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# Billboard

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**MUSIC & MONEY**  
Billboard's Music & Money Symposium offers keynotes with Ticketmaster's Sean Moriarty and BMG Label Group's Clive Davis and Charles Goldstuck, and a reception at the Maserati showroom. Register at [billboardevents.com](http://billboardevents.com).



### MOBILE ENTERTAINMENT

The official entertainment event of CTIA includes Content SuperSessions on mobile music, video and gaming, and keynotes with RealNetworks' Rob Glaser and Mathew Knowles. Register at [billboardevents.com](http://billboardevents.com).

### LATIN

Billboard's Latin Music Conference & Awards features a Q&A with Enrique Iglesias, a case study with Wisin & Yandel, the Billboard Bash, a full-day program on Latin radio and the Billboard Latin Music Awards. Details at [billboardevents.com](http://billboardevents.com).

# OPINION

EDITORIALS | COMMENTARY | LETTERS

## Of Rock And Ringtones

Can Biz Grow Amid Difficult Economic Conditions? BY DANNY GOLDBERG

Although U2 manager Paul McGuinness' recent speech at MIDEM was notable primarily for his comments about Internet service providers, I was taken by a throwaway line in which he mentioned that in the band's early days U2 received tour support from its label Island Records in order to build an audience. Tour support is not an option in today's music economy. There is a serious crisis about how to construct pathways for the next generation of superstars and what business structures can help create such careers.

Tensions between the short-term needs of record companies and the long-term agendas of rock artists have always existed, but the dichotomy is greater than it has ever been. I am not referring to the handful of rock artists who also have hit singles and big ringtone sales and have thus managed to be on the same playing field as other pop artists. No, this is about the hundreds of rock artists whose records are not selling enough to be priorities for the major labels, but who still have a loyal fan base.

More than ever there is a "Mars and Venus" disparity between the agenda of big corporations and their artists. Companies need to focus on quarterly profits, while artists are preoccupied with maintaining their image (or "brand"). Acts like Iggy Pop and Sonic Youth, which never had radio hit singles, are making more money than they did 20 years ago because they have been faithful to their audience, and, dare I say it, to their art.

In today's business climate, artists cannot expect record companies to spend the same amount of money they did when sales were double and valuations quadruple what they are now. Conversely, record companies cannot expect most artists to give up significant chunks of income or ownership (know as 360 deals) unless they get something tangible in the way or money and/or services in return.

Major labels tend to focus on one agenda: hits. It's hard to blame them. As long as their corporate parents are only concerned about short-term profits and place little or no long-term value on masters or artist contracts, it's not realistic to expect a label CEO to be thinking about artists in terms of careers. On the other hand, while any act would like its music to be played on the biggest radio stations, many of them would not want to change their core identity and

alienate their fans just to have a best-selling ringtone.

At first glance the easiest strategy for

**As the United States heads into a recession, those of us in the music business are coming to grips with the fact that our industry is in a depression.'**

major is to focus on licensing their catalogs and to drop all artists except those who fit current crossover radio needs or have superstar status. However, this approach removes a big portion of the pool from which tomorrow's superstars are likely to come. Like Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen and U2, many of tomorrow's most valuable artists will take a few years to develop, and there is no structure at the major labels to support that.

This is a great time for many indie labels, as the success of Bright Eyes and Arcade Fire indicates. But indie labels ultimately have the same pressures as majors: a declining CD business and increasingly complex marketing challenges. My company, like many in the management busi-

ness, is staffing up to handle PR and other marketing tasks for our clients, formerly taken care of by labels. It remains to be seen how new players entering the record business relate to long-term career issues.

While the United States heads into a recession, those of us in the music business are coming to grips with the fact that our industry is in a depression. As R.E.M. manager Bertis Downs recently said at MIDEM, our jobs increasingly involve going to more places to get less money. In the short term, everyone in



GOLDBERG

the business needs to figure out how to motivate the necessary teamwork to build and maintain careers on economic terms that would have been unappealing a decade ago. But more people than ever love music. For those of us who work in the rock'n'roll genre, we have seen the endurance of our culture in such phenomena as the "Rock Band" and "Guitar Hero" videogames. Those who were able to accumulate real estate during the Great Depression made great fortunes later on.

*Danny Goldberg is president of Gold Village Entertainment, where he manages the careers of Steve Earle and Allison Moorer. He also has a label, Ammal Records, in partnership with New West Records, distributed by RED.*

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**RAISING THE STAKES**  
AEG, Ticketmaster, Cablevision team up



**RUBEN'S RETURN**  
Studdard sings again on 'American Idol'



**THE NEXT STEP**  
Billboard says farewell to publisher Kilcullen



**HD DVD NOT RIP**  
Vanquished by Blu-ray, format hangs on



**LEADER OF THE PACK**  
Christian rock king Norman passes on

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**>>>FACEBOOK BOLSTERS MUSIC OFFERING**

Facebook has unveiled a new section designed to let artists create profiles that showcase their music, videos, photos and other assets. More than 80 acts are participating launch partners, including Bruce Springsteen, Carrie Underwood, Justin Timberlake, Rodrigo y Gabriela and Wyclef Jean.

**>>>BAIDU TAKES MORE HITS**

The Music Copyright Society of China has filed a lawsuit against Web portal Baidu, accusing it of copyright infringement and seeking unspecified compensation. Additionally, digital music distributor R2G sent a legal notice to Baidu requesting the de-linking of unlicensed content and plans to initiate its own lawsuit. Baidu could not be reached for comment.

**>>>DIGITAL MELDING PREDICTED**

The digital music business should expect consolidation during 2008 and 2009, research firm Point Topic says in a new report. The group expects digital music services with robust business models will be acquired by major digital players, while the weak ones collapse. Among the companies expected to go on an acquisition spree are Nokia, Microsoft and Rhapsody.

MIKE BLAKE/REUTERS

# UP FRONT

PUBLISHING BY ANN DONAHUE

## GOLD STANDARD

Oscar Victors Score New Publishing Deal

On the heels of winning the Academy Award for best song, Glen Hansard and Marketa Irglova have signed a worldwide publishing agreement with Warner/Chappell Music.

Besides their future works, the duo's catalog will be administered by Warner/Chappell, including those songs written by Hansard as a member of the Frames, music from the pair's recording on "The Swell Season" and songs from the "Once" soundtrack.

"It seems like there's a magic to this movie that doesn't stop giving—I think it's great that the Frames are going to get a wider audience because of this," Warner/Chappell executive VP/head of creative (U.S.) Glen Brunman says. "There's a hunger for what Glen and Mar can do."

The deal is another step in the picture-perfect tale of "Once"—and, if history is any guide, look for the acclaim to build as "Falling Slowly" climbs the charts in the wake of the Oscar win. Brunman began working with Hansard and Irglova in his previous role as head of soundtracks for Sony Music.

The 2007 best song winner, Melissa Etheridge's "I Need to Wake Up" from "An Inconvenient Truth," jumped 87% the week after the Oscar ceremony. In 2006, Three 6 Mafia's "It's Hard Out Here for a Pimp" carried the "Hustle & Flow" soundtrack to a 77% increase in the wake of the Os-

cars. ("Pimp" was not available as a stand-alone single.)

Even though this year's Oscars received its worst ratings ever—32 million viewers, on average, compared with almost 40 million in 2007—don't expect it to derail the "Once" bandwagon. For the week ending at midnight the night of the awards, "Falling Slowly," the Oscar-winning song, sold 14,000 digital downloads, a 359% increase over the previous week.

Steve Ralbovsky, head of Canvasback Music, which released the soundtrack with Columbia Records, says the duo—performing as the Swell Season—will start a monthlong U.S. tour in April, including stops at Coachella, Bonnaroo and Radio City Music Hall. Last year's tour welcomed the performers with sold-out shows and critical acclaim.

"There's an opportunity to still discover and learn some-

**359%**  
Digital sales increase for "Falling Slowly" the week ending at midnight the night of the Oscars

thing [about them]," Ralbovsky says. "We don't want to seize the moment and run it into the ground."

As it turns out, some of the groundwork for the soundtrack's future success was laid



HANSARD, left, and IRGLOVA

in the buildup to the Oscars. In the week before and the week of the Feb. 24 ceremony, VH1 returned the video to "Falling Slowly" to the air and gave it "gung ho" rotation—the channel's highest level—of 45 airings per week. In addition, it received four additional plays during Oscar weekend as the "Top 20 Spotlight video."

"We do our scheduling a week ahead of time, so five days before the Oscars happened, we had to make our decision," VH1 executive VP of music and talent Rick Krim says. "We figured no matter what, their performance was going to be stunning and people would be interested. It

worked in our favor and we decided to keep it on another week [after the Oscars]."

It's the second round for the video on the channel; VH1 first put it in rotation when the movie came out in July.

"The movie never hit giant mainstream, but we put it on as fans," Krim says. "It wasn't about radio [exposure]—it was about artists that we thought were amazing."

As for Hansard and Irglova, they're looking forward to getting away from the glitzy lunacy of Hollywood. While shopping at Hollywood's Amoeba Records,

Hansard was recently recognized by a security guard who inquired, "Are you the dude from the movie?"

"I want to get home and get centered, and do normal things," he says. "Songwriting is all we need to do. Writing songs is never work, it creates calm and peace, and that's absolutely necessary."

But, you know, c'mon, we gotta ask: What did you do with the Oscar?

"It's already gone home off to Ireland—my mother took it," he says. "I came offstage, handed it to her and she hasn't let it go." ...

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**>>> EC FINES MICROSOFT A RECORD \$1.4 BILLION**

The European Commission hit Microsoft with a record €899 million (\$1.4 billion) fine for failing to comply with a 2004 ruling ordering the software giant to change its business practices regarding Windows. The fine comes on top of earlier penalties of €280 million (\$420 million) imposed in July 2006 and of €497 million (\$747 million) in the EC's original March 2004 decision.

**>>> APPLE MOVES TO NO. 2**

Apple is claiming its iTunes service is now the No. 2 music retailer in the United States behind only Wal-Mart, based on data provided by NPD Group. The analyst firm's MusicWatch Survey counts one CD as representing 12 tracks, and excludes any wireless transactions. By that measure, iTunes sold more CD equivalents than any single source other than Wal-Mart. It did not break out exactly how many sales that was.

**>>> TIMBERLAKE, REED TO INDUCT ROCK HALL CLASS**

Justin Timberlake, Lou Reed, Billy Joel and Ben Harper are among the big names who have signed up to induct members of the 2008 Rock and Roll Hall of Fame class March 10 in New York. Timberlake will induct Madonna, Reed will induct Leonard Cohen, Joel will induct John Mellencamp and Ben Harper will usher in Little Walter during the event. In addition, Tom Hanks will induct the Dave Clark Five, Jerry Butler will induct Kenny Gamble and Leon Huff, and John Fogerty will induct the Ventures.

# UPFRONT

TOURING BY RAY WADDELL

## PROMOTION WARS

AEG Live Gets Ticketing And Fuse TV To Compete With Live Nation

News of a blockbuster deal among major players AEG Live, Ticketmaster and Cablevision has sent ripples through the live business. Multiple sources confirm to Billboard that a deal is imminent for Ticketmaster and Madison Square Garden Entertainment (MSGE) owner Cablevision to acquire about 49% of AEG Live, the live entertainment arm of Anschutz Entertainment Group (billboard.biz, Feb. 21). Contacts at the three companies declined to comment.

This partnership will allow AEG Live to more fiercely compete with Live Nation, which will leave Ticketmaster when its contract expires in 2009. What this new powerhouse will have—that Live Nation does not—is a cable music channel.

Fuse TV, the only current competitor to MTV, has since last spring operated under the MSGE umbrella. Fuse was formerly part of Rainbow Media, a division of Cablevision that includes cable TV networks WE: Women's Entertainment, Independent Film Channel and American Movie Classics.

Fuse, which sources say will undergo a multimillion-dollar rebranding effort in the coming months, will play a key role in the repositioning of AEG Live as a company now armed with a sizable media component and the world's largest ticketing company in Ticketmaster.

Cablevision is a publicly traded company and AEG is private; given AEG retains majority ownership in AEG Live, Cablevision will probably only be able to report earnings it receives from the promoter.

Under the direction of CEO Randy Phillips, AEG Live is the second-largest promoter in the world, reporting grosses totaling more than \$742 million to Billboard Boxscore in 2007, trailing only Live Nation. Ticketmaster stakeholder (and former parent) IAC also owns a large stake in the Irving Azoff/Howard Kaufman megamanagement firm Front Line Management. IAC chairman Barry Diller is believed to be a major broker in putting the deal together with Cablevision's Dolan family, whose sports, media and entertainment holdings are numerous.

Reflecting the growing clout and thin margins of live music, the publicly traded Live Nation has become a more comprehensive music company under CEO Michael Rapino's direction, venturing into merchandising, digital marketing, sponsorships and artist management.

AEG Live now has deep pockets, multimedia, ticketing, a music channel, artist management, merchandising (BandMerch), a wide range of venues, a huge digital presence (Ticketmaster is the most visited live music site at more than 23 million monthly unique visitors) and tour promotion/production in its own portfolio.

Though the deal with AEG Live will not replace Live Nation's estimated 15 million Ticketmaster tickets sold annually, AEG Live does give Ticketmaster a fully developed concert promoter interest and a solid ticketing partner. As the ticketing business becomes more competitive, Ticketmaster will now be able to



CELINE DION performs in Johannesburg where she launched her AEG Live-promoted Taking Chances 2008 world tour.

more fully realize its unique marketing power, and enter the risk-taking promoter business in tandem with AEG Live.

This is a logical next move for Ticketmaster, whose CEO Sean Moriarty previously told Billboard in an interview, when asked if the company might evolve into concert promotion, "You've seen an awful lot of change over the course of the past year or so in the types of things that we're doing, and I think you can expect to see more changes as we figure out the best way to position ourselves and provide value. So certainly it's a possibility."

MSGE has also been acquisitive in its own right with last year's purchase of the Chicago Theatre and its thriving New York properties like the Beacon Theatre and Radio City Music Hall. In addition, under president Jay Marciano, MSGE has a booming multiproduction in the Radio City Christmas Spectacular, and successfully launched a four-year run of the Cirque du Soleil production "Wintuk" in 2007 at the

WaMu Theater at Madison Square Garden. The Garden has been the top-grossing arena in the world for several years running, and has for several months been considering constructing a new location across the street from its current Penn Station home.

Ultimately, the deal speaks volumes about how rapidly AEG Live has become an international force in live entertainment, beginning with the startup (and resurrection of a touring company brand) as Concerts West by Paul Gongaware and John Meglen in 2000, and its evolution to create AEG Live by the end of that year under Phillips.

As these two concert promoters go head to head, there is one area where AEG Live does not wish to compete with Live Nation: 360-degree artist deals a la Madonna's. At the Grammy Foundation's 10th annual Entertainment Law Initiative keynote and AEG CEO Tim Leiweke told the room, "There are those that believe in a 360 model. We don't." ...

TELEVISION BY ANN DONAHUE

## 'Idol' Takes Time

Studdard Returns For Show's Farewell Track

To paraphrase "The Godfather"—just when you think you're out on "American Idol," they keep pulling you back in.

Season-two winner Ruben Studdard will perform the "farewell song" used to play off the losing contestants when they depart the top 12. This year, the song will be a cover of Kenny Loggins' "Celebrate Me Home," in a new version produced by Terry Lewis and Jimmy Jam.

It's a significant gig for Studdard, who was dropped by J Records at the end of 2007. He is, however, still managed by the show's 19 Entertainment and under contract to subsidiary 19 Recordings, a link that paved the way for him to return

to the show as the song's performer.

"Ruben has never left our fold," "AI" executive producer Nigel Lythgoe says. "[With] the success that we've had with the play-off song, I wanted to keep it in-house."

The "American Idol" season-five farewell song, Daniel Powter's "Bad Day," went on to sell 1.9 million copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan, and was the top digital download of 2006.

As part of the show's new sponsorship this season with iTunes, "Celebrate Me Home" will be made available digitally starting March 12, the day the first of the top 12 will be eliminated. In addition, it is expected to be included on



BILLBOARD EXCLUSIVE

STUDDARD

one of the compilation albums annually released by "American Idol," according to 19 Entertainment U.S. head Iain Pirie.

"[Lewis and Jam] were on my list of producers to work with, and to have the opportunity was a blessing," Studdard says. "If they tell you something is hot, you can probably rest assured that other people are going to like it."

"Celebrate Me Home" was selected after Lythgoe suggested the tune to Pirie and show creator Simon Fuller. "Each year we think about what's going to reflect that really

special TV moment," Pirie says. "Musically and lyrically, it fits it perfectly."

Pirie says the idea to have Studdard record the track came after the warm reception he received following an appearance on last season's "American Idol" finale. In addition, Studdard is in negotiations to perform the song during "Idol Gives Back," the show's midseason charity effort.

Loggins' version of "Celebrate Me Home," originally released on an album of the same title in 1977, has sold 73,000 downloads, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

And while traditionally thought of as a Christmas tune, the first line of the song—"Home for the holidays"—has been excised to make it less seasonal, Lythgoe says, and Studdard has given the track an updated feel. ...

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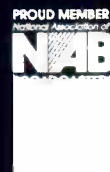
Jon Zellner, Senior Vice President Music Programming (XM Radio)

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DIGITAL BY JENNIFER NETHERBY

## Socially Challenged

Expected MySpace Service To Compete With iTunes, Imeem, Last.fm And More

### >>> CARLY SIMON JOINS HEAR MUSIC

Carly Simon has joined James Taylor, Paul McCartney and Joni Mitchell on the roster of Starbucks' Hear Music label. Her first release for the company, "This Kind of Love," will be available April 29. The 13-track set has a Brazilian-heavy sound, and finds Simon collaborating with Jimmy Webb and Frank Filipetti. That trio was responsible for Simon's 1997 album, "Film Noir."

### >>> McENTIRE TO HOST ACM AWARDS

Reba McEntire will host the 43rd annual Academy of Country Music Awards on May 18 at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas. It will be McEntire's 10th time hosting the show. She has won 11 ACM Awards and has 41 total nods. In 2001 she was awarded the inaugural ACM Home Depot Humanitarian Award for her philanthropic work.

### >>> JACKSON FACES FORCED SALE OF NEVERLAND

Michael Jackson's Neverland Valley Ranch in California will be foreclosed and sold March 19 unless the pop star pays a balance of nearly \$25 million, property records show. Foxnews.com reports that Jackson has been formally apprised of the foreclosure and that legal documents have also been filed with the Santa Barbara County Recorder's office.

Compiled by Chris M. Walsh. Reporting by Antony Bruno, Leo Cendrowicz, Jonathan Cohen, Juliana Koranteng, Steve McClure, Ken Tucker and Reuters.

For 24/7 news and analysis on your mobile device, go to: mobile.billboard.biz.

Already confronted with ongoing competitive pressure from Facebook, MySpace's latest bid to enter the music business comes as other social networking peers, such as Last.fm and imeem, are making big audience gains with ad-supported music offerings.

Sources say MySpace is planning a service that would combine free ad-supported music listening with paid MP3 downloads and music subscriptions.

MySpace parent company News Corp. has approached the major labels about forming a joint-venture music site, similar to its partnership with the major Hollywood studios for video site hulu.com.

The new service would be operated by MySpace and seemingly be positioned to compete against every offering from iTunes to subscription service Rhapsody to social networks. Details are still unclear on MySpace's plans, but it is expected that MySpace will build the music service on the back of its existing social networking base.

MySpace did not return calls for comment.

During the last year, the four major labels have warmed to the idea of allowing users to share music on social networking sites, inking deals with Last.fm and imeem for a cut of advertising revenue. Music is the central connector on both sites: Users create and share playlists with their favorite songs, find and add friends based on their music preferences, listen to full-length songs on demand and purchase downloads through links to Amazon and iTunes.

CBS-owned Last.fm reported a 92% jump in U.S. users in the span of the last month, making it one of the fastest-growing music networks. Last.fm now

claims 21 million unique visitors per month, close to the 23 million unique visitors of rival imeem, which has also seen strong growth in the last year.

However, only a minority of consumers use social networking sites to access music. According to NPD Group, just 14% of Internet users report getting music through social networking sites in 2007. Among teens

**MySpace is a bit late to the table, to be honest. But it's always a force to be reckoned with.'**

—MARTIN STIKSEL, LAST.FM

and college-aged users, it was 25%.

Forrester Research analyst James McQuivey says MySpace, with nearly 70 million U.S. users each month, would establish the category if it were to join.

Execs at imeem and Last.fm shrugged off MySpace's impending entrance. "MySpace is a bit late to the table, to be quite honest," Last.fm co-founder Martin Stiksel says before adding, "MySpace is always a force to be reckoned with."

McQuivey predicted in a recent report, "The End of the Music Industry As We Know It," that in five years social network-enabled music purchases will be the primary way people buy music.

Stiksel believes the ad-supported model is an even better way for consumers to get music and for labels and artists to get paid.

"When you buy a CD, the artist and the label get paid once," he says. "On Last.fm, music gets monetized perpetually every time someone presses 'play.'"

Imeem is pushing its business as an alternative to piracy for a young audience that isn't purchasing music.

"Social networking has the opportunity to be the best hope for the online music experience for the fans, the artists, the industry," imeem chief marketing officer/head of business development Steve Jang says. "If we can do it in a controlled way where we're getting marketing and promotion and also revenue, that's great. It will eat away at a lot of illegal usages online."

Music social networking still has its challenges, the biggest being whether users will put up with ads to hear their favorite songs. Execs from imeem and Last.fm say users don't mind ads so long as they don't get in the way of music playback.

"They certainly have a tremendous opportunity," NPD VP/senior analyst Russ Crupnick says. "On the other hand, nobody has really done a particularly good job so far of challenging Apple. The thing about iTunes with younger consumers is that linkage back to the iPod. It's hard to separate the device from the music storage and software application."

Ironically, McQuivey points out that even if social networking does emerge as a dominant model for listening to music, it could benefit Apple by selling more music online, which could help sell more iPods.

### EXECUTIVE INSIGHT

## AD-SUPPORTED SOCIAL MEDIA

**STEVE JANG** imeem chief marketing officer/  
head of business development



JANG

**1 Will Internet users put up with ads to listen to music?** They absolutely are willing to be advertised to so that they can have this access. [The challenge is] trying to get users to pay, whether they're too young and don't have a credit card, or, I saw something that people under 25, less than 10% buy music. Most people born after a certain date use peer-to-peer or burn each other's CDs... they're all on social networks.

**2 How do you incorporate advertising into the site?**

We do audio, video ads, graphic banner ads, custom programs with large

brands like Nokia, Samsung, Nike... advertising by sponsoring sections of the site, things like Nokia-branded playlists, site section takeovers... We also do a lot of e-commerce, visual downloads. Soon we'll be launching a ringtone service with a partner... We don't want to overmonetize the site and ruin the user experience. Social networking users have a high tolerance for lots of things happening on a page; what they don't have a high tolerance for is bad user flow. They have bad Internet ADD. If you stall the process, they won't wait.

**3 Imeem has links to download songs from Amazon and iTunes. How many users choose to do this?**

We are the No. 1 iTunes affiliate partner. We are one of the top Amazon MP3 store partners. People do want to buy music if they really like the music and they want to put it on a device or on a CD and put it in their car.

With this revenue model, we're not monetizing digital music products. We're monetizing the user's attention.

**MARTIN STIKSEL** Last.fm co-founder

**1 Last.fm posted record growth after it started offering on-demand listening in January. How important is this feature to users?**

The interesting thing was that we had a lot of people coming to Last.fm even before. For us this is proof that people are coming to our site to listen to music, to discover music. They want to listen and share music.

**2 Where do you see this business going in the next few years?**

Advertising-supported music is a great way to generate revenue. It's an alternative to what is around currently. What we are trying to do, we are trying to offer alternatives to these people in a controlled environment monetized to make revenue off of it.

There's still a number of factors that are important going forward. Subscription services cannot be discounted. If you can go somewhere like Last.fm where you can click "play" and listen to any song, why do you need to own it?



STIKSEL

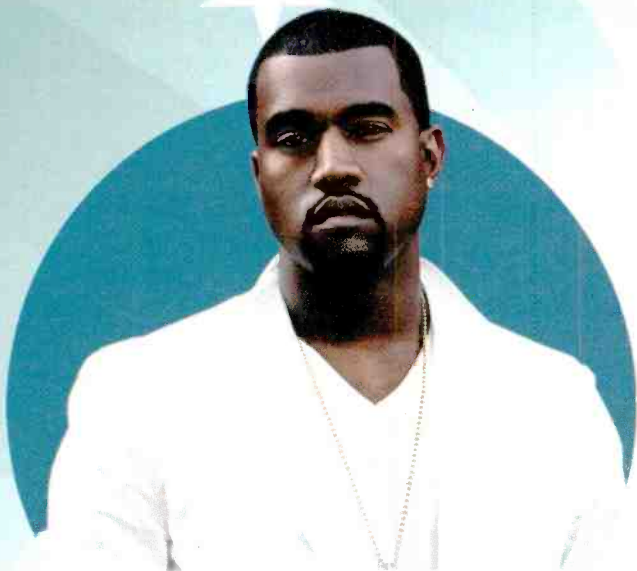
When you buy a CD the artist and the label get paid once. On Last.fm music gets monetized perpetually every time someone presses "play."

**3 What is the challenge going forward for Last.fm in this space?**

With the music, we're trying to get all the music that is out there into Last.fm, potentially tens of millions of music songs out there and getting music videos.

We coined it "Last.fm" for a particular reason. It's the last music station on the Internet. —JN





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# HOME FRONT

360 DEGREES OF BILLBOARD

## KILCULLEN EXITS BILLBOARD

John Kilcullen, who has served as Billboard president/publisher since 2003, has decided to leave the company to pursue his passion as an entrepreneur.

"I leave on the fifth-year anniversary of my arrival because my entrepreneurial clock was beating very loudly," Kilcullen says. "I accomplished what I set out to do."

Kilcullen has also served as senior VP of the Film & Performing Arts and Music & Literary groups of Billboard parent the Nielsen Co. since October 2006. These divisions have now been consolidated under one Entertainment Group, and will be lead by newly appointed media industry veteran Gerry Byrne. Byrne will be based in New York and report to Nielsen Business Media president Greg Farrar.

Under Kilcullen's leadership, Billboard's revenue and brand equity have soared.

Billboard closed 2007 up more than 16% in advertising revenue, with an 11% increase in run-of-book pages. In addition, Billboard's perfect-bound year-end issue carried nearly 80 advertising pages, making it one of its largest issues ever.

In other gains, the network combination of Billboard.com and Allmusic.com continued to grow with more than 5.8 million unique visitors, and finished the year with a 67% lift in advertising revenue over 2006.

Also in 2007, Billboard events and conference revenue closed at more than 7% ahead of 2006. Licensing revenue was up more than 24% from last year due to a partnership with AEG. In this exclusive alliance, Billboard has teamed up with AEG Live to expand existing Billboard-branded live events and create new concerts, festivals and televised awards shows worldwide.

"2007 was a record year when measured against every component of our financial, strategic and execution plan," Kilcullen says. "Due in large part to an incredibly talented leadership team, we grew revenue almost 10% and the bottom line 30% year-over-year in a market that is down 15%."

Last year, Billboard won the Eddie Award, the top editorial award available to a trade magazine, in the media/entertainment/publishing category for a second year in a row. In design, Billboard won an Ozzie Award for best feature design and two Merit Awards from the Society of Publication Designers.

Additionally, Billboard won the OMMA Award for best use of user-generated content by an advertiser (beating out a Super

Bowl ad for Doritos and a YouTube ad). The Mobile Beat campaign was in partnership with sponsor LG.

Billboard identified more than 20 mobile bloggers and arranged access to concerts throughout the summer across America. They blogged with LG camera phones live from the shows.

On the digital front, during Kilcullen's tenure the company launched Billboard Mobile in the United States, Canada and Japan and entered a joint venture with mobile industry trade association CTIA to create the Mobile Entertainment Live conference. He also introduced mobile charts to the magazine that have taken the brand into new growth markets.

"I have had an amazing journey leading Billboard," Kilcullen says, "especially in the midst of so much transformation and change including disruptive peer-to-peer technology, piracy, consolidation, downsizing, the growth of mobile music and the era of personalization. Most of all, we have created an enterprising team who respect each other and work tirelessly to deliver timely insights

to make our readers smarter, more competitive and hopefully, more successful."

Internationally the company has launched three Billboard Live music clubs in Japan and two new foreign print editions in Turkey and Russia.

Kilcullen says, "Five years ago, if you had asked anyone if Billboard would fuse together a successful global brand strategy integrating data, digital, mobile, video, live events, new TV,

restaurant ventures and consumer partnerships, they would have laughed . . . and, by the way, they did. Thanks to my friends and colleagues at Billboard and Nielsen Entertainment, we did just that."

It was also under Kilcullen's guidance that Billboard magazine and Billboard.com underwent successful redesigns in 2005.

Kilcullen's senior editorial leadership team at Billboard remains in place: group editorial director Tamara Conniff and executive editor Bill Werde.

Prior to joining Nielsen Business Media, Kilcullen was founding member and chairman/CEO of Hungry Minds (formerly IDG Books Worldwide). He grew the company to more than \$240 million in revenue and created the "For Dummies" brand. He later took the company public in 1998 and sold it in 2001.

Byrne has served as an adviser to Nielsen Business Media since January 2007. In his new role, he has responsibility for the global entertainment, music and literary publishing enterprises across digital, print and face-to-face platforms.



DVD BY JENNIFER NETHERBY

# WAR OVER

But The HD DVD Format Will Linger On

The high-definition format war may be over with Blu-ray officially declared the winner, but rival HD DVD won't be pushed off shelves immediately.

With 1 million HD DVD players in the market, some retailers and suppliers say they'll continue to sell movies and music releases in the format if consumers continue to buy.

"We're still taking an absolute wait-and-see attitude; the market will tell us what to do," Eagle Rock Entertainment president of operations Mike Carden says. "Those players are out there, and the fan base for music are early adopters."

Eagle Rock Entertainment has put out a handful of releases on both formats, including "Deep Purple: Live at Montreux 2006." Its next slated release, ZZ Top's first DVD, will be Blu-ray-only.

Warner Bros. has twice delayed "Led Zepelin: The Song Remains the Same," set for release on HD DVD March 18. The studio signaled the beginning of the end of HD DVD in January when it announced it would exclusively release films on Blu-ray by the end of May.

With Warner on its side, Blu-ray was to have a significant content advantage with 75% of all high-definition releases. Best Buy and Netflix announced soon after that they would drop HD DVD, with Wal-Mart delivering the final blow days later. HD DVD player manufacturer Toshiba then conceded the fight, announcing plans to immediately reduce player shipments to retailers and be out of the business by the end of March.

As February came to a close, fellow manufacturer Onkyo said it would also cease player production, as did Microsoft, which will sell off its HD DVD add-on drives for the Xbox 360 at a reduced \$49 price.

HD DVD studio backers Universal Studios, Paramount Pictures and DreamWorks switched sides after Toshiba's announcement, but haven't said when they will be completely out of HD DVD.

MVD, which put out its first HD DVD, "Method Man: Live From the Sunset Strip" in January, is switching to Blu-ray for all its upcoming releases that were to go out on HD DVD.

"I can't say we're thrilled," MVD COO Ed Seaman says of Blu-ray's win. "They have a sexier plan, a sexier position in marketing."

Seaman adds that Blu-ray manufacturing costs are double those of HD DVD. The change may also bump back high-definition release dates for "The Sublime Tribute Concert DVD," "Blackalicious" and "Reggae Classic Rockers."

Many retailers will keep discs on shelves at least through the first half of the year, while suppliers taper off releases.

Wal-Mart will carry HD DVD through June. Amazon hasn't said it will drop the format completely, though it will promote Blu-ray as the preferred digital format. Since early January, three-fourths of high-definition sales on the site are in the Blu-ray format, the company says.

New York's J&R Music World will continue to bring in HD DVD movies and music until they stop selling. J&R is being cautious about how many HD DVD units it brings in, though DVD buyer Rob Glatt says the studios are still taking returns on the discs.

"Anybody that bought [HD DVD players] is going to continue to buy releases as they come out," Glatt says.

New England's Newbury Comics stores began reducing their HD DVD inventory after seeing Blu-ray outsell HD DVD 3-to-1 in December, DVD buyer Ian Leshin says. But the retailer will continue to bring in HD DVD on a limited basis.

"We don't want to completely cut it until it's completely cut," he says. "We want to be able to offer as much as we can to the customers. It's still not a substantial risk for us. They haven't told us we can't send this stuff back."

**A ZZ TOP concert at the Nokia Theater in Dallas will be released on Blu-ray by Eagle Rock Entertainment.**

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RETAIL BY ED CHRISTMAN

BILLBOARD EXCLUSIVE

## WAL-MART STIRS PRICING POT

Mass Merchant Proposes Multitiered Plan

The major music companies have been resistant to lowering their price on CDs, but now they may be dragged to that point: Wal-Mart, the largest retailer of music with an estimated 22% market share, has proposed a five-tiered pricing scheme that would allow the discounter to sell albums at even lower prices and require the labels to bear more of the costs.

According to sources, the Wal-Mart proposal would allow for a promotional program that could comprise the top 15-20 hottest titles, each at \$10. The rest of the pricing structure, according to several music executives who spoke with Billboard, would have front-line hits and current titles retailing for \$12, top catalog at \$9, midline catalog at \$7 and budget product at \$5. The move would also shift the store's pricing from its \$9.88 and \$13.88 model to rounder sales prices.

While executives at the Bentonville, Ark.-based discounting giant wouldn't comment on the specifics of their promotion, Wal-Mart divisional merchandise manager for home entertainment Jeff Maas acknowledges the proposal. "When you look at sales declines with physical product, and you have a category declining like it is, you have to make decisions about what the future looks like," he says. "If you have a business that is declining and you want to turn it around, it really takes looking at it from all angles."

Consequently, "we share ideas all the time with our suppliers, particularly about providing [customers] value and relevancy," he says, adding that Wal-Mart expects a dialogue with the labels on making such ideas work.

Maas referenced the DVD business as a model for tiered pricing. "[It] has been around for years and has worked very well," he says.

According to sources, this proposal builds on and is meant to replace Wal-Mart's "corrugated"

promotional program, in which the merchant sells albums priced at \$9.72 in a cardboard display placed in a high-traffic area outside the music department. In order to participate in that promotion, labels have to meet a \$7.50 wholesale cost requirement, which works out to a roughly 23% margin for Wal-Mart.

Using that model as a guideline, the current Wal-Mart proposal could mean that superstar hit titles that retail for \$12 and \$10 would be expected to wholesale at about \$9.25 and \$7.70, as opposed to the \$12 wholesale that three of the four majors charge and the \$10.30 that Universal charges for JumpStart titles.

But Wal-Mart generally doesn't dictate wholesale costs to the labels; it lets its rackjobber suppliers Anderson Merchandising and Handleman handle those discussions.

While those negotiations have yet to take place, the proposal is already causing agita at the major labels. Some consider the proposal a non-starter, others say further negotiations might eventually yield a workable solution, while a few see it as appropriate, given the big picture.

"I don't think this is a Wal-Mart discussion," one top executive with a major says. "I think this is a future-of-the-business discussion. Right now everyone is paralyzed."

But another top executive worries that if the majors individually decide to embrace this proposal the same way it did for the corrugated promotion, it would be bad for the rest of retail. That's because for the corrugated promotion, the majors chose to limit the deep discount pricing to one class of trade—the rackjobbers that supply discount department stores. That strategy denied other store types like music specialty chains, independent merchants, and even Target (that chain does its own buying), from having access to the



low \$7.50 wholesale cost.

Some executives raised the question of whether the Federal Trade Commission would take issue with such a program were it rolled out only to Wal-Mart. But one executive says, "Making it legal is not the difficult part. The difficult part is coming to terms with it."

Another top executive says, "The decision might come down to: Do we give up 20% of our business [i.e., Wal-Mart] in order to not lose the entire business?"

That question assumes that Wal-Mart would either penalize or stop doing business with a major that decides not to participate. Moreover, if all majors take a pass, some speculate that Wal-Mart could pull music entirely from the store.

This type of speculation abounds, although the Wal-Mart proposal was presented only as a starting point. As one label executive asks, "Is this a mandate coming down from the upper echelons, which see the category as a no-growth area?" Another says, "This sounds like the Hail Mary pass and if it doesn't work, they could be out of the music business; or maybe they reduce music down to a couple of racks" from the 4,000 titles carried by Wal-Marts with larger selections.

Maas declined to rule out those possibilities, but says he'd rather look at how Wal-Mart can help a declining category, especially since Wal-

Mart also carries "a lot of categories that are in high growth... the customer votes every single day in our stores, and based on what they want is how we merchandise our stores."

Still, some industry executives doubt Wal-Mart would stop carrying music, because in the past it has presented data to music industry executives showing that music is good for the Wal-Mart basket, i.e., what shoppers also purchase with music.

In the meantime, Wal-Mart is telling labels that its proposed pricing strategy will boost sales so much that the labels won't lose profits. Indeed, that's what happened with the "corrugated" promotion, say label executives who have participated.

For that promotion, Wal-Mart wanted all front-line current and catalog titles to be featured on the fixture, which holds 438 titles. But what it got was mostly catalog with some sales-stalled hit product from labels, which nevertheless managed to fill each slot in the promotion week after week.

While some labels initially resisted that promotion, all majors eventually participated, even if not with the same level of commitment.

"We have a lot of data on how our customers shop and what they want," Maas says. "Our slogan, 'Saving money, live better,' is in our DNA."

LATIN BY LEILA COBO

## A Larger Vision

Universal Music Group Snaps Up Latin Market Share

Sometime in the coming months, a single music label, Universal Music, will control almost half of the U.S. Latin music marketplace.

The shift comes in the wake of Universal's agreement to acquire Univision Music Group, the leading Latin music company in the United States. Univision, whose holdings include Univision Records, Fonovisa, Disa and La Calle, has a 35.9%

share of the U.S. Latin market, according to Nielsen SoundScan year-end numbers. No other label has had that kind of market-share clout in the Latin realm.

Adding the U.S. Latin market share of Universal's Latin labels—Universal Music Latino and Machete, with 8.83% and 5.26%, respectively—to Univision's will place Universal's Latin market share at 49.9%. It shouldn't, however, drastically change the Latin landscape, as Universal's distributing arm, Universal Music

Group Distribution, controls more than 50% of the U.S. Latin market and has distributed Univision's product since the inception of the label. In Latin America and Spain Univision is consistently the No. 1 or No. 2 label in the market.

Univision Music Group was put up for sale last year, after Univision Communications was acquired by a private investor group.

Universal quickly emerged as the front-runner on a list of candidates; in addition to the Univision distribution deal,



Universal Music Group chairman/CEO Doug Morris and president/COO Zach Horowitz have long expressed an interest in the burgeoning Latin marketplace and made strides to develop in that market.

Universal/Univision talks stalled in past months, sources say, over discussions on the promotional role to be played by the Univision TV networks. Per the final agreement, the

Univision networks will continue to provide promotional airtime to Universal artists, much in the same way they did with Univision artists.

Founded by CEO José Behar in 2001, Univision Music has been the longtime U.S. Latin market-share leader. Previously head of EMI Latin, Behar was hired by former Univision Communications CEO Jerry Perenchio to create a music division as part of Univision's media empire. Behar built the company from scratch, signing new and established acts, and later, acquiring leading indie Fonovisa Records, a regional Mexican music powerhouse. To this day, Univision's top sellers are in the regional Mexican realm.

In turn, Universal's forte has

long been its pop division, with stars like Juanes, Enrique Iglesias and Paulina Rubio. More recently, the company has become an urban music leader via its upstart label Machete Music, whose roster includes Wisin & Yandel.

Universal's Latin operations are overseen worldwide by Jesús López, chairman/CEO of Latin America and Iberian Peninsula. An industry veteran who has focused on restructuring his companies' operations and who is developing new business models, López will now oversee the joint worldwide operations of the two labels. Univision will continue to be run by Behar until the acquisition is complete.



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LATIN BY LEILA COBO

## EMPIRE BUILDING

Latin Act Takes Unprecedented Branding Steps

Wisin & Yandel had an epiphany a year ago in December, while playing a 17-and-under party in New York.

"We looked around, and all you saw was kids listening to their music on their phones and sharing the ringtones," manager Edgar Andino says. "After that, it seemed everywhere we went, people asked us about ringtones and voice tones. And we thought, 'Holy cow, this could be something.'"

Today, the market's hottest reggaeton duo has become the Latin poster child for new technologies and brands, cutting deals with the likes of Zune and carrier SunCom, which on Feb. 1 released a Wisin & Yandel-branded and loaded cell phone (see story, below).

Now, the duo is readying its own mobile aggregator company, WYMo, in a joint venture with Puerto Rican aggregator Mymobile. This means Wisin & Yandel will actually own a mobile content company, an unusual—if not unprecedented—scenario for a recording act. WYMo's initial push will be on text messaging and promotions surrounding the duo.

This is all in addition to more typical branding deals, including watches, sunglasses and a forthcoming clothing line.

"We want people to understand that Wisin & Yandel are not just a reggaeton product, but a business product that gives results," Wisin says. "And we want people to understand they can consume our music not just on a CD. It's a mistake to think the industry is on a downslide. You have to make technology work for you."

Although mobile and digital companies have long been interested in reggaeton acts as a way to target the burgeoning—and elusive—Latin youth market, Wisin & Yandel (real names Juan Luis Morera Luna and Llandel Veguilla Malavé) have been especially adept at creating opportunities for themselves. That thrust began two years ago, when the pair, newly signed to Universal-owned Machete Music, released "Pa'l Mundo," got new promotional thrust and hooked up with Andino, a marketer who had worked as a consultant with Pepsi and Anheuser-Busch.

"We sat down and made a two-year plan," Andino says. A major objective, he adds, was to have audiences put a face to Wisin & Yandel's hit songs.

During the past three years, and with support from Machete, the duo has been a veritable hitmaking machine, with songs like "Rákata," "Llame Pa'Verte" and current "Sexy Movimiento," which spent 14 weeks in the top 10 of Billboard's Hot Latin Songs chart. At one point, the duo made history by placing four tracks simultaneously on that chart.

"We wanted to treat them like a brand," Andino says. "That concept didn't exist in reggaeton. You have access to all this audience, and how can you leverage that?"

The Wisin & Yandel team began by making what Andino calls "statements," from a 2007 Radio City Music Hall show whose production Wisin & Yandel paid for themselves, to the expensive cover art of "Los Vaqueros," which the duo subsidized.

But the true gold mine, they thought, lay in the mobile and digital realm, where young Latino consumers were gravitating to the urban marketplace in general and reggaeton in particular.

Wisin & Yandel's first major deal was with Zune. Then, the

duo closed a deal with SunCom Wireless in Puerto Rico, which put out a limited-edition Wisin & Yandel-branded phone in tandem with a series of promotions. One of those promotions involves the duo's trio of shows at Puerto Rico's Coliseum, taking place March 6-8. SunCom costumers, as well as customers from other carriers, can participate in a Wisin & Yandel SMS Challenge, where they're asked to send text messages in order to win a series of prizes—from front-row tickets to meet-and-greets—with Wisin & Yandel.

As it turns out, the company acting as an aggregator for the Wisin & Yandel content was Mymobile, a young company eager to experiment with new business models. With Wisin & Yandel, Mymobile will launch aggregator WYMo, initially serving Puerto Rico, the Caribbean, Latin America and the United States.

"We have the technology to distribute the mobile content," Mymobile owner Nestor Ponce De León says. "And Wisin & Yandel are the No. 1 act. They open an additional line of action for us in the same way they did with cell phones," he adds, referring to the SunCom deal.

A major portion of WYMo's business will be text messaging, fostered through promotions. These include a TV campaign with a local station in Puerto Rico, which will prompt consumers to send text messages via their phones, as well as a Wisin & Yandel "club" where members will get access to multiple promotions and prizes by texting.

Each text message, of course, has a cost.

And although text messages cost far less than, say, a master tone, the volume is much higher (Ponce De León aspires to reach the 3 million texts mark in the first three months alone), and the profit share is bigger. Once the carrier gets its cut, revenue is split 60-40 between Wisin & Yandel and Mymobile.

Mymobile, like most aggregators, typically works directly with carriers. The Wisin & Yandel deal, Ponce De León says, is "unique," not because the model itself is new, but because an act has opted to have ownership in the content as opposed to merely getting a sponsorship fee.

"They've realized that although music continues to be heard, there are other mediums too."

This arrangement, he adds, "allows us to market the brand [Wisin & Yandel], keep tabs on the response and participate in a revenue share."

That type of attitude has been constant in Wisin & Yandel's trajectory.

"They are first in line when it comes in investing in their career, both financially and in terms of effort and dedication," says

Machete president Gustavo López, who just renewed Wisin & Yandel's recording deal.

Under Machete, 2005's "Pa'l Mundo" has sold more than 500,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, and more than 1 million worldwide, according to the label. The duo's newest, "Los Extraterrestres," has scanned 200,000 in the United States since its release last November. Wisin & Yandel also launched their own label, WY, as a joint venture with Machete, with their debut album, a compilation titled "Los Vaqueros," scanning 193,000 copies so far.

Today, the duo keeps digging into its pockets to help pay for expenses above and beyond the label's realm, like its 2007 Radio City show.

And, "They know how to find a balance between how they portray themselves to their fans and how they portray themselves to corporate America," López adds.

Most recently, the pair collaborated with th Franco De Vita and Lenny Kravitz (on the music for an Absolut commercial) and a remix with Nelly Furtado.

Despite the inroads, however, crossing the Wisin & Yandel brand over to the English-speaking market is still not on the horizon.

"Well, I'd love to, but I'm not going to abandon my position in the Latin market to try and conquer the market in English," Wisin says. "There's a lot of Latin market out there. It just needs to be exploited."

Wisin & Yandel, their label and their sponsors will discuss their new business models during the Billboard Latin Music Conference April 6-10 in Hollywood, Fla. For more, go to [billboardevents.com](http://billboardevents.com).



WISIN & YANDEL; below: At the press conference in Puerto Rico announcing their SunCom/Motorola deal.



## THE WISIN & YANDEL EMPORIUM

### WISIN & YANDEL ZUNE

The duo is the first act to be featured on its own customized Zune player. The limited-edition devices were sold exclusively at Wal-Mart. The deal also included a multiplatform promotional campaign and product integration in Wisin & Yandel billboards and videos.

### WISIN & YANDEL SUNCOM/MOTOROLA PHONE

The branded MOTOKRZR K1 handset went on sale Feb. 1 in Puerto Rico, preloaded with the duo's new album, "Los Extraterrestres," a music video and wallpaper. The deal includes a year's worth of promotion of Wisin & Yandel's tour, music, ringtones, ringbacks and other exclusive content.

### WYMO

Wisin & Yandel Mobile, a joint venture with aggregator Mymobile, will launch March 6, the first day of Wisin & Yandel's three shows in Puerto Rico. WYMo will initially be entirely Wisin & Yandel-driven and will include music, ringtones, graphics, text messaging and voice tones. As partners in WYMo, Wisin & Yandel will share revenue with WYMo once the carrier gets its respective split.

### WISIN & YANDEL SUNGLASS LINE

A reflection on their longstanding image as artists who have always worn shades.



### WISIN & YANDEL WATCHES

Designed by Ice-Tek, their color and ads reflect the album cover colors of "Los Extraterrestres" and the entire Wisin & Yandel marketing campaign. —LC

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## On The Road

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# The C3 Effect

## Promoter Furthers Chicago Presence With Soldier Field Deal

News of Philadelphia-based facility management firm SMG reaching a new five-year deal with the Chicago Park District board of commissioners to run the city's Soldier Field ([billboard.biz](http://billboard.biz), Feb. 14), and C3 Presents' attachment to that deal as a content provider, is interesting on two fronts.

The most obvious is that C3, with this and the recently announced national Harrah's deal ([billboard.biz](http://billboard.biz), Jan. 29), is becoming increasingly aggressive on a national level, above and beyond festivals. Even if the deal to bring concerts and events to Soldier Field isn't exclusive, it clearly means that Austin-based C3 has very much established Chicago as a second base. Not only did C3 resurrect the Lollapalooza brand in Chitown—and this was most definitely C3's accomplishment more than any other entity—but it surely will manage to do a stadium show in Chicago when few stadium acts and fewer stadium-level promoters exist at all.

The second, less obvious component of this deal is Live Nation's presence as a contender to operate Soldier Field. The bid to operate the iconic stadium was apparently hotly contested, with Live Nation (partnered with a local real estate firm) and Global Spectrum also vying for the contract.

Live Nation already made a run at operating the Charlotte (N.C.) Bobcats Arena (AEG ended up with a booking/marketing deal there), and the company is known to be throwing its hat in the ring for other contracts.

Among other concerns, Live Nation is now in the ticketing business, the merchandising business, the artist career business, the licensing business and, of course, the club and amphitheater business. Oh, yeah, and the concert promotion/touring business.

Stadiums and arenas, with their sports tenants and government oversight in many cases, are a total different ballgame. But in today's world, lines are completely blurred, and competing with the SMGs and Global Comcasts of the world makes sense for this next-gen concert promoter looking to broaden the horizons of the slim margins of concerts.

But back to C3. SMG Sports & Entertainment senior VP **Mike Evans** says C3 was a valuable part of his company's successful bid to renew its deal with Soldier Field, where SMG has been since 1994.

"We do a lot of business with C3. We've worked with these guys individually and collectively over the years," he says. "C3 is right there in Chicago, they do Lollapalooza and they're active in a lot of other areas in Chicago, and they specialize in alternative type of events."

Of course, Live Nation has a big presence in Chicago, and more importantly, so does Jam Productions, which has brought live

music to Chicago for some 30 years. So why C3 for SMG in the Windy City?

"C3 is not conflicted in the marketplace. They don't have other venues

that they have to book first, and it just made sense," Evans says. "They were the right people in the right time at the right place."

Again, it's not exclusive. "They're in a lot of our buildings and they're not exclusive anywhere," Evans says, adding that **Louis Messina** and AEG Live are bringing in Soldier Field's summer **Kenny Chesney** gig, and SMG also has holds from Jam and Live Nation.

"There's a lot of competition for venues in the marketplace that didn't exist as recently as a few years ago," Evans says. "It's not just



Soldier Field Stadium view

getting stadium attractions—it's about once you get them to Chicago, how do you get them into your venue?"

SMG is a big buyer of talent in its own right and partners frequently with other promoters. "I don't want to panic anybody here. We enjoy our relationships with all promoters. We have business arrangements with just about every major promoter out there—some that are public, some that aren't," Evans says.

"Right now, C3's hitting the sweet spot for us. There are about nine different offers right now on the table for me to co-promote with them in some of our venues on an act that's probably going to go outdoors," Evans adds. "They're coming to me with opportunities. Why wouldn't I make use of those opportunities?"

The "sweet spot" in many cases for SMG is in secondary and tertiary markets. "AEG and Live Nation get more focused on the major markets every day," Evans says. "C3 is very important to SMG, as is Outback and **Brad Garrett** at Police Productions, because those three in particular are working our secondary and tertiary markets from coast to coast."

Well, almost coast to coast in C3's case. "You're not going to see C3 do a show with me in Nassau Coliseum [in Uniondale, N.Y.], or probably Oakland, Calif.," Evans says. "But will you see them in Council Bluffs, Iowa, or the new building in Northern Kentucky, or Beaumont, Texas? Yeah."

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# BOXSCORE Concert Grosses

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	GROSS/ TICKET PRICE(S)	ARTIST(S) Venue, Date	Attendance Capacity	Promoter
1	\$7,062,008 (758,608,000 yen) \$279.28/\$79.13	<b>THE POLICE, FICTION PLANE</b> Tokyo Dome, Tokyo, Feb. 13-14	56,706 two sellouts	Live Nation Global Touring, Creativeman, Live Asia
2	\$2,792,861 (\$3,581,969 New Zealand) \$263.15/\$59.26	<b>ROD STEWART</b> Vector Arena, Auckland, New Zealand, Feb. 18-19	20,248 two sellouts	Frontier Touring
3	\$2,763,164 (296,750,000 yen) \$279.34/\$79.15	<b>THE POLICE, FICTION PLANE</b> Kyocera Osaka Dome, Osaka, Japan, Feb. 10	21,526 sellout	Live Nation Global Touring, Creativeman, Live Asia
4	\$2,502,251 \$250/\$175/\$140/ \$95	<b>BETTE MIDLER</b> Colosseum at Caesars Palace, Las Vegas, Feb. 20, 22-24	16,591 four sellouts	Concerts West/AEG Live
5	\$2,192,890 \$225/\$75	<b>THE POLICE, FICTION PLANE</b> Neal S. Blaisdell Center, Honolulu, Feb. 16-17	16,444 two sellouts	Live Nation Global Touring
6	\$2,002,692 (\$283,008 Singapore) \$424.15/\$69.28	<b>THE POLICE, FICTION PLANE</b> Indoor Stadium, Singapore, Feb. 4	10,690 sellout	Live Nation Global Touring, Lushington Entertainment
7	\$1,496,605 (\$1,661,231 Australian) \$346.85/\$79.28	<b>ROD STEWART</b> Entertainment Centre, Brisbane, Australia, Feb. 22	10,401 sellout	Frontier Touring
8	\$1,110,721 \$250/\$9.99	<b>BARRY MANILOW</b> Staples Center, Los Angeles, Feb. 14	9,353 13,216	Live Nation, AEG Live
9	\$1,058,136 \$98/\$52.50	<b>BILLY JOEL</b> Honda Center, Anaheim, Calif., Feb. 23	12,552 sellout	Goldenvoice/AEG Live
10	\$919,527 (7,376,908 pataca) \$495.48/\$47.49	<b>THE POLICE, FICTION PLANE</b> The Venetian Arena, Macau, China, Feb. 7	7,416 sellout	Live Nation Global Touring, in-house
11	\$808,469 (\$817,950 Canadian) \$57.82/\$47.94	<b>LINKIN PARK, COHEED AND CAMBRIA, CHIODOS</b> Bell Centre, Montreal, Feb. 22	14,487 16,096	Gillett Entertainment Group
12	\$777,184 \$189/\$8.99	<b>BARRY MANILOW</b> Nationwide Arena, Columbus, Ohio, Feb. 8	10,908 14,170	Live Nation
13	\$706,575 \$225/\$165	<b>VAN MORRISON</b> Morton Meyerson Symphony Center, Dallas, Dec. 29-30	3,588 two sellouts	AEG Live
14	\$702,781 \$250/\$9.99	<b>BARRY MANILOW</b> Verizon Center, Washington, D.C., Feb. 9	7,388 9,826	Live Nation
15	\$582,636 \$85/\$49.50	<b>MICHAEL BUBLÉ, NATURALLY 7</b> UCF Arena, Orlando, Fla., Feb. 23	7,502 sellout	Beaver Productions
16	\$574,339 \$53/\$47.50/ \$36.50	<b>LINKIN PARK, COHEED AND CAMBRIA, CHIODOS</b> Xcel Energy Center, St. Paul, Minn., Feb. 13	12,630 15,261	Jam Productions
17	\$573,035 \$75/\$45	<b>MICHAEL BUBLÉ, NATURALLY 7</b> Veterans Memorial Arena, Jacksonville, Fla., Feb. 24	8,897 sellout	Beaver Productions
18	\$559,952 (\$566,518 Canadian) \$58.81/\$48.93	<b>LINKIN PARK, COHEED AND CAMBRIA, CHIODOS</b> John Labatt Centre, London, Ontario, Feb. 23	9,730 9,887	Live Nation
19	\$551,325 \$100/\$45	<b>JILL SCOTT, RAHEEM DeVAUGHN</b> Fox Theatre, Atlanta, Feb. 22-23	8,852 two sellouts	CD Enterprises
20	\$544,318 \$45/\$38.50/\$25	<b>FOO FIGHTERS, SERJ TANKIAN, AGAINST ME!</b> Allstate Arena, Rosemont, Ill., Feb. 25	13,521 sellout	Jam Productions
21	\$536,585 \$81.75/\$57.75/ \$41.75/\$39.75	<b>CHRIS BROWN, BOW WOW &amp; OTHERS</b> Palace of Auburn Hills, Auburn Hills, Mich., Jan. 26	8,873 13,824	Live Nation, Palace Sports & Entertainment
22	\$506,785 \$72.50/\$52.50	<b>CHRIS ROCK</b> Lyric Opera House, Baltimore, Feb. 9-10	7,330 7,620 three shows	Live Nation, CD Enterprises
23	\$487,137 \$99.50/\$69.50	<b>MICHAEL BUBLÉ, NATURALLY 7</b> Seminole Hard Rock Live, Hollywood, Fla., Feb. 20	5,401 sellout	Beaver Productions
24	\$477,460 \$85/\$49.50	<b>MICHAEL BUBLÉ, NATURALLY 7</b> St. Pete Times Forum, Tampa, Fla., Feb. 22	6,075 sellout	Beaver Productions
25	\$472,050 \$49.50/\$29.50	<b>JONAS BROTHERS, ROONEY</b> Toyota Center, Houston, Feb. 14	10,542 10,595	Live Nation
26	\$439,937 \$46.50	<b>LINKIN PARK, COHEED AND CAMBRIA, CHIODOS</b> Qwest Center, Omaha, Neb., Feb. 12	9,461 sellout	Jam Productions
27	\$425,000 \$34	<b>WILCO</b> Riviera Theatre, Chicago, Feb. 15-16, 18-20	12,500 five sellouts	Jam Productions
28	\$423,620 \$79.50/\$49.50	<b>MATCHBOX TWENTY, ALANIS MORISSETTE, MUTEMATH</b> Palace of Auburn Hills, Auburn Hills, Mich., Feb. 2	8,496 sellout	Live Nation, Palace Sports & Entertainment
29	\$384,356 \$96/\$36	<b>RBD, LA NUEVA BANDA TIMBIRICHE</b> American Airlines Center, Dallas, Feb. 16	6,457 7,000	Roptus
30	\$364,482 \$75/\$59.50/ \$49.50	<b>MATCHBOX TWENTY, ALANIS MORISSETTE, MUTEMATH</b> Sovereign Center, Reading, Pa., Feb. 19	6,159 6,209	BRE Presents
31	\$352,490 \$77.50/\$42.50	<b>JILL SCOTT, RAHEEM DeVAUGHN</b> Paramount Theatre, Oakland, Calif., Feb. 7-8	5,654 6,030 two shows one sellout	Live Nation, Bay Area Productions
32	\$310,555 (\$378,800 lempiras) \$95/\$40	<b>RBD</b> Estadio Chochi Soza, Tegucigalpa, Honduras, Feb. 2	9,102 10,000	Roptus
33	\$281,765 \$95/\$35	<b>RBD, LA NUEVA BANDA TIMBIRICHE</b> Dodge Arena, Hidalgo, Texas, Feb. 15	3,519 4,000	Roptus
34	\$253,548 \$51/\$35	<b>RUFUS WAINWRIGHT, SEAN LENNON</b> Radio City Music Hall, New York, Feb. 14	5,955 sellout	Live Nation, MSG Entertainment
35	\$243,112 \$75.50/\$45.50	<b>CHRIS ROCK, WHODINI</b> Rosemont Theatre, Rosemont, Ill., Feb. 14	4,262 sellout	Live Nation

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# AUSTIN GOES LATIN

SXSW Exposure For Mexican, Argentine Acts

A Vans Warped tour franchise in Mexico and an Argentine DJ collective are among the international Latin groups looking for stateside exposure at next month's South by Southwest music festival in Austin.

On March 15, a Warped tour Latin America showcase will feature Mexican bands Allison, Delux and Lipstick Terror—though a lineup for a one-off June 14 rock festival in Mexico City this year under the Vans Warped brand has yet to be set.

"International bands sometimes come to South by Southwest and get kind of overshadowed," says Warped founder Kevin Lyman, who also throws an unofficial SXSW party for bands from as far away as Japan and Europe. But "now it's a real conscientious effort to have different types of music from the U.S. as well as from around the world," says Lyman, who has been freshening up his stateside tour

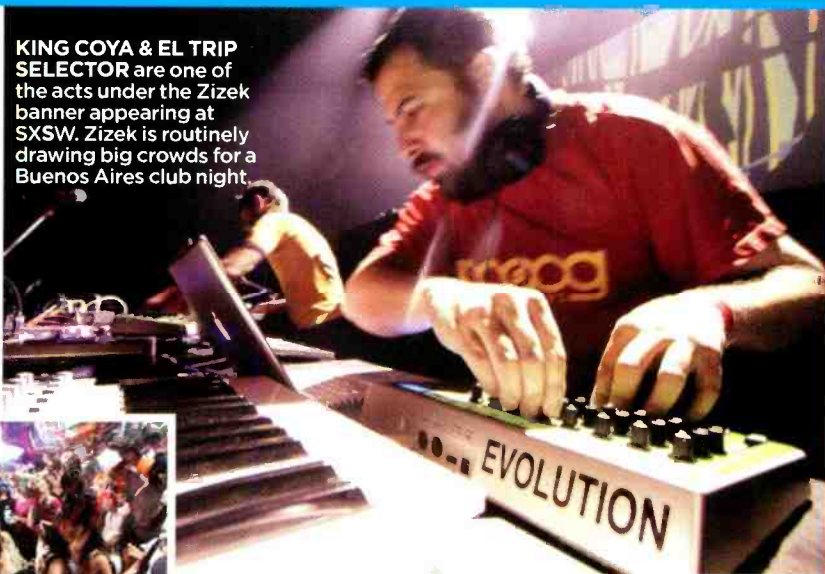
by booking such foreign bands as Spain's the Pinker Tones.

Last year, Allison played several Warped U.S. dates after showcasing at SXSW, and Lyman says this summer Delux will do the same.

Pako Zepeda, co-CEO of Mexico City-based management company Soundguich, is licensing the Warped name, pursuing sponsorships (Vans and Monster Energy are already onboard) and building a database of potential attendees via MySpace and the Warped tour Mexico Web site.

Meanwhile, a collective of Buenos Aires-based DJs has built a five-city U.S. tour around its March 13 SXSW showcase.

The Zizek tour, named for a twice-weekly gathering held at Buenos



KING COYA & EL TRIP SELECTOR are one of the acts under the Zizek banner appearing at SXSW. Zizek is routinely drawing big crowds for a Buenos Aires club night.



Aires' Niceto nightclub, will also stop in Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York and Chicago next month on a tour booked by the Kork Agency.

The 18-month-old club's local success in the Argentine capital—co-founder Grant Dull, a Texas-born expatriate, says it packs in up to 1,000 people on Saturdays—led to the recent founding of label ZZK and an effort to book the DJs at U.S. and European festivals.

The six Zizek acts blend electronic

and breakbeat with cumbia and reggaetón, in a style the tour's MySpace site describes as "electro cumbia," "cumbia crunk" and "cumbia rave."

"The experimental cumbia scene has been around for six or seven years," says Dull, who along with the talent he manages is self-financing the tour. The Zizek DJs "want to see their careers advance and get more gigs... everything that happens when one goes from Argentina abroad."

—Ayala Ben-Yehuda

For news and developments relating to the Billboard Latin Music Awards, see [Billboardevents.com](http://Billboardevents.com).

## EN BREVE

### CONFERENCE CALL

Morning radio, crossover acts, 360 deals and the state of Latin-American and U.S. Latin digital markets are among the topics at the 19th annual Billboard Latin Music Conference April 7-10 in Hollywood, Fla. Celebrity panelists confirmed so far include morning personalities Javier Ceriani of Spanish oldies WCMQ (Clásica 92.3) Miami and El Chulo & La Bola of regional Mexican WLEY (La Ley 107.9) Chicago. They will participate in the conference's first "Radio Day" April 7, which will include panels on the



DE LUNA

Portable People Meter and bilingual programming. Crossover acts Kat De Luna and the D.E.Y. will speak at the "Urban Crossover" panel, while mun2 GM

Alex Pels and MTV Tr3s GM Lucia Ballas-Traynor will hold forth in a discussion on U.S. Latino youth. As previously announced, Enrique Iglesias will be this year's star Q&A artist, while reggaetón duo Wisin & Yandel will explain its new business model with management and sponsors. For a full schedule, go to [billboardevents.com](http://billboardevents.com). —LC

### SPANISH ALLIANCE

The music arm of Spain's biggest media holding, Grupo Prisa, has acquired 70% of the country's most important management and booking agency, Madrid-based Rosa Lagarrigue Management. "In a time of crisis for the music industry, the creation of alliances such as this one underlines the vocation to continue," RLM CEO Rosa Lagarrigue says. RLM, which also has offices in Miami, manages leading Spanish artists such as Alejandro Sanz and Miguel Bosé. Its operation also includes the brand-focused Merchandising on Stage. MOS will now be 70% owned by Grupo Prisa's music arm (GVM) and 30% owned by RLM. GVM's acquisition broadens the cooperation between the two companies that began in 1999, when GVM was founded. The result was the creation of GVM's Planet Events, which has organized Spain tours by leading Latin artists. —Howell Lewellyn



## Latin Notas

LEILA COBO [lcobo@billboard.com](mailto:lcobo@billboard.com)

# Teen Tune-Out

Spanish-Language Radio Listenership Is Up—But Not With Young People

Who's listening to radio?

According to Arbitron's latest Listening Trends report for fall 2007, it isn't teens. Radio listenership by the 12-17 audience has been declining steadily since 1998, to its current low of only 8.1% of all listeners.

When it comes to Spanish-language radio, that average is even lower.

The 12- to 17-year-old set is barely a blip on the listener screen of all Spanish-language

formats, with the exception of Latin urban, where it counts for a high 19% of all listeners. In every other format, though, the demographic falls to a 6% share (for Spanish contemporary radio) or even lower.

While those numbers don't correspond to the nation's youthful Latin demographic (according to 2006 U.S. Census numbers, about one-third of all Latinos in the United States are younger than 18), Latin listenership overall remains healthy.

Spanish-language formats account for 10.9% of total U.S. radio listeners 12 and up, according to Arbitron's fall 2007 numbers. That share is only 1% less than the 11.9% high that Spanish-language radio registered at its peak in winter 2007. It also continues the general upward trend that Spanish formats have been registering since 1998, when they accounted for only 6.7% of all listenership.

Today, in an environment marked by decidedly anti-immigrant sentiment, the listening share for Spanish-language radio is greater than the share for urban radio (9.9%), rock (7.5%), country (9%) and even contemporary hit radio (10.8%).

Granted, Spanish's share includes all Spanish-language formats—even Spanish talk radio. But the numbers demonstrate that there is a strong and stable population that prefers to listen to its radio in Spanish.

Dividing the sector further, regional Mexican remains, by far, the most listened-to Spanish format. And to give you an idea of just how popular this niche of niches is, its 4.4% overall share surpasses the 3.6% registered by alternative radio.

If we delve deeper into regional Mexican, what's surprising is that the bulk of its audience—54%—is between 18 and 34 years old. That's younger-skewing than the 18-34 audience for tropical radio (35%) or for Spanish contemporary radio (37%). For the former, 48% of all listeners are 35 to 64 years old, compared with 38% for that age bracket in regional Mexican.

This breakdown underscores what Spanish-language radio listeners have long known: Regional Mexican is far more eager to experiment and play new music than Latin pop or tropical stations, where core artists have been the same for years,

aging with their audience.

Nothing wrong with that, if it brings in ratings. But it doesn't entice new audiences of any age to tune in, as getting a variety of names on those playlists is excruciatingly hard.

So here's one long-range question: What will happen to Spanish-language radio's slipping youth listenership if urban stations (or Latin rhythmic, per Billboard's Latin charts) keep dwindling?

With the stabilizing of the reggaetón boom, the number of Latin rhythmic stations that Nielsen BDS monitors is now only 10. More and more of those stations have altered their playlists to incorporate more pop and hits.

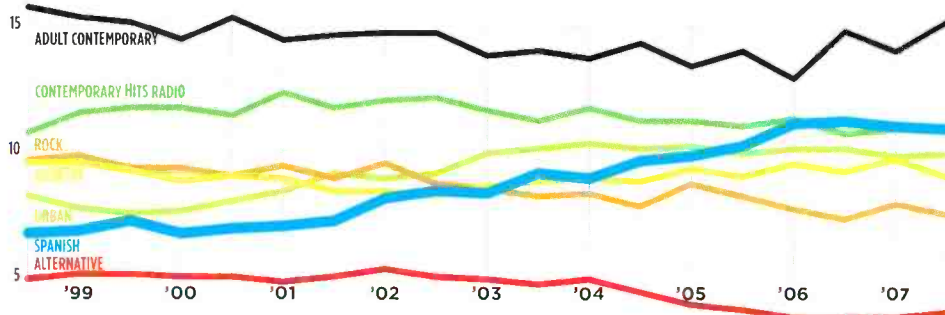
We know teen listeners are not what advertisers want, and that factor has contributed to the demise of those urban stations. But the format's 53% listenership in the 18-34 bracket and a 48% listenership in the 25-54 bracket can translate into spending dollars.

More important, with a healthy Spanish-language listenership, surely there is room for new music to attract new listeners in a broad variety of formats.

For 24/7 Latin news and analysis, see [billboard.biz/latin](http://billboard.biz/latin).

## STEADY GROWTH

Of late, Spanish radio (in blue) has gained in audience share while other formats have zig-zagged.



SOURCE: Arbitron fall 2007 American Radio Listening Trends study, based on average quarter-hour audience share

# Major Player

## New Publisher Ready To Battle Established Entities

The largest music publishing acquisition in history is now spawning a top competitor in the independent sector. Imagemusic, formed by Dutch publisher CP Masters (CPM) and pension fund Stichting Pensioenfonds ABP, is the new owner of the Universal Music Publishing Group (UMPG) assets sold under the watchful eyes of the European Commission (EC).

Now holding rights in songs recorded by artists like Justin Timberlake, R. Kelly and Shania Twain—and the funds to make many more deals—Imagemusic is ready to compete head-on with publishers in Europe and the United States.

This is exactly what the EC wanted before it would give its regulatory blessing to Universal's €1.63 billion (\$2.05 billion) acquisition of BMG Music Publishing. That deal closed in 2006, less than two months after a European court browbeat the EC for the way it handled examination of the Sony BMG Music Entertainment merger. With the independent music group Impala ob-

40 writers including Gino Vannelli, Johnny Nash, Kevin Gilliam (DJ Battlecat) and Candy Dulfer.

Just prior to BMG's sale, that publisher's U.K. assets (including the Zomba catalog) had generated an average of nearly €103 million (\$124 million) in revenue annually during 2003-05, with BMG retaining an average of more than €31 million (\$37 million) in net publisher's share (NPS) annually, according to confidential documents reviewed by Billboard during the BMG auction process. That NPS contributed an average of nearly 19% to the publisher's total NPS during each of those years. The catalogs sold by Universal are a portion of these assets.

The assets and publishing rights divested by Universal—and acquired by CPM/ABP—generated about €30 million (\$37.7 million) in revenue during 2006, resulting in roughly €10 million (\$12.6 million) in NPS, according to a confidential document reviewed by Billboard last year. The final purchase price was in the €125 million (\$189 million) range.

Imagemusic is already working on a second undisclosed acquisition and is ready to sign



**'The commission wanted to make sure we were serious about signing new writers.'**

—ANDRÉ DE RAAFF, CP MASTERS



jecting to the new acquisition, Universal chose to work closely with the EC and divest itself of assets rather than spend millions of dollars challenging potential EC objections.

In the last year, the EC closely monitored Universal's selection of assets and subpublishing rights—sending questionnaires to about 100 European companies for their opinions on the impact on the market by the proposed divestitures—to ensure that the sell-off would reduce Universal/BMG's market power while enhancing or creating competition in the publishing market.

After CPM/ABP beat out nearly a dozen other bidders and sealed the deal in December, the new buyer still had to satisfy the commissioners that it wasn't simply buying assets to squeeze out some money then sell them off again.

"They wanted to know how our network works, if we really had the intention to not only buy catalogs, but had serious ideas about continuing to work the catalogs and, very importantly, to continue to sign new writers," CPM co-CEO André de Raaff says.

Under the deal, CPM/ABP acquired the Zomba U.K., Rondor U.K., 19 Songs, 19 Music and BBC catalogs, which UMPG will subpublish outside Europe. It also acquired European subpublishing rights to the Zomba U.S. catalog. This adds the works of more than 100 writers to the CPM fold, including Kaiser Chiefs, producer Robert "Mutt" Lange (Shania Twain), Martin "Max Martin" Sandberg (Britney Spears, Backstreet Boys) and Mark Knopfler, as well as future songs by Timberlake, Kelly, Linkin Park, Ne-Yo, Nas and others. They join the CPM roster of songs by about

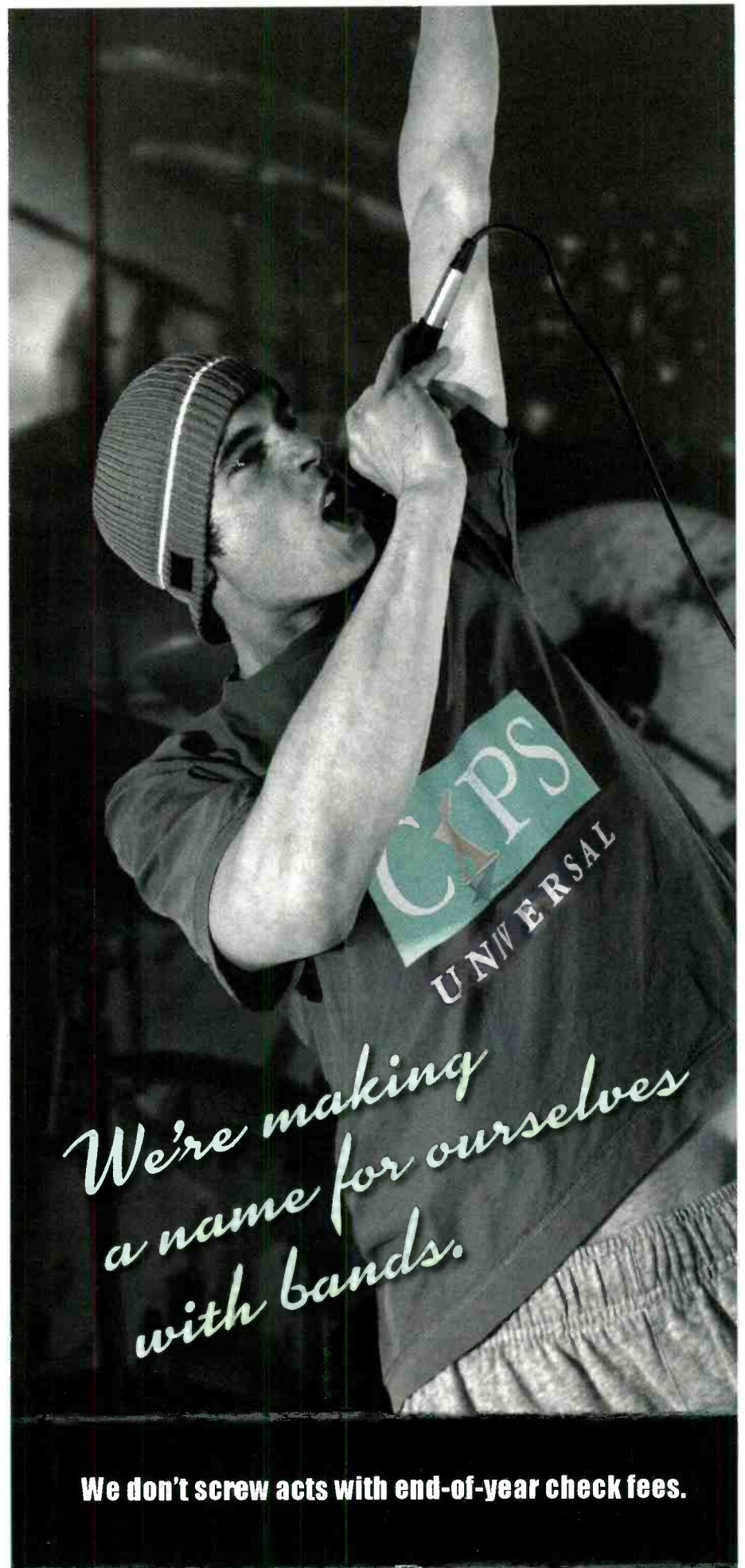
more writers, primarily from the United Kingdom and America, de Raaff says. With writers from these countries, "you automatically have a bigger chance to create worldwide success because of the language and the talent."

In the next six months, de Raaff plans to focus heavily on synch licensing. He believes the catalogs have been underexploited in Europe. And while some U.S. publishers believe that synch fees have dropped even though licensing opportunities have increased, de Raaff says he hasn't seen a pricing drop in Europe.

CPM is one of four divisions of the Netherlands-based CTM, an entertainment company co-owned by de Raaff, Bob Hubar and Denis Wigman. De Raaff, who was once GM of Warner/Chappell Music's Dutch office, has more than 30 years' experience in the music industry. Hubar is an established TV producer and former entertainment attorney.

Slightly more than a year ago, they decided to focus more on music publishing and TV production. That led to the quest for financial backers. ABP is Europe's largest, and the world's third-largest, pension fund with €217 billion (\$328 million) in assets under management. Last summer, de Raaff met ABP executives, who were then already considering investing in intellectual property. They joined forces just as the Universal assets went up for sale.

Imagemusic is opening a London office with four executives from Universal/Zomba, and adding four more to the staff. Administration will be handled out of its office in Hilversum, the Netherlands.



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ATLAS SOUND'S sales spiked on eMusic after a positive Pitchfork review.



## The Indies

CORTNEY HARDING [cortney.harding@billboard.com](mailto:cortney.harding@billboard.com)

**O**n one hand, the results of a recently released New York University Stern School of Business study ("Does Chatter Matter? The Impact of User-Generated Content on Music Sales," by **Vasant Dhar** and **Elaine Chang**) on how different outside elements affected or predicted sales once an album was released don't seem terribly shocking.

Of course, a record with some sort of publicity will sell more than one without any advance hype; if a record is put out in the woods and no one hears it, it probably won't make much of a sound.

Likewise, the authors' findings that blog buzz and social networks can lead to sales increases, sometimes up to three times the average of similar releases, isn't too surprising. But what bears examining, in the wake of this correlation, is how indie retailers can maximize this trend and build relationships with blogs to drive sales.

Online retailers have been some of the first to jump on this opportunity. **Insound.com**, which was recently acquired by the Alternative Distribution Alliance, has an extensive online affiliate program. "We have people on staff dedicated to reaching out to music blogs," site director **Patrick McNamara** says. **Insound** has had a partnership with **Pitchfork** for almost nine

years, and also has relationships with major blogs like **Brooklyn Vegan**, **Stereogum** and **Oh My Rockness**. Those sites get a small percentage of each sale that comes through a direct link, and **Insound** uses the program to boost sales and manage inventory.

"A good review on **Pitchfork** or some blog chatter can definitely drive sales," **McNamara** says. "When **Clap Your Hands Say Yeah** got **Pitchfork's** 'best new music' distinction, we sold 12,000 copies of the record."

Also benefiting from a strong relationship with **Pitchfork** is digital indie music retailer **eMusic**. According to editorial director **Yancy Strickler**, the site saw a 600% increase in downloads of the new **Atlas Sound** album after a recent **Pitchfork** review. **eMusic** also has a partnership with **Boing Boing**, which resulted in a 500% increase for **the Marseille Figs** after the site ran a positive review of their latest record, "The Dirty Canon."

From the perspective of the bloggers, money is only part of the equation when it comes to choosing the sites to which traffic is directed. "Ultimately it's all about picking the most useful commerce services for our audience, so we have the **Amazon MP3**, **Amie St.** and **eMusic** stores that provide [digital rights management]-free MP3 files; **Apple iTunes**, which provides a mix; and **Pricegrabber**, which helps our

users find the best prices on CDs if that's what they are looking for," says **Anthony Volodkin**, founder/CEO of aggregator the **Hype Machine**.

**Matthew Perpetua**, who writes **Fluxblog**, tends to steer his readers toward indie outlets. "I try to favor band sites/label sites, throw things toward indie online shops fairly often," he says.

While digital-only stores have embraced this model, brick-and-mortar stores—even those that sell music through their Web sites—have been slower. "We don't have any deals with the local blogs," says **Isaac Slusarenko** of **Portland, Ore.'s** **Jackpot Records**. Nor does **Phoenix's** **Stinkweeds Records**; owner **Kimber Lanning** says that while some local blogs do link to its store, there is no formal program in place.

Even larger indie chains like **Boston's** **Newbury Comics** have been slow to jump on the blog bandwagon. "Developing an affiliate program for blogs is on the list, but it's pretty far down on the list," **GM Duncan Browne** says. He also acknowledges that the store "sees a definite uptick in sales of a certain record when bloggers pay a lot of attention or a site gives it a good review."

**biz** For 24/7 indies news and analysis, see [billboard.biz/indies](http://billboard.biz/indies).

# Sales 2.0

Is Indie Retail Learning From Blog Buzz?

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## PUMP IT UP

Labels Look To Boost Digital Hip-Hop Album Sales

When Flo Rida set a digital sales record last month with his single "Low," which moved 470,000 copies the first week of January despite not being available on an album, it was emblematic of an intriguing trend.

Digital hip-hop track sales are at an all-time high, but in terms of digital album commerce, hip-hop is lagging far behind other genres. In 2007, of 500.4 million albums sold industry-wide, 10% were sold digitally. In comparison, of the 41.7 million rap albums sold, only 7% (2.9 million) of those were digital.

So far this year (through the week ending Feb. 17), according to Nielsen SoundScan, overall album sales stood at 56.4 million, with 15.4% of that figure being digital (8.6 million). Of the 4 million rap albums sold, 11.2%

have been digital (447,000).

Two indie labels are seeking a solution. Amalgam Digital, which claims it is the first hip-hop-specific online retail store, and Def Jux, which is finalizing plans to expand its label site to a full-blown digital store, are experimenting with new ways to boost the genre's download sales stats.

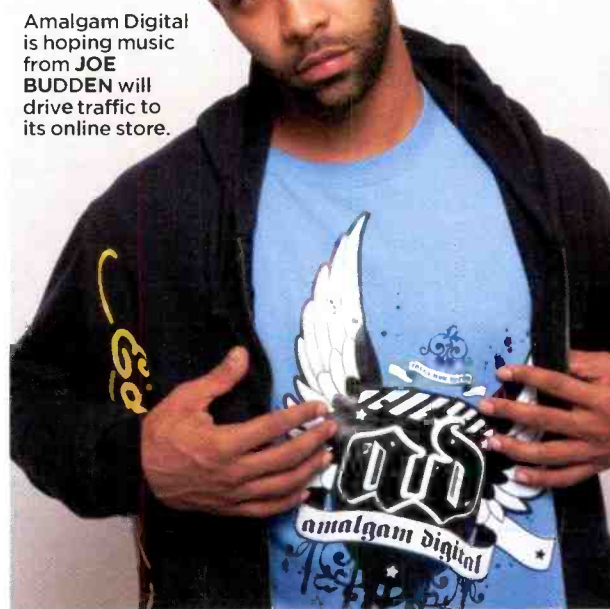
Amalgam GM Jay Andreozzi believes the label not only creates a platform for indie hip-hop artists who otherwise might find it difficult to get music featured on iTunes or Rhapsody, but that it will also aid in shifting hip-hop's digital figures.

The label is committed, Andreozzi says, to "new strategies like additional bonus tracks or a cappella versions of the album or exclusive digital-only albums." An example of the latter is Joe Bud-

den's "Mood Muzik 3.5." The digital-only album was made available earlier this year exclusively on Amalgam's Web site prior to the release of "Padded Room," the New Jersey rapper's official sophomore release, due this spring via the label. In addition, a limited-edition a cappella version of "Padded Room" will be made available free to fans who buy the album from the Amalgam site.

Koch VP of digital/mobile Bill Crowley says that although specialty stores have been successful in the past, he isn't certain a hip-hop-specific store will do as well. "There's a really healthy hip-hop market on the digital side, but they aren't the most likely to buy full-length albums," he says.

Why? Because hip-hop culture has historically been



Amalgam Digital is hoping music from **JOE BUDDEN** will drive traffic to its online store.

singles-driven. "While a lot of hip-hop fans can tell you their top 10 hip-hop albums, there are plenty that love the genre but aren't embedded in the culture that can't," says Jason King, artistic director at New York University's Clive Davis Department of Recorded Music. "Hip-hop has never really been a concept-album-driven culture."

Still, Def Jux plans on adopting the same free/bonus content policy Amalgam has implemented when it expands its online store in coming months. Currently, the site only sells music by Def Jux artists.

"You can put all the B-sides and exclusive digital content on there to further draw people in," label manager Jesse

Ferguson says. "You can add CDs, sneakers, sweatshirts, plus an entire catalog digitally, and not worry about it being in stock or not."

Andreozzi believes that signing former major-label artists like Budden (whose 2003 self-titled Def Jam debut has sold 526,000 copies) to indie labels will further facilitate growth in online album sales.

"We had the highest-selling individual album on Amalgam with Joe and now, when we do his next album, we will hopefully be able to do it on a bigger scale," Andreozzi says.

Crowley says, "There's a lot of success to be had when a high-profile artist finds their way to an indie," but he still believes singles sales will remain on top. "It all comes down to delivering tracks people want," he says. "Still, if they buy an album or a single, it beats the alternative of people not caring at all, or caring so little they'd opt to download illegally." ■■■

BUDDEN: ALEXANDER RICHTER

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### FACT #1: WINNIPEG IS COLD



Date	Event	Attendance	Gross Sales	Temperature
Nov. 28 - Dec. 2	Walking with the Dinosaurs	54,875	\$2,298,212	Brisk at -23°C
Dec. 9	Bon Jovi	15,879	\$1,483,694	Slight chill in the air at -26°C
Jan. 19	Michael Buble	10,198	\$593,762	Never noticed at -31°C
Jan. 21	Big & Rich	6,403	\$341,289	Fingers numb; -29°C
Jan. 26	Blue Ruede	4,593	\$189,552	Unseasonably warm at -19°C
Jan. 27	3 Days Grace	7,133	\$237,490	A holiday! -17°C
Feb. 8-9	Mooster Jam	24,000	\$294,156	Blizzard; 2°C
Feb. 11	John Mellencamp	11,350	\$666,211	A dry cold at -31°C
Feb. 22-24*	High School Musical	21,000	\$550,000	-24°C and holding
Mar. 8-16*	CDN Championship Curling Brier	200,000	\$2,200,000	Really, will it matter?
Mar. 18*	Avril Lavigne	9,000	\$400,000	Likely still hellish
Mar. 21*	Martina McBride	7,000	\$400,000	Expecting the worst
Mar. 25*	Foo Fighters	10,000	\$500,000	No hope in sight
Mar. 28*	Rascal Flatts	12,000	\$850,000	Cabin fever epidemic

\* Estimated Gross & Attendance

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### FACT #2: THE MTS CENTRE IS HOT



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## Larry Norman 1947-2008

### Christian Rock Pioneer Influenced A Range Of Acts

One of Christian rock music's most influential and controversial figures, Larry Norman died Feb. 24 of heart failure at his home in Salem, Ore. He was 60.

Inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame in 2001, Norman is often referred to as "the father of Christian rock music." He is known for such groundbreaking anthems as "Why Should the Devil Have All the Good Music" and "I Wish We'd All Been Ready."

"Larry was an interesting person in every sense of the word," Gospel Music Assn. president/CEO John Styll says. "He was one of the first to record what later became known as contemporary Christian music, but what he did in the early '70s was far edgier than most of what comes from that genre now. I found Larry to be likable and personable, although unpredictable. I always suspected that he wrote much of his own publicity and spun it so as to further his own mystique, and he did have a way of rewriting history. But he earned his place, and history will always show that he was an original—an iconoclast."

Born April 8, 1947, in Corpus Christi, Texas, Norman began writing and performing at age 9. He later moved to San Jose, Calif., where he became part of the local music scene, opening for the Doors and Jimi Hendrix.

Norman began recording in the mid-'60s and first garnered attention with 1968 release "I Love You," which he recorded while lead singer for the group People! The title track was a cover of the Zombies tune, which reached No. 7 on Billboard's pop singles chart.

Norman left the group as soon as its album was released and embarked on a colorful solo career. Capitol Records issued his first solo album, "Upon This Rock," in 1969, widely considered the first Christian rock album. In 1972, with help from Beatles producer George Martin, he recorded the landmark "Only Visiting This Planet" for MGM Records. The following year, he released "So Long Ago the Garden," also on MGM, before opting to pursue the indie label route the remainder of his career, launching his own Solid Rock Records.

Norman pushed the boundaries by creating rock music that incorporated his faith and targeted nonbelievers. Never one to preach to the choir, Norman's brazen passion sometimes irked religious conservatives, but no amount of criticism could deter him. With his long hair, faded jeans and outspoken political and social views, he was the original Christian rock rebel.

Many Christian bookstores banned his product, but his fellow musicians always held him in high esteem. "I remember the exact moment when I first heard Larry's music," says EMI Christian Music Publishing president Eddie DeGarmo, formerly of pioneering Christian rock outfit DeGarmo & Key. "It was June 1972. I was 17. We were just kids in a rock band on a mission to our generation playing wherever we could. None of us were aware that anyone else was doing this probably due to us being sheltered in the Bible Belt. 'Only Visiting This Planet' truly changed the way we looked at things and what was possible. There was somebody that had blazed the trail for us."

Norman's music has influenced a variety of artists, from mainstream rockers to today's



Above: LARRY NORMAN, bottom right circa 1967, with San Jose, Calif.-based pop-rock group People! Inset: Norman performs at a band reunion at the Santa Clara Fairgrounds in 2007.

young Christian bands. "Larry Norman is without a doubt my greatest lyrical influence," ForeFront artist tobyMac says. "He was socially relevant, spiritually significant and passionate about challenging his generation to new heights of love. Larry put Jesus on the streets—right where he belongs."

More than 300 acts have recorded Norman's songs, among them Sammy Davis Jr., Petula Clark, Rebecca St. James and Geoff Moore & the Distance. In 1995, St. James, dcTalk, Grammatrain and Audio Adrenaline were among the Christian acts participating in the tribute album "One Way: Songs of Larry Norman."

At the time of his death, Norman had been working on a new project with Modest Mouse's Isaac Brock and Pixies frontman Frank Black, who cites Norman as a major influence. That music will be released later this year.

Just hours before he died, Norman dictated a message to be posted on his Web site. It said, in part, "I feel like a prize in a box of Cracker Jacks with God's hand reaching down to pick me up. I have been under medical care for months. My wounds are getting bigger. I have trouble breathing. I am ready to fly home." •••



## Legal Matters

SUSAN BUTLER sbutler@billboard.com

# The Legends Lawsuit

## Record Club Sales At Center Of Artists' Royalty Claim

The record industry doesn't make cookie-cutter record deals. This can lead to significant accounting problems—especially after artists sign with different labels over time, each with its own negotiated contractual terms covering royalty percentages and calculation methods. Add to the mix a major-label group acquiring several other labels, and one result can be a lawsuit, such as the one recently filed by 14 artists or their estates against Universal Music Group.

The plaintiffs include such legendary figures as Patti Page and the estates (or trusts) of Count Basie, Sarah Vaughan, Woody Herman and Benny Goodman. The only thing they have in common is that they all signed with labels eventually acquired by UMG, they all hired H/B Webman & Co. to audit their royalty accounts, and they aren't satisfied with UMG's accountings and payments.

It would be easy to say that this case is about a lack of transparency in accounting. But it's more complex than that. Nearly every possible legal and accounting allegation is thrown into this mishmash of a suit filed Feb. 14 in the New York Supreme Court.

The 53-page complaint cites improper payments in connection with record clubs,

returns, compilations, third-party licenses, digital distributions, reserves, legal settlements, foreign royalties and Audio Home Recording Act royalties from 1998 to the present. The complaint alleges that the parties agreed to toll (extend) the statute of limitations during this period of time.

Specifically, the plaintiffs claim that UMG received "inflated advances" and other fees from record clubs and accepted very low royalties—on which artists's royalties, in turn, were calculated.

Oren Warshavsky, a partner with Troutman Sanders in New York, represents the plaintiffs. He believes that the artists should receive a share of the record club fees, since the labels provide free goods—which do not generate royalties—to record club subscribers.

In addition, he says, the contracts required royalties to be calculated based on retail list price. But, he says, UMG no longer publishes retail list prices in its catalog. Instead, he says, the label uses a "synthetic" retail price, which is based on the published price to dealers (PPD). He argues that this is improper because UMG never asked the artists whether the change was acceptable to them.

Despite numerous requests, he adds, UMG refused to tell auditors how it comes up with this price. The auditor determined that the company's methodology resulted in it crediting, as the retail list price, roughly 120%-130% of the PPD; the actual retail list price,



GLOBAL BY HOWELL LLEWELLYN

# RAUCOUS CAUCUS

## Spain's Indie Labels Team Up To Prep For Government Talks

MADRID—The Spanish indie label sector has set up a nationwide Independent Labels' Federation (FIP) to hold more sway in upcoming consultations with the government over music legislation.

To create FIP, the 48-member indie labels body UFI has joined with regional label groups in Catalonia (Barcelona), the Basque Country (Bilbao), Valencia and Galicia (Vigo).

The new group will be independent of Spain's two main music sector pillars—major labels' body and IFPI affiliate Promusicae, and 80,000-member authors' and publishers' society SGAE. FIP will represent some 200 labels that account for 20% of record sales in Spain.

One FIP demand will be for such anti-peer-

to-peer piracy legislation as that proposed in France and the United Kingdom. Former UFI committee member Fernando Luaces, who is now a Promusicae board member and director of Madrid label Boa Records, says, "We want similar laws on the control of Internet content owned by artists and labels—the question of rights [on the] Internet is crucial to the indie label sector."

Luaces adds that "FIP will be a unique voice in the negotiation of these rights, and we shall be prominent in the three lines of negotiations—with mobile phone operators such as Telefonica, global Internet sites like MySpace and YouTube, and rights collecting societies



PEOPLE: MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES; INSET: RON HARRIS/AP IMAGES



VAUGHAN

he says, was 152% of the PPD.

The auditors also found that although many contracts did not allow for certain deductions such as packaging, Warshavsky says, it appears that UMG built a standard deduction into the PPD (e.g., the PPD would be 25% below the published PPD).

Among other claims, the complaint alleges that UMG debited the plaintiffs' accounts with a higher per-unit price when records were returned than it previously credited to them when the same units were sold. UMG also deducted a reserve against royalties for certain third-party exploitations despite no contractual provision allowing for the deduction, the complaint claims.

Warshavsky says he also plans to claim that digital download deals are licenses rather than sales, requiring higher royalties to artists.

It would be surprising if the court permits this case to proceed as one lawsuit; each plaintiff has his or her own contractual agreements that will likely guide how much, if anything, each one is owed.

For example, Count Basie entered more than nine contracts with at least five different labels that eventually became part of UMG. The Mills Brothers had more than 16 agreements in five decades.

And some of the legal remedies may be difficult to win. The plaintiffs claim there is a fiduciary duty between the label and the artists, which would require UMG to exercise a higher standard of care toward its artists than with other contractual relationships. But nearly every court has held previously that there

is no such duty between artists and labels.

The plaintiffs also want the court to rescind the contracts and return the masters to them. But a rescission requires that all the parties be returned to their original pre-contract positions. The plaintiffs could have to pay to UMG all money ever spent by the labels for these artists since, in some cases, the 1930s.

Time will tell whether the plaintiffs are entitled to the total \$6.1 million they claim in damages or whether they are expecting more than they contractually agreed to accept.

"We believe that these claims are baseless, and we are confident that we will prevail in court," a UMG spokesman says.

**.biz** For 24/7 legal news and analysis, see [billboard.biz/legal](http://billboard.biz/legal).



FERNANDO LUACES is leading an indie charge for more pay in music-related legislation.

such as SGAE. We want MySpace and YouTube to pay rights now for using music made in Spain and owned by

Spanish indie labels."

While SGAE welcomed FIP's imminent arrival, Promusicae declined to comment. However, Simone Bosé, director general of Promusicae member EMI Spain, calls FIP "good news as long as all collectives join together to talk about sector problems."

Bosé adds, "The music industry needs unity and strength more than ever to combat the threat of piracy, and to again boost new talent."

Mark Kitcatt, VP of UFI and

director of Madrid label Everlasting Records and distributor Popstock, says that another likely FIP demand will be that 40% of all music played on radio stations be "made in Spain," including Spanish indie groups that record in English.

Kitcatt adds that this type of legislation is a necessary measure "to give Spanish music more recognition and esteem, to make it easier to get [Spanish] bands out there in Europe, the United States and China."



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**'The music industry needs unity and strength more than ever to combat the threat of piracy and to again boost new talent.'**

—SIMONE BOSÉ, EMI SPAIN

## GLOBAL NEWSLINE

### >>> DOWNLOADS UP 41% IN JAPAN

Music downloads in Japan rose by 41% in trade value to 75.5 billion yen (\$699 million) in 2007, with volumes up 26% to 465 million units, according to data released by the Recording Industry Assn. of Japan. PC-based music download sales—including full tracks, albums and music videos—rose 30% to slightly less than 31 million units, for a wholesale value of 5.92 billion yen (\$54.8 million), up 18% from 2006. Downloads in the all-conquering mobile sector accounted for the vast majority of sales, with 434 million units having a wholesale value of 68 billion yen (\$629.6 million). Master ringtones represented the largest part of that with 223.9 million units, down 1% from 2006. The RIAJ counts albums and mini-albums as single units regardless of the number of tracks they contain.

—Fred Varcoe

### >>> WARNER AFRICA GOES MOBILE

Warner Music Gallo Africa has struck a strategic partnership with iO global, which promises to pump the major's music across African mobile networks. Founded in May 2005 in the United Kingdom, iO is a global provider of integrated digital retail solutions. It will distribute WMGA's repertoire through a network of third-party wireless operators and mobile service providers in Africa. The partnership will encompass digitized music in an array of mobile formats, including full tracks, album bundles and ringtones. The pact will initially focus on sub-Saharan African, rolling out first in South Africa and Nigeria in March. WMGA was created in May 2006 as a joint venture between Warner Music International and South African publishing and entertainment company Johncom and its label subsidiary Gallo Music.

—Lars Brandle

### >>> 'THREE STRIKES' FOR DOWN UNDER?

The Australian government says it is considering "three strikes and out" legislation that would see frequent illegal file downloaders lose their Internet access. Under the proposal, similar to a plan being considered by the British government, an illegal file sharer will be given a warning. This will be followed by a suspension of Internet access, and then cancellation. The law would require Internet service providers to monitor traffic on their networks. The Australian Recording Industry Assn. claims that 2.8 million Australians downloaded music and movie files illegally in 2007. ARIA has proposed the three-strikes policy as a weapon in battling piracy during discussions in the past 12 months with the government and ISPs, ARIA chief executive Stephen Peach says. "It's a highly compelling proposal," he says. However, Peach maintains that ARIA would prefer to formulate a voluntary code of conduct with ISPs than rely on legislation.

—Christie Eliezer

### >>> POSTHUMOUS DMA WINS FOR NATASJA

Urban artist Natasja posthumously won four honors at the 20th annual Danish Music Awards show, held Feb. 23 in Copenhagen. The Playground Music artist, who died in a car accident last June, took awards for best album, female vocalist, urban album and songwriter for "I Danmark Er Jeg Født." Alternative rock act Dúné won best band, best new act and best rock album for "We Are in There You Are out Here." Other winners included Copenhagen Records' Alphabeat, whose self-titled disc was named best pop album; its single "10,000 Nights of Thunder" was named best track. Most of the awards were determined by a music industry/media jury; special juries dealt with the more specialized awards.

—Charles Ferro

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GLOBAL BY STEVE McCLURE

# (NOT SO) BIG IN JAPAN

## Lavigne One Of Few International Artists Making Headway

TOKYO—How low can it go? That's what industry insiders in Japan are asking after a poor year for international repertoire in the world's No. 2 music market.

According to the Recording Industry Assn. of Japan (RIAJ), physical shipments of international repertoire, excluding music video/DVD—for digital figures, see Global Newsline, left—plunged 23% in 2007 in volume to 62.6 million units. Value fell 17% to 76.5 billion yen (\$713.6 million).

Domestic shipments fell only 6% to 204.2 million units in 2007, with wholesale value down 1% to 256.8 billion yen (\$2.4 billion). That gave international repertoire (called "yogaku") a 23% market share in volume and value, com-

pared with 27% and 26%, respectively, in 2006.

Warner Music Asia Pacific president Lachie Rutherford says one key problem is that the Asian media, particularly in Japan, is "focused on domestic acts, and unless there is a specific story or angle, the focus [on overseas acts] is not there."

Rutherford says it's crucial for acts to connect to mainstream Japanese consumers, but "Western acts do not always invest the time, so they will not penetrate here unless they're already superstars."

Tower Records Japan merchandise operation manager Takeshi Imaizumi says a lack of such overseas icons as Michael Jackson, Prince

or Madonna has added to the problem. "Since the early 1990s," he says, "the Japanese record industry hasn't been able to find such artists. Only Avril Lavigne has had good results in the past few years."

Lavigne's April 2007 set "The Best Damn Thing"

(BMG Japan) was Japan's top yogaku album in 2007, selling more than 1 million units, according to the label.

BMG Japan president Daniel DiCicco says Lavigne shares "the one trait that ties together nearly every recent successful artist story in Japan... an early, long-term



AVRIL LAVIGNE collected an award recently in Tokyo from BMG Japan president DANIEL DiCICCO for 800,000 shipments of her album 'The Best Damn Thing.' The set has now passed the 1 million-unit mark.

GLOBAL BY ROBERT THOMPSON

# As The World Turns

## Music World Parent Company Unveils New Distribution Plan

TORONTO—The parent company of defunct Canadian retail chain Music World plans to re-emerge as a distributor for music to "non-traditional" markets, aiming at stores like Canadian Tire, Toys "R" Us and other mall-based retailers.

"We'll build an assortment of music for them based on demographics, their retail footprint, their location," says Pindoff Entertainment Group president Michael Waitzer, former CEO of Canadian apparel and footwear chain Athletes World. Pindoff also is planning to open 50 temporary retail stores in malls for the fourth-quarter holiday season.

Music World officially closed its doors Jan. 11,

shuttering 72 stores across Canada. The company was owned by the Pindoff family until it was sold late last year to a group of investors, and as part of the receiver-

**'We believe music is our core DNA and always will.'**

—HUMPHREY KADANER, HMV CANADA

ship of that deal, Music World owed its new owner \$30 million. Documents indicate the company had \$72 million in annual sales.

Though a handful of the stores were on the verge of profitability, most had lease

obligations that needed to be negotiated and would have raised costs, Waitzer says, which led to the decision to close the stores and lay off all 648 employees.

Waitzer adds that record companies are still owed money from liquidated stock, but wouldn't disclose what percentage of that they can expect to see.

While there are rumblings of discontent for Pindoff's

new distribution scheme among some executives, others are supporting the initiative in the hope of recovering some lost revenue and opening up new market segments.

Universal Music Canada president Randy Lennox says he feels positive that an arrangement can be worked out with Pindoff that will return some money from the liquidation of product in Music World stores to the company as it moves forward with the new distribution company.

"There is a will on our part to see Pindoff succeed," Lennox says. "We're fully engaged in trying to make it work, and I'm optimistic it will."

HMV Canada president Humphrey Kadaner says the



focus on the market, including multiple and well-timed artist visits."

The singer's Vancouver-based manager Terry McBride subscribes to that thinking, attributing Lavigne's success to "a combination of three promotional trips, [Japanese-language]

versions of the singles 'Girlfriend' and 'Hot,' plus huge use of her manga stories over mobile and Internet."

Lavigne was featured as a character in a two-volume manga comic book, "Make 5 Wishes," published in April and July 2007 by Random House-owned Del Rey Manga. They were available online and to mobile users as weekly episodes, with Lavigne's music soundtracking the images.

While mobile is Japan's dominant digital-music sales force, industry sources confirm that mobile-based yogaku downloads remain relatively low, partly due to international rights-holders' dissatisfaction with content aggregators' revenue splits.

SoundScan Japan does not have the scale of coverage among retailers that Nielsen SoundScan does in the United States, but has logged 684,000 sales of "The Best Damn Thing," with Ne-Yo's "Because of You" (Universal International) the second-placed yogaku set selling 321,000 units, ahead of Backstreet Boys' "Unbreakable" (BMG Japan) with 300,000.

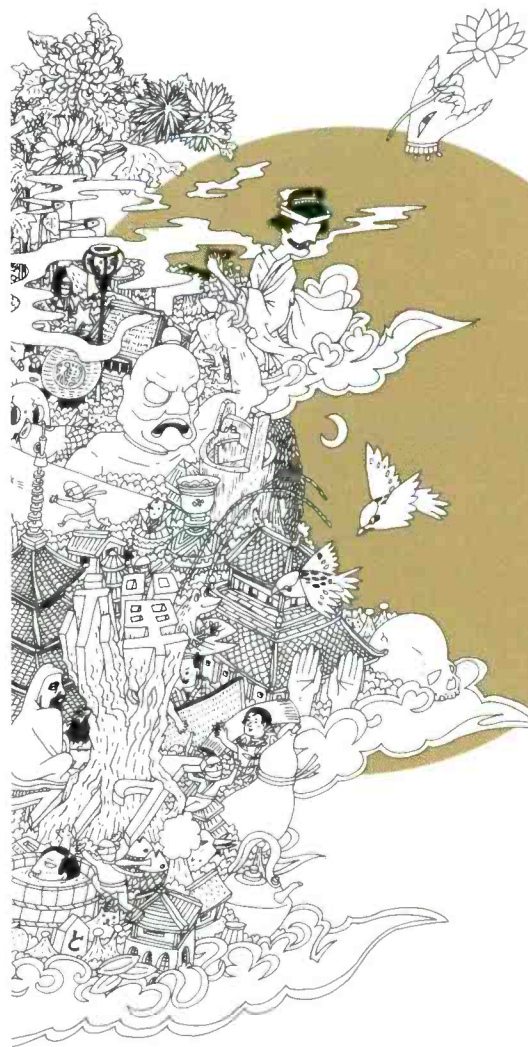
While neither RIAJ nor SoundScan break out labels' international repertoire mar-

ket shares. Universal Music Japan claims to be the 2007 market leader with 33%. UMJ COO Kaz Koike says yogaku sales dropped slightly year on year, but declines to provide exact figures. He suggests UMJ's share largely held up through a decision to follow its domestic marketing approach of placing heavy emphasis on TV promotion.

Yuji Takahashi, head of international at Tokyo-based label Pony Canyon, adds that local artists' dominance of Japanese TV was long compensated for by radio and music magazines' focus on foreign acts. But he says radio now favors domestic talent, while specialist music magazines' sales have been hit by free magazines published by retailers like Tower and HMV.

However, DiCicco suggests all is not yet lost for yogaku. "As [more] overseas markets evolve," he says, "Japanese music companies need to proactively and aggressively search further below the radar for international artists that have the melodies, style—and commitment—necessary to break in Japan."

*Additional reporting by Tom Ferguson in London.*



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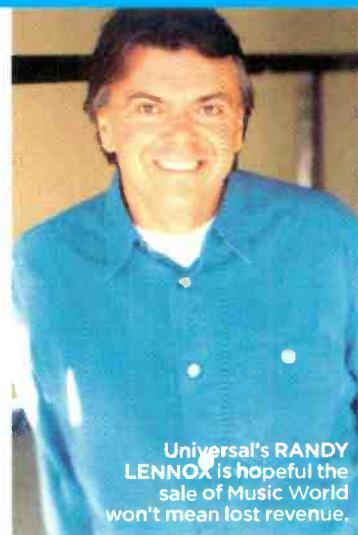
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chain hopes it can pick up half of Music World's past business, which would add approximately \$35 million to its annual revenue. The chain, which has 118 stores across Canada, plans to move into the former locations of three Music World stores.

"Most [malls] want an entertainment retail presence," he says, "so they absolutely want us there."

But some indies are anxious about the fact that there is now one major player left in Canada's music retail sector. "We're left struggling to deal with [HMV]," says Enrique Soissa, co-founder of Toronto-based indie Paper Bag Records, home to releases by such bands as Tokyo Police Club and the Acorn. "It is hard for us to get cut in on a lot of promotions."

Kadaner says he can understand the concerns that music companies in Canada



Universal's **RANDY LENNOX** is hopeful the sale of Music World won't mean lost revenue.

have about the state of the retail industry. He says that while HMV, which he estimates controls around 30% of the music retail market, adds new product segments like videogames and MP3 players, it is still primarily focused on music.

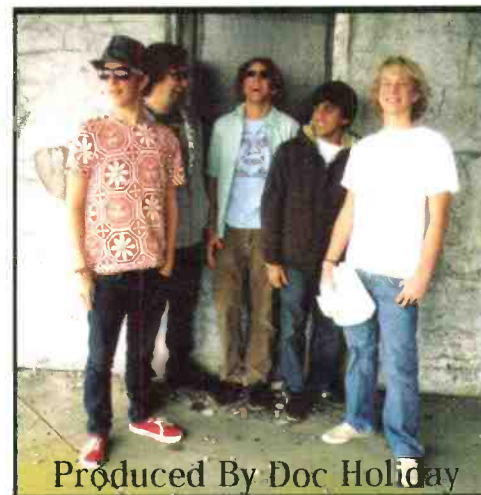
"One can understand their frustration because their total business is music, which is often being consumed by people stealing it," he says. "At the same time they see

retail points being lost or being replaced by retailers where music is a tertiary focus. But we believe music is our core DNA and always will. While we are evolving as an entertainment retailer, we believe that brings traffic into our stores and exposes them to music. That gives the music industry a pas-

sionate, committed retailer that will remain in business."

Canadian Independent Record Production Assn. president Duncan McKie says the retail problems are just a factor of the overall decline in music sales.

"It is surely a big concern, but it is just a symptom of a bigger problem, which is the decline in physical music sales," McKie says. "Canada [caught] this cold early and got it bad."



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# Jordan Schur

It's all about hits for this longtime label president, who is making partnerships a key role in breaking his new roster of artists.



Jordan Schur has one hell of a wall of fame in his Santa Monica, Calif., office. It features posters, framed press clips and memorabilia from Limp Bizkit, Korn, Weezer and the Cure—just some of the acts he worked with in his previous incarnations as president of Geffen Records and owner of Flip Records.

But Schur is most excited about the future. Twenty months after he founded Suretone with an infusion of cash and support from Interscope, the label is about to release a string of albums in the coming months: From First to Last's self-titled album drops April 15 (see story, page 48). Following in rapid succession are releases from Shwayze, Meriwether, the Black Angels, Eastern Conference Champions and the Pink Spiders.

"I feel so strongly about these acts, it's incredible," Schur says. "It's only ironic that at the world's worst time in music, I have the greatest roster I've ever had." "Jordan has a history of finding artists, building them from the ground up, finding their audience and breaking them into the mainstream," Interscope Geffen A&M chairman Jimmy Iovine says.

Schur isn't just relying on the traditional radio-and-release strategy to break these bands. He's drumming up business by pursuing partners in TV, videogames and retail. And the Suretone Web site has just relaunched with the goal of becoming a social networking site for fans of the bands on his label. "It has to be about creating a community around whatever music you're doing," he says. "Hype is the danger. Hype is the enemy of everything that is real."

## So what does it cost to start a label these days?

I've invested \$6 million of my own money in this business in the last 20 months. No one in the record business as an entrepreneur would say that, because no one would be crazy enough to fucking do it [laughs]. I don't answer to finance meetings. I don't look at quarterly cash flow statements of this company. I don't give a shit.

I did it because I believe in my artists, and I believe in myself, and I believe in the power of music because music has never been more present in the culture of our lives.

Interscope has been great to me. They pay for the records that are produced, they pay for all the marketing, they give me some great overhead in the company. But the investment, overall, if you look at the roster and you look at all the signings and you look at the money I've put in and the money they've put in, including marketing and everything else, you probably come to a number that's \$25 million-\$30 million. Easily.

## And you're about to get another big investment?

The Maloof family is making an investment in Suretone to become my partners—ultimately, it's a multi-million-dollar investment. They

want me to look after their music interests. They have a couple of young artists, one of them is Ali Lohan, Lindsay Lohan's sister. We're going to be launching her music career, and we're also doing a TV show with her.

The Maloofs bring great resources. They have a \$20 million recording studio in the Palms and they have an unbelievable venue in the Pearl [in Las Vegas]. We can record our artists and [have them] perform there. With [their background in] the NBA, they bring all sorts of resources for us to license our music. They'll enjoy a minority position in the company because I want to maintain my complete control, but I'm extremely happy to have them onboard.

## What is your state of the union for the music industry?

The music industry has been incredibly fat and lazy, and that's the truth. When you rely upon the musical consumer to repurchase their musical library—from vinyl and cassettes and 8-track tapes all the way through CDs—and you have this massive growth that happened every few years, and you think that's real, you're crazy. It's not real. Once we got to a digital platform where [consumers] could control all of their music within one unit, it ended the built-in engine of the re-

purchasing of the musical library. So then what you're left with really is the business, and people in this business that can find talent and harvest the talent. That's the whole ballgame—it's only about hits.

## Your deals seem like 360 deals, but with significant emphasis on nontraditional sources of income.

We're going out of our way to create alliances and partnerships with anyone and everyone that we feel can help us set the table for when we bring our music to market. If you look at the structure of Suretone, you understand why I believe in that, because I'm not just the record company. I'm the manager. I'm not just the manager and the record company, in many cases, I'm the publisher. You can no longer survive just on the music sales.

I was one of the guys, originally, who never had a problem being the record company and the manager. It was a natural move for me, because I wanted my artists and my destiny to all be one and the same.

I'm not interested in selling a song. I'm interested only in selling an artist. I'm not interested in popping a song on the radio and having them go and buy the single. My job is to grasp onto the integrity and the vision that these artists have, and help them evolve their lifestyle-

I don't answer to finance meetings. I don't look at quarterly cash flow statements of this company. I don't give a shit.

driven bands. So that when that base widens, so that when we do ultimately go to radio and television, we don't have our hearts in our throat.

## Who's next on your roster?

For From First to Last, Josh Abraham produced the record. He did 30 Seconds to Mars recently, but he also did Staind for me, "Break the Cycle." He understands big rock sounds. Meriwether, they're from New Orleans and they've played all these shows spread out in a 200- to 300-mile radius in every direction from New Orleans. We're going to drop that record toward the end of the summer, in the fall.

Shwayze has been incubated in the clubs. It's blowing up. That's a direct result of us working for the last year, feeding the clubs, touring, hitting markets three times, four times. We've hit the top 20 markets in America. I get 10-15 grand a show for them, now. And yet, I don't have a song on the radio, I haven't put a video to MTV and there's no album out. Interscope is like, "Holy shit, this fucking thing is on fire!" It's me who is saying, "No, no, no, wait, because we also have an MTV show that doesn't start until June."

## You did TV before with "The Ashlee Simpson Show." Are you ready for another close-up?

The TV show is amazing—it's like "Entourage" in the music business. It's Shwayze and Cisco Adler, his singer/partner who writes music with him and produces all the music. He's a genius and, by the way, is the son of Lou Adler. I wanted to capture their lifestyle—and they have a crazy lifestyle.

We did three shows one night at the Super Bowl, and we ended up at 6 in the morning driving back to the house with me, Cisco and Shwayze and 12 girls shoe-horned in a Hummer. And I have to call my wife the next morning to explain, "I didn't do anything. Don't worry about it. There's nothing I can do. I'm the manager and I've got to be with them." ...

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# CHASING THE DOLLAR

**For The Global Music  
Business, America's  
Weak Currency  
Means Game On—  
For Challenges And  
Opportunities**

**By Ed Christman  
And Lars Brandle**  
Illustration By William Duke

When OT-Vale artist Chenoa flew to the Americas from Spain to begin a Feb. 17-March 15 promotional tour of key Latin-American markets to support her “Absurda Cenicienta” album, Vale Music president Ricard Campoy already knew that the weak American dollar was going to wreak some havoc on the album’s P&L statement. ■ “The first costs are paid here [in Barcelona] in euros—that is, the airfares, making the promo videoclip and so on,” Campoy says. “Then later when we receive revenue and royalties, it’s in dollars. And that is not much when changed into euros.” ■ It’s a reality that those in and around the music business have been dealing with for years now, at least since the early part of this decade, when the dollar began its long decline. Simply put, if your business collects revenue in dollars, but pays out in a different currency, chances are the past few years have introduced new challenges. But of course, for every party that gets hurt because of the weak American dollar, someone else in the deal could derive a benefit because of exchange rates. Take OT-Vale, for example: Its Universal U.S. and Universal Mexico sister companies of Vale Music—which Universal Music Group acquired last year—benefit from the cheap dollar because the local companies pay the expenses for the promotional tour on the ground, according to Campoy’s view. ■ In one way or another the weak American dollar—which on Feb. 26 dropped to 67 cents against the euro, versus 93 cents on that same date five years ago—has affected every aspect of the global music business, from touring, label operations and the importing and exporting of music to where and how investors and music companies make bets through investments.



## INVESTMENTS

Financial executives suggest that foreign investors will see the weak dollar as an opportunity to buy or invest in U.S. assets to achieve bargain-basement pricing, while foreign-based music companies might consider this time as ripe to initiate or expand U.S. operations.

That's what London-based private equity firm Marwyn Investment Management did in February 2007 when it acquired Entertainment One, which owned Koch Entertainment. It then added to its U.S. holdings by buying Navarre's independent music distribution company three months later.

From the opposite perspective, U.S.-based music companies operating on a global stage have an incentive to reinvest their international revenue in those other territories, instead of repatriating those funds home.

"Some of our investments done over the last year were done with other currencies," Warner Music Group CFO Michael Fleisher says. "We were thoughtful about currencies when doing some of those transactions."

Outside the United States, WMG has used non-U.S. dollar currencies to acquire or help start, in the last 12 months, Jean-Claude Camus Productions (January), a tour production, promotion and booking company in France, to help execute its 360-degree strategy; B-Unique (November 2007), a U.K.-based record label; a 70%

stake in Taisuke (September 2007), a leading artist services company in Japan; Vitamin (September 2007), a label in South Korea; the creation of Digital Access (June 2007), a joint venture with Sony BMG and Russian music labels Soyuz and Nikitin Records, to facilitate the wholesale distribution of a wide range of local and international music products to Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States; a significant stake in ZebraLution (February 2007), the Duisburg, Germany-based indie-label digital distribution company; and the Rights Co. (November 2007) in London, which it merged with Warner Vision to form Warner Music Entertainment.

IF YOU GET PAID IN DOLLARS, BUT PAY IN EUROS, TIMES ARE TOUGHER.

## OPERATIONS

"One of the things we like is that half our revenue is derived from outside the U.S.," Fleisher says. In its most recent fiscal year, WMG revenue was split between 49% in the States (\$1.67 billion) and 51% internationally (\$1.73 billion). EMI generated 30.7% of its revenue in the States (£554.3 million, or \$1.09 billion) of its total revenue of £1.8 billion (\$3.5 billion) in its most recent fiscal year ended March 31, 2007. The other two major labels do not publically break out music revenue by territory.

"We have costs that match up against our revenue" in the respective currencies, he adds. "You don't want to have all your costs in the dollar and revenue in other currencies."

Conversely, if "you are a foreign company selling your product in dollars, doing most of your business in the U.S. and need to convert back to host company currency? Then you are going to get killed," one Wall Street investor familiar with the music industry says.

That happened to a couple of Canadian labels, Madacy and St. Clair, earlier this decade, according to a financial industry observer. Both companies derive the bulk of their revenue from the States, but most of their overhead was in Canada, which meant that they had to repatriate most of their revenue to pay bills—a costly process when the U.S. dollar is weak against the Canadian dollar.

Five years ago, those companies had an advantage when the Canadian dollar was worth 65 cents. To look at that in dollars—since that's how Montreal-based Madacy, which trades publicly on the Toronto stock exchange, measures its revenue—on Feb. 14, 2003, theoretically \$40 million in U.S. sales would have paid nearly \$61 million

Canadian in expenses, according to foreign exchange site oanda.com. Today, that \$40 million U.S. would have only paid for \$40 million in Canadian expenses, a shortfall of \$21 million Canadian.

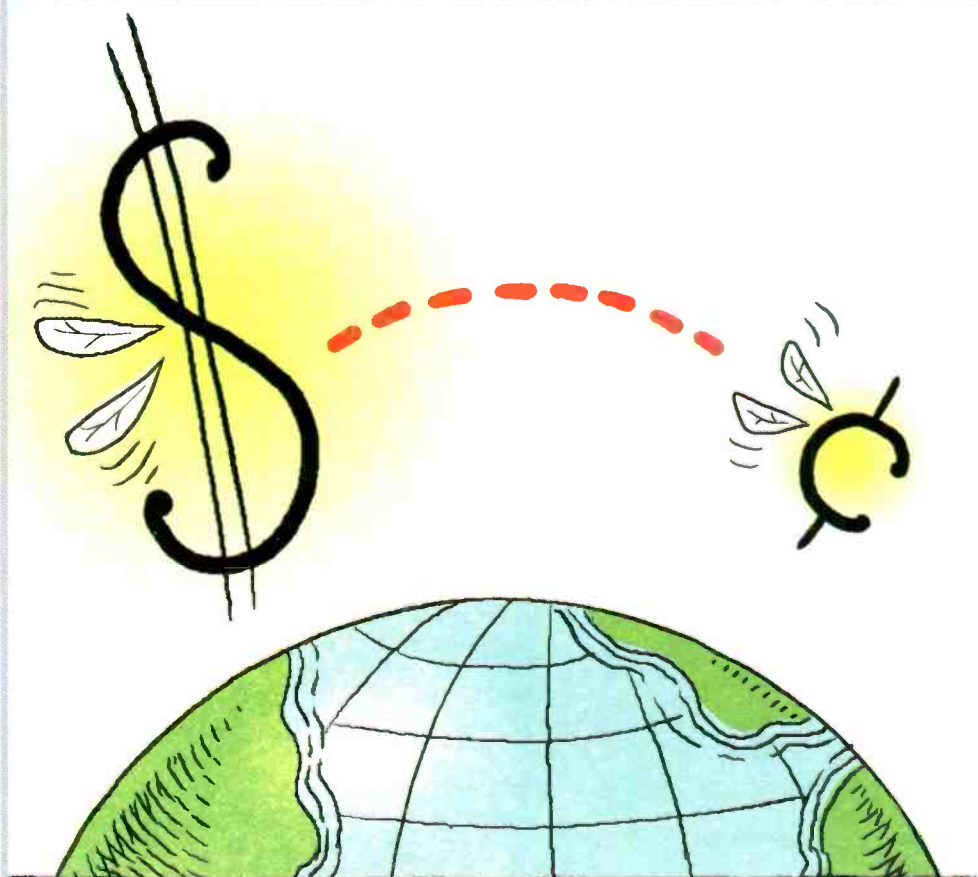
While that may seem like a gloomy prospect for Canadian companies, both of them have taken defensive measures to reduce the sting.

The conversion of the then-weakening American dollar to the Canadian dollar "was an issue for St. Clair that predated my joining the company" in 2005, CEO Ron Ford says. "But the company got more aggressive with hedging currencies and it shifted some manufacturing and distribution pipeline overhead costs to the U.S. to match the revenue stream."

While Madacy wouldn't respond to repeated inquiries on the topic, that seems to be what the Montreal-based label did too. For one, Madacy has part of its cost structure—its distribution center—in the States. But even more important, foreign currency hedging through derivative financial instruments—such as foreign currency options and foreign currency future contracts—appears to provide Madacy with protection against currency swings.

Madacy does not discuss foreign currency gains or losses in its quarterly numbers—it posted \$451,000 in earnings on net sales of \$73 million in the nine-month period ended Sept. 30, after losing \$23.9 million on \$77.1 million in the previous year—but in its most recent annual report it gave some explanation of its strategy.

In that report, Madacy noted it had locked in long-term contracts at favorable exchange rates, which produced an annual gain of



\$436,000 in foreign currency translations. To see how it did that, the prior year's annual report shows that on Dec. 31, the company had 31 monthly foreign exchange contracts until July 2008, to convert on average \$1.28 million into \$1.55 million Canadian, which reflects an average exchange rate of \$1.2097 Canadian/\$1 U.S. At that point, the Canadian dollar stood at \$1.16 to \$1 U.S.

At the end of 2006, it reported that its monthly contracts through November 2008 carried an average conversion of \$880,000 to \$1.04 million Canadian, which reflects an exchange rate of \$1.184 Canadian/\$1 U.S.

Foreign currency hedging also becomes necessary in situations where labels or wholesalers are not in control of their own destiny. For instance, if a U.S. distributor pays for foreign product denominated in dollars, then the foreign label has to take that into consideration, says Joe Micallif, CEO of Portland, Ore.-based Allegro, which serves as the U.S. distributor for many internationally based labels.

Sometimes labels overlook the consequences of exchange rate fluctuations because that is the price they are willing to pay, if the label's long-term strategic play requires an investment in America, Micallif says.

But sometimes labels call the shots. Filippo Sugar, president of Italian indie Sugar, whose roster includes a massive exporter in tenor Andrea Bocelli, says he took preventive measures before the current dollar slump. "Last year we switched all the foreign contracts of Sugar artists to euros, largely because of the currency's strength, but also because our artists are based in the euro zone," he says.

But then labels always have choices. "I see the weak dollar as being a problem for the Americans, rather than for us," Edel Music Italy president Paolo Franchini says. "For us, the weak dollar can even be an advantage. If

I have to pay an advance, in dollars, to an American artist, then obviously it will now cost me less."

Meanwhile many American companies are now opening offices in Europe, precisely so that they can get paid in euros.

That's what U.S. prog-rock label Magna Carta, located in East Rochester, N.Y., did. During the last two years, it has set up shop in Europe by hiring a network of distributors, two independent reps to act as the label's office there and then opened an international bank account in Europe so it could receive euros and pay expenses in that currency, president Peter Morticelli says.

"Because most of the distributors were paying us in euros, we were getting killed on the exchange rate," he says.

While it looked like a good, cheaper option to manufacture in the States using dollars and then get paid in euros, Magna Carta found that between shipment costs, custom duties and value-added tax, it was better off staying with European manufacturing methods.

"Believe me, we have had some bumps in the road along the way," Morticelli says. "The concept of what I envisioned in my head is finally successful, although I will continue to refine the process . . . it has yet to be proven to be money in the bank."



## TOURING

The American dollar's decline seems to be making the biggest music industry waves in the touring sector.

In fact, whether expenses and payments are paid in dollars or euros is influencing which way tours are going, at least in some situations, according to promoters, agents and bands.

In Australia, where international tours are often negotiated based on the U.S. dollar, it has been a boon to that country's already buoyant live music sector.

"The volume of touring acts has increased markedly," says Michael Jacobsen, Sydney-based managing director of Jacobsen Entertainment. "More acts are available because our buying power is exponentially greater. Overseas bands are at least 25% cheaper."

This year—with the local dollar worth 90 cents to the U.S. version, compared with 70-75 cents two years ago—such major-league acts as the Police, Bon Jovi, Celine Dion, James Blunt and Michael Bubl  have either already come or confirmed visits.

That's in contrast to 2001, when the Australian dollar was worth 50 cents to the U.S. dollar, and visits by superstar acts dried up.

When it comes to localized expenses, "if you're guaranteeing an act \$10 million U.S. at 50 [Australian] cents in the U.S. dollar, that [costs] \$20 million [Australian] for us," Jacobsen says. "If you're doing it at 90 [Australian] cents, that's only \$11 million [Australian]."

Last year, the Australian sector grew between 30% and 40% due to the influx of superstar acts, according to promoter Michael Coppel, whose company Michael Coppel Presents proved the most successful Aussie tour promoter with 2 million ticket sales and a gross of \$200 million Australian (\$180.63 million by today's U.S. value) in that period.

Meanwhile, Australian acts are touring more frequently outside their home country, even though most developing acts lose between \$30,000 and \$40,000 Australian (\$27,100-\$36,200 U.S.) per tour in the name of growing their audience, says Serge Bolzonello, a Melbourne-based partner at accounting firm Bank Group, which has Jet, the Sleepy Jackson and Eskimo Joe on its books.

That loss is later offset through advances from their Australian record labels, the bands' own cash reserves from touring domestically and the Australian government's export initiative, which compensates 50% of losses incurred abroad.

"The falling American dollar means that Australian acts can tour additional territories [outside the States] and even have cash reserves when they return to Australia," Bolzonello adds. "The flip side is that the advances they get from U.S. labels is considerably less."

While Australia sees the current weakness of the dollar as a boon, South Africa's music industry has always been at the mercy of a volatile currency, in particular its live music element. **continued on >>p32**

## IMPORTS AND EXPORTS

Import and export wholesalers in the United States and around the globe have been known to capitalize on currency weaknesses. When the Canadian dollar was weak against the U.S. dollar, a large influx of Canadian versions of U.S. hit product found its way into the States.

There is also a market for music that may be out of print in one country but in print in others; or sometimes the U.S. major will not issue international repertoire in the States or vice versa. Around the world, there are a slew of importers and exporters capitalizing on these two markets, which are also susceptible to currency fluctuations.

On the one hand the weak American dollar makes U.S.-based exports look attractive to international importers, but it hurts import sales from abroad.

Import wholesaler Musicrama, which sold imports in the United States, shut down in March 2007 as part of a restructuring; parent company Sheridan Square CEO Michael Olsen says that one of the reasons for the closure was the difficulty that the weakened dollar presented when it came to making money.

Consider this example, from an importer still in the market: "Ten years ago, we were buying a Faith Hill best-of for \$16 or \$17 Australian, which was an \$8 or \$9 cost to us. Figuring in freight and mechanicals, we would sell it to retailers for \$14 or \$15 and they would sell it to shoppers for \$20 or \$25.


"Today, it's still \$17 Australian, which is now a cost of \$15 U.S., so we would have to sell it for \$24 . . . not too many retailers will pay that much for a single disc. The market can't bear that price so instead of doing 500 a year like we did back then, now we maybe sell five copies."

But as can be expected, foreign companies like Tower Records Japan, where U.S. product comprises 50% of the product the chain imports, "a weak dollar is good for our company, even if the dollar-to-yen rate has been fairly stable," Tower Japan merchandise operation manager Takeshi Imaizumi says.






The weaker dollar "means we can reduce our payments in dollar terms to U.S. product suppliers," he says, adding that although the euro, pound and the Canadian and Australian dollars are still trading at high rates against the yen, Tower is still able to make a profit on imports from those territories too.

Foreign exporters in Australia and Germany are scrambling to offset the slowing velocity of sales to the States. The U.S. appetite for German product, likewise, is declining due to the weak dollar, says Joachim Harbich, managing director of German import/export company Membran in Hamburg.

In Australia, Melbourne-based Rocket Australian Exports, which once generated 50%-60% of sales from the States, has been looking to increase sales to Asian and Japan markets. Likewise, Melbourne-based ShockExports.com has experienced a 10% drop in recent months on orders for music and entertainment products from U.S. wholesalers and distributors, according to the company's managing director Frank Falvo. But that doesn't necessarily translate into an overall 10% drop in revenue. "You need to remain flexible, positive, and you need to think ahead because this is all cyclical," Falvo says. "You find that lost 10% by selling an equivalent amount of CD and DVDs in another territory."

  
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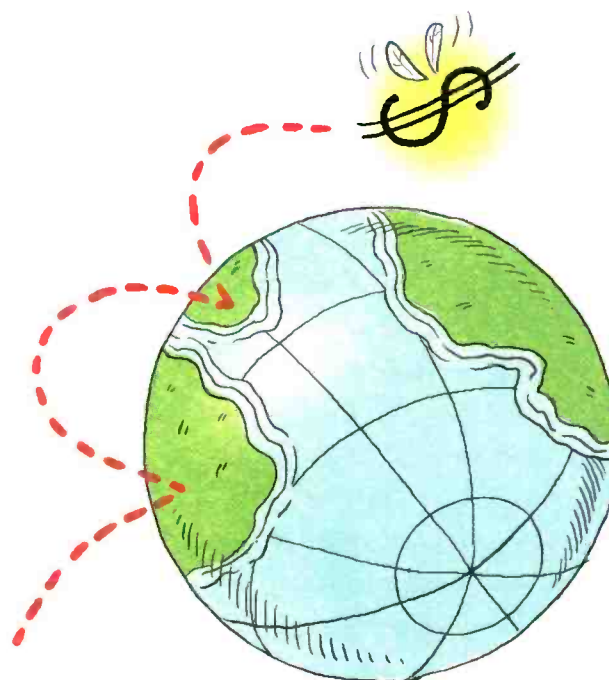
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**from >>p31** Justin Van Wyk, CFO of the country's leading promoter Big Concerts, says the company underwent its most testing time in the early 2000s when there were 13 rands to the U.S. dollar.

In the past five years, however, Big Concerts has been able to recover, thanks to the strengthening rand, which is now 7.6 to the dollar. This has taught the promoter to invest in "forward cover" contracts for the artists and productions it brings to the country, to minimize the risk of fluctuations.

"Take the recent Elton John shows here," Van Wyk says. "We negotiated at a rate of 7.05 [rand] to the dollar but months later when the shows took place in January this year, the rate had risen to 7.80 [rand], which added a significant amount onto the payment due." Thankfully, he adds, the forward contracts were in place to mitigate the increased cost due to the currency fluctuations.

The declining dollar should, realistically, have a positive impact on a country like South Africa, which has always battled against currency fluctuations. However, Van Wyk and Misha Loots, production head at Oppikoppi Productions—a recent entrant into the live music market (its most recent international act was U.S.-based OK Go)—report that this is unlikely to do so.

Both say that many overseas acts are now switching to negotiating performance fees in euros or pounds, which is what one American artist did during current negotiations. In the past few weeks this artist moved from dollars to pounds in terms of performance fee, Van Wyk says.

"Many of the acts we deal with have agents in the U.K. or Europe who deal with South Africa, so in fact we have been negotiating in euros and pounds even before the dollar decline," Loots adds. "We can foresee that euros and pounds will become the currency of choice for overseas acts headed this way."

In Germany, Peter Schwenkow, chairman of Berlin-based promoter DEAG, says it is cheaper for promoters to get the artists because payments are calculated in dollars.

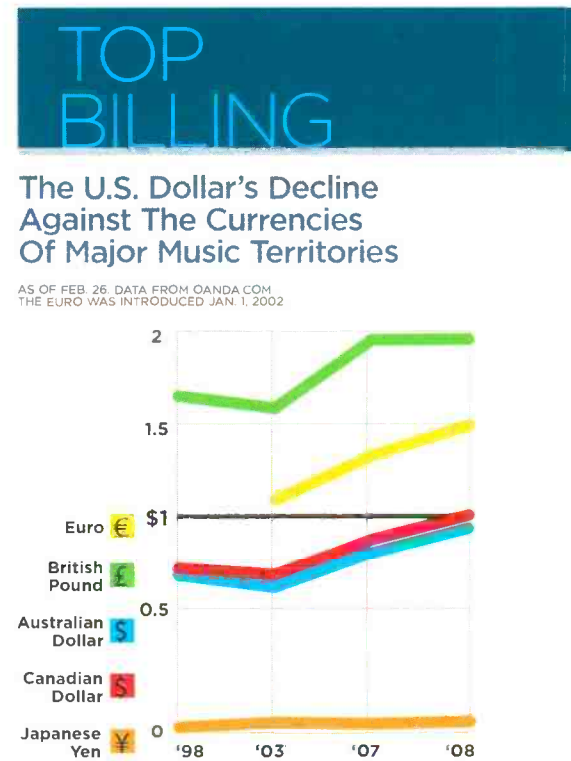
In London, Agency Group Worldwide CEO Neil Warnock suggests British acts are well-placed for a U.S. invasion, thanks to the powerful pound. "It's an unusual bonus," he says. "For our English artists they come over [to the States] and they are getting much more bang for their English pound. We are finding some artists are coming over [to the States] to record; it's cheaper to record [there] than in the U.K."

Warnock notes that being paid in U.S. currency may rankle some artists, but "at the moment, I haven't seen anyone screaming and saying, 'Because of the dollar rates, we are unable to tour.' It hasn't come across our radar as a group."


Yet others say that payment in the weak U.S. dollar could "see fewer U.S. dates by foreign bands," says Bill Zysblat, partner in RZO, a New York-based accountant management firm specializing in the entertainment business. "Their time is better spent elsewhere."

But the William Morris Agency's Kirk Sommer, who handles such U.K.-based acts as the Fratellis, Amy Winehouse, Paolo Nutini, Editors, Duffy and Hard-Fi, believes bands should tour the States for reasons beyond the value of the dollar. While Sommer would not cite specific bands, he did say, "I highly advise international artists to consider using local crews and obviously paying them in local currency. I prefer to look at it as if everything is priced a lot friendlier here. Sterling and euro go a long way." ♦♦♦

*Additional reporting by Diane Coetzer, Christie Eliezer, Howell Llewellyn, Steve McClure, Wolfgang Spahr and Mark Worden.*







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## Facing The Music As Consumer Spending And Confidence Waver

By Ed Christman  
Illustration By William Duke

Conventional wisdom touts the music industry—a low-ticket form of entertainment—as immune to a recession. “Historically, the music industry has weathered recessions better than most other industries,” says Jerry Gold, a music industry consultant and former Warner Music Group CFO in the ‘80s and mid-‘90s. “When times are bad people want to feel good and music does that . . . The last recession [1990-92] affected us a little, but then music was one of the first industries to come out of it.”

RIAA shipment data shows that recessions do, however, at least coincide with some softness in the music business; it’s not always clear if these downturns are as much due to a weak album-release schedule as an economic downturn.

For example, when the coupling of the oil crisis and stagflation led to a 16-month recession that ended after the first quarter of 1975, the music industry experienced a slight downturn, with album shipments falling slightly to 369 million units in 1975 from 389.9 million units in 1974, according to the RIAA. The music industry rebounded from 1976 to 1978 with album shipments reaching 536.2 million in the latter year.

After that, “the two times that the music industry got in trouble was in 1979 and 1982,” former Sony Music format guru Bob Sherwood recalls.

In 1979, another energy crisis, precipitated by the Iranian Revolution, was the backdrop for a decline in album shipments to 470.8 million units.

In 1980, album shipments rebounded to 492 million units, but then there was another recession during 1981 and 1982; album shipments slid backward during those two years to 440.8 million units.

“The industry did retrench, adjust and fixed itself, and then the CD came along,” Sherwood says.

The growth of that format spurred the music industry to new heights during the rest of the ‘80s, culminating in album shipments reaching 740.2 million units in 1990. Then, the U.S. economy just missed lapsing into another recession in 1990-92. And once again, the economic downturn corresponded with album shipments dropping to 698.2 million in 1991 before rebounding again for the remainder of the ‘90s. **continued on >>p36**

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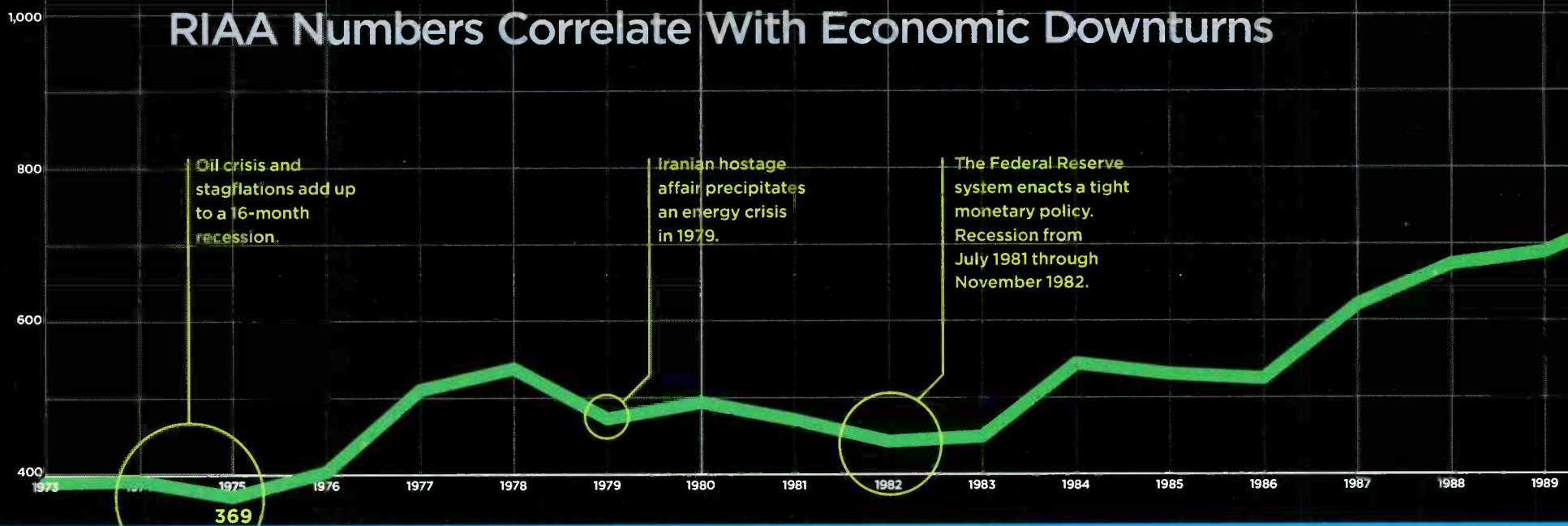
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# A TIGHT SHIP

## RIAA Numbers Correlate With Economic Downturns



The economy has been healthy most of this decade, but that hasn't much helped the music industry.

Caught in one of the most jarring transitions to hit a U.S. business, the digital revolution has weakened the music industry even as it wrestles with a slowing economy.

"With a 15% decline in album sales, we have so many fundamental problems to resolve that a recession can't help," one senior major-label executive says. "But the economies are the least of our worries now."

But those who feel they couldn't possibly worry about anything else may want to take note: The International Council of Shopping Centers and UBS Securities, which compiles weekly retail sales, say that consumers are continuously concerned about the health of the U.S. economy, and as a result remain cautious in their spending.

For January, according to UBS, chain-store sales increased by 0.5%. "With uncertainty about the economy, and the possibility of a recession, consumers have pared their spending," ICSC chief economist/director of research Michael P. Niemira said in a statement.

"Weak retail comparable-store sales make it very clear we are in a recession," distributor Allegro CEO Joe Micallif says. "The higher prices on energy are clearly pinching the consumer."

But, Micallif adds, "it's not the end of the world for the industry." He says that most of the troubled retail and wholesale accounts have "already been flushed out," leaving behind a pretty stable account base. ●●●

## MONEY TALKS

### Investors And Financial Executives On What To Expect In Case Of Recession

#### RICH BENGLOFF

American Assn. of Independent Music president

"All of a sudden we may become a lower-cost entertainment alternative to going to the movies. Think about it: For two people to go to the movies nowadays, it could cost \$50 between the movie ticket, soda and popcorn and parking, or they can stay home and listen to a music CD for \$10."

#### INGRID CHUNG

Goldman Sachs VP of media and entertainment/cable and satellite research

"CDs are cheap enough that if there is a pullback in the economy, people aren't going to automatically think they need to cut back on music spending. Movies and music are fairly recession-proof. People look for cheaper ways to amuse themselves.

"On the flip side, some people would think twice about buying certain electronic goods, like delaying the purchase of the iPhone or MP3 players—these items might not be on the same growth trajectory as before. Things like concert tickets or show tickets might also be at risk."

#### JOE BIANCO

Former chairman of Sheridan Square and Alliance Entertainment; principal in music social network site WoozyFly

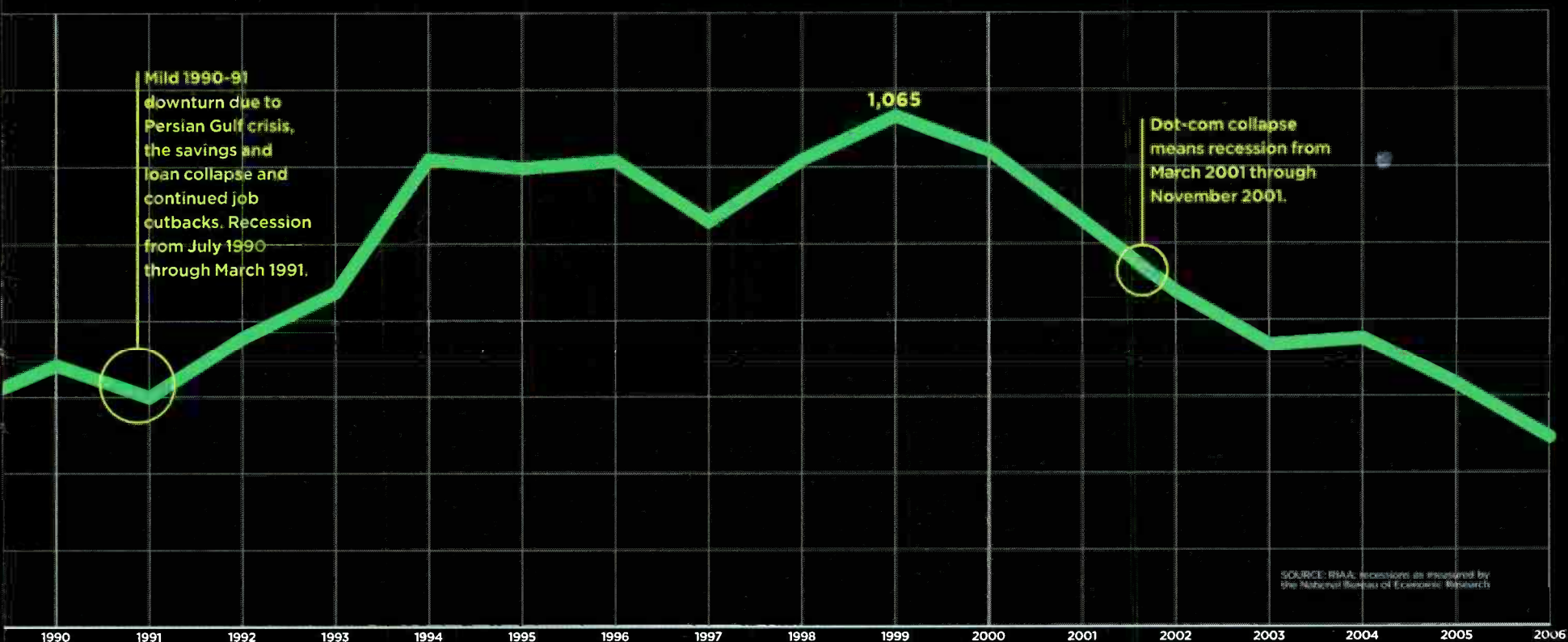
"What happens is a recession slows down the velocity of money. Music used to be recession-proof. That isn't true anymore. It's vulnerable now because what's happening is digital. Whatever benefits digital bestows, it doesn't outweigh the difficulties it has caused because music is now a portable file. There is probably nobody shoplifting surround-sound amplifiers, but if those amps were the size of a quarter, they would get shoplifted more often. Music has become the size of a quarter."

#### MICHAEL FLEISHER

Warner Music Group CFO

"Any recession will impact all consumer spending, so that will have an impact on our business, too. But there is so much other dislocation and transformation going on . . . unless a recession is really deep, I am not sure it will become a headline in our industry as it would in other industries. With physical [sales] declining so heavily, it would be very hard to parse what impact a recession would have on the music industry."





**JERRY GOLD**

Partner at RP Realty Industry; former WMG CFO; music consultant; Spiral Frog board member

“Today music is very accessible and available. But one thing to consider is how music is now being monetized. In an ad-supported model, maybe a recession results in less advertising.”



**GEOFFREY MADDEN**

Partner with boutique financial advisory/investment banking firm Christman Peters & Madden

“Music is a discretionary purchase, and the last few times we went through significant recessions—’90-’92, and before that in 1979 and 1975—the American consumer didn’t have other venues and other opportunities for purchases that competed with music. Now, the American consumer, especially the target age group of 14-34, has a multiplicity of choices that they didn’t have 25 or 30 years ago.

“So in the past the consumer would cut back on discretionary purchases but still buy music. Now, many more options and alternatives out there are competing with music for the discretionary dollars, so music is more sensitive and vulnerable to recessionary factors than it was 20 or 30 years ago.”



**DREW LIPSHUR**

Partner with venture capital firm Greycroft

“Historically people were concerned that consumers would stop buying music. But now that is almost an irrelevant point with physical music sales down 15%.

“Would a recession accelerate the decline of physical goods? No, not at all. The decline is happening very naturally on its own and will continue to do so until it bottoms.

“When there is a recession, people won’t buy a new car, but they won’t stop buying a new CD or a \$10 download. Even if you look at a music subscription, I doubt anyone will cut out a \$150-a-year cost because of a recession. When people are depressed, music makes them happy; it’s a lifestyle choice, and not a huge amount of money to spend.

“What a recession could do is have an impact that trickles down to the music industry. With advertising models, those spends could slow down. Also, corporate balance sheets tighten up in a recession.”



**ANIL NARANG**

Music investor; former co-chairman of Sheridan Square

“People used to buy albums for \$15.99 and now can buy songs for 99 cents, or take them for free or burn them. Music is cheap to the extent that one wants to buy it; they don’t need to spend \$15 or \$20. So it’s not a high-priced form of entertainment, and much of it can be acquired for little or nothing.

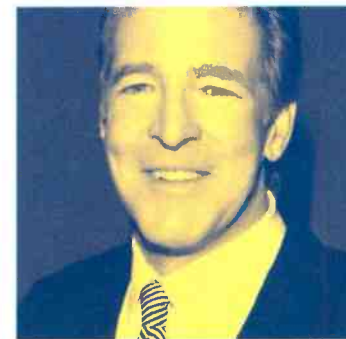
“A recession won’t have a huge impact on the music business. The things that impact the music industry more than anything else are other forms of entertainment competing for people’s leisure time and money like videogames. That field, the leisure lifestyle kinds of products, is growing so rapidly. If the music isn’t good and there are no new bands that interest the consumer, they have plenty of other inexpensive things to turn to.”



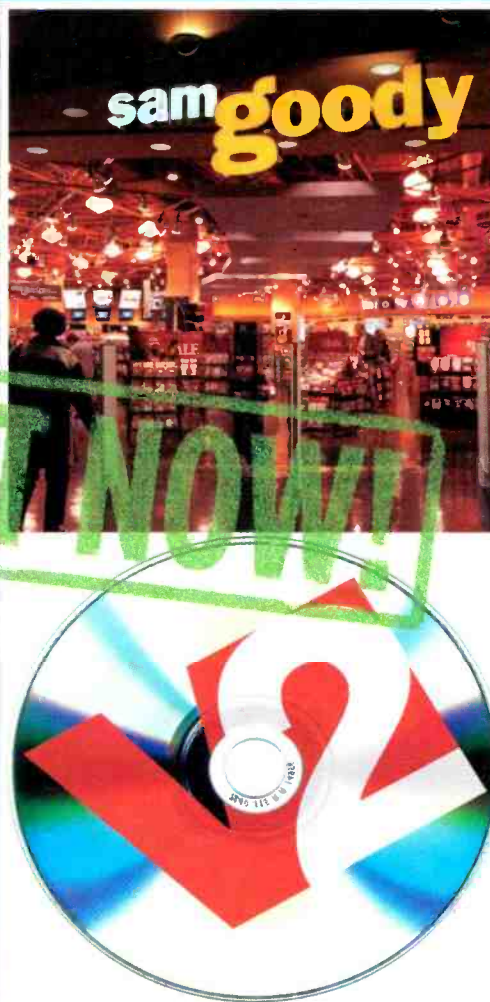
**JIM URIE**

Universal Music Group Distribution CEO

“Common wisdom holds that an economic downturn doesn’t affect the music business. But clearly that is not the case now. Particularly, gas prices are having a significant effect on the music business and certain genres, Latin and country, are really taking it on the chin. Mass merchants track their customer store visits per month, and that has fallen off.”



LIPSHUR: HALVERSON PHOTOGRAPHY



## Retail Track

ED CHRISTMAN echristman@billboard.com



# PERCEPTION PROBLEM

## Wall Street May Have Given Up On Music Prematurely

Somewhere along the way the mainstream press began consistently reporting that record labels are over; record stores, particularly independent ones, are dying; the CD is dead, music is free or will soon be; and with the Internet all artists will have millions of fans. Amazingly enough, Wall Street seems to have embraced the press' mantra on the music business as well. ■ Consequently, any investment firm seen to be making a bet on the music industry is in for a heaping dose of criticism, if not scorn, by its investors, its peers, the digerati and the press. ■ Many potential music industry investors have gotten that message loud and clear and are staying away. As one music industry executive who has been out seeking funding puts it, "There is a general sense that the minute you mention the music industry to investors, the answer is, 'Go away.'"

In fact, the boards of directors at Trans World Entertainment and at Entertainment Distribution Co. decided it was time to head for the hills, instead of remaining involved in the music business. Both boards put their companies up for sale, sources say.

Meanwhile, sources say that the EDC board decided to put that company up for sale and forgo its goal of becoming the industry's back room for manufacturing and distribution fulfillment, even though it now has the chance to land EMI's business to its relationship with Universal Music Group (UMG).

Given that type of thinking on the part of the boards, why would some institutional-type investments firms and venture capital groups stick around the music industry to get their head handed to them?

Well, believe it or not, although there are not as many investors looking at the space as there used to be, some still see opportunity in the music business, even as it goes through this painful transition.

At Trans World, founder/chairman **Bob Higgins** is attempting to take the company private, a deal he continues to work on. Interestingly, Riley Investment Management, which owns 10% of the outstanding shares, is joining Higgins in that venture. Another investment firm, Sherwood Investments Overseas, also signed a nondisclosure to access the Trans World books so that it could evaluate on whether it wants to follow through on a \$7 per share offer.

Likewise, within the music industry, strategic investors have an appetite for merchandising companies, artist management and any company that can help a major achieve the 360-degree model.

When UMG acquired Sanctuary, a key "get" in that deal was the Bravado merchandising company. Also, sources say that indie labels that have their own merch operations are attractive to major labels, too.

Outside investment in the music industry

isn't "drying up, it's just more difficult to convince investors that your model is the one that will work," says **Jerry Gold**, a music industry consultant who sits on the board of ad-supported download service Spiral Frog and is CFO at RP Realty Partners.

**Drew Lipsher** is a partner with New York venture capital firm Greycroft, one outfit still exploring the music space. Lipsher says the firm looks to make investments in businesses in the music space that have at least a digital component. Lipsher's company is "cautious about valuations, but if Greycroft finds businesses it likes, it hopes to be aggressive in making investments."

Lipsher notes that the investment community is interested in any variations on selling music digitally, particularly those that tie physical and digital together to help make music a well-rounded experience.

Other investors cite such music social networks as imeem or such applications as iLike as attractive sectors.

In the private equity sector, **Anil Narang**, who previously was co-chairman of Sheridan Square and co-invested with equity firms, says those firms "are still willing to invest in publishing and the music business but not so in the front-line record business. There, some private equity is sitting on the sidelines in some instances, but others are going after deals like the Death Row catalog," which is on the block due to the label's Chapter 11 filing.

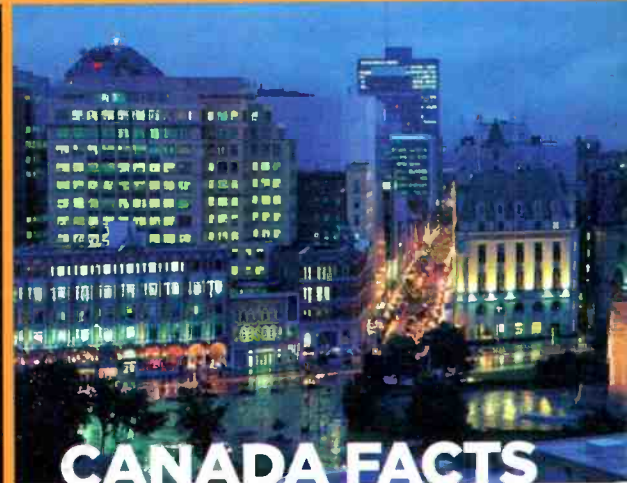
Catalog, like publishing, is considered a safer investment, because it doesn't require the capital outlay that playing in the front-line new-release business does. But even if investors decide to bet on the catalog side of the record industry, Narang advises such investors to "make some bearish assumptions. In the past, investors might have lent 60% against the assets of a music company," now he recommends putting up 20%. So deals are getting done, but on a distressed basis.

Still, he notes there are other private equity investors sitting on the sidelines, waiting for digital and physical sales to intersect. But trying "to pinpoint where and when that will happen is like trying to catch a falling knife," he says.

But **Geoffrey Madden**, a partner with New York boutique investment banking firm Christman, Peters & Madden, says there will always be investors interested in the music industry.

"Smart institutional money is smart for a reason and a large part of institutional investing is being contrarian and counterintuitive," Madden says. "There will always be good investing opportunities in the music industry just like there are good investment opportunities in other out-of-favor industries. What the smart money is good at is finding these opportunities."

ARCADE FIRE, performing at New York's Central Park in 2005, is one of the most successful new bands to emerge from Canada.

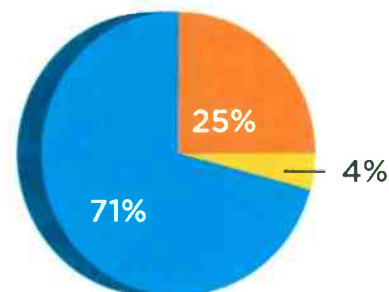


## CANADA FACTS

POPULATION: 33,390,141  
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 CAPITAL: OTTAWA (POPULATION: 774,072)  
 OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: ENGLISH, FRENCH  
 BROADBAND SUBSCRIPTIONS PER 100 PEOPLE: 23.8

## MUSIC FACTS

SALES AWARDS FOR ALBUMS:  
 Platinum: 100,000 units  
 Gold: 50,000 units  
 PHYSICAL SALES, JAN.-NOV. 2007:  
 37.9 million units  
 PHYSICAL SALES REVENUE, JAN.-NOV.:  
 \$382.4 million Canadian (\$375.7 million)  
 MARKET SHARES 2006:



- International repertoire
- Domestic repertoire
- Classical, and other repertoire

### TOP THREE BEST-SELLING DOMESTIC ALBUMS OF 2007

- 1 "Call Me Irresponsible," Michael Bublé (Reprise)
- 2 "Taking Chances," Celine Dion (Sony)
- 3 "The Best Damn Thing," Avril Lavigne (Sony)

### TOP THREE BEST-SELLING INTERNATIONAL ALBUMS OF 2007

- 1 "Noel," Josh Groban (Reprise)
- 2 "Lost Highway," Bon Jovi (Universal)
- 3 "Good Girl Gone Bad," Rihanna (Universal)

## MEDIA FACTS:

KEY NATIONWIDE RADIO STATIONS  
 Hot AC CHUM-FM Toronto  
 Listenership: 1.2 million

## RETAIL FACTS:

KEY BRICK-AND-MORTAR RETAILERS  
 HMV Canada, Wal-Mart, Best Buy Canada, Future Shop  
 KEY LEGITIMATE ONLINE RETAILERS  
 HMV.ca, Amazon.ca, Chapters.ca, archambaultzik.ca

SOURCES: Canadian Recording Industry Assn., Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, Canadian Wireless Telecommunications Assn.

# NORTHERN CHILL

Canadian Music Industry Perseveres In Challenging Times  
 BY ROBERT THOMPSON

With CD sales falling faster than digital sales rise and with layoffs at Canada's major labels, many executives in the country's music business are worried about the implications of a continued decline in the music industry. ■ Much of the concern centers on a drop in CD sales of 5.9 million last year. Despite an increase in digital album sales of 4.5 million (counting 10 digital tracks as one album), that still meant an overall decline of 1.4 million albums. Canadian Recording Industry Assn. (CRIA) president Graham Henderson also says revenue declines for the country's major labels outpaced sales drops.

While the Canadian music industry certainly will be upbeat during Canada Music Week activities March 5-8 in Toronto, sales trends are not encouraging. Major-label downsizing could leave Canadian artists facing difficult choices about whom to work with going forward.

Specifically, many are worried that if EMI Music decides to thin operations in Canada as the company cuts 2,000 employees worldwide, other major labels in the country may follow suit.

Attic Records founder/former president Al Mair says there is little doubt the industry will continue to evolve throughout the year. "The majors are going to continue to shrink, with the resultant job losses," he says.

These changes in the majors could also affect Canadian indie labels, Mair says, which may face losing major-label distribution if shifts in policy occur.

But Dale Peters, who runs Dale Speaking, an independent marketing and publicity firm in Toronto, says that while focus is on the sector's difficulties, plenty of opportunities are open to those willing to consider alternatives to the traditions >>

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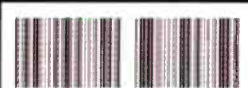
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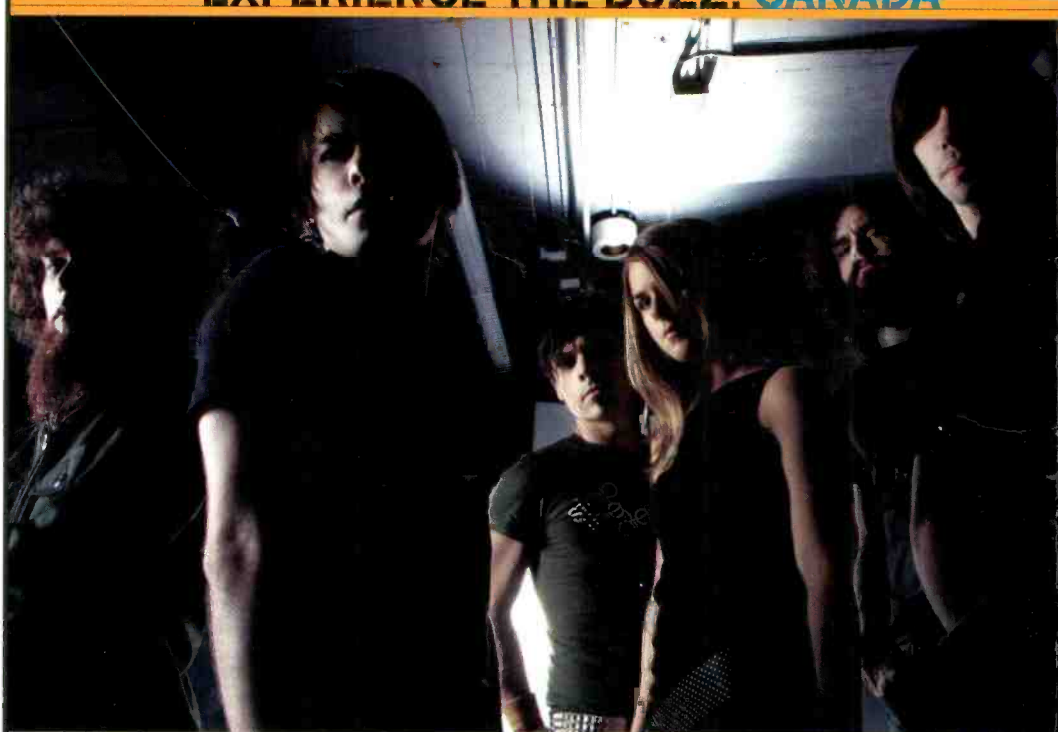
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**YOUR FAVORITE ENEMIES,** above, and **CUFF THE DUKE,** right, are poised for success.

of the music business.

Peters points to an act he works with, Your Favourite Enemies. The act from Montreal has sold more than 40,000 copies of its latest EP by utilizing the Internet and having direct contact with fans.

"I love the fact there are acts out there that want to promote themselves and build their talent over time," Peters says. "Things are changing, but those that are changing with them have plenty of opportunities."

Peters adds that an increasing number of artists are actively taking roles in the business of their careers and are seeking alternative methods of gaining attention.

"A lot of the acts I work with are treating this like a business, which is what they should be doing because that's exactly what it is," he says. "They are saying, 'I want to be an artist, but I want to have control over my career.' And that is exciting to see."

Although a band like Arcade Fire proves Canada's strength as a source of international talent, rising acts like Basia Bulat, Tokyo Police Club, State of Shock, Your Favourite Enemies and Cuff the Duke wait in the wings. As the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) ponders enforcing an "emerging artist" provision as part of radio licensing, Canadian acts are finding difficulty being heard, says Jill Snell, president of Angelina Entertainment, a Toronto-based label imprint and marketing organization. Snell says it is often a case that an act is only deemed worth noticing if it has had success abroad.

"Radio won't support a debut Canadian act unless someone else first takes the plunge, in most cases, an international party who is willing to take the risk," she says. "Canadian radio has become about the song, not about the artist, but I guess long gone are the days when radio assumes any responsibility for Canadian artist development."

Canadian Independent Record Production Assn. president Duncan McKie agrees. "Getting new artists played is still a real concern," McKie says. "We have not yet seen any definition of new



**'There are acts who want to promote themselves and build their talent over time.'**

—DALE PETERS

acts promised by the CRTC."

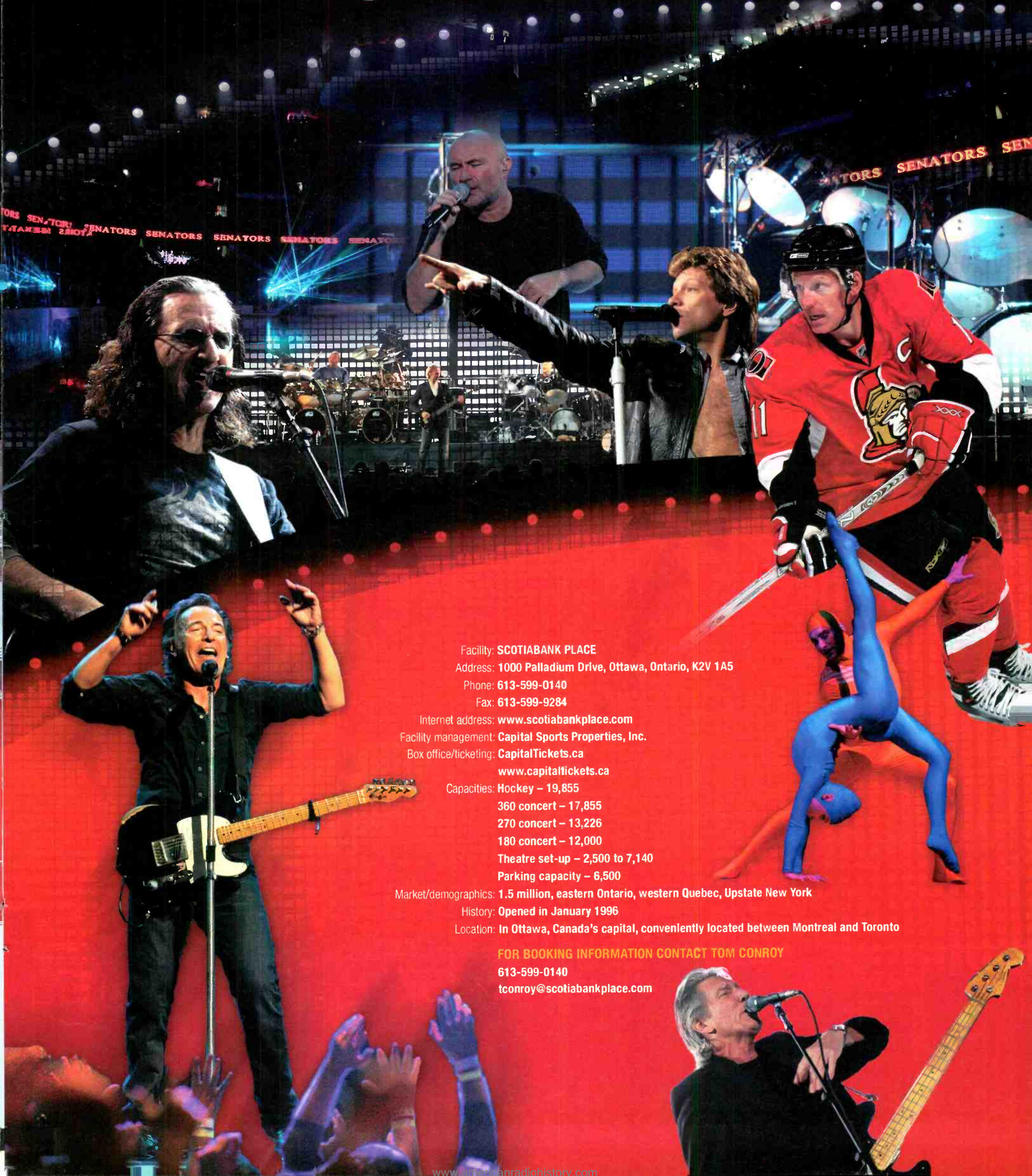
Additionally, the CRIA and CIRPA remain focused on altering Canada's copyright laws to limit free downloading on peer-to-peer sites. There was an expectation that a new law would emerge late in 2007 that would add clarity to the debate in Canada over file-sharing, but the government delayed the bill, which is now expected in the spring.

McKie says his labels need to be paid for the investment they are putting into developing new Canadian acts and stronger legislation is a necessity.

Canada's music retail industry also raises concerns. In 2007, music retailer Music World, owned by Pindoff Record Sales, went into receivership. The chain had 72 stores, and though a new owner has pledged to keep some of them open, there is increasing concern among many in the music business that too much of the retail market now rests with HMV Canada.

"The placement of music at a chain like HMV is increasingly becoming an issue, and we're being overshadowed by things like DVDs," says a major label-executive who asked to remain anonymous. "And I think catalog sales are becoming an issue just about everywhere." ...





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# NEW FRONTIERS

Canadian Music Week Takes On Challenges Of Changing Industry BY ROBERT THOMPSON

Canadian Music Week (CMW) will focus on new concepts and alternative revenue streams that artists and labels can pursue, event founder/president says Neill Dixon, while speakers like Research in Motion co-CEO Jim Balsillie will discuss the possibilities of the digital marketplace. ■ Built upon a theme of “the rebirth of music,” Dixon says the focus of this year’s event will be forward-looking. ■ “The focus is squarely on the future and not about trying to save the past,” he says. “With CD sales still sliding, the industry is looking for new ideas and alternate revenue sources to make up the shortfall.”

CMW activities will take place March 5-8 in Toronto. The event, for which Rogers Music-Store is the title sponsor, includes a trade show, industry convention, a music festival featuring some 500 acts and the Canadian Music Industry Awards.

Honorees this year will include Netwerk Music Group co-founder Terry McBride, Insight Production president/Juno Awards producer John Brunton and singer Alanis Morissette.

For CMW, staying ahead of changes in the industry is key, Dixon says, noting the conference will offer a one-day “Millennials” event aimed at providing the music industry with a

better understanding of the “millennial demographic,” the group born between 1978 and 2000. The event will present the industry with options on how this demographic interacts with media and the opportunities presented in marketing to a highly mobile group.

Among the key elements of the conference is the Digital Music Summit, which kicked off three years ago. This year’s version includes BlackBerry maker Balsillie, who will be one of the keynote speakers, as well as Universal Music Group eLabs executive VP Rio Caraeff.

Dixon says CMW has been preaching about the potential of the digital marketplace since its first keynote on the sector in 1993. He said



**‘The focus is squarely on the future and looking for new ideas.’**

—NEILL DIXON

at the time that a speech by former Massachusetts Institute of Technology chairman Nicholas Negroponte that predicted the decline of the CD and an emerging digital marketplace was ignored by many in the Canadian music industry.

“He accurately predicted the end of the CD and its compressed digital replacement, which would change the business forever,” Dixon adds. “Unfortunately many major-label and retail executives in the audience missed the message as they scoffed at ‘the academic futurist that doesn’t know our business.’”

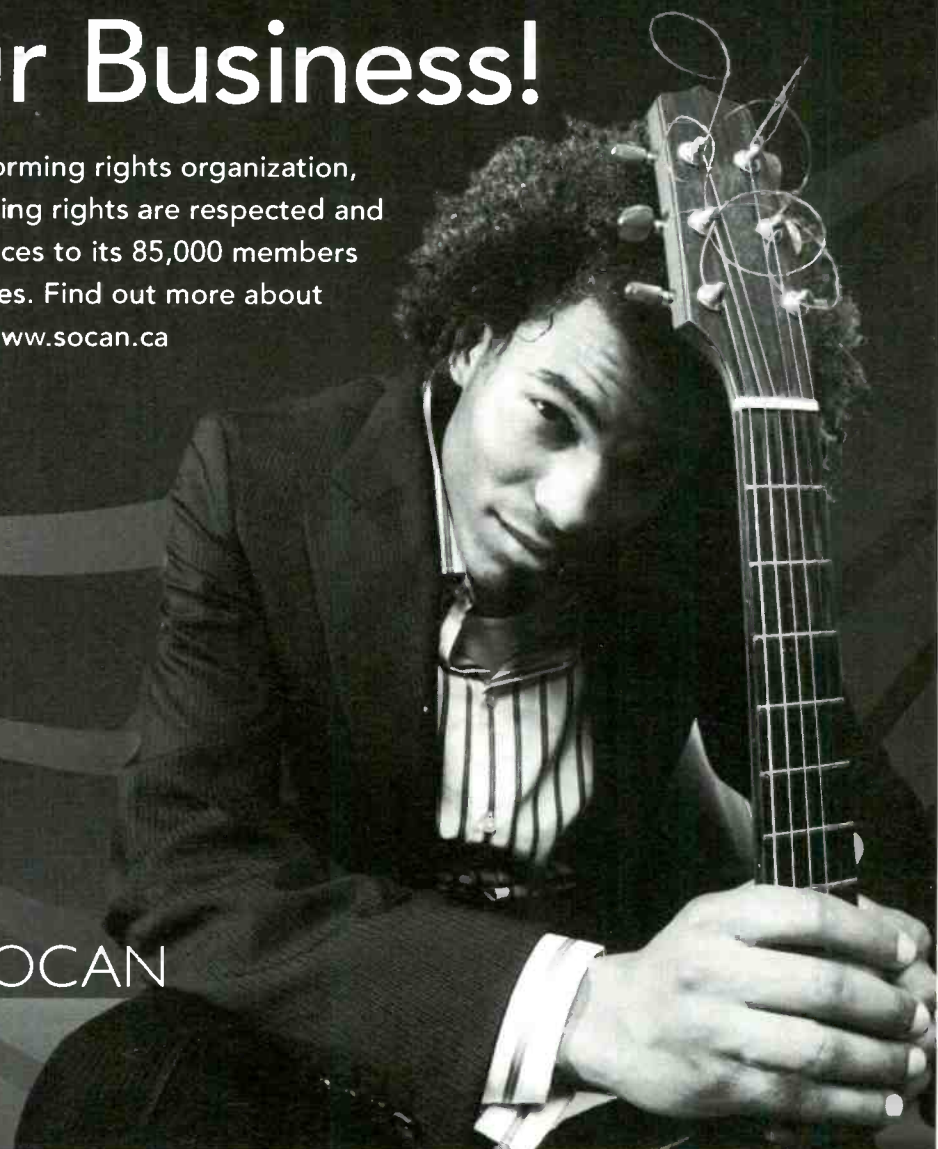
“They’re listening now,” he says. “But it may be too late for some.”

Dixon adds that while there are a lot of individuals preaching gloomy scenarios for the music industry going forward, there is an equally important group of upstarts embracing the opportunities that new and emerging technologies present.

“There’s an enthusiastic new generation of Internet- and mobile-savvy DIY indies that are ready use technology to reinvent the business and create a new world order,” he says.

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# NORTHERN ROUTE

Canada's Touring Market Remains Strong From Coast To Coast BY RAY WADDELL

The Canadian touring market is still on fire. ■ "Maybe you need to talk also to some of my colleagues in the other provinces as well, but by current accounts, Canada is still selling tickets and the traffic is still on the road," says Patti-Ann Tarlton, director of bookings at the Air Canada Centre (ACC) in Toronto. ■ Billboard did check with the other provinces, and the news was the same from the other side of the country. "Yes, the Canadian market is still hot," says Shane Bourbonnais, president of touring/business development for Live Nation Canada, based in Vancouver. "Bookings are looking really strong, [with] lots of the big Canadian acts, such as Avril Lavigne and Michael Bublé, out early in 2008, along with many of the big international acts."

Live Nation Canada chairman Riley O'Connor in Toronto adds, "The summer looks like the best mix of genres of acts I have seen in over two years."

Tarlton's bookings at the ACC show that mix. "We are just about to play out four Spice Girls, and Bon Jovi has added their record-setting fifth show" at ACC, she says. "Country music is playing nationally, TV shows gone live are still selling tickets, Ozzy [Osbourne], Bublé, Lenny [Kravitz], Rascal Flatts, Foo Fight-

and we welcome their business."

Still, agents and promoters should use caution when routing tours through Canada. "It's only on fire for acts that do not overplay by coming back six months or a year later," O'Connor says. "Acts that plan strategically to tour Canada with well-thought-out launches in marketing their new product and price-point sensitivity on a market-by-market basis will do solid business."

Tarlton says that while the state of the U.S. economy makes news north of the bor-



Canada's touring industry is spicy hot as the SPICE GIRLS, forefront, brought their reunion spectacle to Toronto's Air Canada Centre for four big shows.

ers, Iron Maiden, Avril, Celine [Dion], [John] Mellencamp, Matchbox Twenty, Three Days Grace and wrestling are all up and doing numbers in Toronto."

Similar news comes from the Scotiabank Place in Ottawa, where 2008 "is shaping up to be a great year," according to venue VP/executive director Tom Conroy. Already on the date-books for the first quarter are Mellencamp, Rascal Flatts, Foo Fighters, Martina McBride, Carrie Underwood, Def Leppard and Disney's "High School Musical." "The rest of the year should see the business continue at a similar pace," Conroy says.

The question that remains, as it has for the past few years, is how can the market stay at the same levels? "We all expect the market of Canada—it really is one market to all of us from coast to coast—to sustain," Conroy says. "Live Nation is promoting the majority of shows, but AEG is beginning to make tracks here in Canada,

der, the Canadian touring market is anything but skittish.

"We remain cautiously optimistic about Canada, and the dollar is still hovering around par, which bodes well for the business," Tarlton says. "This summer looks like it will be outdoor-based, yet I am still challenged to find time in our arena schedule to execute a number of capital improvements based on the demands of the live industry."

Right now, success is breeding success in Canadian markets coast to coast.

"There are some really great markets to route through, and thanks to strong sales in all the markets, we are seeing more and more confidence from promoters and agents, who in turn view Canada as an excellent market," Conroy says.

**.biz** For a look at five hot bands from Canada poised for success, go to [billboard.biz/canada](http://billboard.biz/canada).

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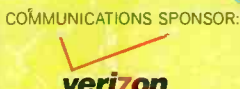
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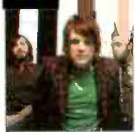
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Christian fave Leeland makes its move

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Label troubles can't sink Alberta Cross

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**REGGAETÓN RICHES**  
Angel & Khriz have a quirky new hit

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# MUSIC



'American Idol' judges **RANDY JACKSON** and **PAULA ABDUL** had discussed collaborating for years before moving forward last summer.

"There was an incredible amount of interest [in the single], I termed it even curiosity, in the very beginning," Concord GM Gene Rumsey says. "I think cynics who were curious all of a sudden heard it and realized, 'Hey, this is a pretty good song.'"

That initial curiosity led to a No. 76 debut on the Pop 100, but "Dance" vanished from the charts after just one week. The corresponding video debuted on fox.com Feb. 20 and enjoyed an airing on "American Idol" the next day, which Rumsey hopes will bring back momentum after the post-Super Bowl lag.

"Usually dance radio is a little more forgiving and respectful of heritage artists," radio consultant Guy Zapoleon says, in explaining top 40's apparent aversion to the single. "But today more than ever, our musical culture is about youthful artists who radio might have laughed at five or six years ago. For somebody like Paula, it's a process of rebuilding her image. She's still seen as a '90s pop artist."

There is no confirmation on the follow-up single, although with the genres touched throughout the album—from the duet of "Idol" alums Katherine McPhee and Elliott Yamin to Joss Stone and the Clipse's cover of Dionne Warwick's "Walk on By" to John Rich, Anthony Hamilton and Sara Watkins' countrified take of Michael Bublé's "Home"—several markets serve as potential targets.

"I've never really wanted to do a solo record," Jackson says, adding that the melange of styles is a nod to his multicultural hometown of Baton Rouge, La. "But I always said that if I did one, I'd love to do one like those Quincy Jones albums like 'Back on the Block' [and] 'Dude' . . . They showcased new talent he was trying to break."

And although Concord is relying heavily on Jackson's "Idol" recognition factor, Rumsey says a lot of time and energy was invested to help accurately gauge his target audience and avoid "the shotgun [marketing] approach of, 'Oh, everyone who watches 'American Idol.'"

Album exclusives will be available at Target and Wal-Mart, which include a making-of from the "Dance" video shoot and exclusive audio content, respectively.

In addition to starting up his new label, Jackson was recently named senior A&R consultant/producer for Concord/Stax and is executive-producing MTV series "Randy Jackson Presents: America's Best Dance Crew." As for what's in the pipeline at Dream Merchant, Jackson says he's working on records for newcomers Esco and Selah.

He says the goal of the label is to stay small and cultivate talented singers and songwriters, not necessarily break the next big pop star. "Great writing and great singing—that's great artistry. That's what the label stands for and that's why I called it Dream Merchant—where your dreams come true."

Additional reporting by Jonathan Cohen and Gail Mitchell.

POP BY JILL MENZE

## FOREVER HIS GIRL

### New Abdul Track Introduces All-Star Jackson Album

After dabbling in nearly every area of the music industry, Grammy Award-winning producer/musician and "American Idol" judge Randy Jackson is adding "solo album" to his already impressive résumé, and he's bringing "Idol" colleague Paula Abdul along for the ride.

The Abdul-driven "Dance Like There's No Tomorrow" is the first single from "Randy Jackson's Music Club, Vol. 1," due March 11 via Jackson's new Concord Music Group imprint Dream Merchant 21. The 12-track collection showcases a diverse range of artists, from established vets like Mariah Carey, Travis Tritt and Richie Sambora to such up-and-coming talents as Barbi Esco and Kelli Selah.

For Abdul, whose last new single was 1995's "Crazy Cool," the collaboration with Jackson consummated several years of vague

conversations about working together. But during "Idol" auditions last July in San Diego, "Randy kept saying to me, 'I've got the perfect song for you. It sounds like you, like now, it's like a nod to you and your past, but it's you now,'" Abdul says. "And he played it, and it was after the first two bars, I knew it was a hit. I knew it was a total smash."

The track was produced by Jackson and the Danish duo known as Deekay. Oliver Leiber, who wrote and produced Abdul's "Forever Your Girl" and "(It's Just) The Way That You Love Me," did some additional vocal production. Jackson and Abdul premiered the single Jan. 18 on Ryan Seacrest's KIIS-FM radio show in Los Angeles, and it was serviced to top 40 stations Super Bowl weekend (Feb. 2-3) to coincide with Abdul's pregame performance of the song.

### >>> SWEET TOOTH

Madonna's new album has been christened "Hard Candy" and will arrive April 29. It is her final studio release for Warner Bros. before she transitions to Live Nation Artists. First single "Four Minutes" will hit U.S. radio in late March. Madonna collaborated with Timbaland, Pharrell Williams and Nate "Danja" Hills on the follow-up to 2006's "Confessions on a Dance Floor." Also appearing is Justin Timberlake, who will induct Madonna into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame March 10 in New York.

### >>> 'BEAT' HAPPENING

A cover of Michael Jackson's "Beat It" is among the many treats to be found on "\*\*\*\*\*," Fall Out Boy's first live release. Due April 8 via Island, the project will be available as a CD/DVD or DVD only; the Jackson cover is a studio version featuring a "special guest guitarist" yet to be named. "\*\*\*\*\*" was taped June 22, 2007, at Phoenix's Cricket Pavilion. The DVD sports all eight Fall Out Boy music videos and a wealth of behind-the-scenes footage.

### >>> DOWN AND 'DIRTY'

Having just wrapped three New York shows with ex-Blind Faith colleague Eric Clapton, Steve Winwood has signed a new deal with Columbia Records. His label debut, "Nine Lives," will arrive April 29. Clapton contributes guitar on first single "Dirty City," which is at iTunes now. Look for Winwood on tour with Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers in the United States this summer.

### >>> WELCOME BACK DONNA

Donna Summer will break a 17-year drought of studio albums with all new material thanks to a new deal with Sony BMG's Burgundy Records. Dubbed "Crayons," the project will arrive May 20. Summer is working with a wide range of collaborators, including Danielle Brisebois, Greg Kurstin, JR Rotem, Lester Mendez and Evan Bogart. The artist's last album of completely new material was 1991's "Mistaken Identity" (Atlantic).

Reporting by Jonathan Cohen.

CHRISTIAN BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

# MOVE THE MASSES

Leeland Aims To Turn Critical Acclaim Into Commercial Glory

With the 2006 release of "Sound of Melodies," Texas-based rock band Leeland became the critical darling of the Christian music community. Its debut disc earned the group a Grammy Award nomination for best pop/contemporary gospel album as well as four Dove Award nominations.

In addition, 19-year-old frontman Leeland Mooring's songwriting prowess caught the attention of Christian music titan Michael W. Smith, and the teen co-wrote several tracks for Smith's 2006 Reunion album "Stand."

Now Leeland is hoping to deliver big with its sophomore release, "Opposite Way," released Feb. 26 via Essential.

"We wrote some on the road and finished most of the songs in the studio when we recorded them," Mooring says. "I think it's a good thing. I'd rather be recording in a fast mode than a slow mode."

It has indeed been a case of life in the fast lane for Mooring, who along with his elder brother Jack, Mike Smith, Jake Holtz and Matt Campbell constitute Leeland. The band has been on the road opening for Casting Crowns on the Altar and the Door tour, and Mooring says interacting with other young Christians while touring helped fuel the new material.

"One of the things we've seen is how our generation wants to be a part of something that is bigger than themselves," Mooring says. "There are so many types of pleasures the world has to offer, but everything in this world ultimately leaves you empty and alone. Nothing in the world will satisfy that kind of spiritual void in your life."

Mooring says the band's goal with the new record was to encourage young people to stand up for their beliefs. "[We want to] raise up a new generation of worshippers," he says, "who do whatever it takes to make that 'opposite way' a reality in their lives. We really hope this will change a lot of kids' lives."

Mooring began writing songs about his faith at an early age. He signed



his first publishing deal with EMI's Christian publishing arm when he was only 15. By the next year, the band had signed a recording deal with Essential, a label under Sony BMG's Provident Music Group umbrella. Thus far, "Sound of Melodies" has sold 38,000 units in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

First single "Count Me In" is No. 28 this week on Hot Christian Songs. "The single is moving well, and we think we'll have some radio success out of this record that we didn't see out of the first record," Provident Music Group senior VP of sales and marketing Ben Howard says. "They have a lot of big fans among radio programmers, but at the same time because of their uniqueness and the different sound of the music, they had a hard time figuring out how to play Leeland."

Howard says Leeland's exposure on the Casting Crowns tour has been key in getting the word out about the new record. The label has partnered with radio in tour markets for a special promotion tying into Mooring's trademark red locks. "We encourage listeners to show up with red hair or with red wigs, and the first 50 people that arrive get a special meet-and-greet with Leeland," Howard says. One fan from among those first 50 also receives two front-row tickets.

The Provident team capitalized on Valentine's Day with a reduced-price, 24-hour presale targeting a very narrow community in its database, Howard says. "We had challenged our team to sell 500 and they presold over 2,000 CDs in 24 hours."



### >>> ASIA'S PHOENIX RISES

Veteran supergroup Asia's new album, "Phoenix," is aptly titled—because it's the first studio set by the band's original lineup of John Wetton, Steve Howe, Carl Palmer and Geoff Downes in 25 years, and because it follows Wetton's emergency triple-bypass heart surgery last summer.

"He had a real scare, but once [the surgery] was over they went straight into the studio to make the record," says Mario de Riso, head of Naples, Italy-based Frontiers Records, which has worldwide rights to the album. The record will be released April 14 throughout Europe. De Riso says a North American release via EMI Capitol will follow, with

international licensing deals in negotiation. Classic rock specialist Frontiers has previously issued albums by Wetton and Downes, plus acts like Styx, Dokken and Rob Halford.

Formed in 1981 by former members of Yes; King Crimson; Emerson, Lake & Palmer; and the Buggles, Asia topped the Billboard 200 with its self-titled Geffen debut. Subsequent releases, however, didn't match that success, and several later albums saw Downes as the only original member.

De Riso says the new album "brings back the classic Asia sound, but has elements of the past experiences of all four musicians. [That's] reflected in the live shows, where they play

## GLOBAL PULSE

EDITED BY TOM FERGUSON

songs by their previous bands."

Having toured in Europe, Japan, and North and South America since re-forming in late 2006, the quartet begins a global trek (booked by Talent Consultants International) March 1 in the United Kingdom. U.S. dates begin April 4. Asia's publishing is through Warner/Chappell/copyright control.

—Steve Adams

### >>> 'FLOWERS' POWER

Kathleen Edwards admits her music isn't easy to classify. The critically acclaimed Canadian singer/songwriter's third album, "Asking for Flowers," bows March 4 on Maple Music in Canada and Rounder in the United States, with Zoe issuing it in Europe the same week.

The new set, co-produced by Jim Scott (Tom Petty, Whiskeytown), offers a more elaborate take than before on Edwards' distinctive brand of pop, rock and Americana. "I

delivered a record that I think is less commercial," she says. "A lot of people would probably be happy if I wrote a lot of poppy, catchy songs—I'm just not in that head space."

It took a while for Edwards to figure out what shape the record would take. "I really had nothing in the bank when I came off tour in 2006," she says. "Now I'm at the other end of it, I realize a lot of my songs come from having observations of those around me, and I hadn't had many because I'd just been on the road." Edwards is booked by the Agency Group (Canada), Creative Artists Agency (United States) and Helter Skelter (Europe).—Robert Thompson

### >>> AMEN CORNER

Warner Music Italy is hailing the success of alternative trio Baustelle as the first fruit of its embrace of the 360-degree model. The act's first Warner album, "La Malavita" (2005), made the FIMI top 20, but fol-

low-up "Amen" debuted at No. 4 after its Feb. 1 release. Warner Italy artistic director Tino Silvestri says "Amen" has shipped 35,000 copies (gold) and hopes to hit 70,000 by June.

"We're particularly pleased," he says, "as Baustelle [is] one of the first examples of our new model of business. Under their contract we're also entitled to a share of touring, merchandising, sponsorship and publishing revenue."

"Amen" is Baustelle's fourth album. Sales have been boosted by hefty airplay for lead single "Charlie fa Surf," but the band's visibility was also enhanced by penning a single last year for another Warner artist, Irene Grandi. The song, "Bruci La Città," was Italy's summer hit of 2007.

Warner doesn't have any concrete international plans for Baustelle, whose publishing is shared by Universal Music Publishing and Warner/Chappell; live work is handled by Live Nation in Milan. —Mark Worden



ALBERTA CROSS

# NOW HEAR THIS

YOUR GUIDE TO UNSIGNED BANDS COMPILED BY KATIE HASTY

## >>>ALBERTA CROSS

Contact: Rene Symonds, manager, [rs@machinemanagement.co.uk](mailto:rs@machinemanagement.co.uk), +44 0 207 247 4227

Last year, British roots-rock outfit Alberta Cross released a seven-song EP, "The Thief and the Heartbreaker," via Geffen in the United States and Fiction in the United Kingdom to much critical success. However, among reorganizational turmoil at Universal and shifting A&R priorities, the band cut strings with the major after losing the option for a full-length during its contractual period. Which isn't a bad thing, according to Alberta Cross principal Terry Wolfers.

"Everything's wide open now," says Wolfers, who co-writes the dusty and soulful tunes with singer Petter Ericson Stakee. "We've really started to build something [in the States]." Alberta Cross shared the stage with former members of Shudder to Think and OK Go at the Barack Rock concert/rally in February in New York and overtook the city's Living Room for a few dates, in addition to rocking the CMJ Music Marathon last fall.

The response, he says, has been good enough that the band plans to move to New York permanently this spring and is mulling a "darker" full-length with potential producers like Alan Bezosi (Regina Spektor) and Victor Van Vugt (Nick Cave, PJ Harvey).

"At an early stage we realized there was a huge opportunity for the band in America," co-manager Rene Symonds says. He and his partner Iain Watt at Machine Management also handle artists like Mika and post-Test Icicles project Lightspeed Champion. "We almost immediately appointed Sam Kirby, Marc Geiger and Seth Seigle at the William Morris Agency to help us on the U.S. strategy." The booking giant has secured a slot for Alberta Cross at the Roxy Festival March 29 in California and at the new All Points West fest in early August in New Jersey. —Katie Hasty

## >>>KIM KLINE

Contact: Kim Kline, 310-403-8976, [info@kimklinemusic.com](mailto:info@kimklinemusic.com) To hear Kim Kline talk on the phone is a distant cry from what you would expect from her music. Raised in an "itty bitty"

Texas town, the 27-year-old pop/rock artist speaks in a bubbly drawl, an upbeat opposite of her often shadowy and rough-edged song persona.

"I can be the nicest person in the world, but I just write really dark," she happily says. Much material from her self-titled 2007 debut was culled from a difficult era in her life, in 2004-2005, when her mother suffered a brain aneurysm and a heart attack, and her grandmother and grandfather passed away. The album has sold 8,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

It was also during this time Kline was settling into her new life in Los Angeles, where she now runs the "Kim Kline music brand." The term is apt, considering her sponsorships from Sinful Affliction Clothing, Hudson Jeans and a forthcoming jewelry line via Mr. Luxury, all alliances she helped cement while working in the fashion industry as a sales rep in California. She's also the face of USB wristband promotion company Aderra (Billboard, Feb. 23); the company is using her image and music as part of their presentation to new clients and fans.

Some radio stations, particularly those in tertiary markets (think: KSPI Stillwater, Okla.; WCMT Troy, Tenn.; and WFDL Fond du Lac, Wis.) have taken kindly to Kline's single "Inside." "To look at me, you'd think I'm just a pure top 40 artist," the photogenic belter says. "But then you hear the guitars. I think we're at a good place in time for women in rock. The marketplace needs to hear a woman's voice." —KH

## >>>PRINCESS ADANA

Contact: Debbie Fontaine, [fontainetalent@aol.com](mailto:fontainetalent@aol.com) Princess Adana has already made a name for herself in her native Trinidad and Tobago, but now she's attempting stateside success. Her arresting blend of reggae-infused R&B and natural dance moves won her the talent showcase at Billboard's eighth annual R&B/Hip-Hop Confer-

ence last November.

Adana, who turns 20 in April, is no stranger to winning competitions. She dominated her first at age 15, a local talent contest while attending the Tobago Academy of Performing Arts on a dancing scholarship. Deciding to focus on music, she met manager Andre Thorne of BWV Entertainment (Brothers With a Vision). Since then, she's become a staple on radio and in dance clubs in the region, thanks to soca hits "Out of Control" and "Uncertain." Adana, who is a contracted performer at six major hotels in the islands, came to the attention of Beverly Hills, Calif.-based Fontaine Music Agency (which repped Bad Boy group Dream) after performing at an international talent competition in August 2006.

"Adana has a sultry alto a la Lauryn Hill," Debbie Fontaine says. "She doesn't have the typical soprano that everyone else seems to be doing."

Influenced by Anita Baker and Eddie Levert, among others, Adana (last name Roberts) has since opened the 2007 Tobago Jazz Festival, which featured Elton John, Mary J. Blige and Al Green. Having already released one indie album, Adana and Thorne are hard at work on another set melding her love of soca, reggae and R&B/soul. "I'm a singer from the heart," Adana says. "I just want to sing, dance and be what I am on the big stage." —Gail Mitchell



PRINCESS ADANA

ROCK BY ANN DONAHUE

# Rock The Cash Box

From First To Last Strikes Up The Brand

By the online numbers, From First to Last has scored some impressive digits. Its MySpace page has snagged 12 million profile views, and from there, fans have tallied 20 million plays of its songs.

Building up these numbers, however, hasn't necessarily meant playing by the book. Now under the management of Suretone's Jordan Schur (see Q&A, page 26), the rock quartet has made a number of partnerships outside of the music arena to boost awareness of its self-titled album, due April 15. (FFTL's prior albums, 2006's "Heroine" and 2004's "Dear Diary, My Teen Angst Has a Body Count," were released on Epitaph and have sold a combined 304,000 units in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.)

Schur says those records were "independent

releases that have never gone to radio. We've taken the time to develop them on the road, through new media, through lifestyle marketing efforts . . . they're my baby."

Among the partnerships:

■ **Electronic Arts.** As part of a publishing deal with EA's label Artwerk, FFTL tracks will appear in the next 11 videogames from EA, Schur says, including best sellers "Madden NFL 09," "FIFA 09" and the next edition of "Need for Speed." "The perfect storm collided in Jordan's office late last year," EA worldwide executive of music Steve Schnur says. "He started playing me From First to Last and I almost fell out of my chair. It was the best rock record I had heard in . . . I don't know how long. They are a picture-perfect gamer band." In addition, FFTL will get promotion on ea.com and on the videogame

giant's EA Trax site, which is dedicated to the music that appears in EA games.

■ **Hot Topic.** Starting at the end of February, the retailer has given counter placement to a FFTL teaser CD, which includes two tracks from the upcoming album, and retails for less than \$3. Fans can get one of the band's shirts and the CD together for \$12, Schur says.

■ **MySpace.** The band performed at a MySpace Secret Show last summer in Omaha, Neb., alongside Hawthorne Heights and Secondhand Serenade.

■ **MTV.** On March 5, FFTL will open for the Cure at a concert in Valencia, Spain, which will be filmed by MTV and play on MTV International as part of the April run-up to the album's release, Schur says.

In addition, billboard.com debuted the guitar-driven anthem "We All Turn Back to Dust" on Jan. 23, tallying 2,800 streams in just two days.

That's not to say Schur won't take advantage of traditional ways to break through, namely touring. Currently, the band is on Hot Topic's 2008 Take Action tour alongside Every Time I Die and the Bled, and it has landed a spot on the 2008 Vans Warped tour, which also counts EA as a sponsor.

"I genuinely believe, because we've done the two years of work, that From First to Last will become the biggest rock band on earth," Schur says. "Brick by brick, we're going to build them into what we know they are. They've made the record that will demand the respect." ●●●

WORLD BY WES ORSHOSKI

# The Long Haul

Anti-'s Devotchka Is Winning Fans Over, One At A Time

**W**hen he founded Devotchka as an "experiment" more than nine years ago, singer Nick Urata's idea was to blur the line between the musics of East and West, between gypsy and mariachi, tubas and theremins, bouzoukis and guitars. There was a "pining away for older times and exotic, faraway places," he says.

"It was a time when I thought, 'How the hell am I ever going to get there? Why don't we try to get there in the music?'"

At the time, success meant merely being able to keep this experiment afloat, and make some money doing it. While that remains a concern almost a decade later (the group's five indie releases have sold only a combined 80,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan), a lot has changed.

If co-manager Mat Hall recalls days when he had to convince everyone from labels to writers that Devotchka's music wasn't some "world-music nightmare," he and the band now find themselves in such unlikely positions as having to decline fast-food giant McDonald's request to use a Devotchka song in a commercial.

For the majority of listeners in and outside of the music industry, Devotchka's meld of unlikely musical bedfellows has proved a hard pill to swallow. But the critically lauded group and its management's long-term strategy of earning one fan at a time is inching toward pay dirt.

Nearing the March 18 release of its sixth album, "A Mad and Faithful Telling," Urata's vision—of creating cinematic music capturing the feeling of "black-and-white movies from another country" and the accordion/wedding jams of his childhood—is enjoying some of the best media attention of the band's career. In

addition to binders of glowing press, Devotchka has been anointed a band to watch by the likes of KCRW Santa Monica, Calif., and NPR. Such noncommercial radio fans as KEXP Seattle and KCMP Minneapolis will spotlight the group on the air next month from South by Southwest.

The band will make its first appearance at the annual Coachella festival this year and will appear on "Late Night With Conan O'Brien" before embarking on U.S. and European tours. The fact that Anti- is releasing the new album is viewed as an achievement on its own by some, as the Colorado band joins such praised labelmates as Tom Waits, Nick Cave and Neko Case.

Things are congealing for Devotchka for a variety of reasons, none smaller than the appearance of its music in last year's Academy Award-winning "Little Miss Sunshine." It created a spike in sales, but not as much as band and management would have liked. That soundtrack succeeded steadily increasing radio and press support and smart, tenacious bookings that found the group supporting acts as varied as Donovan and Marilyn Manson.

The Anti- deal follows an attempt by Seymour Stein to sign De-

votchka to Sire, which Urata says was stymied by the "suits" at parent company Warner, who viewed the band as unmarketable. It's the type of thinking that tested Urata's faith through the years, as rent bills neared and the band slept on floors.

"It just seemed like labels, agents and talent buyers were like, 'What am I going to do with this wacky band with a tuba?'" he says. "I think that end of the business has gotten kind of narrow-minded. If you look at any period of time when music has changed for the better, it was always someone coming out of left field."

With fellow East-meets-West ensembles like Gogol Bordello also enjoying higher visibility, manager Hall is leery of listeners attacking Devotchka for jumping on a bandwagon. "They've been doing this for nine years. I see them as pioneers." ●●●

DEVOTCHKA



FROM FIRST TO LAST: JASON O'DELL; DEVOTCHKA: GARY ISAACS



# THE BILLBOARD REVIEWS

## ALBUMS

### POP

#### MICHAEL McDONALD

##### Soul Speak

Producer: Simon Climie  
Universal Motown

Release Date: March 4

It's not quite "Motown 3," but Michael McDonald is certainly taking his time transitioning back to making original music. "Soul Speak" features 11, well, soulful covers from his personal favorites, along with a trio of new songs that hold their own amidst their formidable surroundings. Highlights include a winning, sultry take on Leonard Cohen's "Hallelujah" and subtle versions of Teddy Pendergrass' "Love TKO" and Van Morrison's "Into the Mystic," while a too-lush treatment of Bob Marley's "Redemption Song" is the album's only outright miss. McDonald maintains the soulful mood on the originals, too, with the smooth and quiet "Only God Can Help Me Now," the lush "Can't Get Over You (Getting Over Me)" and the more forceful "Enemy Within." Soul, it seems, still speaks most convincingly in McDonald's world.—GG

### ROCK

#### THE BLACK CROWES

##### Warpaint

Producer: Paul Stacey  
Silver Arrow

Release Date: March 4

When Chris Robinson sings "Hallelujah, come

join the jubilee" on album opener "Goodbye Daughters of the Revolution," it's an invitation Black Crowes fans consider overdue. "Warpaint" is the group's first new studio album in seven years, and somehow it's more energetic and focused than anything since, perhaps, 1994's "Amorica." "Warpaint" mines the same Allmans-to-Zappa synthesis of influences that's been the Crowes' stock in trade but finds the group fortified by sharp songwriting and lace-tight, live-sounding performances. The Crowes remain loud and proud proponents of psychedelic trippiness on "Daughters," "Whoa Mule" and "Wounded Bird," and dig into some gritty grooves on "Walk Believer Walk," "Evergreen" and a spirited cover of the Rev. Charlie Jackson's "God's Got It." "Oh Josephine" and "There's Gold in Them Hills" deliver mel-lower moments, and the 11-song set establishes the group's return as something to crow about.—GG

#### KATHLEEN EDWARDS

##### Asking for Flowers

Producers: Kathleen Edwards, Jim Scott  
Zoë/Rounder

Release Date: March 4

"Asking for Flowers" is a fourth-album masterpiece from this Canadian singer/songwriter, filled with literate and provocative lyricism, vivid characters and cin-

#### GUTTER TWINS

##### Saturnalia

Producers: Greg Dulli, Mark Lanegan, Mathias Schneeberger  
Sub Pop

Release Date: March 4

The Gutter Twins' Sub Pop debut, "Saturnalia," is teeming with the kind of raw and gritty music one might expect to hear kicked around in, well, the gutter. And considering the project is a collaboration between Mark Lanegan and Greg Dulli, that's certainly not a bad thing. There's something ominous and satanic that possesses the guitar riffs scrawling all over "Idle Hands," and that spirit is channeled elsewhere on "All Misery/Flowers" and the haunting "Front Street." Hints of blues rock infuse "The Stations" and electronic flourishes highlight "Each to Each," as Lanegan's brooding baritone and Dulli's mellow tenor muse on the absurdities of love. "I tell you my story, so that you might save me," Lanegan intones on "All Misery," and while he may never find the salvation he's seeking, he can rest assured there's someone down here in the dinginess listening.—JM



ematically engaging scenarios. Kathleen Edwards chronicles romantic turmoil in "Buffalo," "The Cheapest Key" and the title track, then turns around for such sweeter romantic paeans as "Sure As Shit" and "Scared at Night." There's the rocking, country-flavored energy of "The Cheapest Key" and "I Make the Dough, You Get the Glory." Elsewhere, she mines topical matters on the draft resister's ode "Oil Man's War," the media and environmental concerns of "Oh Canada" and "Alicia Ross," whose content was drafted from a real-life murder. After three predecessors, Edwards may be "Asking for Flowers" but we hope she'll be satisfied with well-deserved plaudits.—GG

#### STEPHEN MALKMUS & THE JICKS

##### Real Emotional Trash

Producer: Stephen Malkmus  
Matador

Release Date: March 4

Stephen Malkmus has neatly kept all his parts in place on his fourth solo album: the languid lyrical nonsense, the obtuse stories that seem to go nowhere until they do (sometimes), the once-again-lengthy compositions and the '70s-pop-prog trickery. (OK, that's new.) They're all so intact, in fact, that "Real Emotional Trash" feels often calculated and a little drifty, which

is probably the point. "Dragonfly Pie" is a messy psychedelic stomp, "Hopscotch Willie" keeps you wondering where he's heading, "We Can't Help You" is a brief, stirring winner, and the 10-minute title epic does some nice bobs and weaves, though it makes, as you might expect, no real sense. Janet Weiss adds welcome flavor on drums and vocals, but overall, how much you enjoy rummaging through this "Trash" will probably depend on the amount of patience you have for the Malkmus' indulgences.—JV

### ELECTRONIC

#### AUTECHRE

##### Quaristice

Producer: Autechre  
Warp

Release Date: March 4

"Quaristice" plays out like bits and pieces of a puzzle that never quite fit together, which isn't particularly unusual for this experimental techno duo. The difference here is that the relatively short tracks offer glimpses of ideas that are finished before fully materializing into something to wrap your head around. The album hops from dense, atmospheric fuzz ("Altibzz," "Palalel Suns") and erratic sequences of glitchy twitches ("Plyphon") to rapid drum machine blips ("Perlence") and back again before ever securely finding its feet. "Simmm" show-

cases bright beats that are slowly bathed in a wash of warm electronica, and the closest thing to dance tracks are the thumping "Rale" and "90101-51-1." At times it feels like a lot is going on, others not so much. The pieces are all there, but it just doesn't add up to more than the sum of its parts.—JM

### JAZZ

#### MARCUS MILLER

##### Marcus

Producer: Marcus Miller  
Concord Jazz

Release Date: March 4

Most largely instrumental jazz albums lose their appeal after the 50-minute mark. Notwithstanding its four R&B-styled vocal tracks (including a winning rendition of Deniece Williams' "Free" by Corinne Bailey Rae), Marcus Miller's zesty CD has adrenaline to spare at the close of its 70-plus-minute funk-jazz marathon, when he speeds across the finish line with a B3-fueled take on Tower of Power's "What Is Hip?" Released on his own 3 Deuces label distributed by Concord, "Marcus" is the eighth solo outing by Miles Davis' final musical collaborator. Miller's high-in-the-mix bass forms the core here, whether it's bottom rhythms in his gently grooved original "Strum" or virtuosic speed on

hot tracks like "Blast," where he also overdubs sitar funk. One of the late-highlight moments is the soulfully lyrical saunter through Davis' "Jean Pierre," co-starring Gregoire Maret on harmonica.—DO

#### KAT PARRA

##### Azucar de Amor

Producer: Wayne Wallace  
Patois

Release Date: March 4

Vocalist Kat Parra indulges her passion for Latin jazz on "Azucar de Amor," her second release for Patois Records. She opens the disc with a sweet bit of salsa/mambo, "Sugar (Azucar de Amor)," that sets the tone for what proves to be a moveable feast of Latin styles. Parra knows how to light the fuse on a salsa number, and she shows us how it's done on the original tune "Quitate la Queta." In a completely different mood, Parra delivers a stirring interpretation of "Esta Montanya D'Enfrente," a mystic Sephardic ballad. Her vocal on this number is beautifully shaped; her grasp of this archaic Judeo-Spanish style is remarkable. Parra also shines on "Un Grito," a song she wrote with Wayne Wallace in the Afro-Peruvian landó style. It's yet another stylistic groove that she handles with an uncanny feel.—PVV

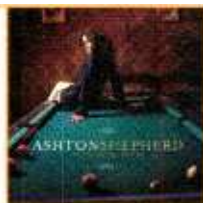
#### ASHTON SHEPHERD

##### Sounds So Good

Producer: Buddy Cannon  
MCA Nashville

Release Date: March 4

There are debut albums, and then there are debut albums that serve notice that the landscape has changed. Twenty-one-year-old Alabama native Ashton Shepherd and producer Buddy Cannon have delivered the latter. Unabashedly country in production and theme, the set is refreshing, authentic and delightfully un-PC. Liquor? Lots of it. Heartache? Check. Dirt roads? Several. Single "Takin' Off This Pain" is destined to be an anthem for women fed up with relationships going nowhere. "I Ain't Dead Yet" finds the singer balancing motherhood and marriage with a night out on the town, while "Not Right Now" embraces "a pint of Crown and a country sound." Conversely, "How Big Are Angel Wings" is a tearjerker about a terminally ill child who asks her doctor the question she can't put to her parents.—KT



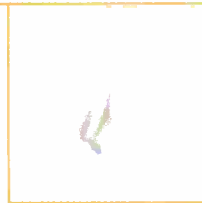
#### BAUHAUS

##### Go Away White

Producers: Bauhaus, Bob Ezrin  
Bauhaus Music

Release Date: March 4

Recorded in 18 days, some tracks in one take, Bauhaus' fifth studio album proves that even a quarter-century's hiatus can't kill a great band, especially if it was undead to begin with. There's no trickery here—apart from the sinister seduction of Peter Murphy's ever-deepening Transylvanian croon—and the bare, live style makes the band's heirs even more apparent. There's PJ Harvey in David J's swamp-blues bass; Nirvana in the shrieking, submerged guitar of Daniel Ash. But the quartet doesn't compose or perform like elder statesmen: "International Bullet Proof Talent" and "Endless Summer of the Damned" are as spry and visceral as its first material. If the band had released a bunch of meandering albums during the past 25 years, you might call "Go Away White" a return to form. Instead, it picks up right where Bauhaus left off: a wet dream for original fans and a blast of recognition for the newly eye-lined.—KM



# THE BILLBOARD REVIEWS

## SINGLES

### FOLK

#### JIM WHITE

##### Transnormal Skiperoo

**Producers:** Joe Pernice, Michael Deming, Jim White, Tucker Martine  
*Luaka Bop*

**Release Date:** March 4

★ Jim White narrated the 2004 film "Searching for the Wrong-Eyed Jesus," an insightful peek at the often dark place where music and religion meet in the rural South. But the title here is meant to describe his recent bouts with contentment, and opener "A Town Called Amen" is a sweet and frothy announcement that White has found some peace of mind after a long spell of conflict. With accompaniment as varied as vocals from Ollabelle and Brazilian percussion from Mauro Refosco, White still keeps us off balance with rich, unpredictable textures ("Diamonds to Coal") that convey lost-in-the-backwoods disorientation ("Counting Numbers in the Air"). He's also a compelling storyteller who uses words and minor chords to empathize with a troubled spirit ("Take Me Away"). But White's new near happiness can't be denied on "Turquoise House," about a man who has found comfort in his nonconformity.—WR

### WORLD

#### MARKUS JAMES

##### Snakeskin Violin

**Producer:** Markus James  
*Firenze*

**Release Date:** Feb. 19

★ Of late, a handful of American artists have explored the connection between West African music and American blues, but Markus James has lived this connection for the past seven years (and four albums). "Snakeskin Violin" con-

tinues his profound world blues passage. Working, as usual, with several Malian players, including Hassi Sare (njarka violin), Mamadou Sidibe (calabash, vocals), Vieux Farka Toure (cadenca guitar) and Mama Sissoko (n'goni), James laid down tracks in Mali, California and Mississippi. His songs radiate a dark, nearly forbidding glow, while his sparse, shadowy arrangements cut a groove that draws deeply from the hypnotic vibe of Malian music. "All That You Can't Keep," "Exile Tracks" and "I Won't Let It" are extremely distinctive pieces, driven by a seductive rhythmic circularity that's a keystone of Malian traditional tunes and Delta blues.—PVV

### NEW & NOTEWORTHY

#### BORN RUFFIANS

##### Red Yellow & Blue

**Producer:** Rusty Santos  
*Warp*

**Release Date:** March 4

★ Don't be misled by the Warp Records logo on this Toronto trio's debut full-length. Rather than making Aphex Twin-style electronica, Born Ruffians are in the business of kicking out jumpy live-band power-pop jams far more concerned with melodic zing than textural depth. Fans of Vampire Weekend and Hot Hot Heat should find much to admire about "Red Yellow & Blue," which follows a buzzed-about 2006 EP as well as tours with indie A-listers Hot Chip and Peter Bjorn and John. Despite the album title, yelpy-voiced frontman Luke Lalonde spends most of his time singing about animals, not colors. Look out for "Barnacle Goose," "Hummingbird," "Foxes Mate for Life" and—wait for it—"Badonkadonkey." Lalonde's prey? A harmless good time.—MW

### POP

#### GAVIN DeGRAW

##### In Love With a Girl (3:25)

**Producer:** Howard Benson

**Writer:** G. DeGraw

**Publishers:** G. DeGraw/Warner-Tamerlane, BMI  
*J Records*

▶ If this single is any indication, the next full-length from Gavin DeGraw will have its rough rock edges. "In Love With a Girl" opens with heavily distorted guitars as minor chords roll through, but be not deceived: Lyrically, the track is happy, with the 30-year-old songwriter heralding a girl that "understands." One flaw beleaguers DeGraw's normally dependable croon: the unnecessary presence of auto-tuning, which is mightily distracting. Beyond that, "Girl" is a rocking home run in the same ballpark as "I Don't Want to Be." The chorus is buoyant, backed with idyllic drum tracks alongside, driving each word-heavy verse, as DeGraw's snappy piano lines may have fans playing, heaven forbid, air piano.—KH

### R&B

#### RAHEEM DeVAUGHN

##### Customer (4:05)

**Producers:** Ivan Barias,

*Carvin Haggins*

**Writers:** R. DeVaughn,

*C. Haggins, I. Barias, J. Smith, K. Oliver*

**Publishers:** various  
*Jive/Zomba*

▶ Although Raheem DeVaughn's designation as R&B hippie-neo-soul-rock star may be difficult to warm up to, his music is not. After a decent debut album, DeVaughn returns with much-improved sophomore effort "Love Behind the Melody." After first reaping top 40 rewards on Billboard's Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart in 2005 with "Guess Who Loves You More," his single "Woman" from the new album peaked at No. 18. "Customer" offers equal promise, with its catchy tune backed by a smooth vocal, mellow accompaniment and heavy-snapping percussion. Despite the clichéd food metaphors for love, DeVaughn manages to get the point across and create a soulful mood.—SB

### TRIPLE A

#### STEVE WINWOOD FEATURING ERIC CLAPTON

##### Dirty City (4:04)

**Producer:** Steve Winwood

**Writer:** S. Winwood

**Publisher:** not listed  
*Columbia*

▶ Steve Winwood revisits his days with the short-lived Blind Faith supergroup on the first single from forthcoming "Nine Lives," and demonstrates that he's one of few vocalists who refuses to be bowled over by Clapton's guitar riffs. Much less slick and overproduced than efforts that made him famous in the '80s, "Dirty City" is a slice of old-school white boy blues, with Winwood moaning about "moving up to higher ground" and Clapton noodling away in the background. Dazzling.—CH

#### KAKI KING

##### 2 O'Clock (5:50)

**Producer:** Malcolm Burn

**Writer:** K. King

**Publisher:** Domino (BMI)  
*Velour Recordings*

★ One of the words that Kaki King uses on MySpace to describe her acoustic guitar sound is "shoegaze," referring to the unassuming nature of her work. But this is also a disservice, for King's music is too stimulating to be grouped with a genre that can induce snoring. "2 O'Clock" from "Dreaming of Revenge" (March 11), details a gray afternoon where King examines a

#### NATASHA BEDINGFIELD

##### Pocketful of Sunshine (3:23)

**Producer:** John Shanks

**Writers:** N. Bedingfield,

*D. Brisebois, J. Shanks*

**Publishers:** EMI Blackwood, BMI;  
*Gator Baby/EMI Ltd.*  
*Epic*

▶ After delays and much fretting, Epic returned Brit Natasha Bedingfield to U.S. hit turf with "Love Like This." While the cutesy recording was engaging to a point—and reached No. 11 on the Billboard Hot 100 and No. 1 on Hot Dance Club Play—the addition of label-mate rapper Sean Kingston felt deliberate, if not forced. Second single and title track of sophomore album "Pocketful of Sunshine" puts Bedingfield back on accomplished melodic footing. Produced by the peerless John Shanks, the single boasts a soaring, anthemic chorus, gleeful tempo and percussive footprint mighty enough to again demand a fistful of club remixes. And there's plenty more on the full-length to propel the singer/songwriter. After "Pocketful" radiates its charms, we'll be waiting for superlative ballad "Soulmate," a track that not only made it in the United States from a dramatic reworking of her original U.K. CD release, but charted in nearly a dozen nations, including a top 10 showing at home. Hopefully, all in due time.—CT



relationship's final countdown as her lover sleeps in. Her delicate voice doesn't quaver at the thought as she chides, "There's no need to be so terrible when you know I would do anything for you." The song's drifting quality gradually transforms into one of King's finger-picking, fret-slapping runs that gallops almost in panic, giving away turbulence straining under her calm. It's a climactic—and cathartic—end to an emotional confession.—CLT

### DANCE

#### THE ROLLING STONES

##### You Can't Always Get What You Want (Soulwax Remix) (3:53)

**Producer:** Jimmy Miller

**Writers:** M. Jagger, K. Richards

**Remixer:** Soulwax

**Publisher:** ABKCO, BMI  
*ABKCO*

▶ Operating under the moniker Soulwax, brothers David and Stephen Dewaele have made a name for themselves producing edgy electro-rock remixes for Daft Punk, Hot Chip and Gorillaz. This playful, gutsy remix of the classic Stones anthem from 1969 album "Let It Bleed" sends Jagger's soulful vocal over a bubbly electro-bass riff inspired by the loose groove of the original, and builds to a deliciously stripped-down dance beat that echoes Prince's 1986 No. 1 hit "Kiss." Meanwhile, bite-sized samples of the powerful opening, famously recorded with the London Bach Choir, fade in and out like buzzing flies, producing catchy breaks. Suspenseful, clever and hard-grooving, this digital-only single is featured in the upcoming movie "21," and will get rock radio down on the dancefloor.—SP



#### COLBIE CAILLAT

##### Realize (4:05)

**Producer:** Mikal Blue

**Writers:** C. Caillat, J. Reeves,  
*M. Blue*

**Publishers:** Cocomarie, BMI;  
*Dancing Squirrel/INAFI/Opium for the People, ASCAP*  
*Universal Republic*

The tide remains high for folk-pop singer/songwriter Colbie Caillat, whose second single off debut "Coco" will make listeners "Realize" that her album has some serious legs. Fresh off multiformat smash "Bubbly" and MySpace recognition, Caillat again delivers an effortless vocal with simple acoustic guitar, instantly singalong melody and harmonies colored by singer Jason Reeves. At the core is a reflection of a budding relationship: "We'd never have to wonder if we missed out on each other." "Realize" is sure to wash up on a shore near you as the weather warms for those unexpected spring flings.—MM

## LEGEND & CREDITS

EDITED BY JONATHAN COHEN (ALBUMS) AND CHUCK TAYLOR (SINGLES)

**CONTRIBUTORS:** Sophia Baratta, Gary Graff, Courtney Harding, Katie Hasty, Kerri Mason, Michael Menachem, Jill Menze, Dan Ouellette, Sven Philipp, Wayne Robins, Chuck Taylor, Christa L. Titus, Ken Tucker, Philip Van Vleck, Jeff Vrabel, Mikael Wood

**PICK ▶:** A new release predicted to hit the top half of the chart in the corresponding format.

**CRITICS' CHOICE ★:** A new release, regardless of chart potential, highly recommended for musical merit.

All albums commercially available in the United States are eligible. Send album review copies to Jonathan Cohen and singles review copies to Chuck Taylor (both at Billboard, 770 Broadway, Seventh Floor, New York, N.Y. 10003) or to the writers in the appropriate bureaus.

GLOBAL BY MARK SUTHERLAND

# BRITs Boosts

After performing their hit song "Valerie" together at the recent BRIT Awards, Amy Winehouse and Mark Ronson are again reunited as the main beneficiaries of sales boosts from the event.

Sales of Winehouse's "Back to Black—The Deluxe Edition" picked up 60% in week-on-week sales, from 19,028 to 30,363, according to the Official U.K. Charts Co., propelling the album into the top three. Over-the-counter sales figures were not available for Ronson, but market-leading retailer HMV saw a 60%-plus boost in his sales.

The chart positions of all the night's performers—including Mika, Rihanna and Leona Lewis—improved in the aftermath of the event, with the BRITs boost looking set to revive previously disappointing sales of Kylie Minogue's "X" album. After a strong performance of "Wow" at the show, her album surged 38-24, while the song rocketed 18-5 on the singles chart in its 10th chart week.

TV ratings for the event, broadcast on ITV1, averaged 6.1 million, up from 5.3 million in 2007 and 4.6 million in 2005, and HMV head of music Rudy Osorio says the BRITs effect is becoming more notable every year.

"People do respond to the broadcast and all the publicity, and there's a growing upward trend," he says. "[It] can help artists like Mark Ronson become household names as well and see very significant increases in their album sales. It's a very good platform for an artist to connect with the mainstream and then build sales for the rest of the year."



MARK RONSON and AMY WINEHOUSE'S performance at the Feb. 20 BRIT Awards proved to be a huge sales catalyst for their latest albums.

## REINVENTING REGGAETÓN

Three years after Angel & Khriz's mega-hit "Ven Bailalo" rode the reggaetón explosion all the way to Europe, the duo is back with a quirky new song for an evolving genre.

"La Vecina," the first single from the Puerto Rican pair's March 11 "Showtime" album on VI/Machete, layers electric and acoustic guitar and trumpets over the familiar reggaetón beat. The track leapt from its debut position at No. 26 on Billboard's Latin Rhythm Airplay chart to No. 16 last week, and is now No. 19, though its audience rose 8% during last week.

Angel & Khriz have been featured on a couple of reggaetón hits since hitting No. 3 on the Hot Latin Songs chart with "Ven Bailalo" in 2005, but their new album represents something of a comeback. The two have toured Spain and Latin America, and parted ways with indie label MVP to join VI/Machete, home to superstars Don Omar and Hector "El Father."



	AMY WINEHOUSE	MARK RONSON	KYLIE MINOGUE
Album:	"Back to Black—The Deluxe Edition" (Island)	"Version" (Columbia)	"X" (Parlophone)
Songs performed at the BRITs:	2	3	1
BRIT Awards won:	0	1	1
Chart position on Feb. 17:	No. 14	No. 22	No. 38
Chart position on Feb. 24:	No. 3	No. 4	No. 24
HMV week-on-week sales boost:	+28.2%	+66.2%	+64.8%



## MATERIAL ISSUE

Cagle Scores Big With Outside Songwriting Help

Country star Chris Cagle has returned to the promised land. His fourth album, "My Life's Been a Country Song" (Capitol Nashville), debuts at No. 1 on Billboard's Top Country Albums this week, his second chart-topper. The set, which sold 37,000 first-week copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, also debuts at No. 8 on the Billboard 200, his first top 10 entry on the big chart.

Meanwhile, first single "What Kinda Gone" is No. 9 on Hot Country Songs. It's Cagle's first trip into the airplay top 10 since "Chicks Dig It" peaked at No. 5 in late 2003.

The success comes after a professional dry spell and a period of personal turmoil. In addition to an ongoing lawsuit involving his former manager, Cagle suffered vocal problems and the shock of learning that a baby that he thought was his turned out not to be. "I was beat up and broken-hearted and locked in a bottle, and there's a lot of the last couple years that I don't remember," he says. "At

the same time, I had some growing up to do."

After selling more than 600,000 copies of each of his first two albums and scoring four top 10 airplay singles, including the No. 1 "I Breathe In, I Breathe Out," Cagle's third album sold less than 400,000 units and didn't produce any radio hits.

Produced by Scott Hendricks and Cagle, the new set features none of his own material—a departure from earlier albums. After sifting through hundreds of reviews, new producer Hendricks told Cagle his material was keeping him from being a bigger star. "That was hard for me to swallow," Cagle says. "I'm a songwriter. But the bottom line is as an artist, you got to make the best music, period."

Cagle and Hendricks instead turned to songs from Nashville's top tunesmiths, including Dave Berg, Craig Wiseman, Brett James, Wendell Mobley and Neil Thrasher.

Country KSOP Salt Lake City music director



Debby Turpin says Cagle "just needed the right song to get him back on track." The new single, she says, "has a great vibe and paints a vivid picture of this stressed-out guy wondering when his girl is coming back, if at all."

Country KMLE Phoenix music director Gwen Foster agrees. "It really didn't matter that Chris had not had any recent hits," she says. "In our world, a great song is a great song."

—Ken Tucker

"We were [touring] all these countries and at the same time getting a little bit of each culture," Khriz (aka Christian Colón) says. "With the music we heard, we wanted to make an album that was for everyone. 'La Vecina' is an example of that."

The artist wouldn't elaborate on the "differences" with the indie that led to the change of label, but acknowledged that Angel & Khriz's new home puts them in company with some of reggaetón's biggest stars.

As for what's happened in the years since Daddy Yankee's "Gasolina" was a massive crossover hit, Khriz says reggaetón has firmly established itself as a genre with discerning fans, whether the music is trendy or not. "Those who make good reggaetón will stand out," he says. "The genre won't die."

—Ayala Ben-Yehuda

RONSON & WINEHOUSE: MARK ALLAN/WIREIMAGE.COM; CAGLE: RUSS HARRINGTON; TROPHY DESIGNED BY JOHN MARSHALL AND SCULPTED BY ROBERT GLOVER FOR BRIT AWARDS LTD

DANCE BY KERRI MASON

# Mushrooming Success

Though it sits on the outskirts of the dance music mainstream, psych-trance duo Infected Mushroom is one of the genre's best chances for crossover success.

Amit "Duvdev" Duvedevani and Erez Eisen played 135 gigs in 2007, including Coachella and Baltimore's Virgin Festival; turned away more than 1,000 fans from a sold-out show at Avalon in Hollywood; got a proper rock'n'roll manager; and made the ultimate commitment to the pursuit of bigger things: They moved from their homeland of Israel to the mean streets of Los Angeles. They will play their first South by Southwest show March 13.

"They've grown to the point where they now have truly massive fan bases on several different continents, and their music has been moving, very organically, toward a more mainstream, melodic and vocal-oriented sound," says manager Jeff Jampol, who also oversees the Doors.

Infected Mushroom first appeared in the late '90s and soon came to define the walloping, wall-of-sound style of goa, or psychedelic trance. "It's really colorful music, and there's nonstop movement," Duvdev says. "It's very intense, very much in your face. Sonically, it can go anywhere, from techno to metal to flamenco, sometimes in the same song." The act's six albums have sold a combined 27,000 units in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

The pair toured as DJs for most of its career, but recently shifted to a band format, with Duvdev on vocals and Eisen on keyboards, plus guitarist Tommy Cunningham and Brazilian percussionist Rogerio Jardim.

"It's what a live show should be all about," booking agent Ron Rivlin of Coast II Coast says. "A full band that performs their own music and hammers away at their instruments, with an explosive delivery."



The duo is working on its seventh album and collaborating with fellow L.A. carpetbagger Paul Oakenfold. Duvdev describes it as "a hybrid of trance and metal, but our influences are all over the place."

"You can call it electronica, psy-trance or any other name," Jampol says, "but at its heart it's really rock'n'roll."

# BON IVER BREAKS THROUGH

When Justin Vernon, who records as Bon Iver, spoke to Billboard a few months ago, he mentioned that none of the albums he had made with any of his previous bands had sold more than 800 copies. This week, Vernon shatters that record, as his solo debut, "For Emma, Forever Ago," shifts 4,000 copies, good enough for a No. 182 debut on the Billboard 200 and a No. 5 entry on Heatseekers.

This sales feat is especially impressive given that "For Emma," which Vernon self-released in 2007, has been floating around the Internet for several months. Lucy Robinson, a publicist at his label, Jagjaguwar, says the company implemented several initiatives to ensure people picked up the rerelease. "We offered a free poster with pre-ordered copies of the album and a bonus track on iTunes that was only available if you bought the entire record," she says. "We also made purchasing a record a condition to gain entry to some in-stores."

Bon Iver is also on tour with labelmate Black Mountain, a pairing that Robinson says attracts a diverse crowd. "It works well for both bands, because they have different but ultimately complementary fan bases," she says.

Radio is also beginning to pick up on the album; with very little effort on their part, Robinson says triple A stations have begun requesting tracks. Public radio stations throughout the Midwest have also taken a strong interest.

Middle America is the base for much of the marketing effort, including a number of Midwest-centric retail campaigns. "He's from Wisconsin and the label is based in Indiana, so there is a huge Midwest component," Robinson says. "He's a hometown boy at heart and was all about keeping it local." —Cortney Harding



according to Nielsen SoundScan, and debuted at No. 8 on the Heatseekers chart.

"We really let John Darnielle take the lead with some of the marketing," Beggars GM Matt Harmon says. "John used his blog, Last Plane to Jakarta, to announce the new record and the availability of a digital mini-EP. We're also going to radio with this record, and we've had tons of NPR support."

Beggars is also trying to maximize Darnielle's book on Black Sabbath's "Master of Reality" album, which will be released in April by Continuum Press as part of its "Thirty Three and a Third" series. "We've talked about doing a bundle with Amazon to sell the book and the record together," Kolowrat says. "The publishers have also been using the new record in their press campaign." The Thirty Three and a Third Web site, for instance, offers a PDF of the first chapter of the book along with a video from "Heretic Pride." That video, for the track "Sax Rohmer #1," also premiered prior to the record's release on spinner.com and was posted on numerous blogs.

The bookishness doesn't stop with just promoting Darnielle's novel. "We're also servicing indie bookstores as part of our lifestyle marketing campaign," Kolowrat says. "It's not uncommon to service bars and restaurants, but we wanted to branch out and find other appropriate venues."

Finally, Kolowrat wanted to include something unique for the members of the press who have championed the band for so long. "Musician and visual artist Jeffrey Lewis did a comic strip that explained all of the songs, and it was sent to the media," she says. "It was a neat visual and a special treat." —Cortney Harding

# 'MOUNTAIN' HIGH

New Album, Book Raise Exposure For Indie Favorite

After years of critical acclaim, press attention and touring, the challenge facing the team working the new Mountain Goats record became translating all the name recognition into sales. "Lots of people know who [lead singer/songwriter John Darnielle] is, but don't take the extra step to listen," Beggars Banquet publicist Sonya

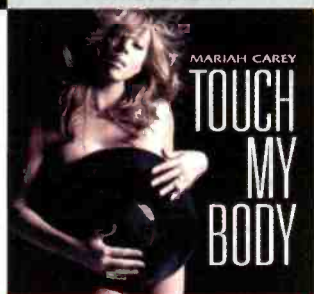
Kolowrat says. "What we've done with this record is really try to build beyond his rabid core fan base and use the word-of-mouth and other strategies to get him new audiences."

If first-week sales are any indication, this effort has paid off. The album, "Heretic Pride," sold 3,660 copies in its first week of U.S. release,



# THE HOT BOX

A WEEKLY ROUNDUP OF NOTABLE CHART ACHIEVEMENTS



MARIAH CAREY  
**TOUCH MY BODY**

## 'BODY' OF WORK

>>Mariah Carey's "Touch My Body" zips 57-34 on the Billboard Hot 100, giving the diva her 31st top 40 hit. That's the most by any female artist since Carey's debut in 1990. All time among women, she trails Madonna, Aretha Franklin, Connie Francis and Janet Jackson.

## REINCARNATION

>>Nick Lowe's "Jesus of Cool" bows at No. 32 on Top Pop Catalog Albums. On its 30th anniversary, the set has been reissued under its original British title. It spent 10 weeks on the Billboard 200 with the U.S. title "Pure Pop for Now People."



## LUKE 'WEEPS'

>>After ukulele wiz Jake Shimabukuro played George Harrison's "While My Guitar Gently Weeps" on "Late Night With Conan O'Brien," his "Gently Weeps" re-enters Top World Albums at No. 6, up 204%. His cover's digital sales surpass a 1,000% gain.

# CHART BEAT

>>As a founding member of the Kinks, Ray Davies made his debut on the Billboard album chart 43 years and three months ago. This week he finally makes his solo debut, as "Working Man's Cafe" enters at No. 140. His brother, Dave Davies, has two solo albums to his credit. They charted in 1980-81.

>>Fred Bronson has more details on Ray Davies as well as B.B. King's seventh No. 1 on Top Blues Albums and what could be the ninth single in the rock era to debut at No. 100 on the Billboard Hot 100 and go all the way to No. 1.

>>Plus, on the 11th anniversary of his Hot 100 debut, Ray J is about to have his biggest hit, and Paula Abdul returns to the chart after an absence of more than 12 years.

Read Fred Bronson every week at [billboard.com/fred](http://billboard.com/fred).

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# CHARTS



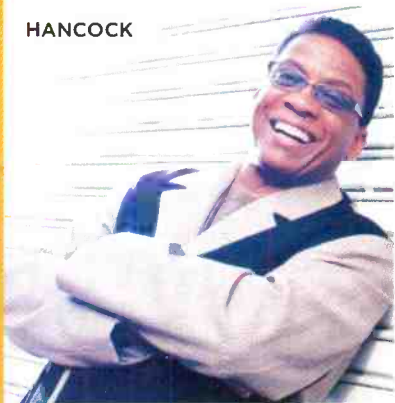
## Over the Counter

GEOFF MAYFIELD [gmayfield@billboard.com](mailto:gmayfield@billboard.com)

## Between Grammys And Oscars, Janet's On Deck

Album sales sit in the low tide of the awards season, with last issue's sales charts reflecting the impact of the Grammy Awards and next week's gauging impact on select titles by the Academy Awards telecast.

### HANCOCK



Past experience suggests the Oscars will have more impact on soundtracks that contain best song nominees than it will on winning or nominated score albums. Last year, for example, the showcase of three nominated songs helped the standard edition of "Dreamgirls" reverse from a pre-telecast dip of 18% to a post-Oscar jolt of 19%, amounting to a week of 45,000 units sold.

On the other hand, last year's win-

ning score album from "Babel" did almost double its sales, but even so ended up moving less than 2,000 units in the post-Oscars frame.

Figure the best action from this year's show will go to the "Once" album, which includes the winning "Falling Slowly" by **Glen Hansard** and **Marketa Irglova**, and the soundtrack to "Enchanted," which had each of its three nominated songs performed.

Meanwhile, in the two weeks since the Grammys' Feb. 10 telecast, **Herbie Hancock's** album of the year winner "River: The Joni Letters" has sold just shy of 80,000 copies, more than the 63,000 it sold in its first 20 weeks.

That volley refutes a couple of the hatchets that NPR contributor **Joel Rose** threw at the Grammys in a commentary that posed as a news report on the Feb. 8 edition of "All Things Considered," which stated that a best picture Oscar "can be worth tens of millions of dollars" while Grammy wins deliver "much smaller" results, an assertion that ignores the career-changing momentum that artists like **Tina Turner**, **Bonnie Raitt**, **Ricky Martin** and **Norah Jones** got from big nights at the Grammys.

No matter how much "River" ends up selling, a beneficiary from the 2000 tele-

cast suggests Hancock's bigger residual may lie a couple of years out.

After an album of the year nomination and a performance at the ceremony helped **Diana Krall's** 1999 album "When I Look in Your Eyes" reach No. 56 on the big chart, her next release in 2001, "The Look of Love," became the first mainstream jazz album to bow inside the top 10 in the history of the Billboard 200, while two of her later albums also reached that chart's top 10.

With a career that has spread noteworthy albums both as leader and sideman through five decades, Hancock's pre-Grammy profile was certainly higher than Krall's pre-2000 fame, but don't be surprised if his next album starts with a bigger splash than he's ever seen before.

**SLEEPY TIME:** "Sleep Through the Static" serves as an ironic title for **Jack Johnson's** chart-topping set, as his is the only one on either the Billboard 200 or Top Pop Catalog Albums to beat 100,000 copies (104,000).

Somewhat I can hear **John Marmaduke** chiding labels about the need to better plan release dates, a campaign the Hastings Entertainment CEO has waged since the 2006 convention of re-

tail trade group NARM.

For what it's worth, eight albums released between Oct. 28 and the end of 2007 that never hit No. 1 had opening numbers that would have been large enough to lead this week's list.

Chart peak shouldn't be the sole criterion labels consider when scheduling a release date, and record companies could rightfully argue that albums released in November and December will likely find faster starts in those months than in the slower store traffic of January or February. But I'm just sayin'...

Next week's likely No. 1 is destined for a hefty total than the one now held by Johnson's three-week champ. Nielsen SoundScan's Feb. 27 Building chart placed first-day sales from reporting chains for **Janet Jackson's** new "Discipline" at 55,000 copies, which promises a sturdier sum at the top of next issue's chart.

By comparison, when **Foo Fighters' "Echoes, Silence, Patience & Grace"** started with 45,000 copies in October on the Wednesday Building chart, it went on to sell 168,000 in the first week, while **Celine Dion's "Taking Chances"** moved 214,000 in its first full frame after a November opening day of 58,000.

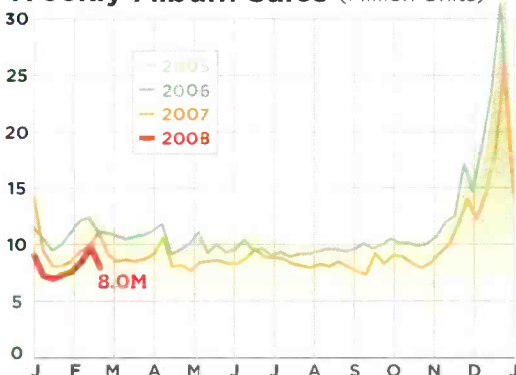
## Market Watch A Weekly National Music Sales Report

### Weekly Unit Sales

	ALBUMS	DIGITAL ALBUMS*	DIGITAL TRACKS
This Week	7,973,000	1,190,000	21,362,000
Last Week	9,789,000	1,238,000	21,949,000
Change	-18.6%	-3.9%	-2.7%
This Week Last Year	9,183,000	863,000	16,854,000
Change	-13.2%	37.9%	26.7%

\*Digital album sales are also counted within album sales.

### Weekly Album Sales (Million Units)



### Year-To-Date

	2007	2008	CHANGE
<b>OVERALL UNIT SALES</b>			
Albums	73,570,000	64,398,000	-12.5%
Digital Tracks	141,713,000	179,205,000	26.5%
Store Singles	362,000	229,000	-36.7%
Total	215,645,000	243,832,000	13.1%
Albums w/TEA*	87,741,300	82,318,500	-6.2%

\*Includes track equivalent album sales (TEA) with 10 track downloads equivalent to one album sale.

### DIGITAL TRACKS SALES

'07	141.7 million
'08	179.2 million

### SALES BY ALBUM FORMAT

CD	66,044,000	54,286,000	-17.8%
Digital	7,312,000	9,862,000	34.9%
Cassette	69,000	22,000	-68.1%
Other	145,000	228,000	57.2%

For week ending Feb. 24, 2008. Figures are rounded. Compiled from a national sample of retail store and rack sales reports collected and provided by

nielsen  
SoundScan

	2007	2008	CHANGE
<b>YEAR-TO-DATE SALES BY ALBUM CATEGORY</b>			
Current	43,851,000	35,784,000	-18.4%
Catalog	29,719,000	28,614,000	-3.7%
Deep Catalog	21,199,000	20,379,000	-3.9%

### CURRENT ALBUM SALES

'07	43.9 million
'08	35.8 million

### CATALOG ALBUM SALES

'07	29.7 million
'08	28.6 million

Nielsen SoundScan counts as current only sales within the first 18 months of an album's release (12 months for classical and jazz albums). Titles that stay in the top half of The Billboard 200, however, remain as current. Titles older than 18 months are catalog. Deep catalog is a subset of catalog for titles out more than 36 months.

MAR 8 2008 THE Billboard 200

Main Billboard 200 chart table with columns for Rank, Title, Artist, and weeks on chart.



A \$7.99 sale tag at Circuit City, along with her starring role in a new TV ad for Rhapsody, helps...

The trio guest-started on Fox's 'Don't Forget the Lyrics' last week. Album is up 157%. Act re-enters Top Pop Catalog at Nos. 12 and 43.



Sophomore set, released in August, topped the 1 million sales mark last week. The trio's first album has sold only 62,000 since its bow in 2006.

At No. 44 with a 16,000 start, Secondhand Serenade easily blows past its previous biggest week (5,000) by previous album 'Awake,' which peaked at No. 164 last year.



After 125 weeks, it has yet to leave the top 50. Last album to match the feat was Shania Twain's 'Come On Over,' which hit 129 weeks in 2000.

Continuation of Billboard 200 chart table from rank 51 to 100.

THE BILLBOARD 200 ARTIST INDEX

Artist index table listing artists and their corresponding chart positions.











HOT COUNTRY SONGS

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WEEKS ON CHART	TITLE	Artist	CERT.	PEAK POSITION
1	1	23	<b>#1</b> CLEANING THIS GUN (COME ON IN BOY) T. HEWITT, R. ATKINS (C. BEATHARD, M. CANNON-GOODMAN)	Rodney Atkins CURB		1
2	4	6	SHIFTWORK B. CANNON, K. CHESNEY (T. JONES)	Kenny Chesney Duet With George Strait BNA		2
3	3	1	LETTER TO ME F. ROGERS (B. PAISLEY)	Brad Paisley ARISTA NASHVILLE		1
4	5	7	SMALL TOWN SOUTHERN MAN K. STEGALL (A. JACKSON)	Alan Jackson ARISTA NASHVILLE		4
5	7	8	ALL-AMERICAN GIRL M. BRIGHT (C. UNDERWOOD, K. LOVELACE, A. GORLEY)	Carrie Underwood ARISTA NASHVILLE		5
6	2	4	WATCHING AIRPLANES M. WRIGHT, G. ALLAN (J. BEAVERS, J. SINGLETON)	Gary Allan MCA NASHVILLE		2
7	9	9	STEALING CINDERELLA M. POWELL, D. HUFF (C. WICKS, R. RUTHERFORD, G. G. TEREN III)	Chuck Wicks RCA		7
8	6	5	READY, SET, DON'T GO F. MOLLIN, A. ARMATO, T. JAMES (B. R. CYRUS, C. BEATHARD)	Billy Ray Cyrus With Miley Cyrus WALT DISNEY/LYRIC STREET		4
9	11	11	WHAT KINDA GONE S. HENDRICKS, C. CAGLE (C. CAMERON, D. BERG, C. DAVIS)	Chris Cagle CAPITOL NASHVILLE		9
10	12	15	YOU'RE GONNA MISS THIS F. ROGERS (L. T. MILLER, A. GORLEY)	Trace Adkins CAPITOL NASHVILLE		10
11	10	10	INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER C. MORGAN, P. DONNELL, K. STEGALL (S. MIRROR, D. MYRICK, J. STEELE)	Craig Morgan BROKEN BOW		10
12	15	3	<b>GREATEST GAINER</b> I SAW GOD TODAY T. BROWN, G. STRAIT (R. CLAWSON, M. CRISWELL, W. KIRBY)	George Strait MCA NASHVILLE		12
13	8	2	WINNER AT A LOSING GAME D. HUFF, RASCAL FLATTS (G. LEVOX, J. DEMARCUS, J. D. ROONEY)	Rascal Flatts LYRIC STREET		2
14	14	14	LAUGHED UNTIL WE CRIED M. KNOX (K. LOVELACE, A. GORLEY)	Jason Aldean BROKEN BOW		14
15	13	13	GOD MUST BE BUSY T. BROWN, R. DUNN, K. BROOKS (C. DANIELS, M. PHEENEY)	Brooks & Dunn ARISTA NASHVILLE		13
16	18	20	JUST GOT STARTED LOVIN' YOU J. RICH (J. OTTO, J. FEMINO, D. V. WILLIAMS)	James Otto WARNER BROS./WRN		16
17	17	17	LOVE IS A BEAUTIFUL THING M. WRIGHT, P. VASSAR (J. STEELE, C. WISEMAN)	Phil Vassar UNIVERSAL SOUTH		17
18	16	17	IT'S GOOD TO BE US M. A. MILLER, D. OLIVER (D. BERG, T. JAMES)	Bucky Covington LYRIC STREET		16
19	20	7	<b>AIR POWER</b> PICTURE TO BURN N. CHAPMAN (T. SWIFT, L. ROSE)	Taylor Swift BIG MACHINE		19
20	21	24	LOVE DON'T LIVE HERE P. WORLEY, V. SHAW (D. HAYWOOD, C. KELLEY, H. SCOTT)	Lady Antebellum CAPITOL NASHVILLE		20
21	24	22	THINGS THAT NEVER CROSS A MAN'S MIND D. CHANCEY (T. JOHNSON, D. POYTHRESS, W. VARBLE)	Kellie Pickler BNA		21
22	23	21	WORKIN' FOR A LIVIN' A. REYNOLDS (H. LEWIS, C. HAYES)	Garth Brooks & Huey Lewis PEARL/BIG MACHINE		19
23	26	26	IT AIN'T NO CRIME M. WRIGHT, B. ROWAN (T. SHAPIRO, T. MARTIN, M. NESLER)	Joe Nichols UNIVERSAL SOUTH		23
24	25	23	YOU STILL OWN ME K. FOLLESE, B. ALLEN (J. REID, N. GORDON, P. DOUGLAS)	Emerson Drive MONTAGE/MIDAS/NEW REVOLUTION		22
25	27	28	SOMETHIN' ABOUT A WOMAN J. RITCHEY (J. OWEN, B. REGAN, J. RITCHEY)	Jake Owen RCA		25
26	28	32	STRONGER WOMAN J. KILCHER, R. RICH (J. KILCHER, M. GREEN)	Jewel VALORY		26
27	19	12	GET MY DRINK ON T. KEITH (T. KEITH, S. EMERICK, D. DILLON)	Toby Keith SHOW DOG NASHVILLE		11
28	33	34	TRYING TO STOP YOUR LEAVING B. BEAVERS (J. BEAVERS, B. BEAVERS, D. BENTLEY)	Dierks Bentley CAPITOL NASHVILLE		28
29	30	29	TAKIN' OFF THIS PAIN B. CANNON (A. SHEPHERD)	Ashton Shepherd MCA NASHVILLE		28
30	31	31	MAYBE SHE'LL GET LONELY J. STOVER, O. LANCIO, J. INGRAM (J. STOVER, J. PAULIN, J. KENNEDY)	Jack Ingram BIG MACHINE		29



Ballad is Louisiana native's 13th top 10, marking his fastest trip into the top bracket since "I Left Something Turned On at Home" in 1997. On Top Country Albums, all nine



At No. 39, duo notches 20th top 40 hit, dating back to 1993. Track previews forthcoming set, due this summer.

Both the album version with Chesney and the newly recorded single with Ewing will count toward song's rise, fueled by airplay at 10 new stations, 15 overall.

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WEEKS ON CHART	TITLE	Artist	CERT.	PEAK POSITION
31	32	20	ANOTHER TRY F. ROGERS (C. STAPLETON, J. SPILLMAN)	Josh Turner Featuring Trisha Yearwood MCA NASHVILLE		27
32	22	16	SUSPICIONS B. GALLIMORE (D. MALLOY, R. MCCORMICK, E. RABBITT, E. STEVENS)	Tim McGraw CURB		12
33	34	23	WE WEREN'T CRAZY B. JAMES (J. GRACIN, T. LOPACINSKI, B. PINSON)	Josh Gracin LYRIC STREET		31
34	38	20	BUSY BEING FABULOUS EAGLES (D. HENLEY, G. FREY)	Eagles ERC/LOST HIGHWAY/MERCURY		34
35	40	24	HOME B. ROWAN (M. BUBLE, A. CHANG, A. FOSTER GILLES)	Blake Shelton WARNER BROS./WRN		35
36	35	27	GUNPOWDER & LEAD F. LIDDELL, M. WRUCKE (M. LAMBERT, H. LITTLE)	Miranda Lambert COLUMBIA		35
37	36	25	HAPPY ENDINGS D. JOHNSON (L. BRICE, J. MCLEROY)	Lee Brice ASYLUM/CORB		35
38	39	29	THIS IS ME YOU'RE TALKING TO G. FUNDIS (K. ROCHELLE, T. L. JAMES)	Trisha Yearwood BIG MACHINE		38
39	49	-	BACK WHEN I KNEW IT ALL B. CHANCEY (G. HANVAN, P. DONNELL, L. WILLMON)	Montgomery Gentry COLUMBIA		39
40	43	41	I STILL MISS YOU J. STEELE (K. ANDERSON, T. NICHOLS, J. SELLERS)	Keith Anderson COLUMBIA		40
41	44	43	SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE J. SHANKS (S. EVANS, M. EVANS, H. LINDSEY, J. M. SHANKS)	Sara Evans RCA		41
42	NOT RATED	1	<b>EVERY DAY</b> D. HUFF, RASCAL FLATTS (J. STEELE, A. MORENO)	Rascal Flatts LYRIC STREET		42
43	37	36	WE RODE IN TRUCKS J. STEVENS (L. BRYAN, R. MURRAH, J. MCCORMICK)	Luke Bryan CAPITOL NASHVILLE		33
44	42	42	I DON'T LOVE YOU LIKE THAT B. CHANCEY (L. ROSE, S. CHAPMAN)	JYPSI ARISTA NASHVILLE		39
45	41	38	IN MY NEXT LIFE G. FUNDIS (T. CLARK, J. COLLINS, T. SHAPIRO)	Terri Clark BNA		36
46	45	47	IF YOU DIDN'T LOVE ME W. KIRKPATRICK (G. LEVOX, W. MABLEY, J. SELLERS)	Phil Stacey LYRIC STREET		45
47	47	48	TIL I WAS A DADDY TOO T. LAWRENCE (L. KING, F. ANDERSON (L. BOONE, T. LAWRENCE, P. NELSON)	Tracy Lawrence ROCKY COMFORT/CO5		44
48	NEW	1	<b>I'M STILL A GUY</b> F. ROGERS (K. LOVELACE, B. PAISLEY, L. T. MILLER)	Brad Paisley ARISTA NASHVILLE		48
49	46	45	FALLING INTO YOU C. DOWNS, B. BRANDT, WHISKEY FALLS, WE3KINGS (S. WILLIAMS, W. BRANDT, B. BRANDT, C. DOWNS)	Whiskey Falls MIDAS/NEW REVOLUTION		41
50	54	49	BRAND MY HAIR J. RICH, S. PENNINGTON (C. M. GRAY, B. A. WILSON)	Randy Owen OMP/NEW REVOLUTION		48
51	48	46	SHE LIKES IT IN THE MORNING K. STEGALL (C. WALKER, M. J. GREENE)	Clay Walker ASYLUM/CORB		46
52	58	58	I CAN SLEEP WHEN I'M DEAD O. GEMMAN (J. M. CARROLL, J. COLLINS, R. RUTHERFORD)	Jason Michael Carroll ARISTA NASHVILLE		52
53	56	-	HE HATES ME J. SCAIFE (S. JOHNS, T. NICHOLS, J. SELLERS)	Sarah Johns BNA		53
54	50	54	YOUNG LOVE T. KEITH, B. ROBERTSON (H. LINDSEY, A. MAYO, S. CARUSOE)	Carter's Chord SHOW DOG NASHVILLE		50
55	53	53	WHEN IT RAINS J. J. LESTER, E. HERBST (J. YOUNG)	Eli Young Band CARNIVAL		49
56	51	52	SHE'S PRETTY L. WALKER, M. CURB (S. DE AZLAN)	Star De Azlan CURB		51
57	57	59	EVERY OTHER WEEKEND R. MCENTIRE, T. BROWN (C. HARRINGTON, S. EWING)	Reba McEntire Duet With Skip Ewing Or Kenny Chesney MCA NASHVILLE		57
58	59	56	I DON'T KNOW WHEN TO QUIT M. KNOX, J. MCCOY (A. GORLEY, B. SIMPSON)	The Road Hammers MONTAGE		51
59	52	51	I CAN'T BELIEVE IT'S ME R. LYNNE, M. PRENTICE (R. LYNNE, T. JOHNSON)	Rockie Lynne ROBBINS NASHVILLE		49
60	55	50	BETTER GET TO LIVIN' K. WELLS, D. PARTON (D. PARTON, K. WELLS)	Dolly Parton DOLLY		48

HITPREDICTOR

DATA PROVIDED BY promosquad

See chart legend for rules and explanations. Yellow indicates recently tested title, ☆ indicates New Release

ARTIST/Title/LABEL (Score)	Chart Rank	ARTIST/Title/LABEL (Score)	Chart Rank	ARTIST/Title/LABEL (Score)	Chart Rank
<b>COUNTRY</b>		<b>JASON ALDEAN</b> Laughed Until We Cried BROKEN BOW (88.5)	14	<b>JACK INGRAM</b> Maybe She'll Get Lonely BIG MACHINE (83.2)	30
<b>RODNEY ATKINS</b> Cleaning This Gun (Come On In Boy) CURB (78.1)	1	<b>BROOKS &amp; DUNN</b> God Must Be Busy ARISTA NASHVILLE (93.9)	15	<b>JOSH TURNER FEAT. TRISHA YEARWOOD</b> Another Try MCA NASHVILLE (79.2)	31
<b>ALAN JACKSON</b> Small Town Southern Man ARISTA NASHVILLE (85.1)	4	<b>JAMES OTTO</b> Just Got Started Lovin' You WARNER BROS. (76.1)	16	<b>JOSH GRACIN</b> We Weren't Crazy LYRIC STREET (80.5)	33
<b>CARRIE UNDERWOOD</b> All-American Girl ARISTA NASHVILLE (92.6)	5	<b>PHIL VASSAR</b> Love Is A Beautiful Thing UNIVERSAL SOUTH (75.8)	17	<b>MIRANDA LAMBERT</b> Gunpowder & Lead COLUMBIA (81.5)	36
<b>CHUCK WICKS</b> Stealing Cinderella RCA (76.0)	7	<b>BUCKY COVINGTON</b> It's Good To Be Us LYRIC STREET (76.4)	18	☆ <b>TRACY LAWRENCE</b> Til I Was A Daddy Too ROCKY COMFORT (92.7)	47
<b>CHRIS CAGLE</b> What Kinda Gone CAPITOL NASHVILLE (88.3)	9	<b>TAYLOR SWIFT</b> Picture To Burn BIG MACHINE (83.1)	19	<b>SHANNON WALKER</b> That's Why God Made Me DM NASHVILLE (88.8)	-
<b>TRACE ADKINS</b> You're Gonna Miss This CAPITOL NASHVILLE (90.6)	10	<b>KELLIE PICKLER</b> Things That Never Cross A Man's Mind BNA (85.3)	21		
<b>GEORGE STRAIT</b> I Saw God Today MCA NASHVILLE (79.9)	12	<b>EMERSON DRIVE</b> You Still Own Me MIDAS (86.6)	24		

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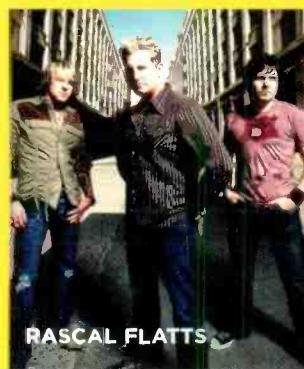
HOT COUNTRY SONGS: 113 country stations are electronically monitored by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Airplay awarded to songs appearing in the top 20 on both the BDS Airplay and Audience charts for the first time with increases in both detections and audience. © 2008 Nielsen Business Media, Inc. All rights reserved.

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BETWEEN THE BULLETS wjessen@billboard.com

FLATTS, PAISLEY LIGHT UP SINGLES CHART

Two of country's heaviest hitters, Rascal Flatts and Brad Paisley, post solid debuts with new singles from chart-topping albums. The former opens at No. 42 with "Every Day," the third hit from "Still Feels Good." "Take Me There" topped the list for three weeks in the fall, while "Winner at a Losing Game" spent four weeks at No. 2 last month. The set led Top Country Albums for four weeks and has sold 1.7 million copies. "Every" is the act's 29th chart hit, most by a group this decade. At No.



RASCAL FLATTS

48, Paisley seeks a seventh consecutive No. 1 with "I'm Still a Guy." The light-hearted cut is the fourth single from "5th Gear," which led the album list for four weeks in July and has moved 800,000 copies. "Guy," which garners airplay at a chart-best 38 new signals, follows the album's No. 1s: "Ticks," "Online" and "Letter to Me." Rodney Atkins meanwhile locks and loads a second week at No. 1 with "Cleaning This Gun (Come On In Boy)," leading by 2.9 million in audience. —Gary Trust













TOP  
HEATSEEKERS®

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WEEKS ON CHIT	ARTIST	Title	PEAK POSITION
1	NOT SHOT DEBUT	1 WK	<b>#1</b> THE RAVEONETTES VICE 80002* (13.98)	Lust Lust Lust	
2	NEW		KINGDOM OF SORROW RELAPSE 7012* (14.98)	Kingdom Of Sorrow	
3	NEW		RAY DAVIES AMMAL 6136*/NEW WEST (16.98) ⊕	Working Man's Cafe	
4	6	30	<b>GREATEST GAINER</b> FIVE FINGER DEATH PUNCH FIRM 70116 (12.98)	The Way Of The Fist	
5	NEW		BON IVER JAGJAGUAR 115* (14.98)	For Emma, Forever Ago	
6	2	61	DRAGONFORCE SANCTUARY 618034/ROADRUNNER (17.98) ⊕	Inhuman Rampage	
7	NEW		PAUL THORN PERPETUAL OBSCURITY 20089 (12.98)	A Long Way From Tupelo	
8	NEW		THE MOUNTAIN GOATS 4AD 2801*/BEGGARS GROUP (14.98)	Heretic Pride	
9	NEW		GARY LOURIS RYKODISC 10925 (16.98)	Vagabonds	
10	3	13	WE THE KINGS S-CURVE 52001 (8.98)	We The Kings	
11	4	5	MGMT COLUMBIA 19512*/SONY MUSIC (11.98)	Oracular Spectacular	
12	1	17	LEVON HELM DIRT FARMER 79644/VANGUARD (16.98)	Dirt Farmer	
13	13	18	NICK SWARDSON COMEDY CENTRAL 0056 (15.98 CD/DVD) ⊕	Party	
14	9	1	AIRBOURNE ROADRUNNER 617963 (13.98)	Runnin' Wild	
15	12	2	LOS CUATOS DE SINALOA SONY BMG NORTE 22541 (12.98) ⊕	Puros Exitos Chacas	
16	8	3	HOT CHIP DFA 18094*/ASTRALWERKS (15.98) ⊕	Made In The Dark	
17	RE-ENTRY		A DAY TO REMEMBER VICTORY 337 (13.98)	For Those Who Have Heart	
18	NEW		ALLISON MOORER NEW LINE 39106 (15.98)	Mockingbird	
19	NEW		DJ CLAY HAT CHET HOUSE 4700/PSYCHOPATHIC (10.98)	Let 'Em Bleed: The Mixtape Vol. 1	
20	NEW		HATE ETERNAL METAL BLADE 14656 (13.98)	Fury & Flames	
21	15	5	BLACK MOUNTAIN JAGJAGUAR 090* (15.98)	In The Future	
22	5	2	BRITISH SEA POWER ROUGH TRADE 10507*/WORLD'S FAIR (15.98)	Do You Like Rock Music?	
23	22		GRUPO NUEVA VIDA MULTIMUSIC 11533 (6.98)	Mejores Cantos Religiosos	
24	14	3	HORRORPOPS HELLCAT 80498*/EPITAPH (13.98)	Kiss Kiss Kill Kill	
25	16		WINDS OF PLAGUE CENTURY MEDIA 8407 (12.98)	Decimate The Weak	

The Kinks singer is still eligible for the Heatseekers chart as a solo artist, as he has yet to reach the top 100 of the Billboard 200 on his own.



The solo debut of Deerhunter frontman Bradford Cox (AKA Atlas Sound) bows with nearly 2,000; 60% of its first-week sales came from digital downloads.

With his sixth studio album, Paul Thorn finally debuts on an album chart, entering at No. 7 with his best sales week (4,000 copies).

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WEEKS ON CHIT	ARTIST	Title	PEAK POSITION
26	26		DEAD TO FALL VICTORY 352 (13.98)	Are You Serious?	
27	NEW		EVERY AVENUE FEARLESS 30106 (12.98)	Shh. Just Go With It	
28	44	14	METRO STATION RED INK 10521 (12.98)	Metro Station	
29	NEW		EYES SET TO KILL BREAKSILENCE 91 (11.98)	Reach	
30	7	4	LA ARROLLADORA BANDA EL LIMON SONY BMG NORTE 21574 (12.98) ⊕	La Historia De La Arrolladora	
31	NEW		FOUR LETTER LIE VICTORY 410 (13.98)	What A Terrible Thing To Say	
32	NEW		ATLAS SOUND KRANKY 114 (14.98)	Let The Blind Lead Those Who Can See But Cannot Feel	
33	21	15	THE SPILL CANVAS ONE ELEVEN SIRE 162428/WARNER BROS. (13.98)	No Really. I'm Fine	
34	10	4	JOSH KELLEY DNK 05 (13.98)	Special Company	
35	17	28	FLIGHT OF THE CONCHORDS SUB POP 746 (4.98)	The Distant Future (EP)	
36	23	21	SHARON JONES & THE DAP-KINGS DAPTONE 012 (15.98)	100 Days, 100 Nights	
37	NEW		GENGHIS TRON RELAPSE 6789* (14.98)	Board Up The House	
38	RE-ENTRY		DEMETRI MARTIN COMEDY CENTRAL 0044 (15.98 CD/DVD) ⊕	These Are Jokes	
39	RE-ENTRY		EGYPT CENTRAL FAT LADY 95255/EAST WEST (15.98)	Egypt Central	
40	31	47	SICK PUPPIES RMR 89752/VIRGIN (12.98)	Dressed Up As Life	
41	19	3	BOB MOULD GRANARY/ANTI- 86910*/EPITAPH (17.98)	District Line	
42	7	6	CARDENALES DE NUEVO LEON DISA 724120/UG (12.98)	25 Aniversario: Edicion Limitada	
43	NEW		JO JO JORGE FALCON TITANIO 1031 (5.98)	Los Mejores 99 Chistes Vol. 1	
44	RE-ENTRY		THE MAINE FEARLESS 30105 (5.98)	The Way We Talk (EP)	
45	47	8	GLEN HANSARD AND MARKETA IRGLOVA WITH MARIA TUHKANEN AND BERTRAND GALEN OVERCOAT 25 (13.98)	The Swell Season	
46	30	18	HURT CAPITOL 94656 (12.98)	Vol. II	
47	NEW		GRAND ARCHIVES SUB POP 754* (13.98)	The Grand Archives	
48	34	39	XTREME LA CALLE 340011/UG (13.98)	Haciendo Historia	
49	38	21	LA ARROLLADORA BANDA EL LIMON DISA 729327/UG (5.98)	Linea De Oro: En Los Puros Huesos...	
50	NEW		AMERICAN MUSIC CLUB MERGE 309 (15.98)	The Golden Age	

## TASTEMAKERS™

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WEEKS ON CHIT	ARTIST	Title	CERT.
1	1	3	<b>#1</b> JACK JOHNSON 3 WKS SLEEP THROUGH THE STATIC BRUSHFIRE 010580*/UMRG		
2	4	7	SOUNDTRACK JUNO FOX/RHINO 410236*/AG		
3	5	1	VAMPIRE WEEKEND VAMPIRE WEEKEND XL 318*/BEGGARS GROUP		
4	3	33	AMY WINEHOUSE BACK TO BLACK UNIVERSAL REPUBLIC 008428*/UMRG		
5	2	2	MICHAEL JACKSON THRILLER 25 LEGACY EPIC 17986*/SONY BMG		
6	NEW		THE RAVEONETTES LUST LUST LUST VICE 80002*		
7	5	9	RADIOHEAD IN RAINBOWS TBD 21622*/ATO		
8	NEW		RAY DAVIES WORKING MAN'S CAFE AMMAL 6136*/NEW WEST ⊕		
9	NEW		THE MOUNTAIN GOATS HERETIC PRIDE 4AD 2801*/BEGGARS GROUP		
10	NEW		KINGDOM OF SORROW KINGDOM OF SORROW RELAPSE 7012*		
11	7		HERBIE HANCOCK RIVER: THE JONI LETTERS VERVE 009791/VG		
12	NEW		MIKE DOUGHTY GOLDEN DELICIOUS ATO 0052		
13	8	18	ROBERT PLANT / ALISON KRAUSS RAISING SAND ROUNDER 619075*		
14	NEW		GARY LOURIS VAGABONDS RYKODISC 10925		
15	NEW		NICK LOWE JESUS OF COOL YEP RCD 2620*		

## BREAKING &amp; ENTERING

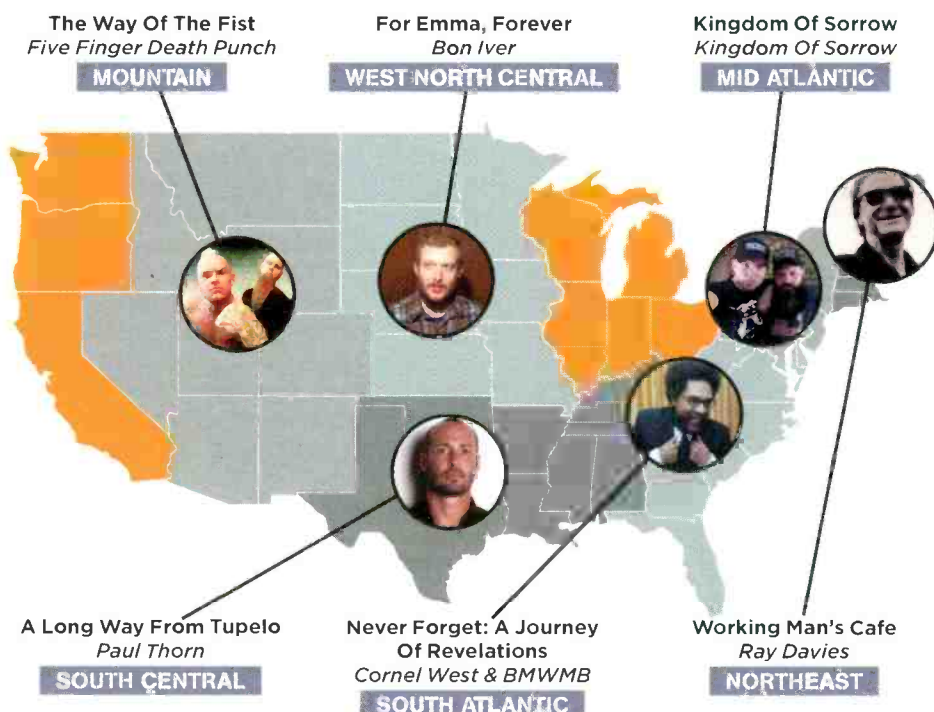
Dallas Green, of post-hardcore act Alexisonfire, quietly launched City and Colour as an acoustic side project, but new album "Bring Me Your Love" made a noisy entrance on Top Heatseekers, debuting at No. 11 last issue. Find out how Green balances his acts on billboard.com.



CITY AND COLOUR

Go to [billboard.com/breaking](http://billboard.com/breaking) to discover developing artists making their inaugural chart runs each week.

## REGIONAL HEATSEEKER #1s



## PROGRESS REPORT

**Basshunter, "Now You're Gone"**  
Clubby tune by the Danish dance act (aka Jonas Erik Altbjerg) rises 21-13 on Hot Dance Airplay. The track, a former No. 1 on the Official U.K. Charts Co.'s singles tally, also sees its third straight weekly increase in U.S. digital sales.

**HEATSEEKERS:** The best-selling albums by new and developing acts, defined as those who have never appeared in the top 100 of the Billboard 200 or the top 10 of Top Country Albums, Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums, Top Christian Albums, Top Gospel Albums or Top Latin Albums. If a Heatseekers title reaches that level, it and the act's subsequent albums are immediately ineligible to appear on the Heatseekers chart. **TASTEMAKERS:** Tastemakers ranks the best-selling albums in an influential subset panel of more than 350 stores from independent retailer coalitions and smaller regional chains. See Chart Legend for rules and explanations. © 2008, Nielsen Business Media, Inc. and Nielsen SoundScan, Inc. All rights reserved.

## PACIFIC

1	The Raveonettes
2	MGMT
3	Ray Davies
4	The Mountain Goats
5	Hot Chip
6	HorrorPops
7	Rebel Souljahz
8	Bon Iver
9	Dragonforce
10	Kingdom Of Sorrow

## EAST NORTH CENTRAL

1	Five Finger Death Punch
2	The Raveonettes
3	Bon Iver
4	Kingdom Of Sorrow
5	Ray Davies
6	Dragonforce
7	Every Avenue
8	Teddy Brent
9	The Mountain Goats
10	Paul Thorn



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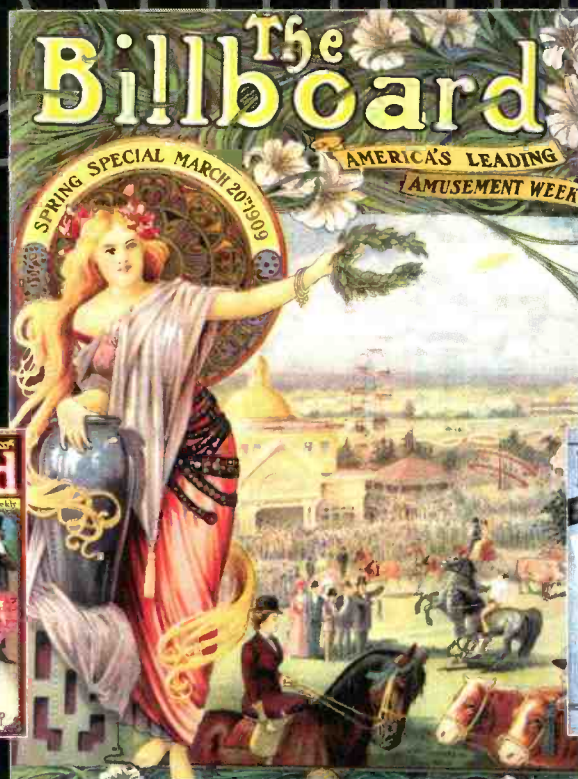
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# Frame A Piece of Billboard History



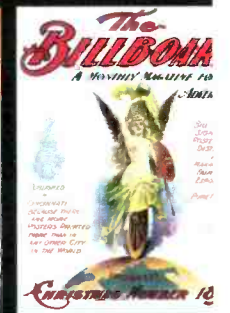
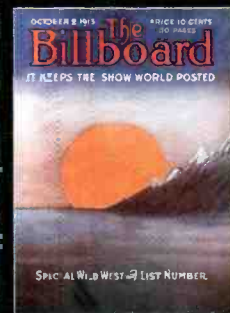
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# EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE

Send submissions to: [exec@billboard.com](mailto:exec@billboard.com)

**RECORD COMPANIES:** Warner Music Group promotes **Michael Nash** to executive VP of digital strategy and business development, effective June 1. He has served as senior VP since Feb. 1, 2000. Nash succeeds **Alejandro Zubillaga**, who will remain with WMG through June.

**Razor & Tie Entertainment** ups **Rob Mason** to manager of promotions. He was coordinator.

**PUBLISHING:** Sony/ATV Music Publishing names **Joseph Puzio** CFO for the publisher's worldwide operations. He was senior VP of worldwide finance at sports marketing firm IMG.

EMI Music Publishing U.K. names **Daniel Lloyd Jones** A&R manager. He was press officer at Warner Bros. Records.

**Painda Publishing**, a unit of Galgo Music Group, promotes **Ben Anglin** to senior VP of talent development. He was creative director.

**S1 Songs America** names **David Polemeni** VP of creative services. He was an independent consultant at Dimensional Music Publishing.

**Cherry Lane Music Publishing** elevates **Jill Pedone** to coordinator of creative services and marketing. She was an assistant.



**DISTRIBUTION:** RED Distribution appoints **Tony Bruno** to senior VP of marketing. He was VP.

**TOURING:** The 7,200-seat Show Me Center on the campus of Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau, names **Jim Barbatti** OM. He was VP/GM at venue management firm PMI in Green Bay, Wis.

Facility management/consulting services firm Venu-Works names **Wolf Larson** executive director of the new Burnsville Performing Arts Center in Minnesota. He was assistant GM at the Flint Center for the Performing Arts in Cupertino, Calif.

**MEDIA:** VH1 promotes **Leah Horwitz** to VP of music talent and creative development. She was senior director of music and talent relations.

—Edited by Mitchell Peters

# GOODWORKS

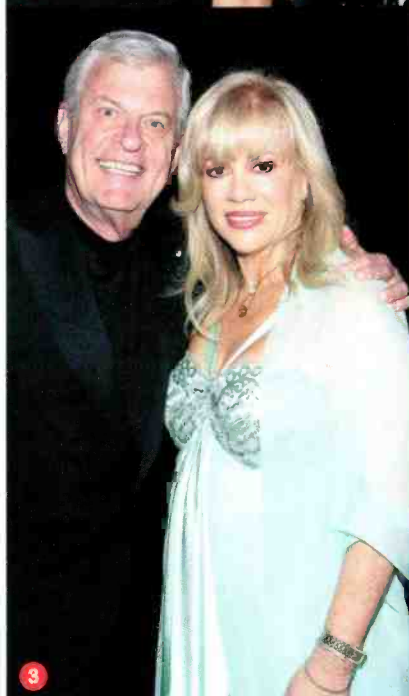
## BLOOD FOR DOWNLOADS

Music Saves Lives has partnered with Loud Bytes and Binary Sounds to give away 400,000 free-music download cards to blood donors during MSL drives at universities and high schools across the country. The download cards feature tracks from 18 acts, including Plain White T's, the All-American Rejects, Pennywise, Bad Religion, Motion City Soundtrack, NOFX and the Street Drum Corps. The program launched in mid-February. Founded in 2005, MSL focuses on education about blood donation and bone marrow registry.

## MCDONALD TO HOST CHARITY GOLF EVENT

Former Lonestar singer **Richie McDonald** will host a golf tournament April 7-8 in Nashville to benefit Feed the Children and the Minnie Pearl Cancer Foundation. Musicians and sports figures will gather at the Hermitage Golf Course April 8 for a day of golf, to be followed by an all-star jam session that night at the Cadillac Ranch. McDonald and other to-be-announced artists will perform. A donation at the door is required for admittance to the concert.

# BACKBEAT



## BILLBOARD AND CHILDREN UNITING NATIONS OSCAR PARTY

On Feb. 24, Billboard teamed up with Children Uniting Nations for its ninth annual Academy Awards viewing and post-show party at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, Calif. Hosted by Tom Arnold, Christine Devine, Tommy Davidson and B.D. Freeman, the black-tie music-business event honored Hollywood's finest, celebrating the dreams and achievements of the entertainment industry, while hoping to give at-risk and foster children all over the world a chance to reach their own dreams. The event featured performances by Line 1 (Cirque du Soleil) and Jil Aigrot, the voice of Edith Piaf in Picturehouse's "La Vie en Rose," and was followed by an afterparty hosted by Davidson, Doug E. Fresh and DJ Spinderella. The Children Uniting Nations Angel Awards went to Ice-T, General Romeo Dallaire and mentors from Foshay Middle School in South Central Los Angeles. PHOTOS: COURTESY OF MAURY PHILLIPS/WIREIMAGE.COM UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

- 1 From left: Lil Ice-T, model CoCo and rapper/actor Ice-T.
- 2 Actress Gretchen Becker with actor Martin Landau.
- 3 Philanthropist/community leader Richard Ziman with his wife, Children Uniting Nations founder/chairwoman Daphna Ziman.
- 4 Actress Nia Peeples of "Fame" and "The Young & the Restless."
- 5 From left: Fabian Sanchez, Derek Hough, Cheryl Burke and Tony Dovolan of "Dancing With the Stars."

PHOTO: COURTESY OF CHARLEY GALLAY

continued on page 74



## INSIDE TRACK

### ANGLOPHILIA

As Billboard reported last week, revered/reunited U.K. rock outfit the Verve is recording a new album but does not presently have a U.S. record deal. Track hears one potential home could be the U.K.-friendly confines of ATO Records, which houses dance titan Underworld on its Side One Recordings imprint and, of course, Radiohead, which released "In Rainbows" on ATO's TBD label. Plus, ATO and its affiliated Red Light Management are home to industry vets who have prior experience working the Verve in America. The Richard Ashcroft-led group just con-

firmed a handful of U.S. dates surrounding its April 25 appearance at Coachella, including a two-night stand at New York's WaMu Theater at Madison Square Garden.

### LOUDER 'VOICES'

Momentum for Sara Bareilles' Epic album "Little Voices" keeps building; the set reaches a new peak at No. 7 on the Billboard 200 this week, while the single "Love Song" moves to a new high of No. 4. Striking while the iron is hot, Epic on March 18 will release an expanded edition of the album, including



a second disc of versions taped for Clear Channel's "Stripped" series, plus interviews and videos. "Little Voices" is now at 403,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.



**BILLBOARD AND CHILDREN UNITING NATIONS OSCAR PARTY**  
continued from page 73

- 1 From left: business leader/nonprofit professional **Lee H. Wallach**, councilman **Bernard Parks**, **Richard Ziman** and councilwoman **Wendy Greuel**.
- 2 Rapper **Darryl "DMC" McDaniels**.
- 3 From left: Emmy Award-winning Los Angeles news anchor/event co-host **Christine Devine**; **Ice-T**, with his Angel Award; and **Daphna Ziman**.
- 4 Salsa music sensation **Sirak Baloyan** with singer **Jil Aigrot**.
- 5 Actor **Steve Guttenberg** and actress **Marlee Matlin**.
- 6 Actress/Children United Nations director of development **Nicole Sherwin** with actor **Cristian de la Fuente**.
- 7 Actors/event co-hosts **Tom Arnold**, left, and **Tommy Davidson**.
- 8 **Line 1** treated the crowd to an amazing acrobatic performance.
- 9 Grammy Award-nominated Christian artist **Sarah Kelly** arrives at the bash.
- 10 From left: Miss USA **Rachel Smith**, actor **Darius Love** and singer/actress **Christina Milian**.



**INSIDE TRACK**

**CITIZEN ON PATROL**

Citizen Cope is preparing himself for life after major labels. The Brooklyn singer/songwriter (aka Clarence Greenwood) was recently released from RCA, which put out his last two albums, "The Clarence Greenwood Recordings" (2004) and 2006's "Every Waking Moment." (His self-titled 2002 debut came out on DreamWorks.) Now, Cope tells Track he's weighing his options as he prepares to start work on his fourth album. "I'm kind of considering my own imprint, maybe in conjunction with a major label, but we'll see." As for his new stuff, Cope plans to start recording in May or June and may release a live project in the interim.



CITIZEN COPE



CITIZEN COPE: DANNY CLINCH

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AUSTRALIA: #2

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GERMANY: #2

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NORWAY: #2

NETHERLANDS: #2

KOREA: #2

PHILIPPINES: #2

SWITZERLAND: #2

SWEDEN: #2

UK: #3

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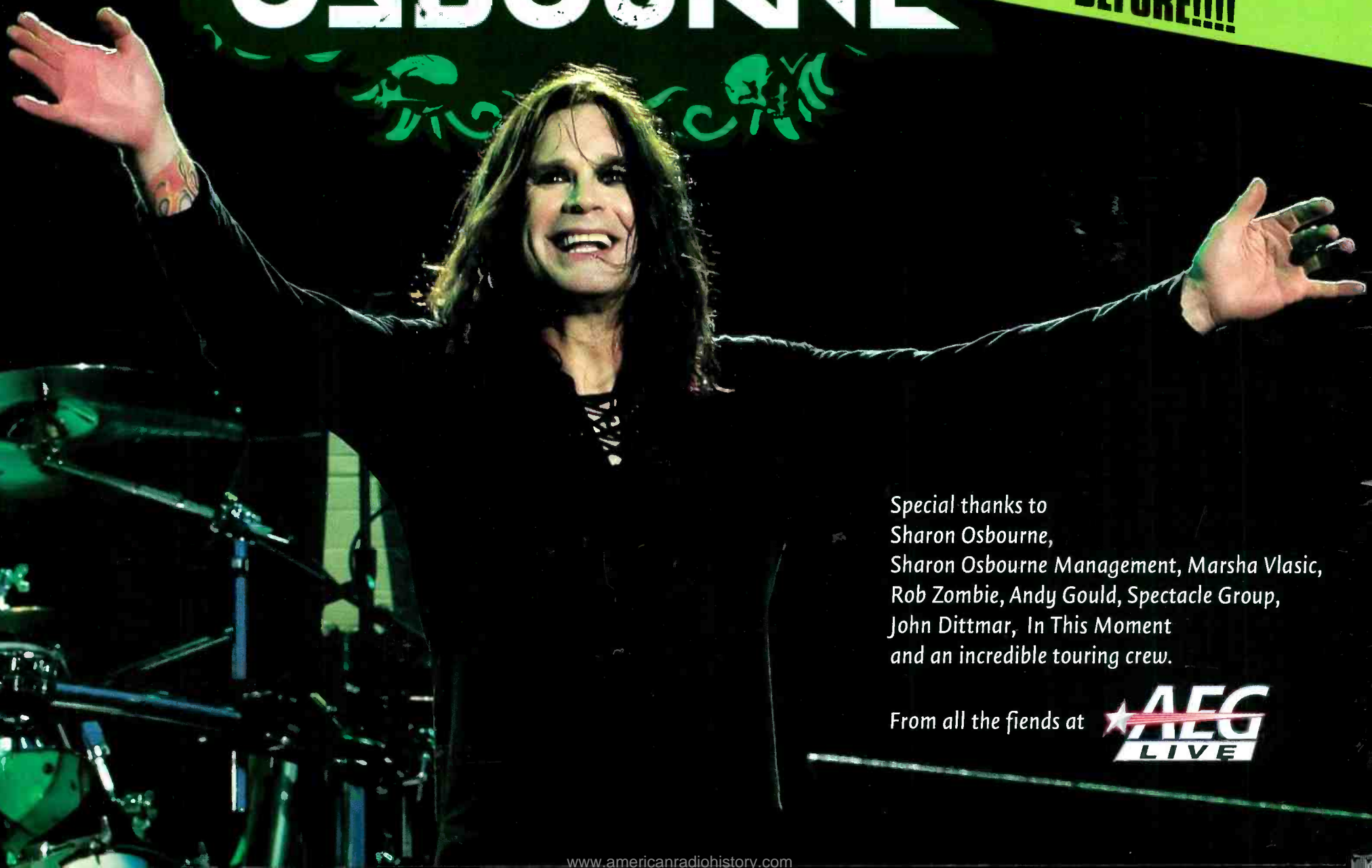
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