Have Sales Finally Hit Bottom?

BY ED CHRISTMAN

NEW YORK—Though U.S. album sales were down last year for the third year in a row—the longest stretch in 20 years—Niel- sen SoundScan numbers still contain some bright spots for 2003. For the full year, album sales declined 3.6% to 667.9 million units from the 693.1 scanned in 2002. But when looking at the fourth quarter, album sales rose 4.7% from the October-December period in 2002. That has caused some executives to proclaim that the industry has hit bottom. Indeed, at mid-year, sales were down 8.6%. That gap was closed (Continued on page 61)

Main St. Meets Madison Ave.
Country Stars Seek Deals Beyond Booze And Trucks

BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

NASHVILLE—With their heartland appeal and loyal fans, country acts have often landed endorsement deals for pickup trucks and booze. But a new generation of artists is trying to branch out to higher-end products normally hawked by rap and rock stars.

“Our consumer is the consumer that the advertisers are trying to reach. They buy the products,” says (Continued on page 14)

Apple Seeds Music Player Race
Consumer Electronics Showdown

BY BRIAN GARRITY

NEW YORK—The race is on in the consumer electronics market to develop an iPod-beater. A host of companies have their sights set on one-upping Apple Computer's white-hot portable music player with a range of devices that they displayed Jan. 7-10 at the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas. The devices compete on everything from price to flexibility, additional features and rival digital music services. But while the number of iPod's rivals grows—with a field that includes Sony, (Continued on page 60)

Run by Lunatics to Bring Music to the Masses.
"With 'The Diary of Alicia Keys' (**** out of four) Alicia Keys takes a creative leap forward. The gorgeous 'You Don't Know My Name' is the album's centerpiece. Alicia Keys has made a superb album."  USA Today

"Alicia Keys' 'Diary' is a knockout with exquisite production, vocals and instrumentals. Keys is the future of real R&B. Bravo!"  Roger Friedman, Fox News

"People Pick: Keys lives up to the staggeringly high expectations set by 'Songs In A Minor'. Like The Godfather Part II, this is the rare sequel that doesn't disappoint. It's that good."  (**** out of four) People Magazine

"It's a stunner, a blend of hip hop with warmth and feeling as well as instant soul classics!"  Rolling Stone

"An immense talent. She makes each moment on the album seem real and her own. Alicia Keys lives up to the enormous expectations for her."  Los Angeles Times

"The Alicia Keys new album is the bomb!"  The View

THE #1 ALBUM IN THE USA (DECEMBER SOUNDSCAN) FEATURES THE #1 SINGLE "YOU DON'T KNOW MY NAME"
### Top of the News

5 **Billboard** exclusively covers Paul Simon's new multi-year, worldwide deal with Universal Music Publishing Group.
6 Producer/label head Pharrell Williams signs a new partnership with Reebok.

### Music

13 The Beat: Pink is ready to jump into her first full-blown headlining tour in March.

20 Beats & Rhymes: Billboard picks who should win—and who will actually win—Grammy Awards in the rap categories.

### Top Albums

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Album</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outkast</td>
<td>Speakerboxxx/Tha Love Below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alison Krauss + Union Station</td>
<td>Union Station Live</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soundtrack</td>
<td>A Series of Unfortunate Events: The End of the Book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switchfoot</td>
<td>The Beautiful Letdown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toby Keith</td>
<td>Shock'n 'Em All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah McLachlan</td>
<td>Remixed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Gotta Have Gospel!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hed PE</td>
<td>Heathen's</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lil Jon &amp; The East Side Boyz</td>
<td>Kicks Off Cruy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senses Fail</td>
<td>From The Depths Of Oblivion (EP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bos Sekg &amp; The Silver Bullet Band</td>
<td>Seannits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marco Antonio Solis</td>
<td>La Historia Continua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alicia Keys</td>
<td>The Diary Of Alicia Keys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sean Paul</td>
<td>Duppy Rock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soundtrack</td>
<td>The Legend Of Zorro: World Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keali'i Reichel</td>
<td>Ke Ali'i Anuuals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Top Singles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outkast</td>
<td>Hey Ya!</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hives</td>
<td>Hatesville</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncle Kracker feat. Doggie Grey</td>
<td>Drift Away</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenny Chesney</td>
<td>There Goes My Life</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annie Lennox</td>
<td>A Thousand Beautiful Things</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deborah Cox</td>
<td>Tattooed Love Letter (The Up Holmes)</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brandy feat. Monica</td>
<td>All About Love</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outkast</td>
<td>Hey Ya! (Radio Mix)</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sin Bandera</td>
<td>Muertos Tan Bies</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outkast</td>
<td>Hey Ya!</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linkin Park</td>
<td>Numb</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alicia Keys</td>
<td>You Don't Know My Name</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outkast feat. Sleepy Brown</td>
<td>The Way You Move</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelis</td>
<td>Milestone</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Videos

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freaky Friday</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pirates Of The Caribbean: The Curse Of The Black Pearl</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crunch-Fat Burning Pilates</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rugrats Go Wild</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linkin Park: Live In Texas</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pumping Iron 25th Anniversary Special Edition</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seabiscuit</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seabiscuit</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Artists & Company Index

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apple Computer Inc.</td>
<td>1, 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBC Film Line</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Entertainment Group Inc.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic Arts Inc.</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ManifestSeats Inc./Stubhub.com</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music Manufacturing Services Group</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reebok International Ltd.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPM Inc.</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPM Management LLC</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sony Music Entertainment Inc.</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sony Music Nashville</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telcel</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Coca-Cola Co.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Inc.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Music &amp; Video Distribution Inc.</td>
<td>18, 22, 27, 38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Music Group</td>
<td>38, 61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Music International</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Music Publishing Group</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**QUOTE OF THE WEEK**

6 Doing a $99, 30-song flash player would be of absolute zero interest to us and our customers.

GREG JOSWIACK, APPLE VP OF HARDWARE Page 60

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**Global**

43 Portugal aims to improve its touring market by focusing on attracting overseas sponsors and acts.

45 Global Pulse: An annual look at which acts will make an impact beyond their homelands in 2004.

**Features**

6 Mileposts
17 Boxscore
30 Billboard Picks
32 The Billboard BackBeat
32 Executive Turntable
44 Hits of the World
47 Classifieds
49 Charts
49 Chart Beat
49 Market Watch
62 Last Word

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**Unpublished**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Album</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joshua Bell</td>
<td>Romance Of The Violin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josh Groban</td>
<td>Closer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry Connick Jr</td>
<td>Rom'y Fro The Holidays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norah Jones</td>
<td>Come Away With Me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Cheetah Girls</td>
<td>The Cheetah Girls (EP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim Brickman</td>
<td>Peace</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Get the first look between the bullets!

Find out Wednesday what everyone else finds out Thursday.

NEW!

Get a jump on the competition with Chart Alert, Billboard's new early chart notification system.

Every Wednesday morning, you'll get the freshest chart data including debuts, weekly sales, chart news, industry trends, and progress reports as well as early chart data for the Billboard 200, Country, R&B/Hip-Hop, Digital Tracks, Heatseekers and more.

Go to billboard.com/chartalert for registration and more information.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>JAY-Z</td>
<td>The Black Album (Roc-A-Fella/Def Jam/MDM)</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>BLINK-182</td>
<td>Bins-182</td>
<td>(Griffon/Interscope)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>NELLY Da Derry Versions: The Reinvention (For Reel/Universal/JMC)</td>
<td>(JMC)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>MISSY ELLIOTT</td>
<td>This Is Not A Test! (The Gold Mind/Eletra/REEG)</td>
<td>(REEG)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>HILARY DUFF</td>
<td>Metamorphosis</td>
<td>(Buena Vista/Hollywood)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>Now 14</td>
<td>(Columbia/Universal/Epic/Zomba/Sony Music)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>TOBY KEITH</td>
<td>Shock'n Vial</td>
<td>(DreamWorks/Nashville/Interscope)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>JOSH GROBAN</td>
<td>Closer</td>
<td>(Reprise/Warner Bros.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>KORN</td>
<td>Take A Look In The Mirror</td>
<td>(Immortal/Epic/Sony Music)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>OUTKAST</td>
<td>Speakerboxx/The Love Below (Arista)</td>
<td>(Arista)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>CLAY AIKEN</td>
<td>Measure Of A Man</td>
<td>(RCA/RMG)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Sheryl Crow</td>
<td>The Very Best Of Sheryl Crow</td>
<td>(A&amp;M/Interscope)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>CLAY AIKEN</td>
<td>Measure Of A Man</td>
<td>(RCA/RMG)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>THE BEATLES</td>
<td>Let It Be</td>
<td>(Apple/EMI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>SHERYL CROW</td>
<td>The Very Best Of Sheryl Crow</td>
<td>(A&amp;M/Interscope)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>SHERYL CROW</td>
<td>The Very Best Of Sheryl Crow</td>
<td>(A&amp;M/Interscope)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>THE BEATLES</td>
<td>Let It Be</td>
<td>(Apple/EMI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>SHERYL CROW</td>
<td>The Very Best Of Sheryl Crow</td>
<td>(A&amp;M/Interscope)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>SHERYL CROW</td>
<td>The Very Best Of Sheryl Crow</td>
<td>(A&amp;M/Interscope)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>ROD STEWART</td>
<td>As Time Goes By</td>
<td>(American)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Indicates sales with greatest sales gains this week.
DVD Maintains Upward Climb

BY JILL KIPNIS

LOS ANGELES—DVD continued its reign as the sexiest consumer entertainment product in 2003. Heightened interest in the hot format propelled total consumer spending on DVD titles in 2003 to $22.5 billion, compared with $9.2 billion spent at the theatrical box office, according to a Jan. 8 announcement by Los Angeles-based Digital Entertainment Group (DEG) at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas.

The DEG reports that DVD accounted for 72% of all home video transactions last year, an increase of 18.2% over 2002 transactions. DVD sales increased 33% over 2002 figures to reach a total of $11.6 billion. Further, DVD rental revenue totaled $4.5 billion in 2003, a 55% increase over 2002.

A record 1 billion DVD software units were shipped in 2003, the DEG says, bringing the total number of units shipped since the format's launch in 1997 to 2.4 billion discs. In fourth-quarter 2003 alone, 381 million DVD units shipped to retailers. Approximately 29,000 individual DVD titles are now available.

“One of the things that is surprising is that we shipped 1 billion in the first six years and 1 billion in 2003,” says Amy Jo Donner, executive director of the DEG. “We did in 2003 what we had done in all of the previous years combined. There is clearly a sweet spot for the marketing of the products. There is a depth and variety of products to appeal to all customers. There is a large amount of titles at different price points across all the genres that have fabulous features.”

By the end of 2003, DVD players were in more than half of U.S. homes, the DEG says. The organization predicts that two-thirds of U.S. homes will have a player by the end of this year and that an additional 30 million players will be sold.

About 34 million DVD players were sold to consumers in 2003, according to figures compiled by the DEG and based on data from the Consumer Electronics Assn. This is a 34% increase over 2002’s DVD player sales.

Additionally, 17 million DVD players were sold in fourth-quarter 2003, which is a 29% increase over fourth-quarter 2002’s sales figure.

The DEG reports that more than 90 million DVD players have been sold since 1997 and that about 37% of DVD owners have more than one player.

(Continued on page 68)
Pharrell Williams Slips Into Reebok Partnership

BY RASHAUN HALL

Following the footsteps of fellow artist/entrepreneurs Jay-Z and 50 Cent, Pharrell Williams—one-half of the Neptunes and CEO of the Star Trak recording label—is getting into the fashion business with Reebok.

Williams and the Canton, Mass.-based footwear and apparel company recently announced a long-term licensing partnership that includes Ice Cream, a collection of men’s and women’s Rbk footwear, and Billionaire Boys Club, a men’s apparel collection.

“I just wanted to share my vision for what some of clothes shout like,” Williams says. “Jay-Z suggested Reebok to me as a way of expanding my vision because he thought it was cool.”

Slated to launch this summer, the line will be available only in selected high-end boutiques and better department store locations.

“Pharrell is a hybrid of youth culture,” Rbk VP Rodd Krinsky says. “He represents a lot of what kids represent today— he’s not stuck in a box of being one thing. He’s a very versatile person, and his music reflects that.

“The goal of getting involved with Pharrell was that we loved his energy, and we also loved the cross-section of consumers that he reaches,” he adds. “He gets us into areas that we’re not really strong in right now.”

Williams and Reebok are developing an integrated global marketing and grassroots campaign to promote the collections.

News From Pew Skewed?

BY BILL HOLLAND

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Are fewer Americans using music file-sharing programs? Maybe. Depends on who you talk to.

Most—but not all—online music industry analysts say they agree to some extent with the findings of a study released by the Pew Internet & American Life Project over the Jan. 2 weekend reporting that illegal music file sharing is down among those 18 and older.

Analysts and execs from peer-to-peer monitoring companies say, however, their data does not show the precipitous 50% dip that the Pew survey found. They also point out that the new survey excludes teens, the most active P2P users.

Pew researchers interviewed 3,358 Internet users from Nov. 18 to Dec. 14 and found that the percentage of music file downloadders had fallen to 14% from the 29% the project had reported last spring, dropping from 35 million users to 18 million users.

The groups that recorded the steepest plunges were women (a 58% decrease), those with some college education (a 61% decrease) and parents with children living at home (a 58% decrease).

The study includes very recent data from ComScore Media Metric, based on a continuously measured consumer panel, which show significant declines from November 2002 to November 2003: 15% for Kazaa, 25% for WinMX, 9% for BearShare and 59% for Grokster.

That contrasts with findings from Websnips, which compiles data on computer requests for P2P music files for such companies as Nielsen SoundScan. A Websnips analyst says that his data does not show any decline in P2P usage.

“Folks might tell Pew something, but the facts are, we’ve not seen a dip,” Web

spins consultant John Fogat says. “In fact, over the Christmas break, we found there was actually a 5% increase in requests for file sharing music files.”

Most monitoring companies execs say that the industry’s educational and enforcement efforts, coupled with the availability of viable pay services, will eventually overcome infringing P2P outfits.

Coke, BBC Deal Goes Flat

Broadcasters Nixes U.K. Chart Tie-In

BY EMMANUEL LEGRAND

LONDON—The partnership between Coca-Cola and the U.K. pop charts has had its ups and downs before the deal was consummated.

State broadcaster the BBC, which carries the radio and TV countdown chart shows, announced Jan. 2 the decision to remove credits of Coca-Cola as the charts’ sponsor.

Consequently, the weekly shows broadcast on BBC Radio 1 and TV channel BBC1 will remain sponsor-less.

The BBC says the decision was made in consultation with the Official U.K. Charts Co. (OCC), which compiles the country’s singles and albums sales charts. In December, OCC had inked a two-year sponsorship deal with Coca-Cola, effective Jan. 1.

The Coca-Cola brand was to receive two verbal credits during the Radio 1 chart show and be identified via text credits on the TV show “Top of the Pops.”

Last December, when the sponsorship deal was announced, the BBC came under harsh criticism (Billboard, Dec. 13, 2003). Some politicians and public figures complained that the BBC should not be featuring commercial brands because it is a public broadcaster.

To make matters worse, the British government had launched a campaign targeting obesity and calling for restrictions on food advertising targeting consumers under the age of 12.

Industry sources say the BBC’s decision has stunned the OCC.

In early December, news of Coca-Cola as the charts’ sponsor did not seem to pose a problem, but observers link the recent U-turn by the BBC to the intense political pressure currently on the corporation.

“It’s as if the BBC has been willing to send a signal to the government that it is getting its house in order,” (Continued on page 48)
GARY STEWART
1945 - 2003

You were a
“Flat Natural Born Good-Timin’ Man”
and you will be missed.

Your RCA Family.
Belgian Consumer Group Sues Over CD Protection

BY LEO CENDROWICZ

BRUSSELS—Once more, record companies’ attempts to sell copy-protected CDs in Europe have raised consumers’ hackles.

Belgian consumer watchdog group Test-Achats/Test Aankoop is suing four of the major record companies for installing copy-control software on CDs, which they claim hinder playback on car stereos and computers. EMI, Universal Music Group, Sony Music and BMG are named in the suit.

In a statement, Test-Achats said it is suing those companies over their efforts to prevent consumers from making private copies of CDs since such action is specifically authorized under Belgian law.

“The majors are not above the law,” the statement said. “The technical processes used by the record companies against piracy are illegal: They prevent any consumer who has legally acquired and paid for the rights of the original CDs to make a private copy.”

The group says private copying is authorized under a 1994 Belgian law that prevents authors from banning copies of sound or audiovisual works made within a family context.

Test-Achats cites a number of CDs released by the defendants that incorporate blocking devices, including Shakira’s “Laundry Service” (Epic) and Radiohead’s “Hail to the Thief” (Parlophone).

The International Federation of the Phonographic Industry counters that the copyright protection does not break the law. The IFPI claims that the European Union’s new Copyright Directive—which has yet to be translated into Belgian law—allows rights-holders to use such measures.

“European law is clear that record companies and other copyright holders have the right to protect their works through technical means,” the IFPI said in a statement. “This is particularly important to discourage widespread unauthorized copying and Internet distribution of recorded music. We do not believe that legal challenges to these technologies have any merit.”

The IFPI also dismissed Test-Achats’ claims that the 1994 law made protection devices illegal. “This is no more or less than the private copying exception that exists in most EU member states. This exception to copyright does not put into question the use of technical measures,” it said.

Test-Achats spokesman Jean-Philippe Ducart accepted that the EU copyright law could uphold the IFPI’s claims, but he insisted that this new law had yet to be implemented by the Belgian government.

He said the Brussels judge who is overseeing the case should reach a decision by the end of March, well ahead of any reading of the law by the Belgian parliament.

“We are not launching a revolution here. We are just defending consumer rights as they are reflected in the current Belgian laws,” he said.

The move comes four months after a French court threw out a similar claim by consumers body UFC-Que Choisir against EMI Recorded Music France. But the court ruled that the playback limitations of EMI’s copy protection were “hidden” and ordered the company to reimburse the consumer on whose behalf the case was brought.

BELGIAN CONSUMER GROUP SUES OVER CD PROTECTION

For Zelnick, It’s Time Life

Record Vet Expands Direct-Marketing Portfolio

BY BRIAN GARRITY

NEW YORK—Time Inc. has sold its money-losing Time Life direct-marketing unit, a leading seller of music and video products through TV ads and infomercials, to an investment group fronted by former BMG chairman/CEO Strauss Zelnick.

Financial terms of the deal were not disclosed.

Under the agreement, Time Life will be owned and operated by Direct Holdings Worldwide—a holding company controlled by Zelnick’s asset-management business, ZelnickMedia, and private-equity investor Ripplewood Holdings. Since its founding three years ago, ZelnickMedia has worked closely with Ripplewood on several media opportunities.

Direct Holdings also owns the Lilian Vernon Corp., a direct-marketer of gift merchandise. As part of the deal, Lillian Vernon and Time Life will share back-end functions as fulfillment and distribution/marketing platforms.

Zelnick serves as chairman/CEO of Direct Holdings, which, with the addition of Time Life, is expected to have an annual revenue in excess of $500 million.

Music and video product will continue to be sold under the Time Life brand. As part of the purchase, Direct Holdings has acquired an exclusive long-term license for the worldwide use of the name in the direct marketing of music, video, books and educational software.

Zelnick says the deal builds on a larger strategy first initiated last summer with the purchase of Lillian Vernon—to create a stable of leading direct-marketing brands.

Time Inc. says it is selling the business to concentrate on “high-growth opportunities” in its core magazine businesses and brands.

Sources say Time Life has been hampered by high operating costs and inefficient systems on the back end. Another source familiar with the company says Time Inc. was facing shutting it down or engaging in a costly turnaround.

Last year, Time Life posted a $50 million loss on sales of $350 million, sources say. Three years ago, Time Life was generating sales in the $600 million to $700 million range.

Additional reporting by Ed Christman in New York.

APPLE ATV%27S TIGHTENED SPORTS SCHEDULE

NEWSLINE

THE WEEK IN BRIEF

Napster, data-storage developer Imation and accessories company Case Logic have teamed to sell Napster-branded products at Target stores in the U.S. Blank CDs and DVDs from Imation and CD cases from Case Logic will feature the Napster “kittychow” logo. The items will be available from Feb. 15 at Target. Napster’s division of Roxio, says the products will be sold alongside prepaid Napster download cards and the Napster Burnpack software package. The latter will contain Napster 2.0 and Roxio’s Easy CD & DVD Creator 6. Additionally, visitors to Target’s Web site will be able to register for Napster’s la carte or subscription services. In other news, Napster has announced a deal with Lawrenceville, N.J.-based technology company Digital 5, which creates wireless software for DVDs, TVs and stereo. The move will enable users of Napster’s premium subscription service to stream music directly to their home entertainment systems. It is not known when the Digital 5 services will become available.

NAPA Auto Parts has signed on as the title sponsor for Alan Jackson’s 2004 concert tour, which launches Jan. 23 in Fort Myers, Fla. The trek will include more than 50 dates, as Jackson’s McRide will open some of the shows. Jackson will be featured in radio and print marketing for NAPA Auto Parts stores and NAPA Auto Care Centers and will also be featured on in-store displays. (For more on country artist sponsorship deals, see stories, pages 1 and 27).

THE DVD piracy case against Norwegian Jon Johansen will not be brought for another appeal, according to a statement from the Norwegian police. Johansen, accused of writing and publishing a DVD-descrambling system to pirate DVDs, was first acquitted of piracy charges last January (Billboard, Jan. 18, 2003). He was cleared again in an Oslo appeals court Dec. 22. The charges were brought by the Norwegian police on behalf of the major film studios.

Dualtone Music Group in Nashville has signed John Arthur Martinez to its roster. The Texas-based singer is the second-place finisher (behind Buddy Jewell) in last year’s “Nashville Star” talent competition series on USA Networks. His first single goes to country radio in March.

Crest National, a Hollywood-based media company providing film, video, audio and replicating services, has purchased the assets of Concord Disc Manufacturing in Anaheim, Calif. Concord Disc Manufacturing CEO John Lee will be retained as a consultant. The acquisition will double Crest’s DVD- and CD-replication capability and nearly quadruple its automated packaging capabilities, Crest National president Ronald Stein said in a statement. Crest National was the first North American manufacturer of the hybrid Super Audio CD format, commencing production in December 2002.

iTunes Taps Billboard Charts

Starting Jan. 6, visitors to Apple’s iTunes Music Store were greeted with another familiar icon: Billboard’s famous logo.

In a multi-year licensing deal, iTunes is now posting The Billboard Hot 100 year-end pop charts from 1946 through the present. Patrons can click on the songs that Apple has secured the rights to for purchase.

“The new Billboard Top 100 charts on the iTunes Music Store make it easy for people to find the music they love from important periods of their lives, from every year, and to rediscover music they might have forgotten,” says Peter Lowe, Apple’s director of consumer and product marketing. “At the end of the day, the consumer is the one that wins out,” says Sam Bell, director of business development for VNU eMedia. (VNU is Billboard’s parent company). The charts “also give Apple a guide in terms of what to pursue to get download rights from the labels as we go back in time.”

The Hot 100 postings are only the start. In coming weeks and months, the site will include year-end listings of top songs for R&B, country, rap, rock, Latin and dance.
How to leverage product placement without bastardizing the production? How to create additional revenue streams from content? How to make a decent salad when there's absolutely no arugula?

So many questions. But that's hardly surprising considering the growing complexity that is reshaping the entertainment industry. Whether the issue is using movies to market brands or using brands to market movies, fresh thinking is required at every turn. The kind of thinking that's fueled by sharper vision and deeper insights. The kind of fuel that's found in one publication alone. The Hollywood Reporter.
The Next Piracy War

The next front in the piracy war is rapidly unfolding. This time, the film industry is under assault, and the damage is swiftly escalating. But to paraphrase the immortal Al Jolson, they ain't seen nothing yet.

Just ask the music industry. During the past three years, physical and online piracy have ravaged the industry to the tune of billions of dollars and thousands of jobs.

In Germany, Mexico and a number of other countries, the majority of the music sold is illegal. The legitimate music industry has been almost shut out of those markets.

Until recently, movie piracy has been much more of a nuisance than a threat. But technology is rapidly tipping the scales in favor of the pirates.

As staff writer Jill Kipnis noted in her front-page story last issue (Billboard, Jan. 10), the movie "Terminator 3" could be downloaded for free from the Internet even before it had been released in DVD form.

Last year, more than 160,000 Web sites were offering pirated movie downloads, according to the Motion Picture Assn. of America. In all, it estimates that the industry is losing about $3 billion a year to all forms of piracy.

While the industry has attempted to take steps to thwart illegal activity, technology is changing faster than it can respond.

Groups have organized to rip off and trade movies illegally over the Internet, and they are using increasingly sophisticated digital recorders to film movies in theaters. The movies are near DVD quality.

As Kipnis noted, DVD recorders are one of the hottest consumer products on the market. But that's only the tip of the iceberg. A French company, Archos SA, has already begun manufacturing a Palm Pilot-like device that can record and play up to 160 two-hour films.

At this week's Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, other manufacturers are slated to unveil similar portable video players. Most, but not all, will block copying of protected DVDs.

Here's an irony the music industry will appreciate. While the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) requires VCRs to include technology to block copying, it doesn't specifically mention recording video to a hard drive. Thus, Archos' SDN device does not contain any blocking software.

"There is a large legal vacuum," Archos founder Henri Crohas acknowledged in an interview with The Wall Street Journal.

Indeed, the legal front looks grim as well. In Norway, an appeals court recently cleared a 20-year-old who had been charged with piracy for distributing software on the Internet that allowed users to copy protected DVD movies.

Even worse, the recent flap over the industry's attempt to ban movie "screeners" (which have ended up being pirated) showed just how much disarray the film community is in.

With technology changing so quickly, the courts are unable to respond because the DMCA is already outdated. That means a legislative solution is urgently needed.
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Key Industry Sectors Get Financial Boost From External Investors

Good Fortune Flows From Outside

Although the music industry has now endured the worst recession in two decades and a 25% erosion of its traditional sales base during the past four years, this will be remembered as the year when external investment provided the spark for an upturn in fortunes. The avalanche of negative press last year obscured very positive and significant shifts in momentum. Although U.S. record sales are down from 2002 levels—a year-to-date decline of 5.1%—our earlier forecasts were tracking that decline at more than twice that—12%.

In the U.K., third-quarter album shipments actually grew by more than 7% from the same period in 2002. Are these the positive signs that we have been hoping for? Perhaps, but such changes are only part of the story.

In 2003, significant amounts of external investment capital flowed into two key music industry arenas: digital distribution and label acquisitions. At the beginning of the year, the most prominent digital distribution initiatives were MusicNet and Pressplay—two ventures largely funded by the music labels. These services overcame considerable licensing challenges and effectively laid the groundwork for independent and well-funded companies to bring their unique skills to the challenge of distributing music digitally.

In April, Steve Jobs put his reputation (and a considerable amount of Apple’s resources) on the line for his much-heralded launch of the Macintosh-based version of iTunes. Then, in June, Rosio raised $22 million in a private placement; capital that would help fund the $39.5 million cash and stock purchase of Pressplay’s assets, as well as the $5.3 million purchase of the Napster brand and assets.

In August, RealNetworks completed its $26 million acquisition of listen.com and its Rhapsody digital music service. Each of these external investments reflects the growing sense of optimism in creating profitable digital music-distribution businesses.

iTunes has now ignited a frenzied effort from many key retail and technology players to capture a share of the digital distribution market. The success of iTunes in selling more than 20 million tracks by year’s end proved that digital music could be sold in an elegant and easy way while still protecting the rights of music labels and artists.

Leading retail companies such as Amazon.com, Best Buy and Walmart; technology companies such as Microsoft; and hardware companies such as Hewlett-Packard and Dell each plan to launch or relaunch new music services in the coming year. Even lifestyle brands such as Coke and MTV are planning new, branded music services. Momentum is also building outside the U.S. O2 currently offers and licenses its service in Europe and Australia. And Apple and Napster 2.0 announced plans to offer digital music services in Japan in the coming year.

With the success of digital music services such as iTunes, music labels can now focus on the signing, development and marketing of artists. Previously, music labels were required to absorb considerable manufacturing and distribution costs up to the point of sale, including those for digital distribution. In 2003 alone, more than $200 million in external investment funding has flown into the digital distribution environment, according to some estimates.

Next year promises additional external investment and exciting new product innovations, which should result in a robust and compelling array of digital music choices for consumers.

The past year was also characterized by external investment capital flowing into music label acquisitions. The expected purchase of the Warner Music Group by Edgar Bronfman Jr. and his partners was notable not only for its size—$2.6 billion—but for its timing in the digital music world of respected financiers: Thomas H. Lee Partners, Bain Capital, Providence Equity Partners and Lehman Bros.

All of this is the setting that will surely follow (measures that would have been equally inevitable in an EMI-partnered scenario), the new investment group will be more committed to investing in building a growth company than a publicly traded media conglomerate such as Time Warner might have afforded.

Several other highly reputable private equity firms and investors continue to demonstrate serious interest in acquiring music labels, suggesting that music assets may now be undervalued, given the promising developments in digital distribution and a potentially brightening industry outlook.

How will the investment inflows into digital distribution and into label acquisitions affect the health of the music business?

The investments the major labels make in restructuring will ultimately create stronger, more capable companies, while outside capital will fund and ensure the development of digital distribution.

External investors have now recognized that consumers are rapidly adopting a digital lifestyle and that music continues to be the driving force in personal entertainment.

The adoption of home networks centered around personal computers as “digital hubs” where music, as well as television, movies, photos, videos and games are all available on demand in any room.

At the same time, music’s new frontier will likely come in the form of digital exploitation across a diverse range of hand-held devices—cell phones, PDAs and portable digital music players—similar to what is currently unfolding in Korea and Japan.

True mobility will allow for the ultimate pay-off—a potential $100 billion industry in recorded music.

Charles Goldstuck is RCA Music Group president.

Taking Issue

By Charles Goldstuck

Letters

Breadth, Range of Pop Music Is Shrinking On Hot 100

In the early 90s, I believe, Billboard switched its tabulation system toward the Nielsen SoundScan system, in order to reflect a more diverse and fairer chart system.

Now, a decade later, it is a rarity to find a single by a non-hiphop or R&B artist in the top 10. Throughout the top 40, pop grew lock, stock and barrel. These services are consistently in a kind of second tier where they tend to rise generally only into the 20s or 30s on The Billboard Hot 100. It would seem to be the least diverse time in the history of American popular music, if one takes the Billboard charts as gospel. Fortunately, created-popular music of all types is still being produced, both in the studio and in performance.

Isn’t it time that Billboard consider another revision to more fairly represent the breadth of the American popular music scene?

The discrepancy between the airplay and the singles charts reveals some of the inequities, but history makes it obvious.

Contrast this era with the decades of the ’60s and ’70s and even the now-distant ’90s, and one is struck with the new prejudice of the American music business. (I won’t even delve into the ridiculously irresponsible and unconsidered writing of some of the “top singles” and the marketing of sex, drugs and violence to our young people. That’s another, probably more important study.)

There is an “Emporer’s Clothes” mentality at present, but so many musicians, writers and performers that I’ve talked to are troubled by it all. I think it’s time that someone in the music media has the guts to tackle this sad trend.

Even when Elvis and the Beatles reigned, there was diversity in those admittedly culture-shocking and changing times. I feel a sense of sadness for today’s youngsters, who will never know the breadth and range of creativity that popular music had in the often-criticized ’70s.

But there’s the way it is. Obviouisly, some of this trend must be due to the demise of a successful, old-fashioned top 40 that played a variety of contemporary musical styles. However, the heavy valua­tion of airplay from hip-hop and R&B formats seems to be making the competition on the Hot 100 almost nonexistent.

Johns Smatla
Producer/Musician
Hackensack, N.J.

Legit File-Sharing Services Flawed

It was with great interest that I read your story about the ascent of “Mad World” from the “Donnie Darko” soundtrack to the U.K. No. 1 position for Christmas week (“Unknown Sound,” Holiday No. 1,” billboard.com, Dec. 22, 2003). As a longtime Tears for Fears fan and a new iPod convert, I wanted to purchase the song ASAP. I found the CD for sale at cdbaby.com and was able to listen to a short clip and decided I really wanted to buy this track.

So I searched iTunes, and I searched Napster, and I searched buysmuz.com, and I searched emu­sic.com, and you guessed it... I found nothing.

There is no reason that a No. 1 song should be nowhere to be found in the marketplace.

Here is an idea that may already have been discussed. Let the Recording Industry Assn. of America do something useful and create a complete database repository of recorded music as a Web service from which any legitimate online e-tailer could sell songs. Or at least sell songs that are not in their own catalog yet.

The industry needs to quit relying on third parties to make this model work and take an active part in building what consumers want: easy, instant access to legitimate downloads.

Brent Roberts
Washington, D.C.

Brent Roberts is a recording artist with Deepnote and owner of Col­labitat Records in Washington, D.C.
Pink Ready For Headline Tour

In March, Pink will start her first full-blown headlining tour. “I can’t wait!” she tells Billboard. “The first album, I had a DAT and dancers. The second album, I had a live band and no dancers. This time I have it all. I love theatrics. It’s not going to be an $18 million stage, because I still believe in the rawness of just music, but it’s going to be awesome.”

After beginning overseas, the tour will hit the States in late spring/early summer.

COMING UP: Norah Jones will release her second Blue Note album Feb. 10. The 13-track “Feels Like Home” was produced by Jones and Arif Mardin. First single “Sunrise” goes to radio Jan. 12. The project is Jones’ follow-up to her multiple Grammy Award-winning Blue Note debut, “Come Away With Me,” which has sold 7.8 million copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

ROUND TWO: “Songwriters in the Round: Generations 2” will be held Jan. 27 at the China Club in New York. The benefit for VH1’s Save the Music Foundation will feature Goo Goo Dolls’ John Rzeznik, Angie Stone, Dallas Austin, Lamont Dozier, BeBe Winans and Darius Rucker. The evening will be moderated by Jimmy Jan. BMI Music Publishing’s Evan Lamber is the event chairman, while artist manager Michael Lippman and VH1 GM Christina Norman are co-chairs. Tickets cost $500.

Last year’s event raised $100,000.

HELPING HAND: Paul Atkinson, veteran record executive and guitarist for the Zombies, will be feted Jan. 27 when the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences honors him with its President’s Merit Award. The evening will double as a fundraiser for the newly established Atkinson Family Trust. Atkinson, who is on dialysis for kidney failure, has been diagnosed with inoperable cancer. Money raised from the evening will help defray the family’s medical costs.

The affable Atkinson was most recently with EMI/Capitol’s catalog division but has also held stints as head of A&R for MCA, RCA and CBS (before it was Sony).

The event, at the House of Blues in Los Angeles, will be hosted by Shadoe Stevens. Performers include the Zombies, Brian Wilson, Bruce Hornsby, Richard Page, Michael Penn and Patty Smyth.

To purchase tickets, which are priced at $250, or to make a donation, call Kory Klein at 310-826-8660. Anyone with items for a silent auction should send an e-mail to jimmy.edwards@wmj.com.

THE CHOSEN FEW: Six acts have been chosen by a panel of Billboard editors to compete in the Southwest Showcase Finals of the Independent Music World Series Jan. 15 at the Knitting Factory in Los Angeles. Andy Ridley of San Diego; Beth Waters of Albany, Calif.; Deadman of Dallas; Elouise Burrell of Oakland, Calif.; the Mos Generator of Port Orchard, Wash.; and the Mates of Santa Barbara.

Awards will be presented in five categories: Best Overall Performance, Best Original Song, Best Vocal Performance, Best Instrumental Performance and Best Band/Group.


dominate top 40 radio that the line between pop and R&B/hip-hop has become more of a blurry smudge.

But as history tells, the dominant sound that defines top 40 is cyclical as the seasons, and this latest trend may be showing signs of wear as a number of young male rock bands—such as Simple Plan, Trapt and Maroon5—flex muscle at mainstream radio.

Likewise, some programmers are eager to nurture a new generation of young pop artists, beginning with the likes of Hilary Duff and Stacie Orrico.

Programmers admit that too much of any one sound is never good for the long-term health of the format. They insist that they’re searching for more balance on their playlists to bring the format back toward the center—if only they can find the hits.

“It’s easy to jump on the trend and play every hip-hop record on your desk, but it doesn’t protect your format,” says John Kvey, PD of mainstream top 40 powerhouse KIIS Los Angeles. “Top 40 was designed for kids and their mothers to listen to together. Where you create a disconnect is in being too hip-hop, too rough. We need to search for more of those mass-appeal records.”

POLARIZING FORCE

Guy Zapolone, president of Zapolone Media Strategies, which oversees Billboard/Airplay Monitor’s Hit Predictor chart, agrees that the massive influx of R&B/hip-hop product may polarize listeners.

“With 50 Cent breaking through big early last year, a lot of R&B/hip-hop songs were given a chance,” he says. “But their charting average was lower at a lot of radio stations, with only the more rhythmic stations having success with most of them, while most top 40s dispersed these to nights.

“We’re definitely in the drumless phase, where top 40 radio is suffering from a lack of good music,” he adds. “I think the format has been holding its own just not at the heights of the glory years of the late 90s and 2000.

“Top 40 has been coming up with fewer new ideas, and it’s taking less chances with its talent, contesting and even music,” he says. “Combine that with the economy choking programming and marketing budgets, consolidating reducing manpower, and we’re seeing more lean times ahead for the format.”

DEFLATED POP

The charts certainly support the theory that 2003 represented a year in which the pop in top 40 was largely deflated.

Among 2003’s top Billboard Hot 100 artists, Justin Timberlake was the only one among the leading five that did not also rank among the top R&B/hip-hop artists of the year. He joins 50 Cent, R. Kelly, Sean Paul and Beyoncé.

Further, among the top airplay songs of the year on the Hot 100, a whopping seven of the top 10 are R&B/hip-hops.

(Continued on page 14)
Country Stars
Continued from page 1

John Rose, senior executive of sales and marketing at DreamWorks Records Nashville.
Still, some think the image of most country stars is too unihp for many marketers.
"Madison Avenue tends to go with what is the popular culture of the moment," RCA Label Group chairman Joe Galante says. "They are more about the moment than hitting the middle of America. It's about being cool, it's about being hip and also being popular."

Of course, Galante sees this as a miscalculation.
"Most of the cities in this country are like what Nashville represents or Chattanooga or Austin. That's what makes up America. But for the most part, people are stuck in L.A. or New York, and that's their version of what America really wants."

Country Endorsements

![NEWFIELD SPORTS WRAP RANGER 20 JEANS](image)

Other suggests that past endorsement deals have stereotyped country acts as promoters of boots, boxo and vehicles.
"Par for it," Rose says. "The depth of artistry of country acts is huge. We have the largest reach at radio, and our product sells in both urban and rural areas."
Shania Twain and Faith Hill are crossover country artists in many ways more than one. They have appeared on the pop charts as well as in major campaigns for Revlon and Cover Girl, respectively. Twain was also recently featured in a campaign by Benefid Foods and Glamour magazine selling a new lipstick, Shania Red, with proceeds going to the American Heart Assn.
Toby Keith was included in telephone company ads for MCI's 10-10-200 long-distance campaign.
Reba McEntire and LeAnn Rimes just signed a deal to star in national TV spots for Dr Pepper. The ads are part of Dr Pepper's "Built Ford Tough" campaign which previously featured Garth Brooks. They will also star Smokey Robinson, Ana Gabriel and Patricia Manterola.
Alessio Peri, VP of marketing for Mr. Coffee, has been tapping into country music. Mr. Coffee, the company enlisted Keith for a print campaign in hopes that he could help change consumer impressions of the company's products.
"We wanted to communicate to our consumers that Mr. Coffee is not your grandmother's coffee maker anymore," Peri says.
The campaign started in 2002 with TV personality Cars in Daly and snowboarder Chris Klug. "We want to communicate that Mr. Coffee is young, active, energetic and relevant," Peri explains.
Tim McGraw's manager, Scott Siman of Nashville-based RPM Management, says his artist has also been offered a wide range of "endorsement opportunities" outside of the stereotypical categories.

REELING IN THE DEALS

"There is certainly an increase in the number of artists who are involved in brands," says Rick Murray, senior director of strategic marketing for the Country Music Assn.
Murray says the CMA is trying to entice companies to use country acts, working to develop the marketplace with ad agencies and corporate brands as well as TV and film producers.
"We go to the key advertising areas, notably Chicago, New York, Atlanta and L.A., and we talk to ad agencies about the country music audience," he says. A personal touch is vital to these efforts. "We bring artists to meet with some of these brand managers at a special dinner or reception," Murray says. "We also provide tickets for members of the brand team or agency to see the artist live in concert."
The CMA also sends a quarterly newsletter to 2,000 corporate marketers "talking about success stories and tours that are coming up," Murray says.
And some companies return the favor. In Trick Pony's case, Price Oil takes care of the trio's gasoline needs at home and on the road.
Additionally, most acts get significant multimedia promotion value from their endorsement deals (see story, page 27).

LOYALTY COUNTS

There are several important reasons that major brands are interested in deals with country acts: the music's appeal to a broad range of consumers, the general lack of parental advisory stickers on their music and the loyalty of country fans.
"One thing the country genre is so well-known for is certainly being a little more heart to heart with its fans. It's almost like family," Trick Pony's Heidi Newfield says.
That is one of the reasons Wrangler jeans works with so many country artists, Wrangler marketing manager Eddie Brooks-Bryant says.
The Greensboro, N.C.-based company has deals with about 40 country artists, including Newfield, George Strait, Phil Vassar, Brad Paisley, Randy Travis, Trace Adkins, Daryll Worley and Tracy Byrd.
The deals range from providing jeans for the artists to multi-level licensing arrangements.
For example, Strait has his own signature line of shirts through Wrangler, which has been involved in his career for some 20 years.
Brooks-Bryant says Wrangler's relationship with country music is a natural. "Most people who wear Wrangler jeans listen to country music, and they want to think they are a cowboy or be like a particular artist."
Wrangler is hoping young women will want to wear the 20X brand of Wranglers that Newfield sports.
"She's a female who is both contemporary and edgey, who wants our product and look good in it," Brooks-Bryant says. "It's trendy and fashionable enough that a very hip, very contemporary artist would wear it."

SELLING WITH A SMILE

When Mr. Coffee tapped Keith to represent its brand, it was looking for someone who "is young and full of energy, active, in style and a relevant figure," Pena says.
The company is reinforcing its country music links with an Internet contest to win a trip to the Academy of Country Music Awards.
Ford Motor Co. has also turned to country in general and Keith in particular.
We knew that country music was a key market for us because more than 60% of truck owners listen to country radio," says Rich Stoddart, Ford division marketing communications manager.
Stoddart says a country star like Keith perfectly represents the "Built Ford Tough" motto.
"We wanted someone who epitomized what 'Built Ford Tough' was all about. We wanted someone who really kind of lived the brand."

Top 40 Radio

Continued from page 13

Based. Only 3 Doors Down, Matchbox Twenty and Evanescence Featuring Paul McCoy broke the mold.
The hip-hop and R&B explosion at top 40 is more sudden than one might suspect.
In 2002, artists representing the year-end Hot 100 were as diverse as Nickelback, Ashanti, Nelly, the Calling and Vanessa Carlton.
In 2001, Lifeshare, Alize Keys, Janet Jackson, Train and Jennifer Lopez featu-

ning Ja Rule offered a varied palette of genres at the top of the year-end chart.
During top 40's previous dominant trend—the teen-pop explosion of the late 1990s—diversity still managed to command the airwaves, with TLC, Coo Coo Dolls, Monica, Backstreet Boys, S'gao Ray and 702 all in the top 10 for 1999.

GIVING THEM WHAT THEY WANT?

As well, it appears that top 40 programmers today are not necessarily playing what the general public is most interested in hearing.
Zapoleon counts off songs he feels the public should hear: Evanescence's "Going Under," Sugarland's "Bouncing Off The Walls," Beu Sisters' "I Was Only (Seventeen)" and Atomic Kitten's "Tide Is High."
"There were a lot of songs from left field that could have been hits," he says. "I don't think enough programmers are using their ears to take chances on songs. It's sad but isn't being pushed by the labels."
Among the top-selling singles of 2003, a significant number were pretty much hands-off on pop station playlists, in large part because of the singles in the top five, all related to Fox TV phenomenon "American Idol": "This Is The Night" by Clay Aiken, "Flying Without Wings" by Ruben Studdard and "God Bless the U.S.A." by the American Idol Finalist.
"Clay Aiken is such a polarized deal; people either love him or hate him," says Tracy Austin, PD of mainstream top 40 KRBE, Houston.
"If the product is there, we're always open," she says. "We've had great success with Kelly Clarkson, and I think she's going to be around to stay—but we may be reaching critical mass very soon with the whole 'American Idol' phenomenon. I just don't know how many more of these we can sustain."
Ivey adds, "You know, I always say, 'The first in a trend does well, the second does OK but the third one has it tough.' Kelly Clarkson is very good and Clay has a rabid fan base, but I'm not sold on Ruben yet.
So while the "American Idol" tidal wave provided a wealth of potential pop product to top 40 through last year, it hasn't commanded enough influence to rally the national top 40 airwaves back to the center.
"Austin agrees that radio stations can only be as good as the product record companies deal them.
"We're not getting a lot of good pop stuff, which makes it tough," she says. "What happens when Christina Aguilera and Justin Timberlake run out of singles?"

AN EYE ON THE MIDDLE

Like many major-market stations sensing that too much R&B/hip-hop will alienate core listeners, KRBE has been aiming to keep an eye on a more balanced playlist.
"A lot of the urban stuff is really reactionary, so it's easy to put on the air and you have to keep an eye on what you'll have to play for recurrents," Austin says. "You need to have artists like Evanescence, who also have adult appeal—which will give them more longevity."
Looking ahead, Austin sees "a plethora of guitarists coming back," with big hits at the station from Simple Plan, Maroon 5, Staind, 3 Doors Down and Trapt. "As you get closer to the summer, those are going to be knee-deep in hip-hop, and we were all talking about finding a balance.
Top 40 still has to be about painting a broad picture of variety about what's available. It's only as good as we make it, by piece by piece.
"We've had great success with Liz Phair, even thought it took forever; and Dido and Sarah McLachlan are smash-

es in middays," Austin says. "Alize Keys could work well for us, and OutKast is on fire. So we're feeling hopeful."
Ivey adds, "We want Justin and Britney and Hillary to work. It's our job to create the excitement for them. We're supposed to be the authorities here—"
The movie is an unflinching, warts-and-all look at the band. Joe Berlinger and Bruce Sinofsky produced and directed the film, which is part of the 2004 Sundance Film Festival and is targeted for release in theaters and on DVD this year if the film gets a distribution deal.

Berlinger and Sinofsky directed the HBO documentaries "Paradise Lost: The Child Murders at Robin Hood Hills" and "Paradise Lost 2: Revelations," both of which prominently featured Metallica's music.

A rough cut of the film was shown at private screenings held last month in New York and Los Angeles. Billboard was among those to get an exclusive preview of the film. "Some Kind of Monster" is the title of one of the songs on the "St. Anger" album. Lead singer/guitarist James Hetfield and drummer Lars Ulrich clash often in the film, with lead guitarist Kirk Hammett usually acting as peacemaker. The making of "St. Anger" was interrupted for several months when Hetfield went into rehab for alcoholism and other addictions.

Other key figures in the film are therapist Phil Towle, whom Metallica paid $40,000 per month to help resolve tension in the band, and producer Bob Rock. Towle is ubiquitous, as he interacts with the band in the studio and during songwriting sessions. Later in the film, the band members wrestle with whether to let Towle go, when they feel his services are no longer needed.

During one therapy session, Ulrich meets with Dave Mustaine, who was fired from Metallica in 1983 and went on to form Megadeth. Mustaine talks about the anger and pain he has experienced by being labeled a Metallica reject.

The film also shows how Metallica dealt with the exit of longtime bassist Jason Newsted, who quit the band in 2001. He is also featured in the movie.

The documentary reveals the band struggling over issues of artistic credibility, the Napster backlash and blacklist from "selling out." In one scene, the band is pressured by management to record promotional announcements for a contest from a large, undisclosed radio conglomerate. When band members show resistance to do the promotion, Metallica manager Cliff Burnstein tells them the corporate radio giant may retaliate by trying to ruin the band's career. Hetfield expresses anger and surprise and is then inspired to write the lyrics "Wash your back so you won't stab mine" for the "St. Anger" track "Sweet Amber."

The tone of the film becomes more upbeat when bassist Robert Trujillo joins the band. The documentary shows several musicians auditioning to replace Newsted, including Trujillo, Eric Avery (formerly of Jane's Addiction), ex-Marilyn Manson guitarist Twiggy Ramirez, Nine Inch Nails member Danny Lohner and Pepper Keenan of Corrosion of Conformity.

In the film, Ulrich says Trujillo was chosen because he was the only performer who did not struggle to play any Metallica songs during his audition. Hetfield also notes that Trujillo makes the band play better.

Trujillo's presence brings a new, more positive energy to the band, as the film ends with Metallica being honored on the MTV tribute show "MTV Icon," as well as performing in packed stadiums.

The conclusion of the film effectively shows that Metallica is at its best when playing live and that the adoration from fans has been crucial in healing some of the band's wounds and may be what motivates Metallica to keep going.

GOLDEN GLOBE AWARDS: With two nods in the musical categories, Howard Shore is the leading music contender for the 2004 Golden Globe Awards.

Shore garnered nominations for "The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King" for best original score and best original song for "Into the West." Shore shares the latter nomination with co-writers Fran Walsh and Annie Lennox, who also performs the song.

Rounding out the nominees for best original score are Alexandre Desplat for "Girl With a Pearl Earring," Danny Elfman for "Big Fish," Gabriel Yared for "Cold Mountain" and Hans Zimmer for "The Last Samurai."

The other nominees for best original song are Sting for "You Will Be My Ain True Love" (from "Cold Mountain"), Elton John and Bernie Taupin for "The Heart of Every Girl" ("Monica Lisa Smiley"), Eddie Vedder for "Man of the Hour" ("Big Fish") and Bono, Gavin Friday and Maurice Sezer for "Time Enough for Tears" ("In America").

A complete list of nominees may be found at thegoldenglobes.org.

The awards will be presented Jan. 25 in Beverly Hills, and NBC will air a live U.S. telecast of the show.
StubHub Tracks Resale Market Trends

BY SUSANNE AULT

LOS ANGELES—At first glance, the Rolling Stones had the No. 1-grossing tour for 2003 (Billboard, Dec. 27, 2003). Wood. The resale ticketing market, Bruce Springsteen rules the roost.

Stubhub.com—an online marketplace where consumers can resell unwanted tickets for sometimes well more than face value—has ranked the top 10 concerts of 2003 based on secondary ticket sales. The San Francisco company included results from its own sales as well as ticket transactions of its resale competitors, such as eBay and third-party ticket brokers.

The rest of the top 10—in descending order—are Simon & Garfunkel, Celine Dion, the Rolling Stones, Dave Matthews Band, Christina Aguilera/Justin Timberlake, Cher, Bon Jovi, Jimmy Buffett and Dixie Chicks.

This list largely mirrors the year’s premier tours in the primary market: Following the Stones were Springsteen, Cher and Fleetwood Mac.

To qualify as the cream of the after-market crop, tours required some combination of high volume and/or top-dollar tickets exchanging hands through the included resale outlets, stubhub.com president Eric Baker says. He says there is no doubt that “when you see artists that are strong on the secondary market, you’re seeing very impressive multiples over face value. People have paid thousands to see Simon & Garfunkel.”

While stubhub.com declined to attach dollar figures with its rankings, it does have examples of high-priced ticket postings. Consumers, while complying with local scalping laws, can sell tickets at a fixed price of their choosing or on an auction basis through the site.

Dave Matthews is touring in support of his solo debut, “Some Devil.” Tickets originally valued at $52 apiece for his Dec. 20 show at Staples Center in Los Angeles were listed at a fixed $648. Floor tickets for Shania Twain’s upcoming April 23 concert at Philips Arena in Atlanta (with a face value of $80) are posted for $142 each.

Stubhub.com takes 25% of the final ticket price: 15% from the seller’s share and 10% from the buyer’s portion.

AN EMERGING MARKET

Tour organizers are well aware of the secondary market. Several say they are considering ways to grab a piece of it.

“One of the things that eBay [and other online ticket resellers] have done is make the secondary market transparent. It has always been there, but now you can watch it,” says Jonathan Hochwald, president of tickets and consumer marketing at Clear Channel Entertainment.

“This is the first time where companies like ourselves can see exactly what it is that’s at stake. This is a huge market that should be going where it belongs—the artists.”

CCE was involved in a number of tours that made stubhub.com’s top 10, including Springsteen, the Stones and Cher.

Hochman says that CCE is looking into posting a select number of VIP ticket packages on eBay to see how the market responds. “Sarah Brightman with a starting price of $750. Forty of these bundles, which include an ‘in-stage seating’ ticket, a backstage pass and a photo opportunity with Brightman, already have sold at that face value through Ticketmaster. CCE VP of touring Brad Wavra reports.

“I certainly see more and more artists looking at the auction model. There is no pressure to buy, but it keeps the money in the hands of the artist. The artist is back in control of the revenue stream as opposed to ticket scalpers and brokers,” Wavra says of Brightman’s CCE-promoted January-March tour.

Most major ticket providers, including Ticketmaster and stubhub.com, can currently offer auction programs for promoter and venue clients. Yet when Ticketmaster rolled out its first concert auction for a Sting show, some artist managers thought the auction suggested unfair price gouging.

“We’ve heard all about the auction idea. I don’t know if an act can participate in something like that without coming off the wrong way to audiences,” says Simon Renshaw, manager for the Dixie Chicks.

Renshaw recognizes that the band’s placement on stubhub.com’s list could indicate that ticket prices were below market value for the band’s 2003 tour.

“But the Chicks have a very strict policy with the way things are priced,” he notes of the tour’s average $61.49 ticket. “On the one hand, they are sensitive to market considerations, but most importantly, they want to deliver value.”

Similarly, Chip Hooper, booking agent for Dave Matthews Band, says, “It’s important to keep prices fair and reasonable. We’re not trying to get every dime that we can. We have no way to know the price for the fans. You would love for the brokers not to get the tickets. But when a band is hot, it’s going to be hard to stop that.”

As for protecting talent concerns, Baker responds, “If there are tickets to sell, Dave Matthews being offered for $600, it’s being sold by the fan. It’s not Dave marking up the tickets.”

Flemish Act Clouseau’s Draw Keeps Growing

BY MARC MAES

ANTWERP, Belgium—Exactly one year after Flemish band Clouseau announced the 110,000th visitor to its Special Edition 2002 concerts at the Antwerp Sportpaleis, organizers PSE Belgium and Clouseau nucleus Koen and Kris Wauters decided to add a 14th show at the venue Dec. 29.

The final show takes Clouseau’s total to the venue to 245,000 concertgoers in 2003.

The act’s strength lies in the combination of a creative live performance and a huge string of Flemish-language pop hits.

For the 2003 edition that began Dec. 2, the band—together with promoter PSE Belgium and sound and lighting company EML—decided to organize the show in the round, boosting the venue’s capacity to slightly more than 17,500 but still offering excellent stage visibility thanks to a rotating stage construction and immense video walls.

“I thought we posted an all-time venue record attendance last year,” PSE Belgium managing director Jan Van Exbroeck says. “But with 245,000 visitors now, it’s hard to predict what next year will bring.”

Van Exbroeck reveals that more than 20,000 tickets for the 2004 shows (Jan. 11-24) have already been sold.

He adds that Clouseau has the ability to renew its approach to songs with every new show. Plus, Clouseau is “targeting a generation here, because we see both mothers and daughters attending the shows.”

Despite the fact that the band’s latest record was released more than two years ago (“En Dans,” on EMI Records), Clouseau continues to succeed with live shows. A DVD on EMI Capital, shot at the 2002 concerts, was the country’s best-selling music video.

“Kris and Koen make catchy pop tunes with creative arrangements,” says Erwin Goegebeur, managing director at EMI Capitol Belgium. “Onstage, they play their hits, the songs the audience wants to hear. And [they sing] in Flemish, because despite the ‘international’ attendance, they’re still a local band.”

The 2003 show was a huge production, with two giant catwalks alongside the rotating stage and eight screens above the stage that carried the video feed.

Souljitter’s Jan Leyers joined the band onstage during the second part of the show. Antwerp is a vital concert market, and the Sportpaleis is a successful arena. Owned by the Antwerp province authority and managed by PSE Belgium, the 17,500-capacity building sold out 96% of its musical events in 2003.
Nashville New Year’s Gala Rocks

Toby Keith put his best foot forward with a rocking New Year’s Eve party at Nashville’s Gaylord Entertain-ment Center that featured special guests Willie Nelson, Blake Shelton and MC Cledus T. Judd. This Dec. 31 extravaganza has been an institution for promoter Steve Moore, now with TBA Entertainment, who began promoting New Year’s Eve shows at Nashville’s premier arena in 1996, when Tim McGraw was the headliner. McGraw topped the bill for four years, and Kenny Chesney headlined the festivities in 2001 and 2002.

This event has become a tradition, with people coming in from all over the Southeast,” Moore says. “It has developed into a regional event, and it was always positioned that way.”

With Keith as the headliner, the 2003 NYE show was hugely successful, grossing more than $870,000 and drawing 14,336 paying attendees. The food and beverage cap was $5,50. “We sold every ticket in the house,” Moore says.

Plenty of well-known names in country touring attended the show, including Keith’s manager T.K. Kimbrell, Steve Dahl and Curt Motley from Keith’s agency, Monterey Peninsula Artists, Hugh Lombardi and Mike Wooley, GM and assistant GM of the Gaylord Entertainment Center, respectively; Nashville Ticketmaster rep Terrance Cohen; merch guru Crome Tidwell; promoter Ben Farrell; and visiting arena manager Steve Maples from the Von Braun Civic Center in Huntsville, Ala.

Keepers of keeping in line on a night when security was tight were Bruce Wagner, Mid South VP for Contemporary Services, and Bart Butler, president of Rock Solid Security. For his part, Butler has to be one of the more flexible security pros in the business, moving from tours with Phish and the Dixie Chicks prior to the United States Marine Corps. As commanding officer of the 1st Recon Battalion in Iraq, Ferrando and some 600 Marines were integrated in the march to Baghdad, garnering a rare Presidential Unit Cita- tion for their efforts, the first for the service since Vietnam.

The concert performances were particularly enthusiastic and festive, particularly that of Nelson, who began his set (as he has since 1974) with “Whiskey River,” and Keith, who balanced party cuts and aggres- sive anthems perfectly with well- rendered ballads. To no one’s surprise, the night’s most impassioned response came from Keith’s “Coun- try’s Red, White, and Blue (The Angry American),” although “Weed With Willie,” with help from Scotty Emerick and Willie himself, also elicited a quite hearty reception.

Keith and Chesney are clearly the two biggest artist-development stories in country music of the millennium, certainly from a standpoint. Keith will continue his current Shock ‘N Y’All tour through the early months of ‘04 before embarking on a major-market amphitheater/arena run that will begin this summer. Meanwhile, Moore would love to have Keith back at the Gaylord Entertainment Center Dec. 31, 2004. According to Moore, “This is Toby’s gig until he says otherwise.”

MORE PEAKIN’ AT THE BEACON: In what has become an early-spring ritual, the Allman Brothers Band will return to the Beacon Theatre in New York, with eight shows on tap for late March. The AB’s has played the Beacon 140 times since the spring of 1989, though not every year. In 1995, the band switched to Radio City Music Hall for a six-night stand, returning to the Beacon in ’96. This year the shows fall March 18-20, 22-23 and 25-27.
UMVD Remains Top R&B, Rap Distributor

BY GAIL MITCHELL

Propelled by the chart/sales success of 50 Cent, Jay-Z, Alkaline, the Isley Brothers, Baby and others, Universal Music & Video Distribution retains its crown as top distributor of R&B and rap albums in 2003. It is a milestone the company has now reached three years in a row.

As in 2002, UMVD commands more than a 2-to-1 lead in R&B and a 3-to-1 dominance in rap over rival distributors. For the 12-month period beginning Dec. 30, 2002, and ending Dec. 29, 2003, UMVD finished with a 40.7% share in R&B and 50.6% in rap. (Rap album sales are also included in the R&B albums totals.)

Reflecting the industry's sales downturn, UMVD's year-end shares are slightly off from 2002's 41.9% (R&B) and 51.8% (rap). BMG wrested second place in R&B from Sony, gaining nearly three points to finish at 18.4%. That gain can be attributed to such acts as R. Kelly, OutKast, Alicia Keys and Luther Vandross.

Dropping by points, Sony claimed a 14.7% R&B share in 2003. Repeating as fourth- through sixth-place finishers are WEA (10.5%), independent distributors (8.4%) and EMG Music Marketing (7.3%), respectively. EMG's improved standings in R&B (7.3%, up from 6.1%) and rap (7.4%, up from 5.4%) are thanks in part to new rapper Chingy's auspicious debut. Also making news on the rap side: the indies. Up to 13.1% from last year's 12.4%, that industry segment generated buzz with top indie act and crank progenitor Lil Jon & the East Side Boyz.

BMG came in third again in rap with 11.8%. Taking over fourth place from Sony with a 10.3% share is WEA, powered by Missy Elliott, Sean Paul, Lil' Kim and Fabolous.

Sony's precipitous drop from 10.9% to 6.9% reflects its lack of rap releases despite an impressive showing by Nas. Sony's strong suit in 2003 was R&B, as proffered by the likes of Beyoncé and Ginuwine.

B2K's Semi-Breakup

Three-Fourths Of The Quartet Move Over To CMX Management Co.

By Gail Mitchell

By now everyone has heard it: Epic's platinum-selling urban group B2K is in an uproar. This comes on the heels of the male teen quartet's latest album release (Dec. 23, 2003) and Screen Gems film debut (Jan. 30), both titled "You Got Served." It was initially stated that the split was because of irreconcilable differences. Since then, members Lil Fizz, J-Boog and Raz-B have told media outlets that it's not so much a breakup as it is a decision to end their relationship with Chris Stokes' management firm (The Ultimate Group (T.U.G.)) because of alleged business improprieties they say they have uncovered.

While fourth member and "serviced" co-star Omarion has elected to remain under Stokes' management tutelage, the other three members have decamped to Las Vegas-based CMX Sports & Entertainment. That company is headed by CEO Antonio Brown, who says CMX is serving as the trio's "advisors and business partners" since the three are still under T.U.G. management at this point in time.

A statement from the band simply said, "This is not a breakup. This has nothing to do with Omarion. We just want to be treated fairly." CMX's newly named COO is another boy-band veteran, Quadre El-Amin. The former Boyz II Men management and Big 3 Entertainment CEO resurfaced after ending his two-year stint with St. Petersburg, Fla.-based Big 3 in December.

Nearly 3 years old, CMX Sports & Entertainment is a joint venture partnership with Radar Films' Ted Fields ("The Last Samurai," "The Texas Chainsaw Massacre"), according to Brown. His parent company is the Chicago commodities firm CM Exchange (cmxexchange.com). Brown's brother Eric—who previously worked with Don King Productions—oversaw CMX's day-to-day operations. CMX handles artists and athletes (including Detroit Pistons forward Tayshaun Prince). Its divisions include a fully integrated independent film/video studio, technology (Internet pay-per-view) and a record label (CMX Music Group) aiming to release initial product later in the first quarter.

During the past two years, CMX has sponsored or co-sponsored boxing events with Don King. Through its cmx-sportsvision.com site, the firm is set to air three pay-per-view bouts Feb. 7 from Las Vegas' Mandalay Bay. Its cmxvideo.com will focus on streaming pay-per-view concerts and other entertainment fare.

Antonio Brown declined to discuss such specific B2K queries as a possible replacement for Omarion. But he did say the group is retaining its name and will be "absolutely" affiliated with the CMX Music Group.

"These young guys are business partners first, entrepreneurs second and artists third," Brown says. "CMX's goal is to remain a fully independent and integrated entity that helps our clients learn about the business of business and allows them to own some of their content."

"Content is all about ownership," Brown adds. "So we're teaching prepping and re-emphasizing that concept, finding people who are interested in talking and connecting with others. Success is all about leveraging your resources."

Calls to Stokes for a response were not returned by deadline. In an earlier statement, he said, "We've had a great run together making hit songs, albums and now movies. The kids are growing up and are interested in pursuing their own careers."

Epic issued the following statement: "The members of B2K are presently having internal issues that they're working to resolve. The group has postponed upcoming tour dates in order to work out their differences."

The statement noted that Omarion is finishing his solo debut. It is set for a March release.
## Billboard Top R&B/Hi-Hop Albums

**January 2004**

<table>
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<th>Title</th>
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<td>Juvenile</td>
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**Janurary 2004 Billboard Top R&B/Hi-Hop Catalog Albums**

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### Crystal-Ball View Of Grammy Night

It’s almost that time of year again: Grammy time! So, I’m getting out my crystal ball to tell you who will take home statues in the rap categories.

First up, best female rap solo performance.

Unfortunately, this category is often the weakest in terms of talent. With a lack of female MCs making music, the same artists are often lauded for sub-par work. That said on with my predictions.

Who should win: "Work It!" Missy Elliott (Gold Mind/Elektro Entertainment Group). This should be a slam dunk for Elliott, who will likely win more than one Grammy this year.

Who will win: Missy Elliott. For best male rap solo performance, there were a few surprises, including nominations for Joe Budden and Sean Paul.

Who should win: "Lose Yourself." Eminem (Shady/Interscope Records). Serving as the lead single to his “8 Mile” soundtrack, “Lose Yourself” was one of the best-written songs in any genre this year.

Who will win: Eminem’s “Lose Yourself.”

On the other hand, best rap album may be the most difficult rap category to predict.


Who will win: A tough call. While OutKast is the critics’ darling, 50 Cent’s “Get Rich Or Die Tryin’” may have the industry vote. In the end, I think André 3000 and Big Boi will win out over 50.

### Final Four: In addition to nods in the rap categories, many hip-hop artists are nominated in major categories like best new artist, song of the year, record of the year and album of the year.

It wouldn’t surprise writer if hip-hop swept all four categories this year. Good luck to all!

Rashaan Hall is R&B editor of Airplay Monitor.
### BILLBOARD January 17, 2004

#### LATIN HOT TRACKS

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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>EN REALIDAD</td>
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#### LATIN POP AIRPLAY

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<td>2</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>LA PALA</td>
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<td>AVENTURA</td>
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<td>Latin Premium</td>
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#### TROPICAL PLAYAIR

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#### REGIONAL MEXICAN AIRPLAY

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<td>EN REALIDAD</td>
<td>Jorge Luis Camaño</td>
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*Note: The table displays the top拉丁音乐排行榜。*
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**Notes:**
- Billboard's regulations for Latin albums include sales of CDs, downloads, and streaming audio.
- Total Latin sales include more than 1 million units (Diamond), 500,000 units (Platinum), 200,000 units (Gold), and 20,000 units (Silver). Units may be converted to sales with the following ratios: CD sales to albums at 1:1; iPod downloads at 1:1; and streaming audio at 1:1. Sales from streaming audio sources were not included.
- **Latin Pop Albums** focus on popular Latin music, including Latin pop, rock, and r&b.
- **Tropical Albums** focus on reggaeton, salsa, and merengue.
- **Regional Mexican Albums** focus on Norteño, Banda, and Tejano music.
Acts Surmount Brazil’s Language Barrier

BY TOM GOMES

SAO PAULO, Brazil—When the Brazilian version of TV show “Popstars” debuted in 2002, it spawned the mega-successful girl group Rouge.

The program had another hit the following year with boy band Br’oz, which went on to become one of the country’s top-selling acts of the year. But aside from the “Popstars” products signing with RGB/Sony Brazil, the bands have something else in common.

Rouge’s first hit single was “Ragatanga,” a Portuguese version of “Aserêjê,” the international hit originally recorded by Spanish group Las Ketchup. And Br’oz’s hit single is “Prometida,” which is a Portuguese take of Carlos Vives’ Latin hit “Fruta Fresca.”

TRANSLATING INTO SUCCESS

This phenomenon underscores a curious paradox: Latin music, in its original language and recorded by the original artists, typically faces an uphill battle when trying to penetrate the Brazilian market. But when translated into Portuguese, the songs stand a greater chance of becoming hits.

“There is no doubt that it is difficult for Latin artists to break in Brazil,” says Millard Engleka, chairman of Sony Brazil.

The reasons, he says, are cultural as well as commercial.

In Latin America, Brazil is a “cultural island” isolated by language. Ironically, the country is a melting pot of nationalities.

“Brazil has its own music—cultivated over generations—and Brazilian people remain steadfast to that music and its natural progressions,” Engleka says.

As a result, “the space for Latin music on Brazilian radio programming is minimal,” says Alexandre Schiavo, VP of marketing and A&R for Sony Brazil.

“Annually, even in such a large country as Brazil, only three or four songs in Spanish find space on important radio stations. Our local market is very strong and diverse in terms of music styles. The remaining space on radio is controlled by English-language artists, which leaves us only soap-opera soundtracks as the main vehicle to promote music sung in Spanish, Schiavo says.

Of course, there are exceptions, notably Mexican rock band Mana, which is signed to Warner. The group’s single “Vivir Sin Aire” has performed well on Brazilian charts, boosted by its inclusion on the soundtrack to Globo network soap opera “Mulheres.”

When Schiavo suggested “Aserêjê” as a track for Rouge to record, “everyone thought I was mad,” he says.

But RGB, which also handles the group, agreed to record the song, propelled by “Ragatanga,” Rouge’s debut album sold more than 1 million copies.

“After that experience, I thought it was time to find an artist to record Carlos Vives’ “Fruta Fresca,” a song that had a huge influence on me when I worked with Latin music in New York and Miami,” Schiavo says.

When RGB confirmed it would produce a male version of “Popstars,” Schiavo targeted the group. “Prometida,” which features a rallenato rhythm, reached No. 2 on Brazil’s radio charts.

“It is now, it has been given exposure and has been translated into Portuguese,” Engleka says.

Schiavo says an annual Latin music festival in Brazil could help develop the genre and the artists in the country.

“Music consumers in Brazil are very open to new stuff,” he adds. “They only need a great idea to introduce them to the richness of Latin music, which has many connections with the musical spirit of Brazilian people.”

Scissor Sisters Set To Cut Up Dancefloor

New York-based Scissor Sisters create smart, sexy and playful pop music. One listens to the quintet’s self-titled debut album makes this abundantly clear.

Also certain is the group’s ravenous appetite for all music, from disco and funk to rock and cabaret. Bandmates Jake Shears, Baby Daddy, Ana Mantronic, Paddy Boom and Del Marquis have obvious soft spots in their hearts for the sounds of Prince, Frankie Goes to Hollywood, Roxy Music, Donna Summer and others to revel in breaking down musical borders.

Though wholly original, “Scissor Sisters” (Polydor U.K., due Jan. 26) finds the five “sisters” paying delicious homage to several acts that have come before.

“Take Your Mama Out All Night” is vintage Elton John.

“Lovers in the Back Seat” recalls 70s-era David Bowie.

A cover of Pink Floyd’s “Comfortably Numb” sounds like a long-lost Bee Gees recording as revisited by Giorgio Moroder. As for “It Can’t Come Quickly Enough,” think Pet Shop Boys.

Throughout, Scissor Sisters create unabashed pop music. For this fab five, pop isn’t a dirty word. For that, we should all be grateful.

Still, one question remains: How is it possible that the dazzling “Scissor Sisters” remain without a U.S. label to call home? This needs to be corrected.

Los Angeles. Airng Saturday nights, the two-hour “12 Inches of Cox” features exclusive mixes from Cox, as well as works-in-progress.


FOR THE RECORD

Due to a processing error, Nos. 7-11 in the Hot Dance Club Play chart in the 2002 Year in Music issue (dated Dec. 27) were ranked incorrectly. The revised recap has Murk at No. 7, followed by Whitney Houston, Jewel, Debo- rah Cox and Seal at Nos. 8, 9, 10 and 11, respectively. The incorrect chart listed only 10 artists; the list of 25 Hot Dance Club Play artists has been properly amended at billboard.com.
### HOT DANCE Club Play

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<tbody>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>10</strong></td>
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<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>LUV ME RIGHT</strong> (ZARADAR)</td>
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<td><strong>6</strong></td>
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<td><strong>ADDICTED (REMIXES)</strong> (ARTIST)</td>
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<td><strong>NOTHING (REMIXES)</strong> (ARTIST)</td>
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<td><strong>BREATHE (REMIXES)</strong> (ARTIST)</td>
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<td><strong>FELL ON ME</strong> (ARTIST)</td>
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<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>BELIEVE</strong> (M. HELLMAN)</td>
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Endorsements Offer More Than Money

BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

NASHVILLE—In this time of waning record sales and Internet piracy, corporate endorsement deals have become increasingly important for country recording artists to sustain long-term careers.

"The money that is generated from record sales does not create enough to advertise on a major national basis," says Scott Siman of Nashville-based RPM Management.

"There's just not enough money generated to do that, so artists have to look outside their record companies for marketing partners to create awareness and visibility," says Siman, who manages Tim McGraw. McGraw has such a deal with Bud Light, where Siman says that TV commercials have yielded as a promotional vehicle. In addition to featuring McGraw in spots that have run during the Super Bowl and the Academy Awards, Bud Light has helped fuel McGraw's road show for seven years by providing tour support.

In turn, such major brands as Mr. Coffee and Cover Girl have actively courted country artists to promote their own products (see story, page 1).

PONY UP THE DOUGH

Another example of a common endorsement deal is the one Trick Pony has with Price Oil that keeps its tour equipment and personal vehicles filled with gas.

Trick Pony's Heidi Newfield says these deals are essential to an act's livelihood.

"It can literally take an artist [who is] having a mediocre year income-wise to having a great year," Newfield says, "because that company has gone to the table and helps them out with what they would have otherwise paid dearly for."

Newfield speaks from experience. She and fellow Trick Pony members Ira Dean and Keith Burns each have endorsement agreements with different car dealerships and eyeglass companies. Newfield also has a deal with Wrangler endorsing its line of 20X jeans. The company provides her and the Trick Pony band with jeans, along with its crew members.

The agreement has sparked an increase in sales of 20X product for Wrangler and elevated Newfield's visibility through special promotions at Western-wear retailers.

According to Wrangler marketing manager Edyke Brooks-Bryant, consumers who buy $30 worth of Wrangler get a free 22-inch-by-28-inch Newfield poster and then register to win tickets and meet-and-greet passes.

"The retailer will run a print ad in its local newspaper or a radio spot, which gives Heidi exposure, and it tells the concert (local) 'Brooks-Bryant says, 'We offer that to any retailer in any market where they are touring.'"

GIVING SALES A LIFT

Corporate sponsorships not only help in terms of tour support: The increased visibility also stimulates album sales.

"If five people walk in and see the stand-up tile [of Montgomery] and I with Jim Beam [and] if only two of the five buy records, they maybe would not have bought [four albums] if they wouldn't have walked into the store [to see the promotion]." According to Brooks-Bryant, "We offer that to any retailer in any market where they are touring."...

UMVD Top Country Distributor

BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

NASHVILLE—For the third consecutive year, Universal Music & Video Distribution finished the year as the top distributor of country albums, with a 32.6% total share of the market from Dec. 30, 2002, through Jan. 15, 2003. UMVD ended 2002 up nearly four percentage points from the previous year, after finishing 2002 with a 29.2% share of the market. UMVD held the top spot during the fourth quarter of 2003, bolstered by such strong-selling releases as Shania Twain's multi-platinum "Up!" (Mercury), the continuing strength of Toby Keith's 2002 set "Unleashed" (DreamWorks) and his late 2003 release "Shock'n Y'All" (DreamWorks), which debuted at No. 1 on The Billboard 200 and the Top Country Albums chart.

BMG finished the year with the second-largest country market share. As record sales continued to slip throughout the industry in 2003, BMG ended the year with a 22% share, down from the 24.3% it accumulated in 2002.

The company's 2003 market share was fueled by Tim McGraw and Kenny's Dunn's "Red Dirt Road" (Arista Nashville) and Alan Jackson's "Greatest Hits Volume II and Some Other Stuff" (Arista Nashville). Jimmy Buffet's "Everything I Love" (Arista Nashville) and John Tatum's "The Best of" (Curb/DMR) were also among the company's top sellers.

Source: Nielsen SoundScan

Sony Nashville Gets Gershon

Tracy Gershon has been named senior director of A&R and artist development at Sony Music Nashville, where she previously was an A&R consultant. Prior to joining Sony, Gershon was a partner in Fitzgerald-Hartley Management's High Seas Music Publishing and the Gershon Music Group.

In other Music Row news, longtime ASCAP writer/publisher rep Michael Doyle joins Major Bob Music as professional manager. Also joining Major Bob is songwriting partner Brian Nash.

For more Music Row news and information, please visit Billboard.com, the online source for the music business.

Sony Nashville Scene

By Phyllis Stark

ARTIST NEWS: Chalee Tennison and Rosie Dean exit the DreamWorks Records artist roster along with newcomer Amanda Wilson. Country Radio Broadcasters will recognize Alabama with a Career Achievement Award during the CRIBS Country Music DJ Hall of Fame dinner March 2 in Nashville. The award recognizes an individual or group who has made a significant contribution to the development and promotion of country music and country radio.

Josh Turner will open 22 dates on Brooks & Dunn's Red Dirt Road tour beginning in mid-February. Joe Nichols is also on the bill.

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<td>2004</td>
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<td>JOSH TURNER</td>
<td>BMG 73955</td>
<td>Long Black Train</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>5,471</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>—</td>
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<tr>
<td>RASCAL FLATTS</td>
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<td>Melt</td>
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<td>2004</td>
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<td>2004</td>
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<td>Gold</td>
<td>4,471</td>
<td>2004</td>
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<td>BMG 73955</td>
<td>Tim McGraw And The Dancehall Doctors</td>
<td>Gold</td>
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<td>2004</td>
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<td>Room To Breathe</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>4,471</td>
<td>2004</td>
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<td>Diets Bentley</td>
<td>Gold</td>
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<td>2004</td>
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<td>BMG 73955</td>
<td>From Here To Here: Greatest Hits</td>
<td>Multi-Platinum</td>
<td>11,474</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>—</td>
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<td>GARY ALLAN</td>
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<td>No Certification</td>
<td>4,471</td>
<td>2004</td>
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<td>BMG 73955</td>
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<td>2004</td>
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<td>Mud On The Tires</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>4,471</td>
<td>2004</td>
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<td>2004</td>
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<td>2004</td>
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<td>2004</td>
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<td>Worship A Faith</td>
<td>Gold</td>
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<td>2004</td>
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<td>Wave On Wave</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>4,471</td>
<td>2004</td>
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<td>BMG 73955</td>
<td>Man With A Memory</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>4,471</td>
<td>2004</td>
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<td><strong>TOP COUNTRY CATALOG ALBUMS</strong></td>
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<td>American II: Unchained</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>5,471</td>
<td>2004</td>
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<td>SHANIA TWAIN</td>
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<td>Come On Over</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>5,471</td>
<td>2004</td>
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<td>2004</td>
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<td>ALAN JACKSON</td>
<td>BMG 73955</td>
<td>The Greatest Hits Collection</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>5,471</td>
<td>2004</td>
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<td>BMG 73955</td>
<td>Flatts Fighter</td>
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<td>5,471</td>
<td>2004</td>
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<td>SOUNDTRACK</td>
<td>BMG 73955</td>
<td>For The Last Time: Live From The Astrodome</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>5,471</td>
<td>2004</td>
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<td>Gold</td>
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<td>2004</td>
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<td>Gold</td>
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<td>2004</td>
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<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
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<td>From Here To Here: Greatest Hits</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>5,471</td>
<td>2004</td>
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<td>BMG 73955</td>
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<td>5,471</td>
<td>2004</td>
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<td>KENNY ROGERS</td>
<td>BMG 73955</td>
<td>The Greatest Hits Collection</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>5,471</td>
<td>2004</td>
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<td>CAMERON ARTIST</td>
<td>BMG 73955</td>
<td>Greatest Hits Volume II: And Some Other Stuff</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>5,471</td>
<td>2004</td>
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<td>HANK WILLIAMS JR.</td>
<td>BMG 73955</td>
<td>Country Classic Gold</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>5,471</td>
<td>2004</td>
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<td>JOHN DENVER</td>
<td>BMG 73955</td>
<td>The Best Of John Denver</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>5,471</td>
<td>2004</td>
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<td>PATSY CLINE</td>
<td>BMG 73955</td>
<td>Back Home Again</td>
<td>Gold</td>
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<td>2004</td>
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<td>GARTH BROOKS</td>
<td>BMG 73955</td>
<td>Walk On</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>5,471</td>
<td>2004</td>
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<td>THE JUDDS</td>
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<td>Gold</td>
<td>5,471</td>
<td>2004</td>
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<td>5,471</td>
<td>2004</td>
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<td>Greatest Hits Volume III</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>5,471</td>
<td>2004</td>
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</table>

Note: Certification indicates album's multi-platinum level. Album with the greatest sales gains this week: Randy Travis' "Worship A Faith," up 69 to No. 9. Billboard's Country Albums chart measures the sales of country music albums purchased from retail outlets, www.amazon.com, and other online retailers, as well as from concerts, radio stations, and other sources. The RIAA certification of albums is based on sales of albums and tapes. RIAA awards: One Million sales for Gold; Five Million for Multi-Platinum; Ten Million for Double Platinum; Fifty Million for Diamond; One Hundred Million for Triple Platinum; and Five Hundred Million for Quadruple Platinum. Final sales figures will be determined by the RIAA. Sales for albums certified before November 1, 1991, will be calculated using the inflated sales multiplier system established by the RIAA in 1991. The RIAA certification of albums is based on sales of albums and tapes. RIAA awards: One Million sales for Gold; Five Million for Multi-Platinum; Ten Million for Double Platinum; Fifty Million for Diamond; One Hundred Million for Triple Platinum; and Five Hundred Million for Quadruple Platinum.
Heatseeker

January 17, 2004

Top Country Albums

1. Alison Krauss + Union Station
2. Sugarland
3. Various Artists
4. Various Artists
5. T-Pain
6. Various Artists
7. Various Artists
8. Various Artists
9. Various Artists
10. Various Artists

Top Country Singles

1. Texas Plates
2. You're in My Head
3. Paint Me a Birmingham
4. On Your Way Home
5. Days of Our Lives
6. Mayberry
7. No Regrets Yet
8. A Guy Like Me
9. This Love
10. That's a Woman

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Billboard Hot Country Tracks

1. Long Black Train
2. Wild West Show
3. I Love You This Much
4. I'm Gonna Take That Mountain
5. You Are
6. I Need a Vacation
7. Die a Man
8. Hot Country Debut
9. I Can Only Imagine
10. I Got a Feelin'
**ALBUMS**

Edited by Michael Paoletta

**POP**

**VARIOUS ARTISTS**

PRODUCER: James A. Johnston

WWE/Columbia 90881

RELEASE DATE: Jan. 13

"WWE Originals" is the latest in a series of World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) albums and the first release in the critical part of the WWE between WWE and Columbia. It follows in the footsteps of the 2002 WWE (then known as WWF) compilation "Forceable Entry," which debuted at No. 3 on The Billboard 200. Unlike that compilation, which featured chart-topping rockers like Kid Rock, Creed and Linkin Park, the appropriately titled "WWE Originals" showcases the WWE wrestlers/entertainers themselves—performing material penned specifically for them. The end result is one that might surprise, mixed, very mixed. Perfunctory, in-your-face rap dominates the collection, with entwined tunes from the Dudley Boys, Kurt Angle, Booker T and others. The set works best when it pops and rolls; witness Stacy Keibler's radio-inspired hip-hop jam "Can't We Just Dance?", the Joan Jett-meets-Liz Phair vibe of "When I Get You Alone" by Lita and Trish Stratus' simple ballad "I Just Want You." And while Stone Cold Steve Austin's interpolates border on silly, they are fun. More importantly, without butting listeners over the head its words perfectly capture his character's attitude.—MP

**JOHN VANDERSLICE**

**Cellar Door**

PRODUCER: not listed

**Bar 33**

RELEASE DATE: Jan. 20

On "Cellar Door," John Vanderslice picks up where he left off last year with the set "Life and Death of an American Fourtrakker" left off—serving up another pleasant helping of sweet headphone pop. This album is being billed as the most personal effort of Vanderslice's career, and he wrestles with inner demons on tracks like "My Family Tree." But as usual, it is the warm, richly textured production that is the star here, not the lyrics. Vanderslice is a passing songwriting drummer, but he is a strong accessory. The thump of "Cellar Door" lies in the lush Bournishes that Vanderslice tucks into the nooks and crannies of its arrangements.—BR

**DANA**

**Thread of Blue**

**PRODUCERS:** Ben Butler, Dana, Ric Molina

Water/Lightyear 54565

**RELEASE DATE:** Jan. 27

With this, Dana's third album, Dana—a native New Yorker who was raised in Cleveland—appears ready for her close-up. On past sets "Sitting With an Angel" and "Currents" the track was featured on "Dawson's Creek" and "Through the Concrete & the Rocks" which included hits AC single, "A Little Light," the original singer-songwriter writer wore her vulnerability well. This time around, Dana exudes a confidence and self-assurance that enthralls and captivates. Of course, it helps that she does not shy away from either the bitter ("Lover Set Free") or the sweet ("Tuscani."—MP

**THE OLD CROW MEDICINE SHOW**

**OCMS**

**PRODUCER:** David Rawlings

Nettwerk America 6700-30349

**RELEASE DATE:** Jan. 27

Nashville-based roots quintet Old Crow Medicine Show surfaces for the first time on Nettwerk with an authentic and spirited studio collection that is easy to love. Inspired harp and hornback vocals serve the cocine-calming attention "Tell It to Me" well indeed, while "Big Time in the Jungle" is an expertly drawn characterization of a country boy's trip to Vietnam that recalls Country Joe & The Fish in tone and style. David Rawlings' no-frills production works such fiddle-laced cuts as "Poor Man" and "Hard to Tell" like a mule pulling a slow, rambunctious germ "Tear It Down" and "Hard to Love" plunge downhill like a runaway wagon "CC Rider" gets Tracy Hank Williams treatment, and "Trials & Troubles" is pure Appalachian blues. The melodic "We're All In This Together" has a timeless, Still-Young Band feel to it. The inspired "Wagon Wheel," like this whole record, sways and rolls with such likely aplomb that it is plain to see why OCMS fits in equally well at bluegrass and jam-band festivals.—RW

**DANCE/ELECTRONIC**

**TINA ANN**

**Situations**

**PRODUCERS:** various

Heart 682003

**RELEASE DATE:** Dec. 16, 2002

Tina Ann made her clubhead debut in 2000 as the featured vocalist on Dynamix's "Don't Want Another Man." The energetic Jamm Jam toured the Billboard Hot Dance Club Play chart. In 2001, the singer struck out on her own. Last year, her infectious track "I Do" cracked the top 10 of the same chart, ultimately paying tribute to women who prevail against pain and hard times. The quiet power of her vocals is unleashed on the sparse, guitar- and piano-flavored love ballad "Beyond." She revisits the jazz heritage of New Orleans' Congo Square on the free-wheeling "Congo," elsewhere, she questions the ideals of fame vs. success. "Say You Want It All" is home to such realism as "Baby haven't you heard/Every star can be replaced." Like the album title suggests, Larrieux is not leery about flying against the commercial tide. It is a welcome ride.—GM

**R&B/HIP-HOP**

**AMI LARRIEUX**

**Bravebird**

**PRODUCERS:** Larus Larrieux, Threadhead, Bashka Ink

Billoida/ADW WMG 8110-00011

**RELEASE DATE:** Jan. 20

The singer/songwriter lives up to the title of her 2002 solo debut, "Infinite Possibilities," on this sophomore set. Broader in scope and tone, "Bravebird" still finds the former Groove Theory frontwoman alternating between sleek, earthy vocals with a mystical mix of R&B, soul/funk, jazz, pop and house—and unfraid to try tactical with (co/writ)/husband Larus on subjects that lie left of mainstream. From the true love groove of opening track "For You," Larrieux veers into the modern-day honies of New York & Company, and Trials &
night of drunken revelry. “Pirrenero de T” will not awaken deep dreams, but it will certainly entertain.—LC

* ORQUESTA LA PALABRA

Breakthrough
PRODUCER: La Palabra

Terinillo
RELEASE DATE: Feb. 12

Orquesta La Palabra takes its name from Cuban-born/Lea Morris

stained glass and woodwork. This is a chal-

lenging and rewarding album. Racked

in the U.S. by Harmonia Mundita.—PPV

CHRISTIAN

* JEREMY CAMP

Carried Me: The Worship Project

PRODUCERS: Adam Watts, Andy Dodd, Steve Hindalong, Mark Byrd

BEAT 72.3/39:561329

RELEASE DATE: Feb. 10

Camp burst onto the scene last year with the impressive “Stay.” That album earned the artist a legion of fans that will not be disappointed with this new collection. These powerful worship songs beautifully showcase Camp’s passion

vocal style and straight-ahead salsa—is a dancefloor smash-in-song, “I’m a Carbon,” a cover of the Roberto Carlos

stanser set to a cha-cha-cha beat, hasarring tone and humor. Even a cover of mid-

70s pop hit “Feelings,” set over a big

band Latin jazz arrangement, avoids the cheese.—LC

WORLD

* LADYSHM BLACK MAMBAZO

Raise Your Spirit Higher—Wenyekula

PRODUCER: Joseph Shabalala

Heads Up International HU/308

RELEASE DATE: Jan. 27

You do not need to understand Zulu to understand the message in the music relayed by Ladysmith Black Mambazo. The South African group’s signature blend of tight harmonies and spiritual

ly resonate on this, its Heads Up debut. The group—still led by original organizer Joseph Shabalala—rhythmically

discusses the political and social issues such as death, apartheid and freedom. As always, Ladysmith vocally evokes the power of music. The opening title track

sets the stage, aided by a buzz, captivating

arrangement. Especially poignant is "Tribute." Featuring Shabalala’s children of the Children of God, the cut pays homage to Shabalala’s wife of 28 years, who was shot and killed outside

of their home. Another song on the album aptly names, Ladysmith is proof that “Music Knows No Boundaries.”—GM

* OMAR SOSA & ADAM RUDOLPH

Pictures of Soul

PRODUCER: Omar Sosa, Adam Rudolph

Otta 1012

RELEASE DATE: Jan. 13

Cuban-born jazz pianist/composer Omar Sosa has been quite busy of late. He released the brilliant album “Sen-

tor” in 2002, followed by the live CD “Anguiano” and the box set “A Night in Lucid” in 2003. Now, as of 2004, he begins this collaboration with percussionist Adam Rudolph. “Pictures of Soul” is certainly the music of a man who has been busy, and what Sosa has tracked thus far in his remarkable career. Some of his pieces are unusual, and his use of the instruments—

utes—and elliptical. Indeed, “Cuzco

Refrain,” like several of the short num-

bers, is very much akin to a post-bop

tone poem. Other tracks, such as “The

Wandering Night” and “Winter of the

Flowers,” are more structurally elo-

rate and linear in their composition. The vibe that runs throughout the set, however, is one of profound impres-

sionistic interplay. This is a chal-

lenging and rewarding album. Racked

in the U.S. by Harmonia Mundita.—PPV

SINGLES

Edited by Chuck Taylor

COUNTRY

DAVID LEE MURPHY Loco (3:08)

PRODUCERS: David Lee Murphy, Kim Tibble

WRITERS: D/L M, K. Tubble


AUDIUM AD-05-8189 (CD promo)

David Lee Murphy charted 11 singles during a tenure on MCA Records in the mid-to-late ’90s, including such hits as “Party Crowded” and “Dirt on the Bottle.” He’s resurfacing on Audium with a frisky, up-tempo number about the joys of being a little bit crazy. Saucy fiddle and infectious lead-guitar work add space to this fun tune. Murphy remains an engaging vocalist who knows how to put a story to music. His knack for touching on the light-hearted, lyric. If country programmers give this a shot, it could help Murphy mount a much-deserved comeback.—DEP

AC

SIMPLY RED You Make Me Feel Brand New (4:18)

PRODUCER: not listed

WRITERS: not listed

PUBLISHER: not listed

SIMPLYRED.com SRSAM022 (CD promo)

In the U.S., Simply Red scored a No. 1 in the UK back in 1989 with a sound rework of “If You Don’t Know Me By Now.” Fifteen years later, lead singer Mick Hucknall repeats the formula with the heartbeat-inducing new version of the Stylistics’ “You Make Me Feel Brand New.” Time has done nothing but add texture to the Brit’s soulful range, making this loving cover an AC radio for AC radio. With Simply Red’s spirited “Sunrise” still in rotation at the format, “Brand New” is poised to foster a two-for-two comeback for this enduring group. From the comforting full-length “Home,” Puma owner Sly Workshop and Jack Ashton at ashingtonconsults@aol.com—CT

ROCK

DAMIEN RICHMAN Cannonball (3:25)

PRODUCERS: Dan Wilson, Mike Spence, Sten Paul/P-Dub/Walton

WRITERS: D. Rice

PUBLISHER: Warner/Chappell Music Publishing Ltd.

PRS

DRM/Vector/Warner Bros. 101235 (CD promo)

In an age when the bottom line is still

creativity and the mass dissemination

promotion of that creativity, it’s nice to see Vector/Warner Bros. making good on their promise to promote

Cannonball” into the upper reaches of the charts.—CT

BEAT

BRITNEY SPEARS Toxic (3:19)

PRODUCERS: Bloodshy, Avant

WRITERS: C. Dennis, C. Karlsson, P. Winberg, J. Jonback

PUBLISHERS: Colige/M-E/Marlyn Songs/Universal-PolyGram, ASCAP

Jive 59153 (CD promo)

“Me Against The Music,” the first single from Britney Spears’ already

platinum “In the Zone,” was an event record in the worst way: a song destined for airplay no matter how. And it ain’t stinkin’. But with that taste now washed away, it’s time to get down to real business. “Toxic” is a boundless step forward for Spears—mature, sexy and tantalizing. Producers Bloodshy and Avant surround Brit with a frantic drum machine, James Bond guitars, complemented with the pop uber-star’s heavily layered vocoder overlay. It works: She sounds potent and convincing as a catty sex symbol. This is a song made for video, and Spears is sure to thrill. Whether the pop-meets-hardcore whole is a tasty listen, this track will build momentum and prove that there is meat behind the end-

lessly publicity mania.—CT

3 DOORS DOWN Away From the Sun (3:51)

PRODUCER: Rick Parashar

WRITERS: Arnold, Robert, Harrer, Henderson

PUBLISHERS: Escatwapa Songs/Songs of EMI

Universal/Universal 211139 (CD promo)

Why at this point. But the band has
evolved somewhat, having the leg-
endary (and now sadly infamous) Phil Spector add his signature touch of sound production to a pair of tracks. Here, on the title cut, Spector’s involvement adds sparkle to what may have been a bit of a last-ditch effort otherwise, thus turning it into one of the high points on the album (due Jan. 27). About a minute and 43 seconds in, handclaps are dropped in. It touches like these that help make this defiant, if you don’t have anything nice to say knock right down the line. Working with Spector proves a heady move by a band that will hopefully be around for decades. One complaint: Barry Westhead’s keyboards aren’t loud enough in the mix.—WO
EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE

DIRECT MARKETING: Malia Doss is promoted to senior VP of business affairs and administration for Warner Strategic Marketing in Los Angeles. She was VP of business affairs for Rhino Entertainment.

DISTRIBUTION: Koch Entertainment Distribution names Janet Baker director of video sales in Chicago and Kathy Gilbert regional video sales manager in Nashville. They were, respectively, director of sales for Wellspring Media and Southern regional sales manager for Wellspring Media.

BROADCASTING: Infinity Broadcasting promotes Tony Berardiini, previously VP/GM for Boston’s WBCN and WZLX, to VP of Infinity Boston; Mark Hannon, previously director of sales for Infinity Boston, to GM of Boston’s WBCN, WZLX and WBZM; and Chris Hill, previously GM of sales for Boston’s WBZ-AM, to senior VP/director of sales for Infinity Boston.

The Latest Heroes Ruben Blades, Hall & Oates, BMI president/CEO Frances W. Preston, producer/artist Nile Rodgers, husband-and-wife songwriting duo Barry Mann & Cynthia Weil and producer Timbaland were honored at the New York chapter of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences’ annual Heroes Dinner. The Heroes Award recognizes excellence and integrity and is the highest honor bestowed by the New York faction. Timbaland received the chapter’s first Heroes Impact Award for outstanding achievement by a recording industry professional in the early stage of his/her career. Proceeds from this event, hosted by “Sopranos” star Dominic Chianese, will be dedicated to the education and community outreach programs of NARAS’ New York chapter. Pictured above, from left, are NARAS president Neil Portnow, Rodgers, producer Jimmy Jam (who presented Rodgers with his trophy), NARAS New York chapter president Phil Goldstein and producer Jimmy Douglas (who presented Timbaland with his award). At right are Timbaland, left, and Chianese.

Now, Hear This ... RACHAEL YAMAGATA Artists to Watch

It’s awfully perfect that the very first verse we hear Rachael Yamagata sing on her debut, “EP,” begins “I’ll fascinate you... for a while”—because that’s exactly what’s going to happen to a lot of us in 2004. While it remains to be seen just how many will fall under her spell, you can believe that it’s going to happen. This charming young siren has it all—affecting, smartly crafted songs; a heart-bagging, soul-soothing voice; a lovable personality; and striking beauty (thanks to her German and Japanese lineage). Since being signed to Private Music (which falls under the Arista Associated umbrella) by Steve Ralbovsky (the Strokes, My Morning Jacket), the Woodstock, N.Y., singer/pianist/guitarist issued the six-track “EP” last October and recently put the finishing touches on her full-length debut, which is slated for an April release. Prior to “EP” (which is highlighted by the sexy, breath-taking “Collide,” the aforementioned leadoff cut), Yamagata cut her teeth as a member of fuses/soul Chicago band Bumpus. But her solo material is more akin to Fiona Apple and is inflected with her love for ’70s albums by the likes of Roberta Flack and Stevie Wonder. During the past year, she has opened for David Gray (at Madison Square Garden, no less) and Damien Rice. Later this month, she begins a tour with Gomez. In short, the fascination begins now.

WES ORSHOSKI

Honoring Jazz’s Greatest Women Diana Ross performed and Phoebe Jacobs and Shirley Horn were among those honored during Jazz at Lincoln Center’s fall benefit gala, “Here’s to the Ladies: A Tribute to the Great Ladies of Jazz.” The event paid tribute to Billie Holiday, Sarah Vaughan, Ella Fitzgerald and others with performances from Ross, as well as Dee Dee Bridgewater, Roberta Flack, Dame Cleo Laine and Marian McPartlan, all backed by the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis. Jacobs, executive VP of the Louis Armstrong Educational Foundation and vocalist/pianist Horn were presented with awards for leadership and artistic excellence, respectively. Pictured at the event, from left, are Ross, Jacobs and Marsalis. Proceeds from the event went to performance and educational programs produced by Jazz at Lincoln Center. (Photo: Patrick McMullan)

One For The Record Books An Elton John concert at the Manchester Evening News Arena broke the attendance record for the venue, Europe’s biggest. John sold 19,076 tickets, breaking a 3-year-old record set by Tom Jones. (In 2000, Jones played to 19,021 people.) Presenting John, left, with a commemorative copy of the promotional flier for the show that detailed the accomplishment is arena GM John Knight. “It is difficult to see this record being broken,” Knight said on the evening of the concert. “The place is full; we literally cannot fit any more people in.”

www.americanradiohistory.com
Twenty-Five Years Young

Queens, N.Y.-based reggae/dancehall heavyweight VP Records celebrated its 25th anniversary with a bash in Kingston, Jamaica, that featured performances from the genre’s top artists, including Beenie Man, Lady Saw and rising dancehall vocalist Elephant Man. Attracting many of the top names in reggae and dancehall—such as Bounty Killer, Beres Hammond and the legendary Marcia Griffiths (a member of the I-Threes, Bob Marley’s famed backing-vocal trio)—the event was sponsored by Puma, which has a long-term sponsorship deal with the Jamaican Athletics Association. The company has produced a series of commercials featuring Jamaican athletes and music by VP artists. One such spot, featuring a cameo by Jamaican track star Usain Bolt, as well as the Elephant Man track “All Out,” was previewed at the party. Pictured above, from left, are the label’s VP of marketing Randy Chin, Bolt and Elephant Man. At left is Buju Banton, left, with Hammond. To celebrate its anniversary, the Jamaican-born label is preparing an extensive boxed set honoring its deep, diverse catalog. (Photos: Marlon “Ajamia” Myrie)

A Look at Luth

RCA Music Group chairman/I Records founder Clive Davis and members of his staff visited Luther Vandross in a New York-area rehabilitation center—where Vandross is recovering from the stroke he had last April—to present him with a plaque certifying platinum shipments of the singer’s latest album, “Dance With My Father.” (I). The photo is from the first batch taken of Vandross since his stroke. His manager, Carmen Romano, says of the presentation, “We thought it would be nice for him to get some good news and to begin to experience again some of the same activities he had prior to his stroke. Also, the pictures tell a story—they let his fans see that he is OK but that there is still a long road ahead for Luther.” (Photo: Wireimage)

Big Man, Garbage Can

“American Idol” champ Ruben Studdard stopped by the set of “Sesame Street” to join Elmo for a soulful rendition of “The Alphabet Song.” The performance will air in April. Above, Studdard grabs a snapshot with Oscar the Grouch. (Photo: Theo Wargo)

Wembley Honors Bowie

David Bowie received the Wembley Male Artist of the Year award for selling 23,000 tickets almost instantly for his two shows in November. It was Bowie’s 14th appearance at Wembley. Other winners of the award include Tom Jones, Bob Dylan and Elton John. Bowie was given the award backstage at the venue. Pictured, from left, are Solo Agency managing director John Giddings, Bowie and Wembley director of sales and marketing Peter Tudor.

Here’s To 2004!

Billboard staffers recently visited BMI’s New York offices to ring in the new year. Pictured, from left, are BMI senior director of corporate relations Leslie Morgan, VP of corporate relations Robbin Arnold, Billboard editor-in-chief Keith Girard, BMI CEO/president Frances W. Preston, Billboard East Coast advertising director Joe Maimone and Billboard international advertising director Gene Smith.

One For Tony

Producer/artist Nile Rodgers, pictured at left, and vocalist Michael Des Barres were among a group of ex-bandmates and friends who paid tribute to legendary drummer Tony Thompson at a benefit at the House of Blues in Los Angeles. Rodgers played alongside Thompson in ’70s funk band Chic, and Des Barres performed with the drummer as the touring vocalist for the Power Station. They were joined by bassist/vocalist Jean Beauvoir (Plasmatics), bassist Carmine Rojas and others. All proceeds from the show went to the drummer’s family Thompson, who also worked behind David Bowie, Madonna and Rod Stewart and backed the surviving three-fourths of Led Zeppelin at Live Aid, died Nov. 12 of the age of 48 from renal cell cancer. (Photo: Cynthia Gauld)
McKean’s Folk Evokes Foster

BY JIM BESSMAN

Christopher Guest’s marvelous cinematic folk-music mockumentary “A Mighty Wind” lovingly sent up an entire genre. It also marked the debut of Michael McKean and his wife, Anne T. O’Toole, as a songwriting team.

The pair contributed “A Kiss at the End of the Rainbows” It is perhaps the key song of the film’s Grammy Award–nominated D2C/Radio Columbia Records/Sony Music Soundtrack soundtrack.

During a reunion concert featuring three fictional 1960s folk acts, the performance of their signature song “A Kiss at the End of the Rainbows” climaxes the regrouping of the “legendary” Mitch & Mickey folk duo. But while the tune seems to hew to traditional folk-music conventions, it was really modeled after the popular song era of Stephen Foster.

“We wanted it to sound like it could have been written by Foster or one of his imitators from 150 years ago,” says McKean, who also stars in the film as a member of the Folksmen trio. He explains: “A lot of songs we now think of as folk songs were actually written by professional songwriters like Foster. So we didn’t have to be literally traditional in writing folk songs for the movie.”

McKean and O’Toole’s other collaborations for “A Mighty Wind,” however, are more consistent with the 90s folk-music stereotypes, “Fare Away” (written with musical director C.J. Vanston) is a nautical incorrect sea shanty, while “Potato’s in the Paddy Wagon” is fanciful fluff.

“The operative word is ‘fun,’” observes McKean, who is also nominating for best song written for a motion picture, television or other visual media for the film’s title track—co-written with fellow Folksmen member Guest and Eugene Levy, who plays Mitch.

Recalling his earlier work with Guest in the pioneering 1984 rock mockumentary “This Is Spinal Tap,” McKean adds, “There’s very little mockery, really, but a great deal of affection for the music we parodize.”

O’Toole notes that the Tuxedo Time Music ASCAP for Foster, McKean is now writing a movie musical, as well as songs like “The Naked and the Nude,” which derives from the Gene Pitney hits “Town Without Pity” and “Mambo.

“What I like is that we don’t do everything just one way,” McKean says of the couple’s varied songwriting technique. “We watched a documentary about old films and tried to follow the way he worked with different lyricists. Oscar Hammerstein II would give him the song title and he would write a melody with a slot for it, and then Hammerstein would write the lyrics on the idea, but Loren Hart would deliver brilliant lyrics in their entirety—which Rodgers then wrote music for. So we want to have no rules.”

They Put The Bomp On Broadway

One of my most cherished memories is of informing Barry Mann at a BMI Awards dinner in Nashville a few years ago that my two favorite songs of his were “Who Put the Bomp (In the Bomp, Bomp, Bomp)” and “She Say (Oom Dooey Doo)”. And then I saw the look of utter revulsion appear on the face of my wife and legendary Brill Building songwriting team partner, Cynthia Weil—this followed by her sneering, “Those are his two worst songs!”

“Who Put the Bomp,” of course was Brooklynite Mann’s own 1961 No. 7 hit, a glorious tribute to dood-wop lyrical gibberish co-authored with fellow Brill Building tunesmith genius Gerry Goffin. She Say (Oom Dooey Doo), which Mann co-wrote with Michael Anthony, had earlier reached No. 18 in 1959 for the Diamonds, like the Canadian doo-wop group’s immortal 1957 hit “Little Darlin’,” it took the vocal genre’s characteristic nonsense syllables to a whole new wondrously idiotic level.

“I can’t help it! I’m always honest,” New York native Weil confesses, not particularly pleased to be reminded at the NARAS Heroes Award 2003 Gala of her disingenuous response at the BMI dinner.

The Heroes event took place Dec. 11 at New York’s Hotel Roosevelt. Weil and Mann were honored along with BMI president/CEO Frances W. Preston, Ruben Blades, Daryl Hall & John Oates, Nile Rodgers and Timbaland.

Weil was more than happy, however, to discuss “They Wrote That”—an off-Broadway musical surrounding her and Mann’s classic songs, directed by Tony Award winner Richard Naality Jr. It premieres Jan. 15 at the McCone/Cavale Theater.

Mann and Weil will perform in the show, which they begrudgingly scripted. Other writers took on the show. But it never jelled,” Weil said. “So we ended up writing it ourselves.

wanted it to be like Billy Joel in ‘Movin’ Out’ [the Broadway show based on Joel’s music but conceived, directed and choreographed by Twyla Tharp]. He said he didn’t do anything, that ‘Twyla did the whole thing. But it didn’t work out that way [with us].”

With their early Aldon Music output out of such timeless hits as “On Broadway,” “We Gotta Get Out Of This Place” and Mann’s most-performed song, “You’ve Lost That Lovin’ Feeling,” the musical, if nothing else, will make for great entertainment. One Mann-Weil favorite likely to go unheard—lamentably—is “She Say (Oom Dooey Doo).

“The only exciting thing about that song was how it was my first top 10 cut,” said Mann, who at least did me the great honor of singing the chorus a cappella—much to his wife’s chagrin.

“He was a mere child then,” she said, disapprovingly.

Matrix’s Next Move: The Mooney Suzuki

In July 2002, this column noted the rising fortunes of production/writing team Lauren Christy, Graham Edwards and Scott Spock, collectively known as the Matrix.

Their considerable contributions to Avril Lavigne’s “Let Go”—including writing, producing and production credits on “Complicated,” “Sk8er Boi” and “I’m With You”—innominate for song of the year and best female pop vocal performance at the 45th Annual Grammy Awards—culti-vated demand for further collaboration with an array of recording artists.

And the Matrix has answered the call. Producing and writing with Liz Phair, Lillie, Hilary Duff and the Tros, among others, has netted the group a Grammy nomination for producer of the year, non-classical.

Currently, the Matrix has upgraded one Pro Tools system to HD, maintaining pre-HD systems to ensure compatibility with collaborators who have not. While it is accurate to say the Matrix is based in the Pro Tools world, such a designation omits much of its story. With their diverse backgrounds, the Matrix’s members bring a wealth of acoustic and electric instrumentation and organic methodology to their digital audio workstation-based studio.

Among their recent projects, for example, is the forthcoming album by New York rock band the Mooney Suzuki. It was tracked to 2-inch analog tape, using vintage equipment, at Paramount and American Studios in Hollywood.

“We’re very excited about the Mooney Suzuki album—it’s different for us,” Edwards says. “They’re a full-on underground rock band. The mix came out real good.”

The project, Christy adds, was a departure for the band as well. “Half the stuff on the record was stuff they had written, because they’re brilliant writers,” she notes. “But they were so interested to see what it would be like to collaborate with us. They thought it would be an interesting combination if we all got into a scrum together and created something.”

That project, along with recent productions for Shakira, Britney Spears, Lindsay Pagano and Jason Mraz, for example, demonstrate the ease with which the Matrix fits comfortably with a broad range of musical styles—a skill not unlike that demonstrated by another artist-turned-producer, Grammy nominee Linda Perry (Studio Monitor, Billboard, Jan. 10).

“Because there are three of us,” Christy says, “and we all were artists originally, we really understand—probably like Linda—what artists sometimes become going through, trying to find that elusive first single or [being asked], ‘Could you quickly come up with another song in case you need the one that everyone thinks is the single?’ We really understand what’s going on, so [artists] feel relaxed with us.”

SECONDS: Two years ago, Gavin Lursken of the Mastering Lab in Hollywood became the first mastering engineer to receive a Grammy Award, for his contribution to the 2001 album of the year (“O Brother, Where Art Thou?”). Lursken is again a nominee, this time with mastering engineer Joseph Palmaccio of Sony Music Studios in New York. For “Martin Scorsese Presents The Blues: A Musical Journey.”

Also, Mastering Lab founder and engineer Doug Sax and equipment manufacturer Solid State Logic will be co-recipients of the 2004 Technical Grammy Award.
NAMM, Industry Expand

BY CHRISTOPHER WALSH

NAMM, the International Music Products Assn., is experiencing a period of robust growth.

Attendance at this year's winter NAMM Show — set for Jan. 15-18 in Anaheim, Calif. — will likely surpass last January's convention attendance of some 68,000, NAMM president/CEO Joe Lamond says.

"We're running about 10% over on preregistration," says Lamond, formerly an executive at Skip's Music in Sacramento, Calif., which is a NAMM member. "It seems like, for the first time in a few years, companies are very optimistic."

For most of NAMM's approximately 8,000 members, business is also looking up, Lamond says.

One reason: The pro audio business is reaching further into the consumer marketplace, as digital recording gear makes quantum leaps in quality and prices plunge.

Yet one of the fastest-growing areas of music gear sales is a surprising one: "Drums and percussion, of all things," Lamond says. "Technically, the oldest instrument."

"We're seeing good growth in a lot of areas, but technology is definitely one of the most exciting areas at the show," he adds.

"The outcome of that growth in "prosumer" technology, from our perspective, is that it is allowing a lot more people to get involved. The 'weekend warrior' guy who is getting together with his lawyer friends and playing in the garage is also recording and making CDs."

New technology, Lamond says, "has really helped lower the barrier of entry for people to get into recording and fulfill their dream of being a songwriter, even if it's just for their immediate family and friends."

In many areas of commerce, dominant retail chains have largely supplanted the traditional mom-and-pop stores in the U.S. The trend has

(Continued on page 37)
New Year Brings Out New Gear At NAMM

By Rich Tozzi

What will music gear makers showcase at the International Music Products Assn.’s winter NAMM show? Here are snapshots of products to watch for from selected manufacturers and suppliers.

DR STRINGS
drstrings.com

DR Handmade Strings will feature both the Rainbow Learning Set and “The Learning Set Instruction Book.” Aimed at beginning guitarists, the Rainbow Learning Set consists of different colored electric and acoustic strings—six strings, six colors. “The Learning Set Instruction Book” is designed to guide playing according to string colors. DR Strings estimates that with this set and instruction book, a student can learn to play the guitar up to six times faster and easier. Also shown will be the company’s Fatbeam bass strings (Marcus Miller signature set), Bootzilla (Bootsy Collins’ signature set) and Black Beauty black-coated bass and electric strings.

FENDER
fender.com

Fender will introduce what the company calls the most versatile instruments it has ever made: the all-new American Deluxe Series of electric guitars and basses. The series, Fender says, is made with the finest materials available to create “well-crafted, timeless guitars and basses” for musicians. Each instrument in the series comes equipped with newly designed Samarium Cobalt Noiseless pickups that are both responsive and articulate. Combined with S-1 switching, the new SCN pickups bring a near-endless array of tones that further defines “the Fender sound.”

GIBSON
gibson.com

Gibson will showcase its entire musical instrument family at NAMM, highlighted by new signature models from the Who’s Pete Townshend and Tom Delonge of Blink-182. New amplified models include solid-body acoustics with the look of traditional Gibson flat tops, along with a Les Paul guitar and amp matched set. Gibson’s value-priced Epiphone division will unveil its Collegiate series, representing the top 50 college sports schools, and a new Masterbilt acoustic line inspired by Epiphone’s rich history. Gibson’s product line now can outfit an entire band with guitars, amps and new U.S.-made Slingerland drums and Tobias bases. It also offers a new line of pianos sporting the Hamilton brand.

KORG
korg.com

Korg will display its new D32XD and D16XD recorders. Each features 16- or 24-bit unprocessed recording with sampling rates up to 96kHz, a newly designed 320-pixel-by-240-pixel TouchView display with four levels of grayscales, eight channels of analog compression on input, a 24-bit digital mixer, four-band EQ on every channel and built-in hard-disc and CD-RW drives.

Both recorders offer eight XLR inputs with individual phantom power and eight quarter-inch inputs, plus a dedicated guitar input, expression pedal input and dual phone outputs. Up to 16 tracks can be recorded simultaneously, each with eight Virtual Tracks (up to 128 tracks on the D16XD; 256 tracks on the D32XD).

Optional enhancements allow a user to expand the functions of the XD Series, adding eight additional quarter-inch inputs, eight additional channels of compression for those inputs and 24-bit ADAT optical I/O, plus Word Clock interlacing. In addition to the onboard SDP/IP digital interface.

In 2004, Marshall Amplification celebrates its 42nd year in business with a biography about founder Jim Marshall, published by Backbeat Books. Marshall will unveil the book at a press reception at its booth on Jan. 15, and Jim Marshall will be available for autographs. To mark the occasion, a rare, purple Marshall amp halfstack, consisting of a 1959 SLPX head and matching 1960 TV cabinet, will be raffled. Also, on Jan. 17, Jim Marshall will be at Guitar Center in Hollywood signing autographs, and another halfstack will be raffled.

ROLAND
rolandus.com

Roland will debut its next generation of recording technologies and electronic percussion products at the winter NAMM Show. It will also be showing the newly released, full-featured MV-8000 production studio.

SONY
sony.com/professional

Continuing to build on its popular software-based audio production product line, Sony Pro Audio will showcase a new Sony-Oxford Plug-Ins Bundle—including EQ, Dynamics and Inflator—for Pro Tools TDM systems. This new bundle will join the ranks of two other existing Sony-Oxford software bundles recently introduced for Pro Tools LE and TC PowerCore systems.

Sony-Oxford plug-ins combine advanced signal processing capabilities with clear sonic advantages, and these bundles make the Sony plug-ins even more affordable to a broad sector of the market.

Sony will also showcase its pre-packaged UWP Series of UHF wireless microphone systems. These competitively priced wireless systems have been augmented by new accessories and components to enable front-of-house mixers to custom-design their wireless system components.

TASCAM
tascam.com

Aside from showing several new unannounced products, Tascam will demonstrate its popular FW-1884 FireWire Control Surface and Audio/MIDI Interface. Also on display will be the new FE8 expander for the FW-1884, which adds eight additional control strips with 100mm touch-sensitive moving faders. Up to 15 FE8 expanders can be added to create a 128-fader system.

Taking advantage of its latest DSP technology, the new GigaPulse, which will also be shown, is the first VST plug-in for Windows from Tascam. Using convoluted technology, which essentially “samples” a room or acoustic body, GigaPulse can emulate any room, vintage EQ or microphone. Other features include microphone modeling, selectable room position and tail extension.

Also on the floor will be Tascam’s AV-452, a new mixer designed for the contracting and installation market. The AV-452 incorporates a microphone mixer, audio/video receiver, infrared controller and digital amplifier into one affordable, easy-to-use component. With a universal learning remote and IR blaster function, it’s designed to control a sophisticated A/V system as one integrated unit.

WAVES
waves.com

Waves, a leader in audio signal processing solutions, will exhibit its ultimate plug-in package—the Diamond Bundle. The bundle incorporates 35 signal processing tools from the Platinum and Transform and Restoration Bundles in one package. For further versatility, Waves’ exclusive WaveSheel provides support for all popular plug-in formats and audio editors, including TDM, RTAS and AudioSuite, along with such native formats as VST, DirectX (Windows) and MAd, and Apple Audio Units (Macintosh).

The latest addition to the Waves family of signal-processing solutions is the Transform Bundle of plug-ins for creative sound manipulation, including Sound Shifter, Doubler, TransX and Morphoder, all operating at sample rates up to 96kHz. The comprehensive Transform Bundle offers four innovative tools in one package, designed to control and shape time, pitch, dimension, punch and instrument characteristics.

YAMAHA
yamaha.com

Yamaha Corp. of America’s winter NAMM offerings will include Version 2 software for the 0296 digital mixer; editor software for the SPX2000; upgraded DTXExpress and DTXtreme electric drums; new Disklaviers and Clavinova pianos; new PSR and DGX keyboards; mLAN cards; VST plug-ins; digital bass amps; acoustic handcrafted guitars; the Xeno series trombones; Z series trumpet; and new concert percussion pieces.

Now in its fifth year, Yamaha Drums will sponsor its annual Legendary Groove Night with a tribute to Yamaha Japan’s Takashi “Hagi” Hagihara. Artists scheduled to perform include Tom Brechtlein, Jimmy Chamberlin, Peter Erskine, Anton Fig, Steve Jordan, Paul Leim, Jerry Marotta, Rick Marotta, Dave Mattacks, Russ Miller, J.R. Robinson, Clyde Stubblefield and Dave Weckl.
Market
Continued from page 35

cultures may be attributed to that. We’ve been trying different ap-
proaches to address that issue, in-
cluding the most comprehensive
mailing the store has ever done. So
far, results are good.

What challenges do you face in
this market?
Surack: I believe the biggest chal-
lenge we have is [inexpensively
made] imported products from
China. We have to sell a lot more of
them to make the same money. I
believe the Chinese market is “at
war” with us and winning, and we
don’t even realize it yet. I don’t
understand who will have money to
buy the products in the U.S. if all our
jobs go to China.

Angress: We are living in a very
competitive global economy. We
face technological changes that can
cause yesterday’s hot product to
quickly become obsolete. Global
product sourcing can cause price
deflation, and oversupply threatens
profit margins. These issues are
not unique to the musical equip-
ment business.

We’ve focused our efforts on
working with the manufacturers
who are in this business for the
long haul — those who foster strong
brand reputations by consistently
delivering innovative products that
really work well for our customers.
Together with these manufacturers,
we’ve worked hard to produce pro-
motions that excite our customers,
and to develop much more efficient
ways of handling our supply chain
to eliminate unnecessary costs.
Such things as freight costs from
Asia can significantly impact the
price of our products. Lowering our
inventory costs allows us to ana-
lyze and monitor the market for
profitable business while offering a
huge product selection and being the
industry’s price leader.

Dolnick: From a sales and sup-
port viewpoint, I think the most difficult
time is for the National Association
of Music Merchants (NAMM) —
the pro market today is keeping up
with changing technology.

—WAYNE DOLNICK, SAM ASH
PROFESSIONAL AUDIO GROUP

NAMM
Continued from page 35

affected the musical instrument
business as well.

Despite that phenomenon, how-
ever, Lamond reports a growing
number of smaller, specialized
retailers, as reflected in new NAMM
members.

“One of the things we’ve seen is an
exciting trend. These are the young
people who think, ‘I can do this better
than those other guys.’ Every time
we see these changes in the retail
sector of the industry, it’s because another
generation of people get into retail.”

To cite one very successful exam-
ple, Guitar Center is a strong national
presence with 122 outlets. The chain
recently opened large stores in New
York City and Chicago.

New, independent retailers are
finding niches, Lamond says. For
example, “the little drum shop that
you walk into and find people who
really speak drums and are very pas-
sionate. Or vintage acoustic guitar
shops . . . I think we’re seeing a lot of
different niche markets picking up opportuni-
ties from where the big guys aren’t.”

Across every category of instru-
ments, this year’s winter NAMM
convention will demonstrate the
same tendency currently seen in the
recording sector, Lamond predicts:
improving quality coupled
with reduced pricing. “There
are two big trends that create
a lot of opportunity.”

The concept of music-making
is not only for the truly gifted “is
really an idea whose time has come,”

Lamond observes, “There’s a lot
more recreational music being
made, a lot more young children
making music. The concept that
music-making really is for every-
body is what we’ve been preaching
for a long time, and it’s something
we are really passionate about.”

During the past decade, the 103-
year-old trade organization has rein-
vested more than $20 million from its
profits into such major market-
building programs as Weekend
Warriors, designed to encourage baby
boomers to pursue music-making.

NAMM also has funded the Inter-
national Federation of Music
Research, which supports researching
the relationship between music and
physical and emotional wellness,
and sesame Street Music Works,
targeted to get young children
involved in music.
39  Indie labels help keep rock 'n' roll alive by introducing such acts as the White Stripes

UMG Tops Album Share For Fifth Year

BY ED CHRISTMAN

NEW YORK—Universal Music Group topped the U.S. music industry for the fifth consecutive year, finishing 2003 with 28.1% total albums market share.

UMG has dominated the U.S. music scene since its 1998 merger with PolyGram.

With U.S. album sales totaling 656.3 million units last year, according to Nielsen SoundScan, that means albums released through Universal Music & Video Distribution scanned 184.3 million units in 2003.

But in 2002, the company scanned 196.8 million units, which means UMD had a drop of 6.5%, or nearly double the U.S. industry's decline of 3.6%, in 2003. Billboard estimates that UMD had total net sales of $1.9 billion last year.

UMD's fourth-quarter sales were closely watched as competitors assessed the performance of the group's controversial JumpStart program. Under the initiative, the company's front-line wholesale price was slashed to $9.09 from $12.02.

While UMD enjoyed an uptick in market share from the 27.8% it had at the end of the third quarter, on a unit basis, it scanned 66.1 million units in fourth-quarter 2003, vs. 65.1 million the previous year.

That means that while UMD saw scans increase 1.5%, it did not keep pace with the overall U.S. industry, which enjoyed a 4.7% increase in the fourth quarter, with scans of 221.4 million vs. 211.4 million one year earlier.

DISTRIBUTION KING

UMD was the No. 1 distributor in current market share, with 30.2%.

The group also had No. 1 album of the year: 50 Cent's "Get Rich or Die Tryin'." It scanned 6.5 million copies.

Indeed, UMD's dominance in the U.S. can be seen in practically every genre and album category that Nielsen (Continued on page 40)

Total U.S. Album Market Share By Distributor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distributor</th>
<th>Jan.-Dec. 2003</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNIVERSAL</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>INDIES</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>WEA</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>BMG</td>
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<td>SONY</td>
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<td>EMM</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
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SOURCE: NIELSEN SOUNDCSAN

Total Current U.S. Album Market Share By Distributor

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<tr>
<td>INDIES</td>
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<td>EMM</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>ALL OTHER</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
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EXCLUDES TITLES CONSIDERED TO BE CATALOG
SOURCE: NIELSEN SOUNDCSAN

40  Carl Singmaster decides to close Manifest Discs & Tapes

'NFL' Title Kicks Off Deal

SME, EA Unite For Videogame Promotion

BY STEVE TRAUMAN

Sony Music Entertainment (SME) has entered a cross-promotional marketing deal for the soundtrack of "NFL Street" with independent game publisher Electronic Arts (EA).

"NFL Street" will feature unreleased tracks and album cuts exclusively from 11 Sony artists on EA's Sports Big label for the Sony PlayStation 2 (PS2), Microsoft Xbox and Nintendo GameCube console systems.

The game hits stores Jan. 15. Two of the tracks will be made into music videos featuring game-play footage. They will be released as singles for radio. Sony will service the songs and video to top radio and video outlets.

The soundtrack features pre-album release tracks from New York's Hot 97 DJ Ray Slay/Three 6 Mafia, Baby D, the X-ecutioners, Grafh, Jakk Frost, Lóst prophets and Wylde Bunch, plus recent album tracks from Bravhearts, Fuel, Korn, Killer Mike and Lil Flip.

(Continued on page 39)
Keeping Alight The Indie-Rocker Torch

A few years ago, one of my favorite rock bands, the Dictators, posed a musical question: “Who will save rock’n’roll?”

Today—as it has been for decades—the answer is “independent labels.”

Don’t take our word for it, though. We direct your attention to “Can Rock Come Back?,” a think piece by Los Angeles Times pop music critic Robert Hilburn that ran on the front page of the paper’s Sunday “Calendar” section Jan. 4.

In his story, Hilburn notes the cavernous commercial gulf between the top-selling pop artists—Justin Timberlake, Kelly Clarkson, Clay Aiken—and the high-profile but relatively meager-selling posse of young rock bands loosely grouped under the rubric “garage rock.”

Without exception, the bands that Hilburn identifies as the shining hope for rock’s future first saw the light of day on indie labels.

The White Stripes issued three albums on Long Beach, Calif.-based Sympathy for the Record Industry before releasing their platinum-plus breakthrough, “Elephant,” on V2.

Interscope’s Yeah Yeah Yeahs made their bow with a three-song EP on New York’s Shifty Records, later reissued by Chicago’s Touch & Go. Hot Hot Heat, now with Warner Bros., initially dropped its album on Seattle’s Sub Pop.

RCA released the debut album by the Strokes. But months before “Is This It” dropped in 2001, the New York quintet was unveiled on an indie EP, which was largely responsible for firing the mammoth buzz in the U.K. that turned the group into the English and American music press.

The larger point of Hilburn’s story—that the new rock acts’ sales are in no way commensurate with the attention they’re receiving—is frustratingly immutable for fans of this cutting-edge music.

As long ago as 2002, a front-page Billboard story surveying rock radio programmers indicated they were highly skeptical of the prospects for aggressive young acts like the Strokes and the Stripes (Billboard, Dec. 21, 2002).

The million-selling successes of “Elephant” and “Is This It” remain an anomaly in a national field dominated by pop, hip-hop and hard-rock hits.

However, in the current climate, it is also possible to foresee their beginnings in the independent community.

Some of the late ’70s punk icons—Television, Patti Smith. X—released prescient indie-label records long before their ascent to major labeldom and their canonization as rock pathfinders.

And the first salvos that Nirvana and Soundgarden fired during the Seattle grunge incursion of the early ’90s were launched by hometown Sub Pop.

There are several simple reasons why the indies have consistently played a key role in the regeneration of rock’n’roll during the genre’s history.

With their ears close to the ground, indie-label operators are the first to pick up the tremors of a distant cultural temblor. They are willing to invest the time and the energy to develop music that is frequently a slow-rolling commercial phenomenon.

Most important, the indie mind-set combines entrepreneurial zeal with a certain aesthetic inscrutability.

Indie label owners put out their records to make money, but the game is never just about making money. It’s about generating ideas—some of which may not achieve immediate mass consumption.

Hilburn’s musings came at the beginning of a year that will be celebrated as the 50th anniversary of rock’n’roll.

The main event being commemorated is the recording of a Tupelo, Miss.-born truck driver’s first single by a former radio engineer for his independent Memphis label.

The torch was lit by Elvis Presley and Sam Phillips, the original indie rockers. It will likely continue to burn bright in the years ahead.

NFL

Continued from page 38

Growing and highly influential—world of gaming,” Sony Music U.S. president Don Jenner says. “I have every confidence that this promotion will enable us to extend the reach of both our artists and the game.”

SME executive VP Michele Anthony agrees. “Our artists get a unique opportunity to expand their fan base.”

EA plans to increase these partnerships. “We continue to seek alignment with the best music companies and are excited that Sony is a partner with vision,” says Steve Schnurr, EA worldwide executive of music.

The group has taken the lead in the use of licensed and original music for its games, launching EA Trax—a division dedicated to this initiative—in August 2002 with “Madden NFL 2003.”

“Since then we’ve been acknowledged as having impact on sales of CDs by [such acts] as Good Charlotte, Nappy Roots, Fabolous, Jet, Yellowcard, Blink-182 and Queens of the Stone Age,” Schnurr adds.

Previously, the most ambitious label soundtrack was the EA Sports Big hit “Def Jam Vendetta,” with a dozen Universal Music Group artists contributing tracks and promoting the game with subsequent album releases (Billboard, March 29, 2003). More than 500,000 copies of the PS2 version alone were sold before November.

“For NFL Street,” we were looking to develop a partnership with a major label and a variety of artists,” EA senior music marketing manager Doug Scott says.

Sony is producing a remix CD of songs from the game by DJ Kay-Slay to be used for promo giveaways and background music for promo events.

Sony is also handling radio promotion for major markets to support new albums containing game tracks that are premiering during the next four months.

DJ Kay-Slay has already been hyping his radio program, “Drum Hour,” including several tracks from the Bravehearts, among others.

WEB INFUSION

All of the in-game beats are original songs created by the X-ecutioners.

The lineup includes “Get With It” with B-Real—a single from their upcoming Columbia album “Revolutions,” due this spring—and “Let’s Go,” a track with Good Charlotte.

The group (which consists of Total Eclipse, Roc Raida and Rob Swift) and DJ Kay-Slay are also characters in the game. “I’m a Madden fan and play [‘Madden NFL 2004’] online almost every day,” band spokesman Swift says.

Swift is also doing the voice-over for “Making of the Game: NFL Street,” which is airing on MTV the week before launch. It will include interviews with and performances by Fuel, Lostprophets, DJ Kay-Slay and the X-ecutioners.

Online integration includes a game/music/artist section on nflstreet.com, with a music player, artist info, artist interviews and merchandise; links to all Sony artist sites; and several major joint online promotions with interactive consumer/artist opportunities.

Game/music prizes.

Sony and EA will also promote the game and artists to such mainstream third-party Web sites as MSN, Yahoo and rollingstone.com. Also planned are joint production and distribution of materials by Sony and EA college and street marketing teams and combined NFL Street gaming tournaments and listening parties.
The decision of Carl Singmaster, owner of the five-unit, Columbia, S.C.-based Manifest Discs & Tapes, to close his stores appears to be part of a growing trend.

In 2002, Bill Thom and Bob Hoyt, the respective owners of Harmony House and Record Express, decided it was time to get out while the going was good, and both those chains are now gone.

In Manifest's case, Singmaster will close the stores one by one and will be out of business by the end of the first quarter, according to Singmaster. As a result, 70 employees will lose their jobs. But one store has been sold to Music City Record Distributors, a Nashville-based chain.

With a number of the leases coming due or already expired, Singmaster says he decided not to renew.

"This is not a bankruptcy," he said in a statement. "It is a business decision to not further invest in music retail. Every legitimate financial obligation, including all trade credit obligations, shall be fully honored."

Singmaster says he made the decision because "the practices and policies of the music copyright owners have made it increasingly difficult for the Internet and let me buy singles at the same price [that] Steve Jobs is getting them for, I would have grabbed that bull by the horns and I could see a very viable business."

He says the elimination of the single has hurt the business and that he believes that if he could renew titles in bulk at his warehouse and sell them in his stores, it would have made it worthwhile to keep his investment in retail. Instead, his proposal was met with "no, no, no, no, no. Not one company would consider it. The labels think the consumer wants to do it at home. Well, people can make coffee at home for a few cents, and yet they go to Starbucks and pay $3.50 for it."

"And then you have things like the Rolling Stones giving an exclusive to Best Buy and telling us we can't carry it. It's just one thing after another. Everything has been negative in the last few years."

But Singmaster quickly adds that working with the coalition of Independent Music Stores has been great.

"CIMS are the best people on earth," he says, further adding that he has met many great people in all sectors of the music industry.

Singmaster says he hopes to stick around the music business in some capacity. "Whatever I do, it will be involved with music and beer—my two passions."

For those in the know, Singmaster differs from Retail Track in that he is a connoisseur of micro-breweries.

NOT SO FAST: Despite what I reported here in the Dec. 27, 2003, column, Pete Jones, who had planned to transition to consultant status, Jan. 1, will stick around for a couple of months as president of BMG Distribution.

He and BMG Entertainment CFO Joe Gorman, who also planned to retire, will stay in place while the regulatory agencies review the company's agreed-upon merger with Sony Music Entertainment.

According to Singmaster, Gorman will remain the head of the company's worldwide finance organization and will continue to work with the team managing the merger.

A part of that initiative, Dennis Kooker has been appointed senior VP of finance, assuming responsibility for all corporate and North America finance as well as serving as the main financial liaison to parent Bertelsmann.

MAKING TRACKS: During the holidays, Bryan Everitt was named director of music at Hastings Entertainment in Amarillo, Texas. He replaces Storm Glover, who joined Anderson Merchandisers in Bentonville, Ark., last month as manager of purchasing. Everitt has been at Hastings for 10 years.

Everitt started as a store manager and most recently served as marketing manager. He reports to VP of purchasing Steve Hicks.

I also neglected to note that George Meyer, formerly VP of music and marketing at the Wiz, joined Hastings in Amarillo a few months back as director of inventory, data and electronic data interchange.

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**Retail Track**

By Ed Christman

ecchristman@billboard.com

**Album Share**

Continued from page 38

**INDIES TAKE SECOND PLACE**

Independent distributors collectively ranked second in total album market share with 16.7%, up from the 16.4% they had in 2002, meaning that the sector generated 109.6 million in album scans. In placing second, indie distributors collectively ranked first in classical, jazz, gospel and new age and ranked second in catalog and music video.

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**Yes, SoundScan tracks.**

In addition to Latin, country, R&B and rap (see stories, pages 18, 22 and 27), UMDV was the No. 1 distributor of albums in rock, soundtracks, catalog, deep catalog and music video. It placed second in the classical, hard rock and jazz categories and in placing albums on the Billboard Heatseekers chart.

In addition, Nielsen SoundScan determines market-share rankings based on point-of-sale information. It collects this data for all formats and configurations from retailers, rack accounts and other merchants, including mail-order companies and online stores. The accounts that provide the information generate 85% of U.S. music sales. Based on this data, Nielsen SoundScan calculates current album market share by counting only sales occurring within the first 18 months of an album's release (12 months for classical and jazz), except for those that remain in the top half of The Billboard 200.

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WEA, the dominant U.S. distributor before the PolyGram/UMG merger, continues to build market share. It had been on a downward spiral in the latter half of the 1990s and reached its low point in 2000 when it had a 15.4% share.

But since then, it has been rebuilding, with 15.9% in both 2001 and 2002 before reaching 16.4% last year. That gives it 107.6 million in album scans, which is almost the same amount of scans as it had in 2002.

WEA generates revenue of $1.45 billion, according to Billboard estimates. WEA was the No. 1 distributor of hard rock and placed second for alternative rock.

WEA placed third in current market share, with 15.4%, up from 14.3% in 2002. Its hot-selling album includes Linkin Park's "Meteora," which scanned 3.5 million copies, making it the third-best-selling album of 2003.

BMG Distribution had a strong year, with market share rising to 15.5% from 14.8% one year earlier, moving the company up one peg in the rankings to fourth.

BMG's real strength is in current albums market share, where it is the No. 2 distributor. Last year, it had an 18.4% share in that category, up from 17.4% in 2002. The company's best sellers in 2003 included Evanescence's "Fallen," which scanned 3.4 million copies, finishing as the year's fourth-best-selling album.

BMG Distribution also came on strong in the gospel and new-age genres, ranking second for both. BMG's market share translates into scans of 103.5 million units, up slightly from 101 million in 2002. Billboard estimates its revenue at $1.2 billion.

Meanwhile, Sony Music Distribution had a tough year, dropping to fifth place. Its market share for total albums dipped to 13.7% from 15.7%. That translates to about 90 million units scanned in 2003, vs. 106 million the previous year.

For current albums, the drop was even larger, with SMD turning in a 12.5% performance last year, vs. 15.2% the previous year. Its best-selling title was Beyoncé's "Dangerously in Love," which scanned 2.5 million copies.

SMD was the No. 2 distributor of Latin and soundtracks. Billboard estimates the company's 2003 U.S. sales to be $1.05 billion.

EMI Music Marketing placed last again, but its market share rose to 9.7% from the 8.4% it had in 2002. It had the surprise hit of the year in Norah Jones' "Come Away With Me," which scanned 5.1 million copies.

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BBC Bows Film Line

BY JILL KIPNIS

LOS ANGELES—The British are coming to the U.S.—again. BBC Video is launching the BBC Film Line this spring to satisfy increasing demand for British programming. The company's foray into theatrical projects follows its most successful sales year ever in 2003. VP of home video Burton Cromer says the company declined to provide specific figures for last year's releases, but highlights included several TV-related DVDs, such as the first seasons of "Coupling" and "The Office." "We really connected with the core DVD-buying audience in 2003," Cromer says.

The company had been discussing a film series for many months, Cromer says, but it waited until it could acquire titles that represented its ambitions for the line. "We want to provide people with familiar, critically beloved classics and films that are lesser-known but as well. Our company's mission is to bring the best of British entertainment to North American audiences."

The first BBC Film Line title, "A Room With a View, Special Edition" ($29.98), will be released April 6 on a two-disc DVD. The triple Academy Award winner includes such special features as a commentary from director James Ivory and producer Ismail Merchant and a memorabilia gallery of previously unpublished photos.

The next release will be the Sept. 7 bow of "Another Country" ($19.98), the 1984 debut of actor Colin Firth. The disc includes cast interviews, a director commentary and a photo scrapbook.

Both films were acquired through London-based Goldcrest Films International.

Cromer says that all BBC Film Line releases will be acquired properties at first, though BBC-sponsored film projects may be released as part of the series. The company expects to release approximately four titles per year.

BBC Film Line releases, which will be distributed by Warner Home Video, will be marketed with "full force," Cromer says. "A Room With a View," for example, will be supported with print, TV and online campaigns. It will also be part of a WHV Mother's Day promotion.

Other upcoming BBC TV-related DVD releases include "Absolutely Fabulous: Series 5" (March 16, $24.98) and "The Office: The Complete Second Series" (date and price to be announced).
London Views Gain Exposure

Saint Etienne Movie Getting Wider Audience

BY ADAM HOWORTH

LONDON—A 60-minute digital movie that accompanies U.K. esoteric club/pop trio Saint Etienne on stage has acquired a life of its own. Recently signed to Sanctuary, Saint Etienne originally turned a digital viewfinder on its home city of London to provide on-the-road promotional support for its latest album, "Finisterre," released internationally in October 2002 through Beggars Banquet and its U.K. imprint, Mantra. The movie, also called "Finisterre," premiered May 2003 at London's Institute of Contemporary Arts as part of the Onedirection7 digital film festival, which has subsequently played around the U.K. It will be shown at similar festivals in Europe and Japan this year. A DVD of the film is set for retail release in second-quarter 2004, with Sanctuary the likely distributor.

PROMOTING THROUGH FILM
Saint Etienne member Bob Stanley says the idea for the film arose while the band was working on "Finisterre." Instead of using its video budget to promote a single, the band had a grander vision: to make a feature film. "We were midway through making our album and taking on the lyrical direction of the state of Britain today," Stanley says, "when we saw a [1994] film by director Patrick Keiller called "London." It made me and Paul Kelly—who usually makes our videos—I think we could do something like that to go with our album."

WIDER AUDIENCE
"We've done 18 or 19 singles," Stanley says. "Every time, you'd spend £20,000 ($35,800) at least on the video—and the only place it would ever show regularly was in Germany. That's a lot of money to spend to get on MTV Germany."

Evans and Kelly did editing and post-production on the movie at their jointly owned London-based Saint Etienne Movie Production (Continued on page 46)

Portuguese Concert Scene Needs Jump-Start

BY CHRIS GRAEML

LISBON, Portugal—Despite a potential glut of new outdoor venues, Portugal could remain the touring backwater of Europe, according to some industry insiders.

Alvaro Covoes, joint managing director of leading concert promoter Musica No Coração, is calling on record companies, promoters and government in Portugal to collaborate in 2004 to market the country more effectively overseas and attract sponsors.

Covoes says many international acts and their management simply ignore the country as a touring destination, even though "most large concerts continue to sellouts in the capital, Lisbon, and second city, Oporto."

Many world-famous acts only make it to Lisbon after they've peaked, Covoes says, "or [they] don't realize that Portugal, despite low record sales, can be a lucrative live destination."

The Portuguese music market was worth $147.5 million in 2002, compared with $551 million in neighboring Spain, according to the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry. However, per-capita music sales in Portugal in 2002 were $14.60, compared with Spain's $13.70. Portugal's population is 10.1 million, while Spain's is 40.1 million.

Portugal is suffering from an economic recession that has seen unemployment rise drastically. The Bank of Portugal says business confidence was at a 10-year low in 2003. But the international Paris-based Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development predicts a gradual recovery for the local economy in 2004 and 2005.

SPANISH STEPS
Mainstream pop/rock acts playing southern Europe have historically tended to opt for Spain, rather than Portugal. But some acts have made the trip to the western part of the Iberian Peninsula and found it to be rewarding. EMI artist Robbie Williams, for example, played to 35,000 fans in two nights when he visited Lisbon for the first time in October 2003.

During one of his concerts, the British artist even asked his management team from the stage why they had never decided to bring him to play in the country before. Such decisions are "often a question of dates" for (Continued on page 46)
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**ALBUMS**

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Hits of the World is compiled by Billboard/London.
**The Likely Lads And Lasses Of '04**

As ever, the first few columns of the New Year will find Pulse putting the spotlight on some of the new acts from around the globe likely to be making waves far beyond their own shores in 2004.

**NEW VEVO: Shonagh Daly**

Daly is the Irish artist most likely to achieve international success in 2004. The 23-year-old Limerick-born singer has signed a five-year deal with Polydor Records. The label will release Daly’s debut album, “Beautiful View,” in early 2004. Andrew Lloyd Webber discovered Daly in 2000, and she subsequently became a chorus member in his West End musical “The Beautiful Game.” She also sang one of his songs at the New York memorial service for the victims of Sept. 11, 2001. Now, the composer and his longtime lyricist, Tim Rice, have teamed for the first time since 1996 to write “A Touch of Love” for Daly’s album. “I’ve done the West End thing,” she says. “Now I’ve made my own album, and I wanted it to be really intimate and simple.”

**ONE-ARMED TRIO: “Zornik”**

Zornik will be all over Belgium in 2004, says Sam Sisk, promotions manager at

**EMI Belgium.** The release of Zornik’s new album, “One-Armed Bandit” (“Parlphone/EMI”), is set for February of 2004, exactly two years after the band’s first album went worldwide with V2. Coming Feb. 9, the band’s EP “Man Bites Dog” follows the debut single “I Love You Cause I Have To.” Aggressive touring and UK festival appearances have helped the group establish a firm platform from which to launch its first album, currently being recorded with renowned producer Clive Langar and Alan Winsten (Eris Costello/the Smiths).

**CHRISTOPHER BARRETT**

**SULTANA OF HIP-HOP: Turkish-born hip-hop artist Sultana made waves in her home territory in 2002 with her left-field debut, “Cerkez Kizi,” on Istanbul-based Doublemoon Records (Istanbul). Now, cameo appearances on three new albums are set to take her fame far beyond Turkey. At opposite ends of the globe, Sultana appears on “The Best of Istanbul” (VÖ) from German label Orient Media Network and on the compilation “Columbia” from Australian indie label Fatboy. She also appears as a guest vocalist in the album “ onward” by Delirium (Netwerk).

**TAYFUN KESGIN**

**WORLD MUSICnets**
Canada’s Outside Gets In On MMS Group Deal

BY LARRY LEBLANC
TORONTO—Music Manufacturing Services Group (MMSG) has purchased a 50% share in Outside Music, one of Canada’s leading independent music distributors.

Both companies are headquartered in Toronto. “We’re planning to officially announce the deal at [international] trade fair MIDEM,” MMSG president Lindsay Gillespie says. MIDE takes place Jan. 25-29 in Cannes, France.

Gillespie declines to reveal his own financial stake in the purchase but says the partnership will be a “full-service distribution/labeled/publishing company.”

Industry sources estimate Outside’s gross annual music sales at $5 million Canadian ($3.9 million) to $7 million Canadian ($5.4 million).

Outside has 18 full-time staffers based in Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal. It has exclusive Canadian distribution rights for several international labels, including Rykodisc, Six Degrees, Ninja Tune, Sub Pop, Ubiquity and Warp. Canadian labels represented include Teenage USA Recordings, Three Gut, Frobbingnagian and Mint.

MMSG operates Music Manufacturing Services (MMS), a leading Canadian supplier to independents of optical discs, cassettes and vinyl. It has a staff of 18 as well, with offices in Toronto and St. John’s, Newfoundland. MMS also offers in-house art and video duplication services.

THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX
Outside founder and president Lloyd Nishimura will continue to run the company. It will soon move its marketing, promotion and administrative staff to MMS headquarters in Toronto but will retain its own warehouse.

Nishimura says Outside will significantly expand the activities of its label, also called Outside Music, following the MMSG deal.

GILLESPIE, LEFT, AND NISHIMURA: BUILDING A FULL-SERVICE COMPANY

To date, the imprint has issued repertoire by a number of Canadian acts, including the Sadies and Superfrienz.

Outside also plans to launch a publishing affiliate and an online distribution service in 2004.

“Both companies will be strengthened by being together,” Nishimura predicts. “There is a synergy between us.”

Gillespie notes that Outside’s clients will have access to all MMS services. “All of the manufacturing advantages we have will be across the hall.”

Gillespie launched MMS in 1988, while he was senior VP of indie label distributor Attic Music Group in Toronto. He left Attic in 1991 to concentrate on MMS.

Nishimura started Outside in 1995 using space he rented in MMS’ warehouse. “He grew so big, he had to leave,” Gillespie jokes.

BULLISH ON INDIES

Outside has been a launch pad for such Canadian acts as Matthew Good, Danko Jones, Jacksoul and Len—which were all later signed by major labels.

It still distributes such noted indie label acts as Scratching Post, the Flashing Lights, Emmy Gryner, Jim Guthrie and Legion of Green Men.

The MMSG deal comes with little surprise. Canada’s independent sector faces increasing competition from the majors, with companies vying for business and for label representation of international and domestic clients.

Independent distributors have also faced fierce competition from the majors and from Sony Music’s RED Distribution, which launched in Canada last year.

The rise of Universal Music Canada-backed label MapleMusic Recordings during the past two years—with releases by such niche Canadian acts as Sam Roberts, Kathleen Edwards, Pilot, the Dears and Joel Plaskett—has had a further impact.

“It’s been tough for everyone,” Nishimura says. “Everyone needs to have strong alliances and good relationships with their labels and their customers. This [deal] is just an extension of that.”

Citing ongoing mergers within the multinational ranks, Nishimura predicts that “major labels will be less willing to do this [distribution] arrangement that they are now doing. There will be a lot of artists available for independent distributors.”


drance.

London Views
Continued from page 43
production house CCLab.

“The original idea was to shoot it on film,” Evans says, “but it was very cost-prohibitive. The [celluloid] camera costs £20,000, and film is £80 [$143] for 10 minutes. But you can actually make it on a digital camera, and it can end up in the cinema.”

Stanley says the movie cost £600,000 ($107,000) to make, which he says is “the cost of a mid-range video. Our previous record company got suspicious when we put up funding it [ourselves],” he adds.

Stanley says the act left Beggars Banquet and Maritina after “a difference of opinion.”

Sanctuary Records Group CEO Joe Cokell was “delighted” to sign the act to the company’s burgeoning front-line roster. “Saint Etienne have produced some great records, and we are all sure they will deliver another one for us in 2004,” he says. No date has yet been set for the band’s first Sanctuary release.

The band’s innovative approach with “Finisterre” has won plaudits from U.K. TV and video industry professionals.

“—Filming will never be able to replace a video, because by its very nature it doesn’t fit the programming format,” notes Ian Greaves, music programming manager for Sky TV’s pay-TV music channels in the U.K. “But if it’s done intelligently enough, there’s no reason why a suitable edit couldn’t accompany a single.”

Jonny Halffax, a director of production company General Lighting and Power in London, has directed promotional videos for U.K. acts Groove Armada and Goldfrapp.

Halffax describes the digital camera and Apple Mac editing software used by Saint Etienne as a tool of empowerment. “It puts longer-form production into the hands of, perhaps, more creative people than the traditional producers of TV,” he says.

The movie may yet reach a wider audience through U.K. state broadcaster the BBC or commercial broadcaster Channel 4, Evans says.

“The BBC got interested when we sent them a 13-minute teaser,” Evans says. “We’re waiting on [word from] the commissioner’s desk at [digital channel] BBC 3 and Channel 4 about buying it for broadcast.”

The project has also attracted attention from the U.S., Evans adds. “The music commissioner for [HBO drama series] ‘Six Feet Under’ wants to look at it. It’s looking really positive.”

Concerts
Continued from page 43
major acts, Coveso admits.

“There are only so many days in the year,” he says, “and for a long world-wide tour, it isn’t always possible to fit in every European capital. Portugal is at the end of Europe [and] given a choice, Lisbon is often left off.”

Coveso also notes that Spain attracts a much larger share of sponsorship than Portugal from national and local government and from the private sector.

Nuno Teixeira, EMT Portugal’s head of marketing, says the touring situation is also hurt by artist management “asking for high fees that are not really vital for their careers.”

That view is echoed by Warner Music Portugal managing director Daniel de Sousa, who agrees that Portugal’s geographical position at the edge of Europe “poses logistical issues.”

NEW VENUES

Coveso, who runs Musica No Coracao with partner Luis Monteza, claims Portugal has more (and larger) concert venues than Spain, including Lisbon’s 20,000-capacity Atlantic Pavilion, where Williams played.

And plus for Spanish overseas acts is that in 2004, the country will have 10 new football stadiums, built for soccer’s Euro 2004 European championship. The event takes place in Portugal in June and July. One of the new stadia, in the city of Coimbra, opened September 2003 with a Rolling Stones concert.

Prior to the soccer championships, Brazilian live festival operator Rock in Rio plans to hold major outdoor festivals in Lisbon (Billboard, Dec. 27, 2003). The shows at Bela Vista Parque May 29-30 and June 4-6 are expected to attract an average of 100,000 people per day. Britney Spears, Metallica, Guns N’ Roses, Sting, Alejandro Sanz and Slipknot are among the acts booked to perform.

Portugal’s fine summer weather and spectacular scenery has made it one of Europe’s most popular summer festival destinations in the past 10 years, Teixeira notes.

“Take summer festivals, such as Sudoeste, are becoming more and more attractive,” he says. “Bands are also realizing that the money they can make from concerts and festivals should be enough to make [playing Portugal] worthwhile.”
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By Deborah Evans Price

NASHVILLE—On the heels of Vestal Goodman’s death (Billboard, Jan. 10), the Southern gospel music community is mourning the passing of another legend. Lake Hess, 76, died Jan. 4 in Opelika, Ala.

Hess, who suffered from numerous health problems, had a heart attack Dec. 14.

“The gospel music industry has lost a great pioneer who embodied character, professional excellence and graciousness,” Bill Gaither says. “I have lost my best friend. . . . This man defined genuine humility and truly lived to bring honor and credit to others. You just do not replace a man like Jake.”

W.J. Hess was born Christmas Eve 1927, the last of 12 children born to sharecroppers Stoval and Lydia Hess in Mt. Pisgah, Ala. At 16, he left home to join the John Daniel Quartet.

Thus began a 60-year career, during which Hess became one of the most influential men in gospel music. In 1965, he was honored with the prestigious 1965 Grammy Award for his work as a songwriter and producer.

Hess was inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame in 1987 and a year later received a Life Achievement Award from SESAC. He was also a member of the Southern Gospel Music Hall of Fame and Alabama Music Hall of Fame.

In 1948, Hess and Hovie Lister launched the Statesmen Quartet. For the next 15 years, the group’s high-energy performances and stunning vocal blend made it one of Southern gospel’s most popular ensembles. It recorded for RCA Victor and launched a syndicated TV show.

In 1963, Hess broke ground again by hand-picking a group of men to form the Imperials. The outfit was very progressive for its time, using drums, electric guitar and bass.


Hess left the Imperials in 1967 because of heart problems. Not wanting to give up singing, he returned to the road performing with his children Becky and Chris as Jake Hess & the Sound of Youth. He also recorded solo projects for RCA before joining with Lister, J.D. Sumner, Russie Roseal and James Blackwood to form the Masters V.

In 1991, he and Lister briefly reformed the Statesmen, before health problems forced Hess to take time off. For the past decade, he has been an integral part of Gaither’s successful series of “Homecoming” concerts, CDs and videos. He had been performing in December with Gaither and others on the Homecoming Christmas Tour.

In addition to his aforementioned children, Hess is survived by his son Jake Jr., 10 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

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Gospel World Loses Jake Hess

Paul Simon Continued from page 5

Paul Simon’s career has been defined by his commitment to social justice and his ability to combine musical innovation with storytelling. Throughout his career, Simon has been a vocal advocate for peace, human rights, and environmental issues, and his music has often reflected these concerns.

Simon’s musical style has evolved over the years, from folk and folk-rock in the 1960s to more experimental and eclectic sounds later on. His use of diverse instruments and his willingness to experiment with different genres has earned him a reputation as a musical innovator.

Simon’s contributions to the music industry have been recognized with numerous awards and honors. He has won multiple Grammy Awards, a Pulitzer Prize, and induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. In addition, Simon has donated a significant portion of his earnings to charity, supporting causes such as human rights, Habitat for Humanity, and the United Nations.

Simon’s legacy as a musician and social activist continues to inspire and influence artists to this day. His commitment to using his platform to effect positive change has made him a beloved figure in the music industry and beyond.

Coke Continued from page 6

A source says...

In its original agreement with OCC four years ago, the BBC had agreed to on-air mentions of chart sponsors, but Radio 1 controller Andy Parfitt says that “the broadcast market has moved on considerably.”

Parfitt adds, “Taking this into account, and recent events, we no longer feel it is appropriate to allow on-air mentions of [chart sponsors].”

Previously, the only case when this provision in the agreement was implemented was in 2001, when online music portal Worldpop sponsored the charts.

Parfitt says the corporation is now working with OCC to resolve the situation “without breaking any of our contractual obligations that are currently in place.”

OCC director Omar Maskatiya says he will meet with representatives from the BBC later this month. “Until then, there’s not much to say,” he adds.

The BBC does not rule out a scenario in which it would opt out of its agreement with the OCC.

“If we are unable to resolve this issue relating to on-air sponsor credits, we will unfortunately have no choice but to break our relationship with the OCC and look at the possibility of developing our own chart, which we believe will better serve our listeners.”

Maskatiya declined to comment on suggestions that the OCC could be made to renegotiate its deal with Coca-Cola, as two of the most visible windows of exposure for the brand will no longer be available.

A source close to the deal says a renegotiation “is a possibility, as the value of the deal is not as valuable as before for Coca-Cola.”

Some sources also suggested that the BBC might be looking for alternative deals, particularly one that did not require a statement about the NBC’s history with the BBC. A source close to the deal said: “What we are looking for are deals that are more in line with the BBC’s current programming.”

Additional reporting by Lars Brandle in London.
Big 3 Led Holiday Sales

It is tempting to think of the holiday selling season as the music industry’s Super Bowl, but in 2003, the leading sellers are more analogous to college football, where more than one championship might be declared.

Fact is, no one album dominated the fourth quarter of 2003 the way that Shania Twain’s ‘Up!’ led the holiday pack of 2002 with 2.9 million sold in just six weeks. However, a broader array of strong sellers and an improved economy put album units in the 2003 holiday stretch from Thanksgiving through Christmas 3% ahead of the same span in 2002 (Billboard, Jan. 10).

Further, from October through the end of 2003, Nielsen SoundScan pegs album sales at 242.8 million, up 6.6% over fourth-quarter 2002. Taking turns as the parade marshals: OutKast, Toby Keith and Alicia Keys.

OutKast’s double-set, “Speakerboxxx/The Love Below,” which retains the top slot on the Billboard 200, was the best seller for the quarter, posting 2.6 million scans from October through December—and that tally doesn’t include the title’s September opener, when it sold another 510,000 copies.

Over the Counter.

By Geoff Mayfield

Narrow the field to the period that ran from Thanksgiving week through year’s end, and “The Diary of Alicia Keys” was queen, notching 1.7 million sales in that span.

The runner-up in both of those time frames was “Shock’n Y’All” by Keith. The country boss’ latest moved 2.3 million in just eight weeks, second only to OutKast for the year’s final three months, with 1.35 million of those sold from Thanksgiving through Christmas, topped then only by Keys.

Cut the calendar another way, though, and Keith gets his own championship ring. His album is the best seller of all in the year’s final two months.

One troubling observation from a music retailer’s perspective: Each of the 20 best sellers from the last three months of the year, and each of the 19 best sellers for the Thanksgiving–Christmas window, are titles that did not reach stores until the last four months of 2003, a pattern that makes it difficult (Continued on page 52)

Fab Four’s Fortieth

Trends build gradually, but sometimes there are pivotal moments in musical history where change is immediate and profound. If I had to pick the top three pivotal moments in the almost 50-year history of rock’n’roll, I would start with the ascension of Bill Haley & His Comets’ “We’re Gonna Rock Around the Clock” to No. 1 on July 9, 1955, the date historians agree marks the beginning of the rock era.

Then I would choose April 21, 1956, the date Elvis Presley went to No. 1 for the first time, with “Heartbreak Hotel.”

Finally, I would focus on the Hot 100 published 40 years ago this issue. Dated Jan. 18, 1964, it was this Hot 100 that saw the debut of a British quartet known as the Beatles.

The Fab Four had already charted with six different titles in their native U.K., but U.S. labels had resisted their charms until Capitol finally agreed to issue “I Want To Hold Your Hand.” That seminal recording debuted at No. 45 on the Hot 100 of 40 years ago this week.

“I Want To Hold Your Hand” took only two more weeks to reach No. 1. Amazingly, 11 weeks after the debut of “Hand,” the Beatles occupied the top five slots on the Hot 100. Imagine an act making its first appearance on the Hot 100 this issue—can you picture them owning the top five only 11 weeks from now?

That’s how quick and dramatic it was. Not only did everything change—many of 1963’s most popular acts couldn’t get a hit once the British invasion began—but the music industry was revitalized, because people were excited to buy music.

Imagine that happening today.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>TITLE</th>
<th>PEAK POSITION</th>
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<td>ALICE KEYS</td>
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<td>Nav 14</td>
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<td>The Very Best Of Sheryl Crow</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>In The Zone</td>
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<td>As Time Goes By... The Great American Songbook Vol. II</td>
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<td>CLAY AIKEN</td>
<td>Measure Of A Man</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>YEONJE</td>
<td>Dangerously In Love</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>SOUNDCRAFT</td>
<td>Tupac: Resurrection</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>EAGLES</td>
<td>The Very Best Of</td>
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<td>26</td>
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<td>WESTSIDE CONNECTION</td>
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<td>COLDPLAY</td>
<td>A Rush Of Blood To The Head</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>3 DOORS DOWN</td>
<td>Away From The Sun</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>JUICE GREAT</td>
<td>Joy The Great</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>NELLY</td>
<td>Da Ditty Versions - The Reinvention</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>NORAH JONES</td>
<td>Come Away With Me</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>SIMPLE PLAN</td>
<td>No Peas. No Nuts. Just Balls</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>SOUNDCRAFT</td>
<td>The Lord Of The Rings: The Return Of The King</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>DJ KROOK</td>
<td>Kid Rock</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>JESSICA SIMPSON</td>
<td>In This Skin</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Number Ones</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>SOUNDCRAFT</td>
<td>The Cheats Girls (EP)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>THE OFFSPRING</td>
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<td>42</td>
<td>KEVIN</td>
<td>Private Room</td>
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<td>43</td>
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<td>MUSIQ</td>
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<td>LIP SERVICE</td>
<td>Live In Texas</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>BIG TYMERS</td>
<td>Big Money Heavyweight</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>LIL JON &amp; THE EAST SIDE BOYZ</td>
<td>Kings Of Crook</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>LIMP BIZKIT</td>
<td>Results May Vary</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>JOE</td>
<td>And Then...</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>HOOBASTANK</td>
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<td>126</td>
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</tr>
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<td>MICHELLE BRANCH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>159</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>105</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>BARBRA STREISAND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>106</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>SOUNDTRACK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>BROOKS &amp; DUNN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>108</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>DASHBOARD CONFESSIONAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>109</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>MURPHY LEE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>95</td>
<td>JOHNNY CASH</td>
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<td>91</td>
<td>71</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>112</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>113</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>A PERFECT CIRCLE</td>
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**NEW HOT SPOTS**

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<td>114</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>BOW WOW</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>198</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>FOX</td>
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<td>198</td>
<td>178</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Over The Counter

Continued from page 49

to encourage superstars to drop albums during the first eight months of the year.

HAPPY NEW YEAR: What a start for 2004. For the first time since 2000, album volume for the inaugural week of a new year is larger than that from the first week of the year.
The year's robust start continues momentum seen during the last four months of 2003, when album sales that were the same as the 1992 frame for 12 of the last 16 weeks.

It is still too early to dance a jig and declare the music industry has solved all the woes it has suffered since 2001. Figure that fulfillment of a Sony Music/BMG merger and Edgar Bronfman Jr. taking Warner Music Group private will cost more than 1,000 people their jobs, and even without those developments, the record companies need to continue overhaulings their business models before they truly find firmer ground.

Still, it's refreshing to start off the year in upbeat mode, eh?

With the erosion that album sales saw the past few years, it is quite possible that many same-week gains will follow this initial win through the first eight months of the year. The challenge might be to keep that momentum rolling through September, when we hit that period when the recent streak of positives.

UP FROM DOWN: Veteran chart watchers know the drill. With the last Christmas-shopping week being the biggest frame of any year, the week that follows sees most albums selling fewer copies. Call it music's version of Newton's Law.

The Billboard sales charts indicate titles with the smallest declines.

Stipulation that explains why most of our sales lists lack Gainer awards this week.

Aforementioned rock band the Darkness is one of three acts that graduate from Top Heatseekers by moving into the top half of The Billboard 200. Also leaping to Heatseeker Impact status are Christian group Three Days Grace (125-91) and country rockie Josh Turner (130-91).

These three acts are the first to reach Heatseeker Impact pay dirt since August, when Maroon5 and Smiley Empty Soul each rose above No. 190 in their weeks.

Obviously, it is difficult for newer acts to accelerate during the last four months of the year, when releases by big-name artists target Christmas shoppers. Conversely, in the first two months of the year, when store traffic shifts from pre-Christmas thru to normal flow, soundtracks and newer artists find it easier to reach higher chart positions.
### Top Pop Catalog

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<td>THE BEATLES</td>
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<td>&quot;WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER&quot;</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>&quot;SHE'S LIKE THE RAIN&quot;</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<td>A&amp;M</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>&quot;LOVE IS THE SAME&quot;</td>
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<td>Columbia</td>
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### New 1

<table>
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<td>&quot;GOOD CHARLOTTE&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;ALL THE WAY...A DECADE OF SONG&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;DEVIL WITHOUT A CAUSE&quot;</td>
<td>Kid Rock</td>
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<td>&quot;THE BEST OF 1980-1990&quot;</td>
<td>UZU</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;GREATEST HITS&quot;</td>
<td>Queen</td>
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<td>&quot;ALL TIME GREATEST HITS&quot;</td>
<td>Barry White</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;SING A SONG&quot;</td>
<td>EVA CASSIDY</td>
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<td>&quot;JAPANESE CRIMINALS&quot;</td>
<td>Phil Collins</td>
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<td>&quot;APPETITE FOR DESTRUCTION&quot;</td>
<td>Guns N' Roses</td>
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<td>&quot;MISSISSAUGA&quot;</td>
<td>PINK</td>
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<td>&quot;SUBLIME&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;OK COMPUTER&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;BREAK THE CYCLE&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;THE IMMACULATE COLLECTION&quot;</td>
<td>Madonna</td>
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<td>&quot;BRUSHFIRE FAIRYTALES&quot;</td>
<td>Jack Johnson</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;GREATEST HITS&quot;</td>
<td>2PAC</td>
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<td>&quot;MASTER OF PUPPETS&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;JOURNEY'S GREATEST HITS&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;GREATEST HITS&quot;</td>
<td>Dean Martin</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;CHRISTMAS EXTRAORDINAIRE&quot;</td>
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### Hot Shot Debut

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<td>ROONEY</td>
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<td>&quot;KIDS PICKS SINGERS&quot;</td>
<td>Kids Pick's Hit Mix</td>
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<td>&quot;LEAVE A WHISPER&quot;</td>
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<td>Dane Cook</td>
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<td>&quot;TURN ON THE LIGHTS&quot;</td>
<td>Basement Jaxx</td>
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<td>&quot;IT STILL MOVES&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;KINGS OF LEON&quot;</td>
<td>Youth &amp; Young Manhood</td>
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<td>&quot;ROBERT RANDOLPH &amp; THE FAMILY BAND&quot;</td>
<td>Unconsidered</td>
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<td>&quot;CON ORGULLO POR HERENCIA&quot;</td>
<td>Pepe Aguilar</td>
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<td>&quot;DANCE PARTY (LIKE IT'S 2004)&quot;</td>
<td>The Happy Boys</td>
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<td>&quot;CAMEL TOE&quot;</td>
<td>Bob &amp; Tom</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;LEAVING THROUGH THE WINDOW&quot;</td>
<td>Something Corporate</td>
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<td>&quot;DIFFERENT KIND OF FREE&quot;</td>
<td>Zoë Gigies</td>
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<td>&quot;KE'ALOHA&quot;</td>
<td>Ke'aloha</td>
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<td>&quot;SURRENDER TO LOVE&quot;</td>
<td>Kindred The Family Soul</td>
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<td>&quot;BYRON CAGE&quot;</td>
<td>Byron Cage</td>
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<td>&quot;FOR ALL OF THIS (EP)&quot;</td>
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### Top Heatseekers

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<tr>
<td>&quot;WE ARE IN THIS&quot;</td>
<td>Lil Jon &amp; The East Side Boyz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;PART II&quot;</td>
<td>Lil Jon &amp; The East Side Boyz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;ME &amp; MY BROTHER&quot;</td>
<td>Ying Yang Twins</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;A MARK, A MISSION, A BAND, A SONG&quot;</td>
<td>D'Artanglade Clan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;ELECTION&quot;</td>
<td>Defaul</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;CRUSH AND DISORDERLY&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;CRINKLE&quot;</td>
<td>Warren Zevon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;VINTAGE&quot;</td>
<td>Michael Bolton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;SEASONS&quot;</td>
<td>Seven Dust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;CHUTES TOO NARROW&quot;</td>
<td>The Shins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;TELL ALL YOUR FRIENDS&quot;</td>
<td>Taking Back Sunday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;KEEPING SECRETS OF SHANTY 3&quot;</td>
<td>Coheed and Cambria</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;STAY&quot;</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;GREATEST&quot;</td>
<td>Mitch Hedberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;MAKE UP THE BREAKDOWN&quot;</td>
<td>Saves The Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;IN REVERIE&quot;</td>
<td>Dan Cook</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;PHYSICALLY&quot;</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;DAMN IT TO HEAVEN&quot;</td>
<td>Peter Murphy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;THE LOVE&quot;</td>
<td>The Strumbles &amp; The Mescaleros</td>
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### Top Independent Albums

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<td>&quot;PART II&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;ME &amp; MY BROTHER&quot;</td>
<td>Ying Yang Twins</td>
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<td>&quot;A MARK, A MISSION, A BAND, A SONG&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;CRUSH AND DISORDERLY&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;CRINKLE&quot;</td>
<td>Warren Zevon</td>
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<td>&quot;VINTAGE&quot;</td>
<td>Michael Bolton</td>
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<td>&quot;SEASONS&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;CHUTES TOO NARROW&quot;</td>
<td>The Shins</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;TELL ALL YOUR FRIENDS&quot;</td>
<td>Taking Back Sunday</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;KEEPING SECRETS OF SHANTY 3&quot;</td>
<td>Coheed and Cambria</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;STAY&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;GREATEST&quot;</td>
<td>Mitch Hedberg</td>
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<td>&quot;MAKE UP THE BREAKDOWN&quot;</td>
<td>Saves The Day</td>
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<td>Dan Cook</td>
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<td>&quot;PHYSICALLY&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;DAMN IT TO HEAVEN&quot;</td>
<td>Peter Murphy</td>
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### Billboard TOP REGGAE ALBUMS

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<td>WAYNE WONDER</td>
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<td>BOB MARLEY AND THE WAILERS</td>
<td>BOB MARLEY &amp; THE WAILERS LIVE AT THE REGENCY</td>
<td>Bob Marley &amp; The Wailers Live At The ReGENCY</td>
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### Billboard TOP WORLD ALBUMS

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<td>ולה ז'ילן</td>
<td>CIRCLES</td>
<td>Circles</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>The Cheiftains</td>
<td>FURTHER DOWN THE OLD PLANK ROAD</td>
<td>Further Down The Old Plank Road</td>
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<td>VOU D'AMOUR</td>
<td>Vous D'Amour</td>
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<td>French Cabaret Songbook</td>
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<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>PALMIRA PRESENTS: FRENCH CABARET</td>
<td>Palmira Presents: French Cabaret</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>ROY COOPER &amp; MANUEL GALBAN</td>
<td>MAIMONIDE</td>
<td>Maimonide</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Panjabi MC</td>
<td>BESPOKE</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Daniel O'Donnell</td>
<td>THE DANIEL O'DONNELL SHOW</td>
<td>The Daniel O'Donnell Show</td>
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### Billboard TOP GOSPEL ALBUMS

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<tr>
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<td>CeCe Winans</td>
<td>ATLANTIC 83654'</td>
<td>Get On Up, Get It On, Get It Done</td>
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### Billboard TOP CHRISTIAN ALBUMS

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<tr>
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<td>CeCe Winans</td>
<td>WMG-DOCTOR SURGEON</td>
<td>Get On Up, Get It On, Get It Done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Smokie Norful</td>
<td>WMG-DOCTOR SURGEON</td>
<td>Get On Up, Get It On, Get It Done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Smokie Norful</td>
<td>WMG-DOCTOR SURGEON</td>
<td>Get On Up, Get It On, Get It Done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Donnie McClurkin</td>
<td>WMG-EXCELSIOR SURGEON</td>
<td>Get On Up, Get It On, Get It Done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Kirk Franklin</td>
<td>WMG-CHRIST SURGEON</td>
<td>Get On Up, Get It On, Get It Done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Kirk Franklin</td>
<td>WMG-CHRIST SURGEON</td>
<td>Get On Up, Get It On, Get It Done</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Kirk Franklin</td>
<td>WMG-CHRIST SURGEON</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Kirk Franklin</td>
<td>WMG-CHRIST SURGEON</td>
<td>Get On Up, Get It On, Get It Done</td>
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<td>Kirk Franklin</td>
<td>WMG-CHRIST SURGEON</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Kirk Franklin</td>
<td>WMG-CHRIST SURGEON</td>
<td>Get On Up, Get It On, Get It Done</td>
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*Numbers with the greatest gains are in this week. Recording Industry Assoc. of America (RIAA) certification for an shipment of 500,000 album units (Platinum). RIAA certification for an shipment of 1 million albums (Diamond). Any album with RIAA certification of Gold or above is eligible for inclusion. Numbers include the sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan for the week ending January 17, 2004. Nielsen SoundScan calculated distribution data for the week ending January 17, 2004.*
Non-Holiday Airplay Jolts AC, Country Charts

The post-holiday effect on the singles charts continues, as a return to normalcy results in some apparent and, in other cases, not-so-apparent anomalies.

The current tracking period reflects the first full week of normal radio programming, and the two charts representing the two formats most heavily involved in holiday music—country and AC—stand out. All but one title on the 60-position Hot Country Singles & Tracks list has a bullet, while on the AC chart, 18 of the top 20 songs have bullets.

All activity leads titles from those formats to rebound on the Billboard Hot 100, led by Sheryl Crow’s “The First Cut Is The Deepest.” It is the only title on both the AC and country charts.

“Cut” earns Greatest Airplay/Airplay honors and jumps 29-22 on the Hot 100 with an audience gain of 8 million impressions, half of which come from the AC format and another 1.5 million from country stations.

“Cut” is the first song without any R&B airplay to earn Greatest Airplay honours on the Hot 100 since January 2003, when Faith Hill’s “Cry” enjoyed the same post-holiday boost from AC and country stations.

While many of the country chart’s bullets appear with the passing of the holidays, one active new title shows exceptional muscle. After debuting at No. 56 during our unpublished week, Rascal Flatts’ “My Wish” takes the chart’s highest leap (50-38) with an increase of 268 detections.

EBB AND FLOW: Although a good portion of the titles on Hot 100 Airplay and sales—the Hot 100 and Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks—songs that had been bolstered by retail action get roughed up.

A prime example is Eamon’s “F’r’ver (I Don’t Want You Back),” which bounces back from No. 1 on Hot 100 Singles Sales for a second week after earning Greatest Airplay/Sales honors for the past four weeks. Sales for the title drop by 35%, so it tumbles eight places to No. 47 on the Hot 100, even though radio audience is up by 7%.

Because of the mass decline in sales, not one Greatest Airplay/Sales honor was awarded on the Hot 100. Bullet honors were awarded to those titles on the sales chart that had the smallest sales declines.

REVISITING RECURRENTS: This week marks the first time that our released recurrent rule goes into effect for Hot Country Singles & Tracks. At least it should have—the return to non-holiday rotations keeps all songs in play.

Although our rule for descending titles on the chart removes songs after 20 weeks if they fall below No. 15, such titles are allowed to remain on the chart below that number when formats report increases. This issue, six such titles are allowed to remain on the chart. Five of the six post triple-digit increases this issue.

SAME HAND: In the wake of last week’s Billboard Hot 100, where the top 12 titles did not change in position, this week’s Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks chart sees the top 14 titles maintain their standing for a second consecutive week. This is the first time such a feat has occurred on the R&B chart in the Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems era and the first time the top 10 has remained unchanged in a two-week period since the April 5, 1997, issue.
Radio's Grammy Ticket Hookup

Tickets to the Grammy Awards are hot items, and nowhere is that truer than in music radio. It is perhaps the most important conduit between the music industry and the consumer.

The National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences has turned to promotion company RPMC as the one-stop shop for radio. "It’s a high-profile event," RPMC partner Murray Schwartz says.

"There are very few events with the cachet of the Grammys."

Because of that, Schwartz's main concern is leveraging these tickets toward awareness of the show.

"We want to maintain the integrity of what the tickets are for, which is to drive the tag line of watching the Grammys," Schwartz says. "If that works, then radio stations and other media can use the tickets to drive that message."

RPMC is working closely with CBS Television and radio affiliates, independent radio stations and syndicator Westwood One.

Schwartz’s role is to provide a clearinghouse of promotional opportunities and information. Market to market, anyone working on these promotions will be able to work with RPMC to know who is doing what and who is getting what.

Harder, Louder, Faster: When WZNN (the Zone) Chicago launched as a modern rock station in September 2001, it was the third format for the ABC property in a year, and Chicago already had a dominant modern station in Emmis' WQX (Q101). Q101 is still in the lead, but it is held by its slimmed down since WZNN became a direct competitor.

Much of the renewed interest in WZNN is a result of the station changing gears about a year ago and leaning active.

Bram Teitelman, rock managing editor for Billboard Sister Airplay Monitor, discussed this with WZNN PD Bill Gamble.

"We knew that there was a group of people that weren't being serviced and were unhappy with their radio choices when we signed on to the Zone," Gamble says. "It took us longer than we would have liked to find exactly what that specific niche was.

"We had an expectation of what we thought the radio station would be," Gamble says. "But when you go back and talk to the consumer, it always winds up being something different."

Initially, listeners were bouncing between the two brands of rock that WZNN and WQX offered—until one year ago. "We refocused the sta-
Apple Caps Explosive Year With iPod Mini

BY MELINDA NEWMAN and JILL KIPNIS

LOS ANGELES—Apple is preparing for 2004 with a bid to push iPod sales even higher, with the introduction of its least-expensive iPod yet. The iPod Mini was unveiled by Apple CEO Steven Jobs Jan. 6 at the Macworld Expo in San Francisco, follows a year of explosive sales for iPods and MP3 players in general. Apple rang up fourth-quarter sales of 730,000 units, according to the company. The year’s sales tally was 1.45 million units, compared with 487,000 iPods in 2002.

The new iPod Mini lists for $249 and features four gigabytes of storage, the equivalent of 1,000 songs. It weighs 3.6 ounces and comes in five colors. It will be available in U.S. stores from mid-February and outside the U.S. in April. It also works with both Mac and Windows.

By contrast, the Dell DJ 15 model retails for $249, has a 15 gigabyte memory, stores 3,700 songs and weighs 2.6 ounces. The player was launched in the fourth quarter; no sales figures are available.

Overall, MP3 player sales experienced growth in 2003 as average price points dropped, says Flash and Hard-drive devices. The Arlington, Va.-based Consumer Electronics Assn. (CEA) reports that shipments of MP3 players totaled 3.8 million units in 2003, a 52 percent increase over 2002. It predicts shipments of more than 5.1 million units in 2004.

Additionally, the CEA says that MP3 players generated $556 million in revenue in 2003, which is a 171 percent increase over 2002. This year, it projects that revenue will increase 27 percent to $760 million.

“The biggest thing you see going on in 2004 is that the average unit price of players has dropped from $138 to $117,” CEA senior manager Stephen Gates says. “The players are also playing more, and you can store entire libraries. Three or four years ago they mainly appealed to young people, but that is changing.”

DVD

Continued from page 5

One of the most notable growth areas of 2003 was the music DVD category. Sales of music DVD titles increased 102 percent in 2003 to reach 17.2 million units, according to Nielsen SoundScan. More than 4,000 music DVD titles are now available. A total of 28 DVD titles sold in excess of five million units in 2003. Buena Vista Home Entertainment saw nine of its titles move more than five million units, including the year’s top-seller, “Finding Nemo,” as well as “Chicago,” “The Lion King: Special Edition” and “Pirates of the Caribbean: Curse of the Black Pearl.” Universal Studios Home Video had the next highest number of five million-plus sellers. These titles include “2 Fast 2 Furious,” “8 Mile,” “Scarface” and “Seabiscuit.” DreamWorks Home Entertainment and Warner Home Video each had three titles sell more than five million units last year.

Universal had the top DVD rental title in 2003 with “The Bourne Identity,” according to the DEC. DreamWorks and Buena Vista tied for second place with 10 year-end rental titles. DreamWorks’ “Catch Me If You Can” was No. 2, followed by “Old School” (3) and “The Ring” (7). Buena Vista’s titles were “Bringing Down the House” at No. 4, “Signs” (5) and “Sweet Home Alabama” (9).

Apple Race

Continued from page 1

Digital Networks North America (maker of the Rio line), Creative Labs, Archos Electronics, Dell and Gateway—Apple is making moves to protect itself. This time, it intends to sidetrack the historical legal skirmish and prevent its revolutionary products from being co-opted by the Windows-based PC market.

At the Macworld Conference Jan. 6 in San Francisco, Apple introduced a new budget-oriented iPod Mini known as the Mini—a four-gigabyte player that holds 1,000 songs and retails for $249 (see story, this page).

“We wanted to offer a better alternative for the market that is buying high-end flash players,” Apple VP of hardware Greg Joswiak says.
by the fourth-quarter surge. What’s more, 2004 is off to an auspicious start, with album sales rising 12.2% in the first week of the year. Doug Morris, chairman of the Universal Music Group—which led the U.S. industry in market share last year—offers a cautious assessment. “The last quarter of 2003 felt better,” he says. “We will all be hopeful for this year, but no one knows” how it will turn out.

He called 2003 a “difficult transitional year for the industry, marked by a shift in the way consumers shop for music.” According to Nielsen SoundScan, sales were down 10.7% in 2003 compared with 2002.

**SECOND BUSINESS MODEL**

Morris says the industry is now “moving to a dual business model” with sales coming from brick-and-mortar and electronic outlets. “The legitimate digital download market is emerging, and that is the promise for the future,” he says.

Although digital sales have been around since at least 1997, when Capitol Records launched the majors into the business with a Duran Duran single, the possibility of a commercial mass marketplace has been diverted by the industry’s focus on unauthorised file-sharing.

But with Apple’s iTunes Music Store leading the way in digital sales, teams tracks scanned 19.2 million units, surpassing physical singles, which totalled 12.1 million units.

In fact, if physical and digital singles are included in U.S. totals, over all sales were 687 million units, compared with 693 million the year before. On that basis, unit sales declined less than 0.9% in 2003. Looking at total albums market share, UMG came in first for the fifth consecutive year, a string that began after its merger with PolyGram in 1998. UMG had 29% of the market, up from 28.1% a year earlier.

Although UMG lost a little market share, that is sometimes due to the subjectivity of when records are released, Morris says. Nevertheless, he offers “special kudos” to UMG’s Interstate Group, which was the label-share leader in 2003 and also noted that UMG “is starting this year with five records in the top 10.”

On a corporate basis, UMG is more than 12 percentage points higher than its closest competitor, the Warner Music Group, which ranks second with 17.6% (including sales by Alternative Distribution Alliance, WMG’s independent distribution company).

BMG Music Entertainment ranks third with 15.5%, followed by Sony Music Entertainment, which totals 14.7% (including sales by RED). EMI Recorded Music ranks sixth at 10.5% (when Caroline’s share is added to EMI Music Marketing).

The independent sector finishes ahead of EMI in fifth place, with 13.5% of the market. When AIA, RED and Caroline’s shares are extracted from the indie category, (For related stories, see pages 18, 22, 27 and 38). While UMG has dominated the industry since its merger, the company might have to start looking over its shoulder soon.

** Nielsen SoundScan’s year-end numbers for 2003 show that the market-share derby could become a two-horse race by 2005 if the merger between Sony Music Entertainment and BMG Entertainment is approved by regulatory agencies later this year. In 2003, Sony and BMG combined for 30.2% of the market.”

**It happens, fine,” Morris says. “That’s not a bad thing. The competition will be fun.”**

Looking at genre sales, Latin music enjoyed the biggest gain, growing by 6.6 million units, or 33.8%, to 26.1 million units last year. Classical enjoyed a 20% surge, with album sales growing by 17.7 million units. Alternative managed to eke out a slight gain of 2.1%.

R&B—the largest genre tracked by Nielsen SoundScan (rock/pop is not broken out)—continues its decline, with sales dropping about 10 million units to 150 million, a decline of 6.4%. The genre peaked in 2001, when it scanned 197 million units.

On a percentage basis, new age—the smallest tracked category—suffered the largest decline, dropping 16.5% to 5.4 million units.

**Current sales**—those counted within the first 18 months of an album’s release (12 months for classical and jazz albums) or until a title drops out of the top half of The Billboard 200—were up 1.3% in 2003, with scans of 423.9 million units.

Catalog, meanwhile, was down 7.5% overall, while deep catalog was down 6.2%. More alarming, if deep catalog is subtracted from catalog (overall sales, the newer catalog titles—those sales counted after an album moves from the current catalog until it is 36 months old—suffered a 10.7% decline.

On a relatively brighter note, the CD decline slowed last year to 2% after an 8.8% decline in 2002—the year it became apparent that the format would no longer drive industry growth.

For 2003, CDs accounted for 97% of all U.S. album sales. That left little of the pie for cassettes. As for new formats, it is unclear from the year-end numbers how DVD-Audio and SACD are doing, because they are sometimes included in the CD category.

**CHAIN DECLINE SLOWS**

Looking at sales in store-type, the chain sector—despite losing 800 stores to closures during the year—slowed its decline, with sales falling 4.5% to 331.8 million units in 2003. The previous year, chains were off 14.7% to 347.2 million units.

In 2003, mass merchants once again held steady, at about 229 million units. Independent merchants, however, continued to suffer, with sales down 14.9% to 69.3 million units. In 2002, indie stores were down 21% to 81 million units.

The only sector to grow in 2003 was nontraditional, which includes sales through TV and e-commerce, concert halls, online and some record club activity. That category tallied 26.1 million units, up 14.8% from the 22.7 million it had the previous year.

Breaking out albums sold through stores another way, the chain category—which includes consumer electronic retailers like Best Buy and book stores like Borders, as well as some traditional record retailers like Trans World and Musicland—for 50.6% of sales, while mass merchants comprise 35%, independents 10.5% and nontraditional 4%.

**Stocks Rise**

Continued from page 5

which ended 2002 at $2.69, closes out 2003 at an even higher $2.29.

XM rival Sirius Satellite Radio also enjoyed a huge jump during the past year. Its Dec. 31 closing stock price of $3.16 is up a stunning 394% from 2002.

**RETAIL COMES ON STRONG**

Despite ongoing woes at retail and a wave of store closings at the beginning of 2002, most music merchants rallied by the end of the year.

The big winner was Best Buy, which earlier last year dumped its stake in the financially troubled Musicland Group. Best Buy stock closed the year up 116%, at $52.14. Also posting gains were retail consolidator Trans World Entertainment (96%), Wal-Mart and Kmart rack-jobber Handleman (79%) and U.K. retailer powers HMV (40%) and Woolworths Group (22%).

Shares in e-tail powerhouse Amazon—which enjoyed a big holiday shopping season—ended the year up 179%, at $52.62. Apple Computer’s position at the forefront of the commercial digital music wave, with the successful iTunes and iPod, pushed its stock to a year-end close of $21.37. That’s up 49% over its 2002 finish.

Real Networks, which acquired listen.com, operator of the Rhapsody digital music service, saw a 50% jump in its year-over-year stock price, ending 2003 at $5.71.

Meanwhile, the jury’s still out on Roxio’s Napster gamble. Roxio ended the year flat, at $4.80 per share.

On the comeback trail was Yahoo, owner of the Launch music destination. Its stock crossed 2003 at $45.03, up an impressive 175% from one year earlier.

Clay Smith, the second-largest percentage jump for companies tracked by Billboard was Loudye, whose stock climbed 529% year over year. Loudye closed the year at $1,951 per share following news that it would offer digital music-stores solutions to third parties, including AT&T Wireless.

Other smaller companies posting big gains were CD copy-protection specialist SunComm Technologies (up 166%) and indie distributor Navare (up 202%).

In the U.K., stock improvements were reported at independent Sanctuary Group (up 21.25%), Chrysalis Group (up 14% improvement) and Mean Fiddler Music Group (up 142%) and shares of digital audio broadcaster Music Choice Europe soared 98%.

**Sales Continued from page 1**

**TABLE: INDUSTRY STOCK PERFORMANCE**

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Electronic</th>
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<th>Music</th>
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’Too Many Acts Over The Last Three Years Are One-Hit Wonders’

BY BRIAN GARRITY

EMI was the odd man out of the major-label consolidation wave last year, but to hear chairman/CEO Alain Levy and vice chairman David Munns tell it, there’s more to the business than market share.

The company is pointing to its most recent financial results—along with a core of key artists—as proof that it doesn’t need a dance partner to survive.

In an exclusive interview with Billboard, Levy and Munns play down the significance of the lost bid for Warner Music Group, stress the need for strong A&R and bemoan the industry’s obsession with market share.

Q: How much does it hurt EMI that it didn’t win the Warner Music Group bid?

A: Levy: We were very clear from when these merger talks started that we had a vision for EMI. A merger would help speed it up, but in no case was it essential for us. We want to build what we think is a different music company. My friend here—[gestures toward Munns]—had a very nice analogy: EMI is a stagecoach. We have two horses. A merger would allow us to have four horses and go faster.

Munns: People say, “What’s plan B?” There is no plan B. There’s plan A, and Warner would have made it a bigger plan A.

Q: So where does this leave the company?

A: Levy: We’re building a company around people and around artists. It takes a long time. Normally, it takes around five years. We’re two years in. Yes, it would have been nice to have had synergies. But it also would have meant a year or a year-and-a-half in front of the antitrust authorities—an outcome of which wasn’t clear at all. So from that point of view, we are ahead of the game.

Q: How do you compete against competitors with larger market share?

A: Levy: A lot of my competitors are focused on unprofitable market share. That seems to be the trademark of the industry. Meanwhile, we’ve been called cost-cutters. We’re not cost-cutters. We’ve just cut waste. So, yes, we’ve cut our marketing costs quite dramatically. But that doesn’t mean we sell one record less.

Munns: And we have a lot fewer bad habits.

Q: What constitutes bad habits?

A: Levy: One of the bad habits of the industry is having, in order of importance, executives, artists and then, very far down the list, the shareholders.

Because we are a public company, we know we work for the shareholders. And because we are a creative company, we work for our artists. Lastly, we take care of our executives. And on the employee front, that doesn’t mean we’re not taking care of them. But we’re taking care of them in a different way. We’ve changed our compensation system so that it’s target-related.

Q: How is that different from your competitors?

A: Levy: Some industry bonuses are based on market share. Market share is what the strategic direction of those companies is all about—which has become the strategic direction of the industry. And that has caused most of the problems.

Market share doesn’t matter at all. Look at Nielsen SoundScan and how our market share is made up: the Beatles, Norah Jones, Coldplay, Chingy. They’re long-term artists and generally, they sell on a worldwide basis. The quality of our market share is great. The result is that for the second year in a row, our American company is going to be substantially profitable.

Q: So it’s hits that are important, not scale?

A: Levy: It’s something different—it’s the quality of the hits that are important. The question is: Are you building a long-term viable artist’s career?

Q: How are you focusing on quality?

A: Levy: We’re devoting a lot of time to working on the second and third albums.

Munns, left, and Levy.

Q: How do you think of Universal Music Group’s new pricing strategy?

A: Levy: There’s a lot of consultation needed before we take a position. The real question is: What is the value proposition? With Norah Jones, nobody ever mentioned the price, but 6 million people bought it. We have a Coldplay DVD/live record which is hot all over the world. I suspect the consumer considers it a valuable proposition.

Munns: With Norah Jones, we sold the first 1 million records around the world at a developing-artist price to get people to give it the benefit of the doubt in their purchasing decisions. Then we put the price up. You didn’t hear all the other people that bought it crying foul.

Q: What’s your take on the rising popularity of digital-track sales? How concerned are you about the shift to a more singles-based business?

A: Levy: You have two issues: substitution of physical sales with digital sales and substitution of illegal digital downloads with legal digital downloads. The suggestion is that substitution from physical to digital might result in going from an album market to a track market. It could be. But we do not know at the present time what the size of that market is going to be. If we get 20% to 30% of the illegal downloads, which is colossal in numbers, probably the market will be bigger and better than it is today.

Q: So you’re not concerned that the album format could be under fire in the digital world?

A: Levy: If you build brands, if you build artists like Coldplay, people will want everything from that artist. If you build commodities, then they will buy just commodities.

Too many acts in the industry over the last three years are one-hit wonders. We aren’t creating longstanding artists. It’s another disease of the industry. When you are in a market-share race, you need a lot of releases, and then you tend to treat the artists like commodities. Yes, piracy is a problem. But if the industry had 10-10 million sellers on a consistent basis, we would be in much better shape. It’s the artists—the stars—who create the consumption.

Q: Virgin Records has seen a lot of change in the past year—and-a-half. How do you feel about the label’s progress?

A: Munns: We need to be patient with Virgin. We’re starting to build a very nice roster. Virgin was not in good shape 18 months ago. It was on the wrong coast. It was a mess. We’re reinventing it, basically. We haven’t put out many records [in 2003]. Next year you’ll see Janet and Lenny and N.E.R.D. and Courtney Love. I don’t believe these things are turned around overnight. The A&R process is a three- to five-year process—more five than three.

Q: If you’re not planning to merge with another major, are you looking to grow the company through smaller acquisitions?

A: Levy: If it fits with our business philosophy and our need for repertoire, yes, we’ll go for it. But most of the time, acquisitions are done to acquire market share—market share you are incapable of creating yourself. That can be a very expensive game.

Q: Is there any interest in shared back-end services with one or more of the other majors?

A: Levy: We are taking a totally different approach. Over three years, we’re investing between £75 million and £100 million in technology, which will totally change the way the company is operated. It will result in us being fully digital in everything from recording to selling. It also will result in massive cost savings.

Q: There are rumblings that you are entertaining offers for Caroline Distribution. Are you planning to sell it?

A: Munns: We’ve had a couple of approaches about Caroline. I’ve made no decisions there.

Levy: What is more important for us than holding Caroline is having permanent contact with the independents. They tend to be close to their artists. They are going to have an important role to play if we are going to have the 10-10 million sellers that the industry needs.

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