UMG Rethinking Prices

BY ED CHRISTIAN

NEW YORK—Get ready for Jump-Start version 2.0.

Top executives at Universal Music Group are discussing ways to revamp their pioneering price-reduction program, because a hoped-for boom in sales never materialized in the face of retail resistance.

Such meetings have gone on since January, but UMG sources tell Billboard that changes are imminent.

UMG parent Vivendi Universal tipped its hand in a March 17 press statement that accompanied the release of its annual financial results. The label said its music subsidiary would further adjust its North American pricing policy as part of a multi-pronged effort.

(Continued on page 75)

Euro Tours Are In The Pink

Dedicated Fans Turn Out For Acts Year After Year

BY SUSANNE AULT

With American music fans more fickle and forgetful than ever, many acts are increasingly scoring their biggest paydays overseas.

Veterans Mariah Carey, Bon Jovi and Lionel Richie are among the attractions that continue to do well on the global circuit.

But even newer artists like Pink, Ben Harper and Usher are cultivating overseas fans, who often remain loyal long after an act fades in the States.

“What I think many of us see is that (Continued on page 18)

Main Street Goes Digital

Brick-And-Mortar Retailers Stake Out Online Music Turf

BY BRIAN GARRITY

NEW YORK—Retailers of all sizes and flavors suddenly have a taste for the digital distribution business.

Wal-Mart, Starbucks, Circuit City and Virgin Megastores are among the leading brick-and-mortar players that recently announced plans to offer digital music to their customers.

And more are coming.

With more than 25 million downloads sold in the first three months of 2004, according to Nielsen SoundScan, many retailers are no longer content to sit on the sidelines of the digital music revolution.

“We’re at a tipping point,” says Jeff Cavins, president/CEO of Seattle-based LoudEye Corp., a provider of digital music services. “You are going to see a lot of well-recognized brands make investments in digital music this year.”

In Starbucks’ case, that means allowing cus-

(Continued on page 75)

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MTV

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Billboard NO. 1 ON THE CHARTS

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CHIESEY | The Passion Of The Christ
VARIOUS ARTISTS | How Great Thou Art
SEAN PAUL | Dutty Rock
GWYNS QUEENS | Roots
WORLD MUSIC | Live In 3D: The Record
WINNIE THE POOH & FRIENDS: Mickey Mouse Clubhouse | 1
BILLY BLANKS' TAE B0 CARDIO | Aerobics
WWF: THE MONDAY NIGHT WAR | 1
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- I Knew I Loved You/ Savage Garden /COLUMBIA

500,000 SPINS
- Angel/ Sarah McLachlan /ARISTA/RMG

400,000 SPINS
- The Game Of Love/ Santana Feat. Michelle Branch /ARISTA/RMG
- Foolish/ Ashanti /MURDER INC./DEF JAM

300,000 SPINS
- Someday/ Nickelback /ROADRUNNER
- The Way You Move/ OutKast /LAFACE/ZOMBA
- Right Thru/ Chingy /DTP/CAPITOL
- Yes!/ Chad Brock /WARNER BROS.
- Brain Stew/ Green Day /REPRISE
- I'll Be Missing You/ Puff Daddy & Faith Evans Feat. 112 /BAD BOY
- She Hates Me/ Puddle Of Mudd /FLAWLESS/GEFFEN
- What About Now/ Lonestar /BNA

200,000 SPINS
- Numb/ Linkin Park /WARNER BROS.
- It's My Life/ No Doubt /INTERSCOPE
- White Flag/ Dido /ARISTA/RMG
- The First Cut Is The Deepest/ Sheryl Crow /A&M
- Are You Happy Now/ Michelle Branch /MAVERICK
- For You/ Staind /ELEKTRA
- Where The Stars And Stripes And The Eagle Fly/ Aaron Tippin /LYRIC STREET
- Down With The Sickness/ Disturbed /GIANT
- Big Pimpin'/ Jay-Z Feat. UGK /ROC-A-FELLA/DEF JAM
- Damn/ Youngbloodz /SO SO DEF/ZOMBA
- Never Had A Dream Come True/ 5 Club 7 /INTERSCOPE
- Ghosts Of Sugar Mountain/ Who's That Girl/Pres Feat. Of Dirty Bastard & Mya /INTERSCOPE
- Cry/ Faith Hill /WARNER BROS.
- Open Up Your Eyes/ Tonic /POLYDOR
- Escape/Escapar/ Enrique Iglesias /INTERSCOPE/UNIVERSAL LATINO

100,000 SPINS
- Yeah/ Usher Feat. Ludacris & Lil' Jon /LAFACE/ZOMBA
- My Immortal/ Evanescence /WIND-UP
- One Call Away/ Chingy Feat. Jacee Weaver /CAPITOL
- With You/ Jessica Simpson /COLUMBIA
- Salt Shaker/ Ying Yang Twins Feat. Lil' John & The Eastside Boyz/ TVT
- Hotel/ Cassidy Feat. R. Kelly /J RECORDS
- E**K It/ Esmen /JIVE/ZOMBA
- Tipsy/ J-Kwon /SO SO DEF/ZOMBA
- Remember When/ Alan Jackson /ARISTA
- Toxic/ Britney Spears /JIVE/ZOMBA
- Gigolo/ Nick Cannon /JIVE/ZOMBA
- You Can't Take The Honky Tonk Out Of The Girl/ Brooks & Dunn /ARISTA
- Little Moments/ Brad Paisley /ARISTA
- Amazing/ Josh Kelley /HOLLYWOOD
- Through The Wire/ Kanye West /ROC-A-FELLA/DEF JAM
- Watch The Wind Blow By/ Tim McGraw /CURB
- Rain On Me/ Ashanti /MURDER INC./DEF JAM
- I Wanna Do It All/ Terr'Clark /MERCURY
- Remember/ Disturbed /REPRISE
- Why Georgia/ John Mayer /ARWARD/COLUMBIA

50,000 SPINS
- This Love/ Maroon 5 /OCTONE/IZE RECORDS
- Dirt Off Your Shoulder/ Jay-Z /ROC-A-FELLA/DEF JAM
- 100 Years/ Five For Fighting /ARWARD/COLUMBIA
- Sweet Southern Comfort/ Buddy Jewell /COLUMBIA
- You'll Think Of Me/ Keith Urban /CAPITOL
- Rubber Band Man/ T.I. /GRANDHUSTLE/ATLANTIC
- Freck-A-Leek/ PeteY Pablo /JIVE/ZOMBA
- I Believe In A Thing Called Love/ The Darkness /ATLANTIC
- Wanna Get To Know You/ G Unit /G-UNIT/INTERSCOPE
- Songs About Rain/ Gary Allan /MCA NASHVILLE
- Spend My Time/ Clint Black /EQUITY
- I Don't Wanna Wait For You/ Mario Winans Feat. P. Diddy /BAD BOY/UMRG
- The Reason/ Hoobastank /ISLAND
- More & More/ Joe /JIVE/ZOMBA

Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems
Los Tigres Take Their Stories From Real Life

Songs Focus On Immigration Issues, Juárez Deaths

BY LEILA COBO

It's not clear when Los Tigres del Norte went from being a norteño band to a social and political force.

What is clear is that in the past two decades, when Los Tigres talk, their audience does not just buy albums. It listens. And it acts.

Action is what many hope Los Tigres’ newest set, “Pacto de Sangre,” will provoke. Released March 30 on longtime label Fonovisa Records, it debuted, as expected, at No. 1 on this issue’s Billboard Top Latin Albums chart.

The album includes two tracks that address contemporary and explosive circumstances and are sure to elicit a strong response.

One is the first single, “José Pérez León,” a hauntingly arranged corrido about a young man who suffocates inside a truck as he attempts to cross from Mexico into the United States. The song directly references the May 2003 incident in which 18 immigrants suffocated inside a truck in Texas. It is No. 28 on the Billboard Hot Latin Tracks chart this issue.

Chilling in its matter-of-fact narrative, “José Pérez León” contrasts with the call-to-arms attitude of “Las Mujeres de Juárez.” That track pointedly criticizes inaction by the Mexican government and police surrounding the unresolved brutal murders of more than 300 women in the border city of Ciudad Juárez since 1993.

“Esta corrido is telling the government that people deserve to have these murders solved,” says Tigres bass player Hernán Hernández, who makes up the band with brothers Jorge, Luis and Eduardo, as well as cousin Oscar Lara.

“We want the families of these women to be heard.” (Continued on page 77)

IFPI Details Global Biz Decline

BY EMMANUEL LECRAN and LARS BRANDLE

LONDON—What once was a $40 billion business is now down to $32 billion.

The global recorded music business experienced another downturn in 2003, bringing the industry back to a level not seen since 1993.

Overall, the value of the global recorded music industry in 2003 fell 7.6% from the previous year. Volume was down 6.5% to 2.7 billion units, according to a report by the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry.

Industry executives and analysts say that while many regions had disappointing results, there were encouraging performances in several major markets. They said that the development of legitimate online music services, coupled with strong action against online piracy, are cause for some optimism in the industry.

“We are still running downhill,” Sony Music International president Rick Dobbis says. “Most of the key markets are down, and that’s not encouraging. But we’ve seen some interesting changes, especially the development of legitimate services spreading around the world. It’s not exactly a new dawn, but it is not pitch-black either.”

Dobbis says the new market situation forces all players to adapt. “Everyone is evaluating how to operate under these circumstances,” he says.

On the bright side, IFPI chairman/CEO Jay Berman highlights legitimate online activity, the

Top 10 Music Markets:
Retail Value, 2002-2003
(All figures in $U.S. millions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>11,848</td>
<td>12,609</td>
<td>-6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>4,910</td>
<td>5,409</td>
<td>-9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.K.</td>
<td>3,216</td>
<td>3,211</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>2,115</td>
<td>2,471</td>
<td>-14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>2,022</td>
<td>2,496</td>
<td>-19.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>676</td>
<td>696</td>
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<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>526</td>
<td>-5.1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: Includes music video sales. All figures at fixed 2003 rate.
Source: IFPI

(Continued on page 77)
Monthly Buzz Chart Debuts

A new monthly gauge of artist popularity bows in this week's issue of Billboard.

The new Billboard Buzz Top 25 ranks individual artists based on an ongoing Internet survey of music fans and is not directly based on sales or airplay.

This month's No. 1 Buzz artist is Wind-up act Evanescence (see chart, this page). It took the No. 1 slot in February, replacing OutKast on the early, unpublished charts.

The information comes from PromoSquad, which already provides HitPredictor charts for Billboard and sister publication Airplay Monitor. The HitPredictor charts project radio success for new singles based on PromoSquad's online surveys.

In addition to such projections, PromoSquad is now measuring overall artist popularity based on fan awareness of multiple aspects of an artist's career, including marketing campaigns, airplay, print coverage, touring and TV appearances.

HOW IT WORKS

The concept was born of fan suggestions. The intense music fans who qualify for HitPredictor Internet surveys said they wanted a way to give their own take on specific artists. (To qualify, respondents must identify themselves as music fans.)

The first step in developing the chart was to compile a list of artists based on Billboard song and album charts from the past two years.

New artists are added to the list each month as they appear on the sales or airplay charts. The current Buzz list includes 250 acts as diverse as Korn, Josh Groban and 50 Cent.

Using the same screening process as in the PromoSquad song-testing system, fans are classified based on music preferences.

Questions are posed to survey participants with the goal of determining how fans perceive the artists. The results are assembled into a chart that ranks artists based on a proprietary PromoSquad formula. The top 25 positions will run in Billboard once a month.

This issue marks the first time the Buzz chart has been published, but PromoSquad has been compiling the chart since November 2003.

Most of the artists at the top of this issue's chart have held steady for the past few months. For example, Evanescence and No. 3 OutKast have been around the top of the chart since the tail end of 2003. (Continued on page 76)

The Billboard Buzz Chart is a gauge of artist popularity through an Internet poll of music fans. Scores are affected by every aspect of an artist's career: Marketing, airplay, print media, touring, TV appearances and rumors all have an impact on Buzz Chart performance. Data is collected with the same strict attention to detail as all other PromoSquad research. A list of 250 artists is compiled based on airplay and sales. The artists are rated by thousands of carefully screened music fans aged 13-50. Results are compiled weekly and monthly. The top 25 chart is based on a weighted positive calculation that takes into account each artist's popularity and buzz among the entire music-listening population. PromoSquad also maintains detailed format-specific charts (e.g., Top-40 Mainstream, R&B/Hip-Hop, Country, etc.). For more information, contact buzz@promosquad.com.

Sanctuary Expands Into Europe

BY EMMANUEL LEGRAND

LONDON—At a time when most record companies are downsizing, Sanctuary Records Group (SRG) is expanding. The London-based independent has created a regional division in Europe to bolster its presence outside the United Kingdom.

Taking the new post of president of SRG Continental Europe is label/management veteran Frank Stroebele. He will also directly oversee the European operations of SRG.

Stroebele reports to London-based Joe Cokell, CEO of SRG United Kingdom and Europe. He moved into his new post April 1.

SRG's existing Berlin-based operation was created in 2001. Cokell says it will be the base for European expansion.

“Our existing operation in Berlin is the nucleus we build from,” he says. “We are now moving into a new phase to establish the company in Germany first and in the rest of Europe, especially Eastern Europe. We see Eastern Europe as a region with strong potential.”

German native Stroebele says, “Berlin is the right place to be. With the enlargement of the European Union, this is the most central place in Continental Europe. I always thought that to coordinate European operations, Berlin was the most rational spot, and I’m glad Joe Cokell shared that view.”

MORE THAN METAL

Stroebele aims to boost the company's profile in Europe, starting in Germany. “For a lot of people, Sanctuary is about catalog and metal,” he says. “It's much more than that, as we've shown with the success of Gary Jules. That leaves a lot of margin for growth.”

Cokell says the German office also has an A&R function. “Don’t expect us to spend half a million euros to sign the next big thing,” he says. “Our strategy in Germany, like elsewhere, is to find acts who are below the majors’ radar or artists with a historical profile.”

In Germany, BMG distributes Sanctuary through an international licensing deal, but Soul Food (metal and rock) and Rough Trade (alternative) handle specific releases.

As part of his appointment, Stroebele brings his artist-management firm Eye Sound Management (ESM) into the Sanctuary fold through what he describes as a “corporation deal.” Sanctuary Artist Management will now develop and manage ESM acts worldwide. ESM’s leading act is Dutch metal band Within Temptation, which is in the process of recording a new album for Gun Records.

Stroebele returned to his native Germany in 2002 to set up ESM after a four-year stint in London as VP of marketing for Epic at Sony Music Europe. Prior to joining Sony, he was marketing and promotion director at Universal Music in Germany and head of international at Roadrunner Records in the Netherlands.

He recently acted as European management coordinator for Anastacia and worked with German indie label X-Cell in developing the international career of pop artist Sarah Connor.

“We’ll build from Frank’s expertise in international marketing but also from his experience in management,” Cokell says.

Sanctuary's management clients include Beyoncé, Jane's Addiction, Iron Maiden, Manic Street Preachers, Guns N' Roses, Robert Plant and the Who.

Additional reporting by Lars Bradle in London.

AFIM To Shut, New Era Begins?

Group Blames Lack Of Funds

BY CHRIS MORRIS

LOS ANGELES—It’s the end of one era and the possible beginning of a new one for the independent music community.

The Assn. for Independent Music (AFIM), the 32-year-old indie trade group, is due to dissolve April 15.

Newbury Comics COO Duncan Browne is a member of AFIM’s executive committee, says, “Over the past several years, the cost of running AFIM has been increasingly problematic to manage, relative to the revenue stream coming into AFIM.”

Even as AFIM made its April announcement about its closure, organizers of a proposed new indie trade body forged plans for a meeting in New York late this month to discuss membership and finances.

“We need a bit more of a voice for the independent community,” says Lesley Bickley, CEO of the Beggars Group U.S. in New York and one of the new group’s key organizers. “The time is right at the moment to do this.”

DRAMATIC CHANGES

AFIM’s demise comes after a decade of dramatic change in the independent sector.

A small group of indie labels and regional distributors founded AFIM in 1972 as the National Assn. of Independent Record Distributors.

Its annual convention was the primary meeting place for regional wholesalers and their distributed labels. But, as the business shifted during the ‘90s to national distribution, established labels took a diminishing role in the organization.

Browne admits, “A significant percentage of [AFIM’s recent membership] was people starting out in the industry coming in at the lowest rate, and it costs the most to service that community, which contributes the least to the overhead of the organization.”

As membership declined, AFIM relied increasingly on its volunteer board to do the work of a nonexistent office staff, according to Browne.

AFIM’s sole paid employee, executive director Courtney Profiti, resigned in late 2003 after 18 months on the job. She was not replaced.

Browne says, “The organization found itself unable to keep up with the stretch to try to align expenditures with revenues. We couldn’t support an executive director.”

In 2002 and 2003, AFIM held its convention in conjunction with the National Assn. of Recording Merchandisers’ confab.

NARM director of membership and public affairs Holly Ross says AFIM members are being offered membership in the retail trade group at a reduced rate.

NARM has also established an independent Music Issue Forum. Browne will serve as chairman, and Ross will act as NARM liaison.

(Continued on page 77)
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Vallon Joins The Move To AEG

**Former HOB Exec Will Become Senior VP Of National Booking**

**BY RAY WADDELL**

Larry Vallon, former House of Blues senior VP, has joined the parade of high-profile concert business executives flocking to AEG Live (billboard.biz, April 2).

By May 1, Vallon will be AEG Live’s new senior VP of national booking. His responsibilities will include overseeing the booking operations at AEG’s regional offices and assisting in securing national tours.

Vallon will report to Joe Marciano, chief strategic officer regional for AEG Live’s regional offices, and John Meglen, president of Concerts West, AEG’s national touring division. (Marciano was Vallon’s boss when Marciano was president of HOB Concessions.)

“Larry is a class act joining a class organization, if I do say myself,” AEG Live president/CEO Randy Phillips tells Billboard. “We’re thrilled to have him. He fills a missing piece of the puzzle.”

Vallon is a 23-year veteran of HOB, dating back to when it was first MCA Concerts and then Universal Concerts. HOB purchased Universal for $180 million in 1999.

He is the latest in a string of AEG recruits that includes Ali Harnell in Nashville and Louis Messina in Houston, both formerly with Clear Channel Entertainment; Susan Rosenbluth, a 22-year veteran of Nederlander Organization, now senior VP of booking for Southern California for AEG Live; and Marciano.

Meglen and Paul Gongaware, co-CEOs of Concerts West, joined AEG even before AEG Live was founded in 2002; most company tours take place under the Concerts West banner. Next on board was Paul Tollett and GoldenVoice.

AEG created the East Coast presence it had wanted when it opened its New York headquarters, with former Metropolitan Entertainment executive VP Debra Rathwell joining the firm as AEG Live senior VP.

All of these industry vets ultimately report to Phillips. A former artist manager and head of the Gasoline Alley and Red Ant record labels, Phillips told Billboard in an earlier interview that his AEG Live plan calls for “a combination of mergers and acquisitions, setting up businesses in different parts of the country and funding them, along with strategic alliances with companies that are not Clear Channel-affiliated.” (Billboard, March 2, 2002).

RIAA Says Study Falls Short

**Academics: File Sharing Does Not Hurt Music Sales**

**BY BILL HOLLAND**

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Recording Industry Association of America is questioning the results of a recent academic study on illegal downloading.

Amy Weiss, RIAA senior VP of communications, calls the Oberholzer-Strumpf study’s results, released March 30, “counterintuitive.”

The study purports to absolve illegal downloaders of negatively impacting the music business.

Weiss also says the study is “anomalous” in that it contradicts the findings of five other studies of P2P activity conducted in 2002-2003. All suggested file-sharing as a major element in the decline of industry sales.

The new study, conducted by two professors at Harvard University and the University of North Carolina, is steeped in complex statistical equations.

“We look forward to what other academics will have to say about [the study] since it has not yet been peer-reviewed or published in a journal,” Weiss writes. “We also look forward to understanding what the authors actually did in the study, since the text of the analysis is incomprehensible to the layman.”

The RIAA also says the study is skewed because the team used the fourth quarter of 2002 as a basis for its findings.

“It is not possible to examine record sales and downloading for 17 weeks (including the Christmas season) and determine whether or not downloading has harmed sales over the last three

(Continued on page 63)

Sam Sweeps, Alanis Strips At 2004 Junos

**BY LARRY LeBLANC**

EDMONTON, Alberta—Universal artist Sam Roberts was the big winner at Canada’s 2004 Juno Awards. The rocker was named artist of the year, and his debut, “We Were Born in a Flame,” won honors for top album and top rock album.

The Junos were held April 4 in front of a capacity crowd at the 16,000-seat Rexall Place in Edmonton. About 1.5 million people tuned in to the CTV telecast, a dip from last year’s show from Ottawa, which drew 2.23 million viewers.

Montreal-based Roberts won in every category in which he was nominated. “This has been an extraordinary evening for our band,” he told the cheering audience.

Backstage at the Junos, Roberts told Billboard he was fatigued after a five-hour drive from Banff, Alberta, where he had performed the night before. “Touring in Canada is tough,” he said with a laugh. “I’d be quite comfortable touring now in Siberia.”

Hometown favorite Nickelback—originally from Hanna, Alberta—was named top group and

picked up the fan’s choice award. The EMI act’s frontman, Chad Kroeger, told Billboard he was thrilled to win a Juno in Alberta. “This always feels wonderful, but it feels that much more so to receive it at home,” he said.

Toronto-based Atlantic rock act Billy Talent was named top new group.

Canada’s female artists—traditionally big Juno winners—fared poorly this year.

With five nominations, Nettwerk Records’ Sarah McLachlan picked up two Junos, for top songwriter and top pop album (“Afterglow”).

DreamWorks’ Nelly Furtado took home one award out of her five nominations, winning top single for “Powerless.” Quadraphile nominee Celine Dion was shut out.

This year’s Junos were marred by slip-ups in the announcements of the nominations; a call for a boycott of the affiliated Juno Fest by a local Edmonton musician over what he felt was low pay; and an intense media center backstage, in which 191 registered media members fought for limited access to Juno winners.

(Continued on page 63)
California state Sen. Kevin Murray is investigating claims by a former EMI employee that the major label attempted to manipulate Nielsen SoundScan data, according to published reports. Gene Rumsey, an ex-EMI Music Distribution executive VP, reportedly testified in a sworn deposition last December that EMI hired marketing consultants who would trade free goods with retailers in exchange for additional scans of an album. Rumsey, who left the company two years ago and now works for Concord Records, estimated that the practice occurred on less than 10% of EMI releases, according to reports. While attempts to manipulate the data are alleged, sources question the effectiveness of such efforts. “We have multiple levels of systems and safeguards in place to recognize and deal with attempts that might be made to skew the results,” says Rob Sisco, Nielsen Music president/COO.

Nielson made to continue the world’s largest maker of media companies. Under Riccitiello’s leadership, the company emerged as the world’s largest maker of videogames. He was part of a management team that formed EA TRAX, a program that partners with music labels and artists. EMI chairman Larry Probst, who has guided EA since 1991, will continue as CEO and assume interim responsibility for Riccitiello’s duties while EA evaluates candidates to replace him.

John Riccitiello, president/COO of videogame maker Electronic Arts since 1997, resigned April 7. He will remain at Redwood City, Calif.-based EA for a transition period but intends to set up a private equity fund that invests in media companies. Under Riccitiello’s leadership, the company emerged as the world’s largest maker of videogames. He was part of a management team that formed EA TRAX, a program that partners with music labels and artists. EMI chairman Larry Probst, who has guided EA since 1991, will continue as CEO and assume interim responsibility for Riccitiello’s duties while EA evaluates candidates to replace him.

SCOTT BANERJEE

Senior Judge Clarence C. Newcomer of the District Court for Eastern Pennsylvania on April 5 denied the Recording Industry Assn. of America’s request for him to reconsider his March 5 decision to forbid “bundling” of lawsuits against suspected peer-to-peer file traders. The RIAA had attempted to bundle 200 actions against alleged infringers into one “John Doe” lawsuit in that court to speed discovery. Newcomer said, “Wholesale litigation of these claims is inappropriate, at least with respect to a vast majority [if not all] of defendants.” Previously, Judge David Baker of the U.S. District Court in the Middle District of Florida ruled April 1 that the RIAA could not bundle the suits of 25 “John Doe” defendants the industry body filed in February.

BILL HOLLAND

Clear Channel Entertainment has acquired a U.S. patent for its Instant Live post-concert CD technology. CCE says the patent was granted “for the business method of creating and distributing concert recordings contemporaneously at events.” The company filed its patent request in 2000. CCE executives recently said Instant Live technology would be installed in CCE-owned clubs in Atlanta, Cleveland and San Francisco. Acts that play these venues will have the opportunity to record and sell CDs after each show. It was unclear at press time what effect the patent would have on such Instant Live competitors as DiscLive.

SUSANNE AULT

The National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences is reviewing candidates for two newly created regional executive director posts. The jobs are based in Los Angeles and New York. The creation of the positions led to the elimination of executive director positions in New York and L.A. Jon Marcus held the New York director post for nine years. The L.A. position had deliberately gone unfilled since NARAS promoted Angela Bibb-Sanders to VP of member services last year. The regional executive directors will oversee programs for members who fall within their Eastern or Western region and aren’t served by existing NARAS chapters. Both directors will report to Nashville-based Nancy Shapiro, NARAS VP of regional management.

MELINDA NEWMAN

The Department of Justice has announced that David M. Israelite, deputy chief of staff and counselor to the attorney general, will lead the DOJ’s newly created Intellectual Property Task Force. The task force, created late last month, is the result of an internal DOJ decision to beef up its anti-piracy and anti-counterfeiting efforts.

BILL HOLLAND

Brian Wilson will be honored as the BMI Icon during the rights group’s 52nd annual Pop Awards dinner May 11 at the Regent Beverly Wilshire Hotel. Wilson picked up BMI’s President’s Award in 1995, with the Icon Award, he will become the first songwriter to receive both special honors from the rights group.

For the latest breaking news, go to billboard.biz.
Protecting The Charts

Back in the days before widespread computerization, Billboard formulated its charts based on voluntary reporting by retail stores.

Needless to say, such a system was easily prone to manipulation, and, quite frankly, record companies were prone to manipulate it. Getting onto the Billboard charts has always had special meaning in the music business, and making it all the way to No. 1 still confers a rare status that is highly coveted by artists and labels alike.

So it’s perhaps understandable—if inexcusable—that record companies might attempt to goose the charts to boost the standing of one of their releases. But in this day and age, it’s kind of pointless to even try.

Since 1991, Billboard has based its charts on sales data that sister company Nielsen SoundScan automatically collects through computerized point-of-sale systems in stores.

That, in addition to other safeguards, makes it exceedingly difficult to scamm the system. That’s why we were mildly amused to see a story break in this week’s newspaper about former EMI Music Distribution executive Gene Rumsey.

According to a deposition in a lawsuit that recently was made public, he said that EMI would pay “consultants” up to $10,000 per project to promote records. Those efforts would include giving retailing free albums to scan through their computers in an effort to deceive SoundScan’s reporting system.

But it’s not as simple as that. Even before a store is added to the system, SoundScan will monitor its sales to establish a pattern. Most outlets, whether they’re mall stores, indies or superstores, have fairly predictable sales volume.

If a sales figure for an album seems high based on the typical volume a store does for that genre of music, it is automatically flagged for investigation. Often, there’s a logical explanation.

An artist may have made an in-store appearance; it may be the artist’s hometown, or it may be due to some other special promotion.

But if the retailer can’t provide some solid proof to back the sales figures, the store’s report will be weighted accordingly, or the store will be pulled from the system for that week.

Since more than 18,000 stores are scanned, it would take a massive, nationwide fraud to statistically affect a major chart like The Billboard 200. Where a problem may arise is on the more specialized charts, which are based on reports from fewer stores.

But at the end of the day, even if the manipulation goes undetected, any gain would only last a week. Then, the scam has to start all over again. It becomes a costly undertaking to sustain a chart position that way.

It also should be noted that the alleged EMI manipulation occurred four or five years ago, and the management has since changed. That’s not to say that record companies have given up trying to beat the charts through manipulation. But if they do, they’re foolishly throwing good money after bad.
John Mayer Tries Hand At New Instrument

John Mayer will bow a monthly music column in Esquire, beginning with the June issue. "It's starting as a third of a page [of] commentary, and I'm hoping I can work up to a page," the Columbia Records artist says. "It's about one record a month, about the music. The Esquire reader doesn't want to know about units."

Mayer, who says his publicist Angelica Cob secured him the post after he expressed a desire to pen a column, has already had his first bout of writer's block. "When I went to write the first column, I got really freaked out," he says. "But then I discovered it's not so hard." Just wait, is all we have to say.

RETURNING: Look for Bruce Hornsby to announce a new multi-album, major-label deal soon.

The first project under the new pact finds Hornsby returning to his pop rock roots. It features Eric Clapton, Sting and Elton John.

Hornsby parted ways with RCA in 2003 after 18 years. His best-selling album remains 1986's "The Way It Is," which the Recording Industry Assn. of America certified triple-platinum. After a number of platinum and gold-oriented releases, his recordings became jazzier and less mainstream but remained critically acclaimed.

Hornsby began shopping the new album earlier this year and received a number of major-label offers. He is slated to sign the deal by the end of this month.

DON'T THINK TWICE: We admit we are totally skeeved out by Bob Dylan's appearance in a Victoria's Secret commercial. It just seems very old and slightly creepy to see Dylan lurking in the same ad with an underwear model young enough to be his granddaughter—even though they don't appear together.

But we thought we'd get a second opinion, so we called Mark Volman. As a member of the Turtles, one of Volman's biggest successes was the group's version of Dylan's "It Ain't Me, Babe." But more significantly, Volman is now a music history professor at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles. As he notes, this is not the first time Dylan's actions have created a stir.

"People berated him when he plugged in, when he became a Christian, when he wrote country-western songs. This will not change how people look at him in the long run at all," Volman predicts.

Besides, he adds, one has to consider the comedic value. "If Bob Dylan can stretch people over into thinking they can buy underwear from Victoria's Secret (Continued on page 17)

Los Lonely Boys Make New Friends

BY CHRISS MORRIS

LOS ANGELES—"We have what we call the musical burrito theory," Los Lonely Boys singer/guitarist Henry Garza says.

"We're the tortilla, and inside this tortilla, we fill it with everything that we gathered from everyone that teaches us something, man."

The San Angelo, Texas-based trio's sonic cuisine has gone down easy in Austin, the city Garza calls "our playground" and the breakout market for the group's self-titled debut album.

Steve Barnett, executive VP/CM at Epic Records, which assumed marketing and distribution of the BED-distributed Or Music album April 1, says the success of "Los Lonely Boys" is a classic case of a regional explosion.

Barnett notes, "This is how you used to do it 10 or 20 years ago: A record broke out of Cleveland, a record broke out of Miami, a record broke out of Seattle. This is what happened with Los Lonely Boys."

He adds, "Here we are now with 210,000 shipped. We're at almost 150,000 scanned. To be honest with you, we're just getting going."

Or Music has a clause in its BED contract that allows its acts to be upstreamed through Sony. (Continued on page 63)

There will be a telephonic auction on May 10th

Of Classic Masters by Genre Including the Following Major Artists:

| Alternative Rock | Better Than Ezra — Face to Face | Violent Femmes
|------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------
| Pop Rock         | Blondie — Go-Go's            | Lucy Pearl     |
| R&B              | Sammy Hagar — Yes             |
| Rock             |                               |

The auction will include masters in the same genres by 12 other artists plus various soundtracks. To bid you must provide contact information by April 21st so we can send you auction details by April 28th. Reach us by e-mail using billboard@equitabletransitions.com.
Universal South Set Inspired By ‘Passion’

BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

NASHVILLE—Being connected to a movie that has grossed more than $330 million can be a great way to launch a new album.

That’s what Universal South is banking on with the April 6 release of “Songs Inspired by The Passion of the Christ.” The album collects spiritually themed tracks from artists as diverse as Ricky Skaggs, Bob Dylan and Nick Cave.

The film’s success prompted Universal South to beef up its marketing campaign. Pre-orders have surpassed 250,000 units, according to the label.

“The game plan changed when we saw the movie was going to be so big,” says Van Fletcher, Universal South senior VP/GM.

Instead of just stocking the CD in the soundtrack section, Universal South decided to invest in an extensive point of purchase (POP) plan.

“We realized we [had] to get the CD seen when people walk into retail,” Fletcher says. “This is definitely the biggest POP order we’ve ever had for a record.

“The image that is on the CD will attract attention,” Fletcher says, referring to a pensive shot of actor Jim Caviezel as Jesus Christ. “A big part of it has been getting visibility in the stores. We did posters. We did two-sided one-by-ones. We did bin cards.”

Fletcher says the label plans a huge Internet campaign that will include sending e-mail blasts to 5 million people. The film advertising will also mention the album.

This is the second project released in conjunction with Mel Gibson’s film about the last 12 hours of Christ’s life.

John DeBoy’s score, “The Passion of the Christ: Original Motion Picture Soundtrack,” has sold 193,000 units, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

The score, distributed by Sony Classics and Integrity Music, has remained at No. 1 on the Top Contemporary Christian Albums chart since its Feb. 24 release.

Universal South, which will work the “Inspired by” album to the mainstream audience, has partnered with EMI CMG Distribution, which will promote the project to the Christian market.

The Nashville-based Rick Hendrix Co. will promote the album to country and Christian radio.

Gibson, who produced the “Inspired By” project with documentary filmmaker/video director Lin Larson, was heavily involved in choosing songs and wrote cut-by-cut liner notes for the album.

The project features six new recordings and six previously recorded tracks. Among the highlights are Leonard Cohen’s “By the Rivers Dark,” Holly Williams singing her grandfather Hank Williams’ “How Can You Refuse Him Now?” and Skaggs’ poignant version of “Are You Afraid To Die?” with an introduction by the Rev. Dr. Billy Graham.

Jessi Colter and her son Shooter Jennings wrote “Please Carry Me Home” especially for the album. It marks the first time the two have written and recorded together. “The song was one of those songs that was a deep spiritual journey for both of us,” Jennings says, “and hopefully for those who listen to it.”

The set’s “Inspired by” title is a bit of a misnomer, because many of the songs have been around for years.

Lunson says the goal of the album was to try to put music to the feelings that the movie stirs in viewers.

“It’s more about the emotions that come out of the film,” Lunson says. “I tried to put together songs that somehow reflected some of the feelings you felt in the film or when you came out of it, and a lot of them were feelings you really couldn’t describe.”

Lunson says the album’s organizers were looking for music that wasn’t overtly religious. “The film itself is so strong that I didn’t feel—and neither did Mel—that you needed to have songs that were giving you an overt message.”

Since the film’s release, there is a plethora of “Passion” products on the market, but Fletcher thinks consumers will be able to discern that this release is connected directly to the film.

“Our album says ‘A Mel Gibson Film’ at the top, and it says ‘The Passion of the Christ.’ That’s about as official as I can get.”
INO Artist Groves Reveals Her ‘Other Side’

The past few years have taken Sara Groves a long way from the high-school classroom where she used to teach. She’s currently headlining a tour in support of her third INO Records album, “The Other Side of Something.”

Prior to launching her own tour April 2, Groves had been appearing on select dates of the Adoration tour with the Newsboys and Rebecca St. James, as well as on the Worship tour. She is on the road with former PFR member Joel Hanson.

“The Other Side of Something” marks the first time Groves has worked with veteran producer Charlie Peacock. Groves’ longtime producer Nate Sabin produced seven cuts.

“Nate always approached the album wanting to portray what we do live,” Groves says. “We came into this new project saying, ‘Let’s let the play be the play.’ A concert is like a play. What you do live is demonstrate what you can do onstage with your body and with your instruments.”

On this recording, Groves wanted to again portray the strength of her live show but also create an album with a more cinematic quality. “I like movies that have layers in complexity, and Charlie is like a movie maker,” she says. “I trusted both Nate and Charlie. They both said, ‘We want to have fun, but we really want to reflect your heart in these songs.’

In recording “The Other Side of Something,” Groves found herself literally on the other side of a pretty defining period in her life. She took last year off. This came on the heels of having spent 250 days on the road with her husband/manager, Troy, and their two young sons.

“My spiritual, emotional and physical gauges were all on empty,” she says.

Groves found herself questioning her abilities as a mother and purpose in life. “There’s a lot of messages of what a good mom looks like and what she does. Here I was putting my baby on a bus and going out and doing all this stuff that I feel called to do. But some days I wonder: ‘Lord, did I miss it? Did I miss the point of what you want me to do?’

Groves spent her year off soul searching. Her new album is the result.

“My favorite song on the album is ‘Compelled.’ That’s where the line ‘I’m on the other side of something’ comes from,” she says. “It’s about the compelling nature of Christ.

“What I feel like I’m on the other side of is an understanding that I’m drawn and driven,” she says. “I’m a slave to Christ, and that’s a really good place to be. I’m feeling the joy, peace and gratitude like I never have before. This album is really marking a struggle and a victory.”

JOY TO THE WORLD: Walt Disney World is expanding its annual contemporary Christian-music festival, Night of Joy, from two days to three. The event will be held Sept. 9-11 at the Magic Kingdom park.

FAREWELL: On March 23, the gospel community lost one of its legends when Roy “Pop” Lewis died at 98. Lewis was the patriarch of the Lewis Family. His love of God, his family and music are his powerful legacy.

Lewis was born Sept. 22, 1905. At 20, he married Pauline Holloway and began one of the gospel community’s most successful performing families. They were married 77 years when “Mom” Lewis passed away last year.

A member of the Southern Gospel Music Hall of Fame, Lewis performed with the family group well into his 90s. In recent years poor health kept him off the road, but he performed last May at the annual Lewis Family Homecoming & Bluegrass Festival in Lincolnton, Ga.

“Pop Lewis was one of the true gentlemen in our industry,” Daywind Music Group VP Norman Holland says. “The love and respect his family, friends and peers have for him is a tribute and testimony to him. I was honored to work with him and his family.”

The Lewis Family continues to record for Thoroughbred Records, a division of Daywind.

For more information call 1-866-FAST-FWD (1-866-327-8393)
www.fastforwardfinancing.com
Afro-Cuban Tsunami Sweeps Mainstream Shores

One of the most significant and vibrant cross-pollinations in the history of jazz has been the so-called Latin tinge.

There have been waves of Latin jazz over the years, but the latest tsunami of the Afro-Cuban hybrid has been particularly potent and wide-ranging. From saxophonist Paquito D'Rivera's myriad projects to Jazz at Lincoln Center's Afro-Latin Jazz Orchestra led by pianist Arturo O'Farrill, Latin jazz has surged into the mainstream.

Last month at New York's Blue Note, trombonist Conrad Herwig held forth with his band to celebrate “Another Kind of Blue: The Latin Side of Miles Davis,” a live album recorded at the club and released by its Half Note Records imprint. With new arrangements written by Herwig and trumpeter Brian Lynch, the band reimagines Davis' classic album “Kind of Blue” with an Afro-Cuban and Afro-Caribbean slant.

The evening's rousing festivities were punctuated by fiery percussion and horn-section brio. The all-star cast of players, including pianist Edsel Gomez, bassist John Benitez, baritone saxophonist Ronnie Cuber and flutist Dave Valentín, ventured through such tunes as “So What” rendered in 6/8 time and a boogaloo-chata-styled “All Blues” before easing into a boleto take on “Blue in Green.”

“The genesis of this project comes from playing with Eddie Palmieri,” says Herwig, a longtime member of the pianist's La Perfecta II and Afro-Cuban Jazz Octet. “Most of the guys involved with this came through Eddie's band.”

In the late '90s, Herwig released “The Latin Side of John Coltrane” on Astor Place Records. “I've led two lives as a musician,” he says. “I've played straight-ahead with people like Clark Terry and Buddy Rich, but I've also been playing Afro-Cuban music for years. It’s been rewarding.”

Half Note VP Jeff Levenson, who produced the album, says, “Miles' material fits perfectly with a Latin-jazz point of view, especially when it's played by guys who are steeped in that world. There's an authentic pedigree at work here.”

“Conrad's Coltrane project opened my ears, so when he approached me about Miles, it was an obvious fit.”

The machete connection: San Francisco Bay Area percussionist John Santos has been one of the West Coast's foremost Latin-jazz bandleaders of the past decade. With his dynamic band, the Machete Ensemble, he recently released his latest CD, “Brazos Ahiertos,” recorded on his own Machete Records label (john-santos.com). The disc features guest appearances by legendary percussionist Orestes Vilató, trombonist Steve Turre and bassist Andy Gonzalez.

His Machete band will celebrate its 20th anniversary next year, but Santos says longevity hasn't been easy, given the lack of label support for Latin jazz.

“Two years ago, I went back on a promise to myself to focus on the creative process,” he says. “Feeling my back against the wall, I had to begin releasing my own work once again.”

The result? A 2003 Grammy Award nomination for his CD “SP Bay.”

Santos has been discussing with fellow Latin jazz percussionists the prospect of a joint-advertising endeavor to earn their self-released recordings more attention.

He has had conversations with New York's Ralph Irizarry (BKS Records through Timbalaye), Los Angeles-based Alex Acuña (Tolu) and Puerto Rico's Paoli Mejias (Checkmate).

Santos notes that Latin jazz faces the same industry-wide dilemma as other genres.

“The problem is fundamental,” he says. “Attempting to create honest artistic expression with strong cultural and improvisational roots based in the social realities from which the art is born does not add up to major profits in an image-conscious and corporate-run industry. To break it down a little further: Creed and art are not good running partners.”

LATIN 'Luna': Chilean vocalist Claudia Acuña recently released “Luna,” her third CD and MaxJazz debut. Produced by Acuña and pianist Jason Lindner, the disc showcases the singer launching into a repertoire that is primarily sung in Spanish.

THREE DOT LOUNGE: The Tri-C Jazzfest in Cleveland commemorates its 25th anniversary this year with a full schedule of concerts April 14-25. In addition to presenting Diana Krall, Natalie Cole, Sam Rivers, DJ Logic and the Joe Zawinul Syndicate, the festival will honor two jazz greats: Verve Music Group chairman Tommy LiPuma and legendary pianist/composer Horace Silver. The Playboy Jazz Festival announced its 26th anniversary lineup. Highlights of the June 19-20 event at the Hollywood Bowl include Robert Randolph & the Family Band, Roy Hargrove's RH Factor, Christian McBride Band and the eagerly anticipated all-star quartet comprising Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter, Dave Holland and Brian Blade.
Court: Web Porn Law Blocks Free Speech

Just as the U.S. Supreme Court is preparing to review the Child Online Protection Act, a Virginia court has declared unconstitutional a state law that aims to block sexually explicit material on the Internet.

Two weeks ago, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit affirmed a lower-court ruling that the statute infringes First Amendment freedoms.

The Child Online Protection Act is a 1998 federal statute that imposes criminal sanctions on commercial Web sites that do not block "harmful speech" (such as child pornography). The law is intended to protect minors.

The court reasoned that while the state should protect minors from such material, it is impossible to do so without violating the constitutional rights of adults.

"In an attempt to deny minors access to potentially harmful speech, the law will effectively suppress a large amount of speech that adults have a constitutional right to receive," Judge James R. Spencer wrote.

In Virginia, the court ruled, it is a crime to use the Internet to sell, rent or lend pictures or written narratives that depict "sexual excitement, conduct or sadomasochistic abuse" to juveniles.

The law's supporters say it should balance protecting children with the rights of adult Internet users.

Several Internet rights groups, such as People for the American Way, argue that the law's application is overly broad. A federal judge declared the law unconstitutional in 2001, and the state then appealed.

Elliot M. Minckberg, legal director at People for the American Way, supports the court's take on the matter, stressing that it is the job of Congress—not Congress—to monitor Internet use by children.

Similar laws in New York, New Mexico and Michigan also have been declared unconstitutional.

MIAMI SHOUT-OUT: Many thanks to the Florida Bar Assn.'s Entertainment Arts & Sports Law (EASL) section for inviting me to speak at their symposium March 26.

The program, which offered 10 hours of CLE credits, drew 150 attendees. Kudos to EASL chairman Darryl Cohen of Cohen Cooper Estep & Mudder in Atlanta and symposium co-chairmen Richard Rappaport of Adorno & Yoss in Miami and attorney Julee Milham of St. Pete Beach.

AWAITING WORD: Officials at P2P United say they have not received any replies from the Big Five record labels after writing to them last month. "We got a big zero-response," executive director Adam Eisgrau says.

On March 11, the lobby for such peer-to-peer technology groups as Morpheus and Grokster wrote to the heads of the five majors, urging them to make "Audible Magic" available for independent testing and analysis. The software has been touted as a solution to illegal downloading.

P2P United says the Recording Industry Assn. of America and its chairman, Mitch Bainiwol, had waved off a similar request in February, citing the proprietary nature of the software program.

P2P United says it wrote to Audible Magic CEO Vance Ikezoye, requesting access to the software in order to facilitate independent tests. Ikezoye has not replied, Eisgrau says.

P2P United is asking Ikezoye to stop "misleading the public and policy-makers by characterizing your fingerprinting software as a ‘filter.’"

The group is also asking Ikezoye to clarify whether he believes Audible Magic should be adopted as a technological mandate for all P2P communications and, if so, whether such a mandate should also apply to e-mail and instant messaging.

TAPPING TALENT: Dawn Weebees Glenn and Zeke Lopez have joined Greenberg Traurig's entertainment practice in Los Angeles.

Glenn, who is a shareholder, was a partner at Blanc Williams Johnson & Kronstadt. Lopez, an associate, is the president of the board of the Bravo Foundation. Their clients include actor Kevin Costner, songwriter John Bettis, entertainer Clint Holmes and author Danielle Steele.

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Continued from page 13

because he's endorsing it, I find that very humorous."

CH-CH-CHANGES: As label shakeouts continue, more executives find themselves looking for opportunities.

Atlantic Records' senior VP of media and artist relations, Patti Conte may be reached at 212-228-5988. The e-mail address for the label's VP of media and artist relations, Laura Gold, is bagones@aol.com, and Atlantic VP of product development Peter Galvin's contact info is peter@galvin@hotmail.com.

In other news, veteran publicist Cary Baker has departed Baker Northrop Media Group, the communications company he founded with Sheryl Northrop in 1997. Baker's new entity, Sherman Oaks, Calif.-based Conqueroo Communications has a roster that includes J.J. Cale, Vernon Reid and Robert Earl Keen.

Northrop keeps the Baker Northrop name and the company's Encino, Calif., office. Among her clients are Lisa Loeb, Stockholm Syndrome and Berklee Press.

Both parties term the split "amicable."

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RepeatSeat Answers Call For Phone Ticketing

BY SUSANNE AULT

Los Angeles—Can you hear me now? RepeatSeat works so, as it introduces cell-phone tickets to U.S. event-goers this year.

Teaming up with fellow ticketing firm U.K.-based Mobija, RepeatSeat will be the first company to offer the service to North American patrons, as early as May.

The 4-year-old, Alberta, Canada-based RepeatSeat is hopeful the alliance will attract more venues to its ticketing services.

1. “If you go out to dinner with someone and ask, ‘What do you want to do tonight?’ you can pull out the cell phone, log on to a venue’s Web site and get the tickets sent to you while you’re getting dessert,” RepeatSeat president/CEO George Davidson says.

The company has signed up two venues per week, on average, during the past two years. Its roster includes about 200 buildings, the majority of which are performing-arts centers.

RepeatSeat hopes the mobile innovation will rope in arena-size venues, allowing it to better compete with established companies like Ticketmaster.

“We started out with smaller business, but we are capable of ticketing any type of venue that is out there,” RepeatSeat executive VP Robert Christianson says. “When they see that our model delivers tickets well and provides the mechanics to enhance customer satisfaction, people are going to be embracing it. We are doing this for our current clients as much as for our future clients.”

PAPER-FREE & POPULAR

RepeatSeat’s wireless technology, Davidson says, is compatible with nearly all current-cell phone models from such companies as Nokia, Ericsson, Samsung and Sony.

Customers can order tickets by either phoning a RepeatSeat client’s box office or logging on to the venue’s Web site. Within 30 seconds of completing the order, the customer receives a bar-code-encrypted ticket on his or her cell phone. At the venue, scanners read the ticket through the phone’s screen.

The company will charge a convenience fee of $1 per cell ticket.

During the past year, wireless ticketing technology has spread throughout Europe, where cell systems are more advanced than in the United States. Having rolled out its mobile technology last August, Mobija now sells 20% of its tickets to people’s cell phones.

The company has contracts with such venues as the 8,000-seat Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre in Glasgow, Scotland.

Mobija is confident that Americans will similarly welcome the opportunity to use cell tickets.

“It is true that Americans do not use cell phones as extensively as in other areas of the world,” Mobija director Richard Phillips says.

“However, the text-messaging market is exploding now in the U.S. Print-at-home tickets are very popular [also]. We see cell-phone ticketing as being the natural next step, as it eliminates all the hassle associated with paper.”

David Goldberg, executive VP of strategy and business development at Ticketmaster, agrees that the prospect of scrapping paper will draw customers. He says Ticketmaster has stepped up discussions with wireless companies to provide its clients with cell-phone capabilities soon.

“INEVITABLE TECHNOLOGY”

Admittedly, mobile ticketing may have its own problems. Imagine a cell-phone battery dying just as a patron is trying to enter a show, Goldberg says.

But he believes the benefits outweigh the downside. He notes that people don’t always have access to their e-mail. “But those people do tend to always have their cell phones with them. Cell phones are in more pervasive. It could be a much better way to reach people.”

He is particularly excited by the idea of sending targeted marketing campaigns to ticket-buyers’ cell phones, in the same way that Ticketmaster regularly e-mails ads to a customer database of 14 million people.

Because of Americans’ relatively slow acceptance of mobile technology, Goldberg says, Ticketmaster venue clients are clamoring for the technology.

“But it’s inevitable that we’ll be doing these things in some fashion,” he says, noting that customers’ quick adoption of Ticketmaster’s print-at-home technology (Billboard, Feb. 22, 2003) indicates we’ll probably get to that point on wireless as well.”

Euro Tours

Continued from page 1

an artist can fall off much more quickly in America,” says John Marx, senior VP of contemporary music at the William Morris Agency. “But in Europe and other territories, an audience will remain faithful to you for years.”

Americans, he says, are “just more fickle.”

CHANGING LANDSCAPE

Sources cite the development of new venues around the world, the strength of foreign currencies vs. the dollar, the loyalty of international fans and the novelty of certain superstars as reasons for the success of international tours.

In Carey’s case, the artist generated 40% more total revenue from her 36 dates in the Pacific Rim, Europe and the Middle East than from the tour’s 33 U.S. shows, says Marx, Carey’s agent.

With both domestic and overseas ticket prices averaging $50-$60, the complete tour grossed $30 million, according to Marx. He declined to specify the U.S. gross.

Carey could play stadiums and arenas on most of the international dates, Marx says, but only theaters and auditoriums in the States.

“For the most part, in America her average capacity was half of what it was overseas,” he notes.

Among the biggest crowds were 40,000 people in Shanghai, China, over two shows Nov. 12 and 14; and 30,000 fans Nov. 16 at Fort Bonifacio in Manila, Philippines.

Then there is the novelty factor.

“Mariah touring in some of these places is really big news,” Tony Goldberg, VP of international at WMA, says. “Beirut? [It’s] really unusual for an artist of her caliber to go there,” he says, referring to her Feb. 25 performance.

IN THE PINK

International touring can also enliven the career of a newer act like Pink.

The artist’s sophomore Arista album, “Try This,” spent only 15 weeks on The Billboard 200 after its November release, peaking at No. 9, its debut position. This chart performance pales compared to that of her first album.

But Pink is on track to sell out all 31 shows on her current tour of Europe and the Middle East in March.

The Feb. 19-April 10 outing—with ticket prices around $20 and venue capacities of about 10,000—should gross $6.2 million.

Pink hasn’t even mapped out domestic dates yet.

“Anytime a U.S. artist can go to Europe and sell out in 10 countries in arenas—that’s a strong story that translates,” Clear Channel Entertainment CEO of international music Michael Rapino, who is promoting Pink’s European trek with Barrie Marshall.

Rapino offers several reasons for the strength of international tours.

“Historically, international ticket prices were low, and most cities didn’t have venues. In the last five years, arenas have been popping up everywhere. And the strong [euro] is really helping,” he says.

Terry Rhodes, agent for Canadian star Bryan Adams at International Creative Management, agrees. “The adjusted money is great right now,” he says. “You go to Europe and are paid in numer, and when you convert it to Canadian, [it’s] that much more.”

Adams was a North American powerhouse in the 1980s, but currently the bulk of his touring revenue comes from outside that region.

For instance, in January 2003, Adams grossed $243,947 at the 7,000-seat Westpac Centre in New Zealand. But he recently grossed only $49,000 at the 1,400-seat Vic Theatre in Chicago, according to Billboard Boxscore.

BUILDING A BASE

Some elite American artists, including the Dave Matthews Band, have yet to draw the crowds of overseas that they do in the United States. However, tour organizers say it takes time to build an international fan base.


But thanks to the way he has nurtured international markets during the past 10 years, Harper owned marques last fall for 17 arena and stadium shows—totaling 170,000 people—in France alone.

“Basically, in the early days, Ben unfortunately didn’t get a lot of airplay. Touring was the only way he could get an audience,” says Tom Chauncey, Harper’s agent at Partisan Arts. “We used that strategy on a global level.”

Highlights of Harper’s 2003 tour included a show in Geneva, Switzerland, where he drew 10,000 fans; three dates in Sydney that attracted a combined 25,000; and two Melbourne shows that drew another 25,000, according to Chauncey.

“He’s a superstar in Australia—the on-sales for those shows sold faster than the Rolling Stones on sales [for shows running February-March]—it’s very, very impressive down there,” he says.

Chris Dalston, an agent at Creative Artists Agency, saysCAA act Bon Jovi owes its longevity to early international road work.

“Today, Bon Jovi is a stadium and an arena act, both domestically and internationally. Which was not always the case domestically in the mid-’90s,” he says.

“Even in the mid-’90s, Bon Jovi played five to six stadium tours [oversseas] over eight to nine summer tours. Twenty years later, they are still reaping the benefits,” he adds.

CAA artist Lionel Richie also maintains a strong international following. He plans a 2004 European arena tour Sept. 30-Nov. 1, Dalston says. It is unlikely that Richie would play arenas in the United States at this point in his career.

Burgoyne by his smash album “Confessions,” Usher is slated to hit large U.S. venues this August. But until this point, he had focused most of his touring efforts on the European arena circuit.

TRANSLATING SUCCESS

Realizing the advantages in court- ing the world, CAA has drastically beefed up its international department through the years.

“At the end of the day, everyone can succumb to America,” Dalston admits. “Yet in a testament of [how far] we’ve come, eight years ago we did not represent any acts internationally. Yet now we have a four-person [international] department, where we represent 90% of our roster in some way internationally.”

International and U.S. tour legs can also be treated as combined entities, tour organizers note, because the international leg can boost the results of a domestic trek.

Partisan’s Chauncey says he opened Harper’s 2003 tour in New Zealand and Australia Feb. 28, April 21 to build momentum before landing April 25 in the United States.

“You’re always looking for a way to generate excitement. We knew that going to this territory would likely have that impact,” he says. “It did get everyone excited—from promoters to the artists to the label.”

Also, he adds, the “fallout effect” of the tour may extend out of the gate overseas “was that he became a worldwide priority for Virgin.”

In other words, as WMA’s Marx says, “Success in one part of the world can help in another part of the world... whether that’s overseas or back in America. Success breeds success.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTIST(S)</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TICKET PRICES</th>
<th>ATTENDANCE/CAPACITY</th>
<th>PROMOTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BETTE MIDLER</td>
<td>Atlantic City Boardwalk Hall, Atlantic City, N.J.</td>
<td>$1,398,500 ($40/sold out to $50)</td>
<td>19,485</td>
<td>sold out</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRINCE</td>
<td>Staples Center, Los Angeles</td>
<td>$7,985</td>
<td>11,827</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRINCE</td>
<td>American Airlines Center, Dallas</td>
<td>$8,181</td>
<td>11,487</td>
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<tr>
<td>ROY STEWART</td>
<td>Palomar, Ariz.</td>
<td>$49</td>
<td>18,433</td>
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<tr>
<td>BEYONCE, ALICIA KEYS, MISSY ELLIOTT, TAMIA</td>
<td>Wachovia Center, Philadelphia</td>
<td>$648,500 ($50/sold out to $65)</td>
<td>22,171</td>
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<td>BEYONCE, ALICIA KEYS, MISSY ELLIOTT, TAMIA</td>
<td>Fonda Theater, Los Angeles</td>
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<td>sold out</td>
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<tr>
<td>BRITNEY SPEARS, KELIS, SKYE SWEETWATER</td>
<td>Philips Arena, Atlanta</td>
<td>$50</td>
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<tr>
<td>R. KELLY</td>
<td>Allstate Arena, Rosemont, Ill.</td>
<td>$72</td>
<td>13,045</td>
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<tr>
<td>ROD STEWART</td>
<td>Arrowhead Pond, Anaheim, Calif.</td>
<td>$109</td>
<td>10,251</td>
<td>sold out</td>
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<tr>
<td>BRITNEY SPEARS, KELIS, SKYE SWEETWATER</td>
<td>Veterans Memorial Arena, Jacksonville, Fla.</td>
<td>$76</td>
<td>11,277</td>
<td>sold out</td>
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<tr>
<td>BEYONCE, ALICIA KEYS, MISSY ELLIOTT, TAMIA</td>
<td>Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum, Uniondale, N.Y.</td>
<td>$80</td>
<td>15,712</td>
<td>sold out</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRINCE</td>
<td>Convention Garden Arena, Bakersfield, Calif.</td>
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<td>4,218</td>
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<tr>
<td>ALAN JACKSON, MARTINA McBRIDE</td>
<td>Kansas Coliseum Valley Center, Kan.</td>
<td>$85</td>
<td>4,917</td>
<td>sold out</td>
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<tr>
<td>LINKIN PARK, P.O.D., HOOBASTANK, STORY OF THE YEAR</td>
<td>Philips Arena, Atlanta</td>
<td>$85</td>
<td>4,917</td>
<td>sold out</td>
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<tr>
<td>CLAY Aiken &amp; KELLY CLARKSON, THE BEIUS SISTERS</td>
<td>Worcester's Center, Worcester, Mass.</td>
<td>$85</td>
<td>5,800</td>
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<tr>
<td>KID ROCK, HEMIGOD</td>
<td>Gud Arena, Cleveland</td>
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<td>CLAY Aiken &amp; KELLY CLARKSON, THE BEIUS SISTERS</td>
<td>Lawrence Joel Veterans Memorial Coliseum, Winston-Salem, NC</td>
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<td>METALLICA, GODSMACK</td>
<td>Landers Events Center, Rockford, Ill.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SARAH BRIGHTMAN</td>
<td>HP Pavilion, San Jose, Calif.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>UIC Pavilion, Chicago</td>
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<tr>
<td>CLAY Aiken &amp; KELLY CLARKSON, THE BEIUS SISTERS</td>
<td>Schottenstein Center, Columbus, Ohio</td>
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<td>9,279</td>
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<td>CLAY Aiken &amp; KELLY CLARKSON, THE BEIUS SISTERS</td>
<td>Joe Louis Arena, Detroit</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>9,498</td>
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<td>AEROSMITH, CHEAP TRICK</td>
<td>CenturyTel Center, Bismarck, N.D.</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>7,495</td>
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<tr>
<td>JOHN MAYER, GUSTER</td>
<td>Xcel Energy Center, St. Paul, Minn.</td>
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<td>The Cajundome, Lafayette, La.</td>
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<td>KENNY CHESNEY, KEITH URBAN, DIERKS BENTLEY</td>
<td>Tampa Bay Times Forum, Tampa, Fla.</td>
<td>$100</td>
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<td>sold out</td>
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<tr>
<td>THE STROKES, THE SOUNDS</td>
<td>Sports Palace, Mexico City</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>11,800</td>
<td>sold out</td>
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<tr>
<td>ROD STEWART</td>
<td>Van Andel Arena, Grand Rapids, Mich.</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>5,473</td>
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<tr>
<td>BO DYLAN</td>
<td>State Theatre, Newark</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>8,618</td>
<td>sold out</td>
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<tr>
<td>NICKELBACK</td>
<td>Rexall Place, Edmonton, Alberta</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>12,300</td>
<td>sold out</td>
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<tr>
<td>CLAY Aiken &amp; KELLY CLARKSON, THE BEIUS SISTERS</td>
<td>Servus Centre, St. Louis, Mo.</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>8,090</td>
<td>sold out</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Punk Tour Shuns CCE, Stumps For Voting**

The bipartisan Plea for Peace tour tries to keep its politics subtle when eschewing Clear Channel Entertainment (CCE) venues, but in the world of punk rock, "subtle" is a relative term.

The fifth Plea for Peace tour—featuring Cursive, Denali, Darkest Hour, Saul Williams, EE, Planes Mistaken for Stars and Mike Park—begins April 19 at Triple Rock Social Club in Minneapolis and wraps June 9 at Trees in Dallas. The trek has 40 dates in all.

Park says that to "support media diversity" the tour will play only non-CCE venues.

"Besides the politics of the election, we feel Clear Channel has really monopolized the venues and driven out a lot of local independent promoters," he says. "Given the philosophy of punk rock, we feel independent promoters are crucial for our survival."

Park says he increasingly hears that there are fewer places for younger bands to play, particularly in larger markets.

"Speaking strictly from my point of view, it was important to show people we can do a tour of some substance that doesn't need Clear Channel's help."

So how hard was that? "It's not that hard; we just have to play multiple nights in some cities to allow enough kids to see the show," he says. "For example, in New York we're playing three nights at the Bowery Ballroom instead of one at Irving Plaza."

When told that CCE is far and away the largest promoter of club shows in the United States, which would seem to indicate an interest in developing acts, Park says, "I'm sure that's what they would want people to see. But [in my talking to independent promoters at the street level, I've heard that Clear Channel will outbid them and lose money on a show just so other promoters don't get it.]"

CCE executives declined to comment.

For punk rocker and Plea for Peace president Park, the tour—like his music—is a labor of love. He and a group of like-minded music biz friends started Plea for Peace as a nonprofit in 1999.

"We had high hopes in the beginning of saving the world," Park says. "Now we're being realistic and trying to focus once a year on bringing some consciousness to the music."

Plea for Peace tours tend to have a punk/hard rock vibe. "We try not to stick to a punk sound, but that's what it always comes out to be, because that's the people I know," Park says. "I'd love to include everything from hip-hop to rock, but at this stage, I'm asking a lot of friends of friends."

This being an election year, Music for America is on board to register voters for any party. "Their politics are definitely liberal and Plea for Peace is bipartisan, but they weren't willing to do it anyway," Park says.

"We're focusing on getting young people excited about the vote, without intimidating anybody," he adds. "Statistically, including the last election, kids are pretty bad about voting. Voting is a privilege, and people in other countries would die for that right."

The Plea for Peace tour is self-financed and does not accept corporate sponsorship, Park says. "We want to keep it strictly DIY," he says, adding that production expenses are relatively low, even for punks. "We use the house PA and pretty much use the guitars rocking to carry people's attention," he says. "There's no lasers or fire, though I'd like to have some."

Merch revenue pretty much keeps Park aloft on the tour. "We make enough to cover any expenses, but we're talking pennies," he says. "Thirty dollars a day is a good day."
## Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>WEEKS AT NUMBER</th>
<th>Peak Position</th>
<th>Certification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Usher</strong></td>
<td><strong>USHER</strong></td>
<td>94</td>
<td><strong>M.E.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Janet Jackson</strong></td>
<td><strong>SNOOKY</strong></td>
<td>93</td>
<td><strong>M.E.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td><strong>Lil’ Flip</strong></td>
<td><strong>PACESTER</strong></td>
<td>76</td>
<td><strong>M.E.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>Carl Thomas</strong></td>
<td><strong>DAMNED</strong></td>
<td>75</td>
<td><strong>B.S.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td><strong>Kanye West</strong></td>
<td><strong>THE COLLEGE DROPOUT</strong></td>
<td>63</td>
<td><strong>CD</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>Twista</strong></td>
<td><strong>ATLANTIC</strong></td>
<td>59</td>
<td><strong>CD</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td>*<em>R&amp;B Revolution</em></td>
<td><strong>BAD BOYZ</strong></td>
<td>52</td>
<td><strong>B.S.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>Jaz</strong></td>
<td><strong>THE BLACK ALBUM</strong></td>
<td>50</td>
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<td><strong>G-Unit</strong></td>
<td><strong>SPORTS CAR</strong></td>
<td>47</td>
<td><strong>B.S.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>Various Artists</strong></td>
<td><strong>BAD BOY’s 10th Anniversary...The Hits</strong></td>
<td>45</td>
<td><strong>B.S.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td><strong>Miami</strong></td>
<td><strong>BET HIP HOP 10</strong></td>
<td>44</td>
<td><strong>B.S.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td><strong>Avant</strong></td>
<td><strong>METAL TAPE</strong></td>
<td>43</td>
<td><strong>B.S.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td><strong>Beyond</strong></td>
<td><strong>COLUMBIA</strong></td>
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<td><strong>B.S.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>14</strong></td>
<td><strong>Outkast</strong></td>
<td><strong>THE LOVES OF CHOO</strong></td>
<td>41</td>
<td><strong>B.S.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ludacris</strong></td>
<td><strong>SPEAK TO THE FUTURE</strong></td>
<td>39</td>
<td><strong>B.S.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>16</strong></td>
<td><strong>Eminem</strong></td>
<td><strong>THE MARSHALL MATHERS LP</strong></td>
<td>37</td>
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<td><strong>THE EAST SIDE Boyz</strong></td>
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<td><strong>19</strong></td>
<td><strong>Trillville/Lil’ Scrappy</strong></td>
<td><strong>THE KING OF CRACK &amp; BME RECORDINGS Present</strong></td>
<td>34</td>
<td><strong>B.S.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>20</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ruben Studdard</strong></td>
<td><strong>SWAY IT</strong></td>
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<td><strong>21</strong></td>
<td><strong>Young Gunz</strong></td>
<td><strong>2GOLD/2GOLD</strong></td>
<td>32</td>
<td><strong>B.S.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>22</strong></td>
<td><strong>Anthony Hamilton</strong></td>
<td><strong>COMIN’ FROM WHERE I’M FROM</strong></td>
<td>31</td>
<td><strong>B.S.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>23</strong></td>
<td><strong>Luther Vandross</strong></td>
<td><strong>DANCE WITH MY FATHER</strong></td>
<td>30</td>
<td><strong>B.S.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
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<td><strong>THE PRINCE OF MATA</strong></td>
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<td><strong>B.S.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
<td><strong>Knoc Turn’AL</strong></td>
<td><strong>THE WAY I AM</strong></td>
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<td><strong>B.S.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>Cypress Hill</strong></td>
<td><strong>TILL DEATH DO US PART</strong></td>
<td>27</td>
<td><strong>B.S.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>27</strong></td>
<td><strong>Keith Sweat</strong></td>
<td><strong>KINGDOM RECORDS</strong></td>
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<td><strong>B.S.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Black Eyed Peas</strong></td>
<td><strong>ELEPHANT</strong></td>
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<td><strong>B.S.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>29</strong></td>
<td><strong>R. Kelly</strong></td>
<td><strong>I JUST THOUGHT OF YOU</strong></td>
<td>24</td>
<td><strong>B.S.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Westside Connection</strong></td>
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<td><strong>GET Rich &amp; DIE TRYIN’</strong></td>
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<td><strong>36</strong></td>
<td><strong>Soundtrack</strong></td>
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## Top R&B/Hip-Hop Catalog Albums

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Good To Be ‘King’
Lil Jon’s Crunk Sound Rules Clubs, Radio, Retail

BY RHonda Baraka

While many eighth-grade boys were cutting lawns to earn money, Jonathan Smith and his friends were throwing parties. Even back then, circa 1985, life for Smith was about getting “crunk”—partying and having a good time.

Today, Smith—now known as Lil Jon—is the reigning King of Crunk, and the album “Kings of Crunk” from Lil Jon & the East Side Boyz is a perfect example of what can happen if you do one thing and do it well.

Lil Jon: Fact File
Age: 32
Hometown: Atlanta
Album: “Kings of Crunk”
Label: BME/TVT
Web sites: liljononline.com, kingsofcrunk.com
Distributor: TVT Records


The Platinum Stars series profiles selected acts that have achieved platinum sales for the first time, as well as major new releases by established platinum acts.

(Continued on page 22)
Kings of Crunk: Sales Trajectory and Milestones

Lil Jon

Continued from page 21

Lil Jon says, “I have been doing the same thing for years: making records for the clubs and going to the clubs, talking to the DJs and networking. That’s how I got to where I am. We ain’t never changed. We’ve basically been doing the same thing we’ve been doing for years.”

And what Lil Jon and his accom- plishes the East Side Boyz (Lil Bo and Big Sam) do is churn out supercharged, high-energy, body-stomping tracks topped with chart-beating vocals, all designed to get listeners to party and move beyond their deepest inhibitions.

The smash hit from “Kings of Crunk,” the naughty and irresistible “Get Low,” pairs Lil Jon with fellow TVT rap duo Ying Yang Twins. The track steamrolled its way onto the charts and into mainstream America and beyond to the point where they are the world’s second-largest independent label.

The peak sales week: 3/20/02, where the album hit #1 on the Billboard charts.

A DIFFERENT FORMULA

The approach that led to the ulti- mate release of “Get Low” is consis- tent with the way Lil Jon and BME Records have been, and will continue to be, an innovator and innovator of innovative sounds.

Phillips says, “We have a formula, and our formula is a little bit different from the norm. I think the norm is to put out your most commercial record on the first, establish that commercial suc- cess and come back with the street records. We actually put out records that can happen in the street and let them build, because they can last for a long time.”

With “Get Low,” however, Phillips says their usual rollout strategy was altered because of demand and time constraints. “I remember us being rushed because people were looking forward to another Lil Jon record, and we had never been in that position before. The album was done in September and slated for release in October. We didn’t have nearly the amount of setup time we wanted, so we had to go to the clubs, radio and video pretty fast.”

But for Lil Jon, there was no pressure. He was accustomed to working fast and furiously.

“When the East Side Boyz started, we knew that we had something that could be pot in the nation and the world, but we were independent,” he notes. “We didn’t have the outlet or the money behind us. But we were like, ‘We’re gonna slowly build and get to where we want.’” I look at everything as a challenge. I like it when people doubt me. That makes me work harder.”

In those early days, Lil Jon says he and his crew literally begged record companies to introduce their music to the masses.

“When we did ‘Who U Wit?’ me and my peers would beg to ride a city and just take it over for the weekend—go to the clubs, get the vinyl out, go on the mix in the DJ booths,” Lil Jon says. “I eventually would own that city. That’s what we did on a national scale.”

And where he is now is sitting at the top of a bubbling crunk empire that has made him one of the most in-demand artists and producers in the industry. The self-professed “workaholic” says

(Continued on page 24)

The Roots Of Crunk

Crunk is nothing new, and Lil Jon is no novice. He’s been around for some time now, wearing a lot of different hats.

“I was the fourth or fifth employee hired at So So Def,” says Lil Jon, who worked with Jermaine Dupri and his staff for seven years as an A&R rep and street promoter. But Lil Jon also released his own independent albums to a small and select but loyal core of fans.

His first release, 1997’s “Get Crunk, Who U Wit: Da Album,” introduced Lil Jon and his signature sound to Southern audiences and paved the way for future releases “We Still Crunk” (2000) and “Put Yo Hood Up” (2001), which was his first release through TVT.

With “Kings of Crunk” and the single “Get Low,” Lil Jon began to finally enjoy the palatable taste of success. He says that success is just the result of paying his dues and being consistent.
TVT RECORDS CONGRATULATES OUR PLATINUM STARS

LIL JON & THE EAST SIDE BOYZ

GOLD PLUS!

APPROACHING DOUBLE-PLATINUM!

CERTIFIED GOLD!

THE NEW ALBUM CRUNK JUICE FALL 2004

CHECK FOR PITBULL'S M.I.A.M.I., OOBIE'S OOBAYBI, AND CHYNA WHYTE'S BAD BLOOD - EXECUTIVE PRODUCED BY LIL JON

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www.americanradiohistory.com
Lil Jon
Continued from page 22

he’s determined to squeeze every drop he can out of his hard-earned success.

"While you’re hot, you gotta milk it and get anything and everything you can. We got the crunk energy drink, we got the pomo," he says, referring to his recently released adult DVD "Lil Jon & The East Side Boyz: American Sex Series." TVT also has released a new combo CD/DVD, "Part II," which features remixes of "Get Low," two new tracks, and a video diary of the act’s national rise.

At TVT, Gottlieb says, "we try to create an opportunity for an artist to connect with the public. I think it’s very difficult to predict if one song is a hit, but it’s much less difficult to figure out whether one artist and one vision, if nurtured and given the right support, can connect. With Jon, without saying whether we thought the second record was going to do five million or one million, we knew ‘Kings of Crunk’ was going to be big.

"The success has a lot to do with the fact that from the release of his first single ‘Bia, Bia’ through to [their latest release] ‘Part II’ there was a seamless marketing plan," Gottlieb adds. “We were unrelenting and the group was unrelenting. They never took a day off in the three years it took to take them to this point."

Thus far, Lil Jon’s "beats" have been steady, sounding pretty much the same in those early days of semi-obscenity as they sound today as the new soundtrack to hip-hop and pop culture. But Lil Jon knows that the same tide that washed his success ashore could someday wash it away.

"Eventually everybody’s sound plays out," he says. "I gotta do this while I can, get as much money outta this while I can. I like to learn. I’m still learning," Lil Jon continues.

But for now, the King of Crunk has no plans to abdicate his throne. "I just wanna keep making hit records," he says. "I just wanna keep producing, making records that DJs love to play, making records that make the clubs go crazy. Whatever I do, people are gonna associate it with energy. Everything associated with Lil Jon and BME is gonna be crunk."

Additional reporting by Rashaun Hall in New York.
UMVD Dominates Latin Market Share

BY LEILA COBO

MIAMI—Universal Music Video & Distribution is beginning the year with total dominance in the Latin music space.

According to Nielsen SoundScan, UMVD had a 45.3% share of the Latin market in the first quarter, up from 32.5% in the same period one year ago and from 39.6% at the end of 2003.

“We’re off to an incredible start,” says Gustavo López, VP of Latin sales and marketing. “Our core business hasn’t changed compared with last year. But if you look at the label breakdown, the market share for each is up. We have great releases.”

Sony trailed in second place, with its market share falling to 16.3% in the first quarter from 21.7% one year earlier.

Other distributors also lost market share, as new signings and releases dropped considerably for most labels, with the exception of Univision, Fonovisa and Universal Music Latino.

UMVD has long been the leader in most music genres in the United States but was not a key player in Latin markets until it started distributing for Univision Music Group in 2002. By the end of third-quarter 2002, UMVD was the third-largest distributor of Latin music in the country, and its share had climbed to 22.8% from 13% the year before.

U.S. Market Share By Distributor: Latin Albums

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Distributor</th>
<th>Market Share</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Universal</td>
<td>45.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sony</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fonovisa</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>EMI</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>WEA</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>BMG</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sony</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>UPC</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sony</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
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</table>

SOURCE: NIELSEN SOUNDCAN

But that changed drastically when Univision acquired leading Latin indie Fonovisa and shifted distribution of that label to UMVD. At that point, UMVD became the No. 1 distributor of Latin music in the country (see chart).

Likewise, as of last year, the Univision Group—which includes Univision Records, Disa Records and Fonovisa—is the leading Latin music company in the United States.

Even as UMVD expands, there have been private grumblings about its size, and some wonder if the company can adequately serve its huge roster of acts.

But López points out that no other distributor has such a large staff dedicated exclusively to Latin music. Currently, UMVD has 17 Latin-dedicated field staffers, plus four people in its Los Angeles home office.

“Universal has made the investment in Latin music to support its product,” he says.

“If a label tells us an act is a priority and they have hard facts—whether it’s marketing plans, radio promotions, tours—they’re going to get the attention, whether they’re an artist on a tiny label or a Univision artist.”

Strong UMVD releases this year include Paulina Rubio’s “Pau-Latina“ and David Bisbal’s “Bulería,” both on Universal Music Latino, Bronco/Los Bukis “Historia de Dos Grandes” (Univision) and Los Rieleros del Norte’s “20 Años de Fuerza Norteña” (Fonovisa). Last week, Disa act Grupo Montez de Durango made a surprising No. 1 debut with “Live in Chicago.”

This year, UMVD also added Ole Music to its roster of distributed labels. Colombian star Elvis Crespo is expected to debut strongly for Ole in May.

EMI ‘Fine-Tuning’ Has Little Effect On Deal-Making

Although the worldwide restructuring of EMI has led to cuts at the label’s Latin American and U.S. Latin operations, the number of jobs lost is not huge.

A total of four positions were shed at EMI Music U.S. Latin, the most senior being Alba Egan, the label’s marketing VP. Egan, a mainstay of the Latin music industry, was previously at Sony Discos.

In Texas, Miguel Trujillo left his longtime post as VP/GM of the regional Mexican and Tejano division. He was replaced by Jorge Ballesteros, former national director of A&R and promotions for Disa. EMI Music U.S. Latin now has 37 staffers, down from 41.

EMI’s entire Latin American operation has shed 36 jobs during the past three months, while some 20 artists have been dropped from its roster. The most senior employee to go was Alejandro Sanfuentes, the former managing director of EMI Chile. Alejandro Varela, managing director of EMI Argentina, has assumed responsibility for Chile as well.

“It was basically a fine-tuning,” EMI Music Latin America president/CEO Marco Bissi says, noting that EMI has been trimming in the region since last year.

However, EMI’s downsizing has not resulted in a loss of opportunities.

The company just closed a distribution deal with Maynard Enterprises in Brazil, the new company formed by Marcos Maynard, former chairman of Abril Music. Abril, which had been Brazil’s leading indie label, folded one year ago. Maynard has signed several acts, including Simone, Roberto Miranda and Rastape.

Through the new agreement, EMI will distribute Maynard’s product in Brazil, but Maynard will be in charge of all marketing.

“They state they will help us market our stock,” Bissi says. “But that’s not what we’re looking for. Of course, we’d like market share, but it has to be the consequence of good work, not the objective. Otherwise, we’re spending money for nothing.”

EMI has a similar deal in place with Pelo Music in Argentina, the company launched by producer Roberto “Pelo” Arriagada EMI distributes Pelo’s product in Argentina and markets it in other Latin countries.

Pelo Music alt-band Babasónicos was the big winner at Argentina’s Gardel Music Awards on March 31, taking home six trophies.

In other EMI news, the label is having a good month in Mexico, thanks to a series of albums—by artists that include Norah Jones, Intocable and Aleks Syntek—in the country’s top 10 list.

IFPI BLUES: Which brings us to the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry’s year-end global numbers for 2003.

For the first time since 1998, Mexico has dropped out of the list of top 10 markets in the world (see story, page 5).

In fact, the Latin market as a whole fell for the third consecutive year, by 14.4% in value and 10.3% in units.

As a result of cheap pricing, the Mexican marketplace fell 16.2% in value, even as unit sales rose by 3.3%.

Mexico actually fared better than Brazil, whose market declined a stunning 25% in units sold and 17.4% in value. And Chile, which had rebounded last year, registered a drop of 21.6% in units and 18.5% in value.

The good news was reserved for Argentina, which registered a fabulous rebound of 85.5% in units and 77.7% in value.

ROCKIN’ QUINCES: Let us close the week with good news. Venezuelan sonero Oscar D’León, formerly with Universal Music Latino, has signed a multi-album deal with Ole Records.

“Oscar D’León is my all-time favorite salsa artist,” Ole founder Oscar Llorda says. “The first time I went to see him was at a club in New York, and he blew me away. That’s when I knew I was in the Latin music business for good.”

D’León will perform during the Ole showcase at the Billboard Latin Music Conference & Awards, celebrating its “Fiesta de Quince.”

For those of you who have been procrastinating, the confab date is looming: April 26-29. To register and to view a full schedule of events, visit billboardevents.com.
**TOP LATIN ALBUMS**

**LATIN POP ALBUMS**

1. **PILAR MONTENEGRO**
   - Album: **Pilar**
   - Label: Sony BMG Latin
   - Market Share: 34

2. **A.B. QUINTANILLA III & KUMBIA KINGS**
   - Album: **La Historia**
   - Label: Varía
   - Market Share: 28

3. **INTOCABLE**
   - Album: **La Historia**
   - Label: Varía
   - Market Share: 23

4. **PIERRO GUAGAMELA**
   - Album: **30 Exitos**
   - Label: Sony BMG Latin
   - Market Share: 33

5. **LITO Y POLACO**
   - Album: **Fuerza De Sera**
   - Label: Sony BMG Latin
   - Market Share: 24

6. **TEGO CALDERON**
   - Album: **El Enemy De Las Guascondes**
   - Label: Sony BMG Latin
   - Market Share: 20

7. **LOS ACOSTA**
   - Album: **20 Exitos**
   - Label: Varía
   - Market Share: 19

8. **EL COYOTE Y SU BANDA TIERRA SANTA**
   - Album: **La Historia**
   - Label: Varía
   - Market Share: 18

9. **YOLANDA PEREZ**
   - Album: **Dejame Llorar**
   - Label: Sony BMG Latin
   - Market Share: 17

10. **MARCO ANTONIO SOLIS**
    - Album: **Que Amarces A Cupido**
    - Label: Sony BMG Latin
    - Market Share: 16

**REGIONAL MEXICAN ALBUMS**

11. **PILAR MONTENEGRO**
    - Album: **Pilar**
    - Label: Sony BMG Latin
    - Market Share: 34

12. **A.B. QUINTANILLA III & KUMBIA KINGS**
    - Album: **La Historia**
    - Label: Varía
    - Market Share: 28

13. **INTOCABLE**
    - Album: **La Historia**
    - Label: Varía
    - Market Share: 23

14. **PIERRO GUAGAMELA**
    - Album: **30 Exitos**
    - Label: Sony BMG Latin
    - Market Share: 33

15. **LITO Y POLACO**
    - Album: **Fuerza De Sera**
    - Label: Sony BMG Latin
    - Market Share: 24

16. **TEGO CALDERON**
    - Album: **El Enemy De Las Guascondes**
    - Label: Sony BMG Latin
    - Market Share: 20

17. **LOS ACOSTA**
    - Album: **20 Exitos**
    - Label: Varía
    - Market Share: 19

18. **EL COYOTE Y SU BANDA TIERRA SANTA**
    - Album: **La Historia**
    - Label: Varía
    - Market Share: 18

19. **YOLANDA PEREZ**
    - Album: **Dejame Llorar**
    - Label: Sony BMG Latin
    - Market Share: 17

20. **MARCO ANTONIO SOLIS**
    - Album: **Que Amarces A Cupido**
    - Label: Sony BMG Latin
    - Market Share: 16
The Billboard Q&A

PAULINA RUBIO

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- BRYAN BINWAKI, AG Mobile
- JERRY BLAIR, The Fuerte Group
- BYRON BRIZUELA, Brizz Productions
- RICHARD BULL, AOL
- VICO C, EMI Latin, USA
- BETO CUEVAS, Warner
- JOHN ECHEVARRIA, Universal Music Latino
- EDDIE FERNÁNDEZ, Sony/ATV Music Publishing
- LUIS FONSI, Universal Music Latino
- SERGIO GÓMEZ, Sergio George Productions
- SAMUEL HERNÁNDEZ, SH Productions
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- FRANK LOPEZ, Amanecer Christian Network
- GUSTAVO MELÍNDEZ, Warner Chappell
- GEORGE NÚÑEZ, Artist, songwriter/Producer
- JORGE PINO, EMI Latin, USA
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- FRANC REYES, Luiza Films
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- GUSTAVO SANTILLANA, Suroc/Vbran/Seminal
- MAARTEN STEINKAMP, BMG
- ADDOLFO VALENZUELA, Twins Enterprises
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Rising From The Ashes Of Electroclash

BY MICHAEL PAOLETTA

The year was 2002. Nu-electro music—often dubbed “electroclash”—was being hailed as the next big thing. Artists like Peaches, Felix da Housecat, Miss Kittin and Fischerspooner became the unofficial poster children of the scene.

By the time 2003 arrived, however, the electroclash backlash had begun. “The electroclash scene was more like a very small hiccup,” BPM magazine publisher/editor-in-chief Jed Ireland says. “Artists that wanted nothing to do with electroclash were pulled into the fold. This scene did not dictate popularity.”

Still, when the time comes to record a new album, what is an artist—one who has been, for better or worse, closely linked to the scene—to do?

If you are Peaches, you deliver a decidedly rock-etched collection. The Canadian singer did just that with her 2003 sophomore album, ‘Ratherfucker.’

Next month, Miss Kittin and Felix da Housecat follow suit with their respective albums, ‘I COM’ (Astralwerks) and ‘Devin Dazzle and the Neon Fever’ (Emperor Norton). Miss Kittin has collaborated with the Hacker, Goldenboy and Housecat in the past. ‘I COM’ marks her solo debut.

France, and now resides in Berlin—says her goal was to intertwine her influences as a DJ and as a music lover within the pop format.

“I wanted the tracks to have chorus es and verses yet still be experimental, nontraditional,” she says. In other words, she continues, “I wanted it to be like cooking: Lots of ingredients that don’t necessarily go together but that ultimately work. That was my challenge.”

In his letter, Berke writes, “Christiana Eastman, Justin Nylander, T.H.E.M. and Electroclerous Records have no rights ever to negotiate, authorize licensing and/or sell all or parts of the five songs mentioned in this letter anywhere in the world.

Upon receipt of the March 26 letter, Jeff Berke of Polk & Berke, the Los Angeles-based law office that represents T.H.E.M. and Electroclerous, sent a reply to Blow-Up.

In his letter, Berke writes, “You entered into several agreements with Electroclerous pursuant to which you produced recordings of several songs contained on the ‘Bang’ album. The recordings were paid for by Electroclerous.”

Berke’s letter continues, “Your agreements with Electroclerous entitle you to a standard producer’s royalty on the songs that you produced. Although you maintain ownership of the copyrights in the songs that you wrote, Electroclerous holds the copyright in the sound recording that was made of those songs.”

While Blow-Up’s Camaione and Cilione had no comment, T.H.E.M.’s Nylander is unable to make sense of the producers’ March 26 letter.

“It seems to contradict the producers agreement they presented to us on May 26, 2003,” Nylander says.

“This often happens—people wanting more and more—particularly when they become more visible and known,” one artist manager says. This manager is referring to Blow-Up, which is becoming popular on the remix front. The duo has remixed tracks for Blondie, the Flaming Lips and Madonna.

Let’s hope all the parties involved in this contractual dispute will resolve their differences—sooner rather than later. Such actions have the potential to seriously damage everyone’s business interests. We would hate to see such promising careers adversely affected by a contract dispute.

At the end of the day, the TV series decided against licensing “Let Me See Your Underwear”—not because of copyright issues, but because the scene in which the music was to appear ended up on the cutting-room floor.

Still, we wonder if this music supervisor will want to work with T.H.E.M. or Blow-Up in the future. This dispute is also analyzed in the April 12 edition of Entertainment Law Weekly, which can be accessed at billboard.biz.

Contract Dispute Could ‘Blow Up’ In Their Faces

Every now and then we learn of a contractual dispute that leaves us bewildered. Consider the following.

Last year, production duo Blow-Up (Claudio Camaione & Paolo Cilione) wrote and produced several songs for recording duo T.H.E.M. (Christiana Eastman & Justin Nylander). The songs appeared on the duo’s album “Bang” on its own Electroclerous Recordings label.

“Miss Kittin, we are no longer interested in licensing this project,” one’s letter reads.

(Miss Kittin, were outspoken in distancing themselves from the scene’s core. That’s because, as Miss Kittin says, “we came from the electro scene, not the electroclash scene. That was shit.”

The electroclash link may indeed have forwarded some careers, according to Astralwerks GM Errol Kolosine, but the whole scene was made to sound bigger than it was. “It was more about hype than a national fan base,” he notes.

None of this is lost on New York DJ/producer/club promoter Larry Tee, who coined the term “electroclash.”

“What began as a reaction to the mainstream became absorbed into the mainstream—which is good and healthy,” Tee says.

Indeed, electroclash elements infuse recent tracks by Kyle Minogue, Sugababes, Britney Spears, Missy Elliott, OutKast and N*E*R*D, among others.

Ditto for the debut album from British duo Robots in Disguise. The self-titled disc, due June 22 from Recall Records, blends electro, disco and punk.

Like Miss Kittin, Robots Sue Denim and Dee Plume had a strong desire to write straightforward, traditional songs. “We both play guitar and we both sing,” Plume says. “That is our foundation. It may be more punk than electro, but who we are...”

Stylistic labels aside, the genuine artists will prevail, Astralwerks’ Kolosine believes. “Artists like Miss Kittin and the H砍Tin do not have Sveagals behind them pulling the strings. They are as real as you can get.”
### Hot Dance Singles Sales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number 1</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Sales Weeks</th>
<th>Num Weeks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>LOVE PROFUSION</td>
<td>Madonna</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ME AGAINST THE MUSCLE</td>
<td>Britney Spears Featuring Madonna</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>NOTHING FALLS (NOBODY KNOWS ME)</td>
<td>Madonna</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>YOU PROMISED ME (I'TU ESOU)</td>
<td>In 4 Grid</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>OLE2 (DURAN DURAN VS PASSENGER MIXES)</td>
<td>Seal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>MADAM CHAMBERLAIN</td>
<td>Whitney Houston</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>WHERE THE HEART IS</td>
<td>Britney Spears</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I'M GONNA BE HARD TO MISS</td>
<td>The Dropkick Urchins Featuring Vivian Campbell</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I LIKE (I LOVE) YOU</td>
<td>Salt N' Pepa Featuring Ice Cube</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Hot Dance Radio Airplay

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number 1</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Plays Weeks</th>
<th>Num Weeks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>LOVE ME RIGHT (O.N SHEILA)</td>
<td>Angel City Featuring Lox McKinnon</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>AS THE RUSH COMES</td>
<td>Motorcycle</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>TOXIC</td>
<td>Britney Spears</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>RED BLOODED WOMAN</td>
<td>Kylie Minogue</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>IT'S MY LIFE</td>
<td>Aaliyah</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>YOU CAN'T HAVE IT ALL</td>
<td>Nat King Cole</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I'M GONNA BE HARD TO MISS</td>
<td>The Dropkick Urchins Featuring Vivian Campbell</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I LIKE (I LOVE) YOU</td>
<td>Salt N' Pepa Featuring Ice Cube</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>DON'T WANNA LOSE THIS FEELING</td>
<td>Damaine Minogue</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>WHEREVER YOU ARE (I FEEL LOVE)</td>
<td>Laura</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Top Electronic Titles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number 1</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Plays Weeks</th>
<th>Num Weeks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I TRY (RAUHBERGER, PILAVIN &amp; ZIMARDO MIX)</td>
<td>Made By Monkeys Featuring Mica Matto</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>DIP IT LOW (FULL INTENTION, JJ FLORES, TYAS &amp; LAWRENCE MIX)</td>
<td>DJ I Orlando</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>GET BETTER</td>
<td>K.M.C. Featuring Sandy</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>LEFT OUTSIDE ALONE (REMAKES)</td>
<td>Anastacia</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>DREAM-A-LOT'S THEME (I WILL LIVE FOR YOU)</td>
<td>Boney M.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>NAUGHTY GIRL (CALDERERONE &amp; QUAYLE REMIX)</td>
<td>Calderone &amp; Quayle</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>FACE TO FACE (ORIGINAL)</td>
<td>DJ Pauly D</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>ALL THINGS JUST KEEP GETTING BETTER</td>
<td>Wendi &amp; Simone Denny</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>BURNING</td>
<td>DJ Tuff</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>NO 1 FEELING</td>
<td>Michael</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>SLIPPIN' AWAY</td>
<td>Vinnie</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Notes:**
- The charts are compiled based on performance data for songs in hot dance clubs and on dance radio stations across the United States. The charts are updated weekly and reflect sales and airplay data from the previous week.
- The charts are published in Billboard magazine, which is a weekly business publication covering the music industry.
- The charts are compiled using Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems, which provides data on musicplayed radio stations and Nielsen SoundScan, which provides sales data.
- The charts are a valuable resource for music industry professionals and music fans alike, as they provide insights into the most popular songs in the dance music genre.

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NASHVILLE—When all the dominos begin tumbling, sometimes it’s best to make the most of the momentum. That may be the best way to describe the rapidly accelerating career of Asylum-Curb duo Blue County. Longtime friends Aaron Benward and Scott Reeves signed their deal with Asylum last year during the annual Country Radio Seminar (CRS). By the time CRS rolled around this past March, they already had a hit single, “Good Little Girls,” climbing the chart. Blue County also recently netted an Academy of Country Music nomination in the top vocal duo category. That’s an impressive feat, considering its album was not even released until April. All of this activity is happening for the duo in an environment in which acts are signed to labels and can often languish for two or more years before a slot opens for them on the label’s release schedule.

ROAD TO BLUE COUNTY

Benward previously performed contemporary Christian music with his father as the duo Aaron Jeffrey and later released a solo album. Reeves had recorded an independent album and starred in a soap opera “The Young & the Restless.”

The two met at a video shoot in Nashville six years ago and became good friends. Their first collaboration was actually a screenplay. (John Travolta’s brother Joey is attached as director, but the film has been put on the back burner because of the duo’s music career.) Knowing music was really their first love, the men’s wives suggested they try writing songs and performing together. From there, they began shopping for a record deal. Nashville publisher Ree Guyer Buchanan introduced them to Asylum VP of A&R Doug Johnson.

“He was passionate from the first moment about us, and his belief was so deep,” Reeves says.

Johnson’s enthusiasm, combined with the fact that Curb’s Asylum imprint was brand-new and ready to move quickly, were key factors in the duos signing. “Other labels wanted to do the typical development thing—get a sound, do some demos and develop,” Reeves says, recounting the usual way a protracted career.

said, “How about two weeks?” “True to the label’s word, within two weeks of signing its deal the duo was in the studio working with producers Dann Huff and Johnson recording the first two songs. One of those was debut single “Good Little Girls.” It is currently No. 13 on the Billboard Hot Country Singles & Tracks chart.

ON THE FAST TRACK

Blue County was the first new act signed to Asylum. The roster includes established artists Hank Williams Jr., LeAnn Rimes and Wynonna. As a result, Asylum staffers were able to focus their efforts on the duo immediately.

“Everything was on a fast track for them,” Dalton says of the duo, which is booked by Creative Artists Agency and managed by Mitchell Solarek of Maximum Artists Management.

By the end of May, Blue County had launched a radio tour that would take it to more than 140 stations. Afterward, the duo began recording the rest of the album in late fall.

Although things were moving quickly, Benward and Reeves say they didn’t feel pressured. They had been writing and collecting songs all summer and were anxious to record.

Though the fast track has worked well in launching Blue County, Dalton says that doesn’t mean all Asylum acts will be moved through the pipeline as quickly, because of the nature of the business. “There’s just a limited amount of space in this funnel that we call radio,” he says. “There’s only so much you can effectively run through, and if we don’t win at radio, we don’t win.”

“Being able to find the right window to give an artist its best possible shot is where the wait comes in, because you want everything to have its focus,” Dalton adds.

He predicts that in the future companies will have smaller rosters and, therefore, will be able to put acts through the pipeline more quickly. “This whole 18-month turn-around time is an eternity for an artist who is trying to make a career and support a family.”

UMVDS Head The Herd

EMMs fortunes have been bolstered by the success of Keith Urban’s “Golden Road,” which remains in the top five on the Top Country Albums chart 18 months after its release. Urban’s Capitol Records labelmates Dierks Bentley and Trace Adkins also helped the cause. Both ended the quarter with albums in the chart’s top 20.

U.S. Market Share By Distributor: Country Albums
### Country Albums Sales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTIST/ARTIST Name</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Peak Position</th>
<th>Sales Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kenny Chesney</td>
<td>ARIA</td>
<td>When The Sun Goes Down</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracy Lawrence</td>
<td>RCA</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keith Urban</td>
<td>ARISTA NASHVILLE</td>
<td>Golden Road</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toby Keith</td>
<td>RCA</td>
<td>Shook’s Y’All</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josh Turner</td>
<td>CAPITOL</td>
<td>Long Black Train</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alan Jackson</td>
<td>CAPITOL</td>
<td>Greatest Hits Volume II</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenny Chesney</td>
<td>ARIA</td>
<td>No Shoes, No Shirt, No Problems</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gary Allan</td>
<td>COLUMBIA</td>
<td>See If I Care</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martina McBride</td>
<td>RCA</td>
<td>Mall</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Shania Twain</td>
<td>COLUMBIA</td>
<td>Upjl</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooks &amp; Dunn</td>
<td>COLUMBIA</td>
<td>Red Dirt Road</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dixie Chicks</td>
<td>RCA</td>
<td>Top Of The World Tour Live</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toby Keith</td>
<td>RCA</td>
<td>Unleashed</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>George Strait</td>
<td>RCA</td>
<td>Mud On The Times</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Clint Black</td>
<td>RCA</td>
<td>Spend Me Yours Time</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tim McGraw</td>
<td>RCA</td>
<td>Tim McGraw And The Dancehall Doctors</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Buddy Jewell</td>
<td>RCA</td>
<td>Home</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>George Strait</td>
<td>RCA</td>
<td>Comin’ On Strong</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Montgomery Gentry</td>
<td>RCA</td>
<td>My Travels</td>
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<td>Soundtrack</td>
<td>RCA</td>
<td>Blue Collar Comedy Tour: The Movie</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>Leann Rimes</td>
<td>RCA</td>
<td>Greatest Hits</td>
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<td>Ron White</td>
<td>RCA</td>
<td>Drink In Public</td>
<td>21</td>
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<td>Johnny Cash</td>
<td>RCA</td>
<td>American IV: The Man Comes Around</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Lonestar</td>
<td>RCA</td>
<td>From There To Here: Greatest Hits I</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Alan Jackson</td>
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*Sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan.*

### Catalog Albums Sales

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<th>ARTIST/ARTIST Name</th>
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*Sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan.*
EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

RECORD COMPANIES: RCA Label Group in Nashville promotes Allen Brown to VP of media. He was senior director of media.

Razor & Tie Records in New York ups Victor Zaraya to VP of finance and operations. He was senior director of finance and operations.

A440 Music Group in New York names Carl Grif- fin head of A&R. He was president of N-Coded Music.

Sony Music Nashville promotes Tonya Derry to manager of A&R administration. She was A&R administration supervisor.

Verve Music Group in New York elevates Jamie Krent to manager of international. He was coordinator of international.

DISTRIBUTION: EMI Music Marketing (EMM) in Los Angeles appoints Melanie Halbach director of national independent retail sales. She segues from her position as EMM label director.

PUBLISHING: BMI in Nashville promotes Misha Hunke to senior director of performing rights, and Eric Nance to associate director of performing rights. Hunke was director of performing rights, and Nance was senior researcher.

RADIO: Westwood One in New York ups Dennis Green to senior VP of talk and entertainment affiliate sales. He was VP of talk programming affiliate sales.

MacDonald Garber Broadcasting in Petoskey, Mich., names Mark Elliott director of programming. He was VP of operations at Radio One 2 One.

CONCERT PROMOTION: Frank Productions in Madison, Wis., names David Maynard talent buyer/manager of marketing and promotion. He was marketing and production manager at Clear Channel Entertainment.

PRO AUDIO: Audio-Technica in Stow, Ohio, elevates David Hill to director of consumer product sales. He was sales manager of consumer products.

HOME VIDEO: Paramount Home Entertainment in Los Angeles names Chris Saito VP of marketing. He was VP of brand marketing at Universal Home Entertainment.

Wellspring in New York names Mark Gillula executive VP of home entertainment and promotes Kimberly Rubino to VP of marketing. Gillula was a Stanford Media Group consultant, and Rubino was senior director of marketing.

RELATED FIELDS: Fremantle Media in Miami appoints Jack Alflandary head of music and talent. He was senior director of strategic marketing and business development at BMG Latin America U.S. Latin.

Radio/TV/new-media sales and marketing company Interep in Chicago names Rick Sametz VP/director of marketing. He was director of promotions at Marvel Entertainment.

RISING STAR STEADMAN

Simon Steadman, lead singer/guitarist of the rock band Steadman, visited Billboard headquarters in New York March 17 for a Billboard Café performance. Steadman entertained the audience with acoustic versions of songs from the band’s Elektra album “Rev.” Photographed: (left) are Billboard advertising director Joe Malmone, former Elektra associate director of press and artist development Melissa Berre- te, Steadman, Billboard senior writer Carla Hay and Steadman co-manager Ames Newman of Bounce-Los Angeles. (Photo: Samantha Chang/Billboard)

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2004 SOUL TRAIN MUSIC AWARDS

At the 16th annual Soul Train Music Awards, Janet Jackson (pictured) accepted the Quincy Jones Award for outstanding entertainment achievement (female). R. Kelly won the male counterpart to the Quincy Jones Award at the event, which took place March 20 at the International Cultural Center in Los Angeles. Other winners included Beyoncé and OutKast, who shared the award for entertainer of the year. (Photo: Michael Caulfield/Wireimage.com)

NOW, HEAR THIS...

BUTTERFLY BOUCHER

Artists To Watch

For a new artist with one album to her name, Butterfly Boucher sure boasts some big names in her corner. Last year, Sarah McLachlan and Steven Page of Bare- naked Ladies hit a Boucher show at Flames nightclub in New York. “They both said that they were blown away,” says Boucher, after the two heard material that would eventually wind up on her A&M Records album “Flutterby.” They said, “We want you to open for us.” Boucher also completed a tour with Barenaked Ladies this month. (Barenaked Ladies, McLachlan and Boucher are all part of Nettwerk Management’s roster.) Boucher says, “I realize I’m in a very lucky position.” Boucher—imagine a hard-rocking Dido—recently recorded a cover of “Changes,” featuring original artist David Bowie, for the upcoming film soundtrack to DreamWorks Pictures’ “Shrek 2.” On the strength of Boucher’s first single and video, “I Can’t Make Me,” mtvU selected her to be part of its “The Cut” promotion for new and developing artists. A&M is working her current single, “Another White Dash,” to adult top 40 and triple-A radio. “It’s been really nice to get this feedback,” Boucher says. “I made music so people can hear. I didn’t make it to be put in a drawer.”

SUMMER AULT

SONIC OPENING

Kim Gordon of Sonic Youth (pictured) rocked during Sonic Youth’s performance at the March 10 grand-opening party of the Dior Homme store on West 22nd Street in New York. Other celebrities at the event included supermodels Helena Christensen and Sophie Dahl. (Photo: Dimitrios Karnouris/Wireimage.com)

HIP-HOP CONFAB

Urban music stars and executives gathered for the 2004 Chicago Hip-Hop Summit, presented March 27 by the Hip-Hop Summit Action Network. Among the panelists, from left, were Def Jam Records co-founder Russell Simmons, Layzie Bone of Bone Thugs-N-Harmony fame and Ludacris. The event, held at the University of Illinois at Chicago Pavilion, also drew stars such as Kanye West, Common, Lupe Fiasco and Twista. (Photo: Martha Brock Photography)
ALBUMS
Edited by Michael Paollett

POP
► ROBI DRACO ROSA
PRODUCERS: Robi Draco Rosa, George Noriega, Walter Amsallem
Columbia CR 66925
RELEASE DATE: March 30
Former Menudo member Robi Draco Rosa penned several hits for Ricky Martin. This, his latest English-language album, is produced by Menudo’s Noriega—a now completely in-the-pocket-with what they’re doing and with each other. Andrea is a sax player with a gor-
groove and a world-class soul feel for
nuance, and Drake seems to be able to
return an endless realm of moods from a
disked hit. From the somber medita-
tion of “Lost (Lloron)” to the
consense of “Louisiana Sтрад,” this
dynamic duo has created a spellbinding free-jazz masterpiece.—PPV

CHARLIE MUSSELWHITE
Sanctuary
PRODUCER: John Chelew
Real World 70876 18472
RELEASE DATE: April 6
Veteran blues harp player/singer Charlie Musselwhite gets a nice
toolish production. Producer John Chelew, who has worked wonders with
gospel’s Blind Boys of Alabama, brings some of his track repertoire
choices and atmospheric studio touches to Musselwhite’s relaxed
vocals and burning harmonica. Guest Ben Harper brings his hot slide gui-
tar to two tracks, while Austin guitar hotshot Charlie Sexton, late of Bob Dylan’s band, complements the
leader nicely on the rest of the
album. The Blind Boys sit in on two
numbers as well. Material runs the
gamut from a humid cover of Randy
Newman’s “Let’s Burn Down the
Cornfield” to Townes Van Zandt’s
ominous “Snake Song.” Mussel-
white’s instrumental take on Eddie
Harris “Allicia” conjures fond memo-
ries of his classic “Croto Redemptor.”
In all, a very pleasing recasting of a
gifted performer that will appeal to
non-genre listeners.—CM

JAZZ
► FRED ANDERSON & HAMID DRAKE
Back Together Again
PRODUCER: John McEntire
Thrill Jockey 139
RELEASE DATE: April 6
Jazz duo Anderson & Drake always
challenge, both from the perspective of performance and from the
vantage point of the listener. Chicago-based trumpeter/composer Fred Anderson has done it before—”Duets 2001”—and it
does well. So the idea of Anderson teaming with drummer Hamid Drake for a
duet recording is a good deal more
inviting than daunting. From the outset of
“Back Together Again,” it is apparent that
the tandem is indeed the completely
in-the-pocket-with what they’re doing and with each other. Andrea is a sax player with a
groove and a world-class soul feel for
nuance, and Drake seems to be able to
return an endless realm of moods from a
disked hit. From the somber medita-
tion of “Lost (Lloron)” to the
consense of “Louisiana Strad,” this
dynamic duo has created a spellbinding free-jazz masterpiece.—PPV

REGGAE
► TOOTS & THE MAYTALS
True Love
PRODUCER: Richard Feldman
VZ 63881-72186
RELEASE DATE: April 6
“True Love” is a 55-minute party in a jwel case. Toots Hibbert and his band, the Maytals, are true Jamaican music
pioneers who made a very slick transition from ska to the rude boy sound that
same garage band in the 1960s. Their
new album is most notable for the
guest artists who are included. The
CD opens with a guest artist, Willie Nelson singing with Toots on “Still Is Moving To Me.” Other killer tracks include “True Love Is Hard To Find” (featuring Ron
Ness, aka Kingston) (Bootsy Collins and the Roots) and “Pressure Drop” (Eric Clapton). “54-46 Was My Number” (titled after Hibbert’s prison number, features Jeff Beck, Toots &
The Maytals’ first hit single, “Bam Bam,” is revisited with Shaggy and
RAHzel. And the ska classic “Monkey Man” is a collaboration with No Doubt. Throughout, every tune and every
guest artist rocks.—PPV

CHRISTIAN
► VINCE REDHOOSE
Go Unto Every Nation
PRODUCER: Vince Redhouse, Tom Bee Red Sea
RELEASE DATE: April 6
Vince Redhouse is a talented multi-
instrumentalist and worship leader
plays the Native American flute, tenor sax and drums while covering many of today’s
top worship songs (“The Heart of Wor
(Continued on next page)
ship” and “God of Wonders”). “Sanctu- ary,” previously featured on the multi- artist compilation “Streams,” is another standout. Redhouse also includes a stirring version of the Tom Bee-penned “The Jesus Way,” complete with Native flute, pow wow drums and chanting. Redhouse’s breezy instrumen- tals shed new light on oft-covered modern classics.—DEP

VITAL REISSUES

ROB DYLAN

The Bootleg Series Volume 6: Live 1964/68

CONCERT AT PHILHARMONIC

PRODUCERS: Tom Wilson, Jeff Rosen, Steve Berkowitz

COLUMBIA/Legacy CZK 86882

RELEASE DATE: March 30

The latest cache of previously unre- leased Bob Dylan’s finds the singer-song- writer at a crucial career juncture. His 1964 appearance at New York’s Phil- harmonic Hall exposed Dylan on an audience that was more committed to the Woody Guthrie-inspired material of his early albums to the distinctive impres- sions of the English rock band, the Who (Another Side of Bob Dylan). This two-CD set includes socially conscious barn burn- ers (“The Times They Are A-Changin’,” “Masters of War,” “All Along the Watch- rail”) and more personal, intense songs (“Gates of Eden,” “It’s All Right Ma, I’m Only Bleeding”). Then-paramour Joan Baez, who still tours a few times, it’s a unique look at Dylan, alternately playful and introspectively intense, at an impor- tant cross in his still-unfolding legend.—CM

DEPECHE MODE

 Singles Box

PRODUCERS: various

Mute/Reprise/WSM 78989

RELEASE DATE: March 30

“Singles Box 5” is part of Mute/ Reprise’s comprehensive singles boxed- set series on Depeche Mode. There are six seven-inch singles, all of which originally released in 1991 but have been reissued to coincide with the bow of volumes 4, 5 and 6. Aimed squarely at the core fans, the Singles Box series collects all of the commercially released singles from the band’s career through “Dream On” (2001). Each box houses six individual jewel cates, one for each single release. Every CD (with reproduced single artwork) collects all of the commercially released mixes and B-sides for a partic- ular single. For example, if a U.S. single had different B-sides from its initial single, the box’s相应 B-side is also included. This “Singles Box” collection amasses all of the previously issued worldwide B-sides. All told, there are 43 tracks (including single versions, remixes, B-sides, non- album cuts and live songs) spread across 30 discs in six boxes.—KC

NAS

10 Year Anniversary Illmatic Platinum Special Edition

PRODUCERS: various

Sony Urban Music/Columbia CK 92072

RELEASE DATE: March 30

To celebrate the tenth anniversary, Columbia is reissuing his debut opus, “Illmatic,” as a double-disc set. The album showcases young Nas, whose razor-sharp lyrical flow had fans proclaiming him the best MC in the game. Years later, now-classic jams like

“It Ain’t Hard to Tell” and “NY State of Mind” sound more relevant than ever. Hip-hop’s time- less in the DJ Premier-produced “The World Is Yours.” A melodic piano loop serves as a hypnotic backdrop to the Queens, N.Y., native’s diatribe. While Nas has had his share of career highs and lows, this album showcases his infinite talent, as well as the promise that lies within him.—RH

DVD

SHAKIRA

Shakira Live & Off the Record

PRODUCERS: Shakira, Tim Mitchell

EPIC CK 91109

RELEASE DATE: March 30

Shakira’s first live set (not including her “MTV Unplugged” recording) is presented in album and DVD formats. The latter is the lengthier of the two and boils down to a 90-minute live concert culled from the artist’s Tour of the Mongoose. Live, Shakira is vocally slackier than on record but otherwise compelling (particularly in the opening “Ojos Asi”) and undeni- ably exciting. This is a riveting perfor- mance, goaded on “Nada” by Shakira’s own vocals and mesmerizing. For fans, there are multiple props or multiple dancers required by the likes of other artists to generate enthusiasm. The true bonus for fans, however, is the added featur- ing Twista and Youngblood.—RH

* CREA U Lied 4 (1:37)

PRODUCERS: Sa-Ra, Gary Katz

WRITERS: LeCesia Holloway, R. Christopher Smith, Chris Burns

PUBLISHERS: Fatboy Music, Sa-Ra Music

AZREA/EMI PCRD 4022 (CD promo)

The soul-kissed and acoustic guitar- laden “U Lied” is the type of ballad that “My Life” era Mary J. Blige would have wholly embraced. At its core, “U Lied” revolves around deception and pain. “I’m good enough to love you/Emo- nentic and warm/Good to keep you/Good to keep you,” she交替. “You should have been more truthful about it/You take anything I don’t have/To change that shit now boy.” By song’s end, Crea is ready to move on—feeling empowered and a bit wiser. Let’s hope that her debut album, “Mystery” (due June), lacks its lead single, will flow with equal amounts of love, truth and sen- suality.—MP

MODERN ROCK

* THREE DAYS GRACE Just Like You (3:06)

PRODUCERS: Gavin “Golden” Brown

WRITERS: Three Days Grace, G. Brown

PUBLISHERS: EMI America Music/EMI America Music (Canada)/3 Days Grace Publishing (CD promo)

Live JD-60518-2 (CD promo)

Three Days Grace hit a grand slam with “I Hate Everything About You,” a great song about loving someone you actually love. Listeners related, pushing the song to No. 55 on The Billboard Hot 100. Now the band is expecting more than the ones that “Just Like You” delivers, which is a repetitive litany of faults. “I could be cold/I could be ruthless/You know I could be just like you,” are a few lines. However, “You thought you were there to guide me/You were only in my way” is a good point that could be applied to a rotten lover or an even worse parent. Collector-wise, this is all loop, a simple but effective note- pattern that immediately sticks in the brain. With more songs like this, Three Days Grace is poised to become a major player at radio.—CLT

* FLAW Recognize (4:11)

PRODUCERS: David Bottrill

WRITERS: Ryan Jurks, Lance Army

PUBLISHERS: Robid Junior/EMI Music Publishing

Republic/Universal UNIR 21212-2

Flaw’s 2001 debut album, “Through the Eyes,” got off to a slow start, with tracks like “Payback” and “Whole” pen- etrating the low end of the Mainstream Rock Track charts. Republic is taking another shot at radio with “Recognize,” the lead single from the act’s new album, “Endangered Species” (due next month). The title of this nu- metal essay painfully tries to figure out just who that man in the mirror is. The song uses melodic pointers from Jour- ney to good effect within a composi- tional framework derivative of Staind. It has a nice lift to it, as do the backing vocals. But radio air is not a given. Simply put, the format is not airing many balls that are weighty in topic and tone. This could change, though, as once programmers realize that the band has as much promise as develop- ing acts Spirechank and Revis.—CLT

COUNTRY

* CHELSEA WRIGHT Back of the Bottom Drawer (3:44)

PRODUCERS: Jeff Hawkins, Cheyl Wright

WRITERS: L. Rose, C. Wright

PUBLISHERS: Sony/ATV Timber Publish- ing; Hillbrow Valley Songs, SESAC, Painted Red Music, BMI

Vivaton VIV-023112 (CD promo)

Cheyl Wright’s debut for new Music Row independent Vivaton Records is the perfect kind of single to introduce a new label. It’s passionate, poignant and flawlessly delivered by an artist who is beginning a new chapter in her career. Between two previous label affilia- tions—Polydor and MCA—Wright has charted more than a dozen singles, including the No. 1 “Single White Female.” Here she delivers a beautifully written song about moments of personal sincerity that represent not only memories from the past but steppingstones to the woman she is still trying to become. Wright’s voice is more earthy and emotional than ever. It’s as if she is singing directly to the listener—and not just trying to score a radio hit. A pretty voice, hers has become a more effective communicator. Throughout, Wright is positively confident.—DEP

BILLBOARD APRIL 17, 2004

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Think Tank Looks To Brill Building For Inspiration

BY JIM BESSMAN

HOBOKEN, N.J.—It's not a "tank," really, but a refrigerator. Still, Think Tank Studio here is envisioned by its operators as a budding Brill Building in terms of songwriter focus and work ethic.

"We call it the Think Tank because it's a place for songwriting creativity," says co-owner Chris Gefken, bassist for defunct Hoboken pop-punk band the Gefkens and current member of Skanatra, the town's 12-piece ska band whose repertoire consists entirely of the work of Hoboken native Frank Sinatra.

"We also call it a 'clubhouse for songwriters,'" Gefken adds. "It's used by songwriting friends and family, kind of like a frat house: People hang out and drink beer, write songs and rehearse and record them."

The 2,500-square-foot facility takes up four rooms in the historic Neumann Leather building, an 1863 edifice at the southern tip of this New Jersey hamlet, directly across the Hudson River from Manhattan—and its famed 1960s midtown song factory, the Brill Building.

"It's in [what was] the refrigerator, where they kept the cows," Gefken continues. "When the lights go out, it's pitch black. It's a deprivation tank of sorts."

But out of such deprivation comes creativity.

SINATRA SCION
"It's a collective of songwriters, musicians and arrangers," notes A.J. Azzarto, herself a Think Tank songwriter/singer, an independent music supervisor and, in keeping with karma, Frank Sinatra's granddaughter.

The key songwriters at the Think Tank further include Gefken and fellow co-owner and ex-Gefkens member Matt Azzarto, who is also singer/guitarist in bands including Skanatra, the Fundamentals and Frank Bango & the Magic Fingers—as well as A.J.'s husband.

Singer/songwriter Bango and his frequent co-writer Richy Vesecky are also Think Tank mainstays. Some eight songwriters currently operate regularly out of the studio, along with a dozen or so musicians.

In addition, indie label P.O.S. Records, home of the Gefkens and Skanatra, is owned and operated in conjunction with Think Tank.

"It's kind of like 'Standing in the Shadows of Motown,'" notes Matt Azzarto, citing the acclaimed 2002 documentary. "Each person is in one or two bands, and we've set up a label to go with the studio."

Bango adds, "Matt will be in the control room working on a recording, while A.J.'s mixing demos and I'm co-writing a song on the couch."

But A.J. sees particular potential for the songwriting/publishing aspect of Think Tank.

The Gefkens had several songs placed in movies, and Skanatra's version of "High Hopes" is the end-title song for "What Planet Are You From?" Due to those developments, recent activity at the studio has turned to composing "replacement songs" for independent films with insufficient budgets to license initial song choices.

Producers of a forthcoming Kate Hudson film, for example, approached the studio with specific songwriting needs.

"They had 10 songs [inserted into the soundtrack temporarily]—including Liz Phair's 'Extraordinary'—then found they couldn't afford them," Matt says. "So I wrote 'Mesmerize' as a replacement [for 'Extraordinary'] and got all our musicians together to record it with A.J. singing it."

WRITING IT OLD SCHOOL
This professional approach to songwriting has contributed to a prolific output. "Between me, Frank and Richy, we have over 60 songs," Matt says. A.J. adds, "People here are writing in the 'old school' format of the Brill Building days."

The Brill Building analogy holds in terms of Think Tank's thriving songwriting environment and in terms of an evolving trend of writing songs for specific singers—namely, A.J.'s mother, Nancy Sinatra.

The legendary 1960s hitmaker has recorded most of a forthcoming album at Think Tank.

"We've been tossing the term 'Brill Building' around at Think Tank, but after Nancy had done some work there—and after listening to the results of her work—I feel like the whole concept got elevated somewhat," Bango notes. "Basically, the piece of music she was working on actually had 'the feel' of the Brill Building songs. After that, Richy and I started to write songs with her and other artists in mind."

Sinatra has so far recorded one song, "Boss Man," for which the Azzartos, who write for Hum Jam Publishing (BMI), co-wrote the lyrics.

According to Gefken, Think Tank now looks to bring in other writers. A.J., meanwhile, cites her goal of handling the collective of songwriters together in seeking a single music publishing company umbrella.

Showcase Reveals Exec's Creative Side

Marc Ostrow's just-announced appointment to the post of VP of business affairs at Boosey & Hawkes represents only part of Ostrow's current activities.

With support from the Shubert Organization, the former senior attorney in BMI's legal department recently played piano in a revue of his original songs at New York theater district mainstay Chez Suzette. He also debuted a new tune at the legendary Friar's Club.

"A lot of people in the industry may well be surprised," says Ostrow, who was director of business affairs and general counsel at jazz publisher Second Floor Music prior to joining BMI in 1999.

Indeed, the University of Chicago law grad, who previously studied English literature and music at the University of Pennsylvania, has kept his creative side well below the radar.

"I'd been advised to keep a low profile until I got established professionally, so people wouldn't think I wasn't totally dedicated to being a lawyer at BMI," Ostrow continues.

"After five years there, I figured that if they didn't respect me as relatively quiet, I kept things low-key around the BMI office, "because I didn't want anyone there to feel that it was a BMI-sponsored event," he explains.

The showcase was set up by Heidi Mathis Endo, corporate relations coordinator for the Shubert Organization—Broadway's leading theater operator. Ostrow worked with Endo's husband at Second Floor.

She had been mightily impressed by Ostrow's informal reading at his apartment of "Life's Work," an original musical concerning love, greed and therapy set in corporate New York.

"What distinguishes Marc's music is that you can remember his tunes after a show, whereas with many other composers, however talented, their tunes are less memorable," Endo says. "He's also able to write in many different styles, which makes him available to write for many types of shows."

Endo decided to present the breadth of Ostrow's material in a showcase format rather than a standard theater-backers audition. The event drew capacity crowds of Broadway and off-Broadway producers, film and TV studio reps, music publishers, talent managers, attorneys and advertising people.

Shubert chairman of the board Gerald Schoenfeld went so far as to send a copy of Ostrow's song "Congratulations, You're Fired!" to a man synonymous with the theme—Donald Trump.

Inspired by positive response, Ostrow is back at the piano bench writing new material—and seeking a music publisher. As for the "serious music" publisher for whom he now works, Boosey & Hawkes president Jennifer Billfeldt notes that "as a member of our New York team, he will play a key role in our global publishing operation."
Trans World's Jerry Kamiler says release schedules should be reconsidered.

**Shrek & Co.**

The New Face Of Videogames Is Family-Friendly

**BY SUSANNE AULT**

LOS ANGELES—Videogames are not just for your teenage brother anymore; they are now fun for the whole family. In an effort to expand their consumer base, software publishers and hardware manufacturers are increasingly targeting families.

Activision is launching three new family games this year. The centerpiece of the bundle is "Shrek 2," set to bow just ahead of the DreamWorks film's May 21 release. The game is available at $49.99 for consoles and $29.99 for PCs.

Electronic Arts bolstered its female-oriented online game offerings last July, such as Club Pogo, with a subscription-based premium complement. Every day, EAs Web games collectively attract 3.2 million users, 55% of whom are women.

And Microsoft's XBox is trying to trade its hardcore-gamer label for something more inclusive of women and children, says Albert Penello, the company's platform group manager. "Gaming is no longer being done by teens in the basement," says Lisa Gaudio, Activision VP of global brand.

(Continued on page 53)

**Universal Still Leads Market Share**

**Prospects For Biz Brightened In Q1**

**BY ED CHRISTMAN**

NEW YORK—With the U.S. music industry enjoying a 9.2% first-quarter gain in album sales and digital tracks averaging 2 million units per week, things are looking up.

Indeed, total U.S. sales spiked 26.2% in the first quarter, with digital tracks now filling the void created by the major labels' refusal to maintain a commercial market-place for physical singles.

According to Nielsen SoundScan, total first-quarter unit sales rose to 185.1 million units from 146.7 million units for the same quarter last year, before iTunes kicked off the digital marketplace in spring 2003. So far in 2004, digital tracks total 25 million scans and will likely top the 100 million mark by the end of the year.

**ON THE DOWNSIDE**

While sales of physical singles in stores rose 2% in the first quarter, the 2.1 million scans render the format all but inconsequential. Similarly, the cassette album continues its journey into oblivion, with sales sliding 31.5% to 3.4 million scans in

(Continued on page 52)

**JONES: HER EMM-DISTRIBUTED ALBUM HAS SOLD 2.4 MILLION UNITS**

Jane Siberry's Sheeba Music label signs an exclusive deal with Burnside Distribution.
YOU TRULY HAD CONTROL

- You would have distribution that paid you 90% plus of the sale
- You would benefit from the marketing efforts of the entire company
- You would be in a family where you, the artist, comes first
- You would receive your money every 30 days
- You would be where artists, songwriters, producers, publishers all gather
- You would control your own destiny with ItsFun.com

ItsFun.com

ItsFun.com pays you 95% of the gross proceeds from each sale, less hard costs involved. Hard costs could include MP3, SightSound licensing fees and credit card fees.

ItsFun.com is an Advanced Solutions Technologies company (OTC: Pink Sheets : ADVK)
Coming Of Age

The Legitimate Online Music Market Grows Up

BY BRIAN GARRITY

“It’s like when a band works for 10 years touring in small clubs and then one day becomes an overnight sensation—that’s what 2003 was for the legitimate digital music industry,” RealNetworks chairman/CEO Rob Glaser says.

This is a business that has spent more than eight years screaming for legitimacy, trying to satisfy the divergent requirements of record companies and consumers. But Glaser is accurate in his analysis of what has happened since April 2003 to the business of selling music via digital downloads and subscriptions.

A little more than a year ago, fans were hard-pressed to find major-label content on commercial digital services in significant volume. Internet piracy was speeding along, and it seemed little could be done to stop it.

Then came iTunes. Apple launched the iTunes Music Store April 28. It allowed music fans to download songs at 99 cents apiece with ease and flexibility. At the

(Continued on page 50)
What A Digital Year That Was!
A Look Back At The Giant Leaps Taken By The Digital Music Market In 2003

BY BRIAN GARRITY

For the digital music industry, there is no turning back.

The companies involved in selling music online have reached this point thanks to a series of prominent deals and strategic moves that reflect a very promising business.

In the past month alone:
• MusicNet@AOL introduced à la carte downloads for 99 cents each as part of its subscription-based service which now has 250,000 members, according to AOL.
• Wippit, the U.K.-based digital music service, unveiled a per-track payment plan and a mobile phone payment system and is reportedly planning a U.S. and European expansion.
• Microsoft gave executives at the South by Southwest Music Conference in Austin a sneak peek of the music download service it plans to launch later this year.

How has the digital music business reached this point? Here’s a review of the past year’s developments:

A key step was taken in early 2003, when labels cleared massive amounts of their content for online distribution. Although some top artists remained skittish about unbundling their music from the physical album format for sale through digital services, a growing number of chart-topping acts and their labels finally agreed to make their content available online.

But this wasn’t the only significant step forward. Equally important: Labels and artists, by and large, dropped restrictions on what users could do with digital content.

Consumers could forget about rules that limited them to making only a small number of copies of a track or blocked them from transferring music to a portable device. Suddenly, fans buying digital tracks could burn songs with few restrictions—as long as they didn’t replicate the same playlist more than five times (depending on the deal). And there were few restrictions on the number of portable devices to which a track could be transferred.

Apple Computer took advantage of these trends and helped drive them. In its first week, Apple’s iTunes Music Store sold an unprecedented 1 million downloads. Sales passed the 2 million mark within iTunes’ first 16 days of business.

Apple’s early success set off a scramble among competing retailers, consumer electronics companies, technology specialties and brand marketers to come up with services of their own.

But the competition actually started a week before iTunes’ April 28, 2003, debut.

On April 21, Real announced plans to acquire live3x.com, operator of the Rhapsody subscription service, for $36 million in cash and stock. As part of that move, Real discontinued its distribution of MusicNet—a joint venture with Warner Music Group, BMG Entertainment and EMI Recorded Music.

(IMMEDIATE SUCCESS)

After striking agreements with the five major labels and stocking up digital files of 200,000 songs (the current repertoire is 500,000), iTunes got off to a quick start, selling more than 1 million downloads in its first week. Apple has continued to up the ante with promotion and marketing deals with Pepsi-Cola and AOL and the all-important introduction of a Windows version of iTunes in October.

“We did come out of the gate with five landmark deals with the majors,” Bell says. “And since then, we’ve added over 200 independent labels. So it’s been a pretty quick burst of growth and interest from the music community—from a point where they viewed it as a Mac-only experiment, to the point now where we own 70% of the digital-download market across Macs and PCs.”

Coinciding with the growth of iTunes, Apple has steadily expanded its product line of iPod players for both Macintosh and Windows computers. Ted Cohen, senior VP of digital development and distribution for EMI Recorded Music, thinks Apple’s marketing muscle and brand name were instrumental in taking the efforts of earlier digital pioneers to the next level.

(Continued on page 50)

Apple Took Big Bite Out Of The Market

BY MICHAEL AMICONE

Any way you look at it, Apple’s iTunes Music Store, which debuted on April 28, 2003, has been an unqualified success during its first year.

In advance of the first anniversary of the online music service, Apple announced that fans had purchased and downloaded more than 50 million songs from iTunes, not including songs redeemed through a Pepsi iTunes promotion.

“Crossing 50 million songs is a major milestone for iTunes and the emerging digital music era,” Steve Jobs, CEO of Apple Computer, said in a statement. Jobs further noted that fans are currently downloading songs from iTunes at the rate of 2.5 million per week.

“I think it’s too early to call it a two-horse race,” says Apple’s iTunes product marketing director Chris Bell, regarding the Apple Internet music store and Napster’s competing service. “But, whatever the race is, Apple’s winning it.”

Apple executives certainly are not shy about their achievement, but iTunes’ success also has struck a positive chord with record companies. The labels had seen their business shaken to the core by rampant illegal downloading from such rogue sites as Kazaa and the original incarnation of Napster. Now, instead of looking warily at the Internet, the music community is embracing its potential for marketing, promotion and profits.

“The vast majority of artists, managers and labels are embracing iTunes.” Bell says. “There are still the usual suspects in terms of holdouts, but what we tend to point out to artists and managers is, by not offering up songs on iTunes or the digital domain, you’re basically holding up a big sign that says ‘Kazaa, this way.’”

On one hand, it’s amazing what’s happened in the last year,” he says. “On the other hand, I think we have to give credit to people who went before. But it took the coolness of Apple, and it took the commitment from Steve Jobs and all his folks to really go to market and not only create a great technological product but do the marketing behind it that really made it a consumer experience and not just an early-adopter experience.”

Success breeds competition, and other players, including the legally revamped Napster, MusicMatch and Rhapsody, are vying for a place in the burgeoning digital-distribution marketplace.

Microsoft last month offered a preview of its music download service to several dozen independent music executives during the South by Southwest Music Conference in Austin. The service is due to launch this fall.

Napster president BradDuea likens the fight for market share to a baseball game. “I draw the analogy of basically the first inning, and

(Continued on page 48)
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Music downloading. It’s changing the face of music forever. Best Buy™ is supporting the evolution with a multimillion dollar campaign to show fans how easy it is to legally download their favorite artists. And we are in the unique position of not only giving consumers the music they love, but the equipment they love to play it on. We invite everyone in the music industry to join us and our partners to share in the opportunities ahead. It’s gonna be huge. Digital music at Best Buy.
BY TODD MARTENS

As the sales of digital music via online services soared in the past year, savvy artists and their managers were quick to get in on the action. Here is a sample of noteworthy digital deals that have driven the sales and boosted the profile of online music services.

Metallica, which waged an infamous campaign against the original incarnation of Napster, resurfaced on the Internet in March via a deal with online distribution company mugs.net. Through its new Web site, livemetallica.com, the act will offer for sale unedited soundboard recordings of its spring tour. Downloads will be available for four days after each performance, using a system developed by Nugs, which provides similar services for Phish and String Cheese Incident. Fans will be able to download the music in MP3 ($9.95) and FLAC files ($12.95), and each show will come with a printable booklet and labels for fans who wish to burn the music to CD.

The Apple iTunes Music Store in February began selling an entire live concert as a single download for the first time. The promotion is for two shows by Widespread Panic, recorded Dec. 30-31, 2003, at Phibbs Amphitheatre. The downloads are priced at $14.99 for both nights—encompassing eight hours of music—or $9.99 for one night. The music is exclusive to iTunes; it will not be sold as an album, according to a representative for Widespread Panic.

Napster in January inked a deal with Universal Music Group for a two-week exclusive on digital distribution of Tom Petty’s MCA catalog. The material previously had not been available for online distribution. Petty’s MCA catalog comprises more than a dozen albums, including “Full Moon Fever,” “Into the Great Wide Open” and “Damn the Torpedoes.” Yet Napster wasn’t the only service partnering with Petty. In March, the artist made available two live songs exclusively to iTunes, “Born in Chicago” and “Red Rooster.”

Veteran rock act Pearl Jam, free from its long-time contract with Sony Music, turned to the Internet in December for the exclusive release of new single “Man of the Hour.” The group streamed the tune through Rhapsody and offered it for sale at its own Web site but then utilized massive online retailer Amazon.com to give it an even bigger push. The move made Pearl Jam the highest-profile act to take part in Amazon’s Advantage for Music Program, which is generally used by unknown independent acts to sell music directly to fans. Amazon sold a two-song CD for $5.

For the November release of “Afterglow,” her first album in six years, Sarah McLachlan didn’t turn to just one online music service to promote the set. The album’s first single, “Fallen,” instantly became the No. 1 song on the Billboard Hot Digital Tracks chart in November when it was made available at the iTunes Music Store prior to the album’s release, and the site also offered an exclusive live EP for 30 days. Additionally, Arista promoted “Afterglow” with an exclusive stream at Rhapsody, a live performance at AOL, an artist spotlight at Yahoo and video streams at MSN.

When Roc-a-Fella released the solo debut from Chicago hip-hop artist Kanye West, the CD came bundled with access to exclusive videos and recordings. Thanks to a deal with Napster and buy.com, however, those who buy the album as a download are also treated to the exclusive material. Download purchasers receive an e-mail with a code that allows them to link to the content. Physical purchasers are able to link to the content with enhanced-CD technology. “We need to give people an incentive to buy,” says Larry Martin, senior VP of new media for the Island Def Jam Music Group. “If there are value-adds in the physical space, there’s no reason we shouldn’t do it online, too.”

Janet Jackson and Justin Timberlake may have garnered all the press from this year’s Super Bowl, but Grammy Awards darlings Beyoncé was also there, and iTunes was recording her. The Destiny’s Child frontwoman performed the national anthem, and her rendition was made available as an exclusive download from the iTunes Music Store. However, the download was only available to those who purchased her Columbia Records debut, “Dangerously In Love,” from the Sony Music Store. Beyoncé is also featured in Pepsi’s iTunes 100 million-song giveaway.

For a two-week period last summer, Rhapsody and Best Buy offered an exclusive online access to the entire post-1971 Rolling Stones catalog as part of a deal with Virgin/EML, and the pre-1971 Stones material in an agreement with ABRCO. At the end of the exclusive period, on Aug. 31, the EML material was made available for download through all legitimate services, including the iTunes Music Store and MusicNet. The exclusive two-week deal kicked off a long-term pact between Rhapsody and Best Buy. The 560-store, Minneapolis-based retail chain has installed up to 10 kiosks in each of its outlets, where customers can experience Rhapsody. During the two-week Stones promotion, patrons were able to sign up for a 14-day free Rhapsody trial in Best Buy stores and through bestbuy.com.

**Apple’s Big Bite**

Continued from page 44

Apple’s had a great at-bat, and we’re still in the midst of our at-bat in the bottom of the first.”

**THE FUTURE IS NOW**

Challenges for iTunes lie ahead. Will consumers continue to favor iTunes’ 99-cents-per-song business model over the flat-fee subscription options offered by Napster and other competing sites? And will leading computer companies—most notably Apple and Microsoft—agree to compatibility for competing digital music devices in the foreseeable future (Billboard, Feb. 7)?

“The biggest challenge right now is, if you buy music through MusicMatch or Napster or any of the services, you can’t easily get it onto your iPod,” EMi’s Cohen explains. “You can do it, but it’s not easy. So the interoperability issue is probably the biggest thing that we have to get past in the next six months.”

Ben Patterson, director of new media for management company the Firm, says, “I think they’re going to run into some potentially serious competition as other players, like Microsoft and Sony, more aggressively enter the market on the consumer electronics side. If they don’t open the iPod format up,” he adds, “I think they could see their idea stolen, just like Windows arguably took Mac’s idea, back in the ‘80s, for the graphic interface.”

One thing is certain: The success of iTunes has confirmed that the future of digital music distribution is now.

“People are now understanding that the online music industry is here and it’s relevant today, not just at some point in the future,” Napster’s Duca says. “Apple’s launch and Napster’s launch moved up the timeline in many people’s minds when online music would really get traction.”
As the media industry moves away from analog, someone must control digital content as it flows between clients, producers, broadcasters and manufacturers. Managing this digital workflow gives you control over profits, security and time to market.

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Digital Year

Continued from page 44

By late May, Real was distributing Rhapsody. But Real wasn’t the only player pursuing a consolidation strategy. On May 19, 2003, Sony Music Entertainment and Universal Music Group sold their subscription service, Pressplay, to Roxio, which rebranded it as Napster.

At the same time, other music services were folding. CenterScans Communications, which had been developing a peer-to-peer-based digital music service with the assets of Scour, was out of business—a notable exit on the industry’s hit list.

In September, the RIAA filed its first copyright-infringement suit against consumers, casting a wide net that put everyone from high-school students to grandparents on the industry’s hit list.

Soon after, MusicMatch announced the launch of its download store, offering tracks in Microsoft’s Windows Media Format. With peer-to-peer users on the run, in October Apple launched iTunes for Windows. It also unveiled a 100-million-download giveaway promotion with Pepsi and announced an iTunes distribution deal with AOL.

Later that month, Roxio entered the market with its updated version of Napster; it also introduced an iPod-like co-branded digital music player with Samsung.

Not to be outdone, Dell entered the online music space through a deal with MusicMatch. In addition, it launched its own answer to the iPod, the Dell Jukebox. In all, Vivendi Universal began unwinding its digital music strategy.

The company announced the sale of EMusic to private-equity specialist Dimensional Associates.

Then in November, MusicNow launched a download service which was subsequently acquired by Circuit City.

In the same month, Real unveiled a distribution deal for Napapodid music, and launched a peer-to-peer networking solution.

As part of the agreement, Comcast promoted Rhapsody with local TV advertising.

The deals kept rolling on as the year wound down. CNET acquired the assets of mp3.com from Vivendi Universal, and in December, Wal-Mart began testing the sale of individual tracks through its Web site for 88 cents apiece. AOL and iTunes, meanwhile, implemented their distribution deal. Under the alliance, AOL Music programming contains links to buy tracks through iTunes. AOL users can also register for iTunes without re-entering their credit card information.

In addition, Napster announced a deal with Miller Brewing Co. to give away thousands of downloads and Napster-branded digital music players in summer 2004.

The end of the year also saw major services like iTunes, Napster and Rhapsody driving sales for the holidays through gift card and gift certificate programs.

New Year, New Products

The new year kicked off with yet another round of service and product announcements.

At the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas in January, Sony Corp. announced plans to launch its own download service, Connect, in April. It also unveiled plans for an updated version of the MiniDisc that can hold up to 1 gigabyte of music per 57 disc. In conjunction, Sony announced a partnership with United Airlines that will allow frequent-flyer miles to be used toward Connect downloads.

Apple kicked off its Pepsi download giveaway Feb. 1 with a Super Bowl TV ad featuring teenagers who were targeted by the RIAA for using peer-to-peer networks.

The same month, Apple introduced its latest version of the iPod, the Mini, billed as the world’s smallest digital music player, holding 1,000 songs. Apple also announced a strategic relationship with Hewlett-Packard. Under the agreement, HP would offer consumers its rebranded version of the iPod and pre-install iTunes on new PCs.

Real, meanwhile, announced the launch of its new download store, the RealPlayer Music Store, and an updated version of its media-management software, RealPlayer 10.

As part of the announcement, Real detailed plans for a download-giveaway deal with Heineken in the summer, and a partnership with rollingstone.com. Virgin Entertainment Group, through an alliance with MusicNet and Starbucks that was announced in February, became the latest company to unveil a digital music strategy.

Deals in the digital music business continue to unfold, with the likes of Yahoo and Amazon expected to elbow their way into the digital space before the year is out.

Coming of Age

Continued from page 43

same time, the company unveiled the third generation of its iPod players, which could hold up to 7,500 songs.

Flash forward one year. Through iTunes and its growing library of tracks, more than a half-million songs from all five major labels and many independents are now available via digital distribution. The recording industry is fighting online piracy by taking legal action against individual consumers who download unauthorized music files in bulk. The sale of music through commercial services is showing significant promise.

Apple announced March 15 that the number of songs purchased by fans through iTunes had passed the half million mark, not including songs downloaded as part of a Pepsi iTunes promotion. Sarah McLachlan’s song

“The Path of Thorns” was the 50-millionth song downloaded from iTunes, the company reported.

Throughout the industry, digital music “is moving the path toward being a viable business,” MusicNet GM/executive VP Ellie Hirschorn says.

To see just what a difference a year makes, check the reports coming from the music business. More than $1 billion in digital downloads have been sold so far this year, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The sale of digital tracks now outpaces the sale of physical singles. And close to 1 million consumers currently subscribe to some form of music subscription service.

Such progress leads some industry observers to observe that although it’s been going on for years now, the digital music revolution has really just begun.

“Taken as a whole,” Glaser says, “we can argue that it would have been great if year one had been in 1999 rather than 2003. But we have made significant progress since 1999, which is really saying something.”

Online Sales 2004

The following chart recaps are for the year to date from the December 6, 2003, issue (the beginning of the chart year) through the March 27, 2004, issue. All the recaps are based on sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan. Recaps for Top Internet Albums reflect sales of physical albums ordered through Internet retailers, while recaps for Hot Digital Tracks reflect sales of paid downloads from Internet sites. In the case of both chart recaps, titles receive credit for sales accumulated during each week they appear on the chart.

Hot Digital Artists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>No. of Charted Titles</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Chart Rank</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. OUTKAST</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Arista</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. MAROONS</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Octone/JRMP</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. NO DOUBT</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. BRITNEY SPEARS</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Jive</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. BLACK EYED PEAS</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>A&amp;M/Interscope</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. KELES</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Star Trek/Arista</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. DIDO</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. JET</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Elektra/EG</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. SHERYL CROW</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>A&amp;M/Interscope</td>
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Hot Digital Tracks

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<tr>
<td>1. HEY YEAH!</td>
<td>RHO MIX</td>
<td>Outkast-Arista</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. IT’S MY LIFE</td>
<td>No Doubt</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>3. TOXIC</td>
<td>Britney Spears</td>
<td>Jive</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. THIS IS LOVE</td>
<td>Maroon 5</td>
<td>Octone/JRMP</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. THE WAY YOU MOVE</td>
<td>Album Version</td>
<td>Outkast Featuring Sleepy Brown</td>
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<td>6. WHITE FLAG</td>
<td>ALBUM VERSION</td>
<td>Dido-Arista</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. ARE YOU GOING TO BE MY GIRL</td>
<td>Jet-Elektra/EG</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8. THE FIRST CUT IS THE DEEPEST</td>
<td>Sheryl Crow</td>
<td>A&amp;M/Interscope</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. WHERE IS THE LOVE</td>
<td>Album Edit</td>
<td>Black Eyed Peas</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. STACY’S Mom</td>
<td>Foundations Of Wayne</td>
<td>S-Curve/EMC</td>
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Top Internet Artists

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<td>2. JOSH GROBAN</td>
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<td>143/Reprise/Warner Bros.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. THE BEATLES</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Apple/Capitol</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. SARAH McLACHLAN</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Arista</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>5. ROD STEWART</td>
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<td>JRMP</td>
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<td>6. SHERYL CROW</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>A&amp;M/Interscope</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. OUTKAST</td>
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<td>A</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. DAVE MATTHEWS BAND</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bama Rags/RCA/RMP</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. NO DOUBT</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
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<td>10. HARRY CONNICK, JR.</td>
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<td>Columbia/Sony Music</td>
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Hot Internet Labels

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<td>2. A&amp;M/Interscope</td>
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<td>3. ARISTA</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. WARNER BROS.</td>
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Top Internet Albums

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<th>No. of Charted Titles</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. FEELS LIKE HOME</td>
<td>Norah Jones</td>
<td>Blue Note</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. CLOSER</td>
<td>Josh Groban</td>
<td>143/Reprise/Warner Bros.</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. LET IT BE...NAKED</td>
<td>The Beatles</td>
<td>Apple/Capitol</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. AFTERGLOW</td>
<td>Sarah McLachlan</td>
<td>Arista</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. THE VERY BEST OF SHERYL CROW</td>
<td>Sheryl Crow</td>
<td>A&amp;M/Interscope</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. SPEAKERBOXX/THE LOVE BELOW</td>
<td>Outkast-Arista</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. THE CENTRAL PARK CONCERT</td>
<td>Dave Matthews Band</td>
<td>Bama Rags/RCA/RMP</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. COME AWAY WITH ME</td>
<td>Norah Jones</td>
<td>Blue Note</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Billboard April 17, 2004
Zingy would like to thank all the music publishers, record labels, artist managers and media companies who have teamed up with us to deliver over 20 million ringtones in the Americas. We are dedicated to creating the best experience for our customers and generating outstanding revenues for our partners in the entertainment industry. All of us at Zingy look forward to developing our current friendships – and to making new ones.

www.zingyinc.com
Siberry's Sheeba Signs With Burnside In U.S.

Canadian singer/songwriter Jane Siberry's label, Sheeba Music, has signed an exclusive U.S. distribution deal with Burnside Distribution Corp. (BDC) in Portland, Ore. The deal commences with the May 4 release of Siberry's album "Shushan the Palace (Hymns of Earth)," a classically based collection of sacred songs by such composers as Bach, Handel, Mendelssohn and Holst.

Toronto-born Siberry began her career with albums for Warner Bros. and Windham Hill. She has been nominated five times for a Juno Award, Canada's equivalent of the Grammys. Siberry founded Sheeba in 1996 as an independent outlet for her music. Before "Shushan the Palace," the Vancouver-based label issued six Siberry albums, three of which were available in the United States via licensing deals with Sounds True and Koch.

BDC is in negotiations to distribute Sheeba's catalog titles. Maple Music distributes Sheeba through Universal in Canada.

The first release under the new agreement will be the Dirty Dozen Brass Band's "Funeral for a Friend," due May 14, followed by Antibalas' "Who Is This America?" and Tin Hat Trio's "Book of Silk," both set for June 8.

Koch Entertainment Distribution handles Artemis Records.

The first release under the new agreement will be the Dirty Dozen Brass Band's "Funeral for a Friend," due May 11, followed by Antibalas' "Who Is This America?" and Tin Hat Trio's "Book of Silk," both set for June 8.

Koch Entertainment Distribution handles Artemis.

Koch CATCHES: Koch Records in New York will now handle the catalog of Chicago-based Premonition Records and Nashville-based Blue Hat Records.

Premonition is best known as the home of acclaimed pop/rock singer-songwriter Patricia Barber. Koch's association with the label will commence with the reissue of six Barber titles in June and July.

Premonition's roster also includes Poi Dog Pondering, singer Tony Calii, and jazz saxophonist Von Freeman. New studio albums are also included in the Koch/Premonition deal.

Crash is also releasing Daniels' new studio recordings.

NO SECRET: Secretly Canadian in Bloomington, Ind., has picked up three new labels for worldwide exclusive distribution. The new imprints are Baltimore-based Monitor Records; Cloud Recordings of Athens, Ga.; and the Social Registry in Brooklyn, N.Y.

Yaz McCombs, the Oxes, EZ T, the Battles and Part Chimp are part of Monitor's roster. Cloud Recordings is the home of Olivia Tremor Control, Circulatory System and A Hawk and a Hackaw. Social Registry's acts include Blood on the Wall, Hall of Fame and Ghost Exit.

Secretly Canadian's label roster also includes K. Table of the Elements, Miera and in-house label Jagjaguwar.

CRAH-STOPH: Phoenix-based hard rock and metal label Crash Music has scored some new European distribution deals.

Effective this month, ZYX Music will handle the label in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, France and Poland; RSK Entertainment (formerly Koch U.K.) is responsible for the United Kingdom. Crash's acts include Ice, Single Bullet Theory, Transport League, Conspiracy A.D and Chaosbreed. Pavement Music founder Mark Nawar operates the label.

Market Share

Continued from page 41

the first quarter from 4.9 million one year earlier.

Universal Music & Video Distribution remains the U.S. leader in total album market share, though it has stumbled. Market share slips to 26.6% in the latest quarter from 28.3% the previous year.UMVD's best seller for the year to date is "The Very Best of Sheryl Crow," which has scanned a mere one million units.

Off the record, executives attribute the drop to UMVD's release schedule, but the industry is scrutinizing the results of the company's controversial JumpStart program. That plan, which was introduced last September, offers lower costs to accounts but eliminates discounts and price-pointed dollars.

MAEKING STRIDES

Meanwhile, independent labels collectively post a 17.1% market share in the first quarter, up from 16.4% last year. The gain moves the sector up a notch in the rankings, to second place. The best-selling indie title this year is the Ying Yang Twines' "Me & My Brother," on TVT.

However, BMG posts the largest gain, finishing the first quarter at 16.7%, up more than three percentage points from 13.5% the previous year.

BMG was obviously propelled by its strength in current market share, where it gains nearly five percentage points, moving to 20.3% from 15.8% in the year-ago first quarter.

BMG distributes half of the top 10 best sellers this year. They are percentage points from 13.5% the previous year.

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BMG distributes half of the top 10 best sellers this year. They are

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total U.S. Album Market Share By Distributor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Universal</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Indies</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>WEA</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SONY</strong></td>
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<td><strong>EMM</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Source: Nielsen SoundScan</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Kenny Chesney's "When the Sun Goes Down," at 1.5 million copies; OutKast's "Speakerboxxx/The Love Below," with 1.4 million copies; Evanescence's "Fallen," with 1.3 million units; and Usher's "Confessions," which moved 1.1 million units in its first week.

On the down side, WEA and Sony Music Distribution both suffer market-share declines, ranking fourth and fifth, respectively, in total album market share.

LOOSING SOME GROUND

WEA's tally is 15.6%, down from 16.5% last year. WEA has placed two titles in the top 10: Josh Groban's "Closer," which has scanned 1.3 million units to date, and Twista's "Rakimike," with 1.1 million units.

Sony slides further, to 13.5% in the latest quarter from 15.4% last year. But it is only down slightly from the 13.7% it garnered for the full 12 months of 2003. Its best-selling title so far this year is Jessica Simpson's "In This Skin," which has accumulated almost 900,000 scans.

While EM Slid the Sicken Markei Marketing finishes in last place in the industry rankings, it enjoys a market-share gain, finishing the first quarter with 10.8%, up one percentage point from the corresponding earlier period.

EMM claims the top-selling album so far in 2004, Norah Jones "Feels Like Home," which has scanned 2.4 million units.

In terms of current album market share, UMVD scores a 28.3% slice of the pie, down from 30.9% in first-quarter 2003. The indie place third behind BMG, with 14.7%, followed by WEA with 13.8%, Sony with 12% and EMM with 10.8%.

The market-share picture for total album market share changes a little when the independent distributors owned by a major are ranked with their parent. While Universal maintains the No. 1 spot, the Warner Music Group takes over the No. 2 ranking and finishes the first quarter with 16.7% when the market share of the Alternative Distribution Alliance is included.

BMG places third, followed by Sony Music Entertainment, which tally is 14.6% share when RED's scans are included in its total.

EMI Recorded Music North America may still place last, but it's market share for the period is 12% with the inclusion of Caroline. And the independent sector collectively places fifth when the above indie distributors' shares are subtracted from its total, leaving it with 13.4%.

White Plains, N.Y.-based Nielsen SoundScan estimates 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 estimates totals for the full market.

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.
Labels Improve Product Flow But Still Leave Holes

Although labels are beginning to spread out their release schedules, they still have some work ahead, according to retailers, if they want to stay in touch with consumers and accounts.

Retailers say they are pleased that the labels designed to ship some big records in 2004’s first quarter, including two that broke the 1 million-unit mark in their debut week, Sarah Jones’ “Feels Like Home” and Usher’s “Confessions.” Other records that have helped store sales include Twista’s “Kamikaze,” Kanye West’s “The College Dropout,” Incubus’ “A Crow Left of the Murder . . .” and Kenny Chesney’s “When the Sun Goes Down.”

While they hope labels remember to send more for next year’s first quarter, retailers are pushing for even more improvements.

“We all know that labels, when planning a release date for a big album, check to see what else is coming out that day. After all, they want to boost their chances at debuting on top of The Billboard 200,” says Kamiler, who releases games for college and high school students.

But when labels map release schedules, Kamiler says, “They why they don’t also consider what happened a year earlier.”

Retailers like labels, compete weekly against their numbers from the previous year. If merchants are going up against a big week from last year, they can be sure they will go out of their way to support any releases that give them a chance at matching those prior numbers, Kamiler says.

Similarly, he wonders why labels don’t realize that Easter week, when a lot of schools are closed, is a good time to release big albums.

Despite his complaints, Kamiler points out that about 35 titles due on March’s last two release dates (March 23 and March 30) had the chance of debuting on The Billboard 200.

Yet on April 13, when most kids are out of school for the week, not one title on the schedule has a chance of making it onto The Billboard 200. April 6 is only slightly better, with three titles that have a chance.

Kamiler understands that the onslaught of big releases at the end of March happens because the labels also feel pretty sure to make their quarterly numbers.

But he wonders why a few of those titles couldn’t have been held over to April 6 or, even better, April 13.

WHITHER HMV? For years now, HMV has appeared to be on the verge of pulling out of the United States, and its latest announcement prompts sales and distribution sources to repeat that thought to Retail Track yet again.

Three of HMV’s stores, in Atlanta, Boston and Marlborough, Mass., are conducting going-out-of-business sales. That will leave the chain with three stores in the United States: two in Manhattan and one in Strongsville, Ohio.

“HMV continues to review the longer-term viability of operating its three remaining stores in the U.S. alongside our more profitable and market-leading Canadian business,” HMV North America president Humphrey Kadaner said in a statement. In the latter country, HMV operates 100 stores.

BEAT OF CONSOLIDATION: Most of the 1,500 jobs eliminated at EMI Recorded Music were lost because of the consolidation of the company’s international operations and the closure of its manufacturing and fulfillment operations in the United States and Europe. However, there was a small number of layoffs in the States.

EMI Music Marketing shuttered its San Francisco office, letting go regional director Fuzzy Swing and three other staffers, sources say. The rest of the San Francisco staffers will work out of their homes and report to the Los Angeles office.

MAKING TRACKS: Exiting the Musicland Group are Laurie Clark, senior VP of audio, and Lynne Murphy, VP of audio. Clarke will continue to serve as a consultant, while Murphy has been replaced by Scott Burtens.

SO SORRY! I incorrectly spelled Steve Harrington’s name in the April 3 issue. Harrington is VP of music at Baker & Taylor.

Videogames

Continued from page 41

management. “It is a mass-market phenomenon.”

At their start in the 1980s, many viewed videogames as a bastardized form of entertainment. But as games ballooned into a $10 billion business, electronic executives were determined to expand their growing consumer base.

EA pruned its Web division in 2001 after acquiring free online game site Pogo. Relating in women with community-styled card games and word puzzles, Pogo was desirable because “It wanted to expand [outside] of teen males,” says Nancy Waisanen, director of marketing for Web games at EA.

As videogames increasingly woo adults, family titles “are an incredibly high-growth area for us,” Gaudu says. Following “Shrek 2,” which four players cooperate to solve certain tasks. EAs family-friendly “Sims” titles, in which players build neighborhoods and societies, have sold millions, he notes.

But the wave is just starting, Saunt says, and family titles have great potential to be just as popular.

Also luring parents to these games is the hunt for exciting content to fill the flat-screen TVs they are purchasing. Xbox, PlayStation 2 and other consoles are increasingly moving into family rooms.

“Once you’ve got the hardware in the living room—out of the children’s bedrooms—it becomes a different proposition in terms of what games you purchase,” Saunt says.

CATERING TO THE FAMILY

The Virgin Megastore chain revamped all of its videogame displays late last year to entice parents to buy. Instead of blindly stacking titles, stores have built several in-store displays devoted to a single game like “The Sims.”

“We’re trying to demystify the buying of computing games,” Saunt says. “Parents sometimes don’t know where to start.”

Xbox launched its first family-focused promotional campaign last holiday season, Penello says. Between November and December, each Xbox console came bundled with free copies of THQ’s “Get Off Your Ass” and “Star Wars: The Clone Wars.”

“Historically, there’s been a perception that we are the [guy-centric] hardcore game box. But our brand is about social gaming. It’s a place where all kinds of kids can come and enjoy entertainment,” Penello says.

Xbox’s share of the console market, versus competitors like PlayStation 2 (PS2), spiked 4% during the holiday period compared with one year earlier. That success is pushing Xbox to explore more family-oriented initiatives.

EAs Waisanen says the company has high hopes for its EA Pogo expansion, termed Club Pogo. Users pay $4.95 per month to compete in a more varied roster of multi-player games for prizes.

“Somebody goes to college and they can play against their parents [back] home,” Waisanen says, noting that most Pogo games enable players to chat with each other.

After eight months, Club Pogo has already signed up 250,000 people, 75% of whom are women.

Sony Computer Entertainment is assessing the progress of its family game “EyeToy,” which was released last November for $49.99 exclusively on PS2.

Through an attached USB camera, one to four players can insert themselves into games as the main characters. Included in the product are 12 “EyeToy”-compatible videogames, such as “King Fox,” “Boxing Champ” and “UFO Juggler.” In “UFO Juggler,” for example, players kick and punch onscreen images by physically making the motions in front of the camera instead of pressing buttons on a controller.
Eagle Rock Creates Strong Product Line

BY JILL KIPNIS

LOS ANGELES—Eagle Rock Entertainment is a staunch believer in innovation. The lion’s share of its music DVD projects are shot in high definition (HD) in advance of widespread consumer adoption of HD TV and DVD. Eagle Rock was one of the first companies to screen a music DVD project in theaters before releasing it to retail. And the company has licensed DVD tracks to radio stations as a marketing tactic.

“We are very, very keen on creating awareness,” says Mike Carden, Eagle Rock’s VP for America president of operations/Eagle Rock executive VP. “We are very fast on our feet.”

The 7-year-old company, based in the United Kingdom and with offices in New York, Los Angeles, Paris, Hamburg and Toronto, is continuing its marketing campaign in 2004 amidst numerous staff additions and changes.

CHANGING THE GUARD

Since the January announcement that Eagle Rock executive VP and president of video unit Eagle Vision Steve Sterling was leaving the company, Eagle Rock has made a number of additional staff shifts and new hiring. Eagle Rock’s operations include international and domestic departments for the Eagle Vision division—which also oversees music programming—sales to TV—and its audio division, Eagle Records.

The changes mainly affected the United States’ $55 million operation. Home video or TV proj-ects generate 80% of that figure, and up to 50 Eagle Vision video titles are released per year.

The staff shifts included several promotions. Kate McDonald was upped to VP of TV media sales, Joseph Gallarelo to the new position of TV sales administrator, John Gaydon to head of acquisitions and Rob Gill to director of operations.

Paul Freehaub, formerly at Winstar and PolyGram, was brought in as VP of marketing and product development. Eagle Vision’s staff numbers 100. These staff changes will reinvigorate Eagle Rock’s focus on DVD, Carden says.

While Eagle Vision has not neared any music DVD sales records with its titles, the industry’s health bodes well for the company this year.

According to the Recording Industry Ass’n of America, 17.5 million music DVDs shipped in 2003, a 64% increase over 2002.

Among Eagle Vision’s key titles are “The Up in Smokey Tour” (2001) release culled from the 2000 rap tour, with 466,000 units, “Diana Krall—Live in Paris” with 96,000 units, and “Usher: Live—Evolution $701” with 34,000 units. (Nielsen SoundScan provided all figures.)

So far this year, music DVDs have accounted for 11% of all DVD releases, according to the DVD Release Report.

Because major labels have not been heavily involved with music DVD until recently (Billboard, Feb. 21), Eagle Vision may have a leg up in consumers’ minds, says Lindsay-Brown, Eagle Rock managing director/international director of DVD sales and distribution.

“We started doing DVDs on day one,” he notes. “We were [an] innovator.”

NEW RELEASES

Eagle Vision is currently re-releasing a solid slate of music DVD projects that it says will compete with major-label projects by building on past marketing success.

One of the main releases is the John Lee Hooker DVD “Come and See About Me” (June 1, $19.98). The title will be linked to a new Hooker CD that Eagle Records is releasing, “Jack O’Diamonds: 1949 Recordings” (May 18).

Eagle Rock forged a worldwide licensing deal with the Hooker estate last year (Billboard, Sept. 13, 2003). The DVD was culled from 300 hours of tape and includes 19 collaborative performances with such artists as Eric Clapton and Bonnie Raitt.

Carden notes that numerous promotions will tie the titles together with the John Lee Hooker Foundation, which provides help for inner-city kids who want to play the guitar. The DVD’s marketing plan will also focus on the quality of the disc.

“We don’t go out to make a VHS and make a DVD out of it,” Brown says. “The proof of that is the John Lee Hooker project, which we have re-stored to make it the best that we can.”

Eagle Rock also works very closely with artists on its DVD projects.

For the May 18 release “Busta Rhymes: Everything Remains Raw,” Rhymes was “involved with every inch of the production,” Carden says.

The DVD contains HS concert footage and features about Rhymes’ career. Marketing plans will include a focus on the HD element.

“We will shoot the majority of our new projects in high def, because we want the fan to get all the bells and

whistles,” Carden explains.

Consumers are just starting to purchase HD-compatible TVs in notable numbers. According to the Consumer Electronics Ass’n, 3.7 million digital TV units will be sold this year. The first mainstream HD DVDs are expected by early 2006 (see Picture This, this page).

Similarly, the May 18 release of Cat Stevens’ “Magikat: Earth Tour” was created with Stevens’ direct participation.

“We’re going to have a screening and have him there,” Carden adds.

Eagle Rock promoted the Usher DVD in theaters in November 2002 (Billboard, Dec. 21, 2002). Carden believes the company has found a strong individual in the strategy.

The company will also continue using radio as a marketing tactic with the June 15 release of “The Man Show—The Complete Second Season” (Eagle Rock also releases select TV and documentary projects.)

Building on its strategy for last year’s “The Cure—Trilogy,” which saw the company licensing tracks directly from the concert DVD to radio, Eagle Rock will air skit spots on 273 stations nationwide.

“We market and promote DVDs much as anyone would promote an audio project,” Carden says. “We go to radio to help us.”

Blu-ray Group Plans Format’s U.S. Debut

High-definition (HD) DVD is coming soon.

The Blu-ray Disc Founders group has announced that its HD DVD players will hit the United States in late 2005 or early 2006. Columbia TriStar Home Entertainment is expected to release the first Blu-ray discs.

Though Blu-ray is competing with other HD standards from Toshiba/NEC and Pionix, the 13-member Blu-ray group is confident that studios will endorse Blu-ray.

“We have had very good conversations with the studios,” says Benjamin Feingold, president of Columbia TriStar. Columbia TriStar parent Sony is a key player in spearheading the Blu-ray standard. “It will be love at first sight when they see it. People will be stunned with how fast Blu-ray will be accepted.”

Feingold believes that consumers will naturally move from the current DVD format to Blu-ray. “DVD sell-through is driving revenue, but we need to raise the bar of excitement,” he notes. “HD movies are the expectation.”

Blu-ray’s discs have five times the storage capacity of a regular DVD and offer more bandwidth than their competitors. The discs also have built-in copy protection and other innovations, such as anti-fingerprint technology.

At a reception held in conjunc-
tion with the Digital Hollywood conference at the Loews Santa Monica Beach Hotel in Los Angeles March 29, director Guillermo del Toro (“Hellboy”) extolled Blu-ray’s virtues, pointing out the differences in standard DVD versus Blu-ray in a split-screen presentation of “Lawrence of Arabia.”

Blu-ray has brought together competing hardware manufacturers, who extol the format’s quality. “This will be the format for the next 20 years,” says Erinn Sullivan, director of planning for Panasonic Hollywood Laboratory. “That’s why we are working together on the specifications.”

Other Blu-ray group members include Dell, Hewlett-Packard, Hitachi, LG, Matsushita, Mit- subishi, Royal Philips, Samsung, Sharp, TDK and Thomson.

A Blu-ray player is on the market in Japan for approximately $3,500. It is not known how much the U.S. players will cost.

“MONSTER” DEAL: Blockbuster subsidiary DEJ Productions has reaped huge benefits from its investment in “Monster.”

The film, which earned Charlize Theron a best-actress Oscar this year for the role of serial killer Aileen Wuornos, first crossed video-acquisition-company DEJ’s path about two years ago, according to producer Randy Jenkins. DEJ ultimately became a producing partner in “Monster.”

“We didn’t have a theatrical distribution infrastructure,” DEJ says. “[It was] a really difficult, expensive business that by definition winds up involving more failures than risks. I hope that what we have been able to accomplish with ‘Monster’ will get us on folks’ radar.”

The 5-year-old DEJ will be releasing fewer direct-to-video titles to focus on projects that have theatrical potential, Reimer says. The company previously released about 85 direct-to-video titles each year. In 2004, it expects to release 50 such titles.

DEJ is currently prepping a potential theatrical release for “Back in the Day,” an urban drama starring Ving Rhames. The proj- ect is its most expensive to date, with a budget of more than $10 million.

“Monster” will be released on home video June 1 in a deal between DEJ, which owns the title’s domestic video-distribution rights, and Columbia TriStar Entertainment. It will be available as a single disc ($26.95) and as a two-disc DVD set ($39.95) featuring extended extras.

ON THE VIDEO BEAT: A new DVD recorder, the DIVA from Malata North America, claims to offer the longest DVD recording ability in the marketplace, at 15 hours. DIVA has started shipping to retail and is expected to sell for $300. . . The Video Software Dealers Ass’n’s East Coast Video Show will now be known as the Home Entertainment Retail Expo. It takes place Sept. 21-22 in Baltimore.

Hart Sharp Video launches Hart Sharp Video Does with the May 25 release of “Common Ground,” a look at American and German soldiers from World War II. Up to 10 documentaries are expected per year. . . A&E Home Video has acquired the North American video rights to 23 titles from the Themas Library of Fre-mantleMedia. The deal includes “The Benny Hill Show,” documentary series “The World at War” and children’s program “The Wind in the Willows.”
## Billboard Top DVD Sales

**April 2004**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label/Distributing Label</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Release Date</th>
<th>Price</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Columbia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2003</td>
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<tr>
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<td>6</td>
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## Billboard Top VHS Sales

**April 2004**

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**Note:** The prices listed are suggested retail prices. Actual prices may vary depending on the retailer and the location.
Sony Lets Artists Get Loopy With Ilona

BY CHRISTOPHER WALSH

Sample and loop libraries are fast changing multitrack recording possibilities. These sample libraries offer a full range of instruments played by real musicians. They are heard on recordings far and wide, from music mixes to TV commercials and computer-based games.

More recently, vocalists are lending their unique instrument to sample libraries, sometimes gaining greater recognition in the process.

Such is the case with Sony Media Services’ (SMS) Ilona Universal Female Vocal Toolkit, a two-CD collection of samples by Polish vocalist Ilona from the Loops for Accia library line. The collection features three octaves of “ohh” and “ahh” vocal samples, with long and short durations for every note. Lexicon reverbs and decay times can also be applied to notes to tailor samples to specific compositions or sonic textures. The toolkit can be used with any hardware or software tool that can import WAV files, according to SMS’ Mike Scheibinger.

“It can not only be used in software, but it’s designed to be played across the keys of a keyboard sampler so that a person can key in a specific note instead of a vocal phrase,” he says.

Ilona and producer Jonathan Todd, recording samples for the legions of digital audio workstation-based producers, sound designers and remixers was a means to expose a European artist to an international audience. Sony’s acidplanet.com user community, Todd says, has been an especially fertile environment for the Ilona collection.

“My analogy is that Acid is to artistic creation what Pro Tools is to studio recording,” Todd says. “The artist/studio/producer relationship remains the same, but the tools that you have to tweak with, pre- and post-recording, are wildly new.”

By creating a contest on acidplanet.com for remixing Ilona songs, Todd chose five remixers for future collaboration. The results are receiving radio and club play, while Ilona’s vocal samples, Todd says, are being heard on TV commercials and other programming.

“For the production side, I love it,” Todd says. “As a producer, you are really free to work the artist in different directions and to work the end result. The market wants this.”

Todd singles out the gaming world, which uses loop-based music. “The best thing,” Todd adds, “is that because of the Ilona loops, now people can get a human sound into an electronics-sounding piece of music.”

In recent years, such products as the Vienna Symphonic Library, Synthesys’ J-Drums and Sampleheads’ Peter Erskine Living Drums have garnered great interest.

The DVD-based Vienna Symphonic Library’s Pro Edition features more than 240 gigabytes of acoustic instruments sounding a cross-section of notes and note lengths, captured at high resolution in premier acoustic spaces.

Peter Erskine Living Drums features thousands of performances played on various drum kits, which are available on CD and CD-ROM or as downloads.

---

Winer’s BiCoastal Is Two Studios In One

BiCoastal Music, a recently expanded and upgraded recording studio in Ossining, N.Y., illustrates the colliding worlds of professional and home recording studios.

The digital audio workstation has enabled a level of professionalism previously unattainable in a home studio. Though Pro Tools HD systems may be as common in private or home studios as in commercial facilities, BiCoastal has gone several steps further.

Recently, owner Hal Winer installed a Solid State Logic (SSL) C200 large-format digital console in his expanded studio, which was redesigned and rebuilt by the Russ Berger Design Group.

“I was running a home studio,” Winer says, “focusing on jazz musicians. In 2001, I got this project with Jack Wilkins [‘Reunion’], who came in with the Brecker brothers, Eddie Gomez and Jack DeJohnette. ‘All of a sudden the floodgates opened, and these heavy jazz guys started coming up from the city. A lot of them are local and Westchester County-based anyway.’

But a bedroom/living room combination proved an inadequate studio/control room to accommodate quartets and quintets. So Winer contacted several architectural firms, he says, and he was impressed that Berger understood his situation.

‘He said, ‘You are the new breed of studio,’ ‘ Winer recalls. ‘With my clientele and location close to the city, it made a lot of sense to expand. And our room is absolutely spectacular.’

BiCoastal remains open to the clients it has served in the past, Winer says, despite its high-end equipment list, which also includes Pro Tools HD.

“But in order to pay for this new facility,” he explains, “I’m opening it up to a select group of engineers and producers who live in Westchester and are used to commuting to the city but don’t necessarily want to. And of course, I’m not going to shut the doors to people who want to come.

“But it is a private facility,” Winer quickly adds. “There’s no sign on the door, and I’m not interested in tour busses and entourages.”

PERFECT SHELTER: One of the most enjoyable aspects of writing this column is the opportunity to attend recording and mixing sessions in some of the world’s top facilities.

Such was the case on a recent afternoon, when Gov’t Mule guitarist/vocalist Warren Haynes and producer Michael Barbiero welcomed a visitor to Soundtrack Studios in Manhattan. Barbiero is mixing Gov’t Mule’s upcoming album, set for a September release, on an SSL 9000 J Series console.

If the track “Perfect Shelter” is any indication, Mule fans will love the band’s latest project. Now a quartet of Haynes, drummer Matt Abts, keyboardist Danny Louis and bass player Andy Hess, Mule plays with the same intensity and musical telepathy that it had in its power-trio era with the late Allen Woody.

Haynes advises fans to expect some new sonic textures. “This is our sixth album,” he says. “We really owe it to ourselves to explore all the different directions that we feel in touch with.”

If the tracks were recorded to analog tape, then transferred to Pro Tools for overdubs, at Water Music in Hoboken, N.J.

Haynes and Barbiero have logged considerable time at Water Music with Gov’t Mule, the Allman Brothers Band and the Bottle Rockets.
South Africa's Hip-Hopping
Surge In Popularity Could Translate To Int'l Success

BY DIANE COETZER

JOHANNESBURG—When Johannesburg hip-hop act Skwatta Kamp went gold last month with the album “Mkhukhu Funkshen,” it marked South African hip-hop’s coming of age.

Skwatta Kamp signed to Johannesburg-based indie Gallo Record Co. in 2003 and released “Mkhukhu Funkshen” Dec. 12. It has shipped more than 25,000 units in South Africa, making the band the first local hip-hop act to achieve gold status.

“Skwatta Kamp’s hip-hop is unique,” Gallo Music Group deputy CEO Sipho Sithole says. “The fact that they locate their lyrics in the specifics of living in Joburg while making globally accessible music means it has a chance of finding an international audience.”

Skwatta Kamp’s sales show it has expanded beyond domestic hip-hop’s traditional black fan base. But the act insists it has not made any compromises by shifting to South Africa’s leading domestic label.

“When we signed with Gallo,” group member Lebogang says, “we made it clear we wanted the maximum amount of creative control.”

Other domestic hip-hop acts on Gallo—the South African licensees for Warner Music Group—include Mischief and Crazy Lu; the company has also signed Kenyan hip-hop act Guli Guli Maji Maji for South Africa.

A BROAD MOVEMENT

Although Johannesburg is seen as the vibrant center of hip-hop in South Africa, the music has a strong base in Cape Town as well.

The first South African hip-hop act to earn international success (Continued on page 60)

Japanese Labels Log On To Downloads

BY STEVE McCLURE

TOKYO—The March 31 launch of the Mora service in Japan marks a renewed attempt to kick-start the legitimate download business in the world’s second-largest recorded music market.

“Japanese labels and Sony Music Entertainment Japan (SMEJ) have joined with several independent Japanese labels to make repertoire available on Mora (http://mora.jp), which is operated by Tokyo-based Label Gate. Seventeen Japanese labels, including Toshiba EMI and SMEJ, jointly own Label Gate, which provides the systems, operations, online billing, digital storage and digital distribution services for Mora.

The development of legitimate download services in Japan has lagged behind the business in other major territories. But Label Gate promotion team assistant manager Toru Nagamine says the time is right for Mora’s launch. “E-commerce has grown up in Japan,” he claims. “People are getting used to making payments over the Internet.”

MUCH MATERIAL TO CHOOSE FROM

Sony and Toshiba-EMI will each make some 25,000 tracks, comprising domestic and foreign repertoire, available for download by the end of April.

(Continued on page 60)

German Music Shipments Down

BY WOLFGANG SPAHR

HAMBURG—The German record industry claims that illegal downloading and CD burning led to a 20% decrease in shipments during 2003.

“The economic consequences of illegal copying are being felt by the creative music scene, as the music industry is the greatest investor in music creativity and the most important source of income for artists,” says Gerd Gebhardt, chairman of domestic labels body BPW.

The trade value of shipments in Germany fell 19.8% during 2003 to £1.65 billion euros ($2 billion), according to new figures from BPW.

“All told, revenues in the industry have plummeted by almost 40% since 1997,” Gebhardt claims.

“Massive copying of music is leaving the deepest traces in pop repertoires,” he adds. “Pop music has held the largest genre share by far of shipments here for many years." However, its share of all units shipped fell from 43.6% in 2002 to 40% in 2003.

Rock’s share also shrank, to 15.2% in 2003 from 15.9% in 2002. Rock and pop lost out to niche markets including dance, schlager (German folk), children’s music and audiobooks.

The declining market conditions are hitting music merchants particularly hard, says Dr. Heinz Stroh, managing director of the German National Assn. of Music Retailers.

(Continued on page 61)
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**Hits of the World** is compiled by Billboard/London.
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### COMMON CURRENCY

A weekly scoreboard of albums simultaneously attaining top 10 chart status in three or more leading world markets.

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<tr>
<td>Eminem</td>
<td>UK</td>
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### N'Dour's Message From 'Egypt'

“It was meant to be a very personal record,” Youssou N'Dour says of his new Nonesuch album, ‘Egypt’. “But with what is happening in the world right now, it seems like it has grown into something greater.” Unlike the Afro-pop style that brought him international success with the hit single “7 Seconds,” “Egypt” is an introspective, devotional journey to the heart of N'Dour's faith as a Muslim. The artist—who recorded most of “Egypt” in 1999 with an Egyptian orchestra and traditional Senegalese musicians in Cairo and Dakar—originally judged the album “too private” for release. However, subsequent world events changed his mind, so what started as a personal expression of faith has become a public statement of potential political significance. “My religion needs to be better known for its positive side,” he says. “Maybe this music can move us toward a greater understanding of the peaceful message of Islam.” “Egypt” will be released internationally in May. NIGEL WILLIAMS

### Global Pulse

**Nigel Williamson, Editor**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Chart</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Spain</td>
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### Friendly Buddha

Belgian duo Plastic Buddha shifts the emphasis from instrumental lounge music to more structured songs with second album "Our Friends Eclectic." The N.E.W.S. label, the band's 2001 debut, "Throwing Stones in Pudding Pools," made Pieter Verschueren and Stephan Parmentier major names on the international lounge scene. With the new album, "Our Friends Eclectic," the duo have returned to writing and singing, whereas its first album was largely samples, Verschueren explains. The single "Private," featuring guest vocals by Lisa Renfro, is receiving considerable European radio play.

**Mark Maes**

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**BOSNIA’S PEARL**: Bosnian rocker Irina & Vi have released their second album. "U Rijevska," little more than one year after their break-through debut, "Kov Mi Vi." The eight tracks on the new set celebrate the remarkable voice of frontwoman Irina Kapetanovic, who has been likened to Janis Joplin. Yet she is reluctant to see the band as merely a vehicle for her own talents. "It started..."
Kazaa Case Grinds On In Australia

BY CHRISTIE ELIEZER

SYDNEY—Two months after a high-profile series of raids in Australia were linked to Kazaa, there is still no sign of a court date for a civil case against the file-sharing service's parent.

Justice Brian Tamberlin said he required more time to deliberate before deciding whether to give Kazaa parent Sharman Networks leave to appeal the court decision that allowed the Music Industry Piracy Investigation (MIPI) unit to conduct the Feb. 6 raids. He made the announcement at a March 29 hearing in Sydney's Federal Court. No date was set for the next appeal hearing.

Sharman CEO Nikki Hemming calls the seizure of data during the raids “heavy-handed” and “unnecessary.”

Lawyers for Sharman had lodged an application March 11 to appeal in the Federal Court against a March 4 ruling by Justice Murray Wilcon. That ruling dismissed Sharman's application to have evidence collected during the raids declared invalid (Entertainment Law Weekly, March 8).

The company argued that Wilcon should not have granted the search order that authorized the raids.

Sharman's lawyer, Francis Douglas QC, argued March 29 that MIPI's application for the order painted Sharman in a negative light. Sharman also claimed that the judge should have taken into account a 2003 Los Angeles Federal Court ruling—currently being appealed by music publishers and film studios—and a later judgment in the Netherlands.

The U.S. judgment (Billboard Bulletin, April 28, 2003) cleared Internet companies Grokster and StreamCast of liability for users who swap files using their software. Sharman was a co-defendant in those initial lawsuits and has cooperated with the appeal process.

In December 2003, the Netherlands Supreme Court ruled that the two Dutch programmers who developed the Kazaa software could not be held liable for copyright infringement of music or movies swapped through the service.

Hemming calls MIPI's pursuit of Kazaa “indicative of the recording industry's increasing desperation to crush peer-to-peer technology. We have compiled in full [with] U.S. proceedings and will continue to do so in this case under appropriate legal procedures.”

PRIVILEGED DATA

Among the 12 premises MIPI raid-ed Feb. 6 were Sharman's offices in Sydney and the homes of its two senior executives. Also raided were Sydney offices of U.S.-based peer-to-peer distribution platform Alten and its subsidiary Brilliant Digital Entertainment. Both have business links with Sharman Networks.

Sydney-based law firm Blake Dawson Waldron currently holds the evidence that MIPI seized and downloaded from computers. MIPI nominated the firm on the day of the raids, when Sharman announced that it would challenge the validity of the execution warrants.

MIPI and Brilliant Digital contend that some of the information seized is privileged and not relevant to the MIPI case.

At a March 23 Federal Court hearing before Wilcon, Sharman and Brilliant Digital were instructed to negotiate an access proceeding with MIPI by May 14. That would allow the companies to go through the data in the presence of independent solicitors and a computer forensic expert.

Wilcon refused MIPI's request for earlier access to the material. He also rejected Sharman's request that all proceedings in the MIPI case be stayed until its appeal was heard.

MIPI GM Michael Speck welcomes that decision, regardless of delays in Sharman's appeal process. "This is the second time Sharman Networks has lost out in moves to delay the case over its Internet file-swapping operations," he says.

At the request of MIPI, Wilcon has added Alten, Brilliant Digital Entertainment and the latter's Sydney-based CEO, Kevin Bermeister, and chief technology officer, Anthony Rose, as respondents to its action.

If MIPI is allowed to pursue the civil case, those respondents will also be accused of infringing the copyrights of the six record companies that own the unit. Those are Universal Music Australia, Festival Mushroom Records, EMI Music Australia, Sony Music Australia, Warner Music Australia and BMG Australia.

"The industry is fearful of our independence," Bermeister says. "They believe we are a target and believe they can run us out of town. But they are a much bigger target than we are, and it won't be long before content owners, artists and labels call their bluff."

The NEXT BIG THING

There are signs that homegrown hip-hop might be South Africa's major international musical breakthrough. Again, the country's independent labels are taking a leading role.

Sandton-based Outrageous Records has already raised the profile of its act, H2O, who in December 2003 released the album "Amaz! Motti." Earlier last year, an H2O track, "It's Wonderful," got heavy exposure through MTV Europe, topping the chart on the broadcaster's World Chart Express show.

"We plan on using mix tapes and more to market our product," label owner Dinozio says. "We're determined to ensure we create a brand of hip-hop that the local and international community can relate to."

YFM DJ Bad Boy T attended last year's Billboard/Universal Urban Radio Networks R&B/Hip-Hop Awards, broadcasting his afternoon show for three days from the event at the Miami Conference Center. He says that South African hip-hop is "the next big thing."

"The dam walls are about to burst," he claims. "So much has been trickling out over the years—starting with the likes of Prophets Of Da City—and now it's becoming a flood of music with artists who have the capability to make an impact around the world."
**British independent label Telstar Records** has gone into administration. Telstar’s artist roster includes Ms-Teeq, Cheeky Girls and Ladytron. Andrew Stoneman and Paul Williams, partners at London-based chartered accountancy group Menzies Corporate Restructuring, have been appointed joint administrators.

“We are currently considering a number of ways forward, including the possibility of a realistic sale of the intellectual property and back catalog of the business,” Stoneman says. “We have not discounted any options.” A spokesman for parent Telstar Music Group says it is “too early” to speculate on possible outcomes. The group’s other operating units are unaffected. They include Wildstar Records (a joint-venture label with London-based broadcaster Capital Radio), music publisher Strong Songs and media-buying company Media Mix. In an April 5 statement, Telstar Music Group co-chairman Neil Palmer said the decision was made after talks of a deal with third parties “failed to reach a positive conclusion.” The move “reflects the very serious problems that the industry as a whole is experiencing,” he added.

**LARS BRANDLE**

The third annual Arton Greek Music Awards were dominated by veteran vocalist Harry Alexiou, who won five awards March 30, including album of the year, best male soloist, best songwriter, best vocalist in a duet and best CD cover. The awards were organized by national commercial TV channel Mega and the local affiliate of the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry. The ceremony was held at the Nikea Weightlifting Centre on the outskirts of Athens and was broadcast live by Mega.

**MARIA PARANITANES**

**U.K.-based digital-music operator Wippit** has launched an upgraded edition of its subscription service. The new version offers an à la carte download option and new entertainment software products. It also enables customers to pay through their mobile-phone bills—a strategy aimed at attracting young customers who do not own credit cards. The company has agreements with U.K.-based mobile operators that include Vodafone, Orange and T-Mobile. Wippit CEO Paul Myers says he is in talks with other operators in the United States, Germany, Spain and Sweden ahead of Wippit’s planned expansion into those markets. The service upgrade follows recent European licensing agreements with EMI and BMG that have seen Wippit’s catalog grow to 150,000 tracks.

Wippit also licenses music from more than 200 independent labels. Wippit’s annual subscription fee is increasing to £49.99 ($91.50) from £30 ($55). “We increased the subscription rates to reflect the growing quality of the service after EMI and BMG came on board,” Myers says, “and we shall increase them again when we sign up the other majors.”

**JULIANA KORANTENG**

**EMI Music Italy** VP of strategic affairs and human resources Gianluigi Chiadariolli explained the company April 2. Chiadariolli, a lawyer by trade, is also president of Italian broadcast and public performance collecting society SCF. “I decided to leave EMI,” he says, “in order to dedicate myself fully to rights collection on behalf of the Italian record industry.” A replacement has yet to be announced. Chiadariolli’s departure is understood to be unrelated to the company’s worldwide restructuring, which will see the departure of 1,500 staffers globally.

**MARK WOR DEN**

**Nupser chairman/CEO Chris Gorl** will deliver the keynote speech at the “Creative Financing and Music” seminar April 20 in Dublin (Billboard, Feb. 14). The one-day event at Chief O’Neill’s Hotel is being organized on behalf of the Irish government with the support of the European Commission as part of Ireland’s tenure of the European Union presidency. Gorl’s speech will address how to overcome investor wariness of the music business. Among other participants will be Irish government minister for tourism and transport minister John O’Donoghue; Irish broadcaster David McWilliams; and European Commission director general for education and culture Nikolaus van der Pas.

**LEO CENDROWICZ**

**Mean Fiddler Music Group** will resurrect its Fielday festival June 20 in London’s Finsbury Park. The British promoter and venue operator canceled the annual Irish music festival last year, citing a lack of headlining acts. This year’s lineup will be headlined by Bob Dylan. Other acts on the bill include the Counting Crows, veteran Irish singer/songwriter Christy Moore and U.S. country/folk artist John Prine. The Fielday started in 1990.

**LARS BRANDLE**

For the latest breaking news, go to billboard.biz.

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**Portugal Indies Form Group**

**Trade Body Intends To Better Reflect The Local Industry**

**BY CHRIS GRAEME**

**LISBON**—Portuguese independent labels are setting up a trade body in a bid to bolster local music.

More than 20 of the 60 established Portuguese Indies have so far agreed to join Editoras Independentes Portuguesas (EIP), says Alex Cortez Pinto, owner/director of Lisbon-based indie Transmoderadores. Cortez is spearheading the formation of the body.

Cortez says the group is being formed because existing labels body AFP “doesn’t reflect the reality of this industry here.” AFP is the local affiliate of the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry.

Cortez says EIP will pressure the government to change the way Portuguese music is supported by radio and TV. It will also lobby for the reduction of VAT (sales tax) on recordings from the current 19% to 5%.

The total trade value of shipments in the Portuguese market fell 18.5% to 81.5 million euros ($98.7 million) in 2003, compared with 99.5 million euros ($121 million) in 2002. In the wake of steadily falling sales, major labels here have been trimming their local rosters in recent years. Of the majors, only Universal and EMI now retain a substantial interest in domestic repertoire.

The major labels are dealing with a major crisis scenario,” Cortez notes, “and while EMI and Universal are making strong efforts to continue to work with local bands, others like BMG and Warner have effectively closed down in Lisbon and become branch marketing offices under Madrid.”

“Since the majors began cutting back on local talent, ‘lots of new bands in the areas of pop, rock, dance, jazz, hip-hop and electronic have seen their work recorded by indies to critical acclaim. Cortez says. He adds that in 1998, there were only 20 indie labels in Portugal, vs. 60 today. However, broadcast opportunities are limited, as the major radio groups here favor international repertoire ahead of home-grown material. According to the local arm of research company Music Control, only four Portuguese acts reached the weekly top 10 national radio airplay listings during 2003.

Universal Music Portugal managing director Toze Brito concedes “that a lot of future new music [in Portugal] will fall under the umbrella of the small independents.” But he insists that “there will always be plenty of room for majors like Universal and EMI to continue to invest in local talent, despite the fact that our market is much smaller than the Spanish one.”

AFP chairman Eduardo Simoes says that the companies forming the new group are not currently AFP members. “They knew new body was similar to other objectives as the AFP,” he adds, “it may not be possible for them to hold membership with us too. Our rules do not allow a [company] to be simultaneously a member of the AFP and a member of another association with similar objectives.”

The founding members of EIP will meet shortly to discuss the new association’s statutes. A provisional board of directors, chaired by Cortez, will be appointed for a period of two months from that date. Full elections will be held at the end of that period. Cortez is hoping the new body will become a legal entity within one month of the forthcoming meeting.

**German Music**

Continued from page 57

“‘The situation for small record stores is particularly dramatic,’ Stroh says, ‘because the record industry has given preference to the large supermarkets in terms of marketing and pricing, meaning that fewer and fewer outlets actually stock music.’”

**A&R WORRIES**

Other sectors of the music business have been quick to point the finger of blame toward the A&R policies of German labels in recent years.

Stroh cites a “creative crisis” at labels. “They have gone for quick successes such as [TV talent shows], but in doing so, have destroyed the basis for creative conditions for talented newcomers,” he says.

German majors have been “neglecting creative A&R work,” agrees Hamburg-based Michael Karnstett, European president/German managing director of publisher PeerMusic.

Karnstett accuses labels of being “obsessed by youth in their personnel policy” and “spending unrealistically on ‘casting shows’ to push [records] into the singles and albums charts as a sign of strength.”

As a result, he claims, a “crisis of confidence” has been triggered in the German music market. “The release of ‘one-hit wonders’ has caused many record buyers to call the value of current music into question,” Karnstett says. He suggests, has frequently driven them “into the arms of illegal file-sharing platform operators, who are ruining our business today like the plague.”

**INCREASED COPYING**

Overall, shipments in Germany totaled 183.2 million units in 2003, down from 223.9 million in 2002. Album shipments fell to 133.6 million from 166.8 million; singles shipments fell 32.8% to 24.4 million.

BPW released a study along with the figures claiming that 26.6 million people made 714 million CD copies in Germany in 2003. The year before, 25 million people made 515 million copies. The survey, conducted by research company GfK, claims that 90% of consumers who own a CD burner use it to copy music.

The study also claims that 7.3 million Germans downloaded 602 million songs last year, mostly from illegal sources on the Internet. This compares with 8.4 million people and 622 million downloads in 2002.

Users who burned music onto CDs were found to have spent 10% on music downloading and streaming and 11% of music revenue on direct purchases, according to a recent report. According to BPW, with a further 1,600 jobs lost in the retail sector.

The trade body estimates that the music industry has shed 6,000 jobs during the past three years.
Do you have a passion for music? Do you have what it takes to make a difference? If you said yes, then the Recording Academy is looking for you!

The National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, best known for the Grammy® Awards, is seeking its next Director. HPC has been a landmark institution in Hollywood and worldwide Christianity for over 100 years. The Director will provide full-time leadership, management, and community development and implementation, fundraising and public relations direction and serve as the primary liaison between the programs and ministries of EM, HPC and the community impacted by our projects. The successful candidate will be a mature Christian with a background in the entertainment industry. Visit www.fpch.org for a detailed position description. We will only consider those candidates who respond via email with a résumé and cover letter describing their interests, background, passion for such a leadership position, Christian journey, and other relevant information. This material should be sent to emsearch@fpch.org by May 1.

Director
Entertainment Ministries (EM) of Hollywood Presbyterian Church (HPC) is seeking its next Director. HPC has been a landmark institution in Hollywood and worldwide Christianity for over 100 years. The Director will provide full-time leadership, management, development and implementation, fundraising and public relations direction and serve as the primary liaison between the programs and ministries of EM, HPC and the community impacted by our projects. The successful candidate will be a mature Christian with a background in the entertainment industry. Visit www.fpch.org for a detailed position description. We will only consider those candidates who respond via email with a résumé and cover letter describing their interests, background, passion for such a leadership position, Christian journey, and other relevant information. This material should be sent to emsearch@fpch.org by May 1.

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Looking for ambitious, creative and highly motivated individuals to fill sales positions in our Chicago office. Sales savvy candidates will be dealing with domestic and foreign record and merchandise retailers, opening alternative and lifestyle accounts along with sales and marketing strategies for our music and merchandise. The ideal candidate would have at least two years experience in music/merchandise sales, strong computer, analytical, communication and people skills. We have a competitive incentive and commission based sales program (salary + base + commission) along with full benefits. Please fax your résumé to: 312.873.3869.
**Lonely Boys**

Continued from page 13

Los Lonely Boys are the first Or act to move up to Sony Music Distribution.

**AUSTIN ADOPTS BOYS**

Austin radio and retail adopted the mixture of hot guitar licks, balladry and Tex-Mex touches concocted by Henry Garza and his brothers, bassist Jolo and drummer Rigoberto, even before the album's release last August.

Jody Denberg, PD at Austin's influential triple-A KGSR, has had the album in heavy rotation since last summer. "The first time the boys heard themselves on the radio, they were driving to Austin and I played them," Denberg recalls. "They pulled over and called me up, crying."

Denberg adds, "It's hard not to be sold [on the band]. They're handsome, they're charismatic, they've got songs and they've got a guitarist who channels Stevie Ray [Vaughan] and Carlos [Santana]."

Denberg invited the band to play KGSR's annual anniversary party in December. Five songs cut live at the "Austin City Limits" studio subsequently became "Heaven Live," a value-added disc key Austin indie store Waterloo Records offered for free with the purchase of the album.

Waterloo owner John Kunz says, "RED [Distribution] and Or came to me and said, 'What can we do to keep sales going on this thing?' By the time it went through all the layers and Epic got involved, they decided to do this piece exclusively for us."

Kunz has sold a staggering 11,000 copies of "Los Lonely Boys" at his store. "It was our strongest first day and debut week ever," he says. "For a debut record, that's pretty phenomenal."

This issue, the album is No. 1 on the Top Heatseekers chart and jumps 130-101 on The Billboard 200.

But Austin embraced the band during the recent South by Southwest Music Conference. In the highest-profile of several appearances there, the group drew 25,000 at an Auditorium Shores concert.

Los Lonely Boys took home band, album and song of the year honors at the Austin Music Awards, handed out on the eve of SXSW.

Following SXSW, the album's weekly sales jumped from 790 to 2,606, according to Nielsen SoundScan. "A huge amount of it can be attributed to the Austin phenomenon," or Music director of sales and marketing Dan Mackta says.

Another factor favoring Los Lonely Boys in the Texas capital is the active sponsorship of local hero Willie Nelson.

The band has opened several shows for the country legend, cut its album at his Pedernales Studio in Austin and performed with him and reggae star Toots Hibbert on KGSR during SXSW.

"He just took us under his wing, bro," Henry says. "He's like our godfather, man. And who better than Willie Nelson to be on your side, to believe in you."

**Listening Jumps on Board**

Mackta says that other early Los Lonely Boys adopters included triple-A stations like WXPN Philadelphia and WPPK Louisville, Ky.

"The band played at the triple-A conference in Boulder last year," Mackta says. "It was before the album came out, and all the programmers were there. When you see them live, then all of a sudden you want to take them home with you. The band was adopted at that show."

Touring has also been key to breaking the band. Los Lonely Boys have played a string of club shows and opened for George Thorogood and Robert Randolph & the Family Band. They will go out with the Alman Brothers in August.

"We've been goin' like a tornado," Henry says. "Move forward. I want to try to hit those bigger crowds, man."

Corin O'Brien, Jay and Jenny Kimmel have all showcased the band, and Epic is now capitalizing on the exposure with a direct-response TV ad.

Epic's Barnett sees his label's mission as spreading the word to top 40 and rock radio formats. He is encouraged by early spins for the single "Heaven" at Los Angeles top 40 outlets at KYSR (Star 98) and KIIS.

"We're really starting to get some the top 40 action in L.A., San Francisco, Seattle, Portland [ Ore.], Denver, Dallas, Boston. The record's going to get, for sure."

**Junos**

Continued from page 10

Still, it was a memorable event, according to organizer Ross Reynolds, chairman of the Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences. "It was a fabulous night," he said. "There was such a cross-section of talent performing. The energy goes up a whole notch when we hold these awards in different cities."

This year's briskly paced show was, in fact, marked by a record-breaking 15 performances on three stages. Highlights included roots rockers Blackie & the Rodeo Kings (with Kathleen Edwards), opera tenor Ben Heppner, crooner Michael Bublé, McLachlan and Fortado.

As the show's host, Alanis Morissette joked fun at U.S. "censorship." While she didn't bare her breast like Janet Jackson, she did disrobe onstage to reveal a skin-colored, anatomically correct body suit. Informed by the show's assistant director that "we can't show nipples or pubic hair on national TV," she then revealed the fake body parts.

Later, Morissette sang the recently censored line "I can be as hole of the grandest kind" as part of her current single, "Everything." "I really enjoyed the night," Morissette told Billboard after the show. "It was so much fun."

Veteran rocker Alice Cooper inducted producer Bob Ezrin into the Canadian Music Hall of Fame. The well-spoken Ezrin gave the most articulate acceptance speech of the evening, predicting better times for the music industry. "We are going to come to the other side of this," he said.

During an off-camera four-hour dinner and gala the previous night, the majority of the 38 Juno Awards were handed out.

At that event, Warner's Bublé won for top new artist, Holly Cole won best jazz vocal for her Alert Music album "Shade," Shania Twain's "Up!" (Mercury) was named top country album, Hallowax rap poet Buck 65 was awarded top alternative album for "Dance Hall Honky Blues" (Warner) and 50 Cent's "Get Rich Or Die Tryin'" (Interscope) was named top international album.

**RIAA Study**

Continued from page 10

years," Weiss writes.

The study team says that a full explanation for the recent decline in record sales is "beyond the scope of this analysis," but then posits "several plausible reasons, without providing statistical backup.

It suggests "poor macroeconomic conditions"; a reduced number of album releases; growing competition from other forms of entertainment; a reduction in music variety due to radio consolidation; the cost of independent retailer price to gain airplay; and possibly a consumer backlash against record industry tactics."

Russ Crane, president of NPD Music says several studies by his group, using multiple methodologies, have produced opposite conclusions. "Everything we've looked at here sharply disagrees with the results of the Oberholzer-Strumpf study," Crane says. A recent NPD study says a 29% decline in units sold in 2003 due to P2P downloading.

The International Federation of the Phonographic Industry also criticized the Oberholzer-Strumpf study.
Missy, Christina Lead MVPA Nominees

With six nods each, Missy Elliot’s “Pass That Dutch” and Christina Aguilera’s “Fighter” are the top nominees for the 2004 Music Video Production Assn. (MVPA) Awards. The 13th annual MVPA Awards will take place May 20 at the Orpheum Theatre in Los Angeles.

The nominations for “Pass That Dutch” include best art direction, best choreography and best coloring. “Fighter” is nominated for best pop video, best hair and best makeup.

The nominees for director of the year are David LaChapelle (“It’s My Life”), Dave Meyers (“Pass That Dutch”), Florence Sigismundo ("Fighter").

For the first time in its six-year history, Oxygen will pre-empt its regular schedule to devote eight hours of continuous programming to an artist. The network’s Morissette programming block will document the singer’s travels around New York to promote her new album, "So-Called Chaos."

Meanwhile, Sugar Ray has inked a deal with Spike TV for a six-episode reality series, tentatively titled “On the Road.” The band is currently on a U.S. tour to support its Atlantic Records album "In the Pursuit of Leisure." Sugar Ray’s reality show will feature eight contestants working with the band on tour. The winner will get a chance to work at a record company for one year. On the other side of the stage, Richard Branson, founder of Virgin Records and V2 Music, is getting his own reality TV show on the Fox network. Tentatively titled "Ironman’s Big Adventure," the one-hour series will have a concept similar to Donald Trump’s "The Apprentice" on NBC.
Usher Thwarts Big Janet Week

Janet Jackson enjoys the second-best Nielsen SoundScan week of her career, but 381,500 copies is not enough to keep her string of No. 1 albums intact.

The four-times platinum "Control" became her first to reach The Billboard 200's summit in 1986. Four of her next five albums hit No. 1, the lone exception being a 1995 hits compilation that peaked at No. 3. During the SoundScan era, "Janet," in 1993, "The Velvet Rope" in 1997 and "All for You" in 2001 each started at No. 1.

That last-mentioned title also rallied the biggest SoundScan week of her career, when it bowed with 905,000 copies. But, unless it can shuffle its way to No. 1 next issue during the big Easter sales frame, her new "Damita Jo" threatens to break up Jackson's run.

Barring her from sixth No. 1 on The Billboard 200 is Usher, an artist whose appeal in many ways reminds me of Jackson's most popular years. Both artists command strong dance chops that have served their videos well. Both crossed easily from a strong foundation of R&B radio stations to considerable success at top 40 formats.

Kristine W Goes 8 For 8

Disco diva Kristine W sets a new record on Hot Dance Club Play, as "Save My Soul" (Tommy Boy Silver) advances 5-1. That makes her the first artist in the history of this chart to put together a string of eight consecutive chart-toppers.

Even more impressive, that represents Kristine W's entire chart history: She's had eight chart entries and eight No. 1 hits. Two artists have had seven No. 1 club play hits in a row.

Madonna has done it twice and Janet Jackson once. Jackson supplied the vocals on Herb Alpert's "A Poppy" disc hit "Diamonds" but was unreleased. Had she been named-checked on this song, she would also have eight consecutive No. 1s.

BREATHE AGAIN: Thanks to "Naughty Girl" (Capitol) by Beyoncé, songwriters Giorgio Moroder is in the top 10 of The Billboard Hot 100 for the first time in more than 17 years.

Moroder's last top 10 hit was "Take My Breath Away," which was No. 1 for Berlin in September 1986. Ironically, "Take My Breath Away" will probably be Moroder's next No. 1 hit as well, since Jessica Simpson's remake bullets 47-34 this issue.


That gives Moroder two songs in the top 40 portion of the Hot 100 after a long period without any chart activity. The last time Moroder had two songs in the top 40 was August 1986, when Kenny Loggins scored with "Danger Zone" while Berlin's "Take My Breath Away" was on its way to the top.

Moroder was last on the Hot 100 in 1987, when "Crazy World" by Big Trouble peaked at No. 71.

Over the Counter

By Geoff Mayfield

While Jackson was as busy as we've ever seen her during the tracking week that ended April 3—making release-week stops on "Late Night With David Letterman," "Good Morning America" and "On Air With Ryan Seacrest"—radio is the arena that gives Usher a decided edge.

On the pan-format Hot 100 Airplay chart, his chart-topping "Yeah!" sets a new record for single-week audience, with 172.8 million impressions (see Singles Minded, page 72), while "Burn" collects another 92.9 million. By contrast, Jackson's "I Want You" tracks 21.1 million impressions this issue, its biggest audience to date, while first track "Just a Little White" peaked at 28 million.

Consequently, Usher piles up sales of 1.58 million in just two weeks, holding the top slot this issue with 486,000 copies (down 55.7%). His total to date is the biggest for an album's initial two weeks since Eminem's "The Eminem Show" did 1.6 million in its first two chart frames, the first of those abbreviated, in 2002.

HIGH FIVE: For the second consecutive week. The Billboard 200's top 10 plays host to five new entries.

Joining Miss Jackson are the sophomore album by Lil' Flip (No. 4, 198,000 copies), blues albums by Aerosmith (No. 5, 100,500) and Eric Clapton (No. 6, 128,000) and the (Continued on page 68)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
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## The BILLBOARD 200 A-Z (LISTED BY ARTISTS)

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<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>IMPRINT &amp; NUMBER DISTRIBUTING LABEL</th>
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<td><strong>COLUMBIA EMI/RCA MUSIC GROUP</strong></td>
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</table>

### Over The Counter

## Continued from page 65

rookie outing by rapper J-Kwon (No. 7, 125,000). After street-date woes caused early starts on Top Blues Albums for Aerosmith and Clapton, those sets jump to that chart's first two slots, the former leading the way.

Last week's top 10 more is demographically, with BMI, EMI Music Marketing, Sony Music Distribution and Universal Music & Video Distribution each holding two apiece and WEA no chocolates at all. I'm withholding the biggest hits. Now, Robi Draco Rosa is eager to make his mark as a solo artist. Rosa's "Mad Love" represents a marketing challenge, as the album is not a tidy fit for any radio format.

Stills, his Columbia debut more than doubles the best week of any album he released through Sony Discos.

Recorded mostly in English, the new ones score the Hot Album Debut on No. 21 on Heatseekers at No. 2 and earns his solo career's first ink on The Billboard 200 (No. 119). His "Songbirds & Roosters" pened at No. 31 on Heatseekers in 1998; "Libertad del Alma" reached No. 11 on Top Latin Albums in 2001. A key ally in Rosa's bid is an aggressive partnership with AEG Live, which funded high-profile showcases in Los Angeles and New York in February (Billboard, Feb. 28).

### OH, MEXICO!

While pop and tropical artists tend to get Latin music's headlines in the mainstream press, those who sell Latin music will tell you that regional Mexican albums carry the mail.

Regional Mexican music has accounted for about half of all Latin album sales in recent years, a reality that adds weight to The Billboard 200 bows seen this issue and last by Los Tigres del Norte and Grupo Montez de Durango. Both bands started small on the chart's top half.

In earning its fifth chart-topper on Top Latin Albums (see story, page 51, Los Tigres’ 17,000-copy opener also places their latest at No. 75 on The Billboard 200. The band’s last two albums each managed higher ranks on this chart, but the new one is larger than the opener that put its most recent entry, a hits set, at No. 67 last summer. Grupo Montez, which last year was the No. 1 hit of any of Latin Albums with an earlier outing, hit paydirt last issue. With 13,000 in week one, it entered the big chart at No. 91. The live album skips this Ink No. 127. Meanwhile, the auto accident that claimed the life of second-generation Mexican singer Adan “Chalino” Sanchez promises the biggest chart week of his career (Billboard, April 10). His latest, “Un Sonador,” which had peaked at No. 50 on Top Latin Albums, returns at No. 5.

His previous album, “Canta Corridos,” released in November, debuted at No. 64 that chart. His father, Chalino Sanchez, who was murdered in 1992, also returns Top Latin Albums at Nos. 62 and 68.

### HOUSEKEEPING

Credit on this week’s sales charts reflects the new homes for Arista artists, which come as a consequence of restructuring at BMG’s U.S. operation.

Acts that remain on the Arista imprint are now sold through RCA Music Group. Those that came from affiliates LaFace and So So Def now go through Zomba Label Group.
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<td>Master P &amp; Luda</td>
<td>Good Side Bad Side</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Lil Jon &amp; The East Side Boyz</td>
<td>Kings Of Crunk</td>
<td>So So Def Joint Ventures</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Ying Yang Twins</td>
<td>Me &amp; My Brother</td>
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**Tape Prices**

Catalog albums are lip.

35 49 34 23 49 34 23 62 34 23 49 34 23 62 34 23

**APRIL 17, 2004**

**TOP POP CATALOG**

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<td>Bob Seger &amp; The Silver Bullet Band</td>
<td>Greatest Hits Vol. 2</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
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<td>Simple Plan</td>
<td>No Pads, No Helmets...Just Balls</td>
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<td>Josh Groban</td>
<td>Epic</td>
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<td>Linkin Park</td>
<td>Hybrid Theory</td>
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<td>MercyMe</td>
<td>Almost There</td>
<td>Forefront</td>
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**S GREATEST GAINERS**

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<td>Larry the Cable Guy</td>
<td>Lord, I Apologize</td>
<td>Epic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bob Marley and The Wailers</td>
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<td>Kid Rock</td>
<td>Cocky</td>
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<td>Rod Stewart</td>
<td>The Very Best Of Rod Stewart</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Mayer</td>
<td>Room For Squares</td>
<td>Reprise</td>
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**TOP HEATSEEKERS**

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**Billboard TOP JAZZ ALBUMS**

Week | Artist | Label | Album | Sales Rank |
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**Billboard TOP JAZZ ALBUMS**

Week | Artist | Label | Album | Sales Rank |
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**Billboard TOP JAZZ ALBUMS**

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BILBOARD APRIL 17, 2004

SINGLES AND TRACKS INDEX
After posting the first audience decline of its chart run this week, “Yeah!” by Usher Featuring Lil Jon & Ludacris rebound to set a new one-week, listener impression record on the Hot 100 Airplay chart.

With a gain of 5 million impressions, the audience for “Yeah!” comes in at 172.8 million, which tops the 170.2 million impressions mark 50 Cent’s “In Da Club” set in the issue dated March 29, 2003.

“Yeah!” remains well entrenched at No. 1 for an eighth consecutive week on The Billboard Hot 100.

The top three gaining songs are all in the top 10 of the Hot 100, as Beyoncé’s “Naughty Girl” (up 17.5 million) jumps 19-9 and “Don’t Wanna Know” by Mario Winans Featuring Enya & P. Diddy (up 16.1 million) claim the No. 3 slot. Usher’s follow-up, “Burn,” earns Greatest Gainer honors and bursts 10-5 with an 18.4 million-listener increase. All three tracks are candidates to replace “Yeah!” atop the Hot 100 in the upcoming weeks.

RENEWED VIGOR: Although he arrived on the country scene in a big way during the format’s early-90s boom, the spotlight has not shone as brightly as it does on this chart vet Tracy Lawrence. He lands his first top 10 radio single in four years while making the biggest sales splash of his career.

Lawrence has been a virtual well-spring of hit material for the format. Starting with his 1991 No. 1 debut single “Sticks and Stones,” Lawrence’s singles all peaked inside the top 10 for the first five years of his career, seven went to No. 1. His most recent top 10 entry came in the April 1, 2000, issue, when “Lessons Learned” peaked at No. 3.

This week, Lawrence’s emotional ballad, “Paint Me a Birmingham,” takes the chart’s fifth-largest increase and rises 12-8 on Hot Country Tracks & Singles & Tracks. The estimated 24 million audience impressions made during the tracking period helps drive opening-week demand for his DreamWorks debut, “Strong,” to 54,000 copies scanned, marking a couple of new career milestones on Top Country Albums.

LIGHTING THE WAY: The success of Sean Paul’s “Gimme the Light” and the subsequent singles from his “Drury Rock” album have opened the door for reggae to finally enter the mainstream after coming so very close in past years.

With this newfound acceptance, reggae titles have been appearing on the charts in numbers never seen before. Benefiting this issue on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks are some veteran reggae acts, a couple of which are enjoying their first chart success, and one newcomer.

Of the seven reggae titles on this issue’s chart, one is from a debut artist, Kevin Lyttle. His “Dude,” featuring Ms. Thing, which inches up 24-23.

TRAGIC CIRCUMSTANCES: The unfortunate passing of AdamChalino” Sanchez March 27 led to a new airing for some of the young artist’s recordings (Billboard, April 10).

“Me Canse de Morir por Tu Amor” re-enters Hot Latin Tracks at No. 39 in its 27th week on the chart. The song peaked at No. 38 in November and moved over to recurrent status after spending its 26th and final week on the chart in the March 6 issue.

Recent recurrent tracks that receive renewed interest from radio are eligible to re-enter the main chart as long as they rank above the recurrent cut-off, which in this case is position No. 20. Sanchez’s current single, “Y Diencen,” is the Hot Shot Debut on Hot Latin Tracks at No. 25.

Spotify, Apple Music, Amazon Music, and other online streaming platforms are paying royalties directly to artists, songwriters and producers, bypassing record labels. This is known as direct-to-artist streaming.

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UMG

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to restore growth and profitability to the division.

DISAPPOINTMENT

Even as it goes through its latest incarnation, the program remains an attempt to remake the industry's business model.

In addition to responding to consumers' demands for lower music prices, UMG also tried to rein in retail demand for labels to spend heavily on price and positioning. UMG executives lamented that they had no real chance to see if the original JumpStart would work because it lacked full retail pricing support.

Also, other major labels never followed suit with similar pricing plans, according to retailers. On the contrary, UMG's competitors privately criticized the program.

For their part, retailers have been expecting changes to the program for some time.

When they got word in March that the new Shady/Interscope album from Eminem project D12 would carry an $18.99 list price and would be supported by cooperative advertising, some saw it as a sign that JumpStart was ending.

"I wonder if that's the beginning of the crack in the diet," one merchant asked.

However, a UMG source familiar with the D12 album, due April 27, says that Shady Records simply chose to stop participating in the JumpStart program.

Within the past two weeks, however, key retailers have been alerted to expect changes.

NEW OPTIONS

While retailers initially complained about JumpStart, many of them begrudgingly grew to appreciate the program because they could boost profits by maintaining their old pricing.

"We can't make any money on CD retailer pricing for the big-box discounters," said one source. "Many specialty stores are seeing higher profits margins, so we're working to keep our prices competitive.

Even so, JumpStart was controversial from the first day that UMG's Universal Music & Video Distribution unit introduced it in September.

Most merchants hailed the lower-pricing concept but criticized the execution—some even after UMD made adjustments in an attempt to address retailer concerns.

Now, UMG executives are discussing a number of possibilities for the new version, sources say.

Under one scenario, the UMG labels would have the option of issuing their biggest releases at traditionally higher frontline pricing, according to sources.

Some indie merchants are looking to get in on the act with a new kiosk system from retail technology firm TouchStand.

On April 5, the company unveiled a line of kiosks at two dozen retail outlets, including Twist & Shout in Denver, Waterloo Records in Austin and Independent Records & Video in Colorado Springs, Colo.

The kiosks—Mac computers with 17-inch touch screens—feature audioclips supplied by aggregator Loudeye.

A Loudeye-powered digital music store is expected to launch later this year. Consumers will be able to buy and burn downloadable music through the kiosks.

Meanwhile, Virgin Entertainment Group plans to launch its Virgin Digital Music service in August. A European offering is expected by November.

The Virgin Digital store initially will offer 700,000 tracks—mainly MusicNet-licensed tracks supplemented by Radio Free Virgin licenses.

Customers will have the option to purchase at the store for $9.99.

It also dropped wholesale deep catalog pricing and developing artist titles to $6.06.

UMG executives hoped retailers would benefit from lower pricing by driving greater sales, and they expected to see lower prices in stores. But for the most part, hit pricing stayed at $9.99 almost across the board.

As for catalog, mainly the big-box merchants went along with the price cuts, sources say.

Among specialty stores, only Tower Records and Newbury Commons adopted reduced pricing across the board, other chains appear to have selectively cut prices on UMG titles.

Tower reduced UMG pricing in its store in December, but in March moved UMG product back to pre-JumpStart levels, sources say.

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EMI

Capitol in Cologne, will take additional responsibility for EMI’s classics and jazz operations. Dirk Ewald, who was adjoining marketing, adds duties for catalog, compilations and special projects.

Following the layoffs, EMI will have 190 employees in the country. A spokesman declined to comment on how many artists would be let go.

ITALY OFFICES HOPEFUL

There are no official announcements from EMI Italy at this point. Sources anticipate that there will be a rationalization of the company payroll, which consists of 102 employees in the Milan offices and 10 in Rome.

But employees at the company were quietly hopeful that the bloodletting would be less dramatic here than elsewhere, as the company, under president Riccardo Clary, has been one of EMI’s strongest European performers.

In the Netherlands, cuts are also expected, although a spokesman says plans are still at an early stage. “We are streamlining the organization. [W]e will be even more selective with new signings and will review carefully every contract that expires,” the spokesman says, adding that EMI remains committed to local repertoire in the country.

In Poland, Piotr Kabaj, president of Pomonota/EMI, tells Billboard: “We are working on a cost-cutting plan and expect to be able to give more details after April 19.”

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Los Tigres

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Maybe a song can't resolve a problem, but you can at least let people know about what's not being done. More people can hear a song than will read a newspaper," Hernán says.

MUSICAL NEWSPAPER

Los Tigres, who specialize in corridos—essentially narratives of true events—are experts when it comes to imparting important information.

"With a group like Los Tigres del Norte comes out with a song that is essentially providing the function of a newspaper, it can have a tremendous impact," says Chon Noriega, director of the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center. Last fall, the center hosted a two-day conference titled "Maquiladora Murders, or Who Is Killing the Women of Juárez?"

Los Tigres del Norte are one of the biggest-selling Latin acts in the United States and the People's top selling Latin act in the U.K.

Musician Susan Snell says that if she were to perform any song from the group's albums, she would choose "el Indio," "Las Hijas de la Atalaya," or "Herencia." She says, "I don't think we will ever go to the voice of the silent people."

While Los Tigres shun the role of political spokesmen for Grupo Juarez, they often put their money where their mouth is. In addition to routinely charity work, in the past two years, they have performed free concerts for U.S. troops stationed overseas.

Most visibly, in 2000, they created the Los Tigres del Norte Foundation to foster appreciation and conservation of Mexican and Mexican-American music.

The foundation's first gift was a $600,000 commitment gift to UCLA's Chicano Studies Research Center. It is being used to digitize an enormous collection of historical Spanish-language recordings.

Through the years, Los Tigres have recorded countless songs about issues affecting Hispanics. They commission are very much of the material—Los Tigres don't write their songs—in response to specific issues or stories.

As influential song list to come the Mexican revolution, they traditionally deal with social issues and political figures. Los Tigres gave them a twist, daring to talk about contemporary issues.

"They've been able to touch on subjects that no other bands bother with," Los Angeles Times Latin music writer Agustin Guerra says. "And yet they have a knack for picking songs people love."

The hope is that "Las Mujeres de Juárez" will fall into both those categories.

Investigations of the crimes have accelerated since president Vicente Fox took office. Some hope that Tigres Juarez will have begun to speak openly about the murders in recent years.

But many, Los Tigres' attention to the subject will put more of a focus on the case.

Global Biz

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growth of DVD and encouraging performances in the Australian, U.S. and U.K. markets.

"The performance [for full-year 2003] represents an improvement from the 10.9% drop in value of the market in the first half," USB analyst Helen Snell says. She adds that seven of the top 10 markets posted better growth rates than USB's original forecast.

The top 10 markets were the United States, Japan, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Canada, Australia, Italy, Spain and the Netherlands.

On a regional basis, all territories except Australasia reported declines. North America, the world's biggest region, registered a 5.9% drop in value compared to the prior year. However, Bennis is keen to note that the U.S. market, which accounts for 37% of the world's music sales, experienced a recovery in the last quarter of 2003. That upward momentum has continued in first-quarter 2004.

The value of the European market fell 8.7% to $11.8 billion. Asia was down 9.6% to $5.8 billion, and Latin America slid 14.4% to $800 million.

The United Kingdom, Europe's largest market, showed resilience, but the second- and third-largest territories—France and Germany—fell sharply by 14.4% and 19%, respectively.

The rise in the value of the market is being driven by the rise in the value of the media market. Due to the rise in the value of the media market, the value of the market is being driven by the rise in the value of the media market.
One year after the launch of Apple Computer's iTunes Music Store, buzz continues to build about the growth of digital music sales. In first-quarter 2004, consumers bought more than 25 million downloads, according to Nielsen SoundScan, a number that is expected to grow steadily over the course of the year.

But to hear Rob Glaser tell it, downloads are not the whole story. While the chairman/CEO of Seattle-based RealNetworks says he expects the new RealPlayer Music Store to quickly emerge as the No. 2 retailer of à la carte digital singles, much of his focus remains on the subscription side of the digital music market. "He's a leading-edge innovator at the forefront of new business models," John Rose, EMG Group's executive VP, says of Glaser. "He's been a clear driver of the whole subscription approach."

Real, which acquired the Rhapsody subscription service in April 2003 for $36 million, claimed more than 350,000 Rhapsody and premium radio subscribers by the end of 2003. Glaser says the launch of the Real music store, coupled with such Rhapsody distribution partners as cable giant Comcast, should drive the company's subscription business even higher in the year ahead.

Q: Slightly more than one year ago, few companies were aggressively targeting digital music. Today we see Real, Apple, Sony, Wal-Mart, Roxio, MTV, Virgin and others either in or looking to get into this market. What has changed?

A: First and foremost, it all starts with the content. It took the labels probably three years from the time they got serious about it to clear a critical mass of content, and it took the industry the same period of time to create consistent licensing programs so companies such as ourselves could get access to the content. There had to be economic arrangements set up across the entire food chain, including songwriters and publishers and labels and distribution companies.

Q: What role has the recording industry's litigation strategy had in the development of the market?

A: In the context of having compelling legitimate services and broad content availability, having the enforcement energy raised has been important. The industry could sincerely say to consumers: "Here's what we don't want you to do" and at the same time say: "Here's what we do want you to do. It's reasonably priced, it's comprehensive and it gives you broad functionality."

Q: Real has been active in this space during the past 12 months. What's been the biggest development for you?

A: In the past year, it's been the decision to join forces with the Rhapsody team. It was a springboard for many, many things. We had a broad distribution platform and a music-hungry audience. At the time, we had distributed RealPlayer to over 300 million unique users around the world.

The Rhapsody team had built the most compelling service out there, but they didn't have their own distribution platform. We also had a common vision with the Rhapsody team in San Francisco that 2003 was the year that digital music was going to come together. So it was one of these hand-in-glove situations.

Q: How did the launch of iTunes change the way people looked at the digital music market?

A: It changed things in two ways. It meant you now had somebody with a big advertising budget promoting digital music. Apple was doing a level of advertising and marketing that only made sense in the context of the several-billion-dollar-a-year Macintosh franchise. It propagated the idea that legitimate services could be cool and fun.

The second thing Apple did was focus the market on exactly one way of doing something: the store model.

Q: As the operator of a subscription business, are you concerned about the general preoccupation with downloads?

A: Having the guy who is making the biggest investment in the market not be focused on our part of the business, and creating an overall halo effect that we benefit from is great. That means that when people graduate to subscriptions, we're the most logical place to go.

Q: What do you see as the prospect for portability of subscription music? There is talk that iPod-like devices for subscription music could start hitting the market in the next year.

A: It's a logical next step. But just because it's logical doesn't mean the industry is going to get there quickly. (It's generally accepted) that the 99-cent thing is an adequate price if you are cannibalizing physical demand. But if people go for subscriptions, and you look at the price you'd have to offer a subscription at—maybe it's not $10 a month; maybe it's $15 or $20, but certainly not $50 a month—the price per song is much lower. That's already business that's being lost to the pirates. But this is one of those areas where the industry hasn't quite reached common ground.

Q: You launched the Real download store at the Consumer Electronics Show. Why are you keeping the à la carte business separate from Rhapsody?

A: Subscription and à la carte are different metaphors, and what we've found is that the best products have really simple metaphors. When you try to blur the two metaphors, it's confusing. You don't have 100% of the catalog available for both rights. Rhapsody is closing in on 600,000 tracks available; the music store has 500,000 tracks. If you don't have consistent rights, you have to explain to the user what they can do with the content.

Q: What is the relationship between downloads and subscription offerings?

A: Using our store as an on-ramp to subscriptions is working even better than we expected. You go in a context that you're buying tracks for a dollar, then you're giving people the opportunity to try Rhapsody from seven to 14 days depending on the promotion, and the conversion rate on that is terrific. These are active music users, and of course, with Rhapsody, if you like songs you can still buy them and we give you a club discount. So the formula is working, the mix is working.
Dear Beyoncé:

Your many fans at PETA are saddened that you’ve ignored repeated appeals calling your attention to the way minks, foxes, and chinchillas are gassed, strangled, and electrocuted on fur farms for your wardrobe. Perhaps the story of this beloved family dog, Jasmine, recently caught by a fur trapper, will prompt you to have a change of heart about wearing real fur.

Jasmine, a black-and-white springer spaniel, was sniffing around near her home in Wisconsin when she unwittingly stuck her head into an unmarked Conibear trap. She yelped frantically as her head was crushed, and her teenage owner, Tylere, was unable to do anything to save her life when he found her struggling. She died in his arms. Fur trappers, who place traps in public areas across the country, call Jasmine and other unusable dogs and cats routinely caught in traps "trash" animals. When you wear a fur coat, collar, or cuff, you are supporting unimaginable cruelty.

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