

# MusicWeek

**ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL**



DECADE-BY-DECADE: AS IT HAPPENED • INTERVIEWS • 50 YEARS OF CHARTS  
TECHNOLOGY • A LOOK TO THE FUTURE • UK'S MOST PERFORMED SONGS



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## MusicWeek 50th ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL

**Editor:** Paul Williams  
**Writers:** Robert Ashton, Christopher Barrett, Ben Carlisle, Eamonn Forde, Alan Jones, Gordon Mussen, Gaele de Whaley, Paul Williams  
**Design/layout:** Ed Miller, Simon Ward  
**Advertising:** Martin Bejlos



**Publishing director:** Gus Haskett  
 United Business Media  
 United Business Media,  
 Ludgate House,  
 246 Blackfriars Road,  
 London SE1 0UY

# Every step of the way

Growing up, many of us who now work in or around the music industry would have had a favourite record shop. Mine was The Disc Jockey, the leading independent music outlet in my home town of Hastings and a store which, despite not exactly having acres of space inside, seemingly managed to stock just about everything.

This being the early Eighties and the store being the only shop in town whose sales counted towards the charts, it was always crammed with goods such as strangely-shaped and coloured vinyl releases you simply could not buy anywhere else, alongside rows of heavily-discounted, newly-issued singles all by acts whose labels were desperate to get them into the Top 40, whatever the cost.

And like most record shops back then, it also had pinned up on its walls the week's Top 75 singles and albums charts pulled from the pages of a certain trade magazine. On one visit I inquired what happened to the old charts when they were ripped from the walls and when told they were just thrown away I asked if they could keep them to one side for me. So there was my introduction to *Music Week*.

What I did not know back then was that the magazine had already been part of the UK music industry for more than 20 years, providing a week-by-week round-up – as would continue to be the case over the next three decades – of the news and issues of this amazing business. That makes it now 50 years *Music Week* has been around, which is what this special supplement is all about.

From a starting point of what was then *Record Retailer* with issue number one in August 1959, this magazine has been there every step of the way, from the incredible achievements of artists such as The Beatles and Michael Jackson who totally changed both music and the industry itself, to technological developments from the CD to the download. En route we've kept a close check on the comings and goings of countless executives and their companies and organisations that have helped in all manner of ways to shape the business, while also reporting on a variety of issues that have united or, too often, divided different parts of the industry.

So our story is your story, which makes this supplement you have in your hands more than just a celebration of *Music Week's* own golden anniversary but rather 50 years of the UK music industry, a period in which it has risen to the ranks of a world leader and one of Great Britain plc's greatest assets.

Our half century landmark has kindly gifted us the perfect opportunity to reflect and reminisce about the last five decades, both of which we do across this supplement as we examine, decade-by-decade, the industry's developments, quiz some of its leading figures to explore the changes that have occurred from different angles, throw the spotlight on the biggest singles and albums of the last 50 years and even do a bit of crystal-ball gazing to try to predict what the future of the business may look like.

Whatever the future does ultimately bring, however, it will have a hell of a lot to live up to in trying to match the last 50 years.



*Paul Williams*  
**Paul Williams**

Editor, *Music Week* – September 2009





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# IN THE BEGINNING...

August 1959 saw *The Record Retailer* launch in a landscape where music was still very much part of the wider world of show business. But a noticeable change was in the air as rock'n'roll began its ascent

WORDS: Paul Williams

**R**ecorded music in the UK is almost omnipresent these days, from the hundreds of radio stations and countless dedicated TV channels playing it around the clock to the likes of synchs in ads and the endless boundaries of the internet.

But when the very first issue of *The Record Retailer* rolled off the press in August 1959, music was an extremely rare commodity. For the British public, many of whose memories were still fresh with rationing during and after the Second World War, it might well have felt the same status had befallen it with few outlets available for them to hear the most popular songs in the hit parade.

The BBC, at least partially as a result of strict Musicians' Union rules controlling the amount of recorded music that could be broadcast in a bid to protect MU members' jobs, offered just a few slots a week for playing records and that was restricted to such wholesome programmes as *Housewives Choice* and *Family Favourites*.

Otherwise, the nearest the listener got to hearing the hits of the day on the Beeb was via sanitised covers played live on air by a variety of orchestras. At least *Pick Of The Pops* had arrived on the BBC Light Programme in 1955 and four years into its run was being presented by David Jacobs, but it was not until an Aussie by the name of Alan Freeman took over in 1961 that it really could be seen as being in tune with the times.

On the radio it was left to Radio Luxembourg to fill the gaps and enable rock'n'roll fans to actually hear the hits by the artists they loved. And for the record companies it was one place where they could get exposure for them.

The circumstances were hardly ideal, though, given Luxembourg's poor signal from the Grand Duchy had the annoying habit of fading in and out and the fact its pop output only began in the evenings, forcing many a baby boomer to listen on their transistors under the bed clothes into the early hours of the morning. The occasions to hear this music were so rare that you had to grab every chance you could get, even if the shows were often paid-for programming by the big record companies of the day such as Pye, Phillips and EMI, all of which had dedicated weekly shows they sponsored featuring their new releases.

Television was not much better. The BBC had flirted with "new-fangled" music with the launch of *Six-Five Special* in 1957 hosted by Pete Murray and which during its run featured the likes of Lonnie Donegan and Marty Wilde, although its producer Jack Good quit the Corporation the following year to join the still-fledgling ITV's ABC and create *Oh Boy!* Good's new show was a revelation for British audiences and featured occasional US guests and the cream of UK talent, including a teenager by the name of Cliff Richard and his band The Drifters (later The Shadows) who scored their first hit when Good insisted they perform the single's B-side *Move It* rather than the main song *School Boy Crush*.

But *Oh Boy!* disappeared from the airwaves two months before *RR* arrived to be replaced in September 1959 by another Good show, *Boy Meets Girl*, for ITV's ABC Weekend Television. Two months before *RR*'s debut another new music TV show was launched, *Juke Box Jury*, hosted for BBC TV by the aforementioned David Jacobs.

However, all these shows' influence paled into insignificance to ITV company ATV's weekly *Sunday Night At The London Palladium*, which, hosted in 1959 by Bruce Forsyth, was the nation's most-watched pro-



**MAIN PICTURE**  
Fifties favourite: Cliff Richard was 1959's biggest star  
**ABOVE**  
The 45: Emile Ford topped the singles charts at the end of *Record Retailer*'s first year



gramme and offered a guarantee that if you were a musical guest on it your record's sales would explode.

At the time of *Boy Meets Girl*'s introductory show the chart-topping run of Cliff Richard and The Shadows' recording of *Living Doll* was just coming to an end. The act's first number one, this Lionel Bart-penned tune was top of the hit parade when *RR* launched as a monthly publication, promising on its front cover the lowdown on the likes of merchandising, shopfitting, TV and concert appearances, staff training and, of course, news. It would have cost you 25/- or £1.25 in today's money.

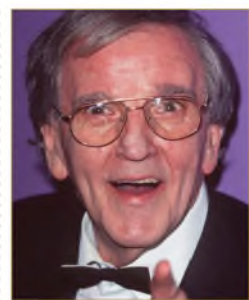
The fact the magazine debuted under founding editor Roy Parker as a monthly, rather than a weekly, underlined how far slower the music industry moved in those days – not that anyone would have referred to it as such back then. This was a time when singers and record companies were still seen as part of the world of show business, one ruled by the likes of impresario Lew Grade and his brothers Leslie Grade and theatrical agent Bernard Delfont.

The big artists of the day were expected to do the likes of pantomime and summer season and it would not be until a certain quartet from Liverpool broke through that attitudes really changed.

That group were still called The Quarrymen when *RR* made its entry and it would be another three-and-a-half years before they would start to make their impact on a business that in 1959 was at something of a crossroads. Many of rock'n'roll's first crop of stars were now out of the picture: Elvis Presley was serving in the US Army, although still managed to top the UK chart during the year with *One Night/I Got Stung* and *A Fool Such As I/I Need You Tonight*; Jerry Lee Lewis's career had been stopped in its tracks by the scandal the year before when it was revealed he had married his 13-year-old cousin; Chuck Berry was in prison; Little Richard had given up rock'n'roll to become a born-again Christian; and Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and The Big Bopper all died in a plane crash in the previous February.

There were some important new developments happening, although at the time they would have made little or no impact on the UK business. On January 12, Berry Gordy launched Tamla Records in Detroit, while later in the year in Jamaica Chris Blackwell started Island Records, which is also celebrating its 50th anniversary this year.

Back in the UK, while the market was still heavily dominated by US artists, there were plenty of homegrown successes to cheer on. Many of them were brought to prominence under the wing of manager and impresario Larry Parnes whose biggest stars in 1959 included Marty Wilde and Billy Fury, the latter scoring his first two hits during the year. The year also took in chart-topping singles from UK artists such as nine-fingered pianist Russ Conway, one-hit wonder Jerry Keller and Parnes-managed Adam Faith, but the undoubted biggest star was Cliff who with the renamed Shadows scored a second chart-topper before the



**LEFT**  
Pop pioneers: *Pick Of The Pops* presenters Alan Freeman and David Jacobs, who later presented *Juke Box Jury*

year's end with *Travellin' Light*. No one, though, would have predicted then that he would still be around in 50 months' time, let alone 50 years as *RR* successor *Music Week* reached its half century.

Cliff was the most lucrative homegrown asset of EMI, one of the "big four" companies of the day alongside Decca, Philips and Pye. US giant CBS at this time did not have a UK outlet, instead licensing its repertoire to Philips, while RCA went through Decca having two years earlier ended a 55-year relationship with EMI. This resulted in the UK releases of Elvis Presley switching from EMI to Decca.

By the close of the Fifties the power had firmly moved from the publishing companies of Tin Pan Alley to the record companies, although these were far from the days of the self-contained artist writing their own material. Too often it was the case of scouting the US for hits before they broke on this side of the Atlantic and then bringing out a British cover by a star. So it was the Isle of Wight's Craig Douglas who was top of the hit parade with *Only Sixteen* when the second edition of *Record Retailer* appeared in September, rather than the original by US artist Sam Cooke.

Introduced a decade earlier, the seven-inch 45 RPM single had established itself as the dominant format as the Fifties came to an end, having seen off the 78. By 1960 *RR* was reporting that production of the 78 had dropped by 67% in the opening quarter of the year.

Although singles sales in the UK had yet to reach a first big peak – one experienced at the height of Beadmania – it was through singles where record companies were achieving the vast majority of their business.

Albums remained something of a luxury and those that did sell tended not to be by pop acts, other than the biggest stars such as Elvis. Instead the market was dominated by the likes of musicals, a point made by the soundtrack to Rodgers and Hammerstein's *South Pacific* being the best-selling album in the UK every week during 1959 and continuing at number one for most of 1960.

The Fifties and *RR*'s first year ended with South Pacific number one on the albums chart and *What Do You Want To Make Those Eyes At Me For?*, a song penned in 1916 and covered by Emile Ford and The Checkmates, the biggest-selling single. It hardly gave a hint to the incredible changes the following decade would bring.

**BELOW**  
Paper pioneer: the first issue of *The Record Retailer* was Vol 1 Number 1 from August 1959



Fresh-faced: The Beatles (as The Quarrymen) first played live in the Fifties

# CONSTANTLY CLIFF

A young Cliff Richard would have thought the current music business to be 'impossible' had he imagined it in 1959. But like *Music Week*, the pop legend has lived through every single day of the industry's last 50 years

WORDS: Paul Williams



**ABOVE**  
Gatekeeper: Cliff Richard has enjoyed a career almost as long as the music industry itself and shows little sign of slowing

**E**xtraordinary changes have happened to the UK music industry in the 50 years since *Music Week* predecessor *Record Retailer* first appeared, but there has been one constant throughout: Cliff Richard.

When the magazine debuted in August 1959 he and The Shadows were enjoying their first-ever number one with Lionel Bart's *Living Doll*, but he was only just getting into his stride. In a run unmatched by any other artist in chart history, Cliff went on to score number one singles in five consecutive decades as well as more Top 10 hits than anyone else. In all, he has more than 120 UK hit singles to his name and in 2009 remains one of the UK's most successful acts both in terms of the live and recording markets.

Given his unique place in history over these past 50 years, who better than Cliff to share some thoughts about how the industry has changed from the artist's perspective across half a century?

**It is *Music Week's* 50th anniversary and in the week we launched, *Living Doll* was number one. What are your memories of that time? It was your first number one, wasn't it?**

It was. *Move It* went to number two in the chart, which at that stage in my life was absolutely brilliant, but what then worried me was the succession of singles afterwards. *High Class Baby*, I think, went to seven or nine, something like that, and then there was *Living Doll* and *Mean Streak* which went to 17 or something.

There was a downward trend, but I remember [producer and head of EMI's Columbia label] Norrie Paramor saying, "Don't worry, we'll find the right song" and then sure enough *Living Doll*, which was maybe my fifth single, went to number one. So he was right. We just had to wait. It underlines one of the main changes. I don't think the A&R men now exist the way they did.

People like Norrie Paramor and George Martin were concerned with us as people as well as artists. We weren't just widgets, so they'd nurture your career.

Norrie Paramor conducted orchestras for me, came into TV shows to make sure all the parts were correct and I'm not sure that still exists; the music business now seems to spit people out very easily. *cliff* One flop and it's all over – I had four.

**These days a lot of artists would have been let go by their record company with a run like that.**

That's what I mean. It has changed so drastically. There are a lot of good artists around who hopefully are still singing because they love it and make a bit of money playing clubs, pubs, whatever, who deserved to have been supported though all of that. If you are a good singer and you can perform there's no reason why you should be dumped that quickly.

I talked to Daniel Bedingfield about this and he had something like four number ones on the trot. I'm only worried now I haven't heard from him recently, but I know he's in LA writing and recording and he is so good. His question to me was, "How many number ones have you had?" I think I said, "14" and he said, "Oh, is that all?" and I said, "Daniel, careers aren't built on number ones. I've had 36 top fives and 127 top 30s, that's what a career is built on and please, if you find you get to number two, don't think of it as a failure."

**And artists don't suddenly become bad overnight because their last record hasn't done quite as well as previous ones.**

That's right. We always relied on record companies. Things are changing. [Physical] singles, for instance, have pretty well gone. People say to me, "Don't you wish you were born now?" I say, "No, I'm so happy I lived through that period when music was loved and respected and people bought lots of it." But I think it's going full circle. When you think about what has happened to the internet: although singles as we know them have been killed off, once they are able to police the internet, once they can get people to pay for what they take, you are back to singles again because people don't seem to download albums.

**Do artists get more of a say these days than when you started?**

I think they probably make more demands on record companies. I'm never quite sure how to balance it out because the record industry has become about lawyers and accountants and not necessarily music people. Whether they were the MD of the company or the guys who went out and sold the records, they were all heavily into music.

**Some people claim that there simple aren't the personalities in the industry anymore. Is that a fair thing to say or just nostalgia?**

I don't know how to gauge it other than the whole tempo of life changed, the direction of life changed, people's attitudes to music changed, people's attitudes to other people changed. All of that has to be taken into consideration. My only gripe is that whereas there was a time when we made the records and they sold them, now it seems to me we are called upon to sell the records as well as make them.

I remember reading a memo I wasn't supposed to read and it was somebody in EMI, no names mentioned, and it just said, "Sell more, less budget" and I'm thinking, "This doesn't make sense because unless you invest you



**ABOVE**

Cliff with The Shadows in the 1960s; the band had 34 UK hit singles with Cliff in the line-up and 35 without him

**LEFT**

Cliff in the early Seventies, a time when he was heavily involved with Eurovision



can't make any money" I'm talking about 20 years ago so this started from way back. Of course you support your album, but when you have to fork out money to make videos and all that and have to take a share of all the advertising you think, "Why am I bothering? I could do this all myself, have my own label and pay for it myself."

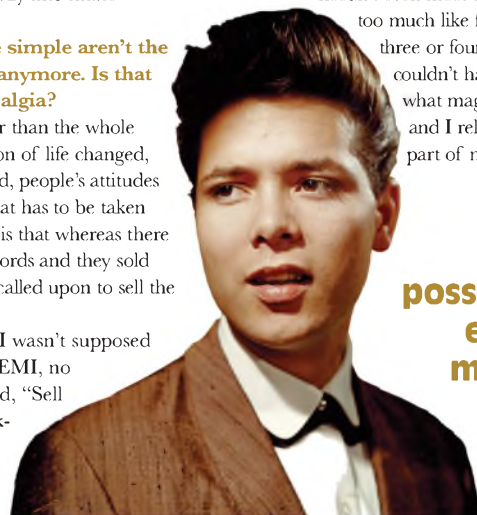
**Back in 1959 how long realistically would you have expected your career to last?**

We were having the most wonderful time and didn't think beyond the next recording session or the next tour we were going to do. I remember I talked about this with The Shadows when five years had gone by and we thought, "Oh, at least we're not overnight sensations, we've actually made it" and then 10 years went by I got struck by the fact if you get to 10 years then potentially longevity is in your grasp. It's been hard work. Maybe I'm making it sound easy but you can't have longevity unless you're prepared to work at it, too.

**What do you think the Cliff of 1959 would make of the music business now?**

He would have thought, "This is impossible." When you think we stood around our microphones and played live and if somebody went wrong it was just a pain in the backside to have to do it again. For them to say to us, "One day you'll be able to overdub" or "One day a song will be recorded in three different countries but the three singers needn't even meet up"... all that technology, it was too much like fantasy. *Move It* we did about three or four takes and that was it. We couldn't have possibly in '59 envisaged what magic there was lying ahead of us and I relish it because my favourite part of my career is recording.

**"We couldn't possibly in '59 have envisaged what magic there was lying ahead of us..."**





CONGRATULATIONS TO **MUSIC WEEK**

HAPPY 50<sup>TH</sup>, YOU'VE NEVER LOOKED BETTER

FROM THE **NEW LOOK** SONY/ATV MUSIC PUBLISHING



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# HEAR MY SONG

Music Week runs down the most-performed UK-originated songs annually from 1959 to 2008 – predictably John Lennon and Paul McCartney lead the way but they are pressed by Eighties hitmakers Stock, Aitken and Waterman

WORDS: Paul Williams



Lennon and McCartney's four compositions give them the highest number of most-performed songs...



Stock, Aitken and Waterman tapped the chart in three successive years, from 1987–89

These charts right show the most-performed UK-originated song annually from 1959 to 2008; each song was recognised at the following year's Ivor Novello Awards

## TIMELINE

Follow the MW timeline from 1959–2009 along the bottom of our following features pages...

## MOST-PERFORMED 1959–1984

- 1959 SIDE SADDLE**  
by Trevor Stanford aka Russ Conway *EMI*
- 1960 AS LONG AS HE NEEDS ME**  
by Lionel Bart *Calveson Music*
- 1961 MY KIND OF GIRL**  
by Leslie Bricusse *Orward Music*
- 1962 STRANGER ON THE SHORE**  
by Mr Acker Bilk *EMI*
- 1963 SHE LOVES YOU**  
by John Lennon, Paul McCartney *Sony/ATV*
- 1964 CAN'T BUY ME LOVE**  
by John Lennon, Paul McCartney *Sony/ATV*
- 1965 I'LL NEVER FIND ANOTHER YOU**  
by Tom Springfield *Warner/Chappell*
- 1966 MICHELLE**  
by John Lennon, Paul McCartney *Sony/ATV*
- 1967 PUPPET ON A STRING**  
by Bill Martin, Phil Coulter *Feet Maurice Music*
- 1968 CONGRATULATIONS**  
by Bill Martin, Phil Coulter *Feet Maurice Music*
- 1969 OB-LA-DI, OB-LA-DA**  
by John Lennon, Paul McCartney *Sony/ATV*
- 1970 YELLOW RIVER** by Jeff Christie *LaFleur Music*
- 1971 MY SWEET LORD**  
by George Harrison *Hamburg, Peter Maurice Music*
- 1972 BEG STEAL OR BORROW** by Graeme Hall, Tony Cole, Steve Wolfe *Valley Music*
- 1973 GET DOWN** by Gilbert O'Sullivan *EMI*
- 1974 THE WOMBLING SONG** by Mike Batt *Sony/ATV*
- 1975 I'M NOT IN LOVE**  
by Graham Gouldman, Eric Stewart *EMI*
- 1976 SAVE YOUR KISSES FOR ME**  
by Tony Hiller, Martin Lee, Lee Sheridan *EMI*
- 1977 DON'T CRY FOR ME ARGENTINA**  
by Tim Rice, Andrew Lloyd Webber *Evita Music*
- 1978 NIGHT FEVER** by Barry Gibb, Maurice Gibb, Robin Gibb *Universal, Warner/Chappell*
- 1979 BRIGHT EYES** by Mike Batt *EMI*
- 1980 TOGETHER WE ARE BEAUTIFUL**  
by Ken Leray *Sony/ATV*
- 1981 YOU DRIVE ME CRAZY**  
by Ronnie Harwood *Campbell Connely & Co*
- 1982 GOLDEN BROWN** by Jet Black, Hugh Cornwall, David Greenfield, Jean-Jacques Burnell *Complete Music, EMI*
- 1983 EVERY BREATH YOU TAKE**  
by Gordon Sumner aka Sting *GM Sumner*
- 1984 CARELESS WHISPER** by George Michael, Andrew Ridgley *Warner/Chappell*

**A**lthough we round up the biggest-selling singles each year elsewhere in the supplement, this list throws the spotlight on the most popular UK-originated songs and their songwriters of the past 50 years.

The 50 songs in question were all recognised at the Ivor Novello Awards as the most-performed song of their year in terms of public performance, through such outlets as radio and TV broadcasts, concerts, clubs, bars and other public gatherings. For the past three-and-a-half decades this award has been sponsored by PRS.

Every single one of the songs in question was naturally a big hit in their year of release, but time has been kinder to some than others. The likes of *She Loves You*, *I'm Not In Love*, *Careless Whisper* and *Angels* are regarded as ever-greens years after their debuts, but others such as Jeff Christie's chart-topping *Yellow River* and Shakin' Stevens' *You Drive Me Crazy* rarely raise even a mention today.

It is little surprise that the Sixties titles are dominated by John Lennon and Paul McCartney, beginning with *She Loves You* and *Can't Buy Me Love*, which, as well as being the most-performed UK songs of 1963 and 1964, also secured The Beatles the biggest-selling singles in each year. However, neither of Lennon and McCartney's other two most-performed songs, *Michelle* and *Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da*, were even hit singles for the Fab Four, instead being respectively lifted by others from their LPs *Rubber Soul* and *The White Album*. In *Michelle*'s case The Overlanders claimed the biggest hit, topping the chart with the song in 1966, a feat Marmalade managed three years later with *Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da*.

Lennon and McCartney's four compositions give them the highest number of most-performed songs, but there are 10 other individuals or songwriting teams that crop up at least twice, making this list ever-more exclusive.

Managing even something beyond The Beatles' principal writers, Mike Stock, Matt Aitken and Pete Waterman were victorious in three successive years, on the last occasion in conjunction with Donna Summer. Their second success *I Should Be So Lucky* is one of two winning songs to have topped the chart for Kylie Minogue; the other, *Can't Get You Out Of My Head*, was the first of Cathy Dennis's two wins and came three years before she won with *Toxic*.

The wide public impact Eurovision songs used to have is reflected by Bill Martin and Phil Coulter's back-to-back appearances here with *Puppet On A String* and *Congratulations* – hits respectively for Sandie Shaw and Cliff Richard – while two other UK Eurovision entries figure: the New Seekers' smash *Beg Steal Or Borrow* and Brotherhood Of Man's contest-winning *Save Your Kisses For Me*.

Current BPI deputy chairman Mike Batt is also a twice-winner, appearing with the *Wombling Song* and *Bright Eyes*, while other writers making two appearances are the Bee Gees trio of Barry, Maurice and Robin Gibb; George Michael; Gary Barlow; back-to-back victors Right Said Fred and William Orbit; and Sting, the only person to put in two showings with effectively the same song. *Every Breath You Take* was 1983's top tune and Sting was victorious again 14 years later as *Puff Daddy* reworked the song as *I'll Be Missing You*.

The majority of the songs have at least some writing credit by one or more of those in the line-up of the act who originally recorded them, a trend most notable in the Nineties when the only exceptions were *I'll Be Missing You* and Troggs frontman Reg Presley's then-27-year-old *Love Is All Around*, which was revived by Wet Wet Wet.

In this current decade the professional songwriter has claimed a greater presence among the winning songs, although typically that is in conjunction with the recording artist. Thus William Orbit and Susannah Melvoin aid All Saints' Shaznay Lewis on *Pure Shores*; Amanda Ghost and Sacha Skarbak co-pen *You're Beautiful* with James Blunt; and Steve Booker is co-created with Duffy on the list's most recent winner, *Mercy*.

The current decade has also increased the presence of

non-UK writers among the winners, partially because of a change in the qualification rules to increase the overseas-writing component allowed, but also reflecting the greater variety of partnerships songwriters embark on these days. This international picture is illustrated by Cathy Dennis's pairing with Swedes Christian Karlsson, Henrik Jonback and Pontus Winnberg on the Britney Spears hit *Toxic*, while, in what is surprisingly his only appearance on the entire list, Elton John is part of a transatlantic collaboration with Scissor Sisters' Scott Hoffman and Jason Sellards on *I Don't Feel Like Dancin'*.

## MOST-PERFORMED 1985–2008

- 1985 EASY LOVER** by Phil Collins, Philip Bailey, Nathan East *Phil Collins Ltd, Universal*
- 1986 CHAIN REACTION** by Barry Gibb, Maurice Gibb, Robin Gibb *Universal, Warner/Chappell*
- 1987 NEVER GONNA GIVE YOU UP** by Mike Stock, Matt Aitken, Pete Waterman *All Eyes, Sony/ATV, Universal*
- 1988 I SHOULD BE SO LUCKY** by Mike Stock, Matt Aitken, Pete Waterman *All Eyes, Sony/ATV, Universal*
- 1989 THIS TIME I KNOW IT'S FOR REAL** by Mike Stock, Matt Aitken, Pete Waterman, Donna Summer *All Eyes, Sony/ATV, Universal, Warner/Chappell*
- 1990 BLUE SAVANNAH**  
by Andy Bell, Vince Clarke *Sony/ATV*
- 1991 I'M TOO SEXY** by Fred Fairbrass, Rob Manzoli, Richard Fairbrass *Spirit Music*
- 1992 DEEPLY DIPPY** by Fred Fairbrass, Rob Manzoli, Richard Fairbrass *Spirit Music*
- 1993 ORDINARY WORLD** by Simon Le Bon, Nick Rhodes, John Taylor, Warren Currenullo *Parlophone, American Star Trade*
- 1994 LOVE IS ALL AROUND** by Reg Presley *Universal*
- 1995 BACK FOR GOOD** by Gary Barlow *EMI*
- 1996 FASTLOVE** by George Michael, Patrice Rushen, Fred Washington, Terri McFaddin *Warner/Chappell, EMI*
- 1997 I'LL BE MISSING YOU**  
by Gordon Sumner aka Sting *GM Sumner*
- 1998 ANGELS**  
by Robbie Williams, Guy Chambers *EMI, Kobalt*
- 1999 BEAUTIFUL STRANGER** by William Orbit, Madonna *Intagram, Warner/Chappell*
- 2000 PURE SHORES** by Shaznay Lewis, William Orbit, Susannah Melvoin *Corvaya, EMI, Intagram, Universal*
- 2001 CAN'T GET YOU OUT OF MY HEAD**  
by Cathy Dennis, Rob Davis *EMI, Universal*
- 2002 JUST A LITTLE** by Michelle Escoffery, John Hagan Hammond, George Hagan Hammond *EMI, Universal*
- 2003 SUPERSTAR** by Mich Hansen, Joseph Belmaati, Mikke Sigvardt *Universal, Warner/Chappell*
- 2004 TOXIC** by Cathy Dennis, Christian Karlsson, Henrik Jonback, Pontus Winnberg *EMI, Universal*
- 2005 YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL** by James Blunt, Amanda Ghost, Sacha Skarbak *Euelo, EMI*
- 2006 I DON'T FEEL LIKE DANCIN'** by Elton John, Scott Hoffman, Jason Sellards *EMI, Universal*
- 2007 SHINE** by Gary Barlow, Howard Donald, Jason Orange, Mark Owen, Steve Robson *EMI, Sony/ATV, Universal, V2*
- 2008 MERCY**  
by Aimee Duffy, Steve Booker *EMI, Universal*



# 50 YEARS

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**SONY MUSIC**

# SWINGING SIXTIES

With The Beatles at the epicentre, the Sixties were the equivalent of UK music's 'Big Bang', launching artists, formats and labels into the hearts and minds of the British people, and from there into the US, too

WORDS: Paul Williams

**T**he 1960s not only represent the golden age of British pop but a decade in which the UK music business grew into a global phenomenon to be rivalled only by the US.

Such an incredible change in status for the British business would have been hard to have forecast in the opening few years of the decade, however. Just as Philip Larkin famously observed that sexual intercourse only began in 1963 with the advent of the pill, in many ways the Sixties from a music perspective did not fully get going until that same year as the birth of Beatlemania started to weave its magic.

It is impossible to give an overview of the Sixties from a music industry perspective without making The Beatles the central figures because nothing was ever the same after them – not just musically but also in how the UK business was run and its standing in the world.

The group sold singles like no act had done previously, but they also sold albums in quantities not seen by a pop act before. Their first album *Please Please Me* spent 30 weeks at number one in 1963 and the follow-up *With The Beatles* continued their run for another 21 weeks as it became the first UK album to sell 1m copies. Reaching seven-figure sales for an album, although still impressive, is hardly out of the ordinary today, but back then it was exceptional in a market in which the currency was largely 45s.

The band's albums popularity contributed more than anything else to raise the stock of LPs in a business that



had largely been the domain of the likes of Frank Sinatra and musical soundtracks (although these remained hugely popular during the decade). And as the Sixties progressed singles and albums and the artists behind them became distinct markets.

For newly-emerging artists such as Bob Dylan, while he was not averse to the odd hit single, it was on albums where he really flourished, just as bands like The Fortunes and The Foundations had hit singles but no hit albums.

As the decade progressed singles sales, which had hit new peaks between 1963-65 when The Beatles achieved the still-unequalled feat of five of their releases reaching 1m UK sales, drifted off as the albums market really accel-

erated. After Tom Jones' *Green Green Grass Of Home*, which was the Christmas number one of 1966, no other singles in the remainder of the decade sold 1m copies. Indeed 1967 – the year of the first Midem – proved to be a pivotal tipping point in the power shift from singles to albums following the releases of landmark recordings including The Beatles' *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* and the Jim Hendrix Experience's *Are You Experienced*. The huge popularity of such releases, which were distinctive and separate from what was going on in the singles market, paved the way for the following decade and beyond when albums would be the dominant format.

That would not just be on vinyl but on cassette, too, which was introduced by Philips in Europe in 1963, although pre-recorded tapes did not appear until a couple of years later.

Another format to enjoy a brief but hugely-successful run of popularity was the EP, which occupied something of a middle ground between a single and an album and tended to contain a handful of tracks mixing hits and album tracks. Until 1967 they commanded their own chart, but as



**ABOVE**  
The Beatles' first album *Please Please Me*  
**BELOW**  
Four lads who shook the world



**The Beatles sold singles like no act had done previously, but they also sold albums in quantities not seen by a pop act before...**

## TIMELINE 1959-62

### 1959

- Berry Gordy launches Tamla Records in Detroit
- BBC broadcasts first *Take Five* July
- First edition of *The Record Retailer* is published
- Chris Blackwell starts Island Records

### 1960

- Michael Holliday has the first number one of the Sixties with *Sunny Flyin'*.

- *The Record Retailer* publishes its first top 60
- Cliff Richard is among the artists to play at the first televised Royal Variety Performance
- Elicia Cochran, perishes in a car crash while touring the UK
- Brian Epstein's new NEMS record store opens in Liverpool
- EMI moves to its new Manchester Square offices

- Sales of gramophone records are valued during the year at \$1.15m

### 1961

- The Record Retailer reports its first case of piracy with the headline 'Bootlegging Found In Birmingham'
- 3,997,148 radio licences are issued during the year
- Number ones of the year include Frankie Vaughan's *Tower Of Strength*,

The Temperance Seven's *You're Driving Me Crazy* and Elen Shapiro's *Walking Back To Happiness*

- On October 28 a teenager called Raymond Jones visits Brian Epstein's Liverpool record shop and asks for *My Bonnie* by The Beatles

### 1962

- Chubby Checker and Sam Cooke were busy popularising *The Twist*

- On October 5 Parlophone single 34949 *Love Me Do* by The Beatles is released. It entered the *The Record Retailer* chart at number 49, before rising to number 17.
- In December The Tornados become the first British group to have a US number one with *Telstar*
- Number ones of the year include Cliff Richard's *The Young Ones* and *3 Bumble B* and The Singers' *Nut Rocker*



**Midas touch:** George Martin enjoyed success with acts other than The Beatles and his productions spent 37 weeks at number one in 1963



**American English:** CBS enjoyed UK success with Bob Dylan



For all the success of rock'n'roll, big album sellers still tended to be MOR and musical soundtracks such as *The Sound Of Music*

early as 1965 there were signs record companies' format priorities were changing. "EPs are simply throwing money away," blasted CBS's Goddard Lieberman to *Record Retailer*. "They're a half step. LP sales should be encouraged."

As writers of their own songs, The Beatles also changed the dynamics of the business between record companies and music publishers. The example of John Lennon and Paul McCartney in penning most of the band's tracks with the rest cover versions persuaded many of the other leading acts of the era to become self-reliant. For these artists there was simply no need to look to Denmark Street for material, although there was good business still to be had for publishers, not least one-time vocalist Dick James who formed a company with the two Beatles principals called Northern Songs.

The success of The Beatles guaranteed EMI's position as the dominant record company of the decade. Under chairman Sir Joseph Lockwood and general manager LG Wood, EMI, which in 1960 moved from Great Castle Street to its legendary offices in London's Manchester Square, could count on some of the very best A&R men in the business, among them Norrie Paramor, Norman Newell, Walter Ridley and George Martin, while its purchase of Capitol Records in the Fifties delivered it The Beach Boys the following decade and an outlet to break The Beatles in the US, even if Capitol was very reluctant to get behind the band initially.

Martin and his Parlophone label had been something of the poor relations at EMI, best known for comedy output from the likes of Peter Sellers and Bernard Cribbins, but his signing in 1962 of The Beatles when virtually everyone else turned them down including colleagues at EMI made him within months the hottest record executive around. Although they dominated, his success was not just down to The Beatles with a combination of the Fab Four, Gerry & The Pacemakers and Billy J Kramer and The Dakotas giving his productions 37 weeks at number one in 1963.

The last of those number ones that year was The Beatles' I Want To Hold Your Hand. The band's breakthrough in the US early the following year opened up British acts in the land that invented rock'n'roll in a way that had not happened before. While other British artists had achieved sporadic American success previously, among them Lonnie Donegan, Acker Bilk and the Joe Meek-produced Tornados, this was something different altogether and the British Invasion that also included the likes of the Dave Clark 5, The Rolling Stones, The Animals and Herman's Hermits, unlocked a door to UK acts in America that has since always remained open, albeit to varying degrees.

The three other leading record companies in the decade had nothing to better The Beatles, but they too were active-

ly contributing to musical history. Decca, the company that had infamously turned down The Beatles (although, unlike others, at least they auditioned them) signed The Rolling Stones on the recommendation of George Harrison. The company under founder Sir Edward Lewis also boasted a roster that at one time or another included Tom Jones, the Small Faces and The Animals.

Pye Records, which had been founded in 1953 out of a business selling televisions and radios, was home to many of the decade's most successful British artists, including The Kinks, The Searchers and Sandie Shaw. Dutch-owned Philips, meanwhile, replied with a mixture of British and American artists including Dusty Springfield, the Walker Brothers and The Four Seasons.

But, as creative and pioneering as the music was coming from both sides of the Atlantic, for much of the record-buying audience trends such as psychedelia largely passed them by. The Summer of Love of 1967, for example, might be remembered by the critics for the likes of The Doors and Buffalo Springfield, but the British public the

same year placed MOR fare including Petula Clark and Engelbert Humperdinck at number one. On albums, apart from The Beatles, the very biggest sellers across the decade were musical soundtracks such as *The Sound Of Music*, *South Pacific* and *West Side Story*.

The same majors who had ruled the Fifties largely continued to dominate, illustrated by singles sales figures that *RR* published in 1967 revealing EMI and

Decca between them had more than 60% of the market with Pye, Polydor and Philips then following. However, the first signs of the impact the US record company giants would have on the UK market during the following decade and later were starting to be revealed.

CBS, which until then had been licensing its releases to Philips, launched in the UK in 1965 with an American record executive by the name of Maurice Oberstein moving across the pond to take up the job of its UK chief engineer for manufacturing. As the decade progressed it began to pile up successes in its own right in the market, including with US artists such as Bob Dylan and Simon & Garfunkel as well as a growing homegrown roster that included Georgie Fame, The Tremeloes and Marmalade, all of whom gave CBS UK number one singles before the decade's end.

CBS's big US-owned rival Warner had been introduced into the UK a few years earlier, getting off to a perfect start when its first release, The Everly Brothers' *Cathy's Clown*, topped the chart for seven weeks in 1960, but it did not start to become anything like a significant player until the 1970s.

Joining the US exports into Britain was Motown Records whose releases were initially made available in the UK via a series of licence deals, including on EMI's Stateside label, which put the Detroit company at the top of

TOP SINGLES YEAR BY YEAR



- 1959 **CLIFF RICHARD & THE SHADOWS** *Living Doll* Columbia
- 1960 **THE EVERLY BROTHERS** *Cathy's Clown* Warner Bros
- 1961 **DEL SHANNON** *Runaway* London
- 1962 **ACKER BILK** *Stranger On The Shore* Columbia
- 1963 **THE BEATLES** *She Loves You* Parlophone
- 1964 **JIM REEVES** *I Love You Because* RCA
- 1965 **THE SEEKERS** *I'll Never Find Another You* Columbia
- 1966 **JIM REEVES** *Distant Drums* RCA
- 1967 **ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK** *Release Me* Decca
- 1968 **LOUIS ARMSTRONG** *What A Wonderful World/Cabaret* HMV
- 1969 **FRANK SINATRA** *My Way* Reprise

the chart in 1964 with The Supremes' *Baby Love*. But the following year an amalgam of the separate Motown and Tamla US labels was created for the UK, Tamla Motown, and its releases sold through EMI. The first such release, The Supremes' *Stop! In The Name Of Love*, appeared that March on TMG 501 and reached number seven in the chart, while later in the decade Motown played a leading role in popularising the compilation album through its Motown Chartbusters releases.

The founder of a record company launched in the same year as Motown found himself profiled in *RR* in 1964

**BELOW**  
British Invasion: The Rolling Stones and the Dave Clark 5 (bottom) followed The Beatles across the Atlantic

The success of The Beatles guaranteed EMI's position as the dominant record company of the decade...



TIMELINE 1963-65

1963

- Cassette tape recorders introduced
- Billy Fury and Brian Poole & The Tremeloes are the first to star on *Ready, Steady, Go*
- John Lennon and Paul McCartney form a company with Dick James Music called Northern Songs Ltd
- The Rolling Stones make their Marquee debut
- UK LP sales up 12% in first half of year

- The first Beatles LP *Please Please Me* is released on Parlophone in October costing 36/-

1964

- *Top Of The Pops* makes its TV debut from a converted church in Manchester on New Year's Day
- EMI states that £6,350,000 was paid for Beatles records during 1963
- *The Record Retailer* profiles 26-year-

- old Christopher Elskowal of Island
- The new-look *Record Retailer* is launched on February 27
- *Radio Caroline* becomes the first pirate radio ship to take to the air, swiftly followed by *Radio London*, *Radio Suteh* and *Radio Atlanta*
- Mods and rockers clash at Cleeve
- Mod group The High Numbers make their debut with *Dr. The Face*, later changing their name to The Who

1965

- EMI head Sir Joseph Lockwood states in *RR* that "pirate radio stations are damaging the top 10 sales"
- The Beatles receive the MBE
- *RR* readers are introduced to 19-year-old Jimmy Page
- Bob Dylan releases first UK single 'The Times They Are A-Changin'
- Andrew Olcham launches his Immediate label

- *Sound Of Music* soundtrack begins 13-week run as number-one album
- CBS boss Goddard Lieberman tells *RR* "EPs are simply throwing money away, they're a half-step."
- Transatlantic takes out an *RR* ad boasting that the Ian Campbell Folk Group's cover of Dylan's 'The Time They Are A-Changin'' is "the first record to hit the charts put out by an independent [sic] record company"

TOP 20 SINGLES OF THE SIXTIES



1	THE BEATLES	She Loves You	Parlophone	1963
2	THE BEATLES	I Want to Hold Your Hand	Parlophone	1963
3	KEN DODD	Tears	Columbia	1965
4	THE BEATLES	Can't Buy Me Love	Parlophone	1964
5	THE BEATLES	I Feel Fine	Parlophone	1964
6	SEEKERS	The Carnival Is Over	Columbia	1965
7	THE BEATLES	We Can Work It Out/Day Tripper	Parlophone	1964
8	ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK	Release Me	Decca	1967
9	ELVIS PRESLEY	It's Now Or Never	RCA	1960
10	TOM JONES	Green Green Grass Of Home	Decca	1966
11	ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK	The Last Waltz	Decca	1967
12	MR. ACKER BILK	Stranger On The Shore	Columbia	1961
13	FRANK IFIELD	I Remember You	Columbia	1962
14	CLIFF RICHARD & THE SHADOWS	The Young Ones	Columbia	1962
15	ARCHIES	Sugar Sugar	RCA	1969
16	CLIFF RICHARD & THE SHADOWS	The Next Time/Bachelor Boy	Columbia	1962
17	TORNADOS	Telstar	Decca	1962
18	THE BEATLES	Help!	Parlophone	1965
19	ROLF HARRIS	Two Little Boys	Columbia	1969
20	DAVE CLARK FIVE	Glad All Over	Columbia	1964



Three is the magic number: US label Motown quickly enjoyed success on both sides of the Atlantic, with The Supremes lighting the way

**RIGHT**  
Top Of The Pops presenters Alan Freeman, Pete Murray and Jimmy Saville with DJ Stuart Henry (far right)

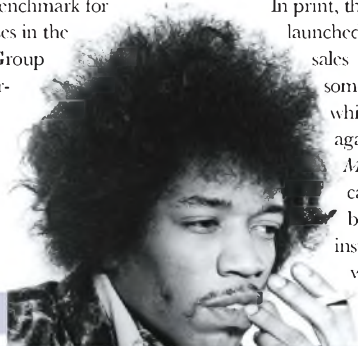


**CIRCLED**  
Pirate DJ: a fresh-faced John Peel in his Radio London days

when the magazine gave the lowdown on 26-year-old Chris Blackwell, the same year Island enjoyed its first-ever UK hit with Millie's My Boy Lollipop. The rise of the company, whose first releases were issued via the Fontana label, illustrated the emergence of an independent music scene in the UK with others in the decade coming to prominence including Andrew Loog Oldham's Immediate Records, armed with the likes of Chris Farlowe and the Small Faces, and Track Records whose roster took in The Who and The Jimi Hendrix Experience. The Beatles also started their own label within EMI, the one part of their Apple empire that was a financial success and which showed to other artists that "the man" did not have to be in charge.

Overall, it was Island that set the benchmark for the independent scene with its successes in the decade including the Spencer Davis Group and Traffic, both featuring the extraordinary talents of a young Steve Winwood. It also gave a kick-start to what would be another independent giant of the Seventies, Chrysalis Records, which was started by Chris Wright and Terry Ellis in 1969 out of

**RIGHT**  
Power shift: Jimi Hendrix helped switch the UK public on to albums



their artist management business and whose first releases by acts including Jethro Tull went through Island.

Those signed to the independents were among the countless artists to benefit from the arrival of offshore pirate radio in 1964, a phenomenon that deeply troubled the UK Government and some record company bosses. But for music fans it finally meant they could actually hear the music they liked when they wanted and not just for a few hours a week on the Beeb's only pop outlets Saturday Club and Pick Of The Pops.

The launch of the pirates, beginning with Radio Caroline and then followed by Radio London, Radio Atlanta and others, would from a modern standpoint have been seen as a blessing for the labels as a way of exposing their wares like never before. But the likes of EMI's Sir Joseph Lockwood were troubled, telling *RR* that "pirate radio stations are damaging 'Top 10 sales'".

Although Caroline bravely carried on, the stay of the pirates was a short one with the Government under Paymaster General Tony Benn defying their obvious popularity among millions of the public by introducing the Marine Offences Act in 1967 to shut them down. But listeners did get BBC Radio 1 in their place with the network launching on September 30 that year, former pirate Tony Blackburn at the controls. Other ex-pirates, including his Radio London colleague John Peel, joined him at the new station.

Music television was also transformed in the decade, firstly with the arrival in 1963 of Rediffusion Television's Ready, Steady Go and then the following January by Jimmy Saville hosting the first-ever 'Top Of The Pops' from a converted church in Manchester.

In print, the *New Musical Express*, which had been launched in 1952, enjoyed weekly sales

sometimes upwards of 200,000, while it now found itself up against the much-older *Melody Maker*, which had been late to catch on to the rock'n'roll boom with its bias leaning instead towards jazz – but this was readdressed as the decade wore on. *Record Mirror* and

*Disc* completed the main four music weeklies.

While Prime Minister Harold Wilson and his Labour Government were fretting over pirate TJs, the record labels were having to contend with a different kind of pirate activity. An *RR* headline screamed: "Bootlegging found in Birmingham" as the accompanying story revealed the seizure of bootleg copies of singles on Melodisc's Blue Beat label.

Such activity was so new when this story appeared in 1961 that the publication felt the need to explain that "bootlegging is a term which went out with prohibition, but this week enters into the vocabulary of the British record trade".

It was the first sign of an unwelcome trend that by 1969 had *RR* reporting that Bob Dylan's Great White Wonder had become the world's first rock bootleg and had gone on to sell 250,000 copies. It was a trend that would only gather momentum.

On the high street the main places to buy records continued to be independent record shops and electronic stores, but the then EMI-owned HMV was finally starting to expand its operations. Edward Elgar had launched its first store at 363 Oxford Street in 1921, but it was not until the Sixties that it started expanding, firstly in London, where it added 15 more stores. By the end of the decade WH Smith had also moved into music retailing, worrying many an independent shop about a new rival who would undercut their prices.

Beyond its retail influence, HMV's 363 store had played its own direct part in the musical revolution of the Sixties when The Beatles' manager Brian Epstein used a small cutting room in the shop's building to convert demo tapes of his then-unsigned band to disc. Contacts at the store also led to the group's eventual signing to Parlophone.

As the Sixties came to an end, it was appropriately The Beatles who sat at number one on the albums chart (with Abbey Road). It concluded a decade in which the fortunes of UK music and therefore the UK music industry had improved in ways nobody could have even imagined at the start of 1960. Britain now had a music business that was truly world class, but matching the standards set by this extraordinary period was not going to be easy.

**For music fans, offshore pirate radio finally meant they could hear the music they liked when they wanted....**



TIMELINE 1966–68

- 1966**
- Deram is launched, describing itself as "a hit label for groovy people". Its first release is Cat Stevens' I Love My Dog
  - The Beatles' Revolver displays group's growing fascination with studio technology
  - The Mothers Of Invention's Freak Out and Bob Dylan's Bond On Blonde are pop's first double albums
  - Track Records makes its debut with

- Jimi Hendrix Experience's Hey Joe
- The formation of Cream with Eric Clapton, Jack Bruce and Ginger Baker marks beginning of the super-group era
- The Beatles play last-ever concert in front of a paying audience in San Francisco

- 1967**
- Radio 1 launches
  - Under the Marine Offences Act, all

- pirate stations go off air
- Sgt. Peppers Lonely Hearts Club Band is the first album to feature its own lyrics
- The music business heads off to the first Midem
- New names including Pink Floyd, Jimi Hendrix, Soft Machine and Fairport Convention make their mark in London clubs such as UFO and Happening 41
- Joe Meek commits suicide. Brian

- Epstein and Woody Guthrie die
- Sandie Shaw wins Eurovision Song Contest with Puffin On A String
- EMI has 30% of all singles sales, Decca 30%, followed by Pye, Polygram, Philips and CBS
- Deram release David Bowie's debut album

- 1968**
- The Move's Something Else is the

- first 551/3 rpm 3EP to be issued
- Hyde Park's first free concert features Pink Floyd, Tyrannosaurus Rex, Jethro Tull and Roy Harper
- The Rolling Stones film their Rock'n'Roll Circus in London
- The Beatles release Hey Jude via their own Apple label, at seven minutes and 10 seconds it becomes the longest-playing number one in the chart's history

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# PAINT IT BLACK

In a career that has garnered him an Oscar and included writing numerous hit singles and more than 100 songs for film, Don Black is better positioned than most to paint a picture of music publishing's past half-century

WORDS: Robert Ashton

"We all knew one another in the old days. You'd see Shirley Bassey walking down the street"

**D**on Black was born in London in 1938 and made his first mark in entertainment as a stand-up comedian.

He broke into the music industry in the late Fifties working variously as a song plugger, manager and composer. Sometimes he combined all three hats. It was while he managed Matt Monro that he wrote the lyrics to the 1964 smash hit Walk Away for the singer.

Black's first film work was the James Bond vehicle Thunderball in 1965, which began a 40-year partnership with John Barry. With Barry he also wrote the title song for the 1966 film *Born Free*, which won an Oscar for best song that year, and he has now written more than 100 songs for movies including *The Italian Job*, *Tomorrow Never Dies* and *True Grit*.

He has also worked extensively as a theatre lyricist. With two number-one US hits under his belt – Michael Jackson's *Ben* and Lulu's *To Sir With Love* – Black has collaborated with many of the great artists of the last five decades, from Barbra Streisand to Kanye West, and he recently worked with Robbie Williams on tracks for his new album.

#### Has publishing changed?

Oh yes, it's another world, obviously things change. I was raised with the Frank Sinatra generation. But I think it is good, it is inevitable, the whole structure has changed. The thing is to adjust.

#### What are the big changes?

When I started in the Sixties everything was in Denmark Street. Tin Pan Alley was right at the eye of the storm. It was where everything was happening in a magical way. It was a street where every door was a publishing company with writers coming in and out all the while. And the coffee shop was full of all the Robbie Williamses of the day. Dickie Valentine and Alma Cogan were pretty much in there on a daily basis.

#### So that was the place to pitch new songs?

Yeah. It was the right kind of meeting place, something we just don't have these days. It would not surprise me to discover nowadays that Phil Collins had never met Mark Knopfler or Gary Barlow. But everyone knew one another in the old days. You would see Shirley Bassey walking down the street all the time.

#### How did you get started in the business?

I started life at *AMÉ* and then became a song plugger in Denmark Street, plugging songs like *Que Sera Sera* by Norman Wisdom.



LEFT  
Don Black:  
from stand-up  
comedian to  
Oscar-winning  
songwriter

"No-one wants just a song these days, everyone wants to be involved in the creation of something..."

#### And to become a lyric writer?

Well there weren't many lyric writers in these days. If someone wanted a song then everyone used to go to Norman Newell and if he wasn't available it was very difficult. I realised at an early age that lyric writers were in demand; everyone seemed to be writing music but they hadn't got the words.

#### What was the breakthrough?

All these continental hits came along and they wanted translations. My breakthrough came via Matt Monro when he heard *Walk Away* (previously the Austrian 1964

Eurovision Song Contest entry *Warum Nur Warum*). I changed the lyrics and it was a big hit for me. It changed my life.

#### Are songs pitched differently?

No-one just wants a song these days, everyone wants to be involved in the creation of something. In the old days if I had a few songs for Shirley Bassey, you'd call around to the A&R guy and play half a dozen songs to him and he'd pick one or not. It was as simple as that. But those were the days when publishers had pianos in their offices.

[Songwriter and record producer] Wally Ridley at EMI didn't want to hear a demo, he would just put the sheet music up and play it on his piano. That is not going to happen now.

#### So what is the role of music publishers today?

These days a lot of them are matchmakers – they put people with people. I hear from my publishers all the time and they are on the phone saying, "Don, what about this?" But it doesn't seem publishers have a relationship with artists like in the old days. Nowadays if you have a good song for Lily Allen, Duffy or whoever the publisher will get it to the

right person, but it doesn't mean they know them. The relationships just don't exist: there was a togetherness and warmth that, I think, is missed.

#### Didn't The Beatles also shake things up a bit?

Yes, they wrote their own songs. So record companies told artists they must write so it became *de rigueur*. Nowadays everyone writes their own songs so there aren't that many people who are simply composers. There are record producers who might also be composers or artists who are composers. It is more difficult for the traditional songwriter.

#### What about the actual process of songwriting?

The idea of just sitting down and writing a song with a person who is not a producer or a performer is, nowadays, frankly a waste of time. There are a lot of songwriters with great songs in the drawer, but they haven't got an artist on board so it is very frustrating. Nowadays everyone is in the same room. If I'm writing with Steve Mac or someone like that it is much more of a collaborative effort. He'll throw a line at me to kick it off and then I'll have one.

#### What about lyrics and the quality of songwriting?

A lot of writers today think songs have to be autobiographical, but it doesn't have to be. And I don't think people raised on Cole Porter will expect to see the same level of craftsmanship in today's Top 20. If you look at the greats – someone like Jermone Kerr – they all had perfect rhyme. It was like a work of art. That perfect rhyme doesn't exist nowadays. But lyrics are still important today and there is craft there, although maybe not the wit. Also, don't forget, there was a lot of rubbish around in the Sixties.

#### Do songs still have the shelf life they seemed to enjoy in the Sixties and Seventies?

Songs were passed around in the old days and a lot of people would perform one song. When I won an Oscar for *Born Free* something like 600 people had re-recorded it within a year or two. Whereas when Tim Rice won an Oscar for *Can You Feel The Love Tonight* (from Elton John's *Lion King*), I would be surprised if half a dozen people recorded it, if that. People just don't record songs. And that's why you can't create a standard. When you hear that great Lily Allen song or great Duffy song, that is usually the end of it. It is one record, by that artist, it is not a copyright that Tony Bennett is going to pick up and that's how you create a proper copyright.

#### But, a song might be sampled nowadays giving it some new life

That's right. Eminem sampled a song of mine on his track *Beautiful* (Reaching Out performed by Queen) from the new album *Relapse*. It opens and closes the album. And there are synes. I'm lucky because a lot of my songs are from movies so if *Diamonds Are Forever* is on TV then it keeps the song alive. But it is very hard to create a copyright and keep it alive and there is something intrinsic and fundamental in the psyche of a songwriter that is not catered for through sampling or synes. If you told Elton John that Michael Bublé has recorded *Daniel* he would be so happy. When songwriters get a cover that is what they live for.



RIGHT  
A young Don  
rubbing shoulders  
with Dean  
Martin at the  
Oscars in 1966

## TIMELINE 1969–70

### 1969

- The first rock bootleg, Bob Dylan's *Great White Wonder*, sells 250,000 copies within weeks
- On January 30, a rooftop on Saville Row is the site of The Beatles' last ever performance
- Blind Faith play their only UK show in Hyde Park
- *Record Retriever* launches its new glossy magazine format on August 9 and

moves to Carnaby Street

- EMI and Pye are rumoured to be launching their own "underground" label
- John Lennon and Yoko Ono begin their "Bed-ins"
- The Rolling Stones play Hyde Park, Bob Dylan plays Isle of Wight
- Led Zeppelin releases debut album, recorded in 30 hours
- Keith Altham forms Jigsaw PR

### 1970

- Simon & Garfunkel's *Bridge Over Troubled Water* becomes the first single and album to be simultaneously number one on UK and US charts
- CBS marketing director Maurice Oberstein becomes deputy managing director
- Pre-recorded cassettes with Dolby noise reduction are first introduced
- Peter Green announces his departure

from Fleetwood Mac

- Jimi Hendrix makes last UK appearance at third Isle of Wight festival
- Deaths of Jimi Hendrix and Janis Joplin (pictured below)



- Derek & The Dominoes (above) make UK debut at the Lyceum
- Debut Elton John album released containing the hit *Your Song*

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# FILTH AND FURY



**ABOVE**  
Anarchy in the UK: The Sex Pistols summed up the new punk movement for the British public as they and a host of like-minded bands emerged in 1976

The Seventies saw a seismic shift in the face of music with punk, prog rock, teeny bop, reggae, glam and disco all vying for public attention against a backdrop of rapidly changing social and musical landscapes

WORDS: Chas de Whalley

**W**hen Tony Blackburn uttered the immortal words, "It's number one! It's Top Of The Pops!" on October 15 1970, Freda Payne's *Band Of Gold*, on the former Tamla Motown production team Holland, Dozier and Holland's own Invictus label, was the UK's top-selling single. It had supplanted Smokey Robinson's *Tears Of A Clown* to show that the decade may have changed but, in the record stores of the nation, American pop soul was still the sound to beat.

Indeed of that year's 14 chart-topping 45s (which included *Bridge Over Troubled Water* and *Voodoo Child*) only six were by UK-signed artists, among them Edison Lighthouse, Dana and the England World Cup Squad.

But the appearance earlier in the show of Deep Purple, miming to *Black Night*, heralded a new slot spotlighting Top 10 album acts. It marked BBC TV's belated recognition of the burgeoning appeal of progressive rock acts such as Pink Floyd, Traffic, Led Zeppelin, Jethro Tull, Black

Sabbath and King Crimson who no longer relied on Radio 1 playlisted singles to stimulate substantial sales.

This was an "alternative" pop market in which British record companies excelled. Innovative indies run by entrepreneurs such as Chris Blackwell (Island), Chris Wright and Terry Ellis (Chrysalis) and Tony Stratton-Smith (Charisma) had made the running in 1969 – and the majors responded to it by establishing new imprints like Harvest (EMI), Vertigo (Philips), Dawn (Pye) and Neon (RCA).

American giant CBS resisted the temptation to makeover its image. Entering the new era with the slogan *Sound Of The Seventies*, it relied on the credibility of its Columbia and Epic labels to deliver benchmark US acts like Bob Dylan, Simon & Garfunkel, Sly & The Family Stone, Janis Joplin and Santana.

EMI began the decade under the leadership of Sir Joseph Lockwood as the UK's market leader with more than 42% of

charts singles and 24.1% of albums. It ended it the same way (although with depleted scores) thanks to a wealth of successful signings underpinned by Tamla Motown's stable of stars and The Beatles' catalogue – not to forget John Lennon's *Imagine* (a number one album in 1971) and Wings' *Mull Of Kintyre* (the decade's most successful single selling more than 2m copies in 1977). But the fact that EMI was purchased in 1979 for £169m by defence giant Thorn was a signal that all was not well in Manchest Square.

Over the next 10 years Decca and Pye, those other traditional bastions of the British music business, also saw their market shares seriously eroded to the point of near extinction by the growth of US companies CBS, RCA, United Artists, A&M and that spread of tastemaking transatlantic labels which finally united as WEA in 1976 under managing director John Fruin.

In 1970, though, Fruin was in charge at a buoyant Polydor – operated entirely

**RIGHT**  
Industry watch: *Music Week's* long-running *Dooley's Diary* as it appeared in the mid-Seventies



## TIMELINE 1971-73

### 1971

- *Record Retailer* rebrands as *Record & Tape Retailer*
- Jim Morrison dies in Paris
- BBC2 screens *The Old Grey Whistle Test*, hosted by journalist Richard Williams
- Deaths of Gene Vincent and Duane Allman
- Rolling Stones Records is launched with Brown Sugar and Sticky Fingers
- Record industry braces itself for a sec-

and consecutive Christmas without a Beatles album while John Lennon's *Imagine* makes *Record & Tape Retailer's* top five

### 1972

- Gary Glitter, Roy Wood's Wizzard, Slade and T Rex lead the glam-rock onslaught
- *Record & Tape Retailer* is relaunched as *Music Week*
- Royal Albert Hall management

announces that they will no longer allow rock concerts because of an increasing "hooligan element"

- Stone The Crows' Les Harvey dies onstage during Swansea gig
- Jonathan King launches his UK label, which has its first hit with 10CC's *Donna*
- Pink Floyd premier *Dark Side Of The Moon* with four shows at London's Rainbow Theatre
- Paul McCartney's Wings surprise stu-

dents at Nottingham University by turning up to play unannounced

- The first prosecution by a music publisher against the sale of a bootleg album is taken against Richard Branson and his Virgin Record shop, for selling *H Bomb* by Deep Purple
- 2,700 singles are issued during 1972

### 1973

- Richard Branson launches Virgin

Records label with Mike Oldfield's *Tubular Bells*

- Edward Heath's three-day week provokes *Music Week* headline: *Music Industry's Darkest Hour*
- EMI takes over Elektra distribution from WEA
- *Music Week* launches its *Tape Guide*, which includes "all releases on music cassettes, eight-track cartridge plus quadraphonic and Dolbyised tapes"



separately in the UK from its PolyGram owned-sister Philips (renamed Phonogram in 1972). A recognised expert on sales and distribution strategies, Fruin was a regular in the pages of *Music Week's* predecessor *Record Retailer* and spoke of a future when the UK marketplace would be dominated by large "record centres" where customers would browse rather than consult with staff for purchases.

In 1971 Richard Branson took Fruin at his word by opening the first Virgin store at Marble Arch complete with stereo headphones and beanbag sofas replacing listening booths. By the end of the decade Branson would have at least 50 more sites, including the Oxford Street Megastore, the biggest of its kind outside the US.

There were other chains, like Laurie Krieger's Harlequin (later to form the backbone of the Our Price empire) among the 500 outlets which Fruin considered to be "specialist" retailers, while an estimated 3,000 more carrying recorded music as sidelines included WH Smith, Woolworths and Boots. Together these three high-street giants controlled approximately 30% of chart sales. Nevertheless Virgin felt fresh and new and public awareness in the brand increased immeasurably in 1973 when Branson formed his own record label and enjoyed an immediate hit with Mike Oldfield's multi-million seller *Tubular Bells*.

Among Virgin's other early successes was *The Faust* tapes by obscure German band Faust which moved some 50,000 units but was excluded from the British Market Research Bureau-collated charts because it sold for 49 pence (the cost of a single) when regular albums were priced at around £2.10. Faust effectively introduced the term "krautrock" to a list of musical genres which had expanded rapidly from heavy and soft rock to folk rock, country rock, soul rock, jazz rock, pub rock and beyond. And then there was reggae, too, which went from being a novelty pop style much beloved by skin-heads, to an internationally respected and inspirational sound in the hands of Island Records' superstar Bob Marley.

But it was glam rock which emerged as the defining style of those early years. Marc Bolan's T-Rex was the first to take glam's mix of sexual ambiguity and sci-fi fantasy into the charts when 1971's *Ride A White Swan* initiated an unbroken run of nine top five singles (including four number ones). Thereafter *The Sweet*, *Mud*, *Gary Glitter*, *Slade* and *Suzi Quatro* were among others who donned sequins and stack heels to become instant heart-throbs.

Many of these were signed to independent producer Mickie Most's new EMI-licensed RAK label, and recorded number ones such as *Tiger Feet* and *Can The Can* penned by glam's poet laureates Nicky Chinn and Mike Chapman. And as *Roxy Music*, *Mott The Hoople*, *Alice Cooper* and *Lou Reed* revealed glam's more serious side, costumes which would have looked over the top in Las Vegas transformed Elton John from a sensitive singer-songwriter into a global superstar.

A wave of transatlantic teenybop stars such as *The Osmonds*, *David Cassidy* and the *Jackson Five* further stimulated this appetite for pure pop among Britain's school-age audience. It reached its pinnacle in 1974 when the *Bay City Rollers* chalked up the first of nine consecutive Top 10 singles in just under three years for Bell – a venerable US independent controlled by former CBS president Clive Davis and managed in the UK by Dick Leahy.

Two names who effectively book-ended the glam era also provided business blueprints for the future. The first



ABOVE Queen as kings: Freddie and co hit the heights with *Bohemian Rhapsody* in 1975

was David Bowie. In 1973, to ensure that *Aladdin Sane* – the follow-up to his massively successful *Ziggy Stardust* album – debuted at number one, record company RCA micromanaged an unprecedented touring and national press campaign which delivered advance orders of more than 100,000 units – figures unseen since the heyday of *The Beatles*. There was speculation that the company was using Bowie as a guinea-pig for a debut UK tour by Elvis Presley – still the biggest name in pop – which was rained out for 1978. By that time, of course, Elvis was dead.

But Queen were on the throne. Freddie Mercury and co already had three chart albums to their credit when *Bohemian Rhapsody* came along in October 1975. EMI was forced to release the six-minute track as a single after it

was leaked to Kenny Everett, the superstar EJ at Capital Radio, Britain's first commercial music station, which had come on air in 1973 and was already boasting listening figures approaching the 2m mark. Record stores were inundated with requests and *Bohemian Rhapsody* subsequently sold more than 1m copies, spending nine weeks at number one over the Christmas period – thanks, in great part, to a showstopping promotional film which reportedly cost more than £40,000 to make and was subsequently hailed as the first bona fide rock video.

By the end of 1975 the UK record business had nearly quadrupled in retail value to £238.9m from £63.7m in 1970. The statistics were prepared initially by the Board of Trade and then by the BPI, which was established three years earlier by former Pye general manager Geoffrey Bridge. Some 75.7m singles and very nearly 102m albums were manufactured in 1975, representing increases of between 30% and 40% over the first year of the decade.

Cassette sales soared, too, breaching the 20m mark for the first time, while labels like K-Tel, Ronco and Arcade – which all launched in 1972 and were now regularly spending in excess of £3m a year on TV-advertised compilation albums – made a valuable contribution to what appeared to be a booming business.

But below the surface the UK music industry was under pressure. Between 1970 and 1974 inflation had already pushed prices up by around 15%, paper and cardboard costs effec-



TOP SINGLES YEAR BY YEAR



- 1970 **ELVIS PRESLEY** *The Wonder Of You* RCA
- 1971 **GEORGE HARRISON** *My Sweet Lord* Apple
- 1972 **THE ROYAL SCOTS DRAGOON GUARDS** *Amazing Grace* BNA
- 1973 **DAWN** *Tie A Yellow Ribbon Round The Ole Oak Tree* Bell
- 1974 **MUD** *Tiger Feet* Rak
- 1975 **BAY CITY ROLLERS** *Bye Bye Baby* Bell
- 1976 **THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN** *Save Your Kisses For Me* Pye
- 1977 **DAVID SOUL** *Don't Give Up On Us* Private Stock
- 1978 **BONEY M** *Rivers Of Babylon/Brown Girl In The Ring* Atlantic/Hansa
- 1979 **ART GARFUNKEL** *Bright Eyes* CBS



ABOVE & LEFT Smells like teen spirit: the Bay City Rollers (above) conquered the UK teen market in 1974 while *The Osmonds* (left) led a wave of fresh-faced American acts



tively doubled in under a year and then, at the very end of 1973, on the back of Conservative Prime Minister Ted Heath's disastrous three-day week and the rising price of crude oil, the cost of vinyl, already in short supply, doubled immediately. This led EMI to suspend production of 1,500 catalogue albums, as well as halt all custom pressing work.

Petrol priced at 50p a gallon also led to the cancellation of much-anticipated tours by *The Allman Brothers*, *Steely Dan* and top US pop act *Dawn*, while few domestic acts could now hope to survive on the road without significant record company support. After a post-Woodstock festival bubble at Bath, Bickershaw and Weeley between 1970 and 1972 – and subsequent crowd problems at other open-air events which prompted Parliament to consider banning them altogether – Reading was the only regular rock weekend of any note.

Otherwise the most prestigious dates on the calendar were one-dayers at Knebworth House and Crystal Palace, where promoters Freddy Bannister and

LEFT RCA's press campaign for David Bowie's *Aladdin Sane* delivered advance orders of 100,000 in 1973, recalling the heady days of *The Beatles*

TIMELINE 1973-75

- Queen, Bruce Springsteen and Steely Dan release their debut albums
- Together WH Smith, Woolworths and Boots control 30% of the retail record market
- *Music Week's* December 1 issue of 76 pages is its biggest ever

1974

- Alex win Eurovision Song Contest in Brighton with *We Are One*

- Spinter's *The Place I Love* is the first release on George Harrison's Dark Horse label
- Nick Drake, Cass Elliot, Duke Ellington and Average White Band's Robbie McIntosh die
- Alvin Stardust makes his live debut at Midem
- Joe Strummer's group The 101ers make their live debut
- EMRE stats show that 30% of retailers

use *Music Week's* charts

- *MW* figures reveal a 37% increase in record sales on the previous year (£276m compared to £200.6m)

1975

- Led Zeppelin launch their Swan Song label with their double *Physical Graffiti*
- Four-track portable recording studios are introduced
- The Sex Pistols make live debut, with

five songs at St Martin's School of Art

- Peter Gabriel quits Genesis
- Elton John receives first platinum cassette and cartridge for sales of



Elton John's *Greatest Hits* (left)



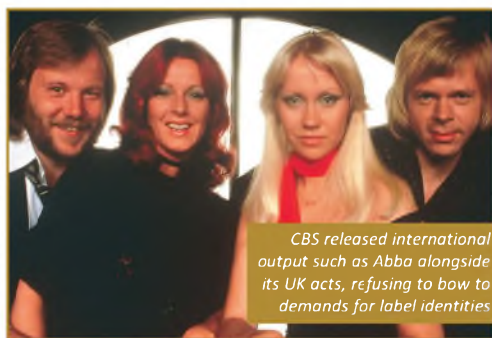
- Virgin's Marble Arch store opens, boasting £100,000 worth of stock
- Queen's *Bohemian Rhapsody* video launches the video age
- Maurice Chevalier succeeds Dick Asher as CBS UK managing director
- Average album price is £2.79

● Phonogram's sales up 84% thanks to roster including Status Quo, LOCO (left), Krewkrew and Alex Harvey

**TOP 20 SINGLES OF THE SEVENTIES**



1	<b>WINGS</b> Mull Of Kintyre/Girls' School Polyphone	1977
2	<b>BONEY M</b> Rivers Of Babylon/Brown Girl In The Ring Atlantic/Hansa	1978
3	<b>JOHN TRAVOLTA &amp; OLIVIA NEWTON JOHN</b> You're The One That I Want BBO	1978
4	<b>BONEY M</b> Mary's Boy Child - Oh My Lord Atlantic/Hansa	1978
5	<b>JOHN TRAVOLTA &amp; OLIVIA NEWTON JOHN</b> Summer Nights BBO	1978
6	<b>VILLAGE PEOPLE</b> YMCA Mercury	1978
7	<b>QUEEN</b> Bohemian Rhapsody EMI	1975
8	<b>BLONDIE</b> Heart Of Glass Chrysalis	1979
9	<b>ART GARFUNKEL</b> Bright Eyes CBS	1979
10	<b>DAVID SOUL</b> Don't Give Up On Us Private Stock	1976
11	<b>GARY GLITTER</b> I Love You Love Me Love Dol	1973
12	<b>SLADE</b> Merry Xmas Everybody Polydor	1973
13	<b>BROTHERHOOD OF MAN</b> Save Your Kisses For Me EMI	1976
14	<b>SIMON PARK ORCHESTRA</b> Eye Level Columbia	1972
15	<b>LITTLE JIMMY OSMOND</b> Long Haired Lover From Liverpool MGM	1972
16	<b>PINK FLOYD</b> Another Brick In The Wall Part 2 Harvest	1979
17	<b>JULIE COVINGTON</b> Don't Cry For Me Argentina MCA	1976
18	<b>NEW SEEKERS</b> I'd Like To Teach The World To Sing Polydor	1971
19	<b>DAWN FEAT. TONY ORLANDO</b> Tie A Yellow Ribbon Around The Old Oak Tree Bell	1973
20	<b>SHOWADDYWADDY</b> Under The Moon Of Love Bell	1976



CBS released international output such as Abba alongside its UK acts, refusing to bow to demands for label identities

Punk might easily have remained a short-lived, London-based fad had Bill Grundy not goaded Johnny Rotten to swear in front of a teatime ITV audience on December 11, 1976. With the new music subsequently arriving on the media map, other acts with attitude like The Stranglers, The Jam and XTC swiftly grew their fanbases while scores more, like Manchester's Buzzcocks and The Fall, quite literally sprang up overnight. The leading music papers *AME* and *Sounds* scorned "boring old fart" album bands like the Eagles, Fleetwood Mac and ELO while simultaneously falling over themselves to spot the best new names first – often in advance of record-label A&R scouts.

As The Sex Pistols ultimately settled with Virgin, The Clash with CBS and The Jam with Polydor, a new generation of independent labels emerged to service the new street sound by applying a DIY approach to marketing. It was led by Stiff Records, a storefront operation established in summer 1976 by former pub-rock band managers Dave Robinson and Jake Riviera. They broke new ground by combining ironic picture sleeves and snappy slogans to make every release a collectible item while revisiting the semi-legendary pop package tours of the Sixties to showcase Elvis Costello and Ian Dury & The Blockheads. Stiff was soon followed by others such as Beggars Banquet, Chiswick, Small Wonder, Cherry Red, Mute and later still Rough Trade and Factory. But with few effective independent distribution networks in existence, most had to strike deals with major labels to get their products into the shops.

Meanwhile, the majors were handing out label deals to their top A&R executives. Phonogram's Nigel Grainge established Ensign to launch Graham Parker and The Boomtown Rats while Polydor's Chris Parry formed Fiction as a vehicle for The Cure. WEA, the new freestanding amalgam of Warner, Elektra, Asylum (and Atlantic), responded with Real (which gave former Anchor Records' staffer Dave Hill a platform for The Pretenders) and Radar (a partnership between United Artists' Andrew Lauder and Stiff's Jake Riviera which furthered the careers of Elvis Costello and Nick Lowe).

And it was not long before new bands demanded their own label identities, too. The Apple model pioneered by The Beatles and EMI in 1968 – and copied by The Rolling Stones and Atlantic a year later – was replicated in 1979 when Midlands' multi-racial ska band The Specials secured their Two Tone deal with Chrysalis.

Once again CBS refused to loosen its grip on its output – preferring to let UK artists battle for attention with international stars such as Bruce Springsteen, Alba, Meat Loaf, Michael Jackson and Earth, Wind & Fire. For this chairman Maurice Oberstein was largely responsible. An eccentric native New Yorker who came to London in 1965, Obie was now one of the industry's elder statesmen and a staunch defender of record companies' interests in a range of political disputes – most notable being the long-running battle with music publishers, led by Ron White at a fiercely acquisitive and rapidly expanding EMI Music, who demanded that writer royalties be raised to 8% of wholesale price from the 6.5% originally set in 1928.

But no matter how tough its negotiating stance, no label could escape the astronomical advances now demanded by the hottest new acts. Nor could they avoid the extra expense involved in the increasingly sophisticated sleeves, coloured vinyl and picture discs – dismissed as gimmicks by older execs – by which a company's commitment to its releases was measured by managers and media alike. They fuelled the headlong rush for chart positions at any cost which led inexorably to the slow but steady devaluation of product during the Eighties and Nineties.

Furthermore, with the exception of those acts like The Police and Dire Straits who developed meaningful international careers, the excursion into punk and new wave so failed to deliver an adequate return on investment that not one of the decade's list of top 20 singles fell into either category.

Consequently it was down to disco to pay the bills and keep the business buoyant in the closing years of the decade. To its detractors disco was black music boiled down to its rhythmic bones and stripped of the raw emotion that had typified soul. Whatever the music critics said it rang a bell with the public. And once The Bee Gees harnessed that dance rhythm to the superbly crafted songs on the 1978 Saturday Night Fever OST, disco became the true lingua franca of pop and would remain so in one form or another for the best part of 10 years.

But as the decade drew to a close the UK's music industry could not afford to be complacent. The introduction of the Sony Walkman in 1979 led to increased BPI fears about the losses, already estimated at £75m annually, from home taping. Between 1977 and 1978 the value of sales across all formats grew by a healthy 23.2% to reach a record high of £354m according to BPI statistics. But only a year later that growth figure had shrunk to little more than 12%. Meanwhile, the Bank Of England minimum lending rate rose from 7% to an eye-watering 17% over the same 24-month period.

As Margaret Thatcher settled into 10 Downing Street, and the costs of singles and albums rose to 99p and £4.00 respectively, the future looked decidedly uncertain.

**RIGHT**  
A new wave: The Damned's New Rose was considered the 'first punk record' while indie label Stiff Records' DIY approach was evident on singles by Elvis Costello, Ian Dury & The Blockheads and The Pink Fairies



Harvey Goldsmith respectively offered headliners including Pink Floyd, The Rolling Stones, Led Zeppelin, Yes and Rod Stewart and The Faces to audiences in excess of 50,000. Town halls and corn exchanges vied with the college circuit as the venues of choice for top touring bands with the HammerSmith Odeon taking pride of place in London for those artists not big enough to contemplate playing the Empire Pool Wembley, Earls Court or Olympia.

But it was in the capital's pubs that the decade's most iconic movement – punk – was born. Fanzine favourites The Sex Pistols, The Clash, The Damned and Siouxsie & The Banshees took the back-to-beat-group basics exhibited by pub-rock superstars Dr Feelgood, added a twist of anarchy and an outrage of their own and captured the imagination of a cosmopolitan crowd craving something dangerous and divisive.

**FAR RIGHT**  
Disco inferno: dance fever exploded in the UK courtesy of The Bee Gees in 1978



**TIMELINE 1976–78**

- 1976**
- The Who use a 78,000-watt FA system for their Charlton Athletic FC appearance
  - Nick Lowe's So It Goes/Hear, Of The City is Stiff label's first single
  - Leading LP record companies are EMI, CBS, WEA, Phonogram and Decca
  - Sex Pistols appear on Bill Grundy's Today TV show and EMI releases the band's debut single Anarchy in the UK
  - Best-selling LP of the year is Abba's

- Greatest Hits**
- 3-ton John is first pop star since The Beatles to be commemorated in wax at Madame Tussaud's
- 1977**
- The most highly anticipated album of the year, Nowheremind The Bollocks, Here's The Sex Pistols arrives on Virgin after the Pistols' debut via EMI and A&M



- To commemorate the Queen's Silver Jubilee the Pistols release their third single God Save The Queen
- Music Week reports that the £7,500 tickets for Abba's February Albert Hall shows are a "new high for pop"
- Deaths of Elvis Presley (left) and Marc Bolan
- Phonogram signs Dire Straits, The Rolling Stones



- The Who sign to EMI, The Jam sign to Polydor and The Clash to CBS
  - Stiff signs distribution deal with Island
- 1978**
- After only 25 months together, The Sex Pistols play their final gig at San Francisco's Winterland
  - Bob Dylan returns to the UK for his first gig in the country for 12 years
  - Release of double album Saturday

- Night Fever establishes John Travolta as a major star, its 18-week run as number one album is followed by a 13-week stint for the Grease soundtrack
- Kate Bush's Wuthering Heights reaches number one; other number one hits during 1978 include Boney M's Rivers Of Babylon and the Boomtown Rats' Rat Trap
- Deaths of Chicago's Terry Kath, Sandy Denny and Keith Moon



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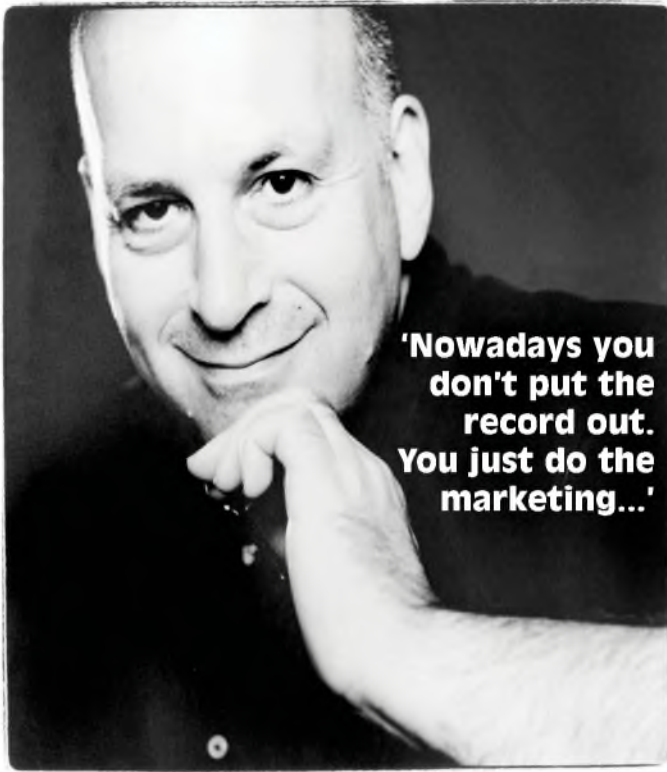


# MUTE WITNESS



Considering its start in life was something of an accident, Mute Records has never been far from the forefront of innovative British music in 30 years. Founder Daniel Miller recalls why music was and still is a great place to be

WORDS: Gordon Masson



**D**aniel Miller founded Mute Records by accident in the late 1970s. From a fledgling label for his own music, Miller's interest in the burgeoning electronic music scene saw Mute become involved in the careers of some of the biggest names in the genre and the growth of Mute as a leading independent music company.

Thirty-plus years on, Miller remains at the helm of Mute, overseeing a label whose acts have included Yazoo, Erasure, Moby, Sonic Youth, Goldfrapp, Nick Cave, Richard Hawley and, of course, Depeche Mode, to name only a few.

In 2002, Miller sold Mute to EMI Records but, despite losing its independent status, Mute remains one of the most respected labels for alternative acts and, with his vast knowledge and love of music, Daniel Miller is one of the most respected figures in the global music industry.

#### How did you first get into the record business?

I put out a single called Warm Leatherette under the name of The Normal. It was the right moment – early '78, after punk. I did it for fun. I'd had no industry experience at all before that. The people at Rough Trade liked it and helped me to distribute it. I had to press 500 because that was the minimum run and I thought I'd probably end up with 450 of them, but it did better than I ever could have imagined.

When I put the single out it had my address on it and to my shock I started to get demos from people who thought that I was a label. I was introduced to Frank Tovey from

Fad Gadget and that was the first act I thought I'd like to work with.

#### Did you have any funding to help you?

No. I sent out five promo copies – one to John Peel, others to *NME*, *Sounds*, *Record Mirror* and *Melody Maker* – and it sold quite well. So I had some cash flow to get Fad Gadget into the studio for a day and did his single and carried on from there. Once I'd started a label by mistake, I could see there were lots of opportunities to find other artists.

#### What would you say your first real breakthrough was?

Warm Leatherette became a bit of a cult record. Fad Gadget had a similar effect and the first album we put out was Deutch-Amerikanische Freundschaft – another landmark artist. At that time I first saw Depeche Mode and from a commercial point of view that was the real breakthrough. They were supporting Fad Gadget at The Bridge House pub in Canning Town.

#### What do you remember about that night?

I couldn't believe what I'd seen. When I saw them again a week later I told them I'd love to put a single out with them and they said, "OK." The deal was if it worked we'd carry on and if it didn't we could go our separate ways.

#### Were most of your deals then done on a handshake?

Not as such, but I really believed in the profit share deal and that the artist should be involved in the process of the

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record coming out, not just recording it and then being told what to do.

**Were you switched on to what the larger industry was doing back then?**

Another project early on was Silicon Teens. That got quite a lot of airplay and lots of record company interest, so I met with some of the people I still know today – Chris Briggs, Roger Ames and various other up-and-coming A&R men. I knew what was going on, but I had no desire to be in it at all.

**When you sold Mute to EMI, one of your main reasons was the security it could provide Mute and its employees. Does that mean you had some bad times as well?**

God, yes. One of the biggest disasters we endured was Britpop. It was the antithesis of what Mute was all about. We were about moving forward and experimenting and Britpop to me was the opposite. We weren't able to sign much. It was pretty depressing and financially we were going through a rough time as well.

**Was that the catalyst for the EMI deal?**

We were not in a good position to negotiate, but we were very fortunate in that Moby's *Play* album took off in the middle of that crisis and went on to sell 10m records worldwide. A lot of people thought Mute was finished before that. But on the back of Moby everyone wanted to be my friend again, so it was the time to speak to potential partners.

**How have you found working in a more corporate environment?**

The music industry has changed beyond all recognition and within that EMI has changed beyond all recognition, but you constantly have to evolve whether you're an indie or a major. [EMI Continental Europe chief] Emmanuel de



Buretlet leaving the company was bad for Mute because he was one of the reasons I did the deal in the first place. And, of course, EMI was then sold to Terra Firma, so we have to explain to a lot of new people what Mute is all about, why it exists, why it's in EMI and why it's a bit of an anachronism.

**How have things changed in terms of finding new talent?**

There's more to choose from and there's more to do, which makes it more difficult. In the end you have to trust your instincts. Sometimes you're right and sometimes you're wrong, but if you start second-guessing yourself then I don't think you can go on.

**How else has the record industry changed?**

Well, nowadays you don't put the record out; you just do the marketing. With Depeche Mode we were talking about their album and the content we wanted to create even before they went into the studio – videos, film, studio recordings and other stuff – and then you have to start involving international people on that. But I enjoy that long drawn-out process as much as I used to enjoy the quick turnaround of just recording and putting out a single.

**What in your opinion are the biggest challenges facing the business?**

Ten years ago a band's audience of 100,000 people was defined by record sales. Now those 100,000 people are defined by how much music is downloaded and the gigs the audience go to, but record sales are maybe a third of what they were. But to reach that audience you still have to invest and do the same work you would have done if you were still selling 100,000 records. That problem has to be addressed.

**What are the highlights of Daniel Miller's career?**

One of the biggest is that I'm still doing it because I have no right to be doing it whatsoever. Also, watching Depeche



Mode play at the Rosebowl in 1988 in front of 80,000 people when a year before Americans were telling us we would never play outside the clubs because the band was too electronic and had no guitars. So to see them play that size of gig in LA was a pretty big thrill. When you stick to your guns and don't change or compromise and something good comes out of that, it's a very satisfying feeling.

**Do you still see yourself doing this in 20 years?**

I can't see myself retiring. I love working with artists and helping them to develop their work. The biggest thrill in the end is watching an audience respond positively to it. That's what we do at Mute: we try to help the artist achieve what they want to do musically. There are lots of very young bands coming through who come from such a completely different place than bands even 10 years ago. Fourteen-year-old kids now have the entire history of pop music available at their fingertips. So it's not about genre or history or anything, it's about what they think is good, putting that through their process and the result can be something else that's completely different. Music is in a great place right now.

**ABOVE**

*Just can't get enough: Miller and Mute extended their stay in the record business courtesy of Depeche Mode's breakthrough*

**LEFT**

*Second coming: Mute revitalised with the release of Moby's Play at a time when Britpop threatened its very existence*

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# SINGLED OUT

The single has enjoyed almost as many ups and downs as its weekly chart – Alan Jones condenses 50 years of it



## ABOVE

Single domination: John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John enjoyed Seventies success, while Wet Wet Wet, Elton John and Will Young all had long spells at the top

## RIGHT

Canada high: In 1991, Bryan Adams' (Everything I Do) I Do It For You was number one for a record 16 consecutive weeks

**M**usic Week's 50th anniversary coincides with the 60th anniversary of the launch of the seven-inch single. To mark the latter event, The Official Charts Company is preparing a chart of the biggest-selling singles from 1959 to the present day. In order to avoid upstaging that list, we have divided the biggest sellers into decades and – as *Music Week* existed for only the last 16 months of the 1950s – our lists start with the 1960s (see individual decades pages for relevant charts).

Not unexpectedly, it is a chart dominated by The Beatles, who occupy four of the top five slots, ceding third place to fellow Scouser Ken Dodd's cover of 1930 ballad Tears. The Beatles' all-time biggest seller, She Loves You, was their fourth Parlophone single, and the biggest hit of the 1960s, racking up sales of 1,890,000, 140,000 more than follow-up I Want To Hold Your Hand, which takes second place on the list. Although the 1960s was actually a decade of enormous musical variety, all but two of the Top 20 places are taken up by Beatles, MOR acts and Anglo-Australians, the latter category including The Seekers, Rolf Harris and Frank Ifield. It was a decade when America got left behind, as evidenced by the fact that only two US acts feature in the Top 20 – Elvis Presley and The Archies.

## Sales rose explosively in 1978 when 88.8m singles were sold – a massive 43% increase on the previous year

She Loves You was the UK's biggest selling single for 14 years, finally being knocked off its perch by Paul McCartney's first post-Beatles number one, Mull Of Kintyre – credited to Paul McCartney & Wings – topped the chart for nine weeks and became the first single to sell 2m copies in the UK, making a mockery of McCartney's own reservations about the song which led him to hedge his bets and make Girls' School a double A-side.

The 1970s was a decade of enormous change for the music industry, with glam, disco and punk all emerging as dominant genres for a period, while sales rose explosively, particularly in 1978 when 88.8m singles were sold – a massive 43% increase on the previous year. Mull Of Kintyre was released at the tail-end of 1977 but all of the next five biggest hits of the 1970s were issued in 1978 – Boney M's Rivers Of Babylon/Brown Girl In The Ring (1,985,000 sales) and Oh My Lord/Mary's Boy Child (1,790,000); John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John's incendiary duets from the soundtrack of *Grease*, You're The One That I Want (1,975,000) and Summer Nights (1,515,000); and The Village People's disco anthem YMCA (1,380,000).

There was a second golden age for British music in the 1980s, with UK artists regularly claiming more places in the US singles chart than their American counterparts, enjoying a particularly purple patch in 1985, when a sequence of seven out of eight number-one hits on Billboard's Hot 100 were by UK acts, their supremacy being interrupted only by Canadian Bryan Adams, whose father was British, and who later came to live here himself. That supremacy was also evident on the charts here and in the list of the decade's Top 10 songs, where the American presence is restricted to

## TOP 10 SINGLES ARTISTS 1959–2009



The biggest-selling singles act of all-time in the UK is Cliff Richard, who has sold 21,326,000 singles since his 1958 debut. Elvis Presley follows close behind with sales of 20,918,000 and The Beatles sit in third place (20,821,000) – but both Presley and Richard enjoyed considerable sales prior to September 1959, and the biggest-selling singles act of the last 50 years is The Beatles, whose sales all fell within the period.

Richard has sold 20,163,000 singles since 1959, while Presley's tally of 15,824,000, puts him fourth in the table of top acts in the last 50 years behind Madonna, who has sold 16,935,000 singles. The rest of the Top 10 is as follows: 5 Elton John – 14,099,000; 6 Michael Jackson – 13,868,000; 7 Queen – 11,495,000; 8 Abba – 10,812,000; 9 Paul McCartney – 10,094,000; 10 David Bowie – 10,012,000.

The Beatles' formidable total has hardly changed in the last five years, increasing during that period by just 21,000, as physical stocks of their singles run out, while they remain unavailable as downloads. In the same period, Cliff Richard has sold 576,000 singles, and Elvis Presley has sold a whopping 1,600,286, partly due to a successful reissue campaign which saw many of his most popular titles reissued on CD and 10-inch, and partly from sales of downloads of his extensive catalogue.

Stevie Wonder's I Just Called To Say I Love You and German-based Jennifer Rush's power ballad The Power Of Love. The honour of having the UK's biggest selling single finally passed out of Paul McCartney's hands to Band Aid's Do They Know It's Christmas, which raced to unprecedented first-week sales of more than 750,000 in 1984, and eventually sold 3,550,000 copies. It was the first of a slew of charity singles to top the chart, most of which have very noble aims but little artistic merit.

Earlier the same year, Frankie Goes To Hollywood made a sensational start to their career. Produced by Trevor Horn, they were only the second act in chart history to top the chart with each of their first three singles, emulating fellow Liverpoolians Gerry & The Pacemakers. Topping the 5m sales mark from just seven singles releases before disbanding, their success was built on debut single Relax, which spent five weeks at number one, a full 52 weeks on the chart, and sold 1.91m copies, with demand extended and chart status sustained by the release of a whole slew of alternate mixes, both on vinyl and cassette. Follow-up Two Tribes also made a huge impression, spending nine weeks at number one, though it sold fewer (1.51m) copies.

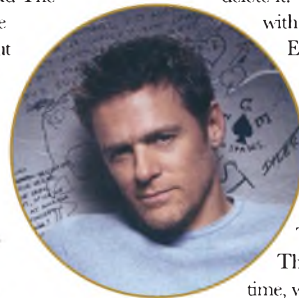
By the end of the decade, marketing was out of control, with record companies involved in an escalating arms race to see who could provide most variations of the same single. It brought success but at a price – Alice Cooper's Poison and Halo James' Could Have Told You So both reached the Top 10 but were each available in 10 variants, making their purchase hugely expensive for completists and confusing for everyone else. The BPI, aided and abetted by chart compiler Gallup, put in place regulations to limit both the number and type of formats, allowing order to be restored.

But the continuing quest for ever higher debuts and market share at whatever cost continued into the Nineties, with

the top end of the chart becoming a fast-moving carousel, though sales were in decline. It became commonplace for singles to peak at their debut position, and turnover was huge, with the Top 10 welcoming seven debuts for the first of several occasions in April 1997. A few weeks later, fully half of the singles in the Top 40 were new entries.

In amid all this frenzied activity, genuine hits did materialise, however, and some records bucked the trend to become enormous hits with lengthy chart careers. Among the biggest were Wet Wet Wet's Love Is All Around, and Bryan Adams' (Everything I Do) I Do It For You. The latter, from the film *Robin Hood: Prince Of Thieves*, was originally going to be Maud Mariani's theme and thus sung by a woman. Kate Bush, Annie Lennox, Lisa Stansfield and Julia Fordham were all approached but nothing worked out. Eventually the tune was given to Bryan Adams. The Canadian, who had been absent from the chart for nearly four years when Everything I Do was released, topped the chart for a record 16 consecutive weeks.

The only Scottish band to register three number-one singles, Wet Wet Wet enjoyed their biggest success with their third and final chart topper, Love Is All Around, a cover of a Troggs hit from 1967. The song was featured in the film *Four Weddings And A Funeral* and spent 15 consecutive weeks at the top of the chart, only falling short of Adams' record after the band itself became embarrassed by the song's dominance and persuaded their record company to delete it. Wet Wet Wet had the edge on sales, however, with Love Is All Around selling 1,784,000, while



Everything I Do sold 1,527,000. Neither emerged as the decade's biggest seller, however – that honour fell to Elton John's Candle In The Wind 1997/Something About The Way You Look Tonight. After the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, on August 31 1997, Elton John re-recorded Candle In The Wind with new Bernie Taupin lyrics.

The result was the biggest selling single of all time, with 4,885,000 sales to date, including an unprecedented 655,000 copies on the day of its release.

The 21st century has been an extraordinary time for the single, with sales ebbing to an all-time low of 36.4m in 2003 but recovering to reach an all-time high of 115.1m last year, as new technology came to the rescue – a combination of MP3 players, broadband and lower price points transformed the marketplace, making downloads the dominant format. With 2009 sales running 36.5% ahead of 2008 in the first 36 weeks of the year, singles sales are likely to exceed 150m this year, albeit with some prices as low as 29p.

All of the 10 biggest sellers of the current decade have sold upwards of 1m copies, but most are either charity discs or songs by contestants from reality TV shows with the power to unleash huge and sudden demand. By far the biggest hit of the Noughties, with sales to date of 1,791,000 copies, is Anything Is Possible/Evergreen, the introductory smash by 2002 Pop Idol winner Will Young. His runner-up, Gareth Gates, also features in the Top 10 alongside X Factor winners Alexandra Burke and Shayne Ward, PopStars champions Hear'Say, and charity records from Tony Christie and Band Aid 20. New 2009 acts like Lady GaGa and La Roux have arrived via the more traditional A&R route and are enjoying success, both with singles and albums, though the future is still in flux and there is no way of knowing in which direction the sales rollercoaster will go next.

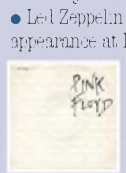
## TIMELINE 1979–80

### 1979

- UB2's fourth London gig at Islington's Hope & Anchor attracts an audience of nine
- The Spinalts form 2-Tone label
- Philips demonstrates compact disc
- Ian Dury's Hit Me With Your Rhythm Stick gives Cliff its first number one
- Cliff Richard enjoys his first number one in 14 years with We Don't Talk Anymore

- Elton John becomes first western rock star to perform in Moscow

- Noel Edmonds hosts revived Juice Box Jury on BBC
- Led Zeppelin make their final UK appearance at Knebworth



- The final number one of the Seventies is Pink Floyd's Another Brick In The Wall, their first hit single in 12 years

### 1980

- The Jam's *Gang Underground* is the first single to go straight to number one since Slade's 1973 Merry Xmas Everybody
- A 45-minute video cassette of a Gary Numan concert becomes the first commercially available video
- In a £169m takeover, EMI becomes part of Thorn EMI

- David Geffen announces the first John Lennon album in five years

- Cliff Richard is awarded MBE
- Home Taping Is Killing Music campaign launched
- WEA managing director John Fruin resigns and gives up chairmanship of EMI
- The Police have the top three albums of the year and the biggest single with Don't Stand So Close To Me

- Deaths of John Lennon, John Bonham, Bon Scott, Larry Williams and Ian Curtis (pictured)





**50<sup>TH</sup>**

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TOP ALBUMS YEAR BY YEAR 1959-2009



- 1959 **SOUTH PACIFIC** Original Soundtrack RCA Victor
- 1960 **SOUTH PACIFIC** Original Soundtrack RCA Victor
- 1961 **ELVIS PRESLEY** G.I. Blues RCA Victor
- 1962 **ELVIS PRESLEY** Blue Hawaii RCA Victor
- 1963 **THE BEATLES** Please Please Me Parlophone
- 1964 **WEST SIDE STORY** Original Soundtrack RCA Victor
- 1965 **THE BEATLES** Beatles For Sale Parlophone
- 1966 **THE SOUND OF MUSIC** Original Soundtrack RCA Victor
- 1967 **THE SOUND OF MUSIC** Original Soundtrack RCA Victor
- 1968 **THE SOUND OF MUSIC** Original Soundtrack RCA Victor
- 1969 **THE SEEKERS** The Best Of The Seekers EMI Columbia
- 1970 **SIMON & GARFUNKEL** Bridge Over Troubled Water CBS
- 1971 **SIMON & GARFUNKEL** Bridge Over Troubled Water CBS
- 1972 **VARIOUS** 20 Dynamic Hits K-Tel
- 1973 **DAVID BOWIE** Aladdin Sane RCA Victor
- 1974 **THE CARPENTERS** The Singles 1969-1973 A&M
- 1975 **THE STYLISTICS** The Best Of Avco
- 1976 **ABBA** Greatest Hits Epic
- 1977 **ABBA** Arrival Polydor
- 1978 **SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER** Original Soundtrack BSO
- 1979 **BLONDIE** Parallel Lines Chrysalis
- 1980 **THE POLICE** Zenyatta Mondatta A&M
- 1981 **ADAM & THE ANTS** Kings Of The Wild Frontier CBS
- 1982 **BARBRA STREISAND** Love Songs CBS
- 1983 **MICHAEL JACKSON** Thriller Epic
- 1984 **LIONEL RICHIE** Can't Slow Down Motown
- 1985 **DIRE STRAITS** Brothers In Arms Vantage
- 1986 **MADONNA** True Blue Sire
- 1987 **MICHAEL JACKSON** Bad Epic
- 1988 **KYLIE MINOGUE** Kylie PWL
- 1989 **JASON DONOVAN** Ten Good Reasons PWL
- 1990 **PHIL COLLINS** ...But Seriously Virgin
- 1991 **SIMPLY RED** Stars East West
- 1992 **SIMPLY RED** Stars East West
- 1993 **MEAT LOAF** Bat Out Of Hell II MCA/Virgin
- 1994 **BON JOVI** Cross Road - Greatest Hits Mercury
- 1995 **ROBSON & JEROME** Robson & Jerome RCA
- 1996 **ALANIS MORISSETTE** Jagged Little Pill Maverick
- 1997 **OASIS** Be Here Now Creation
- 1998 **THE CORRS** Talk On Corners Atlantic
- 1999 **SHANIA TWAIN** Come On Over Mercury
- 2000 **THE BEATLES** 1 Apple
- 2001 **DIDO** No Angel Chesky
- 2002 **ROBBIE WILLIAMS** Escapology EMI
- 2003 **DIDO** Life For Rent Chesky
- 2004 **SCISSOR SISTERS** Scissor Sisters Polydor
- 2005 **JAMES BLUNT** Back To Bedlam Atlantic
- 2006 **SNOW PATROL** Eyes Open Fiction/Polydor
- 2007 **AMY WINEHOUSE** Back To Black Island
- 2008 **DUFFY** Rockferry A&M
- 2009 **KINGS OF LEON** Only By The Night RCA



TIMELINE 1981-83

- 1981
  - January 17 sees first issue of *Music & Video Week*, reflecting growth of home video market
  - BPI chairman Chris Wright predicts cassette-orientated future for industry
  - Island's One + One tape series appeals BPI
  - Sony Walkmans become widely available
  - Phil Collins releases debut solo album

- Face Value, Paul McCartney disbands Wings and Joy Division recombines as New Order
- Celebrations for the 50th anniversary of EMI's Abbey Road Studios
- Chrysalis sign Spandau Ballet (above)
- Bucks Fizz win Eurovision Song Contest with Making Your Mind Up



- 1982
  - Home taping is blamed for a 21% fall in UK album sales during the year
  - WEA managing director Charles Levison threaten to withdraw his company's advertising from "any newspaper which supports or encourages home taping"
  - Charnele 4 is launched and broadcasts The Tube

- Central London branch of the Musicians' Union calls for a ban on synthesizers and drum machines
- Michael Jackson's *Thriller* is released on December 1, gaining favourable reviews
- Paul Weller announces that The Jam are to split
- 1983
  - Gallup begins as new compiler of *Music Week* charts

- EMI signs David Bowie
- Sony, Philips and Phonogram introduce compact disc
- Top Of The Pops celebrates 1,000th programme
- Rolling Stones sign \$25m deal with CBS
- Maurice Oberstein replaces Chris Wright as BPI chairman
- Michael Jackson's *Thriller* has sold 2.5m copies in the UK alone

# THE GREATS



What follows is a list of the elite of the elite, artists whose combined probably more than will be sold in all of 2009. But just who tops such

WORDS: Alan Jones

In the 50 years since *Music Week* commenced publication, upwards of 250,000 albums have been released, of which fewer than 9,000 have made the Top 40, with just 862 reaching number one.

Trying to establish which of these albums are the best or most significant musically is a fool's errand, and not one we are about to undertake but it is possible to determine, with some degree of accuracy, which ones have sold the most copies.

Using their own data since 1994, and multiple other sources prior to that date, including Joseph Murrells' *Book Of Golden Discs*, BPI certifications, record company sources, press clippings and my own algorithmic computations based on chart performance, The Official Charts Company has compiled exclusively for *Music Week* a list of the 50 biggest selling albums of the last 50 years. Only the elite of the elite made the list, for which combined sales exceed 153m - about 10 times the total sales for 1959, the first year of *Music Week's* publication, and probably a little more than will be sold by all albums in the whole of 2009. These albums account for a little over one in every 40 sales over the entire 50-year period - 2.5% of approximately 6bn sales.

So, without further ado, let's open the envelope and reveal the winner. Actually, let's open two envelopes and reveal two winners. First of all, the number-one regular album release and the moral victor is Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band by The Beatles.

Widely considered to be the most influential rock album ever released, Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Heart's Club Band was The Beatles' eighth album, and was recorded over a 129-day period from December 1966 to April 1967, with sessions occupying 700 hours of studio time. Including the

most elaborate and eclectic songs The Beatles had recorded to that point it was instantly embraced by both the media and the public, and spent its first 23 weeks in the chart at number one. It returned to the summit on three further occasions and eventually spent 27 weeks at the top - the sixth longest run at number one by any album. Although The Beatles themselves never released a single from it, every track is well-known to most of the public and four of them have subsequently provided hits for other artists. With

A Little Help From My Friends reached number 10 for Young Idea and 32 for Joe Brown in 1967, and has subsequently been a number-one hit for Joe Cocker (1968), Wet Wet Wet (1988) and Sam & Mark (2004). Lucy In The Sky With Diamonds reached number 10 for Elton John (1974). She's Leaving Home was number one for Billy Bragg and Cara Tivey (1988, as the other side of the Wet Wet Wet single). And When I'm 64 reached number 43 for Kenny Ball & His Jazzmen (1967).

Even the least covered song on the album George Harrison's Within You, Without You - has attracted recordings from Danny Colfax Mallon, Hampton String Quartet, Center Line, Steve Khan, Joe Sasche & Ernst Bier, Peter Knight and at least 30 others. Sgt. Pepper has a fairly modest chart career compared to many albums - it ranks 18th in the longevity league, with 203 weeks on the chart but has been a consistent performer for more than 40 years, accumulating sales of more than 4,910,000 up to the cut-off point a couple of weeks ago.

As vast as that tally is, there is one album which has sold more copies - Queen's Greatest Hits. It is an album which was first released in 1981, cherry-picking their most successful singles, from their introductory 1974 smash Seven Seas Of Rhye to 1980's Flash. Released on October 26





# ST HITS



album sales exceed 153m –  
h an exclusive chart? We find out...

1931, it debuted at number two behind Shakin' Stevens' Shaky album, and started a four-week run at number one the following week. It sold enough copies in the final few weeks of 1981 to finish second to Adam & The Ants' Kings Of The Wild Frontier in the annual rankings, and has continued to sell at an impressive rate ever since.

In 1996, it was issued in a slipcase with Greatest Hits II and in 2000 with Greatest Hits II and Greatest Hits III. As these packages contain the original albums, the decision was made, right or wrong, to share out the sales pro rata. As Greatest Hits I, II and III together have sold 1,680,000, individual tallies for all three have been allocated an extra 560,000 sales.

By the same token, Greatest Hits I and II's combined sales of 132,000 have been split, with an extra 66,000 being added to each. Taking all this into consideration, Greatest Hits has sold a massive 5,780,000 copies. Greatest Hits II, eighth on the list, has sold 3,340,000 copies.

Abba's Gold: Greatest Hits is another perennial whose evergreen status reached a new high last year, when it returned to the top of the album chart, some 16 years after it was first released, in the wake of the success of the Mamma Mia movie. It continues to close the gap on the top two, and has sold 4,648,000 copies.

Taking fourth place is the recently disbanded Oasis. As the biggest selling act of the 1990s, each of Oasis's first three releases make it onto the all-time Top 100 list, but their biggest album, by some distance, with sales surpassing 4,435,000, is (What's The Story) Morning Glory.

**These albums account for a little over one in every 40 sales over the entire 50-year period – 2.5% of approximately 6bn sales...**

The band's second album sold a whopping 345,000 in its first week in the shops, and contains their first two number-one hits: Some Might Say and Don't Look Back In Anger, as well as a brace of number twos: Roll With It, which famously lost out to Blur's Country House in the 1995 Britpop battle of the bands ballyhoo, and Wonderwall, which, despite being pipped to the top spot by Robson & Jerome, sold just shy of a million copies and remains the band's biggest selling single to date.

Completing the top five, in tragic circumstances, Michael Jackson's Thriller has sold 4,096,000 copies. It was placed seventh in the list until it, along with the rest of Jackson's catalogue, received a massive but unwelcome boost when the singer died in June. The 1982 release was previously overtaken as Jackson's biggest seller by Bad – the 1987 follow-up which has sold 3,771,000 copies – but has reasserted itself in recent years and was itself Jackson's favourite among his albums.

Jackson is one of five acts with two albums on the list, the others being The Beatles, Abba, Fleetwood Mac and Queen, but all trail Coldplay who occupy 30th place with A Rush Of Blood To The Head (2,715,000), 39th place with X&Y (2,572,000) and 43rd place with Parachutes (2,461,000).

All of Coldplay's albums are from the current decade, helping the 2000s (or Noughties, as some call it) to snare 15 places in the Top 50, the same as the 1990s. Ten of the albums date from the 1980s, eight from the 1970s and just two from the 1960s – Sgt. Pepper and the oldest album on the list, the soundtrack to The Sound Of Music (1965). It is one of three soundtrack albums to make the chart. Of the 47 other albums, 29 are by British acts, and 11 are by American acts. And although it's a compilation that takes the top slot on the list, all but eight of those 47 artist albums are regular releases.

It is also noticeable that, although many major acts hit the ground running and had major careers from the getgo, only a handful of debut albums have sold the 2,276,000 copies required for inclusion on the list. The highest-selling debut album of all time is James Blunt's Back To Bedlam, which occupies 14th place overall with sales of 3,181,000 since its 2005 release, eclipsing the 3,050,000 sales of Dido's 2000 debut, No Angel. Another debut album to do particularly well, especially as it is the only album in the Top 50 not to yield a hit single (aside from The Sound Of Music) is Mike Oldfield's Tubular Bells. The introductory release on the Virgin label in 1973, it is still its biggest seller, with sales to date of 2,630,000, enough

for 35th place on the list. Virgin was, of course, an independent label at that time but is now part of EMI, which provides 14 of the Top 50, as does Sony. Eleven albums issued by Universal, 10 by Warner Music and one Independiente release complete the total.

The most recent album to make the grade is Leona Lewis's Spirit, which ranks 27th with 2,819,000 sales. Lewis is also one of two mixed race acts on the list (the other is Bob Marley), which is dominated by white pop/rock artists, while black artists are represented only by Michael Jackson and Tracy Chapman.

This, then, is the Top 50 albums of the last 50 years, a period in which albums have gone from being a useful way of supplementing income from the dominant singles market to the record industry's cash cow. The main method of delivery has changed over the years, with vinyl yielding to cassette before CD took the mantle. It is a position it still holds, though its future dominance must be in doubt. And who would be bold enough to say that 50 years from now the album market will survive at all?

## TOP-SELLING ALBUMS 1959–2009



1	QUEEN	Greatest Hits	Parlophone	1981
2	THE BEATLES	Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band	Parlophone	1967
3	ABBA	Gold – Greatest Hits	Polydor	1992
4	OASIS	What's The Story Morning Glory	Creation	1995
5	MICHAEL JACKSON	Thriller	Epic	1982
6	DIRE STRAITS	Brothers In Arms	Vertigo	1985
7	PINK FLOYD	The Dark Side Of The Moon	Harvest	1973
8	QUEEN	Greatest Hits II	Parlophone	1991
9	MICHAEL JACKSON	Bad	Epic	1987
10	MADONNA	The Immaculate Collection	Sire	1990
11	SIMPLY RED	Stars	East West	1991
12	SHANIA TWAIN	Come On Over	Mercury	1998
13	FLEETWOOD MAC	Rumours	Warner Brothers	1977
14	JAMES BLUNT	Back To Bedlam	Atlantic	2005
15	THE VERVE	Urban Hymns	Hut	1997
16	DIDO	No Angel	Cheeky	2000
17	SIMON & GARFUNKEL	Bridge Over Troubled Water	CBS	1970
18	AMY WINEHOUSE	Back To Black	Island	2006
19	MEAT LOAF	Bat Out Of Hell	Epic	1978
20	THE CORRS	Talk On Corners	Atlantic	1997
21	SPICE GIRLS	Spice	Virgin	1996
22	ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK	Dirty Dancing	RCA	1987
23	DAVID GRAY	White Ladder	EMI/Scott West	2000
24	BOB MARLEY & THE WAILERS	Legend	Island/Tuff Gong	1984
25	DIDO	Life For Rent	Cheeky	2003
26	THE BEATLES	1	Apple	2000
27	LEONA LEWIS	Spirit	Syco	2007
28	U2	The Joshua Tree	Island	1987
29	PHIL COLLINS	...But Seriously	Virgin	1989
30	COLDPLAY	A Rush Of Blood To The Head	Parlophone	2002
31	KEANE	Hopes And Fears	Island	2004
32	SCISSOR SISTERS	Scissor Sisters	Polydor	2004
33	TRAVIS	The Man Who	Independiente	1999
34	TAKE THAT	Beautiful World	Polydor	2006
35	MIKE OLDFIELD	Tubular Bells	Virgin	1973
36	JEFF WAYNE'S MUSICAL VERSION	War Of The Worlds	CBS	1978
37	ABBA	Greatest Hits	Epic	1976
38	ALANIS MORISSETTE	Jagged Little Pill	Maverick	1995
39	COLDPLAY	X&Y	Parlophone	2005
40	ROBBIE WILLIAMS	I've Been Expecting You	Chrysalis	1998
41	ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK	Grease	RSO	1978
42	ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK	The Sound Of Music	RCA Victor	1965
43	COLDPLAY	Parachutes	Parlophone	2000
44	NORAH JONES	Come Away With Me	Parlophone	2002
45	TRACY CHAPMAN	Tracy Chapman	Elektra	1988
46	GEORGE MICHAEL	Ladies & Gentlemen – The Best Of	Epic	1998
47	FLEETWOOD MAC	Tango In The Night	Warner Brothers	1987
48	ROBSON & JEROME	Robson & Jerome	RCA	1995
49	REM	Automatic For The People	Warner Brothers	1992
50	SNOW PATROL	Eyes Open	Pictura/Fcylcor	2006



## TIMELINE 1983–85

- The Marquee Club celebrates its 25th anniversary
- IFPI introduces plans for royalty on blank audio cassettes
- Rough Trade releases The Smiths' debut single Hand In Glove (right)



- 1984**
- Music Week celebrates its 25th year of publication. A year's subscription costs £42

- Frankie Goes To Hollywood's Relax is year's most controversial number one
- Island and Stiff announce merger
- Formation of ZTT Records
- Thriller announced as best-selling album ever
- Capital Radio launches Network Chart
- U2 break through with

- Pride (In The Name Of Love)
- There is a 42% increase in record sales on the previous year
- CDs only account for 3% of total record sales
- Band Aid's Do They Know It's Christmas becomes the fastest-selling single ever

- 1985**
- Chris Wright buys out Terry Ellis

- at Chrysalis
- BMI announces plans for the first CD manufacturing plant
- Madonna (right) enjoys seven Top 10 hits during 1985
- Anstrad markets controversial twin-cassette desks, BPI demands their withdrawal
- Dire Straits' Brothers In Arms released



- Michael Jackson beats Paul McCartney to buy ATV Music for a reputed \$34m
- HMV, Virgin and Tower all announce plans for "London's biggest" record store
- On July 13 Live Aid takes place at Wembley Stadium and Philadelphia's JFK Stadium

# A SHARPER V

In a decade when arguably the greatest event in the history of rock was charged with alleviating famine, it was perhaps ironic that technology and rampant commercialism began to assert their authority over the industry

WORDS: Paul Williams



**A**s Sting sang the line "I want my MTV" on Live Aid's Wembley stage with Dire Straits he momentarily brought together the decade's biggest concert, a revolution unfolding in music television and a new audio format that was beginning to transform the industry's fortunes.

The lyric in question famously opened the band's song Money For Nothing, echoing a campaign that had been rolled out by the fledgling music channel across the US in a bid to persuade cable TV providers in each state to start screening MTV.

Launched in August 1981, appropriately with the promo of Buggles' Video Killed The Radio Star, the station as it debuted across America and then elsewhere (it arrived in Europe in 1987) proved to be one of the most spectacular developments of the decade for the industry as it changed forever the way the public could access their favourite artists and for the record companies how they could promote them. The effect on the musical landscape was far-reaching, too, especially in the US for British artists whose

## TIMELINE 1986-88

### 1986

- Bob Geldof receives honorary knighthood
- Wham! play final concert together at Wembley Stadium.
- Debut album by Sigur Sigur Sputnik becomes first to have commercials on it
- Stiff Records folds
- Roger Waters begins legal proceedings to dissolve Pink Floyd. Nick Mason and Rick Wright keep name
- WH Smith buys Our Price chain for

estimated £46m

- The Smiths sign to EMI for rumoured £1m.
- Madness split after 25 Top 40 hits
- Channel 4 launches Chart Show
- Rob Dickins becomes BPI chairman

### 1987

- U2's The Joshua Tree sells 500,000 copies in first seven days, the fastest-selling album in UK history

- Jools Holland is dropped from The Tube after swearing on air
- EMI releases first four Beatles albums on CD
- A BPI hit squad snatches 4,500 boot-leg cassettes in raid at London's Camden Lock
- The Smiths split
- Brian Yates quits as Arista MD
- PolyGram enthusiastic about cassette single

- WIA splits into US and UK divisions
- For the first time ever recorded music sales top £500m in the UK

### 1988

- The Who perform at the BFI Awards
- Holly Johnson wins High Court case against ZTT and signs solo to MCA
- Sales of CD players in UK pass 1m mark, discs are estimated at 19m
- Pet Shop Boys make live debut at

- anti-Section 28 concert
- CDs now account for 4.3% of UK singles sales
- Multi-artist compilation albums are banned by the BPI from the charts
- Stock Aitken Waterman continue to dominate charts with success of Kylie Minogue
- Acid house enjoys first chart success with S-Xpress and Yaz



# VISION



New romantics: the Human League led the charge for a second British Invasion of the US, alongside the likes of Duran Duran

the virtue of these shiny, state-of-the-art discs to the public. With its polished adult guitar rock showing off the clarity of sound the CD offered, compared to those crackly, scratchy records, as well as the ability to easily jump from one track to another at the touch of the bottom, the album became the first to achieve more than 1m sales on the new format.

From this point on for the next two decades the industry would ride on the coat tails of the CD, not only pushing brand new releases on it, but back catalogue, too – ingeniously persuading millions of music fans to replace their LPs with the same album on compact disc. In these halcyon days for the CD no thought appeared to be given to how making perfect digital copies of recordings available to the public would eventually come back to bite the industry in such spectacular fashion.

With its origins dating back to the late Seventies, the compact disc was jointly created by Sony and Philips – then owner of major record company PolyGram – and its commercial arrival in 1982 could not have come sooner for a business whose sales had been alarmingly dipping at the start of the decade.

Although the CD would become the leading albums format in the UK in terms of value by 1990 and in units sold two years later, it was the humble cassette that initially commanded the albums sector, helping the market top £500m sales for the first time in 1987. Cassettes overtook vinyl sales in 1986 and by its peak year of 1989 were selling 83m units in the UK across the year, helped no doubt by the rise of the Sony Walkman and in-car stereos, although both phenomena also contributed to the rise of homemade cassettes.

The industry's response was "Home Taping Is Killing Music", a campaign, which three decades before 'The Pirate Bay', menacingly came with a skull and crossbones logo. Alan Sugar and Amstrad, meanwhile, upped the ante with the introduction of twin cassette decks, which the BPI unsuccessfully demanded should be withdrawn. The trade body also found itself increasingly busy across the decade with cassette and then CD bootlegging.

The vinyl single, too, would be superseded by the cas-



videos flooded the airwaves of the new channel to give birth to the so-called second British Invasion

The Billboard charts were suddenly awash with new British talent. The likes of the Human League, Culture Club, Soft Cell and Duran Duran dominated the charts just as their British equivalents such as The Beatles and the Dave Clark Five had done in the mid-Sixties, reaching a peak in April 1984 when #0 of the Billboard Hot 100 positions were filled by UK acts

But for the music business, while the new exposure for its acts was doubtless welcome, the fact MTV was allowed to grow into a multi-million-dollar business on the back of its talents increasingly left a bitter taste in executives' mouths.

MTV's birth demonstrated this was an industry undertaking rapid change, a point most clearly emphasised by the introduction of compact disc. The Dire Straits song that namechecked MTV came from the band's 1985 album *Brothers In Arms*, which, more than any other release, sold

TOP SINGLES YEAR BY YEAR				
1980	THE POLICE	Don't Stand So Close To Me	A&M	1963
1981	SOFT CELL	Tainted Love	Sony Buzare	1963
1982	DEXY'S MIDNIGHT RUNNERS	Come On Eileen	Mercury	1963
1983	CULTURE CLUB	Karma Chameleon	Virgin	1963
1984	BAND AID	Do They Know It's Christmas?	Mercury	1963
1985	JENNIFER RUSH	The Power Of Love	CBS	1963
1986	THE COMMUNARDS	Don't Leave Me This Way	London	1963
1987	RICK ASTLEY	Never Gonna Give You Up	RCA	1963
1988	CLIFF RICHARD	Mistletoe and Wine	EMI	1963
1989	BLACK BOX	Ride On Time	Decca/Tracklax	1963

ette and the CD, but in this decade it was the seven-inch and 12-inch that ruled, often coming in different shapes, colours and configurations and sometimes with free gifts to try to enhance chart positions. Record companies realised that the more different versions they offered for sale of the same release, the more the fans would buy – and they did. It kept busy Gallup which took over the compilation of the UK sales charts from the British Market Research Bureau at the end of 1982, delivering the electronic recording of sales data at the till for the first time. This made the charts more accurate than ever and in theory harder to hype. That came too late for John Fruin who as WEA managing director had been forced to quit as BPI chairman two years earlier after his record company was exposed for chart hyping in an investigation by Granada TV's *World In Action*.

The more sophisticated way the chart was now put together led in 1987 to the brand new singles chart being broadcast for the first time on Radio 1's flag-ship Sunday afternoon Top 40 show, the same year the BBC station celebrated its 20th anniversary by beginning a nationwide roll-out of full-time FM broadcasting for the first time. With a DJ line-up including Simon Bates, Steve Wright and the only original survivor, John Peel, these remained glory days for the network under controller Johnny Beerling.

But commercial radio was growing rapidly with more than 30 new stations opening in the first half of the decade alone, giving Radio 1 a contemporary pop rival in parts of the country for the first time.

And in the early few weeks of 1984 at least you could hear the number one single on commercial radio: Radio 1 had deemed ZTT act Frankie Goes To Hollywood's *Relax* unsuitable for broadcast because of its sexual lyrics, a decision naturally ensuring the record's rise to the top of the chart. A rougher version of the song had earlier been performed on *The Tube*, a new live Friday night music show which debuted on Channel 4 just days after the new national TV station had launched in November 1982.

Coupled with being able to promote a banned record, Franke's record company ZTT/Island also utilised a multi-format approach to releases with the group's singles appearing in countless different configurations. This reached a peak with *Relax*'s follow-up *Two Tribes* which, aided by different 12-inch mixes and a video featuring US president Ronald Reagan wrestling his Soviet opposite number Konstantin Chernenko, spent nine weeks at number one in 1984. The *Frankie Says...* T-shirts pointed the way forward for artist merchandising opportunities.

The Frankie hits helped to make 1984 one of the most successful years ever for the single with 77m units sold in the year and a record six singles selling more than 1m

LEFT Piracy, Eighties-style: the industry sent out the now-iconic 'Home Taping Is Killing Music' message

## TIMELINE 1989-91

- 1989**
- Samantha Fox and Mick Fleetwood host "memorable" BFI Awards
  - PolyGram takes over Island Records
  - Average price of LPs is \$6.99, CDs is \$10.99
  - Arista celebrates first number one with Lisa Stansfield
  - Jive Bunny & The Master Mixers are unexpected "new artists" of the year
  - Surviving Beatles miss and make up

with EMI, Capitol, Apple and each other. Which leads to space of "Beatles to reform" stories

- Duran Duran inaugurate 12,500-seat London Arena in Docklands.

- 1990**
- Recession returns with a vengeance
  - Indie stores go bust at rate of one a day
  - Our Price celebrates the opening of

- its 500th store
- *Music Week* launches dance chart
  - Office of Fair Trading investigation into the price of CDs is expected to clear industry
  - CBS Records is renamed Sony Music Entertainment and CBS label is rebranded Columbia
  - The House of Lords rejects the music industry's case for a national commercial rock station and dismisses its pro-

- ducts as "thump, thump, thump" music
- Publishers crack down on "wanton" sampling
  - Brian McLaughlin replaces Andy Gray as BARD chairman

- 1991**
- Disillusioned indie retailers turn to parallel imports in a bid to fight off the recession
  - In a move that is seen as a signifi-

cant victory against illegal parallel imports a united industry effort results in a High Court injunction to stop a mail-order company selling CDs for \$7.99

- BPI figures show record industry shipments down for the first time in 10 years

- Thorn EMI buys remaining 50% of Chrysalis for \$16.9m

TOP 20 SINGLES OF THE EIGHTIES



1	<b>BAND AID</b> Do They Know It's Christmas? Mercury	1984
2	<b>FRANKIE GOES TO HOLLYWOOD</b> Relax ZTT	1983
3	<b>STEVIE WONDER</b> I Just Called To Say I Love You Motown	1984
4	<b>FRANKIE GOES TO HOLLYWOOD</b> Two Tribes ZTT	1984
5	<b>HUMAN LEAGUE</b> Don't You Want Me Virgin	1981
6	<b>WHAM!</b> Last Christmas/Everything She Wants Epic	1984
7	<b>CULTURE CLUB</b> Karma Chameleon Virgin	1983
8	<b>GEORGE MICHAEL</b> Careless Whisper Epic	1984
9	<b>JENNIFER RUSH</b> The Power Of Love CBS	1986
10	<b>DEXY'S MIDNIGHT RUNNERS</b> Come On Eileen Mercury	1982
11	<b>SOFT CELL</b> Tainted Love Bizarre	1981
12	<b>NEW ORDER</b> Blue Monday Factory	1983
13	<b>SURVIVOR</b> Eye Of The Tiger Scotti Bros	1982
14	<b>ADAM &amp; THE ANTS</b> Stand & Deliver CBS	1981
15	<b>KYLIE MINOGUE &amp; JASON DONOVAN</b> Especially For You PWL	1988
16	<b>TIGHT FIT</b> The Lion Sleeps Tonight Jive	1982
17	<b>IRENE CARA</b> Fame BDU	1982
18	<b>RAY PARKER JR.</b> Ghostbusters Arista	1984
19	<b>BILLY JOEL</b> Uptown Girl CBS	1983
20	<b>BLACK BOX</b> Ride On Time Deconstruction	1989

Unforgettable: U2's success put Island's star further in the ascendancy



copies. Alongside the aforementioned Frankie hits, there were million sellers for Stevie Wonder, George Michael (both solo and with Wham!) and, most famously of all, Band Aid, whose multi-artist release Do They Know It's Christmas? put together by Bob Geldof and Midge Ure became the UK's biggest-selling single to date and gave birth to the historic Live Aid the following summer.

It was by no means pop music's first big concert for charity – George Harrison's Concert For Bangladesh dated back to 1971 – but it was the most successful in terms of money raised (around £40m) and had the greatest impact as the two main concerts at Wembley and Philadelphia were seen by an audience across the world. It also spawned other large-scale, multi-artist gigs, including one demanding the release of Nelson Mandela at Wembley three years later, but none could rival Live Aid, which to some represented the greatest day in the history of rock.

The worst day, in many people's eyes, had happened four and a half years earlier when John Lennon – just weeks after returning from a five-year "hibernation" with a new single and album – was gunned down outside his

TIMELINE 1991–92

**1991 continued**

- The record industry is united in its dismissal of a newspaper "expose" alleging chart fixing
- Simply Red's Stars is the top-selling album of the year while Bryan Adams's (Everything I Do) I Do It For You dominated the year's singles chart
- Following the tragic demise of Freddie Mercury, Queen's Bohemian Rhapsody stays at

- number one in the singles chart for three weeks
- Island Records defeats court order demanding the destruction of 25,000 copies of the NWA album Efil4Zaggin
- BPI wins Copyright Tribunal battle with the MCPS. The mechanical rate is set at 8.5%
- Level 42 (left) leave Polydor after 11 years in a row over forthcoming album



Thriller the video captured the imagination while Thriller the album established Michael Jackson as one of the biggest stars of the decade

home in New York. In the aftermath his catalogue sold in a way only previously seen after the death of Elvis Presley.

For the former Beatle's one-time record company EMI, life was far from as comfortable at the start of the decade as it had been in the Sixties. Having become part of Thorn-EMI in a £169m takeover in 1980, EMI had at least survived, unlike its big Sixties contemporary Pye, but the landscape was now dominated by the Dutch-owned PolyGram and the American giants CBS and Warner with BMG and MCA completing the six majors.

Just as it had heavily figured in the first British musical invasion of the US in 1964, EMI was a front-row player at the next instalment two decades later, not least with the photogenic Duran Duran who perhaps musically best symbolised these get-rich days of Margaret Thatcher's Britain.

CBS's own big UK guns during the decade included Adam & The Ants, Shakin' Stevens, Wham! and Paul Young, while its international roster including Billy Joel and Bruce Springsteen was the envy of everyone. Then, of course, there was Michael Jackson whose album Thriller smashed sales records, changed how labels used singles to sell albums and broke a black "barrier" for non-white acts on MTV with videos such as Billie Jean and Beat It.

CBS's big US rival Warner under Rob Dickins saw two of its own superstars in Madonna and Prince crack the UK, while enjoying domestic success with artists including Simply Red. PolyGram's Eighties highlights included ABC, Dire Straits, The Jam and Tears For Fears as BMG replied with the likes of Enygnmes and Whitney Houston.

But also at the fore were a group of record companies which could either be termed major indies or mini-majors and which enjoyed the kind of mainstream successes that had previously only been the domain of the majors.

Chrysalis, Island and Virgin had all grown into successful forces during the Seventies, but that spilled over into mainstream triumph like never before over the following decade. A golden period for Richard Branson's Virgin arguably began in the Christmas of 1981 as Human League's Don't You Want Me topped the chart, while its successes continued with the likes of Culture Club, Phil Collins and by decade's end Soul II Soul.

**1992**

- Philips announces that the industry's fifth sound carrier, the Digital Compact Cassette, will launch in the UK on September 1
- Sony attempts to rally software support for the delayed launch of Mini-Disc
- EMI Records aims to become the biggest record company in the world after buying Virgin Music Group from Richard Branson for \$580m

- Mercury Music Prize is established by BPI and BARD with sponsorship by Mercury Communications
- Polydor managing director Jimmy Devlin has hired Peergal Sharkey (below) as an A&R manager



Market leaders: Frankie Goes To Hollywood courted exploited controversy, video, merch and multi-formats to top the charts

Virgin's retail business was also hitting new highs as it expanded its chain of Megastores. Rival HMV, then behind Virgin in store numbers, replied with the 1986 launch in London's Oxford Street of the world's largest record store, while both faced the threat of more competition with the arrivals of US music retailing giants Tower and Sam Goody into the UK market.

Virgin in conjunction with EMI also changed the compilations business for good as it decided to play the TV marketing specialists such as Ronco and K-Tel at their own game by releasing its own hits albums. In hindsight it seemed an obvious move to make, but it was a bold step in 1983 when EMI and Virgin made use of their own repertoire and licensed in tracks from elsewhere to release Now That's What I Call Music!

Chris Wright and Terry Ellis's Chrysalis Records had already enjoyed plenty of mainstream success in the Seventies and that spilled over into the Eighties, beginning with not only their most successful act Blondie but also including Billy Idol, Ultravox and Spandau Ballet. By 1985 Ellis had sold his share of the company to Wright.

Island Records under Chris Blackwell had been rocked by the death of its biggest star Bob Marley in 1981 but a compilation of his work with The Wailers, Legend, released three years later spent 12 weeks at number one. That same year Island added to the Frankie success the breakthrough of U2 with the album The Unforgettable Fire.

Chrysalis, Island and Virgin led the charge of a glorious period for independents with others deserving mention including Tony Wilson's Factory Records, a Madness-charged Stiff Records and a Smiths-boosted Rough Trade, although the indie cause was hit in 1986 when both Stiff and independent distributor Making Waves went under.

Against the cutting edge of Rough Trade and others, the most commercial of independents outdid them all in the second half of the decade as PWL under Pete Waterman started a run of more than 100 UK Top 40 hits. With writing partners Matt Stock and Mike Aitken, Waterman achieved success both with PWL-signed acts such as Kylie Minogue and Jason Donovan as well as with acts signed to other record companies, including RCA's Rick Astley.

For the majors, the incredible success of these independents only further intensified the competition but the signs of how they would respond going forward came in 1989 when Island was snapped up by PolyGram for £272m in the first big takeover deal undertaken by the major under Alain Levy. It was an early taster of how the Dutch giant planned to expand instantly through acquisition as the second tier of players started to get snapped up one by one. The year before Motown had fallen to MCA and Boston Ventures for \$61m.

The majors themselves were not immune to takeover with CBS's record operation bought out by Sony Music Entertainment for US\$2bn in November 1987. As the following decade would reveal, it would not be the last time one of the big players would change hands.



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# THE GOLDEN TOUCH

"I got lucky," says the man who has been responsible for some of the live sector's landmark events of the past 40 years. Harvey Goldsmith remembers live at its peak and why you simply cannot beat the experience of it

WORDS: Christopher Barrett

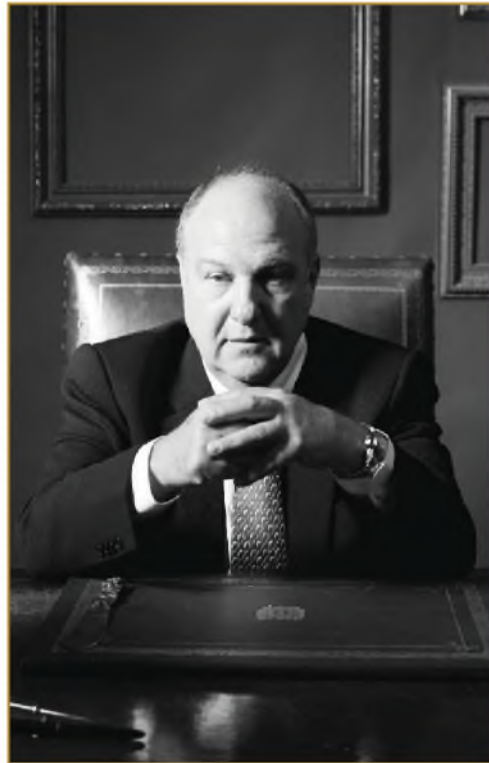
**T**here can be few promoters better placed to offer a broad perspective of the live business than Harvey Goldsmith. Since the north Londoner's career first took off with his Club 66 night in Brighton back in 1966, Goldsmith has enjoyed a remarkable career involving numerous landmark events including taking Elton John to Russia and working on the seminal Live Aid show.

Here Harvey Goldsmith CBE reflects on how the live music business has changed during his long tenure at the peak of the live sector and offers his views on what the future holds for the business.

**What made you want to get into the music industry?**

It was the last thing on my mind really. I went to Brighton University to study a brand new pharmacy course that Sussex had developed, but it was cancelled due to lack of money. I was already down there and got involved in the Students Union. I thought Brighton was going to be a hip, fun place but there was nothing happening. I was given the

**"The mid-Sixties through to the mid-Seventies was the single most creative period of our time and the acts that are still alive are still working and they are the top acts...."**



opportunity to open a club for the union and it became so successful I thought, "This seems like a good idea" and it went from there.

It was 1966 and just when the whole music scene was evolving and changing and I just caught the coattails of it. When I left college I got involved in the poster scene at Kensington Market – we were backing the underground magazine *Oz* and it was busted and we went to the famous obscenity trail. They wanted to raise money and asked me to put on a big show for them so I did Christmas On Earth with The Animals and Jimi Hendrix and I worked on a thing called the 14 Hour Technicolor Dream with Yoko Ono. I was very lucky. I started out during a period when everybody was starting and I met everybody. I was going up to town and hanging out at The Speakeasy and there I met, befriended and then worked for, Manfred Mann, Jimi Hendrix, Eric Clapton, Steve Winwood and people like that. I travelled across America and became very good friends with The Grateful Dead.

It was fun. I realised you could really enjoy doing something and make some money out of it. But money wasn't paramount at that time – what was paramount was that there was such a change in creativity and ideas, going down to Middle Earth and seeing Pink Floyd playing. I thought, "Wow this is a whole new world."

**What was the business like at the time?**

When I first started there were four other promoters and they just did six o'clock/nine-thirty tours and they were all

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packages. But then The Rolling Stones, The Who and The Beatles encroached in the mid-Sixties and the business completely changed.

**When do you consider the live business to have been at its peak?**

From the mid-Sixties through to the mid-Seventies was the most creative. It saw the birth of Pink Floyd, The Stones came into their own, The Who came in to their own. It was Marc Bolan, David Bowie, Elton John, Neil Young, Bob Dylan. That period was the single most creative of our time and the acts that are still alive are still working and they are the top acts.

**How did the business differ from today?**

It was about fantastic managers that were just as important and creative as the artists. It was down to record companies that had people that understood music. There were people in the music business like Ahmet Ertegun, creative people that knew about and were interested in music and developing talent. We have shied away from that now and it's all wrong. I don't think there is anybody in the record business today that is a music person. They may as well be selling cans of baked beans.

**How has the business changed for the better?**

The facilities for the public have generally got better. But the problem is that today every facet of our business is about money and I think that is what has changed the business the most. I am not saying that I am such a philanthropist that money doesn't matter, but we are in a creative business. It is about delivering dreams and the money should follow it. We are not in a money business that is facilitated by playing music on stage and making records. Every facet of our business is dictated by money and we don't put enough combined effort into nurturing the young



acts. When the promoter, the agent, the manager, the record company, the publisher and the PR people all push in the same direction you have success.

**How have the venues changed over the years?**

There were the same crappy venues as there are today. The same badly-run, run-down venues. Other than the new arenas and the odd new smaller venue that has opened they are still the same dumps. To an extent that fits the music. People like dark and dingy, but the facilities are very poor, dressing rooms are appalling and in most small venues the access is appalling.

It's all about tarting up the front and taking the money. It's not changed that much.

**Live Aid was one of the landmark events in the music business over the past 50 years. You must be very proud to have played a part in it?**

Yes I am. It changed the face of the music business, I'm not sure for the better mind you. But it changed the way that people gave money and really linked music and TV together and emphasised the possibilities of televising events. Obviously it also raised a lot of money and helped a lot of people.

**Name some other key events in your career?**

Taking Elton John to Russia, taking Wham! to China, Bruce Springsteen doing Born In The USA at Wembley Stadium. But the biggest audience was Eric Clapton and Bob Dylan at Blackbushe in 1978.

**What does the future hold for live music?**

It's very simple, you cannot beat the live experience. Secondly, people like to be with other people to share experiences, particularly with music. Therefore the live business will continue. Strangely enough as the great existing established acts begin to stop playing, it will make space for new acts and there are lots of great new acts coming up. The problem is, what we had before was a few papers like *NME* and *Melody Maker*, limited radio, limited TV, and the national newspapers didn't want to know about music unless someone got busted, so music had to be discovered and people talked about it and it was passed around, then you would go and see it. Today music is in your face, it is everywhere, there is more demand for music today than there has ever been. Because there is the demand someone has to supply it, so the music industry isn't going anywhere. The business is changing and there is nothing wrong with that, but we have lost a lot of creativity and the discovery aspect. We also have too many people trying to earn too much out of a simple business.

**LEFT**  
Back in the USSR: in 1979, Elton John – with the help of Goldsmith – became the first Western artist to tour the Soviet Union

**BELOW**  
Changing the face of the music business: Goldsmith played a major part in the organisation of Live Aid in 1985



*You Get What You Give* **Gregg Alexander** (recorded by New Radicals) • *The Weekend* **Michael Gray**  
 • *Said It All* **Steve Robson** (recorded by Take That) • *Rockferry* **Bernard Butler** (recorded by Duffy)  
 • *Stuck In The Middle* **Gerry Rafferty** (recorded by Stealers Wheel) • **MusicWeek** *Here I Am* **Brett James**  
 (recorded by Leona Lewis) • *Rock On* **David Essex**  
 • *Delivery* **Mik Whitnall** (recorded by Babyshambles) • *I Try* **Macy Gray** • *Big City Life* **Mattafix** • *The Man Who Can't Be Moved* **Andrew Frampton** (recorded by The Script) • *Rock'n'Roll Queen* **The Subways** • *The Climb* **Jon Mabe** (recorded by Miley Cyrus) • *Baker Street* **Gerry Rafferty** • *Come On Get Higher* **Matt Nathanson** • *Summer Nights* **Brett James** (recorded by Rascal Flatts) • *Let's Make Love And Listen To Death From Above* **CSS** • *Good Life* **Inner City** • *Walk This Way* **Aerosmith** • *Sharp Dressed Man* **ZZ Top** • *Hello* **Steve Robson** (recorded by Take That) • *Shattered Dreams* **Clark Datchler** (recorded by Johnny Hates Jazz) • *Animal Nitrate* **Bernard Butler** (recorded by Suede) • *Gimme All Your Lovin'* **ZZ Top** • *T-Shirt* **Andrew Frampton** (recorded by Shontelle) • *Guilty Of The Crime* **Jerry Lynn Williams** (recorded by The Eagles) • *Dream On* **Aerosmith** • *All I Want To Do* **Bobby Pinson** (recorded by Sugarland) • *Out Last Night* **Brett James** (recorded by Kenny Chesney) • *Save Yourself* **Steve Robson** (recorded by James Morrison) • *Needle To The Groove* **Kurtis Mantronik** (recorded by Mantronix) • *O Valenciel* **Colin Meloy** (recorded by The Decemberists) • *Turn Back The Clock* **Clark Datchler** (recorded by Johnny Hates Jazz) • *Forever Man* **Jerry Lynn Williams** (recorded by Eric Clapton) • *Sing For the Moment* **Steven Tyler** (recorded by Eminem)

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# ROCK'N'ROLLERCO

From a standing start in the early part of a decade riven by internal strife, the music industry hauled itself to the summit once more with help from Britpop and CD sales – then lost the initiative all over again

WORDS: Robert Ashton

Everything seemed possible in the Nineties. The Cold War had ended, Thatcherism had been defeated and it was the start of new history, new politics and new society. The Nineties was about new.

Everything became "the new". The new rock'n'roll. Football was the new rock'n'roll, although England's performance at Italia 90 and Euro 96 put paid to that. Then Vic and Bob gave the nation a new vocabulary, Newman and Baddiel sold out Wembley and comedy became the new rock'n'roll. For a time Damien Hirst and the BritArt crew turned art into rock'n'roll.

Then along came Oasis, Blur and Britpop and rock'n'roll was the new rock'n'roll again. The music industry was in business, sales were at record levels, profits were booming.

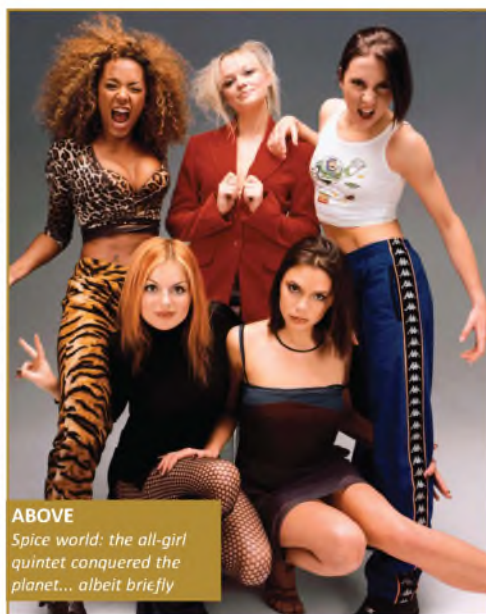
The industry was so confident it was able to invent a brand new girl group, package a cod philosophy around them, sign them to Virgin and sell squillions of records all around the world. Remember Spicemania? Rock'n'roll.

And in their way, the Spice Girls epitomised the Nineties. A big entrance, bigger mouths, but no staying power. Few acts launched in the Nineties would see out the end of the decade intact let alone possess a super-long decade or two-decade career like Seventies and Eighties artists Elton John, Queen, U2, the Pet Shop Boys or New Order. The Nineties was all surface and no depth.

Unfortunately, the music business seemed to follow suit – it was also surface, not depth. Instead of building an industry on rock-solid foundations, that could be flexible and quick to change and lead the digital revolution that would hit at the end of the decade, it carried on in its own sweet way: it was being led towards a slow, but steady decline.



**ABOVE**  
Labour MP Gerald Kaufman made enemies in the industry during the early Nineties over his investigations into UK CD prices



**ABOVE**  
Spice world: the all-girl quintet conquered the planet... albeit briefly

There was no industry-wide strategy put in place. Indeed the industry didn't even have comprehensive figures about itself to base a strategy on. So when it came the industry would have no answer for Napster or iTunes. It would be caught flatfooted by the digital revolution because few in the Nineties had prepared for it or had bargained on the size, scope and impact a digital world would have on the music industry.

And yet it had been given fair warning that it might need to rethink its models and practices – because the Nineties were kicked off by a series of disputes and inquiries into the industry, how it ran its business and its pricing policies.

It went to war with itself in 1990 over the rate at which mechanical royalties should be set (the MCPS wanted 9.505% of published dealer price; the BPI and labels wanted to stick on 6.25%).

The then BPI chairman Terry Ellis branded the MCPS as "terrorists bent on disrupting the music industry" by demanding the higher rate. The two sides battled it out at the Copyright Tribunal, which ruled in November 1991 that mechanical royalties should be set at 8.5% – a success for the BPI.

While this played out, external forces began to ask more fundamental questions of the industry, whose practices had remained largely unchanged for decades. There were signs that the Government, media and consumer bodies were not convinced that the industry had its house in order.

By the start of the decade the Consumers Association had already taken up a complaint about CD prices: it noted they had remained unchanged since the CD had been launched.

The idea that the industry was filling its boots at the expense of the ordinary punter was gaining currency and it snowballed. The Office of Fair Trading took up the cudgels in 1991. Its investigation concluded in April 1992 and suggested there was no evidence of excess profits or collusion between record companies and retailers.

But the respite was only short-lived. In July 1992 the OFT decided to open another investigation to review its earlier research and also delve into the matter of parallel imports.

All this activity caught the attention of the National Heritage Committee and the national press. The NHC, led by Labour MP Gerald Kaufman, wanted to know why CD prices were significantly lower in the US than the UK and it launched an inquiry – the first time a parliamentary group had nosed into the workings of the industry. In a parallel move, newspaper *The Independent* began a

## TIMELINE 1993–95

### 1993

- After a lacklustre 1992 Virgin trounce an all-comers in 1993 with a record albums market share this year under managing director Paul Conroy
- Bjork's first album, *Debut*, is critically acclaimed
- CD pricing becomes one of the biggest issues of the year fuelled by MP Gerald Kaufman's claims that CD buyers are being "fleeced"

- Radiohead break the US market with single *Creep* and album *Pablo Honey*
- George Michael and Sony Music clash in the High Court
- Sammy Jacob launches XFM
- Bard hits out at EMI for closing its Record Tokens division after more than 60 years

### 1994

- The year draws to a close with record-

breaking sales, with the final week before Christmas seeing a record number of sales for a single week

- It is a great year for breakthrough acts. By the end of 1994, 35 acts score their first gold awards, the highest number in five years
- Total shipments for 1994 hit a record high of 317.5m for the year, up 131.8m or 16.8% on the previous year
- Virgin finishes the year as top

albums label for the final quarter with an 8.2% share

### 1995

- Sony Music Publishing confirms a \$500m deal to merge with Michael Jackson's ATV Music Publishing
- Shipments of albums and singles reach record levels of \$1bn for the first time, up 10.7% on the previous year
- In its 30th anniversary year Top Of

The Pops executive producer Ric Blaxill announces widespread changes to the show including a new image, theme tune and launch of monthly magazine

- Sony, Philips and Toshiba have become locked in a battle over the new MPEG2 'high-density' disc formats.
- Robson & Jerome achieve a sales double with the best selling album and single of the year
- Oasis are the biggest selling album





**ABOVE**  
Rolling with the punches: the 1995 chart battle between Oasis and Blur saw Britpop make national news headlines

# ASTER



report made for disappointing reading for Kaufman and the Consumers Association, which branded it "misguided and complacent".

But the effect of the inquiries on the industry saw it approach Government in a different light: in 1990 the House Of Lords rejected the industry's case for a national rock station with one minister famously dismissing pop music as nothing more than "thump thump thump".

This and other setbacks led BPI chairman Ellis to urge his own organisation to be more proactive in its dealings with politicians. The industry had begun to realise that if it could not persuade lawmakers with its cultural case, then presenting an economic one could be just as powerful.

In response it produced the British Invisibles report in 1995, which for the first time attempted to put a figure on how big (£1.16bn) – and important – to UK plc the industry was. The report was nowhere near comprehensive enough and suffered from failing to unearth primary data. But in an oft-quoted statistic, it did demonstrate that the music business was on a par with the steel industry.

From then on the industry's relationship with Government and its culture ministers did – on the whole – improve dramatically. Unfortunately, while external relations might have begun to improve, within the industry itself little else seemed to have changed. Between the start of the Copyright Tribunal and the MMC report, the industry seemed to internalise and concentrate on its problems – of which there were a few.

It had to face the first legal test of a charge of obscenity against a record when Island Records was ordered to destroy NWA's album *Efil4Zaggin* at the end of 1991. In a ruling that demonstrated it was possible to fight the law and win, Island beat the obscenity rap. But there were other setbacks in the early Nineties as recession hit.

Boots became the first major record retailer to ditch the single in 1990 and then Rough Trade Distribution went belly-up in 1991. And in a move that helped establish the antipathy between indies and majors that set in during the decade, indie retailers resorted to parallel imports – up to 50p cheaper than the UK release – to stave off the administrator.

These were key moments for the industry. Yet it seems little was done to address the underlying problems: of the single and its place in the world and charts; of the distribution arrangements of the indie sector; and of the plight of big and small retailers – all major issues that would continue to nip at the industry throughout the decade and ultimately come to bite it many years later.

Maybe the industry didn't want to know; it was too busy counting money from punters buying the CD versions of the vinyl albums they already owned.

And anyway, there were other ways of handling problems – some in the industry thought bigger was better. Nothing bad could happen to a mega company... right? The year 1992 saw EMI pay big money for Virgin Music in a move that heralded a series of big consolidations later in the decade resulting eventually in five majors becoming four.

EMI paid £560m to Sir Richard Branson for his company only three years after splashing out £79m on a 50% share of Chrysalis Records. The move, however, did seem to rejuvenate EMI and its new Virgin label and it kicked British music, which had been on the ropes, back into the charts.

With the landscape dominated by US music, in September 1992 Parlophone quietly released an Oxford-

## TOP SINGLES YEAR BY YEAR



<b>1990</b>	<b>THE RIGHTEOUS BROTHERS</b> Unchained Melody <i>Vervo/Falysse</i>
<b>1991</b>	<b>BRYAN ADAMS</b> (Everything I Do) I Do It For You <i>AGM</i>
<b>1992</b>	<b>WHITNEY HOUSTON</b> I Will Always Love You <i>Arista</i>
<b>1993</b>	<b>MEAT LOAF</b> I'd Do Anything For Love (But I Won't Do That) <i>Virgin</i>
<b>1994</b>	<b>WET WET WET</b> Love Is All Around <i>Firetrax</i>
<b>1995</b>	<b>ROBSON &amp; JEROME</b> Unchained Melody/White Cliffs Of Dover <i>BOA</i>
<b>1996</b>	<b>THE FUGEES</b> Killing Me Softly <i>Columbia</i>
<b>1997</b>	<b>ELTON JOHN</b> Something About The.../Candle In The Wind '97 <i>Rocket</i>
<b>1998</b>	<b>CHER</b> Believe <i>WEA</i>
<b>1999</b>	<b>BRITNEY SPEARS</b> ...Baby One More Time <i>Jive</i>



Creeping their way to stardom: a youthful Radiohead in 1992



**LEFT**  
Famous five: the daddy of Nineties boy bands, Take That had eight number-one singles in their 1991-96 career

based band's first single to almost universal disinterest. But after being overlooked here, *Creep* was released in the US the following summer and reached number 32 in the Billboard charts. Radiohead were up and running.

Within two years the Spice Girls had signed to Virgin Records, Blur set a new record with four Brit awards, Oasis were rolling with it and Chris Evans was directing the new Britpop sound from his breakfast show desk at Radio 1, which was gaining listeners hand over fist. Oh, and someone by the name of Tony Blair addressed the BPI AGM in 1995.

Partly thanks to those busily rebuying their record collections, 1995 was a record year with the value of albums and singles reaching £1bn for the first time. And even though the first great boyband Take That split a year later, the Spice Girls phenomenon was only just getting started.

By 1997 the group had spicepowered their way around the world, selling nearly 5m copies of breakthrough single Wannabe and becoming the first UK group to get their debut album to the top of the charts in the US.

From an industry tearing itself apart over royalty rates and taking a thrashing from Kaufman and the MMC, the British music industry suddenly seemed to regain its confidence. Even a 10-metre statue of Michael Jackson floating

**BELOW**  
Quids in: EMI pays Richard Branson £560m for his Virgin label



campaign to lower CD prices. The heat was on.

The NHC held three hearings and took evidence from label executives, managers and management and retailers. But Kaufman's assumption from the off, that consumers were being "fleeced", undermined his report's findings and united the whole industry in opposition. Maurice Oberstein, then vice president of PolyGram, thought Kaufman might be to the record industry what "Beeching was to the railways". BPI chairman John Deacon called the NHC a "shambles".

Nevertheless the OFT, which completed its second report in May 1993, sent a reference to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission (now Competition Commission) asking it to investigate the existence of a monopoly.

What followed was the most in-depth and wide-ranging review by a Government body on the way the music industry operates. But unlike the NHC report, the industry at least felt that this time it was being treated fairly.

Indeed, when the MMC reported back in 1994, it found two monopoly situations. But it found that they did not operate against the public interest and so there was no bloodletting. The industry got on with its business and the

**1995 was a record year, with the value of albums and singles reaching £1bn for the first time...**

## TIMELINE 1995-97

- set of the year, selling 2.6m albums
- EMI Music Publishing wins race to sign Blur on worldwide publishing deal
- George Michael and Sade reach settlement allowing artist to leave the label
- EMI leaves Manchester Square after 80 years

### 1996

- The music industry is uniting behind Rock The Vote, a new all-party campaign

- aiming to use music to boost the youth vote
- Michael Jackson makes his first appearance on British TV for more than a decade at the Brit Awards
- Pulp's Jarvis Cocker interrupts Jackson's performance. An *MW* straw poll finds 75% backing Cocker's actions
- Brian Eno takes a full-page advert in *Music Week* with the slogan "Free The Pulp!"

- Robbie Williams settles a legal action with BMG hours before it reaches the High Court
- The merger of EMI Group and Thorn is sealed and shares in the two companies begin trading separately
- BPI has imposed stiff fines on two of its members who released records in believes were faked
- Polygram UK chairman Roger Arnes takes on one of the biggest jobs in the

music industry, running PolyGram's entire music output across the world

### 1997

- Paul McCartney is knighted and Andrew Lloyd Webber made a lord in the New Year's honours list
- Radio 1 reveals Mark Radcliffe is replacing Chris Evans as breakfast show host and loses 570,000 listeners following Evans' departure

- Spice Girls' *Spice* becomes the first debut album by an all-new UK act to reach number one in the US
- Elton John's *Candle In The Wind 1997* tribute to Diana Princess Of Wales sells nearly 600,000 units in just a day on its way to becoming the biggest-selling single of all time
- The UK music market's growth continues to outpace the rest of the world, says an IFPI survey

TOP 20 SINGLES OF THE NINETIES



1	<b>ELTON JOHN</b> Candle In The Wind 97/	1997
2	<b>ROBSON GREEN &amp; JEROME FLYNN</b> Unchained Melody/ (There'll Be Bluebirds Over The) White Cliffs Of Dover	1995
3	<b>WET WET WET</b> Love Is All Around	1994
4	<b>AQUA</b> Barbie Girl	1997
5	<b>CHER</b> Believe	1998
6	<b>VARIOUS ARTISTS</b> Perfect Day	1997
7	<b>BRYAN ADAMS</b> (Everything I Do) I Do It For You	1991
8	<b>BRITNEY SPEARS</b> Baby One More Time...	1999
9	<b>PUFF DADDY &amp; FAITH EVANS (FEAT. 112)</b> I'll Be Missing You	1997
10	<b>WHITNEY HOUSTON</b> I Will Always Love You	1992
11	<b>CELINE DION</b> My Heart Will Go On	1998
12	<b>SPICE GIRLS</b> Wannabe	1996
13	<b>FUGEES (REFUGEE CAMP)</b> Killing Me Softly	1996
14	<b>ALL SAINTS</b> Never Ever	1997
15	<b>COOLIO FEAT. LV</b> Gangsta's Paradise	1995
16	<b>CELINE DION</b> Think Twice	1994
17	<b>STEPS</b> Heartbeat/Tragedy	1998
18	<b>TELETUBBIES</b> Teletubbies Say "Eh-Oh!"	1997
19	<b>BABYLON ZOO</b> Spaceman	1996
20	<b>RUN-D.M.C. VS JASON NEVINS</b> It's Like That	1988

The leading architect of Britpop, Noel Gallagher, was soon inside Downing Street... Nothing could stop the seemingly omnipresent music industry...



down the Thames to launch HIStory didn't seem ridiculous in the new-found optimism that saw a battle for number one between Blur and Oasis now played out on ITN's News At Ten.

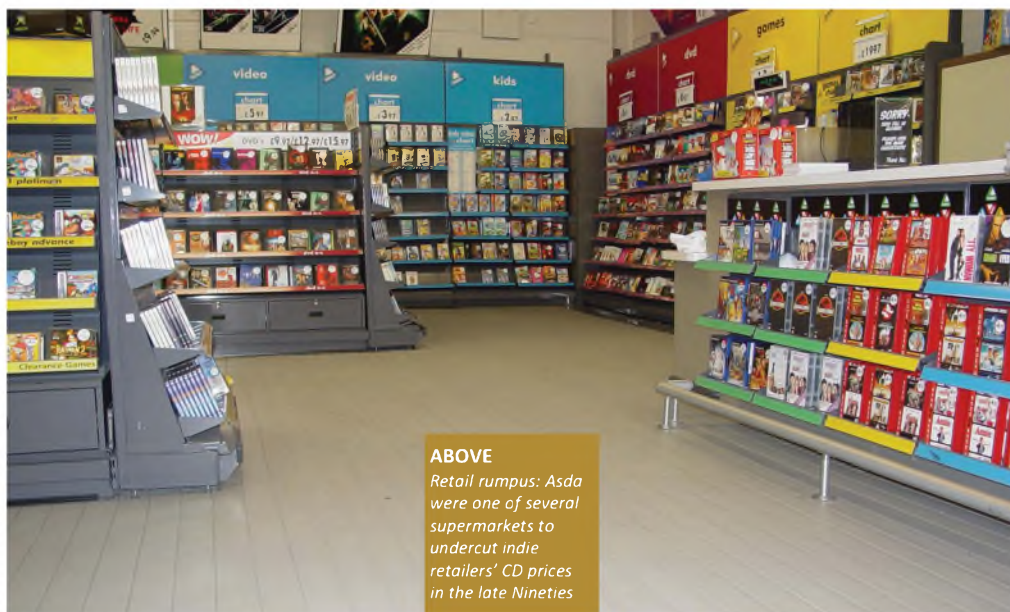
After years of being ignored, misunderstood and vilified, the music business had suddenly found itself as popular as one of its stars. Forget the NHC, the industry was now the establishment's favourite and it was enjoying its 15 minutes.

Its decision to offer the hand of friendship to Government had seemingly paid off. Now instead of being investigated, executives were being wooed by the country's politicians and by the time Labour landed in power in May 1997 there were even more of them knocking on Number 10's door.

Oasis's Creation label boss Alan McGee found himself on a Government creative taskforce and the leading architect of Britpop, Noel Gallagher, was soon inside Downing Street helping to launch Cool Britannia. Even Radiohead, whose third album OK Computer went double platinum, were finally finding wide-spread acclaim.

Nothing could stop the seemingly omnipresent music industry. Another mega-merger occurred in 1998 with Seagram paying £10.6bn for PolyGram, creating the Universal Music Group in the UK.

From the irritations of the early Nineties,



ABOVE Retail rumpus: Asda were one of several supermarkets to undercut indie retailers' CD prices in the late Nineties

the industry was seemingly on top. There were big majors, newly re-organised and selling shedloads of records. There were plenty of "proper" bands around – although the US remained worryingly unimpressed with Blur and quickly got bored with Oasis – and a decent relationship with the country's law makers appeared to be crucial with copyright term looming for many late Fifties and early Sixties rock'n'rollers, including The Beatles.

But how strong and healthy was the industry in reality? EMI had been "demerged" from Thorn in 1996 and was left to slug it out as the only standalone music company listed on the stock exchange. Having to compete with other companies while having to jump through the financial hoops required by the City was going to be a tough ask – and one that it proved eventually unable to meet.

Music retail was also nervously shifting chairs. WH Smith eased its way out of the music market, selling Our Price to Virgin for £145m in 1998 and then, in a move which would eventually prove fatal to Our Price, the two brands were split later that year.

WH Smith also had a hand in the creation of the HMV Media Group powerhouse when the non-specialist retailer offloaded Waterstone's.

Its reshuffling effectively pitched a diminishing number of specialist music retailers against the supermarkets, who had increasingly viewed music as a loss leader that served only to draw in customers to pick up their groceries.

If the indies had already been feeling the heat, then specialist chains began to be pinched by Asda, Morrisons and the rest, who by the end of 1999 were selling new CDs at £9.99, compared to most indies' prices which were stuck at around or upwards of £12.99. The trading terms between the different retailers hardly seemed fair or sustainable if the industry wanted to rely on its retail partners to help break new acts and promote good music. And it still hadn't addressed those issues (charts and distribution) flagged up years before.

Maybe that was because something else was popping up on executives' radars: the internet. Everyone was quickly up to speed about the internet and MP3 files (25,000 Rio MP3 players – remember them? – had been sold by the middle of 1999), but nobody quite knew what to do with the new technology.

By the end of the Nineties, most executives seemed to understand that – bar discovering and developing new talent –

the internet was their biggest challenge.

But in the same way that the industry had been unable to show hard figures to the OFT and MMC or field watertight arguments for its case to be heard by Government earlier in the decade, its response to digital technology was piecemeal, cautious and, ultimately, completely inadequate.

Incredibly, some in the industry thought the best response would be to squash MP3 technology; indeed the RIAA even attempted to injunct the manufacturer of an MP3 player as late as 1998. While Napster's Shawn Fanning was working out how to fileshare, the industry was trying to keep the genie in the bottle.

With Apple's iTunes still many years away the majors fiddled while Fanning and others plotted. There were experiments with pay-per-play digital jukeboxes, but many initiatives were led by record companies – rather than by industry – and nobody seemed to grasp the nettle that music lovers buy into bands, not labels. No-one reached out and said, 'Hey, we all need to work together on this one.'

And then came the bombshell. Napster launched right at the tail-end of the decade and everything that looked shiny and Nineties new suddenly looked well past its sell-by date.

Digital was now the new rock'n'roll, but the industry hadn't signed up to it. How was it possibly going to compete when people could get music for free?

Unfortunately, the industry had few answers – apart, that is, from reaching for the lawyers' phone number again. But the horse had already bolted.



ABOVE Cool Britannia: the ubiquitous Britpop

FAR RIGHT All change: Napster heralded the start of a new age – one in which the industry was slow to respond

TIMELINE 1997–99

1997 continued

- Capital Radio and Virgin Radio announce a planned \$66m merger
- Chris Smith is named national heritage secretary after Labour victory
- Spice Girls' Spiceworld cracks up the biggest music UK shipment of all time with 1.4m advance orders
- Spice Girls sack Simon Fuller
- Spice Girls are 1997's highest UK music earners

1998

- The Spice Girls' worldwide success is honoured with a special Brit Award
- Seagram announces a \$10.6bn acquisition of PolyGram
- Virgin Group secures \$145m deal to buy WH Smith's 75% stake in Virgin Our Price
- Charlene Fife broadcasts The Pepsi Chart for the first time
- Jamiroquai, Radiohead and the

Chemical Brothers win Grammys

- Tony Westworth takes over from Jean-Francois Cordon as EMI Records president/CEO
- HMV follows Tower with the release of an online music store
- First details emerge of the Association of Independent Music
- Labels are increasingly suggesting that the way to deal with MP3 is to harness its potential rather than squash it.

1999

- Napster launches
- UK sales of RIO MP3 players hit 25,000
- Universal Music chairman/CEO John Kennedy outlines the shape of newly-combined PolyGram and Universal
- John Kennedy warns against the damaging effect of recordable CDs
- Big Life Records enters receivership
- Mean Fiddler secures a five-year deal

- to hold a sister festival in Leeds
- Sony Music opens Europe's first Mini-Disc store
- Stereophonics give V2 its first number-one album
- Charlotte Church, 16, is youngest artist to land a US Top 40 album
- Kylie Minogue signs to Parlophone
- Polydor managing director Leelan Grange is promoted to the post of chairman of Universal Music UK



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# LIFE OF BRIAN

'Escapism', 'magic', an 'amazing experience', 'very exciting' – all descriptions of record retail by a man who spent 41 years in the business. So what does former HMV boss Brian McLaughlin make of it all in 2009?

WORDS: Ben Cardew

**"I don't think record shops are record shops as they were... The escapism of those early stores and that magic has probably gone..."**

**B**rian McLaughlin got his first job in music retail in 1964, working in the Co-Op's record store in Portsmouth. Four years later he joined HMV, where he worked until retiring in 2005.

His positions at the retailer included sales assistant, regional manager, HMV UK managing director, HMV Europe managing director and chief operating officer. Here McLaughlin provides a clear insight into how the retail landscape has changed immeasurably over the last 50 years.

**What were record shops like in the early Sixties? Were they exciting places to be?**

Not the ones in Portsmouth, it is probably fair to say. They were fairly dowdy and poorly lit but at that age [he was 15 in 1964] they were still very exciting. The Co-Op store I worked in was a small shop with a browser in front of the counter with LPs in it. It possibly also sold radios and TVs as well. But it was probably the only place in Portsmouth apart from Woolworths that sold music.

**Did this change throughout the Sixties?**

When HMV opened in Portsmouth it was probably the ninth HMV store. The first was in 1921, so it took them all those years to open another eight shops. The HMV stores were professionally run and there were also a number of independent stores run by the same families for years. They were all interesting stores but a lot of them were very unprofessionally run. They were probably people more in love with music than retailers. HMV managed to combine both.

**The late Sixties in Britain are seen as a very fashionable, youthful time. Was that true of record stores? What were they like?**

In Portsmouth HMV there were listening booths. You could go in with your mates and listen to music. Record stores were places for people to hang around in. Most of the time

they used to hang around and never buy anything.

**Did things change a lot in the Seventies?**

At HMV we had Dave Wilde as general manager during the Seventies. He introduced self-service, which was unheard of. Normally the records were master bagged – the records were behind the counter, with the sleeves out front. Initially we lost a lot of product [through theft] but when self-service came in that was it. A lot of indies thought we were mad but it was so much quicker to serve the customer.

**Did record retail expand a lot in the Seventies?**

There was a recession in the first few years of the Seventies. But WH Smith were the dominant [music] retailer in the UK – they had a 25% market share. Also emerging was Virgin. Their shops were unbelievable – people were lying on the floor smoking and drinking. It was an amazing experience.

**And the indies?**

The indie sector was very vibrant at this time. It had a huge hold over record companies. I don't think HMV and Virgin really mattered to record companies at all. HMV had to go to a record retailers' committee meeting in

Liverpool to more or less ask their permission to open up a new store in the city.

**What happened to WH Smith?**

Because most retailers weren't very good the mass market went to buy their music in WH Smith. But HMV saw WH Smith as an easy target. Our Price was emerging in the south towards the end of the Seventies. They were stealing market share from WH Smith. So were Virgin and HMV. Within five to 10 years Smith's domination of the music market was over and it was HMV, Our Price and Virgin.

**You said HMV didn't really matter to record companies – was there a big tension there?**

Maurice Oberstein – who I have the highest regard for – once told me, "You are nothing. You are a fucking con duit." The tension was there for that reason – retailers were not highly regarded by a lot of record company people.

**With the boom in CD sales, were the Nineties a golden time for music retail?**

Once we got through the recession, with CD sales it was the golden years. HMV improved its profits. But HMV was owned by Thorn EMI so it was very stable. Virgin and Our Price kept on changing hands. There was a lot of unrest going on in the retail sector. I don't think people were making the kind of money that HMV was making.

**The Nineties saw the incredible rise of the internet – when did you start to realise digital sales would be competition for you?**

The first thing that we saw was artist websites. I remember once when a Sony artist wanted to give the single away for free. That was the start of more and more battles with artists and record companies, trying to preserve the role of traditional record retail. People thought that the future was about dealing directly with customers through websites and traditional record stores would fold. This was probably the late Nineties. But I left HMV in 2005 and I don't think there had been a significant effect on sales by then.

**How do you feel about music retail in 2009?**

We had a strategy meeting in 2004 or 2005, looking five years into the future and I remember saying that HMV could be the last man standing. Virgin had been in trouble. I knew MVC wasn't making money, although Woolworths looked to be strong.

**How do you feel about record stores selling so many DVDs and games at the moment?**

Record sales used to have no competition in personal entertainment. Once DVD came along it had the same impact as CD did. I don't think record companies understood that was serious competition. DVD and games offered something to make up for record sales although I think some retailers went too far on DVD.

**What do you think a record shopper from 1964 would think of record shops in 2009?**

I think they would be disappointed. I don't think record shops are record shops as they were – they have to share space with games and DVD. The escapism of those early stores and that magic has probably gone. But that reflects the fact that customers aren't buying as much music or they have other means of acquiring it.



**BELOW**  
Mixed space: HMV's 'next-generation' store shares record space with gaming, DVD and technology zones

## TIMELINE 2000–2002

### 2000

- EMI announces a £20bn merger with Warner but later withdraws application.
- Key Distributors refuse to supply Virgin Retail after it failed to pay \$55bn product debts, though it eventually pays.
- Bertelsmann denies it is in merger talks with Sony.
- Sony and BMG announce the start of download trials in the US.
- HMV closes its historic 368 Oxford

Street store following the launch of a new Bond Street branch.

- A merger between Vendi and Seagran is green-lighted by the EC.
- The RIAA files a temporary injunction to close Napster, but the site wins a last-minute reprieve.
- Universal buys Ronder for \$400m.
- Virgin opens its first V Shops.
- RCA A&R consultant Simon Cowell links a joint-venture deal with BMG

- Emap closes *Select* magazine and IPC exits *Melody Maker*.

### 2001

- The industry is hit by another Government CD pricing investigation.
- Popstars winners Hear'Say leave fastest-selling debut single and album.
- EMI and Bertelsmann pull the plug on a proposed merger.
- Lucian Grange to head Universal UK.

- A scintre Mercury Prize goes ahead in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks.
- EMI's long-serving Ken Berry. He is succeeded by Alain Levy and David Munn.
- George Harrison dies.

### 2002

- BBC launches digital stations 6 Music and 1Xtra.
- Mean Fiddler buys a 20% stake in Glastonbury.

- Pop Idol winner Will Young's debut single sells a record 1.1m in six days.
- EMI withdraws from manufacturing in the UK after 71 years.
- HMV Group flotation goes ahead.
- Napster files for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection.
- Bertelsmann in \$2.7bn Zomba takeover.
- Robbie Williams signs a groundbreaking deal with EMI, covering revenues beyond recorded music sales.

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# NOUGHTS AND LOSSES

Traditional portents of doom greeted the new millennium in all quarters but for the music industry it was more reality than myth as sales fell drastically. Nine years on, the challenge is no less incredible – but so are many of the innovations seeking to revive a battered but not beaten industry

WORDS: Ben Cardew



#### ABOVE

Bucking the trend: Coldplay were arguably the biggest stars of the Noughties and enjoyed healthy album sales despite a general downturn

#### ABOVE RIGHT

The X Factor redefined 'music' television and reignited the pop singles boom, making an international star of Leona Lewis

The recorded music industry woke up to the Noughties with a gigantic post-millennial hangover. Admittedly, sales were still strong and would continue to grow for the first half of the decade driven by the tail-end of the golden CD era, but the shadow of breakthrough file-sharing service Napster – quietly launched by Shawn Fanning in mid-1999 – hung heavy.

In the muddled early Noughties industry mindset something nasty was stirring: namely, if music could be downloaded for free, then who on earth would buy it? And what would this mean for an industry that continued to thrive on the model of selling pre-recorded music on plastic discs at a heavy mark-up, with the odd multi-million-selling hit making up for a stream of misses?

It was not an easy start to the millennium. But perhaps this was oddly fitting for a decade that has proved to be considerably more *horribilis* than *minabilis* for the recorded music industry. What is more, it is this precise

question – namely how do you compete with free? – that has come to define the decade.

For the first part of the Noughties the answer was simple: sue. While labels dipped a ginger toe into the digital water – afraid, perhaps, of what they might unleash – the industry concentrated its efforts on litigating Napster out of existence.

They met with limited success – despite obtaining a temporary injunction from the RIAA in mid-2000 against the site, it was not until BMG parent company Bertelsmann bought Napster in October of that year that the industry got any type of a hold on its operations.

What is more, the industry's efforts to cut off access to what had become a source of free music for millions of Napster users proved highly unpopular with the general public, upset by what they saw as the greed of an industry that had grown fat off £15 CD reissues.

It is an image that has stuck to this day, giving ammunition to the likes of The Pirate Bay in their tussles with the industry. And it is not difficult to see the public's point, for, as the industry huffed and puffed over illegal



downloading, efforts to launch a legal alternative stalled.

Indeed, it was not until 2003, when Apple – a company previously seen as being outside of the music industry – pushed the button on its iconic iTunes store that there was any credible, legal alternative to Napster and its ilk. Even then, the debate over DRM-protection on digital files that meant they could not be copied and freely moved – so legal sites were arguably offering a less consumer-friendly experience for a good five years.

By then, of course, the debate had moved on again, with the launch of streaming sites such as Spotify and We7 in 2008 raising the question of whether people actually wanted to own music anymore, or if they would be happy with an ad-supported model similar to TV. It is fair to say the debate will run and run.

The recorded music industry, however, was certainly not alone in feeling the impact of the internet during the Noughties.

The launch of MySpace in 2003, Facebook in 2004, YouTube in 2005 and Twitter in 2006, as well as the inexorable spread of blogging, meant that, for the first time, bands in the Noughties could interact with their fans with an immediacy and intimacy that would have shocked previous generations. No longer would the public have to wait by their radios in the vain hope of hearing the latest effort from their musical heroes – now, within the space of a few clicks, they could hear it, download it and talk about it – quite possibly even share it.

Some people may complain that the mystique has gone from our pop stars now that we know what Little

## TIMELINE 2003–05

### 2003

- Tiscali becomes first European ISP to offer free access to legal digital music
- Virgin Retail confirms a deal to take over Tower's remaining two UK stores
- Tesco says it has leapfrogged Virgin to become third biggest UK chart retailer
- Simon Cowell sells his S Records stake to BMG for a reported \$20m
- The Beatles take Apple to court, over the launch of iTunes

- PPI signs its first licensing deal for an internet-only station
- EMI loses out in the race to buy Warner Music to a consortium led by Roger Bronfman
- Sony and BMG sign a binding agreement to merge
- A record 5.3m albums was sold in the last three days before Christmas, while a new high of 256m albums were shipped across the year

### 2004

- The legal Napster launches in the UK, quickly followed by Apple's iTunes
- EMI's UK operation escapes the worst of 1,500 worldwide redundancies
- Telstar goes into administration
- Simon Cowell unveils details of his new ITV talent show X Factor
- Music Week launches an email news service, the MW Daily
- BMG and 19 exchange lawsuits in

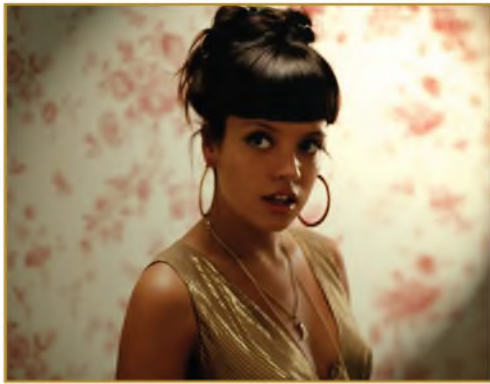
### worldwide battle over Pop Idol

- The MMT leads protests against CD covermounts
- Boulder Wine Power sells his remaining stake in Mean Fiddler
- Joan Peal dies

### 2005

- The OCC tests data to allow download into the main singles chart
- Simon Fuller sells 19 Entertainment

- for \$85m to US rights group OKX
- Gasstonbury brings in an ID system to boat ticket tours
- Capital and GWR's merged entity GOap Media begins trading
- Live 8 takes place to raise poverty awareness
- The BPI eyes its first court hearings against illegal filesharers
- TOTP moves to BBC2
- IZPI figures show legal global down-



**LEFT**  
The millennium bug: the music industry has changed irrevocably since Shawn Fanning and Napster made the cover of Time magazine in 2000. iTunes (far left) launched in 2004, MySpace launched careers for the likes of Lily Allen, the RIAA has been in constant battle with filesharers and Radiohead's *In Rainbows* enjoyed an unprecedented 'honesty box' release

Boots has had for breakfast; others may critique the inevitable boom-bust cycle of hype that the internet has allowed to thrive.

But only a fool or a hopeless Luddite would deny that many acts have thrived on this up-close-and-personal approach, including Lily Allen – the first MySpace breakthrough, attracting millions of plays on her site before her label had released a note – and Radiohead, whose 2007 “honesty box” release for their *In Rainbows* album allowed them to sell directly to their rabid fanbase via the web.

“Traditional” media has been forced to adapt, too. Music magazines have endured a painful 10 years, with falling print sales pretty much across the board and the closures of titles such as *Smash Hits*, *Melody Maker*, *Blues And Soul* and *Ministry Cf Sound Magazine*, while individual radio stations have seen their audiences slowly eaten away by the rise of ultra-niche broadcasting via online and DAB.

Meanwhile, TV endured a decade of contrasts: on the one hand iconic pop shows such as *Top Of The Pops* hit the wall during the Noughties, fatally wounded by dwindling audiences and the impact of the internet. On the other, shows such as *Popstars*, *The X Factor* and *Britain's Got Talent* have created what is arguably the pop boom of the millennium, with audiences of more than 10m tuning in to see the rise and fall of artists such as Leona Lewis, Hear'Say, Will Young and, more recently, Susan Boyle.

Indeed, reality TV stars provided one glimmer of light among a sea of blackness for music retail throughout the decade, periodically racking up till-busting sales for the beleaguered sector. Sadly, it would prove nowhere near enough for companies such as MVC, Music Zone, Zavvi and Woolworths, who all went to the wall within the space of just three years alongside a host of indies.

In 2009 HMV alone survives among the high-street specialists – and this largely thanks to booming sales of video games – while Rough Trade has bucked the indie trend with its “musicatessen” approach. But both have arguably still suffered from the impact of falling album

prices, a trend that accelerated throughout the decade as a result of the impact of digital, supermarkets undercutting CD prices and the industry's frantic efforts to keep unit sales healthy at the expense of margins. By the latter half of the Noughties, top five albums could regularly be found for as little as a fiver on CD, while Amazon launched its MP3 store in the UK with price promotions that saw million-selling albums available for just £3.

Labels and artists felt the pinch, too. For the majors, the Noughties proved a decade of mergers – sometimes thwarted, as in the case of EMI and Warner; sometimes consumed as with Sony and BMG, who eventually tied the knot in the mid-Noughties via a painful series of challenges in the European courts, only for Sony to later buy out Bertelsmann's stake. Mergers, of course, mean “rationalisation” and it proved a decade of job losses and painful cutbacks almost across the board. The age of long boozy lunches and fruit and flowers was, it appeared, finally over.

Meanwhile, EMI, long a symbol of the strength of the UK music industry, was bought by private equity firm Terra Firma in a deal that brought debt packages, high-yield bonds and asset writedowns to the forefront of the music industry.

Artists, for their part, were forced to make up for a shortfall in CD sales by selling their music to advertisers, playing corporate gigs and throwing their efforts into live performance, with the traditional music-industry logic that music sales would offset touring losses turned dramatically on its head. As the decade progressed, the old snobbishness towards taking the corporate dollar – with a few

TOP SINGLES YEAR BY YEAR



2000	<b>BOB THE BUILDER</b> Can We Fix It? <i>BBC Music</i>
2001	<b>SHAGGY FEAT. RIKROK</b> It Wasn't Me <i>MCA</i>
2002	<b>WILL YOUNG</b> Evergreen/Anything Is Possible <i>S</i>
2003	<b>BLACK EYED PEAS</b> Where Is The Love? <i>A&amp;M</i>
2004	<b>BAND AID 20</b> Do They Know It's Christmas? <i>Mercury</i>
2005	<b>TONY CHRISTIE FEAT. PETER DINKLAGE</b> (Is This The Way To) Amarillo <i>Universal</i>
2006	<b>GNARLS BARKLEY</b> Crazy <i>WEA</i>
2007	<b>LEONA LEWIS</b> Bleeding Love <i>Syco Music</i>
2008	<b>ALEXANDRA BURKE</b> Hallelujah <i>Syco Music</i>
2009	<b>LADY GAGA</b> Poker Face <i>Polydor</i>

**Publishers became increasingly important, as artists looked for ways to scrape together a penny that did not rely on a generation of kids who had grown up on the idea of free music...**

notable exceptions – largely dissipated too and with few complaints.

The consequences of this shift were manifold. Labels, not unreasonably, decided that they should also benefit from these new revenue streams, having put their money into promoting these artists in the first place. The result was the emergence of the controversial “360 deal” pioneered by Robbie Williams' 2002 agreement with EMI that saw the major share in profits from touring, merchandising and the rest.

Falling CD sales also meant that publishers became increasingly important as the decade wore on, as artists looked for ways to scrape together a



**LEFT**  
High-street hardship: Woolworths fell by the wayside in 2008, and was joined by Zavvi (formerly Virgin), MVC, Music Zone and countless indies

penny that did not rely on a generation of kids who had grown up on the idea of free music.

Sync departments sprang up like wildfire among the publishers, while a range of new companies opened whose primary aim was to link bands with brands. What is more, as labels became increasingly wary of signing bands that did not come with proven followings, publishers took up the A&R slack, signing artists to development deals often months before labels got a sniff of new talent.

The music charts, too, were turned on their heads by the digital revolution. Much of the early decade saw the albums chart, traditionally the staid older brother to the singles' young hipster, grow in importance, as sales boomed. New albums chart shows were launched, notably at Channel 4 and Capital Radio, while as recently as 2003 the Official Charts Company was discussing possible strategies for reviving the sales format.



TIMELINE 2005–07

load sales have trebled in the first half of the year  
● Simon Cowell and Simon Fuller reach an out-of-court settlement over *X Factor*

2006

- EMI Music Publishing strikes a deal with MCPS-PRS Alliance and GEMA to offer one-stop pan-European digital and mobile licensing
- Arctic Monkeys achieve high-st first-

- week sales for a debut album
- In a UK first, two men are found guilty of illegal filesharing
- *Smash Hits* closes
- *Music Week* launches its Extend The Term campaign for recorded copyright
- PPL given go-ahead to merge with AURA and FAMRA
- Virgin Group sells its near 50% stake in V2 to Morgan Stanley
- TOTP is axed after 42 years

- Impala is victorious after Court of First Instance annuls EC Sony/BMG merger decision
- Universal buys BMG Music Publishing
- The BPI and MCPS-PRS reach agreement over online royalty rates
- Andrew Gowers advises the Government copyright term should not be extended

2007

- Alair, Levy and David Munns are

- fired from EMI
- Apple unveils the iPhone
- EMI becomes first major to ditch DRM
- EMI board approves £2.4bn takeover by Terra Firma
- George Michael is the first artist to play revamped Wembley Stadium as Bon Jovi christen The O2
- Popp is latest music retailer to go into administration, although HMV takes the name and some stores

- Tony Wilson dies
- Universal unveils takeovers of Sanctuary and V2
- Madonna strikes an “all-in” deal with Live Nation
- Fans invited to pay what they want for new Radiohead album online
- Leona Lewis claims fastest debut sell in history
- Bauer buys Emap's radio and consumer magazines divisions

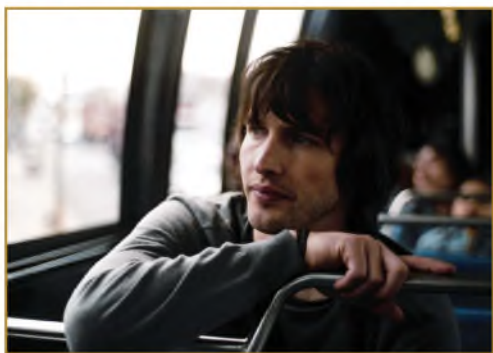
TOP 20 SINGLES OF THE NOUGHTIES



1	<b>WILL YOUNG</b> Anything Is Possible/Evergreen	8	2002
2	<b>GARETH GATES</b> Unchained Melody	3	2002
3	<b>TONY CHRISTIE FEAT PETER KAY</b> (Is This The Way To) Amarillo	UMTV	2004
4	<b>SHAGGY FEAT. RIKKOK</b> It Wasn't Me	MCA	2001
5	<b>BAND AID 20</b> Do They Know It's Christmas	Mercury	2004
6	<b>ALEXANDRA BURKE</b> Hallelujah	Sony	2008
7	<b>KYLIE MINOGUE</b> Can't Get You Out Of My Head	Parlophone	2001
8	<b>SHAYNE WARD</b> That's My Goal	Sony	2005
9	<b>HEARSAY</b> Pure And Simple	Polydor	2001
10	<b>BOB THE BUILDER</b> Can We Fix It	BBC Music	2000
11	<b>ATOMIC KITTEN</b> Whole Again	Interscope	2001
12	<b>GNARLS BARKLEY</b> Crazy	Warner Bros	2006
13	<b>LEONA LEWIS</b> Bleeding Love	Sony	2007
14	<b>LEONA LEWIS</b> A Moment Like This	Sony	2006
15	<b>ENRIQUE IGLESIAS</b> Hero	Interscope	2001
16	<b>X FACTOR FINALISTS</b> Hero	Sony	2008
17	<b>DJ OTZI</b> Hey Baby	EMI	2001
18	<b>WESTLIFE</b> Uptown Girl	BCA	2001
19	<b>EMINEM</b> Stan	Interscope	2000
20	<b>S CLUB 7</b> Don't Stop Movin'	Polydor	2001



**ABOVE & RIGHT**  
Back in the USA: the Brits returned to the US charts, albeit on a smaller scale than the Eighties, with Amy Winehouse and James Blunt in particular making inroads



They need not have bothered. Despite a raft of initiatives such as two-track singles and USB releases, in the end it was the download market that would resurrect the singles chart, when digital data was incorporated in 2005.



**LEFT**  
That was it: Michael Jackson's tragic death robbed the world of his comeback live dates at The O2, but the arena (below) went from strength to strength in a live-sector boom



Things moved quickly from there: in April 2006 *Music Week* reported that downloads accounted for 50% of all Top 40 singles sales; in 2008 digital sales made up a hefty 95.3% of the singles market, with the overall sector booming. With this shift came the return of sleeper hits, with songs working their way up the charts as excitement grew, while Gnarl Barkley made history in 2006 when Crazy became the first song to top the singles chart on download sales alone.

The risk, of course, in portraying the music industry in the Noughties, is of overplaying the misery. For as singles sales proved, it was a decade of contrasts, where grey clouds would rarely come without silver linings.

Among the gloom of falling record sales, for example, was the happy fact that UK acts were enjoying something of a sales boom internationally after the embarrassing Nineties drought: in 2008, for example, more than one in 10 albums sold in North America were by British acts, up from just 0.2% in 1999.

Leading the charge as the new millennium began was Radiohead, who in October 2000 became the first UK-signed act for more than three years to top the US charts with their album *Kid A*.

It was a result that opened, if not a floodgate, then certainly a steady stream of UK successes as the decade progressed. Foremost among these were Coldplay, who became arguably the biggest band in the world with the release of their 2005 album *X&Y*. But honourable mentions must also go to James Blunt, who in 2006 became the first British act to top the Billboard Hot 100 since 1997; as well as multiple Grammy winner Amy Winehouse and 2008's international



**Changing times:** the iPod (above) and then music-capable mobile phones such as the iPhone (left) changed forever the way people consumed music

breakthrough act Leona Lewis

The live industry, too, enjoyed a golden decade of record attendances (Robbie Williams' three Knebworth shows in 2003); global charity successes (Live 8); lucrative reformations (The Police); and till-busting residencies (Prince at The O2).

It is this latter venue that probably summed up the thriving live music industry throughout the decade, combining scale (as London's biggest arena), heavy corporate branding and innovation to immediate success, being crowned the world's biggest arena little more than a year into its life and managing to wipe from memory the Government's Millennium Dome fiasco.

It also demonstrated the risk involved with live music: Michael Jackson's tragic death has left a gaping hole in the 2009 schedules at The O2, while even the mighty Glastonbury had a bit of a wobble in 2008 after booking Jay Z to headline the Pyramid Stage rather than the latest long-haired guitar rockers.

The live industry has also had to deal with problems of its own, with a massive over-supply of festivals, rocketing ticket prices, the burgeoning secondary ticketing market and environmental concerns all threatening the health of the once unassailable sector as the decade draws to a close.

Nothing, then, is what it might seem in a music industry that has grown almost unimaginably complex and far-reaching over the course of the last 50 years.

But in overseeing a troublesome decade we should not be too pessimistic: if one image of the music industry in the Noughties is of a dog perpetually chasing its tail, another must surely be the iPod. Apple's iconic MP3 player whose introduction just five years ago revolutionised how people listened to music, allowing consumers to walk around with their entire record collection on a box not much larger than a packet of cigarettes.

Admittedly, the legality of much of that music may be doubtful – research shows everything from half to 90% of music on the average MP3 player comes from illegal means – but the product's launch nevertheless boosted the consumption of music to previously unimaginable levels.

The question remains, of course, how to monetise this activity. And it is a pressing concern – right now thousands of people around the world are hunkered down on finding a solution to this problem, as the media talks of a music industry in crisis amidst the worst global recession since the Second World War.

Will they succeed? It is impossible to say. But there is certainly no lack of willing. And with the music industry finally working out how to work together on issues such as copyright term extension and file-sharing, the future looks considerably brighter than one might imagine at first glance.

In any case, let's hope so – crack this particular problem and the music industry can look forward to another successful 50 years.

Fail, however, and the consequences are dire...

TIMELINE 2008–09

- 2008**
- RPI figures reveal the money labels made from licensing and other non-creative models rose in 2007
  - Bertelsmann sells most of its record music assets to Sony
  - Comes With Music launches in UK
  - Umbrella organisation UK Music launched
  - Radio 2 controller Lesley Douglas quits over controversial Russell

- Brand/Jonathan Ross broadcast
- EUK, Woolworths Retail and Pinnacle all enter administration
  - Culture Secretary Andy Burnham says Government considering supporting term extension

- 2009**
- iTunes ditches DRM
  - MCPS-PRS Alliance becomes PRS for Music but trouble is ahead as CBO

- Steve Porter is later sacked
- Digital sales now make up 26% of abe. income
  - Figures reveal size of secondary ticketing market with more than 1m tickets resold in 2008
  - Ticketmaster and Live Nation



- announces a merger
- Chris Blackwell (left) named best exec of last 50 years in *MW* anniversary award
- Stats show more than 25% of indie music stores closed in 2008
- The founders of downloading site The Pirate Bay are convicted by a Swedish court

- YouTube pulls premium music content in PRS dispute
- Virgin Media follows Sky by unveiling a planned music subscription service
- The Digital Britain report includes proposals for dealing with illegal file-sharers
- Michael Jackson dies on eve of planned O2 residency
- Spotify wins Apple approval for iPhone app





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# PARK LIFE

When a teenaged Richard Park first spoke into a mic as a pirate DJ in 1966, the idea of modern commercial radio was a world away. Four decades on, how has radio evolved?

WORDS: Paul Williams



**"Some people have their iPods in their cars and they only want to hear their own music, but 90% of us are still tuning into a radio station in any given week..."**

**ABOVE**  
Signalman: Richard Park has spent 40 years in music radio, since he joined Radio Scotland as a teenager (above right)

**F**or Richard Park and millions of other music radio listeners it all began with Radio Luxembourg, its flickering signal in the late Fifties and early Sixties literally the only place on the dial in the UK to offer the latest pop hits night after night.

Since that time, when *Record Retailer* was launched, both Park and music radio in Britain have travelled enormous

distances – quite often together – taking in the launch of the Sixties pirates, followed by the arrivals of Radios 1 and 2 and then the birth in the early Seventies of commercial radio.

For more than 40 of *Music Week's* 50 years Park has been there professionally in one guise or another, starting as a teenager on pirate Radio Scotland in 1966, then working at Radio 1 before beginning an incredibly successful

commercial radio career. Now executive director and director of broadcasting of Global Radio, the UK's biggest commercial radio group with assets including Capital, Classic FM, Galaxy, Heart and XFM, Park leads us through the last 50 years of music radio.

**What are your first memories of music radio?**

Radio Luxembourg and the early presenters like Jimmy Savile. There was also the great Tony Hall; he was a hero of mine, a great voice. He made those records sing

**Would you say Luxembourg in the late Fifties/early Sixties was where things kicked off in terms of what we would now regard as modern music radio?**

Yeah. They used to do the chart show at 11 o'clock on a Sunday night and everybody used to, depending on your age, stay up or listen under the bedclothes

**These were the days when labels had sponsored programming on the station...**

Absolutely. We had the EMI hour, the Decca hour.

**So would that have been the first time the music industry would have begun seriously thinking about radio helping to sell records?**



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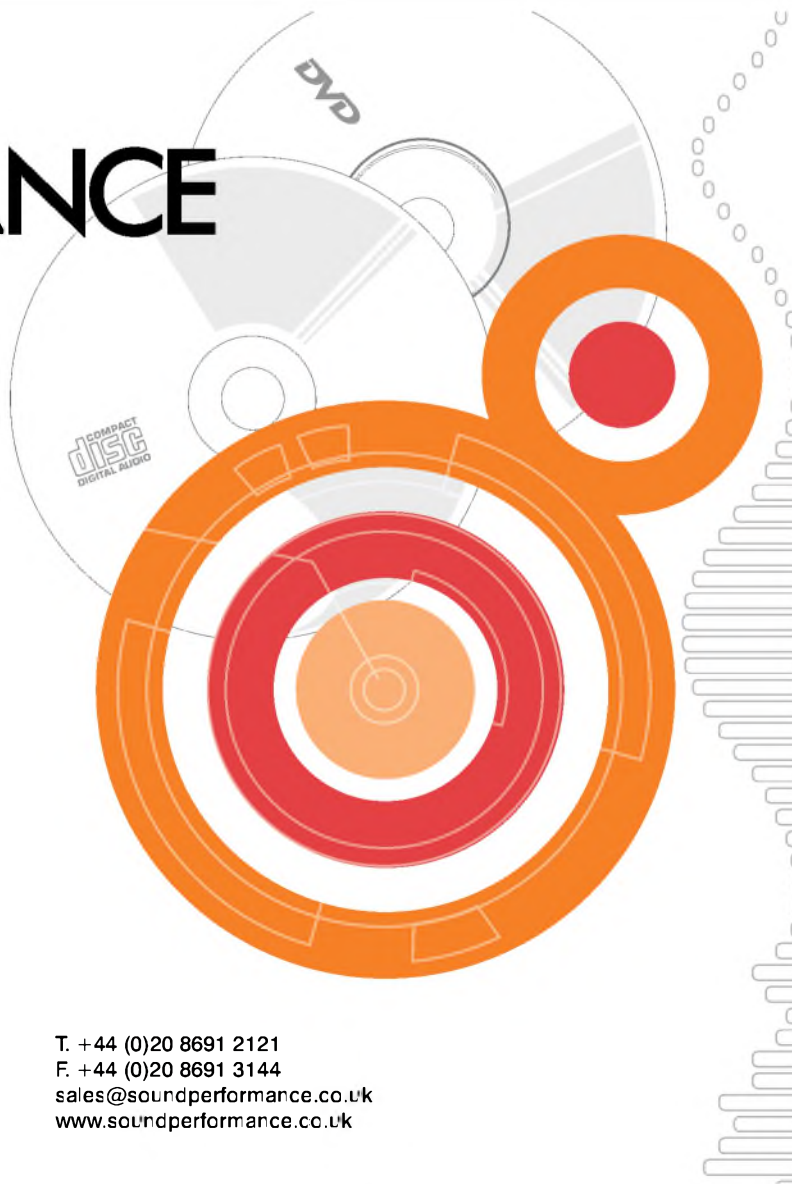
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The music publishing industry had had pluggers in the field for many years. When the BBC were doing live music shows pluggers used to sit in the audience and they used to tell the band leaders how much they would be prepared to pay if their track was on next. That's true! So that's when musical promotion began.

**What impact did the arrival of Radio Caroline in 1964 and then the other pirate stations have on the music scene?**

In London Caroline was on in every shop, every car radio, everywhere. Caroline would hold nights at Hammersmith Palais, all that sort of stuff, and they were absolutely massive and quickly followed by Radio London and Radio Scotland. That was the one I was on with people like Stuart Henry. I began as an 18-year-old so that was a bit of an apprenticeship.

**Did the pirates widen out what music people were listening to?**

Definitely. You had John Peel with his Perfumed Garden and playing the Grateful Dead-type stuff and those American records of that period. You had people like Stuart Henry and Rosko on the various ships they were on playing soul records and so on. It was the first time genres really came through.

**What are your memories of when Radio 1 launched?**

It was massive. I was auditioned two or three times for a gig and eventually became a sort of ad hoc jock who would get to do Radio 1 Clubs and Roundtables and these sorts of things. My memory of it launching was many of us had lost our pirate jobs at that time and we finished in August 1967. Radio 1 began in September and I think everyone in the country heard Tony Blackburn launch it with Flowers In The Rain. I can remember meeting Terry Wogan the day he came for his audition.

**And, of course, six years after Radio 1 commercial radio started.**

I started at Clyde, which was the second music station after Capital, in October '73 and in Glasgow and the west of Scotland listeners just switched en masse from Radio 1. Everybody listened because to get their own music in their own area at that time was something very special.

**What did the introduction of commercial radio do in terms of the music scene?**

In terms of Clyde it brought a lot of Scottish acts to the fore. In terms of Capital at that time it pushed the Fleetwood Macs, the Eagles music scene forward in a way Radio 1 was not prepared to do. That and the American dance records were at Capital, and Radio 1 was much more The Police and other British bands at the time.

**Did commercial radio have much impact in terms of how the BBC thought about doing music radio?**

It pushed them forward again. It gave a rebirth to roadshows as they tried to get into every town centre and claim their territory. But in London they were already losing out to Capital big time, in Glasgow to Clyde and so on. These stations were the market-leading stations.

**By the time we get into the Eighties the growth of commercial stations is really speeding up.**

By 1984 commercial radio was in a much better position than it is now. That was perhaps a peak time when it was widely loved by all communities, but by the mid-Eighties the authorities were saying, "You are so popular you are taking up too many frequencies, put a different programme on the AM to that which you put on the FM" and so I started Capital Gold in London.

**Radio was then growing into hundreds of stations, which presumably would have changed the way the music industry worked with it.**

We had the latest of the many dance booms then and the arrival of a station like Kiss saw a whole variety of house, rap, swing, and hip hop suddenly come on and they had central London vehicles so an odd play on Radio 1 became

much less meaningful. Even stations like Capital had to think about the value of the Westwood and Tong shows it then had.

**In what sort of shape is the relationship now between the music and the radio industries?**

Actually, I think it's improving. I do think both sides are coming through this recession. We've had to pull the stops out and we've all had to clearly understand what our roles are. We are very much a marketing window for this period of modern acts, one of the hotter periods of the last dozen years I would say.

**We're now in an era where you can access music in all sorts of ways but it is still radio where people are more likely to discover music, isn't it?**

It's still radio. Some people have their iPods in their cars and they only want to hear their own music, but most of us – 90% of us – are still tuning into a radio station in any given week.

**Do you notice much of a difference in how those in the music industry view BBC music radio and how they view the commercial sector?**

The record companies will always favour the BBC. That's because it's a one-hit national airplay. Heart, and to a lesser extent Galaxy, have begun to turn that around. It's scale. That's what they're interested in. The more people you reach the more chance there is of selling records but I feel we're entering a very good period for commercial radio.

**Across these 50 years the music industry has been extremely important to the radio industry and vice versa. Are you confident that will continue to be the case?**

Without any question. If I think how my musical interests were aroused it was as a listener and hearing these great songs and that's still the case.



**ABOVE**  
Global brand: Park is now executive director of the UK's biggest commercial radio group, Global Radio



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"The predominant way people will listen to music and other content is by accessing it across multiple devices, from the cloud..."

DANIEL EK, SPOTIFY



# FUTURE PROOFING

Daniel Ek is looking forward to spunk (space punk), David Joseph thinks A&R remains key to music's future, Guy Moot wants to see the entertainment factor back, John Kennedy hopes people will still be listening to the Stone Roses in 50 years while Malcolm McLaren thinks the music industry should be put out of its misery! Our expert panel tells it like it is... or at least will be come 2059

WORDS: Christopher Barrett

**A**s *Music Week* celebrates half a decade of reporting on the ever-evolving music business, it seems appropriate that we channel the focus of some of the industry's greatest minds far ahead into the future in an attempt to predict how our business will develop.

Here leaders from a number of music industry sectors combine to offer a compelling insight into what the next half-decade may hold for music, its delivery, consumption and even how it might one day sound.

**Technology has shaped the development of the music industry over the past five decades and that looks certain to continue. How do you foresee it affecting the distribution and consumption of music in the future?**

**David Joseph** Everything will be more immediate in terms of delivery. There will be more portable devices but also the emergence of a central home-entertainment system for music and other entertainment. Subscription will grow. Fundamentally, however, the real connection between an artist, their music and the fan won't change.

**John Kennedy** Technology has been a friend to the music industry, enabling us over the course of a century to move from selling sheet music to providing access to more than 10m tracks through leading online services. The abuse of technology has always hurt the music industry, from the days where one in three CDs sold was counterfeit to an era where 95% of downloads are unlicensed and illegal. The future of the industry will be diverse, with consumers paying different amounts for various levels of access, portability and permanence in their music collections. Yet users will only be migrated to this range of legal services if governments worldwide match their words about tackling online piracy and protecting creativity with actions.

**Malcom McLaren** New entertainment continues to usurp the importance of popular music as a primary medium.

The technological advances made in the audio-visual world, that we all now live in, have placed new demands on pop music and its old-fashioned industry. The consumption and distribution of music will only thrive by expanding and developing other newer industries rather than its own.

**How will music be listened to?**

**DJ** Still in the same way – there's always time to listen to great music – but I'm hoping at some point for a revival in terms of sound quality and the listening experience. So much artist time and energy is put into creating high-quality sound recordings and that is being slightly lost in some current forms of music delivery.

**Daniel Ek** Music will be listened to in many, many different ways. I don't believe it is about one way, one model – I think the predominant way people will listen to music and other content is by accessing it across multiple devices, from the cloud, but people will also buy music, be that vinyl, CD, download or other as yet undiscovered formats.

**JK** Music has become more ubiquitous, with people able to listen to their favourite singles or albums on the move or in their home. This trend will continue, with sales of more MP3 players and music-enabled phones worldwide. Consumers will choose which devices they take to their hearts and the music and technology industries must service their legitimate demands.

**MM** Today, [popular music] is being looked at more rather than listened to and as a result, pop music is being emulated, simulated, and played with through such DIY mediums like games and talent shows. Ultimately, this has formed part

of the 21st-century generation's body language, a language that soon everyone will possess without having paid for it in the traditional way and will be able, forever, to keep it or simply throw it away for something better.

**Guy Moot** I believe streaming has an exciting future if it's harnessed correctly. The fact you can get music on demand is so user-friendly and has got to increase the volume of music digested by the public.

**Do you believe there is a long-term future for physical formats?**

**MM** No. But antique technology, if that is what you mean, will continue to exist and be desired by those who in the same way, desire vintage fashion.

**GM** Actually I do think the aesthetic value of CD and vinyl is so important still and the feeling of ownership. I still cherish a great record sleeve.

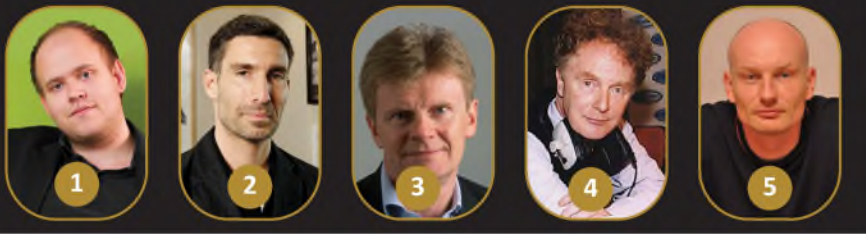
**DE** I do think that physical formats will exist in some shape or form. Whether physical retail will survive is a different question but Amazon, Lovefilm and other businesses have prospered with online distribution of physical media. It's a shame that some of the legacy players didn't get there quicker. Fear is a very dangerous paralysor.

**DJ** The formats will change but I feel very confident that there will always be records to give and own. Lined notes are safe for the time being.

**JK** I think there will always be a market for physical products. Look at the niche success of vinyl, long after it was considered technically obsolete. There will always be some people that want a physical collection of music and for some the attraction of unwrapping a CD at Christmas will never quite be matched by receiving credit for an online store.



MusicWeek  
THE PANEL



From left: (1) Spotify CEO and founder Daniel Ek; (2) Universal Music chairman and CEO David Joseph; (3) IPPI chairman and chief executive John Kennedy; (4) Malcolm McLaren; and (5) EMI Music Publishing UK president Guy Moot

**In the decades ahead, how do you envisage media changing?**

**JK** We are at a crucial juncture in the development of the media. Rupert Murdoch has made the point that his organisation cannot afford to pay journalists if it cannot accrue revenue. That is the challenge – how to secure investment in new content – and it is a problem repeated across the creative sector in the book, film, games, music and television industries. Either governments will recognise that the writ of law must run online to preserve investment in culture or they will not. If they do not, then the incentives to invest in producing and marketing quality content will disappear and we will be in the age of vanity publishing to a highly fragmented market.

**DE** The fragmentation of media, with people in control, pulling what they want and distributing content and recommending content to each other will be a likely way of life over the coming decades. We have seen people consume more and more media in more varied ways and the likes of YouTube and the blogosphere have seen the rise of user-generated content and effective creation of media. We have seen movies made for \$50,000 get major distribution and make it to the cinema, even becoming hits. So media will become fully ubiquitous and even more immediate in terms of consumption and creation.

**GM** Media needs an editorial point of view rather than being a shop window, somewhere to consume music which should be a major opportunity for media and the music industries to come together and both win. What is certain is people will consume media on demand – the notion of the whole family sitting around the radio or television at one time will be different.

**Will the music industry still be a viable business going into the future and, if so, how will the music industry make its money?**

**EJ** It will always be about A&R. If we continue to sign and develop new talent then the rest will sort itself out.

**DE** I think it can certainly be viable if it moves with the times and doesn't continually resist change. I am no expert in terms of the overall industry be that records, publishing, live, merch, et cetera. But as I see it the majors, the indies and management are all in transformation albeit to different degrees. It's about reducing inefficiency, streamlining marketing in terms of embracing the newer, more targeted digital marketing channels and embracing all new channels to market to the consumer and really harnessing the promotional power of online and mobile. Artists have several ways to earn from their creativity and we see more and more of them trying different things, becoming brands, doing interesting things with the way they distribute their music. It's a very exciting time from my point of view and Spotify is hopefully playing its part in that.

**MM** I cannot imagine the music industry as it stands today ever becoming a viable business. Back in the Seventies I thought it was already dead and punk was one way of forcing it to retire, collapse, be made redundant. I still believe the same today. This should have been happening sooner rather than later. The music industry today is like a dead horse that must be put out of its misery. It's full of ill-informed time-wasters and crooks and all it's doing presently is holding on to an ever-decreasing sense of power and thereby stopping the culture moving forward so newer industries can take advantage of pop history and exploit it in far better ways.

**JK** Music companies will be viable businesses in the future. They are diversifying their revenue streams and transform-

ing their business models. Of course, they are doing so in the shadow of a vast online piracy problem. While the industry can limit some of the worst effects of piracy, we need the cooperation of governments and the technology industry to reach a more comprehensive solution to the problem. If online piracy could be significantly reduced, then the nascent success of the US\$4bn digital music industry could be greatly enhanced with all that that means for jobs, growth and investment in new music.

**Do you foresee a day when piracy isn't such a major issue for the music industry and if so, how will it have been tackled?**

**JK** I don't believe we will ever eliminate piracy, but I would like to think that we can reduce online piracy significantly. The UK Government, for example, has talked of a 70 or 80% reduction, which is a welcome and achievable goal. We need to make it more difficult for users to access music illegally and continue to make it easy for them to access music legitimately. Legal services will continue to be highly diverse, tailored to different groups of consumers. A graduated response approach by ISPs to copyright infringement will help migrate people to these legal services. Experience has taught us that the carrot will not work without the stick.

**EJ** We no longer stand alone. Newspapers, film, sports and TV companies are all facing the same issues so our collective voice will be louder. I believe that over a period of time we'll see better legislation as well as consumer and ISP responsibility.

**DE** I guess there will always be piracy from tape and CD bootleggers of old to online and mobile piracy but to me the main way to stay ahead is to embrace and use a lot of those technologies to create experiences that people will actually pay for, whether it be for the music itself or the way they actually experience it and socialise through it.



**Live music will doubtless continue to appeal but are there enough strong fledgling acts today to sustain the stadium performance business of the future?**

**GM** Most definitely. There will be new artists but maybe fewer that fill that criteria but with acts lasting longer, reforming and the festival packages, there should be no shortage of supply.

**MM** I do not know whether the stadium performance of the future will exist in the form it is at present. This old format may be redundant, too, incapable of sustaining itself in this way due to the interactive and do-it-yourself culture that has permeated the industry for several decades – for example, videogames and the talent show. These new businesses have changed the criteria and taste in pop culture a great deal.

**JK** The relative success of the live sector reflects the investment of the recording industry over the past few decades. The reason acts like Blur can sell out Hyde Park or Take That can sell out Wembley and keep crowds enthralled is because they have had so many successful records over the years. Without the marketing and promotional machine that enables artists to have a successful recording career, they are much less likely to be able to attract crowds to fill large venues. However, it is right to wonder whether there are enough stadium acts of the future coming through.

**Music companies today are increasingly getting involved in other entertainment industries (such as TV) and other industries are developing music interests, so will there still be a standalone music industry in the future or will there just be one all-encompassing entertainment industry?**



A sustainable model? U2's mammoth 'claw' live experience

**"I don't know whether the stadium performance of the future will exist in the form it is at present. This old format may be incapable of sustaining itself in the DIY culture..." MALCOLM MCLAREN**

**EJ** It's exciting that our overall companies are evolving into broader music entertainment businesses but at the heart of them record labels must and will continue to be artist-focused/A&R-driven companies, attracting the best talent and with clear creative differences from one another.

**DE** The distinction between a record company and a music/media company is being blurred and the big guys will come into play in more and more areas of the media landscape be that TV, brands, live, merch, but likewise so will a lot of artists and their managers so it will be a more fluid industry playing in lots of revenue streams.

**GM** It will be about music companies with entertainment divisions. I think sometimes in the UK we have forgotten we're in the entertainment industry and not just the artistic industry. I think people such as Simon Cowell used music to produce great entertainment programmes and maybe as an industry we could learn a little more.

**JK** There are obvious synergies between music, film, games and television and I am sure there will be further joint projects in the future, perhaps between business partners or with one company investing directly in several spheres. Whatever label we choose to put on it though, the industry will remain extremely diverse and open to new entrants, with participants ranging from international companies to independent locals that may just have one or two employees.

**The last 50 years have seen the emergence of everything from rock to grime. What do you think the biggest new genre to emerge in the next five decades will be called and sound like?**

**DE** Spunk... Punk in Space

**EJ** I don't care what it's called as long as we discover it first.

**JK** I think someone in 1959 would have had a hard time grasping grime and I think it's equally difficult to predict what new genres will be popular in 2059. Regardless of genre, great music lasts forever. People listened to Elvis in 1959, they listen to him in 2009 and I predict they will still listen to him in 2059. Pop music is not as ephemeral as its critics thought. I hope that people will still be listening to Elton John and the Stone Roses in 2059. I want them as a generation to be able to listen to great new music together too – that's why I am so passionate about the campaign to protect investment in creativity.

**GM** I think it's different these days, the next generation have access at their fingertips. I don't think we will roll from one genre to the next in the same frequency but culture, life and society I'm sure will provide us with new scenes and genres. Personally I would lose my drive if I didn't think there was something coming from round the corner.

**MM** We haven't yet seen the effects of the recent explosion and phenomenon best described as "the talent show", which has emerged through television as well as the live circuit. Or the impact of the video-game industry. These are new genres that have set pop culture on a different path. They will have a lasting impact and change the way future generations get inspired and express their art.

# HIGH-TECH LOWDOWN

How the mistakes and successes of the past have shaped the evermore spectacular progress of music technology

WORDS: Eamonn Forde

**T**he story of the recorded music industry is the story of technological experimentation and new formats opening up new markets. Yet, for every successful format like vinyl, CD and MP3, there have been a number of expensive casualties such as Digital Compact Cassette, MiniDisc (left), DualDisc and quadrasonic vinyl. Other formats, such as eight-track and cassette, were successes at the time but were either superseded or fell out of fashion. Within all this, however, is an important learning process where the mistakes of the past inform the successes of the future.

**"The CD was, and still is, great for business. Its effect on creativity and its aesthetic appeal are not quite so unequivocal. Too many artists felt compelled to try and fill its 80 minutes, and the smaller CD booklet lacked the impact and legibility of an LP's packaging. The legacy of CD might be its stark contrast to the warmth and magic of vinyl, something which young music fans are discovering for themselves alongside the joys of downloading..."**  
**Tony Wadsworth**, chairman of the BPI and former chairman and CEO of EMI

Compression and the need for portability have informed how music technology has advanced. Half a century ago, portability amounted to Danettes and battery-powered radios, but the invention of the compact cassette in 1969 paved the way for the Walkman in 1979 (left). Not long after the Walkman came that other great leap forward in compression – the CD in 1982. In effect, the story since then has been of these two great technologies – the pocket-sized player and the digital carrier – interweaving to bring us the first MP3 players in 1997-98, going mainstream with the iPod in 2001, and resulting in connected model devices such as Sony Ericsson Walkman phones (note the important nod to their history), the iPhone and the Nokia N97 to name but three (pictured below).



The speed of innovation in the past half century has been so pronounced and so accelerated that it has changed not just how consumers get their music but how the music business is financed.

**"The popularity of the MP3 has made a significant impact across the music sector. Newer streaming services such as Spotify and Last.fm would not have seen such a success if people had not already been introduced and acclimatised to the idea of accessing digital, rather than physical, music formats..."**  
**Peter Davies**, marketing manager, 7digital



**"Mobile music services are part of a process that started with portable radios, moved through the Walkmans and MP3 players and on to mobile phones. Music heard on the radio, recommendations from friends, songs played at gigs can all be instantly owned, any time, any place..."**  
**Tim Grimsditch**, global head of product marketing, Nokia Music



Any discussion of technology and the industry cannot ignore the impact of MP3 and online distribution. Digital is both assailable and saviour for the music business and we are currently in the most exciting and most challenging transition period for technology in the industry's lifetime. A decade on from Napster, file-sharing remains a massive problem, but the delivery channels and device market have exploded, fuelling optimism.

**"The music fan is no longer dutifully sitting at the margins of the creative process, waiting for what music makers 'push' out to them. Instead, they are now fully inside this circle, drawing on all available platforms – stores, online, digital, mobile and live to consume and 'pull in' what they want, when and how they want it..."**  
**Simon Fox**, CEO, HMV



From download services such as iTunes and 7digital, through subscription services such as Napster, Comes With Music and eMusic, into streaming services such as Last.fm, We7 and Spotify, and from the iPod into Nokia, Sony Ericsson and the iPhone, the level of innovation is dizzying. It also destroys the myth that the music business has not moved with the times. Of course, things could move faster, but all leaps into the future must be careful and considered ones.

**"The growth in on-demand services is encouraging people to explore more new music, whilst at the same time we are developing immersive products that take fans closer to the artists they love..."**  
**Max Lousada**, chairman, Atlantic Records UK



**"Although it is not always that easy to come up with the perfect product mix, it is very clear that not all consumers want the same things. It is the end of 'one size fits all' releases – utilising all possible variables: price, channel, content, physical, digital – the possibilities are endless..."**  
**Bart Cools**, EMI EVP of marketing for Europe



We are moving from a culture of ownership, ushered in a century ago with the first physical sound carriers, to one of access. With that comes business challenges and also new ways to make money. The physical sound carrier (essentially the CD, although vinyl still has important niche appeal) still provides around 80% of label income, but new access



models are presenting new payment mechanisms – from single-track à-la-carte purchasing, through all-you-can-eat services like Comes With Music and Virgin Media's imminent ISP model and into ad-funded streaming.

**"Streaming has allowed for wider choice – people can choose to access music in the cloud as well as own it. Fans can now connect to and share music much faster than ever before; you can read the latest CD reviews and listen to them instantly..."**  
**Daniel Ek**, CEO and co-founder, Spotify



Technology has opened up yet more markets for the music business; the challenge now lies in wrapping a finance model around them and tailoring content for the specifics of the platform and the channel. The next bold leap will be in interactivity. This is something that mobile apps and services like MXP4 (above, top) are already delivering and the rumoured Cocktail and CMX are expected to bring soon.

**"The dominant music product (i.e. the album) has remained relatively unchanged for decades. The delivery media has changed but the product has remained the same. In the digital age there is no need to release 12-track bundles of music. In fact, in the consumption era, album releases put speed bumps in the artist-fan relationship. A process of product innovation is needed to underpin and guide business model innovation..."**  
**Mark Mulligan**, vice president and research director of consumer product strategy, Forrester Research



**"Talent and technology have been the raw materials of the music industry through history – from the earliest sound-recording devices of the 1880s to the vinyl formats pioneered by Columbia and RCA in the late 1940s to the CD. When technology advanced, the music industry was poised and ready to capitalise on the new tools. The number and variety of digital deals being struck now demonstrates that the industry is embracing the MP3 with the same entrepreneurialism..."**  
**Ged Doherty**, chairman and CEO, Sony Music Entertainment UK



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