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Official Source: International Federation of Phonographic Industry (IFPI)

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willing to compensate you!

Source: IFOP – French polling firm
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The New Baseline

Reasons For Hope—And Urgency—In 2010

When I woke up Wednesday morning, my first thought was of Wyocna Jean. The night before, of course, Port-au-Prince, Haiti, had been devastated by an earthquake. And I knew from speaking to Jean how important that community was to him. His management sent over the statement he had released—Jean was on a plane to the Dominican Republic to try to find a way into Haiti—and it included a reference to his Yele Haiti charity. If you text “yele” to 50151, a $5 donation is made to the Yele Haiti Fund.

After years of having to pick up the phone or write a check, suddenly I could help people in seconds, doing something I spent (entirely too much) time doing every day anyway.

It really got me thinking. The technology isn’t brand new—a few music companies have even experimented with selling music this way. But just like streaming video wasn’t new in 2005 when AOL used the Live 8 concert to make it a household experience, in 2010 Haiti proved to be a tipping point for mobile giving. In little more than 24 hours, more than $2 million was raised through another mobile campaign, this one run by a company called mGive, for the Red Cross.

I hope that anyone who makes a living selling music—or wants to—has mGive, and similar companies with commercial business models, on their call list.

Emergent technologies leave me very hopeful for the next couple of years. Even as I write this, one of my reporters is following up on some tips about scalable layoffs at a major label. The music industry is still in a dark place from a revenue perspective, still resisting itself to new realities.

But for the first time since 2000, I can honestly suggest that the light ahead may not be another train. The business is approaching a new floor and there’s plenty of tools to build anew.

First, that floor. If CD sales continue to drop at the rate they’ve done so for the past few years and digital growth can hold its modest 2009 pace, by the end of 2011, revenue numbers for CDs by CD sales will be surpassed by that of digital album and track sales. And within a year or so after that, total revenue from those sales—physical and digital—will begin to grow.

By the end of 2011, revenue generated for labels by CD sales will be surpassed by that of digital albums and tracks.

(For the math nerds: I used a steady rate of 19% decline on CDs and growth rates of 16% and 9.5% for digital albums and tracks, respectively. Revenue was determined using a $3.86 label share for digital albums and $4.61 for physical. Those totals are regressed fixed costs such as distribution and artist royalties, but not broader costs like marketing or overhead. Senior retail purchasing correspondent Ed Christopher manifoldly credited me for much of this.)

Quibbles if you will, but the business of music sales will be growing again soon. And I believe notions such as text-to-buy will come upon us, and thus potentially incremental—revenue opportunities. And why does the TV show “Glee”—which has an audience of viewers clearly starved to buy music—only market the opportunity to buy an album at the end of the show? Why isn’t there a direct-to-buy push? Why does “American Idol” not push text-to-buy opportunities for the tracks it sells? And what would happen if labels paid for spots to similarly market the original versions of the songs, or insisted such marketing was included in the episodes?

The year 2009 was good for promising developments for labels. The T-Pain iPhone app reportedly sold 700,000 copies, each and was embraced by every talk show from “Ellen” to “Jimmy Kimmel Live!” “Glee” regularly sold hundreds of thousands of songs as performed by actors and actresses in a high school glee club. And singing music looks like it may get a second life, thanks to Apple’s acquisition of Aclima.

But for all the hope, there’s still so much left on the table, much more so than when there should be urgency.

Do you want your career to manage to stabilize after all these years? Or do you want the one that might once again show transformational growth?

It makes me crazy, for example, that publishers and Internet service providers can’t agree on a levy to let folks download all the music they want and do it with what they will. Let me quote a sentence from our story on page 8: “Back-of-the-envelope estimates figure a music levy could bring in anything from two to seven times the revenue the entire music industry currently makes worldwide.”

Meanwhile, “Chorus”—the Warner Music Group-backed, all-you-can-ex experiment that wants to test these theories on college campuses—can’t even get off the ground after more than a year. The gumming I hear in bars leads me to believe that it’s either because labels and publishers can’t agree on reasonable terms, or because some labels don’t want to support a WMG-led digital initiative because of a perceived lack of support by WMG for the digital initiatives of others. Either way, my answer is the same: Are you kidding me? These trains of thought are the fun part—for me—of producing a Best Bits issue each year. We hope it is an unfailing bit of analysis, reporting and insight that looks at what has happened and points to what will. It’s up to you to change your business, with whatever urgency you see fit.
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.COM EXCLUSIVES
Celebrate the return of "American Idol" with a look back at the show's stars and a gallery of how far they've come. Plus, watch video Q&As with "Idol" performers including Adam Lambert, Kris Allen and Chris Daughtry.

BILLBOARDLIVE.COM
Watch a live performance by Grammy Award nominee Rosanne Cash Jan. 21 from the Foundry in Long Island City, N.Y., using the world's only five-screen HD player. For more details on this free concert, go to billboardlive.com.

MUSIC AND MONEY
Join members of the music, legal and financial communities March 4 at the St. Regis in New York to explore challenges and key opportunities shaping the future of the music business. More: billboardmusicandmoney.com.

LATIN MUSIC
The Billboard Latin Music Conference & Awards will take place April 26-29 in Puerto Rico at the Conrad San Juan, Condado Plaza. Don't miss this important Latin music industry event. More at billboardlatinconference.com.

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ON THE COVER: Photo illustration by Chris Short.
FUTURE SHOCK

WITH A MIX OF PREDICTIONS AND EDUCATED GUESSES, WE TAKE A LOOK AT WHAT’S AHEAD IN 2010

ITUNES LAUNCHES FEE-BASED IPHONE STREAMING MUSIC SERVICE

There are many ways Apple can use the assets of the newly acquired Lala digital music service. One of them will be to offer iPhone/iPod Touch users an iTunes-branded mobile streaming music service. Last year’s update to the iPhone operating system allowed app developers to charge a monthly recurring fee for the use of their programs. Apple could simply charge a monthly fee for an app that allows streaming access to iTunes’s catalog. To date, Apple has only four of its own apps in the App Store. Given the company’s success in digital music, it only makes sense that this be No. 5. —Anthony Bruno

THE ROLLING STONES RELEASE A NEW ALBUM EXCLUSIVELY THROUGH WALMART, TOP SALES OF 500,000 IN FIRST WEEK

Keith Richards reportedly won’t be returning to the Rolling Stones for their 2012 tour. In August, a、“Black Ice” (first-week sales of 784,000, total sales of 2.1 million). The Stones aren’t averse to exclusives, having released two concert DVDs exclusively through Best Buy. Next time out, the band will get its “Satisfaction” through Walmart. —Ed Christman

‘AMERICAN IDOL’ WILL STRUGGLE TO TOP RATINGSDUE EVEN AS JUDGE SIMON COWELL EXITS

The ratings for “American Idol” have been on a gentle decline for the past few years; its 2009 season debut was watched by 30 million people, down 15% from its 2008 premiere, according to Nielsen. This trend will continue, not only because the TV audience is becoming more fragmented—damn you, Facebook— but especially since Tuesday-night live slot competitor “NCIS” on CBS is resurgent in the ratings, having become the top scripted show on TV, with 21.4 million viewers Jan. 5. Cowell’s “X Factor” will debut statewide in fall 2011 and thereafter run during the summer: it will never face “Idol” head to head. A smart move. —Ann Donald

JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE TOURS WITH LIVE NATION

When Live Nation inked a deal last year to make Justin Timberlake’s 90’s Silver Tequila the official tequila sponsor for most of its U.S. venues, the writing was on the wall that the pop superstar might soon expand his partnership with the promotion giant. The time may be nearing for the other shoe to drop. Demand for a new Timberlake tour—and album—is high, and word is that Live Nation is working hard to bring him into the fold for a tour. Timberlake’s last outing in 2007, promoted by AEG Live, grossed $127 million, according to Billboard Boxscore.

—Ray Waddell

T.IP TOPS BILLBOARD 200 WITH FIRST ALBUM SINCE HIS RELEASE FROM JAIL

T.I. entered a Phoenix prison last May for weapons offenses on a wave of popularity, thanks to his No. 1 debut album, “Paper Trail” (which has sold 2.1 million units, according to Nielsen SoundScan), and the top-rated MTV re-allay show “T.I.’s Road to Redemption: 45 Days to Go.” Released in late December to an Atlanta halfway house after serving seven months of a one-year jail sentence, T.I. walked out on another high: His No. 2 pop single “Dead and Gone” with Justin Timberlake is a double Grammy Award nominee. While Grand Hustle/Atlantic has yet to announce the rapper’s next album, odds are heavy that T.I.’s absence has only made fans’ hearts grow fonder. —Gail Mitchell

LEAD SINGER OF AVENTURA SCORES WITH FIRST SOLO SET, REIGNITING BREAKUP RUMORS WITH AVENTURA

Named its 2009 album “The Last,” the Bronx-based act denied that it was calling it quits and that members of Aventura have ample reason to stick together after “The Last” sold 246,000 units in the United States to become the year’s top-selling Latin album, according to Nielsen SoundScan. But following what will be a sold-out U.S. arena tour this year, lead singer Anthony “Romeo” Santos may finally make good on his plans to release a solo album. Strong sales are sure to renew speculation of a breakup. —Lole Cabi

REALNETWORKS SELLS 51% STAKE IN RHAPSODY

Amid the ongoing consolidation of digital music services, RealNetworks will be one of the players hedging for the exit doors. The company revealed in a late-November regulatory filing that it’s mulling changes to its Rhapsody joint venture with MTV Networks. The company owned living room entertainment system and Internet service provider-based music services makes Rhapsody an attractive property. But in today’s music retail landscape, it’s usually something other than music that makes the real money, whether it be iPods for Apple or washing machines and flat-screen TVs for Best Buy. Thus, look for RealNetworks to finally pull the trigger and sell off its stake in the subscription service. —Glenn Peoples

LADY GAGA EMBARKS ON WORLDWIDE ARENA TOUR TO PROMOTE NEW ALBUM

Lady Gaga’s planned 2009-10 tour with Kanye West offer an all-star line-up, but the tour is also a monster. “MONSTER” is the debut album by the London-based group, which has sold 2.1 million copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. —Ken Tucker

RIVAL TV NETWORKS TRY TO DEVELOP KNOCK-OFFS OF FOX’S ‘GLEE’

Once a TV network had a hit, the other networks quickly fell in line to create their own versions. Fox’s ‘Glee’ made a relatively modest ratings impact in 2009, with an average of 8.6 million viewers per episode, according to Nielsen. But it was one of the most-watched shows on TV in the prized young women’s demographic, according to Fox executives. Look for more versions in 2010, and a reality-show version debuted in December; NBC’s “Sing-Off” featured a cappella groups from across the country. According to Nielsen, the Dec. 21 finale was seen by 7.3 million viewers. —AD

DIGITAL SALES OF COUNTRY ALBUMS FINALLY BEGIN TO TAKE OFF

This could be the year that country music fans finally embrace the digital album in large numbers. Digital albums accounted for about 10.8% of overall country album sales in the United States in 2009, according to SoundScan, up from 7.5% in the prior year, but still far short of the 26.3% they accounted for in 2003. 9 U.S. album sales. But a new generation of young country artists is helping accelerate the genre’s digital transition. The debut albums of Gloriana and Love and Theft, both released in August, have racked up sales that have been 15% and 21% digital, respectively. And forthcoming releases from Lady Antebellum, “American Idol” finalist Danny Gokey and perhaps Taylor Swift will help further shift country sales from store shelves to downloads. —Ken Tucker
Lady Gaga causes a run on Frosted Loops after showing up at the MTV Video Music Awards dressed as Toucan Sam.

Susan Boyle completes hostile takeover of Suco, appoints her cat Pebbles as Simon Cowell's boss.

Taylor Swift says she is "walking on a cloud" and in "complete disbelief" after being named top country artist at the annual Casper, Wyo., Bluegrass Throwdown.

Grammy Award nominations telecast moves to the Food Network in a bid to boost ratings.

Shakira endorses "sexy" products, including ammonia-free glass cleaner, brake pads and hospital-grade breathing tubes.

FUTURE SCHLOCK!
A LOOK AT THE YEAR THAT WON'T BE

BY THE BILLBOARD STAFF
ILLUSTRATIONS BY THOMAS HERPICH

Jack White and Cirque du Soleil musicians start new supergroup called Seven Nation Army.

Change in Facebook privacy settings exposes 50 Cent as fanatical admirer of Andrea Bocelli.

The Black Eyed Peas announce tour of every naturallv televised event in 2010.

Paul McGuinness rushes Bono to Dublin hospital after U2 singer falls silent for 3.5 seconds.
ISPs And Labels Won’t Come To Terms This Year

One problem with predictions is that they don’t always come true.

Case in point: At the start of 2009, Billboard predicted that during the course of the year, at least one Internet service provider would strike a blanket music licensing deal to indemnify itself against legal action for illegal peer-to-peer (P2P) activity on its network. But that never happened. And given the financial, political and technical barriers lined up against the idea, it won’t happen in 2010, either.

While resistance from ISPs is one obstacle against implementing a so-called “music levy,” it’s not the primary cause for the delay. Rather, the problems lie within the music industry itself.

For starters, there isn’t any agreement on what a music levy should entail. The original concept called for ISPs to pay a per-user/month fee to the music industry for the right to let their subscribers access and share music in any way they like. In many cases, it was described as a “covenant not to sue”—either ISPs or their users.

But not all label executives like the idea. Many still want to retain some level of control over how their music is distributed. So some have proposed a system where the ISP operates its own P2P service, under the theory that they could then withhold content as well as give ISPs the incentive to block competing illegal P2P services.

Other questions remain over how the levy would be applied. Would it automatically apply to all ISP subscribers or only those who opt in to the service? Or would it only apply to habitual P2P users, in lieu of disconnecting their service under a “three strikes” style graduated-response policy?

Further complicating the issue is a lack of solid financial projections to convince labels that revenue gained from a music levy would compensate for their loss of control. Back-of-the-envelope estimates made to date figure a music levy could bring in anywhere from two to seven times the revenue the entire music industry currently makes worldwide, but no one really knows for sure.

“The first time somebody goes out and does a really good economic study of this, the argument becomes more compelling,” says Walter McDonough, general counsel of the Future of Music Coalition and a staunch supporter of the music levy.

Finally, industry experts predict a “major battle” between labels and publishers over how the money gained from a music levy would be divided, with record companies pressing to treat the earnings as download revenue where publishers get 9% while publishers push to treat it like a licensing deal where they get half.

Even if the music business sorts out these issues internally, there’s no guarantee ISPs will play ball. A source familiar with the talks says labels and ISPs remain far apart on what constitutes an acceptable per-user/monthly fee, with record companies asking for around $5 and the ISPs’ less than $1.

ISPs also don’t want the tracking, filtering and reporting burden a music levy would create. But primarily, sources within the ISPs say they don’t like the idea of applying a music fee to all of their accounts. They’d rather offer an opt-in service to those customers who express an interest in music.

Still, that probably won’t address the issue of piracy. Even if an ISP offered a cheap monthly plan, plenty of ISP subscribers would continue to download free music from P2P services. Labels still need convincing ISPs to more broadly implement a graduated-response program beyond the few test cases they’ve participated in to date.

The RIAA is sticking by its position that any such partnership with ISPs be negotiated as a business decision and not under legislative or regulatory action. But others in the industry watching this issue closely have observed that ISP levies only get established through government involvement of some kind.

“The answer to the crisis that has engulfed the music industry for the last 10 years cannot be solved by free-market negotiations,” says Bennett Linchoff, a music industry lawyer critical of the music levy concept. “It can only be made through a change in the copyright law to change the definition of rights enjoyed by content owners and the requirements and obligations, set of rights and responsibilities that govern the transmission of music on the Internet.”

Which means years may pass before any such effort gets under way, as the government and content industry have more immediate fish to fry. The Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement and the net neutrality movement are expected to dominate much of the legislative and regulatory focus this year.

What’s more, a government-led approach to the music levy would require a global effort established simultaneously among several countries in order to ensure the effort isn’t bogged down by the same issue of reciprocity—or ensuring royalties are consistent between foreign markets—that has dogged the terrestrial radio performance royalty effort.

“Part of the debate over the performance royalty for sound recordings on terrestrial broadcasts has been the lack of reciprocity that has cost American artists all kinds of money,” the Future of Music Coalition’s McDonough says. “If we don’t have reciprocity on this, it’s not going to work.

And don’t look to the United States for leadership on the issue. The early groundwork is taking place in countries like France, England and Canada.

As if all these barriers weren’t formidable enough, a cloud of negative public perception hangs over the music levy. Tech bloggers and copyright reform activists have decried the idea, referring to it as a “music tax” and in some cases outright extortion. While those attacks may not faze publishers or labels, it has made the ISPs skittish, to the point that few even acknowledge a discussion is taking place.

As a result, debate on the issue mainly remains behind closed doors. Even the most public of experiments—the Chorus initiative led by Jim Griffin—remain purposely vague. If the two parties involved in the development of the music levy treat it as a dirty secret, how can they ever hope to sell the idea to music fans?

—Antony Bruno

‘The first time somebody goes out and does a really good economic study of this, the argument becomes more compelling.’

—WALTER MCDONOUGH, FUTURE OF MUSIC COALITION
FACEBOOK WON'T LAUNCH ITS OWN MUSIC SERVICE

It's been more than a year since Facebook started shopping around the idea of adding a streaming music service. At last, the online social networking giant considered building its own service. They sought out partnerships with existing services. One result has been an agreement with Lala to enable Facebook users to "gift" a permanent music stream for 10 cents or an MP3 track download for 89 cents.

But don't expect Facebook and CEO Mark Zuckerberg to make significant progress this year toward their original goal of launching a full-fledged music service. For starters, some the prospective partners that had approached are no longer around—Like and imeem are now in the MySpace Music fold, and Lala is with Apple.

A bigger obstacle is the fact that Facebook wanted to offer a streaming service supported by ads, a model that no longer inspires much interest among labels, which are more interested in backing subscription services. Even the popular ad-supported Spotify will probably launch in the United States as a paid offer. But here, too, prospective partners could be hard to find. The future of Rhapsody is uncertain, as joint owners RealNetworks and MTV Networks review their options. And Best Buy is busy using Napster to integrate music into consumer electronic devices.

Facebook may want to consider taking a page from the iPhone App Store playbook, inviting outside developers to create a Facebook music app and taking a cut of any resulting revenue.

WARNER MUSIC WON'T ACQUIRE EMI MUSIC

Talk about a potential merger between Warner Music and EMI has circulated for years, with the latter's precarious finances now fueling renewed speculation.

But EMI is reeling under the weight of a $2.2 billion (€1.4 billion) loan that U.K.-based Terra Firma, a private equity firm, obtained from Citigroup to finance its 2007 acquisition of the label, while Warner has nearly $2 billion in debt of its own to contend with. No bank is going to finance a merger of two companies with a combined $6 billion in debt. Probably the only scenario under which the two labels could contemplate a merger is if Citigroup assumed control of EMI from Terra Firma and its CEO Guy Hands.

That's exactly what could happen if Terra Firma were to default on its loan. But for the time being, Hands has managed to hold Citigroup at bay by making equity injections into EMI to meet the loan's financial covenants. Plus, EMI insiders say the company's recent performance should allow it to meet the covenant through March 31. If Terra Firma clears that hurdle, the next opportunity for Citigroup to force Hands' hand won't come until June 30, when Terra Firma will have further covenant requirements to satisfy.

Chances are that Hands' balancing act will be over before the end of 2010, but not soon enough for Citigroup to negotiate a sale of EMI to Warner—or anyone else, for that matter. For that, stay tuned for 2011.

—AB

PAPERLESS TICKETING STILL WON'T BREAK OUT BIG

With an eye on combating scalpers, a wide range of touring artists have used Ticketmaster's paperless ticketing service for at least a portion of their recent tours, including Bruce Springsteen, Metallica, AC/DC, John Mayer, Nine Inch Nails, Tom Waits and Miley Cyrus, who last year became the first artist to embark on a 100% paperless arena tour.

While secondary-market players predicted chaos in the market, Ticketmaster reported no serious glitches in sales of more than 1 million paperless tickets to events, sports and entertainment. Given paperless ticketing's track record, and its popularity among touring artists, could this be the year it goes mainstream?

Not likely. Veritix, a pioneer in paperless ticketing, says it processed 150,000 of them in 2009 and projects just 750,000 this year. That's an impressive gain but still only a microscopic portion of the $50 million in concert ticket unit sales reported to Billboard Boxscore in 2009. And that doesn't include the millions of tickets sold to sporting events, Broadway shows and other events.

Some acts won't go paperless to avoid potentially inconveniencing their fans, many of whom have proved quite willing to turn to the secondary market because they don't want to stand in line for tickets or would rather buy tickets closer to the date of a show. The future of ticketing in general is still a work in progress. While paperless ticketing will continue to grow, it will remain just one element of a menu of ticket-buying options that's becoming more diverse and no longer standardized.

—Ray Waddell

THE U.K. GOVERNMENT WON'T PASS 'THREE STRIKES' ANTI-PIRACY LEGISLATION

The U.K. government may be willing, but time is no longer on the Labour government's side.

Last November, Lord Mandelson, U.K. secretary of state for business, innovation and skills, unveiled his long-awaited, wide-ranging Digital Economy Bill. It proposed forcing Internet service providers to send warning letters to subscribers suspected of online piracy, while allowing the secretary of state to subsequently impose tougher measures—including temporary Internet account suspension.

"We desperately need it in place," BPI chairman Geoff Taylor says.

But the legal requirement for a general election by June 3 leaves little time to pass the legislation—particularly with weeklong recesses due in February, April and May.

The bill will remain in the House of Lords for debate and possible amendment until at least mid-February. That procedure is repeated in the House of Commons. Most political commentators anticipate a May 6 general election, with Parliament dissolving April 12. Regardless of when the election is held, such a contentious bill is unlikely to be a priority ahead of a popularity contest.

In a Jan. 8 opinion poll by the Sun newspaper, 42% of respondents said they supported the opposition Conservative party, with 30% backing Labour. An election victory by the Conservatives, who are opposed to several of the Digital Economy Bill's proposals, would likely end any near-term hopes for the passage of the legislation.

—Tom Ferguson

In striking distance: LORD MANDELSOHN

Paper chase: MILEY CYRUS

JANUARY 23, 2010 | BILLBOARD.BIZ
SOLUTIONS FOR SALE
TO COPE WITH THE CD’S DECLINE, LABELS AND STORES CHANGE THEIR GAME

BY ED CHRISTMAN

While some record label executives wonder how music retail will respond if CD sales plummet another 20% this year, merchants themselves don’t seem so worried—especially given a number of sales and distribution strategies now on the horizon. ■ In a classic chicken-and-egg dilemma, labels have begun blaming declining CD sales on music merchants diversifying too soon and too heavily into other product lines. Merchants, conversely, argue that labels aren’t doing enough to stem the tide—like, say, lowering CD wholesale pricing, which could help make the category more profitable. ■ As retailers continue to vary the products on their shelves, labels are changing how they handle catalog releases and charge stores for product. And both sides are experimenting with bolder pricing ideas.

FEWER STORES, SHRINKING FLOOR SPACE
Retailers acknowledge that consumer migration to digital music channels has been a significant cause of the sharp drop-off in physical music sales. But they also say that huge 2009 sales of certain titles—Michael Jackson and Beatles albums, for example, and Susan Boyle’s “I Dreamed a Dream”—demonstrate that some consumers still want the CD.

Digital inroads aside, brick-and-mortar retailers say a big factor behind the CD’s decline has been predatory pricing by big-box merchants, which has turned the format unprofitable for most record stores. This has led to store closures and shrinking space for CDs in those stores that remain open, as merchants expand into more profitable product lines.

From 2006 to early 2009, Tower Records, Circuit City, the Virgin Megastore chain and more than half of the stores belonging to Musicland were liquidated. Those chains combined had racked up more than $1 billion in music sales annually, Billboard estimates. About 550 independent stores have shuttered in the past three years as well, while mass-merchant chains carrying music amassed a net loss of 40 stores, according to the Almighty Institute of Music Retail. Plus, practically every remaining store still carrying music—especially those run by Best Buy and Borders—has downsized its music selection. Fewer places to buy music and less inventory in-
side stores mean, inevitably, lower CD sales. As 2000 ended, Trans World Entertainment, for example, operated 986 stores and music sales comprised 75% of total sales. At the end of its fiscal 2000 year, Trans World will have just 536 stores, but music will comprise only about 47% of their total sales.

Other chains that had long focused on selling music continue their evolution into home entertainment distributors. The result is that all of this activity will continue to be a smaller music pipeline and fewer opportunities to buy CDs. While CD sales have been slipping since 2000, the decline has been substantial in recent years, with 18%-20% of sales.

With retailers downsizing music inventory, label executives are pondering ways to ensure that they can get their priority releases into stores. One possible solution might be a scan-based trading, whereby suppliers provide product to retailers on consignment and get paid as each unit sells, verified by the merchant's point-of-sale system. Retailers like scan-based trading because they don't have to tie up cash to maintain music inventory.

Label sources say Universal Music Group (UMG) has begun experimenting with scan-based trading, at Borders and Fred Meyer. Some merchants like Best Buy, though, might have to upgrade their systems' capabilities to handle scan-based trading.

GREAT PRICING EXPERIMENTATION

With big-box merchants selling hit music at $9.99 or less, other retailers are forced to lower prices too, which cuts into profitability. But not every retailer has given up pleading with the labels to change the CD business model. Most music merchandisers on the account side believe the only thing that will slow the CD's decline is lower wholesale pricing. While the major labels have been aggressively dropping catalog pricing, they remain reluctant to do the same for new front-line hits, except for promotions given mainly to big-box merchants.

Last year, Sony Music Entertainment introduced its Acc(station) program, which priced CDs from established acts at $9.90 and developing artists at $7, while deep catalog ranged from $3.95 to $6.90. But the majors still kept their acts at a $10.50 wholesale cost.

In an attempt to demonstrate that lower pricing will boost CD sales, Trans World Entertainment is experimenting with $9.99 single CD pricing for 90 of the majors and some independents, in 118 stores. Label executives say that, so far, the results are impressive (Billboard, Sept. 5, 2000), suggesting that the majors would be able to generate enough sales at that price point to justify a permanent move to a lower $5.96 wholesale cost.

Some distribution executives say lower CD pricing might be possible if they can move to a book-publishing-like model, which will let consumers choose between a deluxe (hardcover-like) version of an album and a regular (paper cover) version. In fact, UMG began experimenting with such a model in late 2000, with plans to simultaneously release albums in both sizes, pricing them at $11.99 and $10.35 wholesale, respectively. But so far, execution hasn't gone smoothly. New albums by Mariah Carey, Rihanna and the Killers all came out at $11.99, but lower-cost versions never materialized; Bon Jovi's special edition of 'The Circle' emerged Nov. 10, 2000, at the higher price, but the regular version didn't hit stores until two weeks later.

CHANGES IN HANDLING CATALOG TITLES

While label executives worry that retailers are diversifying away from CDs too soon, retailers are concerned that labels may begin selling more titles "one way"—that is, with no returns allowed—or only issue them digitally. During the 2007 holiday selling season, WEA told retailers it would deliver 3,600 titles from $11.98 to $17.98 and gave them time and rebates to sell off old inventory. Then, beginning in April 2008, the label started selling those titles one way. So far, the majors have tried to avoid deleting catalog titles outright. "Some companies may begin to lose more active about cutting out titles," Universal Music Group Distribution president/CEO Jim Urie says. "But I don't intend to be one of them."

Newburn Comics CEO Mike Dreese says selling records one way is a tactic that can be used to manage the downsizing CD market, while keeping catalog in print. Since his chain is able to maintain a commitment to deep catalog, he says, such a strategy would give Newburn an added advantage over stores like Best Buy and Borders, which continue to deluge catalog. "We have been advocating one-way sales for the last 10 years," Dreese says. "Everything except new artists should be sold one way."

On the other hand, if labels go one way, Dreese says, they should also use a shared markdown model, similar to the fashion industry's relationship with clothing retailers. That is, labels could work with retailers to sell off overstock by telling them to lower prices and giving them rebates in return. "There is a lot of creativity in fashion and no one knows what's going to sell until it hits the floor," Dreese says.

As for digital-only releases, merchants admit they may make sense in certain instances. But some worry that labels may try using the tactic to force consumers to switch to the digital format. By doing so, merchants fret, the labels would anger CD-loyal customers and force many stores out of business.

Distribution executives suggest that labels might go digital only for developing rock artists until sales start to grow, then put out a CD. And the head of sales at one label predicts that more soundtracks will be issued only digitally—especially those lacking a hit song to drive sales. With the exception of soundtracks for blockbuster films, the executive says, "the physical soundtrack will be more the exception than the rule by 2011."

While many merchants believe all of these strategies will begin to come into play, most agree that lower overall CD pricing is the solution most necessary to curtail the music industry's decline.

"The whole business model is so fundamentally screwed up with too many straws in the punch bowl and too many gatchepapers managing rights for the model to be profitable," Dreese says, adding that "a new model may be able to emerge, but by the time that kind of creativity occurs, it will probably be too late for physical goods."
Let’s Make a Deal

What to Watch For In What Could Be a Busy Year For Digital Music Mergers and Acquisitions

By Antony Bruno

Think last year’s acquisitions of iLike, imeem and Lala marked the end of consolidation for digital music services? Think again. Gradually thawing credit markets and an increasingly competitive digital music landscape could make 2010 a banner year for mergers and acquisitions. Apple’s purchase of Lala in December lends a greater degree of legitimacy to the “cloud-based” access model for music distribution. And that deal, along with MySpace’s purchase of iLike and imeem, will consolidate innovative features into a single, well-financed service—which is surely better for the recording industry than watching them die on the vine individually. “I see it as a positive sign,” says David Ring, executive VP of business development and business affairs for Universal Music Group’s eLabs. “If they cannot or choose not to go it alone, that’s OK. Maybe they need more economic backing in order to make something into an enterprise of great worth. I’m encouraged by the interest in the acquisition of various music services.”

WHO’S IN THE MARKET

Expect to see Apple and MySpace continue their respective buying sprees. MySpace Music wants to expand quickly into areas like merchandising sales and concert ticketing, and has more cash than it has developers. Apple, for all its dominance in the la carte download space, is playing catch-up in areas like social media, discovery and recommendations. Meanwhile, Google is said to be eying a stronger digital music presence to not only beef up its music search results but potentially expand into additional music services for Android-based devices. In fact, Google reportedly considered buying Lala before Apple matched it away.

Microsoft is not only relaunching elements of its MSN portal to improve its search and social networking features, but may also be seeking ways to jump-start its struggling Zune service with an acquisition to perhaps the mobile or Internet radio space.

Amazon’s MP3 store is emerging as a strong, if still distant second to iTunes in the digital download market, but it doesn’t have streaming or social networking capabilities. And Facebook remains curiously absent from digital music outside of a partnership with Lala for virtual gifting.

Other potential buyers include device makers like Nokia, which may want to replace its Comes With Music subscription service with an on-demand streaming option, and Sony, which may want a music access solution to add to the range of media services it plans to launch on the PlayStation Network this year.

Even big-box retailer Best Buy may look to add the stable of entertainment services it’s seeking to bundle into devices sold at its stores beyond Napster—which it acquired in 2008—with an Internet radio or music recommendation technology.

SEARCH AND RECOMMENDATION FUNCTIONS

Likely acquisition targets include technologies and services that address specific areas of the digital music business that a would-be contender would otherwise have to build on its own to be successful.

At the top of this list? Search and recommendation features:

“With the world of on-demand, all you can eat streaming services, what to listen to is even more meaningful than getting access to the music,” says Tim Chang, a principal at Norwest Venture Partners in Palo Alto, Calif.

A particularly tempting takeover target for companies seeking this kind of functionality is Pandora, the customizable Internet radio service that built its own music recommendation engine called the Music Genome. Having finally sorted out a years-long royalty dispute with SoundExchange, the company has clarity on music expenses through 2014 and expects to turn a profit this year through ad sales and premium subscription options.

Other companies mentioned in the search-and-discovery space include the Echo Nest and Big.fm. Kleiner Perkins’ iFund, meanwhile, invested an undisclosed amount in music ID service Shazam in hopes of building it into a mobile music powerhouse, which makes it both a potential acquirer and acquiree.

MOBILE SERVICES

Portability is another area of interest, mostly driven by access to music through mobile phones. MySpace Music, for example, cited imeem’s mobile app as one of the reasons it wanted to acquire the company.

But today’s collection of iPhone app developers aren’t seen as likely acquisition targets. Not many make more than a few million dollars per year in revenue, and their technology isn’t seen as particularly compelling, providing little incentive to buy them out except to acquire personnel and executive expertise.

However, such mobile streaming music services as Slacker—which last year shifted from offering its own portable device to focusing fully on mobile phones as its core strategy—and the highly praised Spotify are another story. As smartphone become more advanced and wireless networks more reliable, the concept of streaming music to a phone rather than downloading and transferring it is becoming an area of great interest and likely one that will result in acquisitions this year, although Spotify’s estimated $250 million valuation may be too pricey for potential buyers.

Another company to watch in Melodica, which offers the mobile service that lets users stream their PC-based music library to their cell phones. Currently, users can only access a random stream of their library, in order to comply with webcaster licensing rules, but an on-demand version is in the works. Sources say Melodica is in negotiations with at least three companies that host the bidding war over Lala, along with other potential suitors.

SOCIAL MUSIC

As for social music services, there’s no shortage of speculation about MOG, a relatively newer entrant that launched a $5-per-month streaming service in December, MOG would give a potential buyer not only a well-received on-demand streaming music service but also an established music-focused social network and advertising network integrated into more than 200 other music-related blogs.

Aside from these big-bucket needs, there’s a host of additional functionality that digital music services are looking for that they could easily get through buying existing companies. There’s also the idea of having a collection of music-related blogs, chat forums, and more.

“They are more likely to be ingredients rather than stand-alone businesses,” says Mike McGuire, research VP with technology research/advisory company Gartner in San Jose, Calif. “The things that add to the experience are where we are going to see more roll-ups and acquisitions.”

“If they cannot or choose not to go it alone, that’s OK.”

—David Ring, Universal Music Group

Selling out? Spotify, MOG, Slacker and Melodica’s Effin Genius iPhone app (clockwise from top left)
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☐ Artist, Performer or his Beneficiary
☒ Producer or his Beneficiary

Step 2 > You want to
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Amount of compensation wanted for each title: ☐ $1,00

☐ I certify that I am the owner of intellectual property rights defined in Step 1 for Works informed in Step 3

Step 3 > Identification of Works
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We will pay any web links that could bring Donations for Artists
DIGITAL

TAKING ON

APPLE

GOOGLE'S ANDROID PLATFORM IS POISED TO MOUNT A STIFFER CHALLENGE TO THE IPHONE

BY ANTONY BRUNO

One of the most important developments of the past 18 months has been the iPhone's emergence as a breakthrough platform for music and artist applications. But thanks to Google's Android platform, Apple's iPhone will finally see some meaningful competition this year in the mobile music app market.

Unlike the iPhone, which is one device developed and manufactured by one company, Android is a smart-phone operating system offered to any phone manufacturer that wants to build products around the technology. In addition to integrating such popular Google services as Gmail and Google Maps, Android devices can access the Android Market—Google's answer to Apple's App Store, where users can buy and download a variety of mobile apps from a selection of third-party developers.

Music apps created for the iPhone have already had a huge impact on digital music services. Such service providers like Pandora, Spotify, Rhapsody and others created free and fee-based apps for the iPhone as their default portable option. Labels and artists have followed with custom iPhone apps of their own.

That's great for the 30 million-plus iPhone users out there. But developing mobile music apps for more than just iPhone users will be critical if mobile access to digital music is to become mainstream.

So far, Android phones have been a mere afterthought, capturing just 3.5% of the world-wide smartphone market compared with the 17% that the iPhone has harvested, according to tech research and consulting firm Gartner. This year, that's expected to change. Existing Android-based manufacturers like HTC, Motorola and Samsung are not only ramping up production of sleek new Android handsets for the new year, they will be joined in the months ahead by LG Electronics and Sony Ericsson. By 2012, Android phones will be the second-largest smartphone platform worldwide with 18% of the market, according to Gartner, second only to Nokia.

Tapulous, Spotify, Shazam, Pandora, heearadio and Last.fm have already created Android versions of their popular iPhone apps. In another modest win, Amazon has chased Android as the only mobile platform capable of accessing its MP3 store, which competes with iTunes.

Next up are artist apps. Sources from three of the four major labels say they are either developing or planning to develop Android-based artist apps that are expected to begin appearing by the end of the year.

"It's definitely a player," Pandora founder/chief strategy officer Tim Westergren says of Android. "It's going to be one of the important parts of the mobile ecosystem."

Tapulous, Spotify, Shazam, Pandora and others have already created Android versions of their popular iPhone apps. And Android is the only mobile platform capable of accessing Amazon's MP3 store.
BRANDING

THERE'S A BRAND FOR THAT

COMPANIES PUT NEW MUSIC TO USE IN THE NEW YEAR

BY AYALA BEN-YEHUDA

Forget U2’s "Vertigo" or Yael Naim’s "New Soul." In its TV ads for the iPhone, Apple's 2009 calling card was a simple phrase: "There's an app for that." While no less catchy, that slogan doesn't lend itself to breaking bands the way Apple's ads have through the past few years (Billboard, Sept. 26, 2009). But that doesn't mean there's a void out there—Billboard surveyed experts to find out which brands are likely to put original music front and center in their 2010 marketing campaigns, whether on TV or other platforms. Here's what we found.

RETAIL CHAINS: Target made waves last year when it struck a retail partnership with Pearl Jam for the release of the album "Backspacer" and featured the band in a TV commercial performing "The Fiker." But more typically, Target ads rely on sweeter fare, such as Tim Myers' "Brand New Day," featuring Lindsey Ray. Expect the chain to stick with that approach in 2010, with other retailers likely to follow in its footsteps, says Josh Rubinowitz, senior VP/director of music for Grey Worldwide, which is working this year with TJ Maxx on music-oriented campaigns. "They really understand the power of music and communication," Rubinowitz says. JC Penney is also likely to identify itself with new music, as did its past holiday season with "Follow the Arrow," by Robi Golan and music and sound design agency Human. McCann Erickson senior VP/executive music producer Mike Boris envisions retailers integrating more thoroughly with artists, perhaps shooting music videos that will double as commercials featuring artists wearing the retailer's clothes. Another idea, Boris says, is for bands to regularly place their new music on retailers' Web sites.

SPRITE: The Coca-Cola soft drink brand will play a major role in launching Drake's debut album next year, says Al Branch, GM of management and branding firm Hip Hop Since 1978. Billboards, online promotion and print advertising from Sprite, along with TV spots featuring Drake and his music, will support the highly anticipated release, according to Branch.

Sprite is now offering free music-based iPhone apps as well. The company has partnered with developer Zoos Mobile to create a Sprite-branded music-studio app that lets users create their own songs using prepackaged samples and beats. The app works by shaking, tilting or tapping the phone to create rhythms and melodies. Sprite is also letting users download additional samples for the app, using under-the-cap promo codes.

LEVI'S: The brand synonymous with American jeans sponsored the premiere run of Green Day's "American Idiot" stage musical at the Berkeley (Calif.) Repertory Theatre last fall. This spring, the clothing company plans to get behind both up-and-coming and established artists. Expect Levi's to give "some exclusive unique music with a twist to their consumer base," Cornerstone co-CEO Jon Cohen says. The Levi's Fader Fort, a traveling live music space, will return to music festivals as well.

MOUNTAIN DEW: Look for Mountain Dew's Green Label Sound program for indie artists to return with "a bigger commitment, more media partnerships, more touring and bigger exposure," says Cohen of Cornerstone, which works with the PepsiCo brand on the online singles label. He declined to disclose specific details of what's ahead, but the singles label has helped launch such acts as Chromeo and Matt & Kim.

DOVE: Since its "Fresh Takes" micro-series starring Alicia Keys aired on MTV in 2008, Dove's music use has taken on a lower profile; "Segue," a tune from singer Di Johnstone featured in a Go Fresh body mist commercial, is one example. The beauty brand will roll out a TV and online campaign this year featuring a well-known song reworked and rerecorded for Dove, Ogilvy Entertainment president Doug Scott says. "I wouldn't be surprised to see [other] beauty brands getting into the space from a music perspective," he says.

GREAT HISTORY GREAT FUTURE

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Of the top 10 grossing films of 2009, just three were original productions—Disney’s “Up,” Warner Bros.’ “The Hangover” and Paramount/DreamWorks’ “Monsters vs. Aliens,” according to BoxOffice Mojo.com. The rest were sequels—like the year’s top-grossing film, “Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen”—or adaptations of works made popular in other mediums, like “Star Trek.”

Since the major studios are the creative arms of corporations that have to keep shareholders happy, it’s becoming increasingly rare for movies with any element of risk to be greenlit—and original stories take a big chance on finding an audience than those that stem from a property that’s already popular. And it’s just as unlikely that major studios will take a chance on an up-and-coming artist to do the music for their films. That’s where the independents come in.

“Indie films are always a place where you can take more chances,” says Peter Golub, director of Sundance Film Music Program and composer for the acclaimed indie film “Frozen River,” among others. “It’s a good entryway for composers.”

In 2010, look for independent films to step up as a way to break new artists for a couple of reasons. First, there are fewer barriers to get music in an indie film—either as a synched song or a composed score—because these films generally don’t have the tiers of executives mastering the creative elements of the film. Second, the extensive calendar of film festivals throughout the year can help expose music in independent films to a variety of audiences around the world.

The downside, of course, is that independent films lack the budgets of major studio movies, and film financing has contracted across the board. So doing the music for an independent film may not make you rich, but the trade-off is repeat exposure and the ability to use the film as a calling card for larger projects.

The Independent Film Festival season in 2010 starts with the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah (Jan. 21-31), and the programming lineup includes several films where music takes center stage. “Sympathy for Delicious,” directed by Mark Ruffalo and written by Christopher Thornton, is about a paralyzed DJ who seeks faith healing, and Polish entry “All That I Love,” about a small-town teen punk rock band during the Solidarity movement, are both in competition.

Indie films have as much chance at acclaim as big-budget features. An indie film debuting at Sundance has a shot at 12 full months of promotion before the eligibility period ends for the Academy Awards. In recent years, this has been key to building a groundswell of support. In 2008, Glen Hansard and Marketa Irglova won the Oscar for original song for “Falling Slowly” after “Once” won the audience award at Sundance. In 2007, Melissa Etheridge’s “I Need to Wake Up” won after “An Inconvenient Truth” held its world premiere at the festival.

The shortlist of nominations for best documentary at this year’s Oscars includes “Soundtrack for a Revolution,” written and directed by Bill Guttentag and Dan Sturman and featuring performances by John Legend, Anthony Hamilton, Wyclef Jean and the Roots. The documentary tells the story of the civil rights movement through music. It played at the Cannes Film Festival, the Tribeca International Film Festival and the Vancouver International Film Festival, where it won the Rogers Peoples Choice Award.

“Documentaries are paying more attention to score than they did 10 or 15 years ago,” Golub says. “Documentaries themselves have changed—it’s less of a puritanical, cinema verite approach and documentary filmmakers are now using all the elements of storytelling. And one of those elements is music.”

The most direct way to meet indie film directors, music editors and music supervisors and pitch your music for productions is to attend the major film festivals where those in the industry congregate. In most cases, the films on display at festivals are sometimes secondary to networking opportunities and social events. For instance, ASCAP and BMI traditionally host artist showcases during Sundance featuring musicians with links to films being shown at the festival.

“A lot of it is force of personality,” Golub says. “If you get your music out there, it could be used in a temp score that somebody hears and asks, ‘Who did that?’”

Besides Sundance, the other elite film festivals for independent features are the Cannes Film Festival, which will be held May 12-23, the Toronto International Film Festival, Sept. 9-18; the Tribeca Film Festival, April 21-May 2; and the Los Angeles Film Festival, which is held during the summer.
PUBLISHING

CATALOG SHOPPING

AS PRICING COMES DOWN, PUBLISHING INSIDERS IDENTIFY POTENTIAL ASSETS FOR SALE

BY ED CHRISTMAN

While pricing for music publishing assets has gotten more realistic in the last 12 months and has helped some deals get done, executives at firms hungry to make acquisitions say further price rationalization is needed before the music publishing marketplace heats up again. Rock & Roll Hall of Fame Hall of Fame Inductee and CEO of EMI Music Publishing deal makers say that the market is still on track for the next 12 months — and most bet on EMI Music Publishing. But that’s because the company is the crown jewel in the struggle for ownership control of EMI Group between U.K. private equity firm Terra Firma, which paid $7.6 billion ($6.6 billion) for the company in 2007, and Citigroup, which backed the deal by lending $2.7 billion ($4.4 billion). Since EMI Music Publishing’s fate is tied to that of EMI Music, we focus below on the other publishing companies and portfolios named by music publishers as those best positioned to come up for sale in 2010.

EVERGREEN COPYRIGHTS

Evergreen Copyrights is a company that generates a lot of speculation about its future, if only because it was up for sale during summer 2008.

Evergreen Copyrights was founded in 2005 by Richard Perna, David Schulhof and Joel Katz, with financial backing from the Lehman Brothers Merchant Banking III fund. When Lehman Brothers was teetering on the brink of bankruptcy in summer 2007, Evergreen’s future appeared uncertain. But in September 2008, the company insisted that Lehman’s Chapter 11 filing would have “no financial impact on Evergreen” (Billboard, Sept. 27, 2008).

With about 20 acquisitions behind it, the company’s catalog generates about $7 million in annual net publisher’s share, company executives say. But for the last nine months, most of the company’s deals have been administration practices instead of catalog purchases. “When the switch,” one music publishing executive asks. In 2009, Evergreen did administration deals for the Joey Ramone, Mark Farner and Death Row catalogs. The company’s catalog also includes the works of Nick Drake.

Another executive says Evergreen is in a “wait-and-see mode.” And yet two other sources say that the principals were trying to either put together financing to buy the Evergreen portfolio or raise more funding to do more acquisitions.

The Lehman Brothers fund that owns Evergreen has been taken over by Triantific Capital Partners. “In 2010, we will be reviewing several opportunities to take out our existing financial partners,” Evergreen co-CEO Schulhof says. “We want to build the company and we plan to be aggressive in making acquisitions this year. But the fund has been in this investment for four years so we are looking for a new financial partner. There is no urgency to do a deal. We will only do a transaction that makes sense.”

DEATH ROW

Death Row’s music publishing, which includes songs by Dr. Dre and Snoop Dogg, could be put on the block as part of the unraveling of the partnership that acquired the company in a Chapter 11 auction in January 2009.

At the time, WIDEawake Entertainment partnered with financial backer New Solutions Group of Mississauga, Ontario, to put the deal together. The company’s catalog was re-launched in April 2009, but by September there was a falling out between Lara Lavi, who had been running the label, and New Solutions Group. Lavi sought a restraining order to eliminate interference from New Solutions Group.

On Dec. 8, 2009, a New York Supreme Court judge overturned the restraining order, saying that New Solutions Group chairman Ronald Overdend has a controlling interest in the company that owns Death Row, and that Lavi never posted a $2 million bond as ordered by the judge.

Executives say it’s unclear whether New Solutions Group wants to retain the owner of the Death Row assets, which are now run by Death Row senior VP John Payne. The catch, according to some executives, is that Death Row received an advance when it cut a deal with Evergreen Copyrights to handle administration, so any Death Row sale would likely require the buyer to retain Evergreen as administrator. A Death Row spokeswoman declined comment.

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LATIN UNDER MY UMBRELLA
LABELS (AND THEIR PARTNERS) AREN’T JUST FOR SELLING RECORDS ANYMORE

BY LEILA COBO

The past 12 months have seen labels overly expand their functions to include management and concert promotion. Even when management isn’t part of the deal, most Latin labels now have new business development departments that seek out sponsorship and branding partnerships—arrangements that are bound to proliferate in 2010.

Today, Sony Latin and Universal Music Latin Entertainment have business development departments as well as booking and management companies. Sony, for instance, has the talent development arm Day 1, as well as a stake in the management company Westwood Entertainment.

“Day 1 and Westwood cover all of Latin America and the United States. The companies work together but also separately, sometimes handling the same acts, sometimes not. In fact, Westwood still manages and books non-Sony acts,” Sony Music Latin/Day 1 managing director Rubén Leyva says. But today, he adds, what was once considered revolutionary “has become part of the way we do business.”

Currently, operations of Day 1 and Westwood cover all of Latin America and the United States. The companies work together but also separately, sometimes handling the same acts, sometimes not. In fact, Westwood still manages and books non-Sony acts.

Similarly, some two years ago, Warner Music Group purchased a stake in management/booking company Get In, which has offices in Spain and later opened an office in Mexico. Get In manages some artists—including several from other labels—and books others, including Spain-based Alex Ubago and Mango de Oz. As in the case with Day 1 and Westwood, signing over management isn’t a condition of belonging to the label. Meanwhile, some EMI artists from Spain and Portugal are signed to the major’s Stealth Entertainment subsidiary.

Finally, Universal’s Global Talent Services, which started off providing support services to managers in different countries, now also functions as a full-fledged management company, handling the careers of Fanny Lu and David Bisbal while also supporting touring and management of several Universal acts throughout the region.

In addition to GTS, Universal has business development departments in Argentina, Peru, Colombia, Mexico, Central America and the United States, whose purpose is to develop alliances with labels and artists.

Amigo de Coca-Cola: MAKANO

Application and Acceleration

LATIN LABELS PREPARE TO DIVE INTO THE MOBILE APP POOL

BY AYALA BEN-YEHUDA

After Latin music dipped its toes into mobile phone applications last year, falling development costs are expected to accelerate the genre’s embrace of apps in 2010 with new offerings that center on artists, label catalogs, concert streams and games.

With Hispanics overindexing in the use of mobile entertainment technologies to receive news and read current events, apps targeting their tastes might be an attractive proposition.

More than half of Hispanic adults with cell phones have the ability to play MP3s and video on those phones, according to Forrester Research. Among respondents to a 2009 bilingual survey, 38% report using their phone to play music at least once per month, and 12% report playing video—much higher proportions than non-Hispanics, though the music-playing question didn’t specify full tracks or ringtones.

Universal Music Latin Entertainment VP of digital and mobile Skander Goucha says all top-selling acts at the label group will have an app timed with their album releases in 2010. But he says those apps are likely to remain free marketing tools designed to engage fans, rather than a profit center on their own. UMLE was able to create apps last year that were basically extensions of Don Omar’s and David Bisbal’s Web sites by using a template developed for use across Universal’s labels, making them relatively affordable.

“Developing an app for anything other than the iPhone is expensive,” Goucha says, pointing out that the majority of UMLe’s consumers use prepaid wireless services like Metro PCS and Boost Mobile. Goucha acknowledges that ringtones have been more popular among fans of UMLe artists than apps but adds that “the situation will be totally different once apps can be available on wider platforms.” As development costs drop, UMLe expects to launch more apps, he says.

Indie label Balboa Records joined the app world last year with the $1.99 Joan Sebastian Radio, which allows users to listen to music from his catalog and stream his latest album, “Pepadito al Corazón,” for a limited time. Balboa GM Federico Baptista says that although the app was only downloaded a few hundred times, “we found that the week it was released, and a few weeks after, about eight albums from Joan’s catalog made the [Latin] top 20 in digital and mobile stores both in Mexico and the U.S.”

In addition to the catalog boost, “we saw a nice traffic increase” in terms of online searches for Sebastian, Baptista says.

Balboa will roll out more apps this year for its top front-line sellers, Cusíllitos and Paquito la del Barranco, as well as catalog artists like Antonito Aguilar.

The more successful paid iPhone apps so far are along the lines of Pandora, a game that allows users to simulate the sounds of a Puerto Rican asa orchestra. Users can play music instruments as the guiro, palitos, maracas and trombone; add backing rhythms; and connect the phone to a sound system as well as jam along with up to five other users. The $2.99 app, introduced nearly a year ago, has been downloaded more than 10,000 times, according to Alfredo Richner, a founder of app developer Vasya Broqui.

There are those, though, who believe apps devoted to specific Latin artists can make money as well. One of those is Jonas Hudson, president of Global Digital Syndication, a producer and distributor of digital content that is in talks with app developer Melodio to stream concerts from Latin urban acts. In October, Hudson put together a live and on-demand stream of a concert by reggaeton duo Jowell & Randy, who record for WM/Machete.

He says the concert, sponsored by Medalla beer, garnered 20,000 paid mobile downloads at $4.99 each.

Key to Hudson’s business model is getting a sponsor to offset production costs and sharing revenue with the artist. “We want to make [artists] a first-dollar gross partner,” Hudson says, “as opposed to some ridiculous net that they will never see.”
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Mos Def
Justin Nicbank
No I.D.
Pink
A.R. Rahman
Rihanna
T.I.
Carrie Underwood
Charlie Wilson
Miguel Zenón

For a complete list go to www.bmi.com/GRAMMYs2010
TOURING

THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS

AS THE LIVE NATION-TICKETMASTER MERGER AWAITS U.S. REGULATORY APPROVAL, HERE'S WHAT TO LOOK FOR

BY RAY WADDELL

While the outcome was never in doubt, the Jan. 8 vote by shareholders of Live Nation and Ticketmaster Entertainment to approve the two touring titans’ planned merger signaled that the deal’s long, winding path to fruition has entered the home stretch. All that’s left now is for the U.S. Department of Justice to weigh in on the deal.

The DOJ could vote to approve the merger, reject it or grant its blessing under certain conditions. What follows is a guide to the various scenarios that could unfold in what will be one of the defining events of the year for the music business.

MERGER PROCEEDS AS PLANNED

If the deal passes as proposed, it would create a diversified behemoth called Live Nation Entertainment, with Live Nation CEO Michael Rapino as president/CEO and Ticketmaster Entertainment CEO Irving Azoff as executive chairman.

Ticketmaster is the world’s largest ticketing company and Live Nation its largest promoter/venue operator. But ticketing and concert promotion just scratch the surface of this deal, which is about tapping into revenue streams through every inch of the pipe that connects artists and fans.

Although Live Nation had just launched its own ticketing company when it signed the merger agreement with Ticketmaster last February, the two companies insist that the deal wasn’t motivated out of a desire to eliminate competition. They also argue that the combined company won’t prevent other ticketing companies from continuing to operate and new rivals from emerging.

Will the DOJ buy this argument and allow the merger to proceed as planned? Probably not. But it’s worth noting that the U.K. Competition Commission cleared the merger in December, despite having voiced concerns just two months earlier about the deal’s potential impact on the ability of German companyCTS Eventim to enter the U.K. market.

LIVE NATION SELLS OFF SHEDS

Promoters built amphitheaters to tap into other revenue streams. Now, in exchange for $255 million in January 2008. Although Ticketmaster already was in the reselling business through its TicketExchange division, the TicketNow acquisition signaled a shift from openly battling resellers to becoming a major player in the market.

At congressional hearings on the merger last February, Azoff said he wouldn’t have acquired TicketNow had he been Ticketmaster CEO at the time of the deal, and even indicated he would be open to selling it.

But even if Ticketmaster agrees to part with TicketNow, a newly formed Live Nation Entertainment would still strike fear in the hearts of resellers because it could still try to launch a new, more powerful, artist-endorsed secondary-ticketing business that would seek to capture any resale profits on behalf of the artist (and itself).

LIVE NATION SELLS FRONT LINE MANAGEMENT

While Live Nation had already put several sheds on the market before this merger pact was announced, its CEO, Irving Azoff, said the company was simply looking to sell venues and divest itself of the business. But it’s likely that abandoning this venue platform completely, the sale of at least some of its sheds could conceivably be part of a deal to secure DOJ approval.

Ticketmaster Sells Front Line Management

While many critics of the merger have focused on what it would mean for the ticketing business, savior opponents of the deal like the American Antitrust Institute in Washington, D.C., have highlighted the benefits that the combined company would reap from the vertical integration of ticketing, artist management, venue operation and concert promotion.

Artist management is clearly the linchpin in this structure. Front Line has management re-relationships with some 200 acts, including some of the most powerful touring forces in the world like the Eagles, Neil Diamond, Jimmy Buffett, Kings of Leon, Christina Aguilera and John Mayer. Though not a manager per se, Live Nation has cut long-term multiyear deals of its own with such acts as Madonna, U2, Jay-Z, Shakira and Nickelback.

Artists that are part of this team could put a show on sale, sell press rights to a sponsor, bundle tickets and merchandise (including CDs and music downloads), sell VIP packages and continue to market and sell to a motivated and involved fan base after the tour buses leave town.

The blending of Live Nation’s entertainment marketing division MusicToday, Live Nation Merchandising, LiveNation.com with Ticketmaster.com and Front Line’s Live All Access VIP program, plus the deepest of sponsorship branding resources and expertise under one roof, could be a music marketing monster on a global level.

Selling off Front Line would go a long way toward addressing regulatory concerns about the vertical integration of such services in a single company. But it would also undermine the rationale for the merger. Azoff remains at heart an artist manager, and without the Front Line component there’s no Azoff and, in all probability, no deal.

THE DOJ REJECTS THE MERGER

President Barack Obama’s Administration has signaled that it intends to be more aggressive on antitrust issues than his predecessor. And congressional opponents of the merger have urged the administration to view the deal skeptically, citing their concerns that the combined company would wield excessive clout in the live entertainment business and drive up ticket prices and fees.

But as Ticketmaster and Live Nation primarily have different core businesses and compete directly only on the ticketing front, casting this merger as monopolistic or anti-consumer isn’t as easy as many would have it.

New ticketing companies and software programs continue to emerge, just as Ticketmaster contracts run their course and come up for renewal. And while the dramatic rise in ticket prices in the past 15 years has been related to industry consolidation, it has also reflected a market correction that has brought prices more in line with what consumers are willing to pay, as the success of the secondary market has illustrated.

The newly merged company would clearly benefit from its ability to integrate its artist management, venue promotion and ticketing operations. That would make Front Line a formidable force with regard to established acts, save for one factor. No matter how much Azoff and company tout the autonomy of Front Line’s affiliated management companies, independent managers will be able to leverage the fact that they aren’t part of Live Nation Entertainment.

That’s no small factor to consider when dealing with artists concerned about their image with fans. It will also be difficult for Live Nation to make life tough for non-Front Line acts, because theirs is a business that thrives on volume and takes itself as artist-friendly.
THE ROAD AHEAD

HOW CLUBS AND THEATERS—AND THE ARTISTS WHO PLAY THEM—WILL ADAPT TO THE ECONOMY IN 2010

BY MITCHELL PETERS

Billboard asked booking agents, managers and venue talent buyers to predict new trends and developments to expect at the club and theater touring level in 2010.

PUTTING THE ROAD ON HOLD

In an effort to hold out for a possible rebound in the economy, some talent buyers are taking a break for several months before the scheduled release of their album. Rock band Spoon will release "Transference" Jan. 19, but the group won't tour until spring. "We've opted to give the record a little time to breathe and also to give the touring business an opportunity to come back," Spoon manager Ben Dickey says, noting that the band usually tours within about a month of a new release. Other agents are advising clients to tour less. "It's very hard to repeat business in any specific market," says Larry Webman, an agent at Paradigm Talent Agency.

LOWER ON-SALE PRICES

Since many concertgoers are holding on to their money longer and waiting to buy tickets at the last minute, some U.S. promoters have been experimenting with lower prices during the first 24 hours of an on-sale. "The discount ticket in advance gets a bunch of tickets out into the marketplace," says Larry Valton, executive VP of AEG Live's regional offices. "Word-of-mouth increases when you have tickets out in the marketplace with someone saying, 'I'm going, are you going?'" AEG Live New York talent buyer Adam Weiner says the lower on-sale pricing strategy has already worked for some shows he's been involved with. "We did something where it was $10 at the on-sale," he says. "And we blew out of the tickets."

PERCENTAGE DEALS

If the struggling economy continues to affect club show attendance, some touring acts may find promoters cutting more percentage deals instead of paying flat guarantees. "If promoters pay a guarantee and nobody shows, they're losing money," Webman says. "But if the band is confident that they're going to do business, then you can actually make more if you take a better percentage deal, as opposed to getting paid a guarantee."

CREATIVE PACKAGING

Competition among touring artists is fierce at the club and theater level, especially since many rely on live performances as their primary source of income. So to help ease traffic and create more incentive for fans to attend shows, some artists have developed creative co-billings and package tours. "That's probably a trend we'll keep seeing," Ground Control Touring agent Andrew Colvin says. "It's about making your show stand out." AEG Live's Weiser predicts that 2010 will find a number of bands that could headline clubs and theaters on their own touring up to play the same-sized venues, to guarantee a sellout.

FLEXIBLE TICKET PRICING

When Los Angeles-based Spaceland Production talent buyer Liz Caro began noticing last August that regulars weren't returning to see a band that had already played six months prior, she entered into negotiations with booking agents to lower their ticket prices. For new indie-rock bands and package shows, "agents are asking for $10 advanced tickets and $12 on the day of show," she says, noting that many fans buy walk-up tickets. "People aren't going to those shows that are $12."

In some cases, Caro won't even book a show unless an agent agrees to a ticket price between $8 and $10. "I'll walk away from it," she says, adding that some agents are becoming more flexible with their pricing.

HIGHER ARTIST TURNOVER

Some booking agents are willing to sign a new band with a glowing review on influential music Web site Pitchfork without having heard the album or watching the band perform live. Billions Corp. president David Viscelli says. But the instantaneous buzz that the blogosphere and other music-focused sites have created has produced an environment that makes it increasingly difficult for artists to develop as a live act and maintain their popularity long enough to build a live fan base, says Viscelli, who believes the trend will likely get worse in 2010. "To help fight the high turnover rate, Viscelli is encouraging his staff to not sign new clients based on industry buzz. "We're going to see more and more evidence of ridiculous short careers," he says. It's not an issue of whether you can generate some buzz about the things you've just recorded in your basement three months ago, he adds. The issue is how you retain that interest six months later."

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ATLANTIC CROSSING

CAN BEST BUY BOOST U.K. MUSIC SALES?

BY TOM FERGUSON

LONDON—The U.K. music biz is betting on Best Buy to help stage a retail comeback when the U.S. giant opens its first U.K. stores this spring. Britain’s beleaguered entertainment retail sector lost almost 1,000 outlets in 2009 as the Woolworths, Zavvi and Borders chains all folded or closed their U.K. stores.

But Brian Rose, managing director of the commercial division at Universal Music U.K., believes Best Buy’s mix of electrical and entertainment products could tempt U.K. consumers.

“Best Buy’s model is different,” Rose says, “and they’ve got a chance to make it successful.”

Best Buy first crossed the Atlantic in May 2008, creating Best Buy Europe in partnership with U.K. cellphone merchant Carphone Warehouse, after paying £1.1 billion ($2.1 billion) for 50% of that company’s retail interests. In July 2009, Best Buy International CEO Scott Wheway was named CEO of the European company, overseeing Carphone Warehouse’s 2,450 stores across Europe as well as future Best Buy stores.

In October, Best Buy predicted it would create 8,000 U.K. jobs during the next five years, confirming that it will open its first stores in Throckmorton in Essex and Hedge End, near Southampton. The chain subsequently announced it will open a third store at Merry Hill in the West Midlands region that would employ “more than 100” people.

Best Buy declined repeated requests to discuss its U.K. plans, but British labels are already rolling out the red carpet for its launch.

The arrival of any retailer of music is welcome,” says Matt Crossway, EMI Music executive VP of sales and commercial development for Europe. “A global partner of Best Buy’s stature is a real bonus.”

The UK industry seems equally enthusiastic. “The retail market has been devastated in the last 15 months,” says Richard Selfon, sales director at independent distributor PIAS. “So it’s great to have somebody out there opening stores.”

At trade group the Entertainment Retailers Association (ERA), director-general Kim Bayley calls Best Buy’s entry into the market “positive for entertainment retailers as a whole,” adding that “new retail outlets inevitably grow the market overall.”

Most sources anticipate Best Buy will open about 80 stores in the United Kingdom during the next five years. The chain said in December that it signed a one-year deal with Lancashire-based wholesaler MBL Group designating it as its exclusive CD/DVD supplier. MBL already supplies mass merchants like Morrison (403 stores) and the Co-operative (4,590 stores).

Selfon says his initial meetings with Best Buy have confirmed his plans for big-box stores of 50,000 square feet in out-of-town shopping areas.

Best Buy’s U.K. rollout was initially scheduled for 2009 but was postponed in March of that year by Best Buy International’s then-CEO Bob Willett, who warned at the time that “the road to international growth is littered with casualties.”

But while other U.S. chains have struggled in the United Kingdom (see story, below), Selfon suggests Best Buy can avoid a similar fate by “using MBL and tapping into their expertise,” while Crossway says he has “no doubts [Best Buy] will adapt their successful model to the local market.”

Universal’s Rose says Best Buy has been discussing its U.K. entry with suppliers “for well over a year,” adding that the chain has stressed its commitment to stocking a wide range of entertainment products. Rose says experience shows consumers spend more time at out-of-town destination stores than at in-town outlets, so “Best Buy have an opportunity to sell range and, because most U.K. consumers will initially shop at Best Buy in search of consumer electronics rather than CDs or DVDs, Rose says he expects “the majority of music sales will be incremental.”

But London-based analyst Patrick Yau at Bridgewell Securities disagrees.

“All the evidence points to cannibalization rather than incremental sales as new entrants come into the market,” Yau says. “Given the high-profile failures of music retailers in the U.K., it does seem odd that Best Buy wants to take on the supermarkets and HMV as well as Amazon, CD WOW and other online retailers.”

While music market-leader HMV declined to comment, the ERA’s Bayley concedes that new competition inevitably puts “some pressure on existing players.”

One of those players is Walmart’s JTV store Asda chain, the United Kingdom’s No. 2 mass merchant in terms of album sales (after Tesco) with 7.3% of expenditure in 2008, according to labels group the BPI.

Asda music/games category director Fergal Gara declined to comment on the retailer’s plans to counter Best Buy’s arrival, but insists that “we welcome any competition that is good for the market.”

Gara says Asda posted “strong, double-digit growth for music” in 2009, although newly released figures from the Official Charts Co. show U.K. album sales fell by 13.8% in volume from 2008. Although Best Buy often secures retail exclusives with labels in the United States, U.K. labels have mixed opinions about whether that approach can also cross the Atlantic.

While EMI’s Crossway says the company “is open to all ideas from retail partners that deliver value to fans and artists,” Universal’s Rose dismisses the concept.

“We don’t do exclusives in the U.K.,” he says.

“We want to put an artist in front of as many different people as you possibly can.”

But Rose remains confident that Best Buy can replicate its success in the States, where it was the third-largest music retailer by volume in the first half of 2009, after only iTunes and Walmart, according to research company NPD.

“They’re a world-class retailer, in terms of consumer electronics,” Rose says. “But they put home entertainment at the heart of everything they do.”
THE CUP THAT CHEERS?
SOUTH AFRICAN MUSIC BIZ’S WORLD CUP PLANS STRUGGLE FOR GOVERNMENT FUNDING

BY DIANE COETZER

Johannesburg—Music took center stage at the festivities in Cape Town marking the final tournament draw for the 2010 FIFA World Cup, with South African musicians Johnny Clegg and the Soweto Gospel Choir joining the likes of David Beckham and Charlize Theron for the globally televised event.

But while the Dec. 4 ceremony successfully shone a spotlight on the World Cup to host country’s music scene, executives are concerned that a lack of government backing might affect their plans to do the same during the tournament itself.

The World Cup, which will run June 11-July 11, is expected to attract 400,000 international soccer fans to South Africa with millions more watching on TV. The nonprofit Music Industry Forum of South Africa—who’s membership includes the Recording Industry of South Africa, the Assn. of Independent Record Companies (AIRCO) and the South African Music Promoters Assn.—is working to ensure that every sector of the business maximizes opportunities to showcase the nation’s artists.

In addition to a June 10 official Kick-Off Celebration Concert at Soweto’s 40,000-capacity Orlando Stadium, MIFA’s plans include staging music performances at airports, hotels, fan parks and at all 64 World Cup matches. “We want this to be a monthlong live music festival that directly puts income in the pockets of our members throughout the country,” says MIFA chairman Oupa Leboho, who’s also general secretary of the Creative Workers Union of South Africa. AIRCO chairman Dodo Monemadogi says, “It’s the first time since the onset of democracy that the industry has united in one body, and it’s given us a new energy.”

MIFA is looking to the government’s Department of Arts and Culture to match that energy by covering part of the costs of MIFA’s 450 million rand ($60.1 million) 2010 music promotion plans, which are designed to complement Sony Music Entertainment’s rights to produce and market official tournament products and songs.

But despite an initially favorable response from the department’s deputy minister Paul Mashatile in July, MIFA says negotiations haven’t made much progress since then. Mashatile set up a World Cup task team in August, but Leboho says, “We’ve been unable to meet with either team or the minister since.”

According to MIFA, Mashatile said at the July meeting that only 53 million rand ($7.1 million) remained of the 150 million rand ($20 million) that the government had allocated for arts and culture projects in 2010, although no other official music events have been announced.

In a statement, Mashatile says the task team will work with all stakeholders “to ensure the 2010 FIFA World Cup offers fans to our country a truly African experience.” He would not comment on how much money was left for 2010 projects, although his spokesman says talks with MIFA will be scheduled soon.

Whether they will be soon enough, however, remains a concern for the music business, which may turn to official tournament sponsors like Adidas and Coca-Cola to fund specific projects. “We want to use our rights in such a way that allows the whole music industry to participate,” Sony Music Entertainment Africa CEO Rikki Lister says. “It’s essential that the music, particularly the live music, reflects all of [South Africa’s] music styles.”

But Lister warns, “Time is fast running out to get MIFA’s plans up and running. ... it would be unrealistic to expect any sponsor to just put up cash to create the infrastructure for the development of a 2010 national music plan.”

MINDING THE STORE
MAJOR LABELS LAUNCH DOWNLOAD SITES IN AUSTRALIA

By Lars Brandle

Brisbane, Australia—Major labels are looking to take advantage of the digital boom Down Under with their own download services.

The local affiliates of Universal Music Group, Sony Music Entertainment and EMI Music all operate digital music stores—although executives say competing with local market leader iTunes isn’t their primary objective.

“Consumers need choice and the market was open for another high-quality, authentic digital music platform,” Sony Music Entertainment Australia chairman/CEO Denis Handlin says. “Not enough was being done to provide alternatives into the market.”

Sony’s Bandit.fm site, which launched in November 2008, is the only major-label-owned service to host content licensed from all three rival majors and independent music aggregator the Independent Online Distribution Alliance. Official market-share figures aren’t available, but industry estimates give Bandit about 4% of the digital market, behind iTunes’ dominant 70%-plus share and telecom Telstra’s Bigpond Music’s 10%-plus share, edging the low-single-digit percentage share each held by Universal’s GetMusic and EMI’s ThelN Song. (A Warner Music Group spokesman says the major doesn’t plan to open a digital download store in Australia.)

“Licensing from the other majors was ‘not as hard as you’d expect,’” Sony Music Entertainment Australia GM of digital Gavin Parry says. “There was a lot of support from other companies to find an alternative in the market.”

GetMusic, which Universal launched in November 2007, features video streaming and sells digital downloads, CDs, DVDs and other merchandise, and also sells digital downloads by Sony artists. Universal Music Australia managing director George Ash says the ultimate aim is “to have everyone on there.”

EMI Music Australia launched its Musichead MP3 download store in September 2008 and then rebranded it TheInSong last October, integrating it into its ARB blog site ThelN Sound FromWayOut. It carries 500,000 tracks from EMI’s catalog and will expand in 2010 through licensing deals with other labels, according to EMI Australia director of new business development Roddy Campbell.

While executives stress current sales levels reflect the relative infancy of the sites, Campbell says TheInSong “surpassed expectations in the first couple of months,” while Bandit claims 100,000-120,000 unique monthly users. Executives note the importance of brand partnerships in driving traffic. Bandit has teamed with Commonwealth Bank, Clínica and Qantas Airways for download giveaways, while EMI’s service has forged promotions with MasterCard, Garnier and fast-food chain Oporto.

Pricing is competitive, with no one site consistently beating the others. The major-owned sites are also vying for customers by offering exclusives. In the run-up to Christmas, Bandit was selling recent albums by Sony’s “Australian Idol” alum Guy Sebastian, Adam Harvey and Darren Lea with exclusive bonus tracks.

The majors are also planning to start subscription services, with Bandit’s due to launch in late January or early February, and EMI and Universal’s set to follow suit later in 2010. A survey that media group Immedia published in August found that while only 10% of respondents had used a music subscription service in the past year, 68% were keen to sign up.

Recorded music sales in Australia grew 0.4% during the first half of 2009 to $178.6 million Australian ($156.9 million) from the same period in 2008, with a 43.3% rise in digital sales more than compensating for a 6.8% slump in physical sales, according to the Australian Recording Industry Assn. (Billboard, Oct. 17, 2009). Label sources say the digital market kept growing at a similar rate in the second half of the year.

Increasing competition in Australia’s digital market could prove challenging for all players as the market matures. But industry observers expect the majors’ presence to drive overall demand.

“Competition is a very positive step, whether it comes from labels or not,” says Karen Farghia, Nokia music manager for Australia. “It reinforces to consumers that legal digital music is easily accessible.”
LEGAL

MONEY CLIP

EXPECT TO SEE GREATER CLARITY ON THE LEGALITY OF FAN-CREATED MUSIC VIDEOS

BY BEN SHEFFNER

More than a decade after the launch of Napster, the recording industry's complicated legal relationship with Web-savvy music fans seems no closer to resolution. But a number of cases winding their way through the courts may bring a bit of clarity in 2010 to one particularly fuzzy area of the law: fan-created online videos that contain music.

The major labels have all worked out deals with YouTube to split ad revenue with the site after a user uploads a video music. But considering that labels don't issue explicit licenses to users and YouTube continues to warn against uploading copyrighted material, it isn't clear whether the labels actually want fans to upload their music in the first place. Meanwhile, other copyright owners who don't have deals with YouTube, such as Vevo and music publisher Acme, are still pursuing copyright infringement suits against the video-sharing giant.

The latest action taken by a major label against a video-sharing site—and a key case to watch in the near future—was filed in December by EMI Music imprints Capitol, Caroline and Virgin and EMI Music Publishing against Vimeo, a division of online media conglomerate IAC. EMI charges that the site infringes on its copyrights by allegedly encouraging fans to upload videos containing professionally produced music. EMI's suit also focuses on "lip dub" (a phrase EMI says was coined by Vimeo), homemade videos that feature fans lip-syncing to professional recordings, including many from the major labels.

EMI's suit will likely revolve around two legal issues. First, are videos uploaded to other video-sharing sites—which organize, categorize and profit from user-uploaded copyrighted content—liable for copyright infringement? While the Digital Millennium Copyright Act includes "safe harbor" provisions for sites that promptly remove videos upon receipt of a takedown notice from content owners, copyright owners claim that the DMCA, enacted years before video-sharing sites even existed, was never intended to protect sites that built businesses around rampant, unlicensed use of others' intellectual property. Especially when they encourage users to upload copyrighted content. (EMI also alleges that Vimeo itself uploaded videos containing its music, an activity that isn't covered by DMCA safe harbors.)

There is surprisingly little case law on this topic. In September, a federal judge in Los Angeles ruled against Universal Music Group in its infringement suit against Vevo.com, saying the video-sharing site was protected by the DMCA. But that case isn't binding on a New York federal court and UMG is appealing. And the case involves a U.S. District Court judge ruled in December that safe harbors are simply unavailable to sites that "induce" infringement.

The other major legal question in the EMI suit is whether lip-dubs and similar mash-ups of amateur and professional content are infringing. Copyright reform advocates argue that they're examples of fair use tolerated under copyright law as an accommodation to noncommercial, transformative creativity. Of course EMI will point out that, whatever the motivation of the amateur lip-dubber, Vimeo is anything but "noncommercial." Sources familiar with the labels' thinking on the issue acknowledge these videos' promotional value, but they also note that other video-sharing sites like YouTube have struck deals with the labels and dismiss the notion that copyright owners should forgo a revenue stream simply because it also promotes their artists.

Elsewhere, Stephanie Lenz is still battling UMG over its takedown of a video she had uploaded to YouTube of her toddler son dancing to Prince's "Let's Go Crazy." Lenz wants damages for the removal of a video she considers an obvious fair use. UMG maintains it acted in good faith to protect its copyright. And Don Henley's suit against U.S. Senate candidate Chuck DeVore, R-Calif., over the use of "The Boys of Summer" and "All She Wants to Do Is Dance" in "parody" political videos is moving forward in federal court in Santa Ana, Calif.

U.S. courts have yet to provide clear guidance regarding the legality of pairing copyrighted music with amateur video and then broadcasting it to the world. That may finally change in 2010.

"It used to be that people were conditioned to wait until TV and commercial alternative radio and the other usual outlets told them what to like next," says Seth Hurwitz, co-owner of 930 Club in Washington, D.C. "Now people are trained that if they want to find new bands, they have to go look for them. It's all word-of-mouth—or word-of-computer." This shift in habits is a big consequence of the tour industry, as more artists will start packing clubs without traditional airplay or mainstream media attention in advance. Below are five bands that, like Kings of Leon, Paramore and My Morning Jacket last year, are poised to take their fans based to the next level in touring for 2010.

PHOENIX

"I consider Phoenix to be the most poised to take that monster next step," says Hunter Powell, promoter for Austin-based C3 Presents, whose productions include the Lollapalooza and Austin City Limits festivals. The French alternative rock band formed almost 10 years ago, but it was 2009's "Wolfgang Amadeus Phoenix"—which sold 277,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, and hit No. 37 on the Billboard 200—that really broke the act stateside. The group also earned a Grammy Award nomination for alternative album of the year. "They've undertoured in the U.S. They haven't toured as much over here and there's a lot of pent-up demand to see them," Powell says.

PASSION PIT

Along with other promoters, Seattle Theater Group senior talent buyer Adam Zacks sees a rapid growth in the touring profile of "bands that are using an electronic element, that aren't just straight-up electronic bands." The most frequently cited example of those headed for a major touring bump in 2010 is Passion Pit, the Cambridge, Mass., band whose 2009 Frenchkiss debut, "Manners," has sold 111,000 copies.

Brooklyn band the National has toured steadily on the strength of its last two albums. Its most recent, 2007's "Boxer" (Beggars Banquet), has sold 177,000 copies, and a fifth set is due this spring. "The National has built up a huge fan base with great records, so with a new record coming, I think they're really going to step up," Powell says. "They're a great comparison with My Morning Jacket; they've really built from the grass roots up." Zacks agrees that the stage is set for the national to move to larger venues. "It's just a matter of delivering with the next record," he says.

THE NATIONAL

Multi-instrumentalist and singer/songwriter Annie Clark, who performs as St. Vincent, is, a road warrior, having toured with the likes of Arcade Fire, Grizzly Bear and the National, as well as headlining her own treks. She was a festival fixture in 2009 after the release of critically lauded "Actor" on 4AD, which sold 43,000 U.S. copies, and reached No. 96 on the Billboard 200. "But she's been conservative, playing smaller rooms, building her audience," says Lesley Olenick, who books Los Angeles' Club Nokia as a talent buyer for Goldenvoice. "She's been playing bigger rooms, 1,500-cap rooms, and doing even more festivals this year.

BAND OF HORSES

There's consensus that Sub Pop's Band of Horses is at a critical juncture in its touring career. The group has been building a following with the success of 2007's "Cease to Begin," which reached No. 33 on the Billboard 200 and sold 174,000 copies. But an expected third album in 2010 could take the band "from 1,000-plus-capacity clubs and small theaters to large theaters and 5,000-capacity venues," Olenick thinks. They're on the Kings of Leon path as far as a young band that has a kind of 70s, classic rock feel. They're amazing live; they've been very protective of fan-friendly, low-ticket prices, so if the record is done and they can tour behind it, they're going to hit the 5,000-cap rooms.

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Down/Jay Sean Feat. Lil Wayne/Cash Money/Universal Republic
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200,000 SPINS
Already Gone/Kelly Clarkson/19/RCA/RMG
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I'm Alive/Kenny Chesney With Dave Matthews/BNA
Meet Me Halfway/Black Eyed Peas/Interscope
Need You Now/Lady Antebellum/Capitol Nashville
One Time/Justin Bieber/Island/IDJMG
Sexy Chick/David Guetta Feat. Akon/Astralwerks/Capitol
TIK Tok/Kesha/Kasz Money/RCA/RMG

50,000 SPINS
All The Above/Maino Feat. T-Pain/Hustle Hard/Atlantic
Do You Remember/Key Sean Feat. Sean Paul & Lil Jon/Cash Money/
Universal Republic
Gangsta Lov/Snoop Dogg Feat. The-Dream/Doggystyle/Priority/Capitol
Hard/Rihanna Feat. Young Jeezy/SRP/Def Jam/IDJMG
Haven't Met You Yet/Michael Buble/143/Reprise
I Can Transform Ya/Chris Brown Feat. Lil Wayne & Swizz Beatz/Jive/JLG
Money to Blow/Birdman Feat. Lil Wayne & Drake/Cash Money/
Universal Motown/UMRG
Someday/Rob Thomas/Emblem/Atlantic
Southern Voice/Tim McGraw/Emblem/Atlantic
The Truth/Jason Aldean/Broken Bow
Uprising/Huse/Warner Bros.
We Won't Be Found Together/Bon Jovi/Mercury/IDJMG
Wheels/Foo Fighters/Roswell/RCA/RMG
White Lies/Miranda Lambert/Columbia
AUSTIN’S BRIDGE

Sitting around the home studio of Rascal Flatts’ Jay DeMarcus, it’s obvious why the members of Austin’s Bridge feel confident about their sophomore set, “Times Like These,” due March 23 on Daywind Records.

“We were really excited when he decided to come onboard and take on this project,” singer Justin Rivers says of DeMarcus, who produced the band’s new album.

“It reminded me a lot of what myself and the guys do—really tight harmony and that really special blend that they have together,” DeMarcus says of the similarities between Rascal Flatts and Austin’s Bridge.

Austin’s Bridge bowed in 2007 with a self-titled debut that drew a wide audience thanks to the trio’s ability to combine Southern gospel, mainstream country and contemporary Christian into its own unique sound. The newcomer even earned a Dove Award for bluegrass recorded song of the year for “He’s in Control.” The original lineup featured Rivers, Jason Baird and Mike Kofahl. When Kofahl left to spend more time with his family, Toby Hitchcock joined last summer.

DeMarcus, who started his career in the Christian group East to West, says he enjoyed his return to the genre. “A lot of my heart and soul has been in Christian music. That’s where I got my start and it’s something that I very much missed being a part of,” says DeMarcus, who credits Daywind senior VP of A&R Norman Holland with recruiting him for the project.

—Deborah Evans Price

B.O.B.

Two months ago, rapper/singer B.o.B., who also goes by his real name, Bobby Ray (Simpson), Bobby B., or just plain Bob—made a viral video with Atlantic Records president Julie Greenwald in an effort to quiet rumors of tension between the artist and his label.

The YouTube clip relieved fans who were wondering whether B.o.B. would ever release “B.o.B. Presents: The Adventures of Bobby Ray,” his debut album due May 25 on Atlantic, through T.I.’s Grand Hustle and producer Jim Jonsin’s Rebel Rock labels. In early 2009, Vibe and XXL magazines touted B.o.B. as an emerging MC alongside Kid Cudi, Asher Roth and Wale. The Atlanta-based artist drew attention for his versatility—he recalls both OutKast’s Big Boi and crooner Raheem DeVaughn and may be the first rapper to play the guitar well—and the skills displayed on his early mixtapes.

While Cudi, Roth and Wale all released major-label debuts in 2009—with varying degrees of success and frustration—B.o.B.’s project stalled. He doesn’t deny the rumor that Atlantic wanted him to sign a 360-degree deal first, but says both parties eventually reached a compromise.

“We just had to make it work. Now I feel a huge sense of support,” B.o.B. says. “In this business, you have to lose your ego sometimes. I’m still learning how to do that.”

In the interim, he released another lauded mixtape, “Jourmet Life,” on new albums by Cobra Starship and Pittbull, and recorded with Big Boi. In August, an unofficial mixtape called “Should Have Been the First Album” surfaced, another sign that demand for a proper full-length is strong. B.o.B. says he may release a “mini-mixtape” before April to maintain the buzz.

Meanwhile, B.o.B.’s official debut single, “Nothin’ on You,” which recalls Lupe Fiasco’s 2007 hit “Superstar,” was released digitally Dec. 15. “Adventures” will also feature collaborations with Jonsin, Fiasco, producer Dr. Luke and Weezer’s Rivers Cuomo. “It won’t sound forced,” B.o.B. says. “The trend in hip-hop now is to be weird or different. I just want to be natural and allow my music to speak to people.”

—Monica Herrera

J. COLE

Hip-hop albums get delayed for all sorts of reasons—legal single and prison sentences being two of the most popular. But J. Cole’s forthcoming debut might be delayed for a more creative rationale—namely, because he can’t stop tinkering with it. “I’m a perfectionist,” says the 24-year-old rapper, who’s the first artist signed to Jay-Z’s Roc Nation imprint. “Eventually somebody will just have to tell me to stop.”

But Cole has never been good at taking no for an answer. Born in North Carolina, he attended St. John’s University in New York, spending the second half of his college career and subsequent two years searching for a record deal. “I was calling A&R people and rapping on their answering machines, trying to get my beats on other people’s projects, all of it,” he says. A relationship with Mark Pitts, who managed Biggie Smalls, led Cole to a meeting with Jay-Z, who then signed him.

A mixtape, “The Warm Up,” is making the rounds, and a guest verse on “The Blueprint 3” track “A Star Is Born” introduced Cole to a wide audience. Now if he can just make the perfect album.

—Courtney Harding

ESTER DEAN

If Ester Dean doesn’t become a household name, it won’t be for lack of trying. She has already written or co-written songs for Keri, Keri, Cole, Cia and the Pussycat Dolls. Her most recent credits include: Mary J. Blige’s latest single, “I Am”; Rihanna’s “Rude Boy”; and several songs on Chris Brown’s new album “Graffiti.”

In the midst of all this activity, the singer/songwriter from railroad town Massique, Oklahoma, somehow found time to release her own first single, “Drop It Low,” featuring Brown—who was also her co-writer on the buzz track. Peaking at No. 31 on the Billboard Hot 100 and No. 33 on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs, the single is the precursor to Dean’s first solo album for Zone + Interscope. Due later this year, the untitled project is being produced by hitmaking Zone architect Polow Da Don.

“Pillow gets my crazy self and I get his crazy self,” Dean says with a Betty Boop laugh. “We’re married into music and look at songs as our kids. We fight over them and nurture them.”

—Gail Mitchell

ANA ISABELLE

When Puerto Rican pop artist Ana Isabelle began recording her album, prospects looked good for her to reach the finals of the highly rated Univision singing competition “Viva el Sueño.” Then, at the end of November, she won the final audience vote. Like the 13 contestants she defeated, Ana Isabelle already had a label deal, but had yet to break in a big way.

“We made the album in about a month, but I think it surpasses my first album in many respects,” says the singer, who released her debut in 2007. This time, she’s a priority artist for Universal Latino, which paired her with an established star, Cristian Castro, on a duet cover of his hit “Por Amarte A Mi.”

“Mi Sueño,” scheduled for release Feb. 9 on Universal Music Latino, also features songs Ana Isabelle sang during the competition. Producers include Mauricio Garza, Yoel Henriques,
prolific pop hitmaker Armando Avila and pop star Latin Ford. Among other collaborators on the mostly covers album are Noel Schajris, son by Four's Angel Lopez, songwriter Claudia Bruni and pianist Arthur Hamilton. Universal is standing behind its audience's pick, booking Ana Isabelle on its TV shows and featuring her on the network's New Year's Eve special from Times Square. Universal Radio has also hosted festivals in Houston and Los Angeles with Ana Isabelle and other 'Viva el Sueño' finalists. The singer "occupies a place that was empty in the market, as the young female maleromantic singer for a new generation."

Universal Latino GM Luis Estrada says, "Estrada adds that Coca-Cola will sponsor private events and in-stores with Ana Isabelle and that a 'Viva el Sueño' tour is in the works for the second quarter and will hit major Hispanic markets, including Ana Isabelle's home of Puerto Rico.

Universal has "always supported me," but now "they're betting on me harder," Ana Isabelle says. "I want to take advantage of this moment."

K'JON
After getting fired from his corporate job a few years ago, singer/songwriter K'Jon decided to dedicate himself to music full-time—and his efforts are paying off. His single "On the Ocean," released independently in 2008, peaked at No. 12 last summer on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart. After signing to Universal Republic in January 2009, K'Jon released his album "Get Around," which has sold 147,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The Detroit native got his start in 2003 when he recorded a demo and distributed it locally. It found its way to New York, and after writing for a number of under-the-radar artists in the Big Apple, K'Jon got his first major placement in 2004—on the "2 Fast 2 Furious" soundtrack. He hoped that would open some doors. "But it wasn't happening," he says. "I wasn't moving as an artist or as a songwriter."

Four years later—after self-releasing an album—K'Jon found himself frustrated with his singing career. That's when "On the Ocean" came to him. "I was sitting in the middle of nowhere, in L.A., writing for other artists, away from my newborn child and the song just hit me," he recalls. "I felt like I was on a deserted island, and I couldn't see my rescue ship, but I couldn't get on it. "On the Ocean" became a metaphor for what I was waiting on."

In 2010, K'Jon hopes to continue writing motivational music not only for himself but also for other aspiring artists. "I'm in writing mode all the time," he says. "I definitely believe I can make tracks that can help elevate others."

—Mariah Conepcion

PIXIE LOTT
After topping the U.K. chart with her first two singles, "Mama Do(Uh Oh, Uh Oh)" and "Boys and Girls," U.K. pop princess Pixie Lott has been ready to bring her big, soulful pop sound to the U.S. market for a while.

But now she'll be launching her U.S. campaign alongside an independent movie role. The 19-year-old from suburban Brentwood, Essex, has been filming "Freddy the Movie" in Los Angeles with director/producer Brian Robbins and teenage co-star Lucas Cruikshank, who created the Fred Figglehorn character, originally a YouTube hit. Interscope's U.S. album campaign will be timed for "optimizing around the millions of fans that will be exposed to her," Stephenson says. He expects to confirm a lead single—"There are multiple options," he says—and radio date in the coming weeks.

Lott's glamorous image and stomping pop sound, which has drawn comparisons to Duffy and Amy Winehouse, took storm in 2009 and won her two trophies at the MTV Europe Music Awards. Together, her pair of No. 1 singles have moved 304,000 copies in the United Kingdom, according to the Official Charts Co., while debut album "Turn It Up" has shifted 261,000. The album also went No. 1 in Denmark and Ireland.

Stephenson says this success paves the way for the stateside campaign. Lott has already visited the U.S. several times, meeting label executives and Interscope's commercial and sync licensing partners, performing at an industry showcase and recording her album in New York. Los Angeles and Atlanta. Collaborators include RedOne, Greg Kurstin, Toby Gad and Kara DioGuardi.

"I love American music, and it was great to work over there on the album because it's given it a crossover sound, not a U.K. sound," says Lott, who names Mariah Carey as her idol. Jason Flom, president of Lott's U.K. label Mercury, believes her commitment and Interscope's support will pay off. "Her work ethic will help her," he says. "She's young and excited by it and she'll end up traveling the world."

—André Paine, with additional reporting by Mark Sutherland and J.R. Rotem on the set.

"I feel really blessed," the 24-year-old says. "This is my time, and it makes me feel like I need to deliver a classic album. I don't want to let people down that got excited about me, and I know it'll be great because I'm hard on myself and I work hard."

With Waynes's blessings, Minaj has released three mixtapes since 2007, all featuring guest appearances from her label chief. "When I heard him say my name it was such an OMG moment for me," Minaj says. Her first collaboration, a remake of Young Gunz's "Can't Stop, Won't Stop," "I wasn't big enough for someone of that caliber to notice. I didn't think it was my time yet, it was very surreal."

Now, as she prepares her solo debut, Minaj says she's trying to show that the fuss is all about, working with Usher, Jennifer Lopez, Keri Hilson, Bobby Valentino and Ludacris. She also appears on the Young Money album "We Are Young Money," released Dec. 21 and distributed through Universal Motown.

But she still remains humbled by all the opportunities and the accolades. "I never thought I would be one of the girls in that elite female rap group," she says. "I'm just as shocked as everyone else."

—MC

YEASAYER
When Brooklyn band Yeasayer entered the studio to record a follow-up to 2007's "All Hour Cymbals," the group set a few ground rules. "We wanted to make an album of 12 songs, all under three minutes and 30 seconds," singer Chris Keating says. "We wanted a strong emphasis on the low end of things, and we wanted to try and craft a unique sound."

The band missed on the first two marks; its new album, "Odd Blood," which will be released in February on Secretly Canadian, has 10 songs, only three of which clock in at less than 3:30. But the members definitely stay focused on the bottom end—and the sound, much like its previous effort, stands out from the crowd. This time, though, the aesthetic has shifted, from the psychedelia on "All Hour Cymbals" toward a mix of '80s radio hits, '90s one-hit wonders, dance music, dancehall and dubstep.

"We could keep doing the same thing, but why bother," Keating says. "We have diverse tastes and we did a certain sound on the first record and wanted to do something else. If someone who liked the first album hates this one, well, they can always go back and listen to the first one."

Keating adds that "Odd Blood" was also influenced by the band's extensive touring. Yeasayer has co-headlined with MGMT and opened for Radiohead and will tour Europe and the United States in 2010 before playing another round of summer festivals. The band has already released a gleefully not-safe-for-work video for "Ambulance," and Keating says the next one will probably be even more naughty. He also says he's hoping to license tracks to films and is willing to consider working with some brands. "I have a Honda Civic," he says, "So I like them."

—CH
OUT WITH THE OLD...

In with the new, the loud, the soft, the twangy, the melodic, the weird and the just plain brilliant. The new year is shaping up to be a great one for music, with banner releases in almost every genre hitting shelves and online retailers in 2010. Artists are swapping genres, collaborating with unexpected partners and cranking out great music. Below is a sampling of some of the biggest releases; a more comprehensive list can be found at billboard.com/newreleases.

BY COURTNEY HARDING

CHARLOTTE GAINSBOURG
‘IRM’ (BECAUSE MUSIC/ ELEKTRA, JAN. 26)
The dreamy-voiced daughter of French actor/ singer Serge Gainsbourg and British actress/ singer Jane Birkin has come into her own as an actor and a singer. She won the best actress award at the 2009 Cannes Film Festival for her role in “Antichrist,” among other acting accolades, and delivered the critically acclaimed album “5:55” in 2006. Her new collection, released Dec. 7 in the United Kingdom, was written and produced by Beck, with whom Gainsbourg worked for five days before asking him to collaborate with her on the entire album. Single “Heaven Can Wait” is a duet with the musician. “It was great to be able to extend the process and have different moods each time,” Gainsbourg says about the year-and-a-half that she flew between France and Los Angeles for sessions. More percussive and expansive than “5:55,” “IRM” includes themes of memory and the past and the brain and death,” according to Gainsbourg, and incorporates MIR sounds stemming from her experience after a cerebral hemorrhage in 2007. Gainsbourg’s touring plans for the album are still under discussion. “I’m very nervous,” she says. “It’s so comfortable to be in the studio with someone I admire, but it’s a whole different story to be bold about it.”

TOBYMAC
‘TONIGHT’ (FOREFRONT, FEB. 9)
From his early days with groundbreaking rap/rock trio dcTalk to his Grammy Award-winning solo career, tobyMac has long been one of the Christian music community’s most innovative artists. Winner of the Gospel Music Assn.’s 2008 Dove Award for artist of the year, he has also seen all three of his solo albums certified gold. Fans are already preordering his new set, “Tonight.” Lead single “City on Our Knees” is nominated for a Grammy for best gospel song and has sold more than 133,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan, hitting No. 1 on Billboard’s Hot Digital Songs chart. Never one to rush the creative process, tobyMac has been working on the new release with co-producers Chris Stevens, Jamie Moore and Dave Wyatt for two-and-a-half years. “I try to write records that take a snapshot of what I’m living, the things that I’m struggling with, whether it be my relationship with God or my relationship with friends,” he says. “It’s not about putting a neat little bow on everything.” “Tonight” features a guest appearance from Skillet frontman John Cooper on the title track as well as collaborations with Israel Houghton and Rellent’s Matt Thiessen. “Tobymac is a song called ‘Wonderin’,” he says. “It’s sort of reminiscing about dcTalk.” The release will include bonus remixes and behind-the-scenes video. “Musically it’s still that same big pot of gumbo—what I call ‘hip-rock,’ funk and soul,” says tobyMac, who has recruited 12 young directors to create clips for the new tunes.

MASSIVE ATTACK
‘HELGOLAND’ (VIRGIN, FEB. 9)
That shuddering bass, those yearning vocals, that sense of trouble and doubt: The elements that defined Massive Attack are all still there on the band’s fourth album, “Heligoland.” But the approach was different. The first albums were more studio- and sample-based; this is a departure, founding member Daddy G says. “We’ve toured extensively and through that went from a DJ-based entity to a band format. It’s been a comfortable and experimental evolution, and it’s completely changed the way we make records.” “Heligoland” comes seven years after the band’s third album, 2003’s “100th Window,” but according to Daddy G, it was “seven years in the thought process and eight months in the making.” The result is 10 tracks that are stripped down and song-based, allowing for many distinctively voiced collaborators to shine through. Hope Sandoval, Martina Topley-Bird and TV on the Radio’s Tunde Adebimpe all make appearances. The band also worked with Gorillaz mastermind Damon Albarn on the Radiohead-inspired album highlight, “Saturation Come Slow.” “It was a really brilliant experience,” Daddy G says of the collaboration. “He is not just the king of Brit-pop—he’s the king of everything.”

BEN SOLLEE & DANIEL MARTIN MOORE
‘DEAR COMPANION’ (SUB POP, FEB. 16)
After meeting on Myspace and trading e-mails about their mutual concerns regarding mountaintop removal coal mining, Ben Sollee and Daniel Martin Moore decamped to My Morning Jacket frontman Jim James’ house to record “Dear Companion.” Songs like “Sweet Marie” showcase Sollee’s classical training, and the mournful “Flyrock Blues” highlights Moore’s guitar chops. While the album isn’t overtly political, Sollee says the pair sought to create a narrative thread about communities affected by destruction and poverty. “Our goal was to create a platform for people to think about issues of consumption and energy use,” Sollee says. “to do it in a way that was focused on storytelling.”

QUASI
‘AMERICAN GONG’ (KILL ROCK STARS, FEB. 23)
Longtime followers of indie rock group Quasi should expect more guitars and fewer keyboards on the Portland, Ore.-based band’s eighth studio set, “American Gong,” according to Quasi vocalist/guitarist/keyboardsist Sam Coomes. The dynamics of Quasi’s sound changed about three years ago when bassist Joanna Bolme joined the group, which had previously consisted of only Coomes and drummer Janet Weiss. “One of the reasons why we did keyboards over the years as a two-piece was to cover the whole sonic spectrum,” Coomes says. “But now with a bass guitar covering the low end, playing guitar is just more fun.” Coomes says his favorite song to perform live from “American Gong” —the band’s first album for Kill Rock Stars—is the rocker “Bye Bye Blackbird,” which includes an extended bridge that allows for improvisation. “It’s fun to take the leap at that point in the song,” he says. Quasi plans to promote the new release with a U.S. club tour that begins in March. The band is also planning visits to Japan and Europe in 2010.

BLAKE SHELTON
‘HILLBILLY BONE’ (WARNER BROS., MARCH 2)
Blonde Shelton’s raucous duet with Trace Adkins, “Hillbilly Bone,” is proving a strong lead-in for Shelton’s new project. “I honestly feel it’s my debut album,” Shelton says. “I’m at the highest point in my career so far, so I know that’s an odd thing to say, but I just
feel like this is me completely, finally knowing what I want to do and who I am as an artist.” “Hillbilly Bone” is Shelton’s sixth studio album. Produced by Scott Hendricks, “Hillbilly Bone” includes songs written by Rhett Atkins, Craig Wiseman and Shelton’s girlfriend, Miranda Lambert. “I cut a lot of stuff my friends wrote,” Shelton says. “Miranda and Hillary Scott [from Lady Antebellum] sat down and wrote a song. They played it for me to get me to do the guitar/vocal for them and I made them promise not to give it to anybody else. It’s called ‘Suffocating.’ It’s a love-gone-wrong song.”

THE BESNARD LAKES
‘THE BESNARD LAKES ARE THE ROARING NIGHT’ (JAGJAGUWAR, MARCH 9)

The Besnard Lakes recorded their new album in two chunks, partly because core members Olga Gornitz and Jake Lasek’s home studio was so booked up they could only claim a few days, and partly because, in the middle of the process, actor Mark Ruffalo commissioned the pair to score his directorial debut, “Sympathy for Delicious.” While Lasek describes the film score as “understated,” the new Besnard Lakes album is decidedly not, with dense layers and walls of noise. “We sabotaged ourselves sometimes, like on the track 'Albatross,'” Lasek says. “We added a noise part to the song so it couldn’t work at radio.” But the whole album doesn’t adhere to the more-is-more concept. “For the song ‘Lonely Moon’ we recorded a version that was very full and layered, and then went back and stripped out everything, including the drum,” he says. “It became this quiet, beautiful thing.”

NATALIE MERCANT
‘LEAVE YOUR SLEEP’ (NONESUCH, MARCH 30)

Former 10,000 Maniacs singer Natalie Merchant hasn’t released a proper solo album since “Motherland” in 2001. But the artist is planning an ambitious return in 2010. Her Nonesuch Records debut, “Leave Your Sleep,” is a two-disc album of original music with lyrics adapted from various poems, including works by Robert Louis Stevenson, Robert Graves, Ogden Nash and Christina Rossetti. “I’ve also been really intrigued about setting other people’s words to music, rather than my own,” says Merchant, who recruited 130 musicians to back her, ranging from the Weyton Marsalis Quintet to the Chinese Music Ensemble of New York. The 26-song “Leave Your Sleep”—which Merchant co-produced with Andres Levin—began as a “lullaby record” and slowly transitioned into a project about childhood in general. “At that point my kid was already 3 years old and was asking questions like, ‘What happens when we die?’” she says. “I wanted to be able to answer those questions musically.” The artist originally planned to release the album in two volumes, but her label felt it would be strategically better to release it as one set. Nonesuch said that she “basically got one chance to talk about this project and have people listen, so you might as well put it all out at once,” she says, adding that her second album for Nonesuch is already written, and she plans to record the songs with the backing of an orchestra.

DADDY YANKEE
‘DADDY YANKEE MUNDIAL’ (EL CARTEL/SONY, MID-MARCH)

Reggaeton star Daddy Yankee (real name Raymond Ayala) says he didn’t write the single “Grito Mundial” (World Shout) thinking specifically about the 2010 World Cup. But the celebratory track, loaded with trumpets and whistles, definitely sounds like a sports anthem. It’s the first single off an album that veers from introspective hip-hop to more danceable beats and is being produced by the production team of Los de la Nasa, which also records on Yankee’s label El Cartel. For his new studio set, Yankee has turned to distribution from Sony and has already paired up with key brands. In late 2009, Coors Light sponsored a series of private events throughout the United States to launch “Grito Mundial.” A video is slated for release in January.

JAMIE FOXX
‘BODY’ (WORKING TITLE) (J RECORDS, MARCH)

On Jamie Foxx’s last single he suggested that listeners blame their shortcomings on “the alcohol.” Now he’s offering even more questionable advice: recommending they quit their jobs altogether. “Quit Your Job” is the potential first single off Foxx’s new album, tentatively titled “Body,” helmed by Carlos “Los Da Mystro” McKinney and the Dream. “Quit Your Job” finds Foxx playfully chanting, “I never had a girl like this/She fix me pancakes, she knows how to bake/I wanna be the one that’s by your side/I wanna be the nigga that says goodnight.” over a nursery rhyme-like, piano-laden production. Other songs slated to make the album include “Winner,” produced by and featuring Justin Timberlake and rumored to have a guest spot from Jay-Z; the love song “Rejoice,” by Raphael DeVaughn; the club track “Straight to the Dance Floor,” on which Foxx sings, “I got my hands on my nuts and my bottle in the air”; the R. Kelly-esque ballad “Split Personality”; and the recently released street track, “Speak French.”

TONI BRAXTON
‘PULSE’ (ATLANTIC, MARCH)

During her much-publicized battle with heart disease, R&B singer Toni Braxton says she
didn't think she'd ever be able to do music again. But a conversation during cardiac rehabilitation with an upbeat elderly female patient who had survived four heart attacks helped motivate the singer to continue performing. “That's when I found my pulse again,” Braxton says, noting that her forthcoming album, “Pulse,” is “sexy,” “fun” and “testimonial.” The first single from the album—her debut on Atlantic Records—is the sensual “Yesterday,” featuring Trey Songz. Braxton also tapped blue-eyed-soul crooner Robin Thicke for the romantic track “Don’t Leave.” “We've got this argument and we both realize we were wrong,” she says about the song, “and we're begging each other to try and work it out.” Other favorites are the R&B-meets-country “I'll Have to Wait” and the title track. Producers include Rodney Jerkins and Rodney Mancuso. “I wanted to work with the newer collaborations and more up-and-coming artists like Rodney Jerkins, says Braxton, who adds that the album will feature a hit in the United States by late spring.

DRAKE ‘THANK ME LATER’ (YOUNGMONEY/CASHMONEY/UNIVERSAL MOTOWN, MARCH)

Drake has already picked up two Grammy nominations, and he doesn’t even have an album out yet. But the former child actor plans on changing that soon. His highly anticipated debut set features production from the likes of Omen and longtime collaborator Noah “40” Shebib. Guest features include Jay-Z, Kanye West and Young Money label chief Lil Wayne, and he hopes to team with Sade as well. Tracks lined up for the project include “Shut It Down,” featuring Brandy, which Drake describes as “a song for the non-famous woman to feel special and know that even though I’m up here and have the option to mingle with these ‘upper echelon’ women, sometimes I'd rather be with the girl from back home or a student or a girl that works at Walmart. It’s an empowering song for all women.” Another track that will make the cut is the album’s intro, “Fireworks.”

GORILLAZ ‘PLASTIC BEACH’ (PARLOPHONE/EMI, MARCH)

With Gorillaz’ last album, “Demon Days,” selling more than 5 million copies worldwide, according to EMI, including 2.2 million in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, small wonder: the band’s collaboration with the most interesting member of the group was once again the most intriguing. “It’s probably the first album ever to feature both Snoop Dogg and Lou Reed,” Parlophone president Miles Leonard says with a laugh. “But Damon Albarn’s vocals are as much a part of this album in a way.” And it’s not just the album’s cover: it’s also the tracklist — he’s right across on this record: it’s not just guest vocalists.” De La Soul and U.K. all-rounder the Horrors have also worked on tracks, while Bobby Womack and Mos Def feature on the album’s lead single, “Slyo,” due at U.K. radio in early March and described by Albarn as a “dark, twisted track that sounds like the ‘Saturday Night Fever’ soundtrack on MDMA.” Albarn, who took time out from the sessions for Blur’s successful summer reunion tour, is also producing the album, while Leonard praises Jamie Hewlett’s visuals for the album’s video and Web content as “step- ing up to the next level.”

SLASH ‘SLASH & FRIENDS’ (LABEL TBD, APRIL)

With Velvet Revolver on hiatus, the top-hatted guitar hero worked with several friends for his first true solo album, which he recorded mostly at Barefoot Studios in Hollywood with co-producer Eric Valentine. Confirmed guests include Ozy Osburne, Kid Rock, Iggy Pop, Wolfmother’s Andrew Stockdale, Maroon 5’s Adam Levine and Chris Cornell, while Slash has also mentioned working with Dave Grohl, Duff McKagan, Alice Cooper, Mest and Priscilla Doll. “We're not a one-man band anymore,” says Slash. “We're a band with all the best people in the world.”

KATE NASH TITRE TBD (U.K.: FICTION/ POLYDOR, APRIL 12)

“Today is my official last day in the studio,” Kate Nash posted on her MySpace Dec. 15, 2009. “This is the follow-up to her quirky 2007 piano-pop debut, ‘Made of Bricks,’ which was cut to drop April 12 in the United Kingdom, and Fiction Records managing director Jim Chancellor anticipates Interscope will release the album in the United States around the same time. Recorded at RAK Studios in London with former Suede guitarist and Duffy collaborator Bernard Butler producing, Chancellor describes it as “bigger and better” than its predecessor. The Supernatural-inspired album, he says, features “vintage guitar sounds, strings and horns used in a brilliantly understated manner.” Nash’s songs about everyday life and love helped propel the debut to $44,000 in U.K. sales, according to the Official Charts Co., plus a further 168,000 in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Chancellor identifies future singles as “The Only Song,” “Everything’s Gone,” and “Shine This Guilt.” “That latter track is a magnificent piece of urban poetry,” Chancellor says. “Totally epic.”

TONI BRAXTON

KYLIE MINOGUE TITRE TBD (PARLOPHONE/EMI, APRIL)

She may be a superstar everywhere but the United States, but American audiences were the first to get a sneak preview of Kylie Minogue’s 10th studio set on her recent U.S. tour. The happy-go-lucky disco-pop of “Better Than Today” is a good benchmark for the new album, according to insiders, which sees the Australian star going back to basics after 2007’s eclectic “X.” That album—which sold 462,000 copies in the United Kingdom, according to the Official Charts Co.—featured multiple songwriting collaborations, but the new record is largely co-written with British singer-songwriter Neiman Pellow and produced by Stuart Price, most famous for his work with Madonna. "Kylie makes pop records," Parlophone president Miles Leonard says. "We're trying to achieve an album that has a sound and feel all the way through. We've got the people and the songs in place to do that." "X" only sold 58,000 copies in the U.S. according to Nielsen SoundScan, but Leonard expects the United States to be a priority this time around, after rave reviews for her debut American tour. "She's had a spadeic success there before," he says, "but there's a lot of anticipation in the U.S. for Kylie to deliver this record.”

DEFTONES TITLE TBD (WARNER BROS./REPRISE RECORDS, APRIL)

Following a November 2008 car accident that left Deftones bassist Chi Cheng in a semi-conscious state during the past year, the rock band “didn’t know if we were going to continue on.” Deftones frontman Chino Moreno says. Prior to the accident, Deftones recorded an album’s worth of material (known as the “Era sessions”) with Cheng, but there aren’t any immediate plans to release these songs, according to Moreno. The good news for Deftones fans is that the band has recruited bassist Sergio Vega and recorded a new album that’s reminiscent of the group’s earlier days. Moreno says the as-yet-untitled release learns more toward the raw heaviness of the group’s 1997 sophomore effort, “Around the Fur,” than to the experimental nature of its past three studio albums. “It sounds like an old Deftones record,” he says. “It’s a more aggressive record.” Lyrically themes throughout the Nick Raskulinecz-produced album reveal a “positive zest for life,” Moreno adds. “There’s no complaining in this record and no hurting. I’m not singing about how I’m sad or that my life sucks. It’s all pretty positive.”

STONE TEMPLE PILOTS TITRE TBD (ATLANTIC, APRIL)

It’s been almost nine years since Stone Temple Pilots released their last studio album, 2001’s “Shangri-La Dee Da.” And in the meantime, the ‘90s alternative rock titans have seen challenging times, from singer Scott Weiland’s drug problems to the band’s 2003 breakup. But
after reuniting for an extended series of tours in 2008 and 2009, ideas started flowing for a sixth record, due this spring. In a year-and-a-half’s time, “we went out on the road and came back to the studio, then went out and came back,” bassist Robert DeLeo says. “We were always one of those bands that came in and put together an album in two weeks.” He says the set will be a “well-rounded” balance of rock and ballads, while his brother, guitarist Dean DeLeo, says the record is a conscious effort to “branch out” and “step into some new terrain musically.” As for what it’s like to work together again, “Robert says it best,” Dean says: “It’s like getting into an unmade bed—it’s kind of messy at first, but it’s warm and cozy.”

**JENNIFER LOPEZ ‘LOVE?’ (EPIC, APRIL)**

Talk about a long lead time—promotion for Jennifer Lopez’s “Love?” began last year, with the Pitbull collaboration “Fresh Out The Oven” leaked online and to clubs. The song, likely to be offered as a bonus track, is much more urban in feel than the rest of “Love?,” which has a modern electronic dance vibe that contrasts with the slightly retro feel of 2007’s “Brave.” The album is timed with the release of Lopez’s next film, “The Back-Up Plan,” with discussions under way to include music from “Love?” in the movie. First single “Love? (a beautiful night)” in the fall, timed to Lopez’s TV performances beginning with the American Music Awards. Look for Lopez to wear Pitbull designs for her promotional appearances. Plans are in the works for radio contest prize giveaway and appearances at the designer’s boutiques. On the album, Lopez sings, tall-songs and brooks (within pop reason) on the subject of love over soaring synths and prominent beats. Typical are the Wynter Gordon-written “Starting Over,” produced by Donji, and “What’s Love?,” produced by D’Mile. Another highlight is “Everybody’s Girl,” a pulsating drum-driven track produced by Mike Carvin and written by Gordon.

**MAROON 5 TITLE TBD (A&M/OCTOBER, APRIL)**

Maroon 5 fared to Switzerland to record the follow-up to 2007’s “It Won’t Be Soon Before Long” with producer Matt Lange. Despite rumors of Lange’s quirility, keyboardist Jesse Carmichael says the residual influence was “friendly” and showy, although he adds that Lange “pushed us really hard.” Carmichael adds that the result is a collection of songs that sound “more organic, almost closer to our first record than the last. You can really hear our personalities.” The final track list has yet to be set, but Carmichael reassures fans that “the songs that will probably be the first singles are my favorite tracks.”

**SHARON JONES & THE DAP-KINGS ‘I LEARNED THE HARD WAY’ (DAPTONE, MAY 4)**

After the unexpected success of 2007’s “100 Days, 100 Nights,” Sharon Jones & the Dap-Kings felt a bit of pressure when they returned to the Daptone Records studio to record a follow-up. “When you sell 100,000 records and your sales goals are 50,000 records, there’s a lot of expectations from the retailers to the distributor is really different,” Daptone co-owner Neal Sugarman says. The real challenge, though, has been juggling constant touring with recording and running the label, since Sugarman and co-owner Gabe Roth also play and tour with the Dap-Kings. “Everything takes a little longer than most other labels,” he says. Sugarman says the biggest musical change on the album was the use of more instrumentation than on “100 Days.” Almost every song is augmented with backing singers and strings, and the horn section is augmented on a lot of the stuff,” he says. Ultimately, the band isn’t trying to reinvent itself but instead build on what has worked in the past. “What we’re doing is something that we’ve been doing from the very beginning,” Sugarman says. “It’s like making records that look and sound like the records that we love.”

**THE NEW PORNOGRAPHERS ‘TOGETHER’ (MATADOR, MAY)**

“Challengers,” the New Pornographers’ 2007 Matador album, featured a lush, quieter side to the Canadian power-pop collective than earlier efforts, but its next outing will find it returning to the guitar-centric approach of the first three releases. “I’m terrible at analyzing our records, but I’d say this one is more of a rock album than ‘Challengers’ was,” New Pornographers frontman Carl Newman says. The group recorded with producer Phil Palazzo in various locations, including Brooklyn, Vancouver and Newman’s Woodstock, N.Y., home. Singer/songwriter Neko Case remains within the New Pornographers’ fold. Newman says that, despite her solo success with 2009’s “Middle Cyclone,” which hit No. 3 on the Billboard 200, Case will also tour with the band this summer, saying that adding Neko will give the band “new European festivals this summer.”

**ALAN JACKSON TITLE TBD (ARISTA NASHVILLE, SPRING)**

With 16 Country Music Assn. Awards (including three entertainer of the year titles) under his belt, Alan Jackson is still going strong, two decades into his career. For his follow-up to 2008’s “Good Time,” he’s again working with longtime producer Keith Stegall. Jackson penned all 17 songs on his previous album, and for the upcoming set, he’s written seven of the 12—including “After 17,” about his oldest daughter, Mattie—and co-written one more. “Tail Lights Blue” is a love-struck tune written by Jackson’s nephew, Adam Wright of the Wrights, and cowriter Matt Robey. Jackson also serves up a spirited rendition of Canadian singer/songwriter Fred Eaglesmith’s “Freight Train.” The first single, “Just That Way,” was released in December.

**KELIS ‘FLESH TONE’ (WORKING TITLE) (WILL.I.AM/INTERSCOPE, SPRING)**

Following a tumultuous year that included a highly publicized divorce from rapper Nas, the birth of her first child and numerous family court hearings, Kelis is finally back with a new label home, a new album and a new sound. Now signed to Interscope Records through Will.I.am Music Group, she premiered the single “Acapella”—her first new material since 2009’s “Kels Was Here”—online in November. On the track, produced by David Guetta and inspired by her son, the New York-raised singer/songwriter takes her hip-hop-driven style in a more electronic/dance direction. Other songs on the anticipated eight-song project include “4th of July,” produced by DJ Ammo; “Kidda,” inspired by Kelis’ musical connection to the acoustic guitar-based ”Carfreedom American,” produced by Jean Baptiste; and “Alive,” helmed by Diplo. Kelis is currently in the studio with label head Will.I.am.

**AGAINST ME! ‘WHITE CROSSES’ (SIRE, SPRING)**

Even though lead singer Tom Gabel says Against Me! never set out to be a political band, it’s a little hard to characterize a group whose
new album’s title track is about an abortion memorial any other way. On its new set, the band is still concerned about social issues, but with a much more nuanced viewpoint: the track “Teenage Anarchist” criticizes someone for having “politics[ ] that are too convenient.” On each record, we challenge ourselves to do something different but always have a definitive statement.” Gabel says. Butch Vig has returned to do production duties, and Alan Moulder is at the mixing board.

MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE
TITLE TBD (REPRISE, SPRING)
After making a concept album about cancer, My Chemical Romance decided to return with a concept album about . . . New Jersey. The still-untitled release has been described as a “Garden State Camaro album,” and on songs like ‘Save Yourself,’ the band pays homage to hometown hero Bon Jovi. “When we first started writing, we were doing all these two-minute punk songs,” guitarist Ray Toro says. “We didn’t love those, though, and I think we finally arrived at something that was a happy medium.” Other tracks include “Death Before Disco,” which sounds like a dancer’s version of the Hives.

AVRIL LAVIGNE
TITILE (RCA, FIRST HALF)
Plenty has changed in Avril Lavigne’s world since 2007’s “The Best Damn Thing,” which sold 1.6 million copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan. She split with manager/Network Music Group CEO Terry McBride, launched divorce proceedings against husband Deryck Whibley of Canadian pop/rock act Sum 41, and then joined forces with Irving Azoff’s Front Line Management. Given the turmoil, it wasn’t altogether surprising that Lavigne’s latest album, originally scheduled for release last November, was quietly taken off the schedule. The artist’s management won’t give a release date for the new record, recorded in Los Angeles and helmed by longtime producer Butch Walker, but a spring appearance is heavily rumored. It will include the atmospheric-yet-poppish “Black Star,” the chorus of which was used in 2009 TV ads to promote Lavigne’s perfume brand.

U2
‘SONGS OF ASCENT’ (ISLAND/ INTERSCOPE/IGA, JUNE)
Manager Paul McGuinness told the Irish Independent newspaper that “Rono is always an optimist, but he seems confident of getting a new record out by the end of the next six months.” As for the sunglasses-clad frontman, he told

the paper, “We are working away and we have a couple of yearlings in the stables that could really turn out to be thoroughbreds in the future. As a band you are always trying to work on new material and we had some unfinished material from the last album.” There have been other reports of the band spending time in the studio in New York and France. As far as tracks go, the Edge told Rolling Stone that “Kingdom of Your Love”—the 360° tour’s intro song—is a “potential Songs of Ascent” track. Rono also described the album as an “intimate affair.”

OZZY OSBOURNE
‘SOUL SUCKA’ (EPIC, JUNE)
The Prince of Darkness has returned to the dimmed confines of his home studio in Los Angeles to work on his first album since 2007’s gold-certified ‘Black Rain.’ Kevin Churko, that album’s co-producer and songwriting collaborator, is back onboard, as are regular Ozzy cohorts Rob “Blaze” Nicholson and drummer Mike Bordin, along with keyboardist Adam Wakeman and new guitarist Gus G. Kotsos (Karamitroudis) of Firewind. Songs include “Let It Die,” “Diggin’ Me Down” and the title track. Osbourne will support the album with a world tour that will include a re-launch of the Ozfest package this summer.

LIL JON
‘CRANK ROCK’ (UNIVERSAL REPUBLIC, SECOND QUARTER)
R&B/hip-hop. Pop. Rock. Reggae. Brazilian rhythms. And, of course, crunk. Lil Jon has something for everyone on his first post-TTT outing with new label Universal Republic. Fans are already getting a taste of what’s in store thanks to several buzz tracks: the electrified “Outta Your Mind” with LMFAO (Jon returns the favor on the duo’s latest single, “Ingrese”), the strip-club gyrator “Pop That Pusy,” street-pumper “Throw It Up Part 2” and the hypnotic “Machuka,” featuring Brazil’s Mulher Fiel and Mr. Crija. “He’s been pushing the envelope for the past 18 months.” Universal Republic A&R executive Wendy Goldstein says, referencing Jon’s LMFAO ties plus his work on the remix of David Guetta’s “Sexy Bitch” with Akon. The first major push behind “Crank Rock” will get under way at the end of January when “Miss Chocola,” featuring R. Kelly and Mario, will be sent to urban radio. On the pop front, look for a single featuring Dr. Luke and SOFIS. Additional guests and producers include DJ Chucky, Will.I.Am, Game, Ice Cube, Elephant Man and siblings Damian and Stephen Marley, who guest on “On the Grid.”

KERI HILSON
TITLE TBD (MOSELVE/ZONE 4/ INTERSCOPE, SECOND QUARTER)
The singer/songwriter capped 2009 with two Grammy nominations: Best New Artist and Best Rap/Sung Collaboration for “Knock You Down.” Featuring Kanye West and Ne-Yo. Now Hilson is getting busy in the studio recording the still-untitled follow-up to her gold-certified solo debut, “In a Perfect World.” Airing for the Memorial Day holiday as a target release date, Interscope urban music head DJ Mormile promises that the three guiding lights behind Hilson’s first album—Timbaland, Polow Da Don and DrummaBoy—are back onboard. “They’re the cornerstones,” says Mormile, who notes that West, Will.I.Am and returning songwriter/producers Jeff Bhasker will also be involved. And signs are pointing to fellow newcomer Drake being a featured guest as well. “We’re just getting into this,” says Mormile, who hopes to have a first single out in March, if not sooner. “But we already have an idea of what we want to do. This album will continue the evolution of Keri, building off the hits ‘Knock You Down’ and ‘Turn Me On,’ which helped define her. This new album will be ‘Turn Me On’ times 10.”

JAZMIN SULLIVAN
TITLE TBD (J RECORDS, SUMMER)
Jazmine Sullivan is one album into her promising music career but the singer/songwriter is already well aware of the disadvantages of being a celebrity. “Come on y’all, let’s be real! Never spoke to me till I got a deal! You don’t know me but you do me favors! Don’t know you so I see you later,” the sassy 21-year-old songstress sings on “Blow,” a track scheduled for her upcoming sophomore album, “Vanitey Six,” produced by Carlos “Los Da Mystro” McKinney, is an ode to Prince. “Just play my favorite song, get my $6 on! Don’t make me wait too long, just play my favorite song.”’ I’ll get my Vanity Six on.”’ She chats over drums and horns. “You Get on My Nerves,” produced by Ne-Yo, finds Sullivan smartly pointing out to an ex-lover: “You should never have to call pretending/You should have known I was done when I headed your window,” in reference to her 2009 hit single, “Burn Your Windows.”

RICKY MARTIN
TITLE TBD (SONY, EARLY SUMMER)
Ricky Martin is releasing his first studio set since 2005’s “Life” with a twist: The album will be bilingual, with no language claiming majority. Manager Bruno Del Granado says Martin is trying to keep the “originality of the song: If it was created in English, it stays in English. If it was created in Spanish, it stays in Spanish.” Martin is very involved in the production and writing process along with Lester Mendez and David Cabrera, and the album has an energetic vibe. “What he wants to do is to go out there and have a great time and lighten people’s moods,” Del Granado says. Martin’s most recent album was a 2007 live set, and his last Spanish-language studio release was 2003’s “Almas del Silencio.” This time, Del Granado says, he’s aiming for the International mar-
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NAÏVE (FRANCE) // PROPER MUSIC GROUP (UNITED KINGDOM)

The collapse in December 2008 of the U.K. indie distribution giant Pinnacle Entertainment, one month before MIDEM, left many of its partners in the lurch, including Naïve Classics, the classical music arm of France’s indie label Naïve. Meanwhile, the British indie distributor Proper Music Group was looking to expand. “We had meetings scheduled with several distributors during MIDEM,” says Thomas Lorain, international development director for Naïve. “This is what is good with MIDEM: You can get hold of everybody at once, which is really plus in case of an emergency such as the one we had.” Meeting face to face with Proper executives Steve Kenney and Eddie Williamson “convinced us of their strength on CD online distribution, which is key to our repertoire. We signed the deal a couple of months after MIDEM.” Proper now distributes the 1,006-album Naïve Classics catalog, which added around 40 new releases in 2009. Among them was Handel’s “Between Heaven and Earth” featuring soprano Sandrine Piau, which made the top 10 of the Official Charts Co.’s classical listing in October.

DINE ALONE RECORDS (CANADA) // SHEER GROUP (SOUTH AFRICA)

Ryan Spalding, marketing and promotions manager of the Toronto indie label Dine Alone, went to MIDEM in 2009 with clear goals in mind: to take as many meetings as possible and nail down distribution arrangements for a variety of territories, including South Africa and Europe. “We were looking at developing markets,” Spalding says. “Places where we could do enhanced distribution deals. Going to MIDEM definitely generated a lot of business for us.” Spalding secured a meeting with Rob Cowlings, GM of South Africa’s Sheer Group, to discuss the release in that market of Dine Alone acts like Moreen, Alejandro and City in Colour. The deal was concluded soon after the meeting, with Sheer Group distributing several Dine Alone albums, including Old Crows/Yellow Cardinals by Alejandro. Spalding says that at first the arrangement may only involve a few hundred units, but the deal could also open up touring opportunities for Dine Alone acts, which are managed by another division of the company. “That was one of the goals,” Spalding says. “We wanted to open up places like Johannesburg and Cape Town.”

GRAND H MUSIC (GERMANY) // PKP MUSIC (UNITED STATES) // VUUR MUSIC (UNITED STATES)

The owner of Grand H Music in Hamburg, Hille Hillekamp, struck a publishing deal last year at MIDEM to represent hits from the likes of Ike & Tina Turner.
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Turner, Eric Busden and de Burgh in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. The deal covered a 200 song catalog published by Los Angeles-based P.S. Music and its subsidiary Jangal Music. Negotiations in German took place with Gerhard Weir and Eric Busden. This historic entertainment law firm Pechstein & Weir, leading the contract in the spring. Hillikamp notes that they’ve been friends with Weir and Busden for more than 20 years and they always trusted MidEM to discuss interesting deals—including, in 2009, P.S. Music. Their catalog contains over 50,000 songs. “The deal with we will publish the catalog on a 12-year term. At the beginning of 2010, we will conduct a general review of the catalog to ensure it is competitive and commercially viable. For the future, we are looking for new artists and projects to add to our catalog,” Hillikamp says. “We are actively seeking new deals in India, Europe and the UK. We are also looking to expand our presence in the US and Canada.”

SUNFLOWER MUSIC (AUSTRALIA) // DRAMATIC ENTERTAINMENT (UNITED KINGDOM)

SUNFLOWER Music, a company that specializes in international music administration, has signed a deal with MidEM to secure a U.K. partner for its new venture, Dramatic Entertainment. The company operates in both the U.K. and Germany and has been expanding its international presence. The deal will see Dramatic Entertainment take over the management of the company’s catalog in Europe. The agreement will also see the company expand its reach in the U.S., where it already has a strong presence.

SOVEREIGN ENTERTAINMENT (SOUTH AFRICA) // STYLE RECORDS (UK)

SOVEREIGN Entertainment announced today that they have entered into a co-publishing agreement with Style Records, a UK-based label. The deal will see the companies work together to release music in South Africa and the UK. The agreement will also see Style Records expand its reach into the African market. The companies have been working together on various projects in the past, and this is a natural extension of their relationship. The deal is effective immediately and will see Style Records take over the publishing rights to all music released by Sovereign Entertainment in South Africa. The companies will work together to promote and distribute the music in both markets.

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Level 0
Monday January 25
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Auditorium 1:09
Pierre Dufour and the Sacem Delegation discuss the MidEM / CISC Conference
Monday January 25
11:15 AM
Auditorium 1:09
Bernard Meyr’s speech during the MidEM / CISC Conference
Monday January 25
3:00 PM
Auditorium 1:09
Conference “Multiterrestrial Licensing – Where Are We?”
CONCERTS AND EVENTS
Håkan Carlén
Monday January 25
11:30 PM
CIRQUE DU SOLEIL
Monday January 25
8:30 PM
THE MIDDAY meal
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BUDDE MUSIKVERLAG (GERMANY) // CHERRY LANE MUSIC (UNITED STATES)

When German film producer Regina Ziegler wanted Academy Award-winning composer Hans Zimmer to score an upcoming movie about Henry V, Ziegler turned to Rolf Budde, founder of the Hamburg-based Budde Musikverlag, who publishes Zimmer's global publisher, Cherry Lane Music. Budde suggested the deal at MIDEM 2009 to Mike Corrally, executive VP of business development at Cherry Lane. The discussions led to Zimmer agreeing to score the movie's original soundtrack with fellow Cherry Lane composer Henry Jackman, who previously collaborated with Zimmer on the motion pictures "Shine," "The Patriot," and "Memoirs of the Caribbeans." The movie will premiere March 18 in Berlin; its international title will be "Henry of Navarre." Malan says, "The composers in Germany are enthusiastic about Hans Zimmer's work. I'm sure that when they hear his work in this film, a lot of them will wish to work with him as well."

FUJI PACIFIC MUSIC (JAPAN) // WORLDSOUND, ONE HAWAII MUSIC (UNITED STATES)

One of the challenges and opportunities presented to independent U.S. music companies at MIDEM is to find a significant licensing partner in a major international market. At MIDEM 2009, Warren Wyatt, co-founder of Seattle-based WorldSound, established a strategic partnership with Fuji Pacific Music, Japan's biggest music publisher, for the latter company to handle publishing in Japan for WorldSound and its subsidiary, Oceana Music Asia. The deal includes the entire 25-year catalog of the renowned Hawaiian band Na Leo. It increases Fuji Pacific's dominance in the area of Hawaiian music in Japan, where the group has a considerable niche following. MIDEM veteran Aki Moritatsu, who is based in international at Fuji Pacific, says "This has really helped build the bridge between Hawaiian and Japanese industries." The first new major project Fuji Pacific will be working on under the deal is Na Leo's forthcoming album, due later this year.

LONG LIVE CRIME RECORDS (UNITED STATES) // WIRELESS DEVELOPER AGENCY (UNITED STATES)

Long Live Crime Records CEO Susan Ferris goes to MIDEM for meetings with music organizations to which she belongs, with existing partners with whom she does business worldwide and with companies that hoped to sell their services to her label. And it was that third type of meeting that led Ferris in 2008 to Kenny Ainge, president of Wireless Developer Agency, a wireless distributor based in East Lansing, Mich., and WDA content director. Susan Lameth. WDA now represents the label's roster (the Bangles, Five, Joe Cocker, Tim Caley, Doozmaree, Fizz, J.Plexx, Sung Jackson, Jimmy Lovel, Littler, Spiritualized, Unit I, the Upstairs, and Versuform). Things with mobile carriers internationally, Ferris says, that in the past payola's revenue has grown from nothing to 5% of her revenue. "It's not massive but it's nice when those checks come," she says, noting that she is happy with WDA that she re-recommended the company to other labels.

Regarding by Lars Brandle in Brisbane, Australia; Ed Christmas in New York; Lilla Cole in Miami; Shane Cooper in Los Angeles; Tom Duffy in New York; Tim Ferguson in London; Howard Franklin in Madrid; Antoinette Pochner in Paris; Rob Scheuer in Tokyo; Wolfgang Spieker in Hamburg; and Mark Witting in Milan.
Rapper Turned Songwriter

Rico Love has penned R&B smash hit "Kiss the Pieces" in his latest hit, "Somebody to Love." He’s also written for artists like Usher, Chris Brown, and Mariah Carey. Love’s credits include "D.N.A.," "You’ll Never Understand," and his latest album, "D.N.A."

As a songwriter, Love has worked with artists like Usher and Sean "Diddy" Combs. He’s been credited with writing or co-writing songs for artists like Usher, Chris Brown, and Mariah Carey.

Love’s most recent album, "D.N.A.," includes the singles "I’ll Never Understand," "You’re Never Gonna Love Again," and "D.N.A."

Love’s songwriting skills have been recognized by the music industry, and he has been nominated for multiple awards, including a Grammy nomination for Best R&B Album for "D.N.A."

Love’s success as a songwriter has led to him being signed to EMI Music Publishing, and he is currently working on his next album.

Viva Elvis

As Elvis Presley fans commemorate what would’ve been his 75th birthday on Jan. 8, the hits collection "Elvis 75" debuts on the Billboard 200 at No. 7 with 10,000 copies sold. The album features previously unreleased tracks and rare performances from the King of Rock ‘n Roll.

The album includes hits like "Can’t Help Falling in Love," "Suspicious Minds," and "All Shook Up." The "Elvis In Memphis" edition of the album features 10 previously unreleased tracks from the famous studio sessions.

Overall, Presley’s catalog of albums posted a 20% increase in sales in the week that ended Jan. 10, with a 25% increase in downloads. The "Elvis 75" album accounted for 43% of the increase in sales.

Elvis Presley’s Top-Selling Albums and Songs, Week Ending Jan. 10

**ALBUMS**

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Ke$ha’s ‘Animal’ Bites With Dizzying Digital Bow

Ke$ha replaces Susan Boyle at the top of the Billboard 200, thanks to the arrival of the former’s debut album, “Animal,” with 132,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The youthful fans of Ke$ha must be delighted to see the 22-year-old pony-tailed girl jump the soaring sounds of the 68-year-old Scottish ringstress and her iconic achromatic croon.

The skyrocketing hits of Ke$ha’s album are a result of how “Animal” sold a boatload of downloads in its first two days of release. Generally, albums that initially sell strong download numbers tend to fall off quicker as the week progresses. Thus, some industry observers figured that “Animal” would do around 190,000.

But “Animal” held up well all week, especially at digital download stores. It also helps that the set carried an attractive developing artist list price of $6.99, was on sale for even less at the big physical retailers and both Amazon’s MP3 store and iTunes sold it for $6.99.

In total, 76% of the album’s first-week sales came from download retailers. That’s the largest weekly digital percentage share for an album at No. 1. It’s also the largest digital sales week for any album since John Mayer’s “Battle Studies” debuted with $22,000 in downloads. But consider that his 129,000 downloads were part of an overall 286,000 copies sold that week (for a 43% digital share), whereas the digital-to-physical ratio for “Animal” was more skewed toward downloads.

Point to ponder: In one week, Ke$ha sold more digital albums than Boyle’s “I Dreamed a Dream” did in seven weeks (89,000). That figure is of course dwarfed by the overall sales for “Animal” (3.2 million).

So why the stark difference in digital sales between the two albums? One could conclude that Boyle’s album hasn’t connected with tech-oriented music consumers (read: young people) and that its true audience remain elderly people only buying CDs. But then you have Ke$ha, who because of her newsprint and her target appeal, has yet to connect with many people who want to buy a physical album (read: older people).

DIGITAL GETS DOWN: Some may have taken a rather dim view of Ke$ha and her “Bitch” hit, likening it to a fake digital phenomenon and upsetting that the “Animal” album wouldn’t stay up significant numerically. Last year, for example, Sean Kingston’s single “Fire Burning” was a smash, selling 2.2 million downloads. But its parent album, “Tomorrow,” released last September, only crosses the 50,000 mark this week. The same thing can be said for Flo Rida, who released the inescapable song “Right Round” last year, coincidentally featuring vocals from Ke$ha. The track sold 4.1 million downloads in 2009, but Flo Rida’s album “R.O.O.T.S.” has sold only 248,000 after bowing with 55,000 last March.

However, in one week, Ke$ha’s album sold three times what Kingston’s album has sold in four months, and nearly three times what Flo Rida’s set sold in its first week.

Perhaps you can chalk it up to love, for whatever reason, Kingston and Flo Rida failed to connect with the album-buying public as personalities, as overall artists, whereas Ke$ha seems to have clicked with consumers—at least in terms of album sales—through her unconventional personality and imagery.

Speaking of unconventional personalities, an associate of mine tried to make the argument that Ke$ha could be the next Lady Gaga. It may be a bit early to venture down that road. But then again, a year ago, when Gaga’s “Jingle Bell Dance” was in its second week at No. 3 on the Billboard Hot 100, who would’ve thought she would have the best of her year so far?
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEARL JAM</td>
<td>In The End</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALICIA KEYS</td>
<td>The Best Of Me</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>POKER FACES</td>
<td>Love Is A Feeling</td>
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<tr>
<td>CASE THE ELEPHANT</td>
<td>Stand By Me (In The End)</td>
<td>5</td>
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### Top Internet
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THE TEMPER TRAP</td>
<td>See You On The Other Side</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JIM BRICKMAN</td>
<td>Only One</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KENNY ROGERS</td>
<td>The Same Old Blues</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TECH NINE</td>
<td>Tell Me The Truth</td>
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### Top Kid Audio
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>KID BOP KIDS</td>
<td>Kids Bop Sings The Beatles</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISNEY PRINCESS</td>
<td>The Time We Were BFF</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISNEY PRINCESS</td>
<td>The Time We Were BFF</td>
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### Mainstream Top 40

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I'm Mines / Maia / Peculiar (L.A.)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>My Heart Bounces / Sean Kingston</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Dancing With the Devil / Don't Let Go / Stars On 45</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Stronger</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>We Own the Night</td>
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### Adult Contemporary

<table>
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<th>Title</th>
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<th>Week</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>You Belong With Me</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Fallin' For You</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Everything</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Happy</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Love</td>
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### Rock Songs

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<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Week</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I Can't Tell You No</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Electric Lady</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Scream</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Everytime</td>
<td>5</td>
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### Active Rock

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
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<th>Week</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Stuck</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Need You</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>To Die</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Hold</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Drown</td>
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### Heritage Rock

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Week</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Black Hearts (On Fire)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>All the Right Moves</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Smiley</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Here We Go Again</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Life</td>
<td>5</td>
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</table>

Taylor Swift takes her fifth week at No. 1 on the Mainstream Top 40 radio chart with "Gary V. 89-16.

Swift previously reached the number with "You Belong With Me" (No. 1, 2008) and "Love Story" (No. 1, 2009) and "You Belong With Me" (No. 1, 2010).

With her latest top hit, Swift ensures her lead as the country-music artist with the most No. 1s in the Mainstream Top 40 chart's 37-year history, and she has more multiple titles on the No. 1 list to date than Kenny and Dolly.

Taylor Swift's "You Belong With Me" is on the Billboard Hot 100 (No. 1), "Love Story" (No. 1), and "You Belong With Me" (No. 1, 2010). Her "Gary V. 89-16," "Love Story," and "You Belong With Me" are all holdovers from earlier in the year. Swift's album "Fearless" (No. 2) and Carly Underwood's "Gaither" (No. 3) are the third and fourth spots on the list that are included on the No. 1 list for the band Country Songs survey.
### HOT COUNTRY SONGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Album</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Consider Me Gone</td>
<td>Lady Antebellum</td>
<td>Lady Antebellum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I Wanna Make You Close My Eyes</td>
<td>Donny &amp; Marie</td>
<td>Close My Eyes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Back In Black (From &quot;The Hunger Games&quot;)</td>
<td>Jennifer Nettles</td>
<td>Back In Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>American Honey</td>
<td>Lady Antebellum</td>
<td>Lady Antebellum</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>American Honey</td>
<td>Lady Antebellum</td>
<td>Lady Antebellum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Why Don't We Just Dance</td>
<td>Josh Turner</td>
<td>Six Degrees Of Separation</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>White Line</td>
<td>Zac Brown Band</td>
<td>High Time For2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>You Know You're Wrong</td>
<td>Kip Moore</td>
<td>Kip Moore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>That's How Country Boys Roll</td>
<td>George Strait</td>
<td>The Very Best Of George Strait</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>If I Can Make A Song Like That</td>
<td>Sheryl Crow</td>
<td>Songs Like That</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>If I Was You (Mama Don't9</td>
<td>Lady Antebellum</td>
<td>Lady Antebellum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>My Kind Of Woman (Brand New Man)</td>
<td>Reba McEntire</td>
<td>My Kind Of Woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>She's Got A Way With A Guitar</td>
<td>Sara Evans</td>
<td>There's A Girl In Every Guitar Pick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>You Can't Get To Heaven</td>
<td>Toby Keith</td>
<td>The Right Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>That's My Kind Of Woman</td>
<td>Martina McBride</td>
<td>The Time Of My Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Feels Like Today</td>
<td>Tim McGraw</td>
<td>singles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Right Where It's Wrong</td>
<td>Jason Aldean</td>
<td>My Kind Of Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Meet Me In Charleston</td>
<td>Miranda Lambert</td>
<td>Mr. Goodlife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Joe Don't Come Easy</td>
<td>Dierks Bentley</td>
<td>singles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>I Love Your Coat</td>
<td>Tim McGraw</td>
<td>singles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>She's Got A Way With A Guitar</td>
<td>Sheryl Crow</td>
<td>Songs Like That</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>It's A Man's World</td>
<td>Brad Paisley</td>
<td>singles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>You're Gonna Miss Me</td>
<td>Dierks Bentley</td>
<td>singles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Ain't Nothin' But A Heartache</td>
<td>George Strait</td>
<td>Heartache No More</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>The Story Of My Life</td>
<td>Eric Church</td>
<td>singles</td>
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### TOP COUNTRY ALBUMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Taylor Swift</td>
<td>Fearless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Taylor Swift</td>
<td>Red Velvet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Carrie Underwood</td>
<td>Play On</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Zac Brown Band</td>
<td>The Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Jason Aldean</td>
<td>Wide Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Miranda Lambert</td>
<td>Unstoppable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Eric Church</td>
<td>Learn To Live</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Reba McEntire</td>
<td>American Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Reba McEntire</td>
<td>Vol. 1 (The Very Best Of)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Kacey Musgraves</td>
<td>Same Old Story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Kacey Musgraves</td>
<td>Pageant Rustlin'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Luke Bryan</td>
<td>Do It My Way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Kenny Chesney</td>
<td>Greatest Hits II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Rosanne Cash</td>
<td>The List</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>George Strait</td>
<td>Tangled</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>George Strait</td>
<td>Flirtations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>George Strait</td>
<td>Arielle</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>George Strait</td>
<td>Faithful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>George Strait</td>
<td>#1 &amp; #2 And Then Some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>George Strait</td>
<td>Trouble's Coming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>George Strait</td>
<td>Little Bit Of Everything</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>George Strait</td>
<td>Have A Little Faith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>George Strait</td>
<td>Man That Got Away From Me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>George Strait</td>
<td>Time Of Your Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>George Strait</td>
<td>Sail On</td>
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### TOP BLUEGRASS ALBUMS

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Rascal Flatts</td>
<td>Dreamer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Patty Loveless</td>
<td>Married And 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Old Crow Medicine Show</td>
<td>Speaking In Tongues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Rhonda Vincent</td>
<td>Through A Journey And More</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Rhonda Vincent</td>
<td>The Bluegrass Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Rhonda Vincent</td>
<td>Born To Be Bluegrass</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Rhonda Vincent</td>
<td>Rhonda Vincent</td>
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<td>Rhonda Vincent</td>
<td>Square Dance</td>
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<td>Rhonda Vincent</td>
<td>Christmas Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Rhonda Vincent</td>
<td>Leap Of Time</td>
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### BETWEEN THE BULLETS

"More" For Corbin

Although Top Country Albums shows only a few albums during the past holiday retail slump, country's tried and true act, Brad Paisley, maintains its reign with a 6th in December 2009. Paisley has yet to release a country song, but it's worth noting that his hit single, "More Than A Woman," has been gaining momentum on country radio. Paisley's latest album, "Life's Work," has spent over 10 weeks on the charts, proving that the country singer's singles have a wide appeal. His latest album, "All I Need," was released in 2009, and it has already topped the charts. Paisley's success on country radio is a testament to his ability to create catchy, radio-friendly country tunes that appeal to a wide audience.
### CHRISTIAN SONGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
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<th>Label</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One More Time</td>
<td>Casting Crowns</td>
<td>Sparrow &amp;amp;amp; Fervent Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>His Love</td>
<td>Newsboys</td>
<td>EMI Christian Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Way</td>
<td>Kim Walker</td>
<td>Fervent Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We Are One</td>
<td>Casting Crowns</td>
<td>Sparrow &amp;amp; Fervent Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How Great Is Our God</td>
<td>Mathew West</td>
<td>Sparrow &amp;amp; Fervent Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God With Us</td>
<td>Steven Curtis Chapman</td>
<td>Music Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart Of The Lion</td>
<td>Newsboys</td>
<td>EMI Christian Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For The Longest Time</td>
<td>Matthew West</td>
<td>Sparrow &amp;amp; Fervent Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We Are One</td>
<td>Casting Crowns</td>
<td>Sparrow &amp;amp; Fervent Music</td>
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### HOT CHRISTIAN AC SONGS

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<td>Newsboys</td>
<td>EMI Christian Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>For The Longest Time</td>
<td>Matthew West</td>
<td>Sparrow &amp;amp; Fervent Music</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Mathew West</td>
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### CHRISTIAN ALBUMS

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<td>Sparrow &amp;amp; Fervent Music</td>
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<td>Newsboys</td>
<td>EMI Christian Music</td>
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<tr>
<td>For The Longest Time</td>
<td>Matthew West</td>
<td>Sparrow &amp;amp; Fervent Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We Are One</td>
<td>Mathew West</td>
<td>Sparrow &amp;amp; Fervent Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Way</td>
<td>Casting Crowns</td>
<td>Sparrow &amp;amp; Fervent Music</td>
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### HOT GOSPEL SONGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peace</td>
<td>Kirk Franklin</td>
<td>My Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God With Us</td>
<td>Newsboys</td>
<td>EMI Christian Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Without Love</td>
<td>Kirk Franklin</td>
<td>My Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What If We</td>
<td>Kirk Franklin</td>
<td>My Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You Are My Everything</td>
<td>Kirk Franklin</td>
<td>My Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak to Me</td>
<td>Kirk Franklin</td>
<td>My Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Day In A Lifetime</td>
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<td>My Music</td>
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### HOT GOSPEL ALBUMS

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Label</th>
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<td>My Music</td>
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<td>God With Us</td>
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<td>One Day In A Lifetime</td>
<td>Kirk Franklin</td>
<td>My Music</td>
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With 5.1 million impressions each of the 25 of the Hot Gospel Songs and 50 of the Hot Gospel Albums, the Gospel chart is the fourth most popular chart. The Hot Gospel Albums chart is the second most popular chart. For more information on the Hot Gospel Songs and Hot Gospel Albums charts, visit Billboard. biz.
### HOT LATIN SONGS

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<td>SE ME VA LA VOZ</td>
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<td>Marco Antonio Solís</td>
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<td>LO MEJOR SIN MI</td>
<td>Aventura</td>
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<td>Mafia &amp; Sue</td>
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### TOP LATIN ALBUMS

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<td>POR LO MEJOR DE MI</td>
<td>Alejandro Fernández</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>LA GALÁRZABA</td>
<td>La Gloria</td>
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<td>ME ENAMORE DE TI</td>
<td>Marc Anthony</td>
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<td>DIME QUE NO</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>TE AMO</td>
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### REGIONAL MEXICAN AIRPLAY

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<td>Lenny Santos</td>
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<td>Marco Antonio Solís</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>MI COMPAS</td>
<td>Celia Cruz</td>
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### LATIN POP AIRPLAY

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<td>Celia Cruz</td>
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### BETWEEN THE BULLETS: 20 WEEKS AND COUNTING

Aventura celebrates its second No. 1 Hot Latin Songs with "Dile Al Amor" and its 20th week at pop chart Top Latin Albums with "The Last." The only other album to notch at least 20 weeks at No. 1 since 2009 was Daddy Yankee’s "Bárbaro Pino" (2004). "The Last" may remain at No. 1 for a while, as likely contenders are weeks away from release such as Camila’s "Empezar de Cero" (out Feb. 9) and Chayanne’s "No Hay Regateo" (Feb. 23).

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RECORD COMPANIES: EMI Music names Bruce Lundvall chairman emeritus of Blue Note and appoints Ian Rountree president of the Blue Note and Manhattan labels. Lundvall has been at the helm of Blue Note for 25 years, and Rountree was senior VP at Manhattan Records.

Koch Universal in Munich names Jörg Holmig managing director. He was senior VP at Sony label Ariola.

Universal Music Japan appoints Tomohiro Hoshino CFO. He was CFO/financial director at Oddee Japan.

Columbia Nashville names David Friedman director of field promotion. He was director of national promotion.

Glassnote Records names Nick Petropoulos head of radio promotion. He was a senior director of alternative radio at RED Distribution.

PUBLISHING: BMI appoints Brandon Risano exec late director of writer/publisher relations. He was an artist development representative at Interscope/Def Jam/A&M Records.

ASCAP promotes Marc Emert-Hilmer to director of membership for pop/rock and Jorge Rodriguez to director of membership for Latin. Emert-Hilmer and Rodriguez were associate directors.

Stem America promotes Paul Mabey to senior VP/GM in Los Angeles. He was VP/head of film for North America.

TOURING: The Windish Agency taps Bajan Journale as a booking agent, effective Feb. 1. He founded booking agency Noise Problem.

RELATED FIELDS: UK: collecting society PPRS for Music appoints Robert Ashcroft chief executive, effective Jan. 25. He was a senior VP at Sony Electronics.

MTV names Nick Shore senior VP of strategic insights and research. He founded the Way Group in New York.

—Edited by Mitchell Peters

THE ROOTS JAM SESSION RETURNS

After a one-year hiatus, the Roots Jam Session will return to help usher in the 51st annual Grammy Awards.

The “Late Night with Jimmy Fallon” band’s invite-only charity event will be held Jan. 30—the night before the Grammys are handed out at Los Angeles’ Staples Center—at an undisclosed Hollywood venue. Each year, about 500 invitations are sent shortly before the event to people within the music community, with information providing the location.

In years past, the Roots Jam Session has hosted onstage collaborations between the Roots and acts including Snoop Dogg, TV on the Radio, The Roots and Carson Blockway. “It’s a five-hour impromptu jam session,” says Roots Jam Session co-producer Kevin Seldon, whose company Redroof Marketing organizes the event with Tina Harris Tours and Oakley Play. “It’s a complete celebration of music. Performers don’t get paid to perform.”

In addition to live musical surprises, the event’s purpose is to promote social awareness. Seldon says. This year it’ll promote environmental-friendly issues with the help of Geeks Music Group, a side project of nonprofit organization Bevcorp.

To help promote the green theme, organizers have launched a logo design contest at RootsJamSession.com. The website also provides links to locations that accept donated used clothing and electronic devices.

INSIDE TRACK

RODRIGUEZ’S GOT IT COVERED

Texas singer/songwriter Carole Radiguet took the covers route for her third studio album, “Love and Circumstances,” due in April on the new Opus Records label.

“I’ve got quite a few covers that I throw in my set every night,” the onetime Chip Taylor sideman says. “It seems like every single time I do that someone will come up to me and say, ‘What can I get the album that song is on?’ That was the impulse for making it.”

Produced by Lee Townsend (Still Life, London Walk/Bright), “Love and Circumstances” includes Rodriguez’s versions of Lucinda Williams’ “Stead Your Love” and the late Townes Van Zandt’s “Rex’s Blues.” Rodriguez also strikes home by honoring his father, fellow troubadour David Rodriguez, with the unreleased “When I Heard Gypsy Davy Sing,” and his great aunt, Spanish singer Fidela Gorria, with “La Parranda Trapanera” from her repertoire.

Rodriguez augmented his band with guitarist Frisell and Greg Leisz on pedal steel. She also put together full-scale string arrangements for some of the songs.

“This record is like taking a step back from what I’ve been doing and figuring out what kind of songs are important to me,” Rodriguez says. “Hopefully for my next record I will have learned something from that and take it with me.”
Honoring The Top Artists In Japan For 2009
Based On Billboard Japan Charts & Votes From Music Fans
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Billboard Live TOKYO & Canopy Square in Tokyo MidTown
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