Labels Peer
At Pirates
For Insights

Firms Tracking Downloads Say Industry Likes To Spot Trends

BY SCOTT BANEREE

Say what you will about Internet pirates, their downloads speak volumes about what’s hot in music.
That fact hasn’t been lost on record labels, which are increasingly subscribing—albeit discreetly—to companies that monitor illegal download traffic on peer-to-peer services.
If you weren’t looking at the [P2P] data, we’d be pretty foolish,” says Jeremy Welt, head of new media at Maverick Records.
Maverick is one of the few labels that admits to subscribing to services that track illegal downloads.
But John Fagot, a consultant for Webspins, a company that monitors P2P services, says its data is being used at every major label.
BigChampagne, the other major player, acknowledges that Warner Bros., Interscope, Elektra, DreamWorks, Atlantic and Disney’s Hollywood label

Blue Note Fitted To A Tee
Famed Jazz Label, Ropeadope Link For New Clothing Line

BY MICHAEL PAOLETTA

Blue Note Records knows a thing or two about music. Ropeadope Industries knows a thing or two about fashion.
Now, the two companies are joining forces to launch a line of clothing, A New Perspective.
The collection, consisting primarily of T-shirts, draws inspiration from classic Blue Note artwork. Specifically, the clothes feature reinterpretations of album covers, images and text/design treatments.
For this partnership, Blue Note is licensing all the designs to Ropeadope (an offshoot of Ropeadope Records), which will pay royalties based on sales.
The 100% cotton jersey knit T-shirts are supplied

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There isn't a formula for a #1 hit.
But there is a checklist.

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Artistic & Company Index

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Europe Embraces ‘Anastacia’

BY MICHAEL PAOLETTA and EMMANUEL LEGRAND

Anastacia has America to thank for her upbring- ing. But she has Europe to thank for her success. Born in Chicago and raised in New York, Anastacia has seen her self-titled third album for Daylight/Epic debut at No. 1 throughout much of Europe, where it was released March 29. Time will tell if she receives a similar reaction in the United States. The album is due to arrive this summer.

Overseas, “Anastacia” entered the Billboard European Top 100 Albums chart at No. 1. By comparison, Janet

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Anastacia: ‘If a country wants me, I am there’

EU Merger Delay Signals Big Probe

BY LEO CENDROWICZ and WOLFGANG SPAHR

BRUSSELS—The European Commission’s decision to temporarily stop the clock on its investigation into the planned merger of Sony Corp. and Bertelsmann’s music divisions is an indication of the expanding depth and breadth of its probe.

The Commission, the executive authority of the European Union (EU), has sought an unprecedented volume of information from the principals to the deal, as well as their competitors and other players in the market.

The delay—probably for two weeks—will allow the EC to demand even more input.

“This additional request concerns information on a variety of markets,” says Tilman Lüder, spokesman for EU competition commissioner Mario Monti.

Lüder says a new deadline will be set after the EC receives answers to a marketplace questionnaire it has distributed to numerous companies in and out of the industry.

The EC’s original deadline for its probe was June 22. Any formal statements opposing to the merger were due at the end of April. That deadline has also been suspended.

While the investigation is mainly focusing

(Continued on page 71)

Azoff Opens Wallet
Other Purchases Could Follow TBA Deal

BY RAY WADDELL

For Irving Azoff and his new partners, the proposed acquisition of TBA Entertainment could be just the beginning.

“We’re buying a bunch of stuff,” Azoff says. “But we want to wait and let the smoke clear on this one first.”

Azoff is purchasing the event production and management firm in partnership with veteran entertainment executive Robert Geddes and investment firm JHV Green tree Capital, an affiliate of Whitney & Co. of preferred stock, after transaction expenses.

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introducing....

MARIO WINANS

IN STORES APRIL 20TH
Trial To Probe CCC Biz Practices

BY RAY WADDELL

In a case fraught with huge implications for the concert industry, the antitrust suit pitting Denver independent promoter Nobody in Particular Presents (NIPP) against Clear Channel Communications is set for an Aug. 2 trial.

A federal judge in Denver is allowing NIPP to proceed with its suit against Clear Channel, finding that the latter had attempted to create a monopoly. NIPP originally filed the suit in August 2001 (Billboard, Aug. 18, 2001). CCC unsuccessfully filed a motion to dismiss in October of the same year (Billboard, Oct. 9, 2001). On April 2 this year, Judge Edward Nottingham of the U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado ruled that CCC’s cluster of eight radio stations in the Denver area was not a monopoly. However, the judge also stated he believed CCC had intended to create a monopoly position when it rejected paid advertising by NIPP.

NIPP alleged that the Denver radio stations in question played songs by artists whose concerts were promoted by Clear Channel Entertainment in the market but did not play songs by bands that NIPP promoted. CCC is the live entertainment arm of CCC and is the largest concert promoter and venue operator in the world. Nottingham’s 125-page decision reads, in part, “NIPP provides sufficient evidence that Clear Channel intends its manipulation of airplay to interfere with NIPP and other promoters’ prospective business relations with artists.”

Numerous bands, booking agents, artists, managers and record-label personnel are mentioned in the court papers. “This is a pretty amazing ruling,” NIPP’s attorney Morreale tells Billboard. “I would imagine for those on the other side [of the case] this would be a pretty sobering read.”

Morreale, who resigned from his day-to-day duties at NIPP in January, remains a partner in the company and has been a point man for NIPP in the lawsuit.

In many ways, the Denver case has been portrayed as a David vs. Goliath conflict, and the industry continues to closely monitor it. “We’ve always believed we had a strong case, and this is a partial vindication of that belief,” NIPP president Doug Kaufman tells Billboard. “[CCC’s] tactics have impacted our business; that’s why we filed suit in the first place.”

Andrew Levin, CCC’s chief legal officer, tells Billboard, “We are pleased the judge threw out several claims and narrowed the case significantly. We’re confident that when both sides of the story are heard at trial, the remaining allegations will be dismissed as well.” Levin says the judge dismissed radio station monopoly and consumer protection claims. He adds that a high standard is required to dismiss claims prior to trial, and the judge views all facts in the light most favorable to the plaintiff, then applies the law.

A pretrial conference is set for April 30. Levin says there are material facts in dispute on the remaining NIPP claims. “I don’t think NIPP’s Kaufman says the case has cost his company a lot of time, energy and money. “We’re looking forward to the trial starting on Aug. 2,” he says.

Lead attorneys representing NIPP in the case are John Francis and Dale Harris of Davis, Graham & Stubbs in Denver.

Atlantic, EMI Pub’s Lamberg Bow Label

BY MELINDA NEWMAN

In creating a label with Atlantic Records, Evan Lamberg is hoping to cultivate a “philosophy of patience in an impatient world.”

To that end, E.V.L.A. Records Entertainment, a joint venture between Atlantic and Lamberg, will be dedicated to slowly building artists’ careers. “The days of extravagant spending are over,” Lamberg says. “This record label is about creativity first and then about being financially responsible. If my artists don’t blow up and sell a million albums, they can still make record two, three or four.”

In an unusual arrangement, Lamberg will continue as executive VP of creative for North America at EMI Music Publishing.

All acts signed to the new label must also be EMI writers. EMI Music Publishing, while not an investor in E.V.L.A., will share in the label’s earnings.

E.V.L.A.’s first release will be “Take It All Away,” the debut album from singer-songwriter Ryan Cabrera. Due June 28, the album was produced by the Goo Goo Dolls’ Johnny Rzeznik. First single “On the Way Down” goes to radio May 17.

The idea for the label came out of a discussion two years ago between Lamberg and Roger Ames, who at the time was chairman of Atlantic parent Warner Music Group. Although Lamberg works with all the labels in his role at EMI, some of his biggest successes have been with Atlantic acts such as Matchbox Twenty, Hootie & the Blowfish, Jewel, Sean Paul and Stone Temple Pilots.

“Roger said, ‘You have a great rapport with Atlantic. Can’t we formulate something a little more structured?’” Lamberg recalls.

Even though Ames and a number of Atlantic executives with whom Lamberg initially planned the label have left the company during its recent restructuring, Lamberg says that such remaining heavyweights as Atlantic Recording Group CEO Jason Flom and co-chairman/COO Craig Kallman were supportive from the beginning.

“Evan is an extraordinary executive who has proved over many (Continued on page 69)

SSL Targets DAW User

Console Maker Enters Digital Recording Market

BY CHRISTOPHER WALSH

In a clear sign that the digital audio workstation (DAW) has permanently and profoundly altered the audio recording industry, Solid State Logic (SSL) is throwing its hat into the ring.

The leading producer of large-format recording and mixing consoles for music production will unveil the AWS 900 Analogue Workstation System at the National Assn. of Broadcasters spring convention April 19-22 in Las Vegas.

The AWS 900 combines SSL’s “SuperAnalogue” signal path and processing with digital control, creating an integrated hybrid of analog console and DAW interface.

It allows direct control of DAW recording, editing and mixing functions and operates independent of the DAW platform, making it compatible with Pro Tools, Nuendo and Logic Audio, among others.

The AWS 900 will begin shipping in June and will be priced at $85,000, substantially less than the cost of SSL’s large-format consoles.

SSL’s 4000 G and 9000 J Series analog consoles have been hugely successful. The Oxford, England-based manufacturer claims more than 3,000 SSL-equipped recording, post-production and broadcast facilities around the world.

The company’s XL 9000 K Series analog console, introduced in 2002, recognized the DAW’s growing presence in audio recording with the integration of a fast-screen display on the center section, allowing DAW display.

SSL took a significant step toward DAW integration with the 2005 introduction of the XLogic product line, which features rack-mounting signal processing units developed from the K Series console.

XLogic products afford DAW-based recording environments individual SSL components that are virtually identical to the large-format console from which they are derived, at a fraction of the latter’s cost and physical size.

SSL managing director Colin Pringle says that his company hit its stride years ago, when its 4000 series became the centerpiece of the recording studio of the day, with its tape machines and signal processing.

“There have been changes in the way that people work,” Pringle notes. “A lot of production work goes on outside of a conventional studio environment. That’s been largely enabled by the widespread use of DAWs. People are looking for extended control of [DAWs] through a tactile control surface, because there’s a limited amount you can do with your fingers.”

A variety of DAW controllers currently exist. For example, DigiDesign, manufacturer of the Pro Tools platform, offers a range of console surfaces, from the eight-fader Digi 002 and Command 8 to the Control 24 and ProControl.

ProControl is expandable to 48 channels. The 24-channel AWS 900, for which SSL is developing an SSL console within the compact footprint of a DAW interface. As DAWs have come to dominate recording in and outside of traditional studios, audio professionals have attached greater emphasis on the front end of the signal chain to provide analog warmth to digital recording. Vintage preamplifiers and compressors, as well as new models designed in response to the DAW’s proliferation, have become very popular.

“A lot of people don’t want to overlook analog,” Pringle says. “The quality of what you capture and how you process that is of paramount importance before it gets as far as storage and subsequent manipulation.”

Just as the AWS 900 is aimed at DAW users, its introduction may signal acknowledgement of the diminishing market for the large-format consoles that for decades served as a commercial recording studio’s centerpiece.

New York-based engineer/producer Pat Dillett says, “They certainly realize that selling 96 channels of hardware to people is not going to happen at the pace it used to.”
KIM WATERS
IN THE NAME OF LOVE
“seductive .. irrepresible, melodic, dreamy…”
— JAZZIZ

On the heels of the greatest album of his acclaimed career, MR. KIM WATERS returns this spring with the seductive IN THE NAME OF LOVE.

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New Download Site Targets Latin Market

By LEILA COBO

MIAMI—A new all-Spanish download site is betting that Hispanics represent a burgeoning market for buying music online.

Emepe3.com, which launched last week, is billed as “the world’s first all-Spanish-language digital music store.” The site has a catalog of approximately 250,000 indie tracks, 100,000 of which are currently available for purchase at the equivalent of 99 cents each.

Perhaps most important, Emepe3 is available to consumers around the world.

“We are open to the Hispanic market worldwide, and we have no restrictions by country,” founder and CEO Andy Kleinman says.

Currently, consumers in Latin America cannot legally download from any of the other sites available in the United States, including Apple’s iTunes.

Emepe3, which developed its own technology and software, allows non-U.S. customers to access tracks and pay for them in local currency.

However, Kleinman stresses, his initial focus will be the U.S. Latin market, which is already accustomed to the legal downloading process but will benefit from a Spanish-language service.

Emepe3 does not have repertoire from any of the major labels. Kleinman says he has initiated conversations with the majors, but the issues of licensing and pricing from country to country have complicated the talks.

“When we first spoke with them, the Apple store wasn’t up, and they really had no idea,” Kleinman says. “Now, I think they’ll see us up and running, and we’re a Spanish site, so they’ll feel left out [if their product is not included].”

Kleinman, 23, founded Emepe3 as a music news site in 1999. His revamped company, which is financed by a German investment group, has offices in Miami and Buenos Aires.

Because Latin music piracy has reached crisis proportions in the United States and Latin America, Kleinman hopes to partner with the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry and the Latin Academy of Recording Arts to create anti-piracy campaigns.

Although Latin music is increasingly being offered at download stores, its presence and promotion on such sites have been minor.

However, a study released last month found that Hispanics use the Internet more frequently than the general online population to listen to music and download files, among other activities.

The second annual America Online/RoperASW U.S. Hispanic Cyberstudy interviewed 615 Hispanic Internet users and 300 general-population users.

According to the study, 54% of online Hispanics regularly or occasionally listen to music via the Internet, compared with 35% of the general population.

Spanish-language digital music files, compared with 27% of the general population.

Rock Hall Plans Nightly Radio Show

By MELINDA NEWMAN

It’s only rock ‘n’ roll, but Crystal Mountain Productions hopes you like it.

The Cleveland-based company has linked up with the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum to produce a nightly syndicated radio program running from 12 a.m. to 6 a.m.

Moonlight Groove Highway—Rock and Roll Through the Night—is a music-driven show that will also feature interviews, call-ins and reports from a team of correspondents.

It will broadcast from the Alan Freed radio studio in the Rock Hall.

Cleveland-based Envision will syndicate the show, which will bow this fall.

The primary target will be rock and classic rock stations.

But Envision and Crystal Mountain say they will even target Triple-A and talk stations because of the show’s diverse elements.

“On overnights, you can hear sports, you can hear people talk about crop circles, but mostly you’re going to create a show like this for rock music fans,” says Christopher Dieck, president/CEO of Crystal Mountain.

The on-air format has a number of syndicated programs, including the long-running “Rockline,” and such newer entries as “Little Steven’s Underground Garage,” “Hard Drive” and “Nights With Alice Cooper.” However, the format does not have an overnight offering like “Moonlight Groove Highway.”

ECONOMICAL MODEL

The show can bring big names to stations’ overnights. But more important, it can save them money, says Sean Ross, VP of music and programming for Somerville, N.J.-based Edison Media Research.

“The selling point of syndicated shows has always been getting big names,” Ross says, “but for a lot of stations, it’s not that lofty; the advantage is more that it’s a way to extend your night without the salary.”

Although affiliates will share ad revenue with the show—which, like most syndicated programming, is on a barter basis—Envision president Danno Wolkoff believes the stations can more than make up the money.

“Most stations are using that time for tie-breaks and bonus spots,” he says. “We’re coming to them where they can tap into a new kind of national and local dollar.”

For the Rock Hall, the show means an enormous amount of free exposure.

“The museum was built with a radio studio in it for one major reason: to have stations do remotes from across the world and to remind people that we’re in Cleveland,” says Terry Stewart, CEO/president of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum.

“We don’t use the studio very often from midnight to 6 a.m., so the opportunity to have someone broadcast from our studio then is a great PR and promotion for us.”

Crystal Mountain is paying the Rock Hall a licensing fee and paying for the use of the studio. The Rock Hall does not have a say in the programming, but Stewart says Crystal Mountain will have access to the museum’s archival material.

With that format, the show will have at least 24 affiliates.

Stations will receive the program live via satellite.

Dieck says the big pitch will come during the Conclave radio convention in Minneapolis in July.

NEWSLINE

RealNetworks is lobbying Apple Computer to join forces against Microsoft in the digital-music market, according to a report in The New York Times. RealNetworks chairman/CEO Rob Glaser reportedly sent an e-mail to Steve Jobs last week imploring the Apple CEO to make the iPod compatible with Real’s RealPlayer Music Store. Real wants to license Apple’s FairPlay digital rights management technology in exchange for making the iPod the default device for Real’s software, the report says. Glaser reportedly hinted to Jobs that if Apple did not license its DRM, Real would explore opportunities with rival Microsoft. “We have been committed that consumers who use our services can use a market-leading device,” a Real spokesperson tells Billboard. “We’re concerned that Apple could not be reached for comment by press time.”

BRIAN GARRITY

Five major trade bodies have teamed to form the Coalition of Entertainment Retail Trade Assns. (CERTA), which—consists of the Digital Media Association, the National Assn. of Recording Merchandisers, the National Assn. of Theatre Owners and the Video Software Dealers Assn.—plans to publicly address common concerns. CERTA members will hold their first joint activity April 20 on Capitol Hill, when they will meet with lawmakers to discuss how congressional support can help combat entertainment piracy.

JILL KINNIS

A San Diego clothing manufacturer is suing Britney Spears for $10 million, claiming her use of the phrase “in the zone” infringes its trademarks. In court documents obtained by Billboard, Live Breeze and its founder Rodd Garner contend that the use of “in the zone” on Spears’ multi-platinum five-album set of the same name, as well as on DVDs and T-shirts, is unauthorized. Live Breeze also filed a cease-and-desist order to ban Spears from using the trademark in her concert recordings and promotional campaigns. Clear Channel Entertainment Television, Jive Records and Signature Network are also named as defendants in the suit.

In March, Spears released the Hollywood’s Finest album. The release month, was changed to the Onyx Hotel tour from the In Zone tour after the suit was filed Feb. 17 in the U.S. District Court for Southern California. Live Breeze has owned the trademark since 1992. Peter Anderson, who represents Spears in the case, could not be reached for comment.

SAMANTHA CHANG

Local 802 of the American Federation of Musicians has reached an agreement with the Variety Arts Theater, a New York off-Broadway theater, under which the Sinfonia virtual orchestra will be used in its presentation of “The Joys of Sibelius.” The deal states that the theater will use Sinfonia only with the consent of the union. This is the latest development in a long-running dispute between the musicians’ union and New York-based Realtime Music Solutions (RMS), which manufacturers Sinfonia. In March, RMS filed an unfair labor practice charge against Local 802 after the latter’s February agreement with the Opera Company of Brooklyn banned its use of Sinfonia. The National Labor Relations Board dismissed the complaint.

CHRISTOPHER WALSH

Canadian broadcaster CHUM Limited has signed an agreement to purchase all the shares of Calgary, Alberta-based Craig Media. This includes the digital speciality TV channels MTV, MTV2 and TV Land as well as conventional TV stations in Calgary, Edmonton, Alberta and Winnipeg. CHUM, a CBC affiliate station in Brandon, Manitoba; and the recently launched Toronto 1 station in Toronto. CHUM will purchase Craig Media for $265 million (Canadian) in cash. It will finance the purchase with bank debt. The transaction is subject to approval by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, among others. CHUM owns and operates 30 radio and eight TV stations and 18 specialty channels, including MuchMusic.

LARRY LEUBLAC

Nielsen Entertainment and videogame maker Activision have released a study on the effectiveness of advertising in videogames. Nielsen is developing a system that allows tracking game habits as a tool for advertisers. The study, “Video Game Habits: A Comprehensive Examination of Gamer Demographics and Behavior in U.S. Television Households,” surveyed more than 1,000 ages 3-34 from a sample of Nielsen TV households. Three-quarters of the surveyed population said they own a videogame system. One-quarter of active gamers could recall in-game advertisements from the last game they played, and one-third said in-game ads help them decide which products to buy.

Upon releasing the study, Nielsen announced that it is developing a system that will allow Activation and other videogame companies to share demographic information. Nielsen aims to provide tools for advertisers to effectively measure ad exposure, demographics and audience recall as it pertains to videogame use.

SCOTT BANERIE
Piracy Endgame In Sight

The contentious fight between the music industry and peer-to-peer file-sharing services is drawing closer to the endpoint. The beginning of the end was signaled earlier this month, when Congress finally stepped up with legislation that would clear the way for the federal government—finally—to take responsibility for enforcing U.S. copyright laws.

A Senate bill would authorize the Justice Department to go after online copyright infringers in civil, as opposed to criminal, court. Pursuing civil claims is a much easier process and requires a lower standard of proof to obtain a conviction.

The House bill is stronger; it gives prosecutors the authority to go after file-sharers as felons, which could put perpetrators in jail for up to 10 years. The bill is overkill in my view, but it gives the feds a way to fight against prolific downloaders and those who pirate physical CDs.

Organizations that represent P2P services are obviously unhappy with the legislation. If the measures pass, it will put services such as Grokster and Blub-ster in a difficult position. But clearly this legislation is needed and not for the obvious reason. It’s certainly the federal government’s job to enforce its own laws, and it’s about time that Congress gave prosecutors the proper tools to do the job.

Our best hope is that congressional action will force both sides to negotiate in good faith.

But our best hope is that congressional action will finally force both sides to negotiate in good faith to end what Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., aptly called an “intolerable predicament.” Let’s start with something everyone can agree on. Sharing copyrighted works over the Internet is flat wrong. It robs everyone who creates music, from the big labels to artists. By the same token, P2P services represent promising new technologies and should be allowed to flourish—legally.

When emerging technologies clash with existing law, P2P proponents argue that the law should be changed. Frankly, that argument has merit, but not when such changes threaten to undermine an entire industry.

Rather, we need to find a middle ground that would allow for the continued development of P2P services without illegal file sharing. But so far, neither side seems interested in a reasonable solution.

Negotiations have been more like the old Abbott & Costello routine: “Who’s on First? What’s on Second? And I Don’t Know is on Third.”

You know the drill: “Who’s on first?”

“I don’t know.”

“No, he’s on third.”

“Who?”

“No, he’s on first…”

And it goes.

Congress has done the right thing by putting this legislation on the table; now it needs to bring the two sides to the table.
Combinations Of Entertainment And Advertising Can Be Win-Win Situations

In Defense Of Advertainment

You might remember the old commercials for Reese’s Peanut Butter Cups: A guy is walking along blissfully enjoying a chocolate bar, while another guy is joyfully consuming a jar of peanut butter.

Then, someone stumbles, and whammo! A profound combination of chocolate and peanut butter occurs, and candy is never the same.

The guy with the chocolate bar is the entertainment business. The guy with the jar of peanut butter is the corporation that advertises. Both are stumbling, but as the two worlds collide, something good is happening.

Nothing is new about the combination of advertising and entertainment; these areas have a natural symbiosis.

Music has been used in TV and radio commercials for decades. Corporations have long provided backing TV and radio programming and have sponsored live concerts.

But the new era of “advertainment” represents a dramatic change in the way these two areas can support one another. Indeed, the line between entertainment and advertisement is increasingly blurring, and some of the most creative works are those created under corporate auspices.

With the advent of TiVo and similar devices, TV audiences can control the pace of commercials. Consumers have more ways to spend their free time, and corporations are searching for methods to reach consumers that are not unduly intrusive but still secure their attention.

At the same time, sales of CDs are diminishing; the major record companies are consolidating and recording artists and songwriters are seeing their traditional streams of income decreasing.

Similar changes are occurring in the world of TV, with the proliferation of channels and competitive devices for distributing TV content.

Even the movie business, while still vibrant, is bracing itself for the onset of widespread piracy against the background of increasing budgets.

As these changes cause us to abandon many of the traditional models, we are seeing win-win combinations of entertainment and advertising. They range from corporate advertisers’ sponsorship of, and product placement in, reality TV programs to the boosting of the careers of artists like Michael McDonald, Sting and James Taylor.

Creative commercials use their music respectfully and in related themes. There has been a virtual tidal wave of TV commercials, Internet promotions and videogames involving artists and their music.

As many artists now recognize, there is nothing evil about having their music associated with a particular product. At the same time, many advertisers are striving to create promotions that are “artist-friendly” and to set up deals that provide the artists with the benefits traditionally associated with the promotion.

As record companies are hesitant to sign new acts, new artists are achieving initial buzz by appearing in ads or other promotions.

And with labels reluctant to invest substantial marketing funds in their signed acts and as radio becomes less diverse, the availability of advertising tie-ins helps provide the artists and their music with the exposure it needs.

Similar changes are occurring in the world of live events. Concerts have become a key component of an independent profit center, even for artists that don’t have a new record to promote.

Corporate sponsors are playing roles well beyond putting up a bit of money in exchange for having a sign on the wall of a venue.

They are looking for ways to have their brands more substantively associated with live events and, in return, artists are receiving bigger payouts and more promotional tie-ins that in turn boost the artists’ profiles.

The success of Celine Dion’s multi-faceted relationship with Chrysler (including Chrysler’s support of Celine’s long-running show at Caesars Palace Coliseum in Las Vegas) is a good example of how this can work well.

Artists are in search of artists whose music is compatible with the advertisers’ image and desired customer base.

Of course, some artists will never allow their music to be used in the promotion of a product, and many will limit their associations to advertisers they consider politically acceptable or at least benign.

In some cases, artists can benefit from the demographic associations with a company considered to be hip.

Where there is an advertiser/artist match, the joint marketing possibilities are virtually endless, and they can result in the creation of, and support for, great art.

Artists and their representatives will work to ensure that any promotions treat the artist and the artist appropriately and provide the artist with the cash or cash equivalents that are needed.

Sponsors will work to ensure that their brands are receiving the push they need and that costs are limited to the extent possible.

In many cases, artists and advertisers fail to recognize how much they actually can help one another. In some cases, the deals between them can be structured so that relatively little cash changes hands, but promotional benefits are exchanged.

In the best cases, the consumer learns more about, and develops better associations with, an advertiser, and the artist is nurturing the consumer and strengthening the artist’s own profile.

When it works, advertainment can be a very good thing.

Laurie Sorian is a partner and co-chair of the entertainment law group with Monatt Phelps & Phillips in Los Angeles.

Report Deters Sensible Debate On Crowd Safety

We would be interested to know how you reached the conclusion that “a paucity of crowd-management skills threatens the U.K. touring business” (“Study Events Unsafe,” Billboard, March 27).

It certainly wasn’t in the preliminary report on crowd dynamics by Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College. Rather, it was the report, which was presented at the IlMC Safety Focus Group session this year, conclude that events were unsafe.

Indeed, your report even failed to get the name of the study right. Its correct title is “A Comparative Report on Crowd Dynamics, Behaviour and Management on the Endemol and Robbie Williams Concerts at the National Bowl and Knebworth, Respectively, in the Summer of 2003.”

The title you used referred to an entirely different publication. What the report actually describes are the preliminary findings of research at these two “super-scale” events and the factors that need to be taken into account when planning a crowd management strategy for events of this kind.

These are hardly typical concerts, even in the U.K., so the report could scarcely be a comment on the entire U.K. touring industry. Furthermore, your reporter, Juliana Koranteng, ignored the fact that there were representatives from Germany, Ireland and Holland on the Safety Focus Group panel, reflecting the fact that this is a fully international issue.

She also failed to report the very positive contributions from both Padraic Boran of MCD Productions in Ireland (who offered suggestions on venue location, the strength of supporting bills and effective signage) and Sabine Funk of the 200,000-capacity Rheinkultur festival.

The fact that a photograph of Feargal Sharkey appeared alongside the article added to the confusion you created, as he was not an SFG panelist and, to the best of our knowledge, was not even present at our session.

Nonetheless, we would be delighted to discuss the subject with Mr. Sharkey, should the opportunity arise.

The issue of crowd safety is one that affects the entire live music industry. We hope that studies such as ours will throw light on a complex and occasionally controversial subject.

By contrast, the uncharacteristically sensationalist and inaccurate reporting you provided last month only serves to hold back sensible debate on the topic.

The IlMC Safety Focus Group Montlaur, France.

Anti-Piracy Call Lacks Logic

Hugh Prestwood’s concluding threat in his contribution to the Billboard Anti-Piracy Campaign is that if peer-to-peer downloading doesn’t cease, our society “will soon see the creation and production of that commodity [songs] cease.”

Balderdash. Recent science shows that humans have made music longer than we have used fire. “Barbara Allen,” “Go Tell It on the Mountain,” “Whiskey in the Jar” and literally thousands of other folk songs and spirituals that form the basis of virtually all American music composed today— including Prestwood’s—were made before a song became a “commodity.”

In his magnanimity, Prestwood offers, “Let us come together.” Then he proposes that file sharers do a variety of things that meet his interests without offering downloaders anything at all: not the singles that used to be for sale, not albums with greater content at more affordable prices, not even a guarantee that some of the money will go to recording artists.

All we’re offered is that hollow claim that there won’t be any music unless the status quo is preserved. Chicken Little used better logic.

There are very real reasons why we need to concern ourselves with how songwriters and artists get paid and, indeed, whether they get paid at all. I hope that the next part of the Billboard Anti-Piracy Campaign addresses some of them.

Dave Marsh Editor Rock & Rap Confidential Los Angeles
Santana, Will.i.am Collaborating

Black Eyed Peas leader Will.i.am and Carlos Santana have been writing together for Santana's next studio album.

"He was like, 'Wow, I've never seen anyone so focused,'" Will.i.am says of Santana's reaction to his work ethic.

I got to his studio at 10 a.m., and we finished a song [that day]. It's called 'I Am Somebody.'"

In addition to working on his new studio album, Santana, who will join Eric Clapton June 6 at Clapton's Crossroads Guitar Festival in Dallas, has been working on a

benefit record for Milagro Foundation—the charity started by Santana and his wife, Deborah, that aids disadvantaged youth. No word yet on a release date for either album.

ONE DISC AT A TIME: Singer/songwriter Sophie B. Hawkins has won her case against an online vendor whom she alleged sold advance copies of her album five months before its release.

In an April 13 decision in Santa Monica, Calif., small claims court, Hawkins won by default after the defendant failed to appear. The judge, Los Angeles Superior Court Commissioner Roberta H. Kyman, also put a judgment against the vendor for $324—the total amount the CDs were sold for—plus Hawkins' court costs.

In her original filing in December, Hawkins alleged that the vendor illegally obtained a promotional copy of her April 20 release, "Wilderness," and sold one copy online for $300 on Dec. 5, and two subsequent copies for $12 each on Dec. 23.

Hawkins purchased the CDs back from the fans who bought them from the vendor, who could not be reached for comment.

"She's not doing this for the money. That's why she made the small claims suit for $324, not the [small claims limit of] $5,000," says Gigi Gaston, Hawkins' manager. "It's about sending a message."

ALVIN ON THE MOVE: After 13 years of recording for HighTone Records, Dave Alvin has inked a licensing deal with Yep Roc Records.

The Graham, N.C.-based label will release Alvin's next two albums worldwide. Yep Roc is a wholly owned subsidiary of Redeye Distribution.

"I would be flipping burgers if it were not for [HighTone]," and I

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Country Rocks!

More Pop Artists Crossing Boundaries Between Genres

DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

NASHVILLE—During a recent Kenny Chesney concert in Albany, N.Y., Poison frontman Bret Michaels joined Chesney onstage. Much to his surprise, when he and Chesney launched into Poison's '80s power ballad "Every Rose Has Its Thorn," the crowd sang along with every word.

In looking at the country charts during the past year, perhaps Michaels shouldn't have been so shocked.

The lines between country and rock fans are definitely fading. And barriers that once existed at radio are crumbling.

Kid Rock and Sheryl Crow had a massive radio/video hit with "Picture." Rock's version of the song with country chanteuse Allison Moorer became the top-selling commercial country single last year. Crow recently graced the Billboard Hot Country Singles & Tracks chart with "The First Cut Is The Deepest."

Uncle Kracker's duet with Chesney, "When the Sun Goes Down" (the title cut of Chesney's multi-platinum album) reigned.

Bret Michaels is one of many rock artists whose music strikes a chord with country fans.

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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 FEMALES |
| POP ROCK | BLONDIE — GO-GO'S |
| R&B | LUCY PEARL |
| ROCK | SAMMY HAGAR — YES |

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.
Radio, Retirement Lift ‘Angels’ To No. 1

Despite a stellar reputation and solid sales, Harmonia Mundi USA has never put a CD atop the Billboard classical music chart during its 22-year history.

But that changed April 10, when Anonymous 4 and its album "American Angels" shot to the top spot. Why this album, and why now? Nearly all of Anonymous 4’s previous albums have reached the top 10, so it’s not surprising that one has finally reached the pinnacle.

But other elements are at play as well. For starters, Anonymous 4 is retiring this season as a full-time ensemble. “American Angels” has elicited the interest of longtime fans revisiting a beloved group before it retreats from the scene.

Second, a feature on NPR’s “Weekend Edition Saturday” program helped spike interest. During the first few days following the program’s airing, “American Angels” sold more than 6,000 copies.

A change in repertoire probably also played an important part in the album’s success. In stark contrast to the medieval and new music that has been Anonymous 4’s signature repertoire, the current album features American favorites and rarities: 18th-century psalm settings, 19th-century shape-note songs, camp-revival hymns and famous gospel tunes. The album creates a bridge to listeners outside of the ensemble’s regular base and taps into a deep current of interest in American Harmonia Mundi USA VP/artistic director Robina Young is planning an impressive lineup of new releases and artist tours.

“This fall will include the release of the second ‘Baltic Voices’ title, featuring the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir and Paul Hillier,” she notes. “The violinist Andrew Manze will release an album of Vivaldi concertos to coincide with a U.S. tour.” And the “girls,” as Young fondly refers to Anonymous 4, will release another album in spring 2005—"The Origin of Fire," featuring music by the great medieval mystic Hildegard of Bingen.

PULITZER FANTASY: This year’s Pulitzer Prize in music was awarded to Paul Moravec. A graduate of Harvard and Columbia universities, he currently chairs the music department at Adelphi University on Long Island, N.Y.

The winning piece is his “Tempest Fantasy,” scored for clarinet, violin, cello and piano, which was performed last May by David Krakauer and Trio Solisti. His publisher is Subito Music.

The Beat

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will be forever grateful,” Alvin tells Billboard.

However, Alvin says he was attracted to Yep Roc’s “energy and vision. They are a very artist-friendly label, open to new ideas, and are embracing with enthusiasm the way the business is headed, and that is what I need for the next step of my career.”


TWILIGHT TIME: Mark Lanegan, formerly with Queens of the Stone Age and Screaming Trees, has joined Greg Dulli’s Twilight Singers for the current leg of the group’s U.S. tour. The outing concludes April 20 in Seattle.
CBS sportscaster Deion Sanders and Yolanda Adams will co-host the Gospel Music Assn.'s 35th annual Music Awards April 28 at Nashville's Municipal Auditorium. The show will be broadcast on UPN, marking the first time the network has aired the event, formerly known as the Dove Awards. The show is slated to air from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. ET/PT May 28.

GMA is partnering with Regal Entertainment Group for a big-screen premiere of the show. The awards will be shown live in 50 cities at Regal Cinemas, United Artists Theatres and Edwards Theatres. The event marks the first time a live awards show has been simulcast in movie theaters nationwide.

ForeFront artist Rebecca St. James will serve as host for the Regal event, reporting live from the awards. Tickets for the theater showings cost $10 and are available at regalcm.com.

Prior to the broadcast show, Curb artist Natalie Grant and Word Records' Mark Schultz will host the opening ceremonies, during which the prebroadcast awards will be presented.

HEDGES SOARS SOLO: After four albums with Blessid Union of Souls, singer/songwriter Eddie Hedges is charting a new course with the release of his solo debut, "Something to Believe In," just released on Madacy Entertainment.

"I finally had the opportunity to do the music I wanted to do, and fortunately, Madacy was interested in allowing me to do that. So it was a blessing all the way around," he says.

"A preacher's kid from Cincinnati, Hedges' career began when he moved to the West Coast and became a "hired gun," touring and playing with Sheila E., Johnny Gill, Bell Biv DeVoe and others.

"I was a drummer/percussionist/vocalist," he says. "I was the go-to guy for shows like 'Arsenio Hall,' 'Jay Leno,' the American Music Awards and that kind of thing. Then when the guys at home in Cincinnati told me they wanted to put a band together, I moved back and we started Blessid Union." That was in 1994. What followed was a string of hits including "I Believe," "Let Me Be the One" and "Leonardo (She Likes Me for Me)." Hedges says, "After seven years with Blessid Union, it was time to do something else..."

He describes his new CD as "basically indicative of my life over the last few years. When I decided I was going to leave the band, it was because I was going through something spiritually. I was raised in the church, but as you get older you kind of step off the path. Every track on the record is about my life or someone involved in my life. I didn't start out to write a Christian record. I just started writing the music that was in me, and what I was talking about was spiritual," he continues. "A couple of the songs are the prayers I prayed while I was on the road. I just put them to music."

Madacy plans to promote the project through an extensive Internet campaign. It will also alert the 200,000-plus members of Blessid Union's fan club that Hedges has a solo album out. The singer/songwriter plans a summer tour.

NEWS NOTES: Managing Dreams Entertainment & Consulting is partnering with gospel promotional company GZ Underground for a new venture targeting the needs of independent gospel artists, labels and ministries.

Managing Dreams CEO Evelyn Miller-Mack and GZ Underground CEO Curtis Jermany also head the Urban Gospel Alliance (UGA), a collective of independent gospel artists.

The 15-member contemporary gospel group Derrick Hall & Company is the first act to be managed under the new joint venture.

In other UGA news, a three-disc compilation is in the works that will showcase the depth and variety of independent music in the urban gospel genre.

"The Gospel Zone Presents the Underground Volume II" will include one holy hip-hop CD, one spoken word CD and one CD featuring urban gospel styles.
Tribeca Film Festival Resonates With Music Themes

The Tribeca Film Festival continues to offer an eclectic mix of films with a music theme. The event is on par with the Sundance Film Festival as an independent movie showcase that attracts the music industry.

The Third annual Tribeca Film Festival—which takes place May 19 throughout New York's Tribeca neighborhood—will screen films that showcase rock, jazz, opera, and hip-hop.

On the rock front, the late Clash frontman Joe Strummer is the subject of the documentary "Let's Rock Again," which will premiere at the festival. Directed by Dick Rude, the film documents the final tour of Strummer and his band the Mescaleros before his death in 2002.

Another world premiere is "Kill Your Idols," a documentary directed by Scott Crang about New York's art-punk scene. Sonic Youth and the Yeah Yeah Yeahs are featured in the movie.

Composers and conductors are the subjects of three of the foreign entries in the festival:

- From Germany, "Rhythm Is It!" follows the journey of conductor Sir Simon Rattle as he works with the Berlin Philharmonic on Igor Stravinsky's "The Rite of Spring."
- From the Netherlands, "The Master and His Pupil" focuses on conductor Valery Gergiev as he mentors three students in Rotterdam, Holland; and "A Labyrinth of Time" is a documentary about composer Elliott Carter.

Short films "On the D.L." and "Of Mexican Descent" are among those that represent hip-hop.

- "On the D.L." follows hip-hoppers Questlove of the Roots and former Digable Planets member King Britt as they attempt to get a driver license. "Of Mexican Descent" is about the group of the same name from the Los Angeles underground hip-hop scene. Also in that genre is "Mix," a documentary about two South African female DJs.

Musical theater and traditional dance are showcased in the documentaries "Elaine Stritch at Liberty" and "The Dance Challenge."

The Harlem Blues & Jazz Band is the focus of the nonfiction film "The Last of the First," which will have its premiere at the festival.

Although documentaries make up the majority of the festival's music-themed films, the event also features movies starring musicians.

One such movie is "Coffee and Cigarettes," written and directed by Jim Jarmusch. It is a collection of short films focusing on characters chatting over coffee and cigarettes. Iggy Pop, Tom Waits, the White Stripes and Wu-Tang Clan members RZA and GZA are among the film's stars.

MTV has presented a concert at the festival for the past two years featuring such acts as Norah Jones, the Roots, Robbie Williams, Sheryl Crow, Wydele Jean and Counting Crows. Although it has not yet been announced, this year's film fest is expected to include such a concert.

For more information, visit tribecafilmfestival.org.

PINK AS JANIS: Pink will reportedly star as Janis Joplin in the feature film "The Gospel According to Janis." Directed and co-written by Penelope Spheeris, the biopic will be produced in part by Spheeris Films.

It will be a separate production from Paramount Pictures' Joplin biopic "Piece of My Heart," which will reportedly star Academy Award winner Renée Zellweger (Movies & Music, Billboard, Feb. 28). "The Gospel According to Janis" does not yet have a major film studio attached.

Meanwhile, a spokeswoman for BMG North America chairman/CEO Clive Davis denies published reports that Davis will oversee the film's soundtrack and says that it is too early to know who will produce the soundtrack. Pink has segued to BMG's Jive Records, following the restructuring of her previous label, Arista Records. Representatives for Pink had no comment at deadline.

OTHER CASTING NEWS: Will Smith is starring in the romantic comedy "The Last First Kiss" for Columbia Pictures. Smith's Overbrook Entertainment is producing the film... Aerosmith frontman Steven Tyler has a supporting role in the MGM comedy "Be Cool," the sequel to "Get Shorty."... Hilary Duff will star in the romantic comedy "The Perfect Man" for Universal Pictures... Ja Rule has a supporting role in the horror flick "Assault on Precinct 13." Rogue Pictures, Lionsgate Films and Outlaw Films are behind the independent film.
The Bottom Line Grows Up
Adult Music Fans Emerge As Market Force, Offering Hope For The Future

BY MIKE LEVIN

Every day in the United States, about 10,000 people become "grownups." The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that's how many people mark their 30th birthday each day.

For the music business, that means some 3.5 million customers per year presumably are shifting off the tribal, image-driven music of their youth and moving into the individualistic, melody-driven repertoire of maturity. It's a theory supported by numbers. Figures from the Recording Industry Ass'n of America, NPD Group and some of the country's leading retailers show that during the past decade, sales of music for grownups are booming at a time when overall industry figures have slid drastically.

Of course, younger fans also purchase adult-oriented repertoire. But for the third consecutive year, over 30s are the only group to buy more albums than they did the year before.

Today, the 35- to 44-year-old consumer buys as many records as teenagers, according to the NPD Group. In 2003, over-30s bought 417 million albums; 15-24s purchased 246 million. Adults now purchase 56% of all records, and analysts believe that could hit 60% by 2005.

"Adult music continues to be among our top two or three segments, and it's growing in a down market because it's recapturing what made contemporary music good in the first place," says Kevin Cassidy, executive VP of sales, operations and product at Tower Records. "I guess it's cool to be a singer/songwriter again."

Young, melody-oriented stars like Norah Jones and Josh Groban appeal across the demographic spectrum.

But the success of new albums and catalog product from legacy artists—Harry Connick Jr., Jackson Browne, Hall & Oates, Rod Stewart, Bette Midler, Michael McDonald and others—testifies to the strength of music for grownups. So do the trends toward crossover success within the pop, rock, country, jazz and roots genres.

"The adult buyers never went away, they just got bored for a while," says John Rollins, publisher of Tracks, the first music magazine to target exclusively the over-30 music market. "Now the baby boomers are re-engaging, and they're the first generation that, as they get older, wants to stay contemporary with pop culture."

Record companies and distributors are catching on. When Tracks launched last fall with Sting on the cover, Rollins says, the magazine sold twice as much advertising as expected.

"There aren't many [media] serving this market, which is a bit of a surprise considering the numbers I've been looking at for five years," he adds. "It's pretty obvious the adult consumer is demanding attention."

During the past year, The Billboard 200 has confirmed the sales strength of the adult-oriented artists cited above and others, including John Mayer, Santana and Luther Vandross. The trend is also promising for the bottom line of the music business. Marketing executives see an adult demographic willing to spend $18.99 on a CD by a recognizable artist because they believe it will

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Artists who appeal to fans age 30-plus include, from left, Michael McDonald, Bette Midler and Norah Jones.
Majors Find Ways To Reach Adult Audience

BY MIKE LEVIN

The year was 1998. It brought the Billboard chart debuts of Britney Spears, Creed and 'N Sync, among others. But it also saw a pivotal shift in music-buying trends, one that resonates through the industry today.

In 1998, for the first time since the 1960s, adult music fans—those over 30 years of age—bought more than half of the music sold in the United States.

Sales of music for grown-ups show no sign of slowing down, and record companies are discovering that their best customers are once again discriminating and driven by music rather than pop fades. Yet unlike younger fans, adult record buyers don't have music television and teen magazines to tell them what to buy. This makes reaching the over-30s a whole new challenge.

"The change has been huge, because this demographic knows what it wants and is willing to pay for it," says Tim Prescott, executive VP and chief marketing officer for BMG. "They're concentrating on artists for their songwriting abilities, not fashion, and the key is to not over-type anything.

"I think we understand the music well enough," Prescott adds, "so it's a matter of hunting out where the customers are going to find this music. We have to reach into what they're watching, what they're reading."

For the record business, that means marketing via the "The Oprah Winfrey Show" and CNN instead of MTV; The New Yorker instead of Rolling Stone.

While radio outlets such as NPR and adult-alternative formats support music for grown-ups, book- and music retailers such as Borders and Barnes & Noble create the best environment to reach this market. Adult buyers may hear new music from the likes of Fleetwood Mac or Harry Connick Jr. as they drink their coffee and read their books and newspapers.

Adult marketing works better when consumers can lean into the product in the retail environment, not get blasted away by it.

"The majors are returning to a consistent, intelligent relationship with retail, one that's not configured to create an image or brand. That kind of branding doesn't work with adult consumers, especially among females who are buying a lot of the records," says Kevin Cassidy, executive VP for sales, operations and product at Tower Records. "This merchandising mentality is changing how everyone does business."

For Sony Classical president Peter Gelb, the shift to NPR-style

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NPR Becomes Adult Tastemaker

National Public Radio has become a holy grail of exposure for record-company executives seeking to market music for grown-ups.

NPR shows such as "All Things Considered" and "World Café" reflect perfectly the over-30s' desire to find music that fits their sensibilities.

"When we sit down and put together a plan for an (adult) artist, NPR is right at the top of the list," says Marc Johnston, VP-GM at Universal Classics Group.

"I am continually amazed by what a taste-driver it is. If an artist is featured on a weekend show, the album is bound to turn up on Amazon's top 10 on Monday. I think it shows that once you can motivate this market, it lasts for a long time."

Bob Boyle, the director of "All Things Considered," developed the multimedia online music program "All Songs Considered" to give further exposure to the music played between stories on NPR's evening news show.

"All Songs Considered," which can be accessed at npr.org, has evolved to offer in-depth profiles of artists performing music for grown-ups. The stylistic breadth of this market is reflected in the artists featured recently on the show: Bob Dylan, Radiohead guitarist Jonny Greenwood, gospel/blues singer Ollabelle, Wynton Marsalis and others.
Indies: Adult Focus Is Nothing New

BY MIKE LEVIN

The buying power of the adult music consumer is pushing America’s record companies to rethink their marketing strategies.

For independent labels, that means it’s business as usual.

Music fans over 30 buy more than half the CDs sold in the United States. They’re highly partisan and tough to reach, so it’s no surprise the major record companies are still tentative about changing their focus from youth marketing. Not so the indies.

“Adults are the key niche we’ve always gravitated toward, because the major’s have never really been interested in it,” says Bob Frank, president of Koch Records, a division of Koch Entertainment.

“I think indies know realistically that targeting sales of 100,000 units can be a big success,” Koch says. “It’s a luxury that we don’t have to spend three or four dollars a unit on marketing, but this means you have to know who your audience is and the easiest way to reach them.”

Koch focuses on established acts like Lucinda Williams, Carole King and the Bob James Trio, and Frank explains that activating an artist’s fan base is the key to adult-repertory sales.

“We use whatever promotional tools work best for the artist—I think TV is the most effective right now—and make sure there is a very high degree of credibility, because these consumers want to reconnect with the emotional link they had at one time.”

Former major-label artists with an adult audience often set up their own independent labels to reach those fans. That’s the path Rick Springfield has taken with his new album “shock/denial/anger/acceptance” released through RED District.

Springfield, who has partnered with VH1 Classic and Borders and is touring through the end of the year to promote the album, explains, “As an independent label, I’m up against the big boys,” Springfield acknowledges. “But if a song is undeniable, it will get through.”

For Artemis Records, the quest for artists with that emotional link to their audience has led the company to sign Steve Earle and the Pretenders, among others. Both veteran acts lost deals with major labels that were more focused on mainstream youth repertoire.

Artemis CEO Danny Goldberg says It’s always the ability to “touch the sleeping giant” of adult consumers, most recently in the late 1980s with artists such as Bonnie Raitt (whom Goldberg previously managed).

But keeping the momentum going today requires a better understanding of how the over-30s access music.

“It may mean TV, radio, touring—whatever gets the word-of-mouth going,” Goldberg says. “The PR hook is vital to create an artistic rationale. I don’t think the [Warren] Zevon record would have had half the sales it did without the VH1 special,” Goldberg says, referring to “The Wind,” an adult-oriented folk album that won Zevon a posthumous Grammy Award.

Retail chains such as Tower Records, Target and Wal-Mart, as well as Amazon, sell most adult-oriented repertoire for the majors, and it’s difficult for indie labels to break product into those aisles.

Combination-retail outlets like Borders and Barnes & Noble come up time and time again in small-company plans, and indies are willing to supply most alternative stores that cater to over-30s and their desire for musical discovery.

Adult music consumers “are tired of being

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Indies
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force-fed and want to experiment," says Helaine Harris, VP of Daedalus Books & Music, which does most of its business through direct mail and the Web. "There is a real connection between books and music among adults, and once they find we’re here, they learn to trust our taste. We also offer that long-forgotten thing called customer service."

If there were an archetypal adult-oriented compilation, it would be a collection by Time-Life. To sell music aimed at those 40 and older, the company produces stand-alone TV programming, such as the recent 30-minute segment "Lifetime Romance," featuring Bobby Vinton.

"We’re also strong in the mass merchandisers," says Freddi Sollag, Time-Life’s VP of retail and special markets. "The explosion of this genre has happened for only one reason: I can see, and that is adults are starving for entertainment material, especially visual material, directed toward them." He adds that Time-Life’s retail sales have grown 30% annually since adults reclaimed more than 50% of the music market.

These figures are mirrored at world-music label Putumayo, another beneficiary of the adult demographic’s desire for discovery and low-volume marketing.

"The over-30s are traveling more, trying new things," says Dan Storper, president of Putumayo. "They may not be browsing record stores as much, but they are hearing good music on soundtracks and in commercials. It becomes sort of a self-fulfilling prophecy when they’re out in an environment, hear something great and say, ‘My God, that’s wonderful.’ Then they’ll make a beeline right for the stores."

Like most niche labels, Putumayo relies heavily on word-of-mouth marketing. While media placement is important, marketers of world music, jazz, blues, roots, classical crossover and other alternative genres know there usually isn’t room for their product on commercial radio or TV, unless they buy advertising time on those outlets, as Time-Life does.

"It looks tough for indies, but there really isn’t a secret," Storper says. "It’s all about developing an audience that trusts your tastes, and then growing organically. This can happen in so many ways, although it does take patience."

Organic growth is most evident in the narrowest niches, such as instrument and ethnic genres. Latin music, for example, is the fastest-growing repertoire within the over-30 demographic in the United States, outpacing others by almost two to one, according to the Recording Industry Assn. of America. Much of it comes through independent Latin labels, which have little or no budget for promotion. Yet sales are booming—a perfect example of demand driving supply.

The same thing is happening in the guitar niche. "The adult guitar fan is a dedicated fan, not icon-obsessed. This music sells because it has a passion [these fans] can feel inside," says Dale Rahiner, president of guitar-oriented Latin, roots, blues and jazz label J Curve. "Concerts capture people, and at-concert sales are huge for these artists. The thing is, much of this music is very old-style, stuff today’s fans grew up with and have remained loyal to, something you’ll never see on a big label."

Because independent labels develop fewer new acts than the majors, they can focus more on legacy artists and repertoire, which resonate for adult fans. They can also experiment with new retail and marketing styles, hoping to make that all-important emotional connection that adults demand. "It is a period of intense change in the industry," says David Neidhart, VP of sales and marketing at contemporary jazz and country label Narada. "I’m not sure where it’s going, but I have to say that for the first time in a long time, I’m very optimistic about the future."

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deliver high value for money.

The key to marketing music for grownups is all about helping adult consumers discover songs and artists that resonate in their lives, Tower’s Cassidy says.

"They want to tell a story of discovery to their friends, about finding some great new stuff Bette Midler has put out or a newcomer named Norah Jones who sounds fantastic and they’d never heard of before," he explains. 

"As the current industry consolidation continues, there is room for majors and indies to boutique artists like these, where sales of 100,000 rather than 5 million means success."

Even though fans older than 30 are three times less likely than younger music buyers to accept music recommendations, according to NPD research, they still seek that advice from sources they trust, including friends and alternative media channels.

These fans have been called the "NPR demo" for their responsiveness to music exposed through alternative channels like National Public Radio.

Russ Crupnick, VP of the NPD Group, thinks the renaissance of adult consumers is the best thing that could happen to the music business after three straight years of declining sales.

"This is turning out to be a much larger segment than [record companies] ever believed," he says. "Adults show less price sensitivity, and they’re more disposed to browsing the shelves."

So an adult music buyer won’t quibble about a price tag if the music is worthwhile. That’s also clear on the concert scene. According to Billboard’s year-end Boxscore charts, the Rolling Stones staged the top tour of 2003, with a top ticket price of $200. A willingness to pay for perceived value is also evident online.

As legitimate online music services such as Apple Computer’s iTunes have emerged (and the Recording Industry Assn. of America takes legal action to stem unauthorized music downloading), fewer music fans over 30 have engaged in illegal file sharing, according to the NPD Group. Adult music buyers represent 31% of the illegal downloading population, down from 42% 12 months ago. With those adult fans purchasing music instead, either offline or on, the music business has reason to celebrate for the first time in many years.
tastemaking is a natural step along the path back to music creation as an artistic process.

"Classical labels these days are being less and less true to their origins," Gelb says. "We're now encouraging classical and pop crossover where the best marketing plan is born out of excellent music and genuine artistic success stories."

Gelb points to cellist Yo Yo Ma, whose fans eagerly followed his crossover to world pop on "Obrigado Brazil" and along the way helped Sony discover Brazilian vocalist Rosa Passos.

"The adult market is so huge, with so many interests and desires, that when you can get them to listen, they will want to own the music, assuming it's high quality," Gelb says.

Columbia Records president Will Botwin says his label's Essential Series of releases has done well because "it lets the artist and music do the talking. Norah Jones has had success because she isn't over-fueled, in your face. We're seeing the same thing with [singer/songwriter] Nellie McKay, where patience and persistence bring a long progression of small gains."

Still in her teens, McKay has been profiled on NPR's "All Songs Considered" as a songwriter of uncommon talent. "Because these artists resonate deeper," Botwin says, "you have to start from the fringes and rely a lot on word-of-mouth."

Organic marketing isn't easy when record companies need to plan campaigns lasting as long as two years and then have to hit moving consumer targets. Nontraditional marketing channels are key. Film soundtracks, which returned to vogue a decade ago, are becoming more important. Labels are also seeking exposure in restaurants, commuter transportation hubs and even hair salons. Marketers are also finding value online. "If you can use the right portals, like Apple's iTunes, and let people hear what they're buying, adult consumers have shown they'll respond positively," Columbia's Botwin says.

If adult music fans feel they are receiving value for money, their purchases will not be limited by genre. And if they don't have time to research the newest trends, they also don't want to be told what to buy.

"There is a much higher level of scrutiny today because adults are more culturally involved, and they know they've been ignored for a long time," says Piero Giramonti, Epic Records senior VP of worldwide marketing. "They read, they watch news, so you have to take advantage of the distinctiveness of the artist."

That's why Epic created niche TV programming for Cyndi Lauper and has her back performing small-club concerts. "She's at a stage in life where her music is very emotional to her, and it's important to use this as a catalyst to make a connection with adult fans," Giramonti says. Epic has also leveraged its use of television, co-creating "Pop Star Challenge" with Oprah Winfrey. Similar to the "American Idol" format, "Pop Star" presents older contestants singing older music.

As every label tries to sign the next Norah Jones, the strong music in music for grown-ups holds great promise for record companies. Quality adult-oriented music is a product that people can't seem to buy enough of. Getting that music to adult consumers is one of the biggest challenges faced by the music business and certainly a key to its future.
Music

Praise And Worship Tours On The Rise

BY DEBRA AKINS

With praise and worship titles commanding a healthy share of the Billboard Top Christian Albums chart, the genre clearly has become a driving force in Christian music.

Record sales and box-office success at worship-themed conferences and concerts seem to go hand in hand. Attendance at such events around the world has skyrocketed during the past several years.

Once dominated by lesser familiar worship leaders, these events now attract big crowds drawn to their own circuit of praise and worship superstars.

The songs have become well-known from their use in church services, and more mainstream Christian artists are assembling tour packages to support worship-themed albums.

One of the most successful tours this year has been Adoration: The Tour, featuring co-headliners the Newsboys and Rebecca St. James with opener Jeremy Camp. The tour averaged 4,000 fans at each performance.

At press time, the tour’s first 15 dates had sold out, and organizers were booking additional concerts and discussing a fall run.

The Newsboys’ “Adoration: The Worship Album,” released last April, has become the group’s fastest-selling set to date, with more than 332,000 units sold, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

“This is the biggest momentum I’ve ever seen with the Newsboys,” longtime manager Wes Campbell says. “Record sales are doing better than we’ve ever seen, and that’s translating into what we’re seeing at these shows.

“This tour is giving the record a longer life and lengthening the sales cycle,” Campbell continues. “We thought we would put a new album out in the spring, but the momentum of this one was so great that we pushed the new record back to the fall.”

Albums from two of the tour’s artists—St. James’ “Live Worship” and Camp’s “Carried Me: The Worship Project”—arrived at retail in February. “Carried Me” has sold 90,000 copies and “Live Worship” has moved 25,000 units, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

DEMAND FOR MORE ROOM

Gospel artist CeCe Winans launched what was originally planned as a 25-city church tour Feb. 6 in support of her worship project, “Throne Room.”

Promoters have now extended the tour to 38 cities because of the strong response.

“We started getting calls from churches everywhere,” says Demetris Stewart, president of Winans’ PureSprings Gospel label. “We’ve got enough requests right now that we could do this tour for three more months.”

Stewart attributes the continued strong sales of “Throne Room” to the tour.

“There has been no drop off in sales in weeks, and I’m sure it’s because the tour is out there,” he says. “We’ve seen sales begin to increase in tour markets as soon as radio ads start announcing CeCe’s upcoming concert.

“Throne Room” has sold more than 256,000 units since its September 2003 release, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Stewart says that on-site CD sales have averaged 300 to 500 per show. Product sales at church venues are not typically reported to SoundScan.

CONFABS CATCHING ON

In addition to touring, many worship leaders and artists benefit from appearances at arena-size worship conferences that draw large audiences to multiple cities.

“When these artists come to our events, they’ll usually play to a much bigger crowd than if they played their own concert,” says Ron Luke, president and founder of Teen Mania Ministries, which produces Acquire the Fire youth worship events in 33 cities across North America each year.

Luke estimates 225,000 people will attend this year’s Acquire the Fire events, which feature worship band Delirious.


“Without a doubt, it translates into more sales at retail outlets in those markets,” Luke says. “But the added benefit is that youth pastors trust us. It’s almost like we are the Good Housekeeping seal of approval for these bands.”

“We chose to do the Acquire the Fire events because we believe in Ron Luke and what [the band and the company] are trying to achieve,” says Tony Patoto, manager of Delirious and CEO of Furious Records. “Acquire the Fire will expose us to a crowd that may not have heard of us.”

These types of opportunities are popping up all over the country.

With the help of worship acts and Sixsteps Records labelmates Chris Tomlin, the David Crowder Band and Charlie Hall, the Passion Conferences launched by director and founder Louie Giglio have been responsible for successful OneDay gatherings in 2000 and 2003.

Last Memorial Day weekend, more than 20,000 students attended OneDay3 at a 400-acre ranch in Sherman, Texas.

The event set up a 35-city Passion Experience Tour, which featured the same artists as the OneDay event. The tour logged 15 sellout performances, and total attendance surpassed 80,000 people.

“After a OneDay event or a Passion tour goes through town, you see it shift over into retail,” says Denise George, director of artist development for EMI Christian Music Group, which distributes Sixsteps Records.

“Most of our sales the first couple of years came from event sales,” George says. “Now we’re seeing real healthy support for the Passion brand from retailers.”

Creative Strategies Keep Venues Viable

SEATTLE—Faced with competition from a barrage of new buildings, venue managers are increasingly looking for ways to attract their core audience.

During the past several years, scores of new venues have opened to rival veterans in their cities and in nearby regions (Billboard, Feb. 14). Last year alone more than 30 major buildings opened up around the country.

Attendees at the International Assn. of Assembly Managers (IAAM) District 4, 6 and 7 meeting, which took place April 2-5 in Seattle, addressed this hurdle—bumping up at a number of sessions.

“Never doesn’t necessarily mean better,” said Jeff Trisler, senior VP of House of Blues Concerts and a panelist on “How Better to Prepare Your Facility to Get Our Business.” “There are some problems associated with bigger, and more expensive buildings. [Older buildings] can certainly beat them on cost.”

Trisler noted that for state-of-the-art arenas to recoup their costs, dollars’ worth of construction costs, facility fees are often tacked onto event tickets.

Promoters and artists sometimes have to lower their gross expectations to account for these fees, which go primarily into venue accounts.

IAAM attendees—from venues in such areas as Canada and the U.S. Pacific Northwest and Southwest—can sniff up bookings at aging venues if they are careful about providing enough space between on-sale dates. A venue is unlikely to work with a business with Eric Cole, VP of booking at Clear Channel Entertainment’s (CCE) motor sports division, “if they put something like Metallica on sale on the same day they put our show on sale. That will really hurt us.” Cole acknowledged that “lots of cities have more than one arena,” but he noted Mason Ellenberger, director of events and facilities at Barton Colosseum in Little Rock, Ark., that the flashier nearby Alltel Arena “won’t be able to fit everything. That’s where you want to be in the (event) business.”

Unique events launched at venues specifically to battle newcomer’s arrival with a 1,500-seat cabaret series at the Sport Mart Place in Kamloops, British Columbia.

For about $400,000, the building opened up and started to take away the bigger shows,” said Sport Mart manager Steve Schaffrath at the session “Creating Events in Your Facility.” “We have found a niche in cabarets.”

Schaffrath said Sport Mart buys local singling talent for the events. While ticket sales typically break even, Sport Mart usually turns a modest profit through alcohol sales. Besides simply generating revenue, such neighborhood-tailored events “can spread goodwill in the community. That goes a long way and supports other events that we’re doing in the building,” said Jane Cada-Sharp, GM for the Crystal Centre in Grande Prairie, Alberta.

IEG/BILLBOARD TOUR SPONSORSHIP ROUNDUP

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<tr>
<th>Sponsor</th>
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<th>Estimated Fee</th>
<th>Leverage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Coors</td>
<td>Coors Amphitheatre, Englewood, Colo., multifacility</td>
<td>$900,000-plus annually</td>
<td>Naming-rights deal with 6,800-seat formerly known as Fillid’s Green Amphitheatre builds on existing partnership with venue operator House of Blues that includes title of Chula Vista, Calif.’s Coors Amphitheatre and presenting status of concerts at Universal Coors Amphitheatre. Coors will add ads to the on-site radio station.</td>
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<td>Midler</td>
<td>Queer as Folk Future Babylon tour, May-July, 18 stops</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>Using club tour based on the hit Showtime series as part of its first gay marketing initiative. On-site presence includes sampling, Midler Men go-go dancers and branded visuals. Will distribute tickets to a handful of clubs in each market to generate additional revenue. Other sponsor includes 2004 Interactive Male and Divoti.</td>
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<tr>
<td>MySpace.com</td>
<td>Blossom Media tour, May-July, 57 stops</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>Social networking site aligned with tours to build visibility among musicians and music fans; bands use the site to post music, tour dates and to communicate with fans. Offsetting rights fees to tour and e-mail to 1.5 million users. Social promotions allowing its members to nominate and vote on bands to open the tour; will solicit new members at the gigs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whirlpool Corp.</td>
<td>Reba McEntire tour, June-November, 25 plus stops</td>
<td>$5 million</td>
<td>Using tour as cause-marketing platform around Whirlpool’s 50-year-old relationship with Habitat for Humanity, which donates a refrigerator and range to every Habitat for Humanity house built in North America, will create an on-site exhibit that will be used to solicit donations and recruit volunteers. McEntire will appear in a TV ad for Whirlpool and Habitat; Whirlpool will run an employee sweepstakes giving a trip to attend the coastal show. It also will offer employee pre-sale tickets for concerts located near its manufacturing facilities.</td>
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Compiled by William Chipp, senior editor, IEG Sponsorship Report


BILLBOARD APRIL 24, 2004

20
**The Allman Brothers Band**
Beacon Theatre, New York
March 18-20, 22-23, 25-28

**George Strait, Dierks Bentley, Kellie Coffey**
Alibi Arena
North Little Rock, Ark.
Feb. 20

**Britney Spears, Kellie Coffey, Skye Sweetnam**
Washtenaw Center, Philadelphia
March 6

**Bevyonce, Alicia Keys, Missy Elliott, Tamia**
Philips Arena, Atlanta
March 28

**George Strait, Kellie Coffey**
National Arena, Columbus, Ohio
March 27

**Britney Spears, Kellie Coffey, Skye Sweetnam**
American Airlines Arena, Miami
March 28

**Rod Stewart**
ARCO Arena
Sacramento, Calif.
March 29

**David Bowie**
Air Canada Centre
Toronto, Ont.
April 18

**Metallica, Godsmack**
Key Arena
Seattle
March 6

**Kenny Chesney, Keen Urban, Dierks Bentley**
Xcel Energy Center, St. Paul, Minn.
April 12

**Bevyonce, Alicia Keys, Missy Elliott, Tamia**
Alhambra Arena, Rosemont, Ill.
April 2

**Britney Spears, Kellie Coffey, Skye Sweetnam**
TD Waterhouse Centre, Orlando, Fla.
March 29

**David Bowie**
Wachovia Centre
Philadelphia
March 30

**Kenny Chesney, Keen Urban, Dierks Bentley**
April 11

**Rod Stewart**
Nokia Live
Grand Prairie, Texas
April 10

**Aerosmith, Cheap Trick**
Mississippi Coast Coliseum, Biloxi, Miss.
March 16

**Kenny Chesney, Keen Urban, Dierks Bentley**
Viejas Assembly Hall, Champaign, Ill.
March 1

**Kenny Chesney, Keen Urban, Dierks Bentley**
The Mark of the Quad Cities, Moline, Ill.
April 2

**Aerosmith, Cheap Trick**
Tulalip Lumia Center
Lakehurst, Fla.
April 11

**Hilary Duff**
Sopp Coliseum
Houston, Ont.
March 14

**Aerosmith, Cheap Trick**
Pensacola Civic Center, Pensacola, Fla.
April 30

**Van Morrison**
The Theatre at Madison Square Garden, New York
March 31

**Kenny Chesney, Keen Urban, Dierks Bentley**
Tuscaloosa Events Center, Tuscaloosa, Ala.
April 4

**Tom Jones**
Humphreys Centre, Toronto
March 9-10

**Sarah Brightman**
Save Mart Centre, Fresno, Calif.
March 15

**Bevyonce, Alicia Keys, Missy Elliott, Tamia**
Target Center
Minneapolis
April 1

**Bevyonce, Alicia Keys, Missy Elliott, Tamia**
Comerica Fieldhouse, Indianapolis
March 30

**Kid Rock, Fuel**
Ford Center
Oklahoma City
April 22

**Van Morrison**
Northrop Auditorium, Minneapolis
April 1

**Bevyonce, Alicia Keys, Missy Elliott, Tamia**
Greensboro Coliseum, Greensboro, N.C.
March 21

**A Perfect Circle, The Mars Volta**
Long Beach Arena, Long Beach, Calif.
March 23

**Víctor Manuelle, Aventura, Hector & Tito, Yoscar Taranate, Joes Veras, Don Omar**
The Theatre at Madison Square Garden, New York
March 30

**Sarah Brightman**
American West Arena
Phoenix
April 15

**Nickelback**
Pengrowth Saddledome
Calgary, Alberta
March 17

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### Ticket Price/S

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**Van Halen Shows Off To Strong Start**

There are a number of solid arena tour dates this spring and summer, including those by Eric Clapton, Britney Spears, Rod Stewart, Eagles, Prince, and Madonna. The last of these launched with an impressive on-sales last week, surely easing the minds of some promoters who ponied up artist guarantees of $375,000 to $1 million, according to sources.

Band manager Irving Azoff would not confirm the figures. An on-again, off-again rumor for much of the first part of this year, the Van Halen reunion with Sammy Hagar on vocals is now shaping up as a solid top 25 tour for 2004. The tour opens June 11 at Greensboro, N.C., at the Greensboro Coliseum. "I knew it would blow out," Azoff says. "Van Halen is rocking." Barbara Skydell and Keith Sarsken of William Morris Agency and Jonny Podell at Evolution Talent booked the tour by cutting promoter deals on a market-by-market basis. Azoff says the tour will ultimately consist of four legs of 22 shows each.

**GOD ON TOUR:** As expected, Eric Clapton will follow up his Crossroads Guitar Festival appearance in Dallas with a North American arena tour, beginning June 11 at Alltel Arena in Little Rock, Ark. The route is a nice mix of primary and secondary markets and stops at only two outdoor venues. Clapton will play a double July 3-4 at Tweeter Center for the Performing Arts in Mansfield, Mass., as the Democratic National Convention will occupy the FleetCenter in Boston. Tweeter Center’s 14,000 reserved seats, well beyond what most amphitheaters offer, likely helped it clinch the deal. The venue, booked by Clear Channel Entertainment/Boston V Dave Marsden, finished first among all sheds in grosses in 2003. Clapton also will play outdoors Aug. 2 at the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles to wrap the tour. Rick Roskin at Creative Artists Agency books Clapton.

**RED HOT AND BLUE:** Coming off one of the buzz performances at the South by Southwest Music Conference last month in Austin, young U.K. soul singer Joss Stone will tour the United States this spring, beginning April 21 at the Chicago House of Blues and wrapping May 2 at SunPest in West Palm Beach, Fla.

In addition to the run of eight spring shows, Stone has scheduled a series of high-profile TV specials and festival appearances. She performs alongside Patti LaBelle, Jessica Simpson, Ashanti, Eve and others April 18 on the live VH1 “Divas” telecast. She duets with Smokey Robinson on a performance of his classic “I Second That Emotion” for the Motown 45th anniversary special, scheduled to air May 3 on ABC.

Stone will film a performance for “Austin City Limits” in April, which will air during the show’s next season. When her brief U.S. tour wraps up, Stone will open for Sting at London’s Royal Albert Hall from May 14 through May 20. Ron Kaplan at Monterey Peninsula Artists books Stone.

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**THE OTHER NELLY:** Nelly Furtado will launch her Come As You Are tour of U.S. theaters April 30 at the Vic in Chicago. The tour supports Furtado’s gold-certified second DreamWorks album, “Folklore.”

The theater tour concludes May 19 at the Wiltern Theatre in Los Angeles. Furtado begins a European run June 10 with an appearance at the Super Rock Super Rock festival in Lisbon. The Europe trek wraps July 1 in Utrecht, the Netherlands. Marty Diamond at Little Big Man books Furtado.
Crushing Music is striving to bring genuine hip-hop music to the advertising market. The New York-based full-service music house recently opened bi-coastal offset Crushing Blueprint. The new company boasts a creative roster including high-profile hip-hop songwriter/producers Mike Elizondo (50 Cent’s “In Da Club”) and Kanye West (Twista’s “Slow Jamz”).

The division already has one hip-hop-themed commercial tucked under its belt: Pepsi Vanilla’s “Trucks.” The spot features two trucks in a hydraulic lift contest, geared to hot hip-hop beats that Elizondo produced.

“Advertising is always trying to be a mirror of what’s happening in culture,” Crushing Music partner Mary Wood says. “Although hip-hop music has become mainstream, we felt there was a real void in the advertising world for authentic hip-hop.”

“We refer to Wood and Crushing Music founder Joey Levine. The duo is responsible for such 30-second pop-culture ditties as Coca-Cola’s “Can’t Beat the Feeling” and 7-Up’s “It’s an Up Thing.”

“The one field being ignored in the advertising world was hip-hop music,” Levine says. “I don’t know if it was because of fear or lack of knowledge of where to get [the music]. But what I was hearing on the air seemed homogenized.”

To effectively tap the lucrative hip-hop advertising market, the duo partnered with West Coast producers Steve Lindsey of Bloter Music Publishing and Matt Kahane of GoodVibe Recordings. Both possess strong ties to the hip-hop world. Lindsey’s company publishes Elizondo’s music. Kahane has worked with such hip-hop acts as Slim Village and Mystic.

MAJOR DISCIPLINE

A member of late-’60s group Ohio Express, Levine wrote and produced songs for that band and other acts before segueing into commercials.

Adjusting to advertising’s 30-second world takes major discipline, he says. “Getting a star personality is one thing; creating the music is another. You have to be fresh and original—and deal with demanding clients, deadlines and budgets.”

Elizondo produced Elizondo when Blueprint first approached him. The Dr. Dre protégé had already done a couple of commercials, including one for Jack in the Box.

“It’s easier not having to deal with a three- to four-minute track,” he says of the 30-second limit. “But communicating with advertising people, it takes time to get used to their language. They have certain objectives, and musically you have to figure out how to bridge that gap.”

Blueprint’s team of producer/composers is also involved in various record and movie ventures. To help facilitate Blueprint projects, Lindsey or another finishing producer will step in after the initial music is written.

“Agencies continuously want changes,” Lindsey says. “So we’ve made it a little easier on the producers. Myself or another finishing producer will come in and then we’ll deal with the agency and talk to directors. That way we’re not bombarding these talented people with a bunch of changes.”

Blueprint recently wrapped an AT&T spot that sports a remix by T-Ray. His production credits range from Cypress Hill to the Fat Boys. Besides Elizondo, West and T-Ray, the Blueprint bullpen houses DJ Hi-Tek, Snoop Dogg and Sean Combs’ Bad Boy Entertainment, among others. Additional client irons in the fire include Pizza Hut and a new Pepsi spot.

Elizondo is excited that other opportunities are opening up for musicians willing to take chances. “There’s a strong hip-hop collective that can translate what they do in different arenas. It’s a seamless transition between commercials [and] TV shows forward to film composition.”
SALES DATA COMPILED FROM A NATIONAL SUBSET PANEL OF CORE R&B/HIP-HOP STORES BY Nielsen SoundScan

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ARTIST | IMPRINT & NUMBER/DISTRIBUTING LABEL | Title |
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<td>Michael McDonald</td>
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<td>Motown 17</td>
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Today’s Rap Pales Compared With ’94

With Columbia Records celebrating the 10th anniversary of Nas’ “Illmatic” with the release of “10 Year Anniversary Illmatic Platinum Series” (Sony Urban Music/Columbia), I started thinking about 1994. I was a junior at an all-boys prep school in suburban New Jersey. Like most kids that age, I was more interested in hip-hop than history.

Fortunately for me, 1994 turned out to be a banner year for hip-hop. It’s hard to see that happening now.

In addition to influential albums by Gang Starr (“Hard to Earn”), Common Sense (“Resurrection”), and A Tribe Called Quest (“Ill Communication”), ‘94 had an outstanding class of hip-hop rookies.

That year the world was introduced to M.O.P., Warren G., Fugees, and Method Man, among others.

While these acts made lasting imprints on the genre, “Illmatic” and two other debut albums released that year left their mark indelibly on the broader music scene—and a certain 17-year-old.

“Illmatic” was like a lightning bolt for many. While its subject matter wasn’t particularly unique, Nas’ lyrical abilities were on par with some of the best in the game. That, combined with hard-hitting tracks from A-list producers DJ Premier, Pete Rock and Large Professor, made for an unbeatable combination.

While Nas was beating the East Coast with his tales of street life, there was a new sound coming out of the South: OutKast’s “Southernplayalisticadillacmuzik” (LaFace Arist) and the Atlanta-based duo’s debut ushered in a new era for hip-hop.

MCs could do more than jazz music. Cuts like “Player’s Ball,” “Get Up, Get Out” and the title track made OutKast instant fan favorites.

1994 was also the year that former Uptown Records A&R executive Sean “P. Diddy” Combs launched his Bad Boy label. Craig Mack and The Notorious B.I.G., aka Biggie Smalls, kicked things off there.

Biggie’s “Ready to Die” (Bad Boy)

was an epic masterpiece. The late Brooklyn, N.Y., native had a narrative flow that remains unmatched.

Whether he was sharing autobiographical tales (“Juicy”), waxing poetic about the gangster lifestyle (“Warning”) or serenading the ladies (“One More Chance”), Biggie was flawless.

Flash forward 10 years to 2004. What happened? Granted, there have been some impressive debuts, but none have had that all-encompassing effect on the genre.

Where are those artists who grabbed the game by the throat and force it to change? Where’s the album that’s going to make some 17-year-old kid want to be in this business?

Do you know?
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IN LATIN AMERICA

APRIL

22 BENIDORM
PLAZA DE TOROS

24 BARCELONA
PALAU SAN JORDI

29 MEXICO D.F.
PACIO DEPORTES

MAY

1 GUADALAJARA
PLAZA DE TOROS

3 GUATEMALA
DOMO

5 COSTA RICA
ESTADIO R. SAPRISSA

7 PANAMA CITY
TEATRO ANAYANSI

9 MIAMI
MIAMI ARENA

12 CARACAS
POLIEDRO

16 BUENOS AIRES
LJNA PARK

17 BUENOS AIRES
LJNA PARK

20 RIO DE JANEIRO
CLARO HALL

22 SAO PAULO
CREDICARD HALL
APRIL 26-29, 2004
THE EDEN ROC RESORT & SPA
MIAMI BEACH

The Eden Roc Resort & Spa Miami Beach

Heineken Presents
Billboard Latin Music Conference & Awards 2004

In Association with Garnier Fructis

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AKWID, Univision Records
MARICIO ABAROA, Earthtown Entertainment
MAXIMO AGUIRRE, Maximo Aguirre Music Publ.
GABRIEL ABAROA, LARAS
RAFAEL BAUTISTA, WOJ-D-FM, Chicago
KAREN BENEZRA, Brandweek
BRYAN BINIYAK, The Fuerte Group
BYRON BRIZUELA, Briz Productions
RICHARD BULL, ADL
VICO C, EMI Latin, USA
ANGELO CARRASCO, Sony Music International
SUZI CIVITA, Warner Bros. Pictures, Music
BETO CUEVAS, Warner
REBECCA DRUCKER, The William Morris Agency
JOHN ECHEVARRIA, Universal Music Latino
EDDIE FERNANDEZ, Sony ATV Music Publishing
LUIS FONSI, Universal Music Latino
SERGIO GEORGE, Sergio George Productions
SAMUEL HERNANDEZ, SH Productions
DOUG JAMES, EMI
PAULA KAMINSKY, BMG Entertainment
ANDY KLEINMAN, EMEPE.com
FRANK LOPEZ, A الرسمي Christian Network
GUSTAVO MENENDEZ, Warner Chappell
GEORGE MORENO, Artist, songwriter/Producer
JORGE PINO, EMI Latin, USA
BERNICE RAMIREZ, VOZ Cristiana
FRAIC REYES, Loca Films
HECTOR "PERUCHO" RIVERA, Perú Music
SUSAN ROBERTS, New Media UMVD
LUIS SAMARA, WALEN
IKE SANTANDER, Santander Music Group
GUSTAVO SANTOA LALLA, Sarco/Vibra/Seminal
MAARTEN STEINKAMP, BMG
ADOLFO VALENZUELA, Twins Enterprises
OMAR VALENZUELA, Twins Enterprises
FRANCISCO VILLANUEVA, Mock & Roll
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BRIAN WILLIAMS, SunTrust Eq, Banking Group
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### Hot Latin Tracks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Format</th>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>Greatest Gainer</strong></td>
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<tr>
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### Latin Pop Airplay

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### Tropical Airplay

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### Regional Mexican Airplay

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### Top Latin Albums

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<td>Grupo Montez De Durango</td>
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<td>54</td>
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<td>Vicente Fernandez</td>
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### HOT SHOT DEBUT

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### Latin Pop Albums

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<td>Varios artistales</td>
<td>Fonovisa</td>
<td>CD</td>
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**BILLYARD APRIL 24, 2004**

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**American Radio History**
In Mexico: Intocable continues to establish itself as a key grupero act in Mexico. Its studio album “Nuestro Destino Estaba Escrito” has been certified triple-platinum (150,000 units) by Mexican recording industry chamber Amaprófon. Similarly, its live CD/DVD combo, “Intimamente,” was certified gold for sales of 50,000 copies after only two weeks in stores. The group’s Miami tour kick-off March 27 drew 45,000 fans to Ecatepec, a Mexico City suburb. Intocable will also play Mexico City’s prestigious Auditorio Nacional for the first time June 11 and 12.

TERESA AGUILERA

In Panama: Eight bands have been selected as semifinalists in Panama’s first national contest, and five finalists will ultimately be chosen. All five finalists will record two tracks at Panama City’s Contraexñas Studio for a compilation album to be released by Sony Music later this year. The winner will also get a professional video directed by Kathy Simnovic, a Web site designed by BTS Multimedia, a management deal with Republic Entertainment and Home Music Management Mexico and a three-month supply of clothing from Ecko Ulltd. The event was organized by veteran event-promoter Republica Entertainment in conjunction with Web site panamrock.com and Soberana Beer. For more information, visit panamrock.com.

ANASTACIO PUERTAS CAICEDO

In Spain: Argentina’s Charly García, legendary Cuban bolero composer/singer César Portillo de la Luz and Brazilian newcomer Adriana Calcanhoto took the three Latin awards at Spain’s eighth Premios de la Música April 15 in Madrid. García, 53, considered one of the fathers of rock en español, received the Honorary Latin Award. Portillo de la Luz, 81, a founder of Cuba’s film music genre in the 1940s, collected the Lifetime Latin Award, while minimalist singer Calcanhoto took the new Latin artist prize. The Latin awards had been announced in advance after a vote by 5,000 members of the Music Arts and Sciences Academy (AAMCI). The academy is formed by authors society SGAE, artists association AIE and a team of music industry professionals. AAMCI had already announced that opera star Montserrat Caballé would receive an honorary award for lifetime achievement. Indie label Nuevos Medios took home best record label. The remaining 30 awards were to be announced April 15 at the gala ceremony. Alejandro Sanz is likely to be among the winners, with seven nods. Las Niñas and Alex Ubago both have five nominations, and Andy & Lucas had four.

HOWELL LLEWELLYN

Latin Notas

Continued from page 26

Specifics were not disclosed, but the group estimates the deal to be worth 10 million euros in cash, publicity and tour support. Calegari Quijano will launch its own massive Spanish tour following the “Por Nuestra Música” stint. By late fall, the group plans to come to the States and begin promoting its music. But how serious are they? Well, the brothers are buying a pad in Miami. And they’re not alone. Recent arrivals to the city include singer/songwriter Amaury Gutierrez, who moved his entire family from Mexico. Also making his home in South Florida is producer Sergio George, formerly stationed in New York.

THALIA EXPLOSION: While we’re talking about branding, no Latin act comes closer to Mexican diva Thalia.

First came sunglasses. Then her own Kmart clothing line. Now comes her own lifestyle magazine. “Thalía,” launched April 13 and billed as “the first celebrity-inspired magazine for young Hispanic women.” The monthly publication is put out by American Media’s Latino Magazine Group, which includes “Mira” and “Shake en Español,” among other titles. Could it get any better? Yup. Next fall, Thalía will launch her own candy line in partnership with Hershey. The deal is part of a broader, multiyear partnership announced earlier this month. It includes sponsorship of Thalía’s upcoming tour, a Spanish-language advertising campaign and consumer and retail promotions. The kicker is the new, co-branded line of Thalía Hershey products specifically targeting the Latin market. The “Latin-inspired” candies will be variations on standard Hershey themes. You may find, for example, dulce de leche fillings in your Hershey’s Kisses. Thalía’s Hershey partnership is managed byubby Thomas D. Mottola.

MUSIC AND FILM: The Billboard Latin Music Conference is about, well, Latin music. But what happens when Latin music and film come together? And not just music videos. On April 29, as part of the conference, three filmmakers and composers will discuss the music of film and film in a unique panel titled “The Music We See.”

Franc Reyes (director of future film “Empire,” starring John Leguizamo, and composer of many of the film’s tracks), Gustavo Santacolla (who scored “21 Grams” and “Amores Perros”) and Jessy Terrece (music video Grammy Award winner and director of the upcoming feature film “Soul Plane” starring Tom Arnold, Method Man and Snoop Dogg) will discuss the expanding role and treatment of Latin/Latin-themed music in film. The discussion will be moderated by Suzi Civita, VP of music at Warner Bros. Pictures. For a complete list of Billboard Latin Music Conference events and panels, visit billboardevents.com.

IN BRIEF: Luis Silva, previously marketing director at Freddie Records, has launched an independent marketing and promotion firm. One Man Show will be based in San Antonio, Texas, and its clients include Los Astros de Durango, Juliesta Venegas, Mario Orozco (former singer for David Lee Garza) and newcomer Mario Delgado “En Camera Chorr.” Silva can be contacted at sielca@msn.com... Concert series “La Múnsica Musical Miller Lite” are for its third consecutive tour, with 10 stops beginning May 2 in Dallas. Sponsored by Miller and produced by Miranda & Associates, La Múnsica features four semi-trucks that travel from city to city and unfold to become stages. Each stop will feature different acts. Dates are booked through Sept. 12. The May 2 concert bill includes Los Tigres del Norte, Ana Bárbara and Intocable.

We “like to utilize nontraditional marketing strategies to market a product,” Romann says. “For me, it’s about branding, content and culture.” Initially, Haru founder Barbara Matsumura approached Romann to discuss the creation of an ad that would run in various magazines. “I told her that we needed to do something different,” Romann recalls. “We had to develop a Haru brand, because brands have leverage for content,” he explains. In essence, “we would turn a brand into content.” In this case, the content is music. “Because music communicates faster than any other medium,” Romann says he began discussing potential ideas for a “Haru track” with Garrett. According to Romann, he and Garrett wondered if they could create a song that, initially, would have no connection or relationship to the restaurant.

“We wanted to get through to the emotion by way of legitimate content,” Romann notes. “Every brand has a subculture,” he adds. “But for a brand to be strong, you must have a powerful subculture. So, we wondered if we could sneak our way into culture as content—by producing an experience.” And it worked.

Indeed, a number of compilations have already licensed the Blaze Ballyons-produced “Haru” by Haru (aka Romann and Garrett)—with remixes by Wide Life, Junior Vasquez, B.B.C. and Demarko! & Deep Influence. They include “Divas de la Discoteca” (Star 69 Records) and “Winter Party Vol. 7” (Centauro Entertainment). Of course, whether the track is wholly accepted as a legitimate song or just another tried and used as an advertisement with an ulterior motive—remains to be seen.

In the end, it will come down to where you first heard the song and what it means to you. “If that first experience was authentic, positive and legitimate, ‘Haru’ will be accepted as a song, then, when you find out that it’s also the name of a restaurant, you won’t feel cheated.”

In the coming weeks, Romann Music will send a new track, “Automatic Lover,” to about 60 radio stations. Romann says this has absolutely nothing to do with a client. “We want to establish complete legitimacy as a content provider. We are not building artists’ careers; we are building content.” Along the way, though, Romann will be branching Romann Music.

“We don’t realize the impact that brands have in our lives,” Romann says. “We are humans beings crafted by marketing, society and media.”

Haru is primarily owned by the Benihana Restaurant Group.
### HOT DANCE SINGLES SALES

<table>
<thead>
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<td>Kylé</td>
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<td>Enigma</td>
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<td>The Crystal Method</td>
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<td>HOW DO YOU DO (REMIX)</td>
<td>Des'ree</td>
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<td>I'M NOT THE ONE</td>
<td>Mariah Carey</td>
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### HOT DANCE RADIO PLAYAIR

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<td>Motorcycle</td>
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<td>Armin van Buuren Featuring Autumn Saane</td>
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<td>STRAIGHT AHEAD</td>
<td>Tube &amp; Berger Featuring Chrissy Hynde</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>IT'S MY LIFE</td>
<td>No Doubt</td>
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<td>DIP IT LOW</td>
<td>Christian McBride</td>
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<td>Ailinna</td>
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<tr>
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<td>WHERE YOU ARE (I FEEL LOVE)</td>
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<td>I FEEL LOVE</td>
<td>Blue Man Group Featuring versus Hom</td>
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<td>WHITE FLAG</td>
<td>Dido</td>
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<td>TAKE ME TO THE CLOUDS ABOVE</td>
<td>LMC vs. UZ</td>
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<td>OH YEAH!</td>
<td>OutKast</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>IF I WERE YOU</td>
<td>Candeo Jays</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>THIS LOVE</td>
<td>Maroon 5</td>
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<td>NOTHING BUT YOU</td>
<td>Paul Van Dyk Featuring Herstuck &amp; Jeneinges</td>
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### TOP ELECTRONIC ALBUMS

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<td>ZER0 7</td>
<td>When It Falls</td>
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<td>AIR</td>
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<td>Ultra10s</td>
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<td>N.Y.C. Underground Party</td>
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### HOT DANCE CLUB PLAY

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<td>DREAM-A-LOT'S THEME (I WILL LIVE FOR LOVE)</td>
<td>Donna Summer</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>GET BETTER</td>
<td>K.M.C. Featuring Sandy</td>
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<td>SIGNED, SEALED, DELIVERED</td>
<td>Colton Ford &amp; Pepper Mashay</td>
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<td>JAMS SESSIONS FOR COLONIAL</td>
<td>Mr. Ali &amp; E.S.Novice</td>
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<td>Shannon Reid</td>
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<td>A DAY IN THE LIFE (2004 REMIX)</td>
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<td>No Doubt</td>
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### HOT SHOT DEBUT

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<td>BORN TOO SLOW (E.MORILLO, DEEPSKY &amp; NURBEED MIXES)</td>
<td>The Crystal Method</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>YOU HAVE A WAY</td>
<td>Melanie Mann</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>YA NO ERES EL MISMO (NORTY COTTO MIXES)</td>
<td>Noelia</td>
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<td>SLIPPIN' AWAY</td>
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*Note: The Billboard charts are based on various factors including sales, airplay, and streaming data. These data are compiled by Nielsen SoundScan and Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems.*
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Praise & Worship Genre Thrives

BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

At a time when the music industry as a whole is struggling, praise and worship music continues to thrive.

During the past several years, the genre has expanded beyond church pews to dominate Christian radio, has sold briskly at retail and has launched several popular series, including “Songs 4 Worship,” “Warship Together” and “WOW Worship.”

Such labels as Vineyard, Maranatha and Integrity have long been the backbone of the praise and worship community. But in recent years, major Christian companies, including EMI Christian Music Group and Provident Music Group, have made successful forays into the market, employing direct-to-consumer sales and utilizing the Internet to spread the word.

As the Christian music community gathers for the 31st annual Dove Awards April 28 in Nashville, praise and worship artists will be prominent among the nominees.

“The genre has grown more than 60% in the last six years, despite negative industry trends like illegal downloading, price evaluation and competing formats,” says Danny McGuffey, chief marketing officer for Integrity Media. “Praise and worship is the language of the church and always will be. We have seen fast growth in new praise and worship brands like ‘iWorship,’ which has now sold more than 1 million units since its introduction less than two years ago,” McGuffey says.

Direct-response TV marketing “has also been instrumental in the growth of the genre,” he adds. “Plus, we’ve seen some extremely successful campaigns by Time-Life and Sony Music that have really driven growth at retail.”

McGuffey estimates that 40 million to 60 million people sing praise and worship songs every Sunday in church.

“Our genre is really defined by the songs and the impact they have on people, as opposed to the artist-driven side, which demands touring, videos and radio for exposure. We say the church is our radio station or broadcast vehicle,” he says.

For many years, the majority of praise and worship albums were live recordings of church services led by a worship leader. Consumers bought these projects based on the featured songs and largely on the reputation of labels that specialized in worship music.

Integrity, Maranatha and Vineyard have long been the trusted names for praise and worship music. The approach of executives at these labels was not just to record a live album but to “harvest” the experience at the service.

Prominent worship leaders include Don Moen, Paul Baloche and Darlene Zschech. In recent years, however, (Continued on page 36)

As a praise and worship artist, Michael W. Smith has been extremely successful.
Compilations On the Rise

BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

The popularity of the praise and worship genre has grown in recent years to several top-selling compilation brands. Despite the view that similar series dedicated to the same genre might overwhelm the market, industry insiders feel they haven’t hit saturation point.

“If you look at the top [Nielsen] SoundScan charts, you’ll see a plethora of different brands out there,” says Danny McGuffey, chief marketing officer for Integrity Media. “This genre is defined by big and emerging worship songs on the [Christian Copyright Licensing] chart. Whether they are worship leader-driven of artist-driven, they all serve their place in this growing movement.”

It’s not uncommon in the praise and worship arena for several companies to work together on a series. Integrity is involved in several brands, including “Hosanna: Music,” “Songs 4 Worship” (in partnership with Time-Life) and “Worship,” along with Marantha and INO.

“WOW Worship” debuted in 1999 as a relationship between Integrity, Marantha and Provident. Several labels licensed the WOW brand name from Christian music’s big three companies—Word, EMI Christian Music Group (EMI CMG) and Provident Music Group—which had been releasing the WOW series of Christian pop, word, EMI and Provident now market and promote the WOW Worship brand.

EMI CMG has partnered with Time-Life to promote the popular Worship Together series. The Worship Together brand also uses on a web site offering music resources. EMI CMG’s parent company of Sixstepsrecords, whose roster includes the David Crowder Band, Matt Redman and a series of live recordings of worship gatherings known as the Passion series. Despite all these releases, McGuffey does not feel that praise and worship consumers are confused by the abundance of product available.

“I don’t think we are confusing the consumer any more than the 35,000 different pop releases that come out every year,” he says. “Companies that are focused and getting their audience can always find customers.”

Those deeply involved in the praise and worship community see the rise of strong brands as a major plus in the genre’s growth. McGuffey points to the success of Time-Life’s “Sons of Song.”

“The advantage is that, with more than 8 million units sold to date, we have developed an extremely strong brand for the church consumer,” he says, adding that the series has the “distinction of being the fastest-selling” and biggest

Christian music today encompasses a variety of styles—country, rap, rock, pop, hip-hop, and house. All versions of any musical style can find a counterpart in Christian music.

What makes praise and worship so different is that it’s the only type of Christian music that is unique to the Church marketplace. It is music that is sung directly to God, and it is the counterpart in mainstream music.

There’s something about praise and worship that cannot be copied or imitated,” Australian worship leader, Hugh Rosby says. “I don’t see it as a trend that is going to peak. The industry finally identified what the market wanted and started bringing it in a stronger way.”

Christian music is singing directly to God.

“Worship music is Christian music,” Waterfront Entertainment president Hugh Rosby says. “It’s the core of the sound in the praise and worship genre. When you look at songs like “Samadhi” or “The Lord’s Prayer,” there is a commonality of sound and worship leaders. These songs then become ingrained in the minds of the church-going public through repetition.”

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A tiny music publishing company run from a kitchen breakfast nook in Austin has suddenly found itself in the midst of some big-time success. Brandi Warden runs Moonkiss Music out of the home she shares with her songwriter husband, Monte. But size doesn’t matter to Moonkiss, which has had six major-label artists cut its songs in the two years the company’s been in existence.

The Wardens are currently enjoying their first hit. “Desperately,” recorded by George Strait. It is No. 10 on the Hot Country Singles & Tracks chart. Warden wrote the song with her brother-in-law, songwriter Brian Robison, who previously recorded it himself. Warden says it’s an interpretation of a song written by her previous girlfriend inspired by the song. “Brandi says if it goes to No. 1, she’s sending my ex-wife flowers,” he notes.

The Warden started Moonkiss after Warner-Chappell Music dropped Monte from his publishing deal. But proving that success breeds more success, Monte says “desperately” has “led to other requests and action on songs of mine.”

As an artist, Monte was signed to several label deals. However, he says, “I’ve spent most of my career very well representing the bottom half of the chart.”

He was on A&M as a member of the Wagoners in the late ’80s, then had solo deals on Watermelon Records and RCA Records. But after 18 years as a songwriter, “Desperately” is his first bona fide hit. Brandi is the third generation of her family to work in the music business but the first to be on the publishing side. Her grandparents, Don and Gladys Scalfe, uncle Ronny Scalfe and father Phil Thomas were all songwriters. And they’re not all happy about her chosen line of work. As songwriters, she says, her family members think of the publisher as “the man.”

She learned a lot about publishing when she served as A&R coordinator for producer Mark Wright at Decca Records in Nashville. She recently told Wright, “All those years of getting your coffee paid off.”

While her husband is the sole permanent writer signed to Moonkiss, Brandi is now working with some other writers on a song-by-song basis and has a potential cut on hold with Terri Clark for one of them. Her agreement with those writers is straightforward: “My deal is if I get the cut, I get the publishing. If I don’t, I don’t get nothing.”

But she wants to keep the company small. “I don’t ever want to be EMI and have a bunch of writers on a draw.”

THE ROW: Marco Promotions has launched a new division, Club Connection, that will develop and coordinate promotions for country dance clubs and venues and dance instructors. Other Club Connection services will include distribution of music, posters and other print material, as well as spin solicitation and marketing. The initial panel will consist of 100 nightclubs. Marco’s Jon Gunter will head the new division.

AWARDS & HONORS: The Library of Congress gave the Daily Paper and Living Legend Award in Washington, D.C., April 14. Parton performed at the ceremony, which was taped for a May special on the Great American Country TV network.

Meanwhile, Reba McEntire will be honored with the Johnny Cash Visionary Award during the CMT 2004 Flame Worthy Video Music Awards in Nashville April 21. Past recipients are the Dixie Chicks and Cash. The award, previously called the Visionary Award, was renamed this year in Cash’s honor. It recognizes an artist’s “musical vision, innovative spirit, and impact on music videos and pioneering initiatives in entertainment,” according to CMT.

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### Country Rocks

Continued from page 11

at No. 1 on the Hot Country Singles & Tracks chart for four weeks. Though he’s no stranger to Nashville, Jimmy Buffett scored his first No. 1 on the Billboard Top Country Singles & Tracks chart last fall with “It’s Five O’Clock Somewhere.” The duet with Alan Jackson spent eight weeks at the summit before dropping.

And there’s more coming. Kracker will tour with Chesney this summer, and Kracker’s label, Lava Records, plans to work a single from his next album to country radio.

There are also plans to work Antigone Rising, a new female band on Lava, to the country market.

Michaels is even prepping his launch in that genre. At press time, he was close to signing a deal for a solo album on Music Row indie Lofton Creek Records, headed by Nashville veteran Mike Borchetta.

For artists who have never cared about genres or barriers, it’s just an opportunity to work with admired acts. For example, Michaels and Three Doors Down’s Brad Arnold will be in Tracy Lawrence’s next video for “It’s All How You Look At It,” Jack White of the White Stripes produced Loretta Lynn’s new album, “Van Lear Rose.” Phil Vassar plays piano and sings on Kracker’s new project.

But for the industry, all this activity raises many questions. One of them is. Are these primarily pop artists watering down the country radio format? Are they taking slots away from new country artists?

**Nashville Skyline**

Label executives from Nashville to New York primarily see the crossover as a good thing.

“There’s a whole world of people out there who will go to a Hank Jr. show one night and go to a Mötley Crüe show the next night. Then they’ll go Aerosmith the night after that and go to Alabama the night after that,” observes Mike Dungan, president of Capitol Records in Nashville.

“Those kids don’t care if you call it ‘country’ or ‘rock’ or whatever it is. If they like it, they like it. God bless ’em for it.”

For pop labels, it’s a way to mine a new audience.

“Country fans love great songs, and that’s something that thankfully Uncle Kracker has a real knack for.” says Jason Flom, CEO of Lava parent the Atlantic Group. “The songs on the new album have a little bit of country feel to them, so I’m very optimistic that Nashville may embrace the new album.”

Flom says his artists’ attitude plays a key role in their acceptance.

“People sense that with Kracker and Kid Rock there is a real love of country music and a real respect for the fans and the whole institution of country,” he says. “It’s not something that just occurred to them one day and they went out after the country market.”

Kracker says, “We’ve always dabbed and kind of played around with [country music]. Even on my first album there was a lot of rap stuff, but there was steel guitar. It’s not necessarily a matter of crossing over but incorporating the music that I love with the music that I do.”

Michaels’ interest also stems from a longstanding appreciation of country music. “I grew up listening to traditional country,” he says. “I’m not here to change anything. I just want to add to it.”

Not surprisingly, country programmers greet this wave of crossover artists with ambivalence.

“Good music is good music, and it’s our job to get people to listen to our radio stations,” country KEEY (K102) Minneapolis VP of programming Greg Swedberg says. “If they like a song by a rock artist better than a song by a core country artist, we’re really under [an] obligation to get the most listeners. So we should play the songs that get us the most listeners.”

Swedberg says Craig’s “First Cut Is The Deepest” wasn’t “country enough,” but “Picture” researched “better than almost [anything] else we had in the country format. It would have been stupid for us not to play that song.”

Some programmers would rather devote the limited space on their playlists to country genre’s core artists.

“We [want] to focus on artists who are going to be there for us as a station and a format,” KMRPS Seattle music director Tony Thomas says. “Our audience knows when they hear us they can hear pop artists. When listeners turn to us, I’d rather be meeting their expectations with a uniquely country-branded artist like Toby Keith or Alan Jackson.”

Thomas admits there are times when stretching the boundaries works.

“The pairing of Kenny Chesney and Uncle Kracker on When the Sun Goes Down seemed like an ideal way to introduce a non-country artist to our air,” he says. “But we don’t take that to mean that listeners need to hear [Kracker’s pop hits] ‘Follow Me’ and ‘Drift Away’ as gold on our air.”

However, Thomas says he’ll give Kracker’s next release a test spin. “But we’re not out looking for pop product to play just to see if we can make it,” he says.

“The refrain I’ve heard from Nashville label folks for years is, ‘We want to build careers.’ We do too, and we’d rather play the hook out of Gretchen Wilson’s Redneck Woman or go early on Josh Turner’s Long Black Train, knowing that these are going to be our artists, than go fishing for country-tied tracks by artists who aren’t out there saying, ‘I’m country.’

**Country Crossroads**

Though country radio’s reaction to crossover artists may be mixed, country video outlets have embraced Craig, Kracker and Rock.

Country Music Television routinely plays clips with those artists, and the successful series “CMT Crossroads” showcases major pop/rock acts performing with country artists. Pairings have included James Taylor and the Dixie Chicks, Travis Tritt and Ray Charles and Martina McBride and Pat Benatar.

“The premise of CMT is that country music is bigger than you think it is,” says Brian Phillips, CMT senior VP of programming. “It’s ‘can go places you didn’t imagine.’

Labels outside Nashville have also solicited CMT’s help and are interested by those acts early. When Dixie Chicks manager Simon Scaife told Flom his new girl group Antigone Rising sounded like it would fit the country format, Lava flew the act down to try to sign Flom and his staff, who report they were duly impressed.

**Survival of the Fittest**

Most country label executives aren’t too bothered by the pop/rock acts invading the country charts.

“We are always open to great music that will work,” DreamWorks Records senior executive for promotion and artist development Scott Borchetta says. “It’s always going to be survival of the fittest, so what’s going to fit best today, I’m not going to categorize. If any of our artists feel threatened by it, then they need to make sure they are making the best music possible.”

RCA Label Group chairman Joe Galante is quick to point out this isn’t a new phenomenon.

“Over the last 20 years, we’ve had this conversation probably every couple of years,” he says, citing Lionel Richie, Julio Iglesias and ‘N Sync’s brief forays into country.

“As long as the music is interesting, I don’t have any problem,” Galante says. “But when people are desperate in other formats and try servicing rock acts into country formats just to see if they can’t get something, and the act really doesn’t have an interest in the format, I think that’s balls.”
### April 24, 2004

#### Billboard Top Country Albums

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Kenny Chesney</td>
<td>The Sun</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Toby Keith</td>
<td>Shock-Yall</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Keith Urban</td>
<td>Golden Road</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Josh Turner</td>
<td>Long Black Train</td>
<td>Sony</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Tracy Lawrence</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Epic</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Alan Jackson</td>
<td>Greatest Hits Volume II</td>
<td>MCA</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Songs Inspired By The Passion Of The Christ</td>
<td>Reprise</td>
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<td>Brooks &amp; Dunn</td>
<td>Red Dirt Road</td>
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<td>See If I Care</td>
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<td>Time Life</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>Johnny Cash</td>
<td>American IV: The Man Comes Around</td>
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<td>Lonestar</td>
<td>From There To Here: Greatest Hits</td>
<td>RCA</td>
<td>73</td>
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<td>33</td>
<td>Hanson</td>
<td>Union Station</td>
<td>Reprise</td>
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<td>34</td>
<td>Jimmy Wayne</td>
<td>This Aint My First Love Song</td>
<td>RCA</td>
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#### April 24, 2004

#### Billboard Top Country Catalog Albums

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Willie Nelson</td>
<td>Greatest Hits</td>
<td>RCA</td>
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<td>Loretta Lynn</td>
<td>The Very Best Of Loretta Lynn</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Martina McBride</td>
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<td>Kenny Chesney</td>
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<td>Tim McGraw &amp; Faith Hill</td>
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<td>Warner Bros.</td>
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<td>Johnny Cash</td>
<td>The Very Best Of Johnny Cash</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>George Strait</td>
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<td>MCA</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Keith Urban</td>
<td>The Very Best Of Keith Urban</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>Toby Keith</td>
<td>Greatest Hits Volume Two</td>
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**Note:** The table includes the top country albums and catalogs for the week of April 24, 2004, as reported by Billboard magazine. The data includes sales figures, positions, and labels. The table is a snapshot of the industry at that time and does not necessarily reflect current sales or popularity. Additional information, such as album features and release dates, is not provided in this format. For more detailed information, please refer to the original source material.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Peak Position</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>THE WRONG GIRL</td>
<td>Lee Ann Womack</td>
<td>RCA Nashville</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>I WANNA MAKE YOU CRY</td>
<td>Jeff Bates</td>
<td>BMG Nashville</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>SHE THINKS SHE NEEDS ME</td>
<td>Andy Griggs</td>
<td>RCA A &amp; R</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>WHISKEY LULLABY</td>
<td>Brad Paisley Featuring Alison Krauss</td>
<td>MCA Nashville</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>FLIES ON THE BUTTER (YOU CAN'T GO HOME AGAIN)</td>
<td>Wynonna With Naomi Judd</td>
<td>Curb Records</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>MEN DON'T CHANGE</td>
<td>Amy Dalley</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>ME AND EMILY</td>
<td>Rachel Proctor</td>
<td>Sony BMG Music</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>IF NOBODY BELIEVED IN YOU</td>
<td>John Rich</td>
<td>Universal South</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>BREAK DOWN HERE</td>
<td>Julie Roberts</td>
<td>BMG Nashville</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>THANK GOD I'M A COUNTRY BOY</td>
<td>Billy Dean</td>
<td>BMG Nashville</td>
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**Top Bluegrass Albums**

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<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THE BREAKUP DEBUT</td>
<td>Terri Clark</td>
<td>Capitol Records</td>
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<tr>
<td>GIRLS LIE TOO</td>
<td>Vince Gill</td>
<td>MCA Nashville</td>
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<td>IN THESE LAST FEW YEARS</td>
<td>Tracy Byrd</td>
<td>MCA Nashville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOW'D I WIND UP IN JAMAICA</td>
<td>Tracy Byrd</td>
<td>MCA Nashville</td>
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<tr>
<td>WHAT IT Ain'T</td>
<td>Tracy Byrd</td>
<td>MCA Nashville</td>
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<td>ROUGH &amp; READY</td>
<td>Trace Adkins</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
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<tr>
<td>DRIVE IN THE SUN</td>
<td>Stevie Austin</td>
<td>BMG Nashville</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMOKIN' GRASS</td>
<td>Shannon Lawton</td>
<td>BMG Nashville</td>
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**Billboard Top Country Singles Sales**

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<th>Label</th>
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<td>BREAK DOWN HERE</td>
<td>Jerry Roberts</td>
<td>BMG Nashville</td>
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<tr>
<td>WILD WEST SHOW</td>
<td>Big &amp; Rich</td>
<td>MCA Nashville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HURT</td>
<td>Johnny Cash</td>
<td>MCA Nashville</td>
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<tr>
<td>I CAN'T TAKE YOU ANYWHERE</td>
<td>Scotty Emerick Featuring Toby Keith</td>
<td>MCA Nashville</td>
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<tr>
<td>PICTURE</td>
<td>Kid Rock Featuring Allison Moorer</td>
<td>BMG Nashville</td>
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<tr>
<td>IF HEARTACHES HAD HANDS</td>
<td>Rhonda Vincent</td>
<td>BMG Nashville</td>
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<td>LAST ONE STANDING</td>
<td>Emerson Drive</td>
<td>BMG Nashville</td>
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<tr>
<td>THE IMPOSSIBLE</td>
<td>Jimmy Wayne</td>
<td>BMG Nashville</td>
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<tr>
<td>BROKENHEARTS NITE</td>
<td>Joe Nichols</td>
<td>BMG Nashville</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ALBUMS

ESSENTIAL REVIEWS

Edited by Michael Paoletta

POP

▶ HANSON

Underneath

PRODUCERS: Danny Kortchmar, Hanson

3CG Records 8186104002

RELEASE DATE: April 20

Four years since its studio album, Hanson returns with the self-released “Underneath.” Before proceeding any further, if you’re looking for the next “Mmmmbop,” you’ll have to search elsewhere. “Underneath” spotlights a more mature, melodic pop-rock Hanson. It’s a musical field the three brothers—Taylor, Isaac and Zac—have been traveling in for some time. But this newest effort is the group’s most endearing, because it shows the trio confidently shaping its own style with the catchy, indie-meets-rock songs. “Staying Strong Enough To Break,” “Crazy Beautiful” and lead single “Fenny & Me.” With any luck, this charming set won’t stay “underrated,” because it should. Perhaps it will help shake the boy-band moniker the Hansonists picked up early in their career.—AK

▶ BEN KWELLER

On My Way

PRODUCER: Ethan Johns

ATC/RCA 8287659174

RELEASE DATE: April 6

Sure, it seems like there are too many musical Bros. All three—Ben Brod, Ben Lee and Ben Kweller—even had fun with the coincidence and together released “The Bros EP” (Sanny) early this year. Yet on his second major-label release, “On My Way,” Kweller shines apart from his identically named buds and proves his songwriting chops. The disc rocks right into form with lead track “I Need You Back.” Its jubilant, relaxed pop-rock tone, sitting adjacent to Kweller’s poppy debut “Rolling In the Making,” could melt away any lovers’ quarrel. First single “The Rules” showcases an artist ripping it up with garage-band intensity, along the way, Kweller makes clear the “rule” that says young male singer-songwriters must be sensitive and vulnerable. Yet Kweller doesn’t leave his sweet side totally behind. For the title track, he offers up a touching, stripped-down carefree song about growing pains. With “On My Way,” Kweller establishes that he has lots more going on than just a cool name.—SA

★ AMBULANCE LTD.

LP

PRODUCER: Jim Abbiss, Ambulance Ltd.

TVT 2630

RELEASE DATE: April 6

Ambulance Ltd.’s debut long-player is a dreamy, dreamy tradition of ’90s shoegazer rock. Influence-wise, new, the New York four-piece most convincingly gets My Bloody Valentine namechecking on “Mothers Day” (there are reasons why are evident on such tracks as “Heavy Lifting”), but the group is just as indebted to Dean Wareham and Brian Poole of Luna and Zuzu. Ambulance Ltd. spends much of the back half of “LP” floating through space rock numbers like the sun-drenched “Still Here for You Are” and the nocturnal “Michaël”; both are in the vein of Luna’s masterful “Penthouse.” Elements of the Beatles, the Kinks and the Velvet Underground are all melody evident on the album, too. (A cover of the Velvet’s “Ocean” is a hidden bonus track.) “LP” ultimately succeeds because of Ambulance Ltd.’s ability to synthesize these recognizable sounds into something fresh and uniquely their own.—BG

★ THE DANNEMILLS

BASELIS OF ANTE

PRODUCERS: Tim Hatfield, Wes Kidd, the Dannemills

Red Ink/Epic WR 92969

RELEASE DATE: April 6

There couldn’t be anything pretentious about a band that recorded part of its major-label debut in a Manhattan Mini Storage. Nor do the Dannemills rely on a contrived image or studio gimmickry. Instead, this Brooklyn quartet, featuring ex-WhiskerTown member Steve Terry, serves up earthy, straightforward rock ’n’ roll. Along with a wealth of warm sounds, the band includes space rock, roots-rock riffs, the group’s solid songwriting is also represented on four tracks recorded in frontman Alex Hennessy’s home. Adequately alternating between the large-size rock of “What You Get” and “The Lost Complaint” and the mellow, midtempo style of “Sleeping,” “Rosie” and the Beat” is vaguely reminiscent of “All Things Must Pass”-era George Harrison (Phil Spector’s wall of reverb). Also included is a video for “Sleepsinging.”—CM

TORTOISE

It’s All Around You

PRODUCER: Tortoise

Thrice, 70115

RELEASE DATE: April 13

After releasing two groundbreaking, mostly unclassifiable records in the mid-’90s, noise collided into a reliable formula of bass-heavy instrumental rock, experimental electronics and jazz detours. Some of each category is present in “It’s All Around You.” And although the album doesn’t knock the ball out of the park on first listen, ultimately it reveals just enough cool ideas to keep things interesting. On such cuts as “Crest” and “Stretch (You Are All Right),” the group finds a happy medium between a live-recording feel (“Five Too Many,” the off-kilter closer “Salt the Skies”) and studio-heavy creations (“By Dawn,” “The Lithium Stains”). The latter, featuring vocals from Kelley Hogan, is the quintet’s first cut with singing in a decade. Tortoise isn’t pushing the envelope as far as it has on albums past, but “It’s All Around You” can still please the adventurous ear.—JC

PAT MCGEE BAND

Save Me

PRODUCER: Matt Frederiksen

Warner Bros. 45817

RELEASE DATE: April 6

Like musical peanut butter and jelly or macaroni and cheese, the Pat McGee Band offers comfort and goes down easy. The band plays its brand of American heartland rock skillfully, relying on sunny guitar strokes and the warm vocals of frontman McGee. But there are few fireworks to distinguish the tunes on its major-label debut from those of more established acts in the genre like Train or Five for Fighting. That said, because it sounds like fellow bands, lead single “Beautiful Ways” should be a no-brainer at adult top 40. Throughout the album, the songwriting remains uneven. Early relationships are boiled down to “Whatever it was’it came too late” (“Must Have Been Love”). For all its sweetness, however, “Save Me” may leave some craving a bit more sauce.—SA

DANCE/ELECTRONIC

▶ VIC LATINO & DAVID WAXMAN

Ultra.Dance 05

PRODUCERS: various

Ultra UTA 1190

RELEASE DATE: April 20

WKU New York rockers host Vic Latino and Ultra R&R director David Waxman co- helm the latest volume in the label’s successful Ultra.Dance series. As with previous installations, volume five favors current clubs (Martin Solveig’s “Rocking Music”) and crossover hits (Angel City Feat. Lala Mckinnon’s “Love Me Right (Oh Sheila)”). High points are many, and include “Take Me to the Clouds Above” (LVM Ci U2), “Love Comes Again” (Tiesto Feat. Alicia Keys), “I Don’t Even Know” (Rick Ross), “L.O.V.E.” (Donna Summer) and “The Best of Both Worlds.” “Rockin’ the Universe” is particularly sharp. DX

COUNTRY

▶ ALLISON MOORE

The Gavel

PRODUCER: R.S. Field

Sugar Hill 53984

RELEASE DATE: April 13

Allison Moore’s follow-up to last year’s much-loved live record is the kind of record from which careers are made. Produced by the winning combination of April Brooklyn and Racked stardom of “I Ain’t Giving Up On You,” it is obvious that Moore means business. She cowrote all 11 cuts with Doyle Wescott. Not one of the opening cuts is a tune to forget. “Lousie Is in the Blue Moon” and “Melencholy Polly” are superbly drawn, while “One on the House” is world-weary. R.S. Field’s production is dead-on, perfectly balancing wailing guitars against Moore’s passionate vocals. For immediate proof, check out the powerful “Believe You Me” and the loose, sleepy tone of “Baby Dreamer.” Additional choice cuts include the bitingly sarcastic “The Boardroom,” the slow-building, powerful “Once Upon a Time She Said” and the supremely sad title cut. Much of the subject matter here is heavy, but Moore’s art is nothing short of inspirational.—BW

LATIN

▶ GISELLE

Contra La Marea

PRODUCERS: Jaime Querol, Juan Vicente Zambrano, Gustavo Celis, Jose Luis Arroyave

Universal Music 700202242

RELEASE DATE: March 30

Get past the almost-show-all-back cover of Giselle’s latest album (which is not well- warded with music that is high on substance and style. It is also unapologetically merengue, the operative word being “unapologetically,” because today merengue is widely regarded as a losing proposition. Is this why Giselle has titled her album “Contra La Marea” (Against The Tide)? Perhaps. But one thing is certain: When Giselle sings merengue, she has guts and swing. She also has fun, most notably in “Dolor de Amor,” a cha cha where she is asked (Continued on page 42)
SINGLES

Edited by Michael Paolotta

MODERN ROCK

JET
Cold Hard Bitch (4:03)

PRODUCER: D. Sardy
WRITERS: N. Cester, C. Cester, C. Muncey
PUBLISHER: Get-Music
Elektra PRCD 1962 (CD promo)

If ridiculously puffy hair was what kept you from embracing '80s metal, you’re in luck with Jet. The band’s new single, “Cold Hard Bitch,” perfectly encapsulates the best parts of the genre, such as political incorrectness and unabashed machismo. But the Australian band is as stripped-down as your favorite garage act, underlined by the straightforward growl of lead singer Cameron Muncey. The song’s grinding guitar melody is literally one huge hook. It could be that the band’s similar to what music fans come from days gone by, Muncey yells that he just “wants to get a reaction” from his friends. It feels good to approve, albeit with a tinge of guilt.

VITAL REISSUES

WASIS DIOP
Everything I Never Quite Enough

PRODUCERS: various
Triolys/Teris TRI-CD-82035
RELEASE DATE: April 6

Senegalese native Wasis Diop has been residing in France and making music since the age of 15, but it’s only now, with the release of “Everything I Never Quite Enough,” that he is getting the attention he deserves. The album’s first three singles, one of which ("No Sant") is no longer available. This is a collection of extraordinary music. Drawing inspiration from reggae, rock, pop and Senegalese roots music, Diop sings in French, English and Wolof. Diop is a virtuoso song/writer who always finds the most alluring groove. At 19 tracks, this album has much to admire, beginning with the first new tune, “Le Passé”. Diop’s laid-back vibe is perfectly embodied by “African Dream” and “No Sant.” Both songs feature Diop sharing vocals with Lena Flagle. For something more upbeat and intense, listen to “Soweto Deal” and “De’Paal Lu Won.”

DVD

Fever: The Music of Peggy Lee Classic (72345-99365-9-8

RELEASE DATE: April 6
Peggy Lee’s tumultuous superstar shines brightly in this splendid one-hour documentary, which aired first on PBS. The DVD includes such bonus material as a shamppoo commercial and a greeting from Paul McCartney. Using her reflective later-career hit is “That All There Is” as a matrix, the program considers the late Lee’s immortal mystique through vintage performances and interviews with Kevin and contemporaries, including Quincy Jones, Cy Coleman and Nancy Sinatra. Highlights include a lost TV performance of signature hit “Fever” from 1958, a 1963 TV debut with Judy Garland and home movie footage of Lee and her first husband/frequent songwriting collaborator David Rose. Protected K+L. gas sums it up best when she calls Lee “the whole thermometer.” Lee was surely the coolest and the hottest.

R&B/HIP-HOP

MOBB DEEP: Go It Twisted (3:42)

PRODUCER: the Alchemist
WRITERS: various
PUBLISHERS: various
Isaiah-I/Alchemist/ID ID-65021-2 (CD promo)

While Jive isn’t necessarily known for hardcore rap/hip-hop, the group has changed—thanks to Mobb Deep. The Queens, N.Y., duo makes its Jive debut with “Go It Twisted.” Prodigy and Havoc are up to their old tricks, delivering fierce verses over a haunting synths-driven track, courtesy of the Alchemist. Havoc even addresses his new label home with this lyrical gem: “we gon crash, probably fleece snowflake out of that Abercrombie/Trying to rip Bayboro/I’m on top of my boys.” Already “Go It Twisted” is receiving props at mix-show radio. With a little help, it will make it into regular rotation at R&B formats. This serves as an apt introduction to Mobb Deep’s forthcoming “Amerikaz Nightmare” set.

RYLIE NICHOL: Just for You (3:38)

PRODUCER: Mark Taylor
WRITERS: L. Richie, P. Barry, M. Taylor
PUBLISHERS: AASCAP/FRS
Island ISLR 16011-2 (CD single)

This table track is the artist’s new album (due next month) is as pleasant as can be. And while there’s nothing wrong with that, there’s nothing quite right with it either—particularly...
Music, Fashion, Retail Merge In Deal

By Cole Sternberg

As such established artists as Michael McDonald and Justin Timberlake benefit from corporate partnerships, the blended world of “advertising” has expanded to include relationships between emerging artists and established brands (Entertainment Law Weekly, March 29).

“Brands are realizing that music is the way to go, and advertisers are incorporating music into their marketing plans. It is lifestyle marketing, and music is part of everyone’s lives,” says Bruce Starr, marketing associate at BMF Media in New York.

BMF has engineered a cross-marketing campaign that brings together rock act Mirth with designer Valentino and retailer Bergdorf Goodman. Under the multifaceted partnership, Mirth performed at the April 15 launch of Valentino’s summer 2004 R.E.D. clothing line at Bergdorf Goodman in Manhattan.

Dublin-based Mirth comprises singer Colin Smith, guitarist Emmett O’Malley, bassist Colin O’Malley and drummer Adrian Mordaunt. Valentino’s R.E.D. collection, which stands for (Continued on page 45)

DVD-A, SACD Get Awareness Push

By Steve Traiman

With more titles available from more artists in more genres, proponents of DVD-Audio and Super Audio CD are ramping up on the hardware side for home and auto models.

Integral to their success will be the arrival of long-promised education programs for retailers and consumers and promotional campaigns involving multiple manufacturers.

The DVD-Audio Council, an industry group of record companies and hardware manufacturers, says that more than 35 manufacturers are marketing about 160 different DVD-A player models.

Some 14 million DVD-A players exist in homes worldwide, with half of those in the United States. This includes an estimated 2 million computer-based DVD-A players shipped from such companies as Creative Labs and InterVideo.

David Kawakami, director of Sony Corp. of America’s Super Audio Project, points to a key statistic released at the January Consumer Electronics Show of 118 SACD models available from 26 manufacturers and more than

1,800 titles available worldwide.

Until last year, the Consumer Electronics Assn. did not break out separately the figures it received from its member manufacturers for U.S. unit shipments of DVD-A and SACD players.

But the latest figures show sales to dealers in 2003 of 989,000 DVD-A players and 629,000 SACD units, with some overlap of “universal” combo models, according to CEA analyst Sean Wang. These are all home entertainment units. The CEA may separately report models for automotive use in 2004.

Creating Awareness

The DVD-Audio Council is preparing two retail initiatives, according to Craig Eggers, consumer technology marketing director for Dolby Labs and a council leader. The first targets the buying offices of retail chains and sales staff; the second will involve a major consumer electronics company as a partner. The council’s efforts are focused on consumer electronics dealers, rather than music retailers.

“We must create more awareness for DVD-A

(Continued on page 44)
Runt Distribution’s Vinyl Biz Continues To Grow

Selling LPs, of all things, has become a growing concern for Berkeley, Calif.-based Runt Distribution. “Our meat and potatoes seems to be vinyl,” says Russ Tolman, head of sales for Runt. Owned by Filippo Salvadori and several Italian partners, Runt’s business has evolved since it was founded in 1996. “We started off strictly with imports and doing in-house labels for reissues,” Tolman says.

The company continues to operate its in-house labels, Water Records (CD reissues) and 4 Men With Beards (vinyl reissues). But it has branched out into manufacturing and distributing LPs for other labels. Runt is fabricating the lavish, clear-vinyl LP versions of Revenant Records’ roots-music collections. It also distributes titles from Plain Recordings and DBK Works, which vinyl has become an indie concern since the LP was abandoned as the main music format during the 90s, in favor of the CD.

Tolman maintains that while the numbers on vinyl “aren’t huge,” it sells well as a niche product. And it’s a no-muss, no-fuss proposition for distributors, since LPs have long been one-way sales.

Several titles have been successful for Runt. Tolman says, Plain’s My Bloody Valentine LPs have sold both more than 5,000 units; 4 Men With Beards’ vinyl reissue of Televisions’ “Marquee Moon” has moved close to 5,000, and its Aretha Franklin titles have sold 2,000-3,000 copies apiece.

“Even jazz titles do 2,000 to 3,000,” Tolman says. He adds that building on vinyl has filled Runt’s year-to-year sales. The company was up 40% in 2002 and 2003, and this year sales have increased 30% to date. “We’re in a nice little niche,” Tolman says.

TEAMWORK: Conor Oberst, frontman of Omaha, Neb., band Bright Eyes, has launched a custom label, Team Love. The imprint will be distributed by Bright Eyes’ label, Omaha-based Saddle Creek Records, which is handled by Alternative Distribution Alliance. Oberst will head A&R for Team Love. Former Sony Music Publishing VP Nate Krenkel will handle day-to-day operations.

The first release from the label, due June 22, will be “Wild Like Children,” an album by Omaha folk-pop group Tilly & the Wall. The set by 19-year-old singer/songwriter Willy Mason is scheduled for fall.

Team Love plans to make its music available in free download form on the label’s website the same day albums are in stores.

SPOTLIGHTING AUSTIN: The Austin Music Foundation (AMF), Texas’ non-profit, indie-oriented education and support group, is mounting a one-day showcase for local acts.

Stylist as a kind of mini-South by Southwest Music Conference, the AMF’s Spotlight Series is set for May 8.

Five clubs in the Red River district in downtown Austin—Stubb’s, Emo’s, Red Eyed Fly, the Caucus Club and Headhunters—will host 34 bands.

Scheduled showcasing acts include indie-label and unsigned talent like I Love You but I’ve Chosen Darkness, Knife in the Water, Young Heart Attack, Dynamite Boy, Wideawake and DJ Casanova.

DECIDING ON VICTORY: Victory Records in Chicago has sealed an exclusive distribution deal with Boca Raton, Fla.-based Undecided Records & Films. Undecided, previously handled by boutique rock distributors.

The relationship commences this summer with the release of new titles by Every Time I Die, the Big Screen. Further Seems Forever, Shindig, Things in Herds and Burn the Mountain Down and the reissue of Poison the Well’s debut. RED distributes Victory.

DVD-A

Continued from page 49

with the buyer, get the message across [to sales staff] that it’s important to ‘sell’ audio again to step up sales with better margins,” Eggers says. “We need to get them prepared to deliver an effective demo to consumers when they come into stores.”

A new Web site, dvdaiaudioinfo.com, has been created to offer information on available DVD-A titles and players, record labels and manufacturers and to answer frequently asked questions.

Kawakami points to an important difference in the entertainment approach of SACD and DVD-A. “While the SACD format can support video, it is first and foremost a music carrier and is optimized for audio playback,” he says. “Our feedback from music consumers and audio enthusiasts indicates that this is more important to them.”

Looking at the efforts of the DVD-Audio Council, Kawakami acknowledges that Sony and Philips, the two major SACD proponents, cannot drive the marketing alone. “We’ve concentrated on having third-party companies do the job but are working on a very comprehensive retail and consumer education campaign with a collective promotion involving a number of manufacturers later this year.”

One effective campaign is the Sony SACD Fall In Love with Music Again in-store display at Circuit City and other major electronics chains. It features a Sony five-disc DVD/SACD changer, digital receiver and surround sound speaker system.

The display includes eight racks with 22 SACD titles from Sony artists, priced from $14.99 to $21.99. Consumers can select a variety of tracks with playback switchable from stereo to SACD to “hear the difference.”
Renewed Virgin Predicts Smooth Landing

Virgin Entertainment Group North America may have had a humpy takeoff this year, but the company appears to have recovered nicely. According to suppliers large and small, the chain is once again current with payments.

"We should have most of our problems cleared up by the end of April," Virgin Entertainment Group president Glen Ward says. Rest assured, the remaining problems are being addressed.

Take real estate, for example. Virgin will close two of its 23 stores. It will shutter its Westbury, N.Y., store May 9 and its Columbus, Ohio, location May 31. In both instances, the landlord found replacement tenants.

VEGNA has been reviewing its real-estate portfolio, looking for opportunities to renegotiate, terminate or transfer to other retailers the leases of unproductive stores. After the Chapter 11 filings by Tower and Wherehouse, the landlords are "more willing" to discuss existing leases, Ward says.

Once VEGNA has the opportunity to convert its remaining unproductive stores into profitable ones—or, failing that, to shutter them—the chain will be able to generate funds and "get back into growth mode," Ward says.

One major-label credit executive applauds Virgin's actions, especially the move to close unproductive stores—something it had never done in its 11 years of trading in the United States. "If you have a capital drain, you stop," the executive says.

In the first quarter, credit managers watched VEGNA closely as it got caught in a cash-flow crunch and had to use returns to pay down bills. But by early April, even small music suppliers were caught up. "Virgin did everything they said they were going to do," one small independent distributor says.

In addition to cleaning out overstocked stores, the chain's parent, Virgin Entertainment Group, came to VEGNA's aid by providing a loan. In addition to giving the North American operation much-needed liquidity, the move also showed suppliers that Virgin stands behind VEGNA. That gesture helped convert suppliers' anxiety into confidence, although some are now applying tighter-than-usual credit limits.

Virgin Megastores U.S. is not the only chain being placed under these limits. Virgin CEO Simon Wright notes. "All suppliers are getting tighter with credit limits. It's not just happening here [in the United States], but it's happening around the world.

"The suppliers have to watch out that [these limits] don't become a self-fulfilling prophecy," he warns.

Meanwhile, "the Virgin brand is getting stronger with Virgin Mobile going into phase two and with Virgin being launched as a domestic airline next year," Wright says. At the Megastore, "we are going to get back to what we do," he says. And in case you have forgotten what VEG does, Ward will remind you. "Nobody puts out a megastore like we do," he says. "That's the heritage of Virgin.

"The San Francisco redesign proved to be a fantastic move, and it looks like it is a sustainable business model," he adds. "In San Francisco, we didn't lose music sales but augmented them.

Beyond that, the bumpy start to 2004 "has turned out to be a positive," Ward says, because it led VEGNA to re-examine its operations.

“We are looking at our whole business model from top to bottom.”

HOT SPOT: Concord Jazz executive VP/CMO Gene Rumsey discovered on April 8 what it’s like to be in the eye of the storm.

That day, the New York Post and other newspapers reported that, in the past, EMI had tried to manipulate music charts. Rumsey, who two years ago was executive VP at what was then EMI Music Distribution, says the stories quoted him out of context.

Rumsey had given testimony under subpoena in an action where EMI sued Avatar for breach of contract last April, claiming the indie owes $1 million.

Rumsey says the press reports unfairly make him out to be a stoop pigeon, when in fact he merely acknowledged during his deposition that the disreputable practice of paying labels to boost chart still exists.

In that same testimony, he says he argued against using such a tactic and added, “EMI was not in support of it, either.” That practice, by the way, is usually detected by safeguards put in place by Nielsen SoundScan.

Mrnorth
Continued from page 43

“reinvention, evolution and deconstruction,” features vintage patterns, surfer chic and denim.

The cross-marketing deal involves a promotional give-away of Mrnorth’s “Livesize” debut CD (Uninhibited Records) with any purchase from Valentino boutiques nationwide. The band and the designer also share window space at Bergdorf.

Brian Feit, president of BMP, says “the music speaks for itself” in selling bands to designers. Valentino is plugging Mrnorth into its marketing plans for the R.E.D. fashion line. In fact, frontman Smith was a guest model at a recent Valentino fashion show.

The relationship is a win-win for all parties. For Valentino, Bergdorf has dedicated window space to his new clothing line, which, according to Starr, has never been done. And Valentino benefits from being associated with a rock act that exemplifies the image it wants to portray with its R.E.D. line.

Smith originally found it “a little unorthodox and a little strange for the band to be striking up active allegiances outside the music world” and admits he was not thinking of marketing partnerships when writing and performing with Mrnorth.

However, he sees the added value in such deals. “This is really the way we have to be thinking. You can’t be limiting your audience and allegiances to what is considered the standard.”

Respective of the sponsor or forum, Smith says that “what people have in their memory walking away from Bergdorf is the memory of a striking performance, with striking music from a striking band.”
**Titles Tap Gay Pride**

BY JILL KIPINS

LOS ANGELES — An underserved market is getting its due this June. Home video companies are rallying around Gay Pride Month with new releases and a strong commitment to promotion.

“The gay and lesbian population is out in force, and they are definitely purchasing,” says Charmaine Kloe, VP of marketing at Ventura Distribution. She notes that the United States’ 22 million gays and lesbians held purchasing power of $458 million, according to marketing firm Opus-Comm.

Kloe says there is also a “big demand” for video product in the wake of the nationwide debate over gay marriage.

Ventura Distribution is taking advantage of all these factors with its June 1 DVD release “Gay Weddings” ($29.98), an eight-part series from the Bravo network.

The two-disc set follows the lives of four same-sex couples as they plan their wedding ceremonies. Its extra features include new interviews with the couples and segments about such advocacy groups as Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD).

The set will be advertised in numerous gay and lesbian publications, Kloe says. Ventura will also work with GLAAD’s San Francisco Media Awards, set to take place June 5.


The focal title in the group is “Torch Song Trilogy,” based on the Tony Award-winning play and starring Harvey Fierstein, who contributes an audio commentary.

New Line will market the titles with a grass-roots campaign during Gay Pride events, according to VP of marketing Justine Brody.

“Retailers who know this population is a part of their client base are now making sure that they are serving it,” Brody notes.

Virgin Megastores will present endcaps and displays highlighting Gay Pride Month, says Dave Adler, senior VP of marketing and strategic development.
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<th>WEEK</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
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<td>Voiced by: John Travolta, Citation Malcolm, Alfred Molina, Donny Osmond, Tatyana Ali, Rawson Baggs, Peter O'Toole</td>
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EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

RECORD COMPANIES: Sony Classical in New York promotes Marc Offenbach to senior VP of marketing and sales. He was senior VP of sales.

EMI Music U.S. Latin in San Antonio names Jorge Ballesteros VP/GM of regional Mexican and Tejano. He was national director of A&R and promotions at Dia.

Shout Factory in Los Angeles appoints Stacey Studebaker senior director of media relations and Jeffrey Palo senior director of production. Studebaker was manager of publicity at MGM Home Entertainment, and Palo was senior director of production at Virgin Records America.

PUBLISHING: SESAC in Nashville promotes Amy Beth Hale to director of affiliate services. She was associate director of affiliate services.

PRO AUDIO: Guitar Center in Westlake Village, Calif., ups Gene Joly to senior VP/technology merchandise manager. He was VP/technology merchandise manager.

Sennheiser Electronic in Old Lyme, Conn., names Brigitte Frank marketing communications manager. She was senior marketing manager of creative services at META Group.

5 Browns, 1 Label

Classical pianist siblings the 5 Browns recently inked a record deal with BMG Classics. The musical group’s debut album is due in early 2005. Pictured sitting, from left, are group members: Melody Brown, Deondra Brown and Desiree Brown.

Standing, from left, are group member Ryan Brown, 5 Browns co-manager/executive producer Joel Diamond, BMG Classics VP/GM Gilbert Hetherwick, BMG Classics senior director at A&R Deborah Surl, BMG Classics chairman Nicholas Firth and group member Gregory Brown.

Now, Hear This ... THE LOST TRAILERS

Artists to Watch

Willie Nelson once told the Lost Trailers lead singer/songwriter Stokes Nielson, “If you build a house of quality in the woods, the world will beat a path to your doorstep.” That advice became the inspiration for “Welcome to the Woods,” the Lost Trailers’ major-label debut album, due April 20 on Republic/Universal Records. The album draws heavily from the Atlanta-based rock band’s Americana, roots and country-music influences. Along with frontman Stokes, the other members of the Lost Trailers are his brother, bassist Andrew Nielson; guitarist Manny Medina; drummer Jeff Porter; and keyboardist Ryder Lee.

Stokes Nielson credits country legend Nelson as being an important force in the Lost Trailers’ career. When Stokes Nielson was a DJ at Vanderbilt University radio station WRVU in Nashville, he interviewed Nelson and gave the music veteran a Lost Trailers demo. Nelson soon invited the Lost Trailers to play at his 4th of July Picnic in 2000. By the time Republic/Universal signed the band, the Lost Trailers had toured extensively and released two independent albums. The band is currently on a U.S. tour, and Republic/Universal has serviced “Longfall,” the first single from “Welcome to the Woods,” to triple-A radio. Though the Lost Trailers are now on a major label, Stokes Nielson says, “Our philosophy hasn’t changed: We want to make music that’s vital to people.”

Rooney Rocks

Robert Carmine (pictured at right), lead singer of pop/rock band Rooney, entertains the crowd during a free Rooney show sponsored by Sunglass Hut March 22 at Irving Plaza in New York. The group performed songs from its self-titled Gefen Records debut album, as well as new songs such as “Reanalyzed” and “One-Armed Man.” The next day, the band stopped by Billboard’s New York headquarters for a Billboard Café meet-and-greet. Pictured, from left, are keyboardist Louie Stephens, Carmine, Billboard senior writer Carla Hay, drummer Ned Brower, bassist Matthew Winter and lead guitarist Taylor Locke. (Photo right: Michael Weintrob/Grooveography.com; photo top: Steven Trichtenberg)

Hot Fashion ... 50 CNT

50 Cent, left, joined fashion mogul Marc Ecko at Ecko’s Large & In Charge company event March 25 in New York. Ecko is collaborating with 50 Cent on the rapper’s G-Unit Clothing company.
Scotland Breeds New Talent

This is the first in a two-part series examining new music breaking out of Scotland and Ireland. The next installment will run in the May 1 issue.

BY OLAF FURNISS

EDINBURGH, Scotland—The healthy showing by Scottish bands at this year’s South by Southwest Music Conference in Austin is testament to the renaissance of this country’s music scene.

Buoyed by the response to the 14 Scottish acts on display at SXSW (only one act attended in 2003), industry insiders here are confident that the crop of local talent has a sustainable future.

“For things to grow, you need a solid base, and we now have that,” says Geoff Ellis, CEO of Scotland’s largest promoter, DF Concerts. “A strong base is not founded on hype.”

Vic Galloway, a DJ on state-owned BBC Radio Scotland and U.K. youth station BBC Radio 1, says the Scottish music industry has come of age.

“There is an ever-growing infrastructure consisting of radio, press, labels and managers, who, unlike those in the past, are working closely together,” he says.

MORE THAN GLASGOW

Insiders say the domestic music scene benefited from international exposure when Edinburgh hosted the MTV Europe Music Awards last November (Billboard, Nov. 22, 2003) and BBC Radio 3’s Awards for World Music in March (Billboard, Feb. 21).

Glasgow-based alt-rock band Franz Ferdinand has led the pack of Scottish acts breaking out to a mass market in the United Kingdom. The band’s self-titled debut album is approaching platinum.

(Continued on page 52)

VH1 Debuts Down Under

Labels See Marketing Opportunity

BY CHRISTIE ELIEZER

SYDNEY—Australian labels are hopeful that the launch of VH1 Down Under will give them an additional tool to help break into international markets.

Singapore-based MTV Networks Asia launched VH1 Australia as a wholly owned and operated subsidiary March 14. VH1 Australia shares office space with the MTV Australia channel, which is a licensed operation through Sydney-based pay-TV operator Optus TV.

The two channels share some resources but will continue to operate independently and target different demographics.

“Up to 40% of content on VH1 is local,” says Andrew Hoppe, VH1 Australia director of operations and programming.

Locally produced versions of staple VH1 shows “Behind the Music” and “Storytellers” will be offered to overseas affiliates, he adds.

Label executives here suggest that the overseas push could be key to the marketing of local acts seeking international breakthroughs.

“The people at VH1 come with excellent reputations, and we’re expecting them to make a splash by offering competitive marketing opportunities,” says Denis Handlin, chairman/CEO of Sony Music Entertainment Australia. “We’ll certainly be working with them.”

Roger Grierson, chairman of leading Australian independent Festival Mushroom Records, is also enthusiastic about the opportunities the launch creates.

Praising the “wealth of material” VH1 brings to the domestic market, Grierson points out that the broadcaster “has a more specific demographic than current [Australian] offerings.”

Australia has only four major music channels. Of these, only Channel V’s MusicMax actively targets the 25-44 demographic that VH1 covets.

This age group “has a longer attention span and a better idea of what it wants from music,” according to VH1 Australia GM Nigel Robbins. “It is a group which is not catered for in this country.”

DIGITAL DIRECTION

Robbins heads a staff of 10 at the new channel. Formerly CEO of MTV Group Japan, he has worked for the broadcaster in Hong Kong, New York, Singapore and Tokyo.

He reports to Singapore-based MTV Networks Asia president Frank Brown.

Hoppe, who reports to Robbins, was most recently managing director of digital rights management company Soundbuzz Australia. He also served as VP of network programming at MTV Networks Asia 1994-98.

VH1 Australia launched as part of digital pay-TV packages introduced by local operators Foxtel Digital and Austar Digital. Robbins concedes that VH1’s success depends on how quickly Australians respond to digital TV.

“In terms of subscribers,” he says, “we’re taking a long-term approach. We’re initially targeting modest numbers, realistically so. But there’s plenty of room for growth.”

Brown suggests that the time was right for MTV to expand its presence Down Under.

“One in four households in Australia already embrace subscription TV, and access to digital technology [is] set to make it even more attractive to consumers,” he says.

Robbins is confident the channel will also attract substantial advertising. However, he admits, “many Australians have never heard of VH1. We’ve got to market ourselves strongly.”
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| 4. The Shadow | 4. Si Demain...(Turn Around) | 4. Si Demain...(Turn Around) | 4. One Last Dance |
| 5. The Shadows | 5. Si Demain...(Turn Around) | 5. Si Demain...(Turn Around) | 5. Just One More |

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**NEW = New Entry  **RE = Re-Entry
## Billboard EUROCHARTS

### Singles

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<th>Track/Album</th>
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### COMMON CURRENCY

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

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### Taliban Takes Years Getting To ‘Heaven’

Four years after their last studio album, the Corrs are back. The Irish band came off the road in 2001 after six years of almost continual touring and recording. “We needed to get our lives back,” lead singer Andrea Corr admits. After a break, the family quartet spent 18 months writing and recording fourth album “Borrowed Heaven” (Atlantic) in Dublin and Los Angeles. “It’s our strongest songwriting to date,” Sharon Corr says. “We had more time, and all four of us contributed.” “Borrowed Heaven” will be released in late May and will be preceded by the single “Summer Sunshine.” Four dates are yet to be announced.

**Nigel Williamson**

**CROWN PERFORMANCE:** Erann has recorded an official wedding song as a “gift from the people of Denmark” to the country’s Crown Prince Frederik and his bride, Mary Donaldson. The couple will marry May 14. Sony will release the song, “When You Hold Me,” April 19, with proceeds going to charity. The track, which is expected to debut at No. 1 in Denmark, will appear on the singer’s album “Say Something Nice,” due for release in European territories in late summer, according to Eva de Wall, Sony international exploitation consultant. The album will combine material from Erann’s 2001 solo debut, “Still Believing,” and follow-up “That’s the Way for Me,” both of which went platinum in Denmark.

**Leading Lady:** The original Bunsa Vista Social Club lost two of its stars last year with the deaths of Compay Segundo and Ruben Gonzalez. But happily, Omar Portuondo, the only female voice on the group’s Grammy Award-winning album, is still going strong. “Flor de Amor,” her second solo album for World Circuit/Nonesuch, is due for a May release, and it represents something of a departure for the 73-year-old singer. To her customary Cuban rhythms she has added South American flavors, with Brazilian musicians joining her Cuban band in the studio in Havana. Production is by World Circuit supremo Nick Gold and Brazilian Al Siqueira, who helmed the Latin Grammy Award-winning album by Os Tribalistas. “We have some of the best musicians in the world in Cuba [and they are] on this record,” Portuondo says. “But it’s also interesting to work with other musicians.” She undertakes a European tour in May.

**APRIL IN PARIS:** What better time or place than April in Paris to kick off the first Blue Note Festival? Commemorating the jazz label’s 65th anniversary and showcasing the diversity of its Paris/New York roster, the event was initiated by Blue Note France manager Nicolas Pflug, who then enlisted the help of Bruce Lundvall, president/CEO of EMI Jazz & Classics. Those appearing include Wynton Marsalis, who is newly signed to Blue Note, Jason Moran, Bandwagon, Pianist Group, Erik Truffaz with French singer Christophe, Flavio Boltro and Medeski, Martin & Wood. Vocalist Angela McClusky closes the festival with a tribute to the late French jazz great Claude Nougaro. “A lot of people think jazz is dying,” Lundvall says. “But every once in a while, someone breaks through like Norah Jones, and when you hear a young musician who has that magic, you know this music has a future.”

**DErIVal Woman:** Top Polish rock vocalist Agnieszka Chylinska has released her first solo album, “Winna” (Guilty), on Parnorn. Chylinska became the most controversial female artist in Poland when she fronted heavy metal outfit DNA, whose fifth album went gold and together sold more than 300,000 units. DNA disbanded in 2002, and Chylinska began writing songs for her solo project, including one called “Get the F out of Here.” “It’s dedicated to those who wrote me off without the hard,” the 28-year-old says. The album debuted at No. 2 behind George Michael. The title track has been released as the first single.

**Romer Rogowski**
French Phoenix Rises

Armed With English Lyrics, Band Pursues A Global Audience

BY JAMES MARTIN

PARIS—French acts that sing in English are a rarity. EM France wants to turn Source/Virgin signing Phoenix into something even rarer: an English-language French band that sells large quantities of classic rock with a Californian accent.


FAMOUS FANS

The band has attracted press attention in its home market because of its celebrity fans, including U.S. filmmaker Sofia Coppola. She included Phoenix on the soundtrack to her Academy Award-winning 2003 feature “Lost in Translation.”

The band also has links with Virgin France labelmate Daft Punk. Phoenix guitarist Laurent Brancowitz’s first group, Darlin’, also featured the rhythm section makes up Daft Punk, Thomas Bangalter and Guy Manuel de Homem-Christo. Phoenix evolved from Darlin’ when Bangalter and de Homem-Christo left to form Daft Punk in 1995.

The plan for Phoenix, Muller says, is “to impose them as an authentic part of the pop rock scene, rather than just as a fashionable trend for glossy magazines.”

London-based Vincent Clery-Melin, European director of EM alternative music division Labels, adds, “We want this album to appeal as much to [leading French top 40 radio network] NRJ as it will to Sofia Coppola.” Labels is releasing “Alphabetical” outside of France.

“Because Phoenix follow in the wake of other artists who are also their friends [Air and Daft Punk], people expect them to play electronic music,” he adds, “whereas Phoenix play Californian 70’s-style rock compositions with Neptunes-style production values.”

That duality is integral to the band’s sound. “We like our music to sound full and warm,” Brancowitz says, “but above all, we wanted to make a contemporary record.”

Brancowitz cites the Beatles, Bob Dylan and the Beach Boys as influences. “But we’re just as influenced by hip-hop,” he says.

SINGLES STRATEGIES

Phoenix’s 2000 debut album, “Unit-ed,” shipped 150,000 units worldwide, according to Virgin France. “Alphabetical” has shipped 65,000 units to date in continental Europe and Japan; 20,000 of those were in France. It has charted in France, Norway, Sweden, Germany and Italy.

“Alphabetical” will street in the United Kingdom and elsewhere June 28, with a North American release set for August. Virgin U.K. shipped “a soft prerelease of 6,000 copies of “Alphabetical” in the United Kingdom March 29, “without pushing for volume or co-ops with retailers,” Clery-Melin says.

To build a profile at U.K. radio, two singles will precede the album’s release. “Run Run Run” bows April 19, followed by “Everything Is Better” in June.

“Is a fitting strategy for the U.K.,” Clery-Melin says, “as singles get more attention there, for example in terms of radio play.”

Brancowitz claims Phoenix’s choice to sing in English was dictated by the nostalgia-tinged pop rock it plays.

“English is the language of popular music,” he says, “and rhythmically, it works better with what we want to do. It’s more natural than French.”

However, the fact that singing in English isn’t common to France.

“Brancowitz talks of making the band’s commercial potential outside of France isn’t lost on Brancowitz. “Everyone would like their work to connect with as many people as possible,” he acknowledges.

Phoenix will play live dates in Europe and Japan throughout the summer. The band’s booking agent for those territories is Peter Elliott of Primary Talent International in London.

Scottland

Continued from page 49

inumin (300,000 units shipped) in Britain, according to its label, London-based independent Domino. In the United States, it is the No. 9 on the Heatseekers chart and No. 8 on Top Independent Albums. The album is due to be rereleased via U.S. licensee Epic in early May.

Another Glasgow-based act, Irish Scottish outfit Snow Patrol, was among the hottest tickets at SXSW this year. Already a U.K. breakout, the band played the festival ahead of the March 30 U.S. release of its A&M album, “Straw.”

But the current harvest of quality Scottish acts is not confined to Glasgow.

“When it’s Scottish phenomenon, where-as in the past it has always been just Glasgow,” says Alec Downie, development officer for state-funded Nems, which organizes seminars and showcases and disseminates information about the Scottish music industry.

“At the moment, Edinburgh is really interesting,” notes Scott MacDonald, owner of KFM Records, which is based in the city. He cites Edinburgh indie labels Benbecula and SL and such acts as the Beta Band and Boards of Canada as catalysts.

Two of MacDonald’s own signings, electro-punks the Magnificent and electronica act David Jack, were part of the Scottish delegation at SXSW.

TALENT FROM ALL OVER

Many other up-and-coming acts hail from the country’s rural and island communities. These include electronics artist Mylo (Breasted Records) from Skye, unsigned rockers Raar from the Black Isle and Haff Cousin from the Orkney Islands. Half Cousin has signed to London-based Groenland, owned by leading German artist Herbert Groenemeyer.

Broadcaster Galloway has championed Scottish bands on-air for the past five years. He says the breadth of music being produced in Scotland is a result of the breakdown of genre barriers.

“These days, people’s tastes are much broader, so you get rock people at hip-hop gigs and indie kids at rock gigs,” Galloway says.

Other industry observers here emphasize the increase in the number of small, part-time promoters in both rural areas and cities during the past two years. These promoters, who place local acts in venues with capacities of 150 to 500, are credited with stimulating the newly charged domestic scene.

Attention from the international industry has grown with the launch of two Scottish UK trade fairs, Go North (in Aberdeen) and Music Works (Glasgow). Each is in its third year.

Taking place in June and October, respectively, the fairs have attracted international attendees to their daytime panels and evening showcases.

Veterans of the Scottish scene point out that the last time Scotland attracted such strong outside interest was in the 1980s. That decade saw the international success of such acts as Wet Wet Wet, Simple Minds, Big Country and Deacon Blue.

“It’s similar to now the mid-’80s, in terms of the vast amount of talent around,” says Dougie Souness, managing director of Half Measure, a Glasgow-based publishing, management and label group. He worked for 12 years for the management company of Mercury Records act Wet Wet. Wet. “Six back-to-back independently and major — had budgets to sign and develop acts,” Souness notes.

A recent lack of major-label investment bred a “do-it-yourself” culture in Scotland, he suggests. This produced an explosion of independent labels that have allowed Scottish artists to develop their careers “organically.”

Souness is considering offers from U.S. majors and independent labels for two acts on his management roster — Tippi and the Grim Northern Social — following their SXSW appearances. The latter released its self-titled debut album in the United Kingdom in 2003 on London-based indie One Little Indian.

Glasgow indie label Chemikal Underground is also looking to beef up its U.S. presence. Its drummer guitar duo Sleepies recently signed a U.S. management deal at SXSW with Management Music Division. The act will release its debut album, “We Are All—Sluts of Trust,” in the States March 27 through New York-based Megasource.

“Such is the mixture of styles emerging from Scotland that there is no easily definable “Scottish sound.” However, observers agree that a new feeling of mutual appreciation and common goals is producing an identifiably Scottish attitude.

“Scottish bands break through at the moment will give others confidence,” Galloway says.
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The Big Money Is Back

Record Number Of Power Deals In Luxury Real Estate

BY CATHARINE APPLEFELD OLSON

The music business is enduring yet another year of anxiety, but you would never know it by looking at the luxury real estate markets in the industry hot spots of New York, Los Angeles, Nashville and Miami.

"The big money is really back in the luxury market," says Pamela Liebman, CEO of New York real estate firm Corcoran Group. "We're seeing more power deals than we ever have in the past. I think 2004 is going to be a record-breaking year for the $10 million-plus market."

A similar high note is resounding in Los Angeles, where Coldwell Banker moved more $10 million-plus properties during the first quarter of this year than it did in all of 2003, according to Joyce Rey, executive director of preview.

"It's hard to know whether it's pent-up demand or the economy or what, but things are moving much more quickly now," Rey says.

"Generally today you have to pay well in excess of $3 million to get a substantial lot size in the most sought-after neighborhoods."

The current cycle of fast-moving inventory and greater demand than supply is a potent formula that generally equals higher prices.

Corcoran Group inventory is down more than 50% from last year, for example, while the percentage of its properties that have sold at or above the asking price is currently at 49.6%, compared with 23% in February 2003, according to Liebman.

And although the lingering low interest rates don't necessarily affect the typical luxury home buyer in the way they do the general market, they certainly don't hurt.

"You could say these big-bucks buyers don't tend to finance anyway, but lower interest rates are always a good thing for real estate," Liebman says. "They energize the whole market."

At the $1 million-plus level, more buyers are taking advantage of the interest-only repayment option offered in private banking this year, several industry insiders report.

THE BIG APPLE

In New York, music executives and artists continue to show a preference for living downtown or near Central Park. Recent Corcoran

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Big Money
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clients include violinist Joshua Bell, who moved down the street to a new condo in Chelsea's Flatiron neighborhood; Virgin executive VP of marketing Randy Miller, who purchased a SoHo loft; and Blue Man Group music director Chris Dyas, who settled on new digs in Park Slope, Brooklyn.

“Our entertainment clients still tend toward Tribeca, Soho and Central Park West—those three are the big draws,” Lieberman says. “Celebrities have always found Tribeca appealing because it has a grittiness [along with a] sense of luxury, and many [properties] offer views because the neighborhood doesn’t have a lot of high buildings.”

CITY OF ANGELS
The high-end property squeeze in Los Angeles is putting the spotlight on neighborhoods that might have been passed over in a slower cycle.

“As the market becomes more desirable and inventory gets lower, people start looking at alternative areas,” says Gary Gold, executive VP of real estate agency Hilton & Hyland in L.A., where luxury homes tend to sell from $600 to $1,200 per square foot and can cost upwards of $2.5 million.

“There’s a lot of new developments downtown—mostly apartments but some houses, because of the [lower] price,” Gold says.

Perennial favored areas include the Sunset Strip between Doheny and Crescent Heights—where Christina Aguilera recently bought a home—Bel Air, Santa Monica and Venice, which is an area that is stepping up its profile in the luxury market.

“If you’re famous, privacy is often a huge issue,” Gold notes. “I’ve had celebrities look at houses and sit in the bathtub to see if any paparazzi can see them.”

In another warm-climate city, Miami, luxury real estate also continues to boom. According to Doug Yount, president of title company Columbia Title, an increasing number of properties in the $1 million-plus range are being sold up site unseen online.

International appeal and a reputation as “a huge playground” are bringing entertainment industry folks en masse to Miami, according to Yount, who notes property values in the area have been increasing 15% to 25% for the past several years.

While downtown Miami condos enjoy a high profile, entertainers and industry executives tend to opt for Miami Beach and neighboring islands. According to brokers Jennifer Lopez, Sean “P. Diddy” Combs, Rick Martin, Lenny Kravitz and Creed’s Scott Stapp have all recently purchased residences in the city.

MUSIC CITY
Nashville is not feeling the property squeeze but is certainly benefiting from the boom in luxury real estate. Communities surrounding Music City offer more wide-open space. You can have a 10-acre estate and still live within a half-hour commute to the centrally located Music Row.

Some 85 homes priced at more than $1 million were sold in 2003 in Nashville, and 150 luxury homes were on the market at press time, according to Donna Tisdale, a broker at Worth Properties.

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Big Money
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"The big change in the $1 million-plus market in Nashville over the last few years is the availability of new construction—offering elaborate master retreats, granite-filled chef's kitchens, home theaters, exercise rooms and other features buyers expect in upscale neighborhoods," Tisdale says.

"Another reason Nashville is so hot right now is that it has recently come up in the top five on several lists of places to live in America, and it has been No. 1 on a few," notes Terry Stevens, an affiliate broker at Fridrich & Clark Realty and a former music industry executive.

MARKET TRENDS
No matter where they reside, whether it's a sleek condo or a sprawling estate, many luxury home buyers are turning their homes, quite literally, into castles.

"A lot of these entertainers have more money than time, so they are doing up their homes to the nines so they can really enjoy it when they're there," Gold says. "Home theater is big—media rooms, flat screens, water features. They are vamping their houses like there's no tomorrow."

Because of this luxury real estate boom, Gold has also noticed another trend.

"I've taken a number of big-time, successful music industry people out to lunch through the years who are no longer looking for property and instead are interested in getting into real estate," he says. "Real estate is just very hot right now."

Artist Turns Investor

Creed frontman Scott Stapp became active on the investment side of the real estate market when he founded Lion's Share Holdings to pursue properties on the Hawaiian island of Maui—where he resided for one year—and other locales.

"We have about $15 million in properties right now," Stapp says. "We are actively pursuing real estate that we plan to let appreciate and then turn over in three years or so."

Other cities that Stapp has his sights on include Orlando, Fla.; New York; and Los Angeles.

But it is South Beach, Fla., where Stapp recently decided to hang a personal shingle. Just before he started working on his upcoming solo CD, he moved into a sprawling estate that blends Mediterranean and Italian Gothic styles.

"I have to be by the water. It brings a calmness to me, which I need as a writer," he says. "The architecture of the house is just so beautiful, and I'm decorating the inside with everything that could inspire me. I want every inch of the house [to be] a place where you can sit and be inspired."

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Aiken Revives Sedaka Fave

The proclivity of “American Idol” for celebrity judges has not only given last year’s runner-up Clay Aiken the B-side to his current single “The Way,” but has given songwriter Neil Sedaka a new lease on creative life. The song, “Solitaire,” best-known as the Carpenters’ No. 17 hit from 1975, is the title track of Sedaka’s 1972 album. It was also cut by the likes of Elvis Presley, Shirley Bassey and Johnny Mathis. It is one of several tracks co-written with lyricist Phil Cody after former teen idol Sedaka took a hiatus from collaborating with Howie Greenfield, his Brill Building writing partner on such Sedak sung classics as “Oh! Carol,” “Calendar Girl,” “Happy Birthday Sweet Sixteen” and “Breaking Up Is Hard To Do.”

Sedaka says he’s been a big fan of “American Idol” from the start, but he was initially met with skepticism when he called in to volunteer his judicial services. Convincing the producers that he was for real, Sedaka did in fact appear—and was serenaded by Aiken’s stellar performance of “Solitaire.”

“It got such a fantastic reaction that he recorded it for [debut album] ‘Measure of a Man,’ but it didn’t get on,” Sedaka says. “So he did a marvelous version for the new single. It shows that a good song is a good song, no matter how many years ago it was written—and that you never know when a young artist will pick up your song.”

Indeed, Sedaka senses a “resurgence” of his material, which first gained notice in 1958, when the Sedaka-Greenfield classic “Stupid Cupid” hit for Connie Francis. He points to the forthcoming album by 14-year-old newcomer René Olmstead, compiled a demo of some of these lesser-known songs for producers and record companies. “When I go back 30 or 40 years, I find so many hidden treasures,” says the senior Sedaka. “I’m an old song-plugger anyway, from way back.”

Here he recalls writing with Greenfield for Al Nevins and Don Kirshner’s Aldon Music. “We were the first Brill Building team, before Barry Mann and Cynthia Weil and Jeff Barry and Ellie Greenwich and the whole gang,” he says. “We had the room with no windows, and then came ‘Stupid Cupid’ and [Francis’ follow-up hit] ‘Where the Boys Are,’ and we got a recording contract.”

Now an EMI Music Publishing BMI writer, Brooklyn-born Sedaka has also returned to his heritage with an album of old Yiddish songs: “Brighton Beach Memories—Neil Sedaka Sings Yiddish.”

“When I was growing up . . . I heard [Yiddish singing duos] the Breynger Sisters and my family would sing along with their records,” Sedaka says. “It’s not commercial, but I don’t care: I get joy out of singing these old songs. It’s something I’ve always wanted to do over the years but never got the chance.”

Sedaka is now slated to perform some of these Yiddish songs June 3 at Carnegie Hall, to benefit the Yiddish Theater of New York.

SONG HALL HONOREES: Charles Fox, Al Green, Daryl Hall & John Oates, Don McLean and songwriting duo Barrett Strong and Norman Whitfield will be inducted to the National Academy of Popular Music/Songwriters Hall of Fame.

The artists will be recognized at the academy’s 35th annual awards dinner. Special award honorees at the black-tie event, which is slated for June 10 at the Marriott Marquis Hotel in New York, will be announced later.

“The Songwriters Hall of Fame Awards is very special because it’s a time when premier songwriters come together to honor their own,” Song Hall chairman Hal David says. “We’re proud of the growing impact of our event, which is now one of the high points of the year. We are looking forward to another terrific and memorable evening, where we spotlight the accomplishments of those who have provided us with the words and music that form the soundtrack of our lives.”

Aiken, left, and Sedaka. Enjoying “Solitaire’s” success.
Easter Parade Delivers Goods

Because the holiday hops around the calendar, Easter week can seem as fickle as Lady Luck at a casino, making music stores look rich one week and poor another. Despite these numeric complexities, the Easter Bunny always delivers.

Stacked next to the same calendar week of last year, this issue’s sales charts look mighty. But the 20.8% hike in album sales is a bit of fool’s gold, because the corresponding 2003 frame was not a holiday week.

So, enjoy the 10.5% lead we now see in year-to-date album sales over 2003, because that lead will probably be softer next week.

Easter 2003 arrived on April 20, during the tracking week that will compete with next issue’s charts. Without any huge titles in the April 13 release schedule to help make up the difference, next issue’s comparison to the same week of 2003 is guaranteed to look ugly.

That will be a moment to take a look at the big picture, for which Chris Muratore, director of retail relations for Nielsen Entertainment, offers a dose of optimism. He points out that while this year’s comeback might look shy next to the boom year that was 2000, that shortfall is largely attributed to the consumer’s abandonment of the cassette.

Stand album-length CDs sold this year next to the same point of 2000, and you’ll see a fairly even race, with 179.3 million sold in each of those spans. In fact, this year’s haul is about 8,000 copies ahead of sales to date in 2000, a heady comparison when you realize that ‘N Sync moved 4.2 million copies of its “No Strings Attached” album inside that time frame.

BASKETS FULL: Usher is clearly the marshall for this year’s Easter parade, which also sports a career-best week for R&B siren Tamia.

Aside from the end-of-year holidays, Thanksgiving and Valentine’s Day, Easter always marks one of a music store’s best sales weeks. That traffic—and two radio hits—slows the erosion on Usher’s “Confessions” to a mere 4.8% dip.

That yields him 463,000 copies and a much wider lead over the rest of the chart than he held a week earlier. His album stands 67% ahead of the No. 2 slot, up from 27%.

Usher has now sold more than 2 million copies to date. That’s the best showing for an album’s first three weeks since 50 Cent’s “Get Rich or Die Tryin’” scanned 2.2 million in that window early last year. And, contrary to what you read here last week, 50’s album was the last to reach 1.6 million in just

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Top Internet Album Sales reflects physical albums ordered through Internet merchants, based on data collected by Nielsen SoundScan. Unlike most Billboard pop charts, charts are included on the Internet and Soundtrack charts. Albums with the greatest sales gain this week. Recording Industry Assn. of America (RIAA) certification for net shipment of 50,000 units (Gold) • RIAA certification for net shipment of 1 million units (Platinum) • RIAA certification for net shipment of 10 million units (Diamant). Numerical Following Playlist or Directly reflects albums' multi-platinum level; for box sets, and for albums with a running time of 110 minutes or more, the RIAA includes shipments by the number of discs and/or tapes. RIAA Latin album awards: • Certification for net shipment of 10,000 units (Gold). • Certification of 50,000 units (Platinum). • Certification of 1,000,000 units (Diamond). * Asterisk indicates sales reports compiled with Nielsen Netship Data. ** Various artists have yet to reach Nielsen Netship Data. *** Various artists have yet to reach Nielsen Netship Data.

**THE BILLBOARD 200 A-Z**

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**Over The Counter**

Continued from page 61

two weeks.

Tamia’s “More” was to have hit stores last August, but it was delayed when the singer was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (Billboard, March 27). This becomes a case of absence making fans’ hearts grow fonder, as 71,000 copies more than doubles her prior best Nielsen SoundScan week. She scores Hot Shot Debut honors on Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums (No. 4) and The Billboard 200 (No. 17). Ranks on both charts are her best yet.

This is the fourth straight year that the Valentine’s Presidents’ Day week ousted the Easter frame. This year’s February blast of 17.1 million additional album orders in the traditional single factor of the Grammy Awards moving to the start of the week, but even so, Valentine’s Day reaped more than Easter in six of the previous 10 years.

Although album sales are only 5% ahead of the prior week, more than half of the titles on The Billboard 200 show robust gains. A bevy of media events make Jessica Simpson and Hilary Duff leading ladies among those movers.

With a stop on “The Ellen DeGeneres Show,” a rerun of “Late Show With David Letterman” that featured she and husband Nick Lachey, and extensive promotion for the couple’s Easter-night ABC variety show Simpson’s “In This Skin” bounces back into the top 10 (12-4, up 45%).

A Favorite Singer win at the April 3 Nickelodeon Kids Choice Awards and the April 6 video release of “Cheaper by the Dozen” set up momentum for Duff’s 93% drive (31-20). Oh, yeah, she and Simpson are both riding hits at top 40 radio, too.

**PASSION REVEIVED:** NBC’s “Today” recognized Easter with a medley performance from “The Passion of the Christ” soundtrack on April 8, featuring score composer John Debney, soloist Lisbeth Scott and a 50-piece choir.

That performance helps stoke a 91% gain for the album, pushing its largest sales sum since its second chart week, at 44,000 copies. It jumps 3-1 on Top Soundtracks and 54-26 on The Billboard 200.

The issue also sees the chart bow of a related album Songs Inspired By The Passion of the Christ, an eclectic collection of songs from the likes of Bob Dylan, Elvis Presley, Leonard Cohen, Leon Russell, Ricky Skaggs and the Blind Boys of Alabama.

With an opener of 25,500 copies, it garners Hot Shot Debut honors on Top Christian Albums at No. 3 and Top Country Albums at No. 7, while easing the big chart at No. 59.

The cover features the film logo and a photo of its star, James Caviezel, and the album was co-produced by “Passion” producer/director Mel Gibson. However, since none of these tracks are heard in the movie, this set is eligible for Top Soundtracks.

Even so, Universal South is hopeful this project will enable the label to plunge into the soundtrack business.

**HEARING IS BELIEVING:** An April 6 profile on National Public Radio’s “All Things Considered” helps trumpeter Dave Douglas more than double his sales, good for a re-entry on Top Jazz Albums (unpublished this issue, but available at Billboard Information Network, billboard.com and billboard.biz).

Reviews aired on that same program a week ago also created a similar spike for rock/country hybrid Lambchop but no gain for Scottish band Franz Ferdinand (No. 8 on Top Independent Albums). Conversely, Lambchop, which has yet to dent a Billboard chart, sees sales drop for its “Aw, Cronin,” despite an April 9 visit to “Late Night With Conan O’Brien.”
### Billboard April 24, 2004

#### Top Pop Catalog

**Artist** | **Imprint/Number/Distributing Label** | **Title**
--- | --- | ---
1 | **NUMBER 1** | JEREMY CAMP<br>Carried Me: The Worship Project (BMG 76322 37169 2) ***6 Weeks At Number 1***
2 | **HOT SHOT DEBUT** | IN FLAMES<br>Soundtrack To Your Escape (EMI 7567-18427-2 2) ***New Entry***
3 | **NUMBER 2** | FINGER ELEVEN<br>Finger Eleven (Epic D2 062 487 478-1) ***New Entry***
4 | **NUMBER 3** | RON WHITE<br>Love In Public (BMG 76322 37197 2) ***New Entry***
5 | **NUMBER 4** | TOOTS AND THE MAYLERS<br>Rooney (RCA 19197-1) ***New Entry***
6 | **NUMBER 5** | BLUE COFFEE<br>Blue County (Indie/Universal) ***New Entry***
7 | **GREATEST GAINER** | GAVIN DEGRAW<br>Chariot (Sony 88697 79627 2) ***Up 20***
8 | **GREATEST GAINER** | PRANZ FERDINAND<br>Flame (EMI 7567-18440 2) ***Up 21***
9 | **GREATEST GAINER** | THE POSTAL SERVICE<br>Give Up (Sub Pop 595) ***Up 21***
10 | **GREATEST GAINER** | ROB RIDAZ<br>Never Make Me Blush (BMG 76322 37194 2) ***Up 21***

#### Heatseekers

**Artist** | **Imprint/Number/Distributing Label** | **Title**
--- | --- | ---
1 | **NUMBER 1** | JOSH BROOKS<br>Brother, Where Are You (SONY MUSIC 528718 IDJMG 01.98 018.98) ***Up 2***
2 | **NUMBER 2** | THE BEATLES<br>Yesterday...A Decade (EMI 7567-18454 2) ***Up 2***
3 | **NUMBER 3** | METALLICA<br>The Sickness (REPRISE 84521 479 0001 1) ***Up 2***
4 | **NUMBER 4** | JIMMY GAVIN<br>Sister, Where Are You (SONY MUSIC 528718 IDJMG 01.98 018.98) ***Up 2***
5 | **NUMBER 5** | THE RASMUS<br>Dead In Town (UDISCD 83534/AG 110.98 17.98) ***Up 2***
6 | **GREATEST GAINER** | THE RASMUS<br>The Sickness (REPRISE 84521 479 0001 1) ***Up 2***
7 | **GREATEST GAINER** | JOHN MAYER<br>Room For Squares (REPRISE 84521 479 0001 1) ***Up 2***
8 | **GREATEST GAINER** | MARTINA McBRIDE<br>A New Day Is Coming (EMI 7567-18424 2) ***Up 2***
9 | **GREATEST GAINER** | TIM MCGRAW<br>Live (COLUMBIA 88697 79625 2) ***Up 2***
10 | **GREATEST GAINER** | MERRITT MILLER<br>Misery (SONY MUSIC 528718 IDJMG 01.98 018.98) ***Up 2***

**Top Independent Albums**

**Artist** | **Imprint/Number/Distributing Label** | **Title**
--- | --- | ---
1 | **NUMBER 1** | WILLIAM HUNG<br>I Was Number One (Sonoma 101 101.98 018.98) ***Weeks At Number 1***
2 | **NUMBER 2** | MASTER P<br>Good Side Bad Side (Gospo SPMG 001 001.98 018.98) ***Weeks At Number 2***
3 | **NUMBER 3** | LIL JON & THE EAST SIDE BOYZ<br>Kings Of Crunk (RCA 19179-1) ***Weeks At Number 3***
4 | **NUMBER 4** | YING YANG TWINS<br>Me & My Brother (RCA 19159-1) ***Weeks At Number 4***
5 | **NUMBER 5** | VAN HUNT<br>Moments Of Truth: A Decade of Hits (SONY MUSIC 528718 IDJMG 01.98 018.98) ***Weeks At Number 5***

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**Additional Notes:**

- **The top chart entries are based on sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan.**
- **Heatseekers charts reflect new entries or significant moves for albums.**
- **The Heatseekers category identifies albums that are making significant inroads into the top 100.**
- **Independent Albums chart highlights new entries or significant moves for independent albums.**
- **For more details on how albums are ranked,，请访问www.billboard.com.**

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**www.billboard.com • www.billboard.biz**
**Billboard Top Blues Albums**

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**Awards and Certifications**

- **Billboard Top 200**: Sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan.
- **Billboard Top Blues Albums**: Nielsen SoundScan.
- **Billboard Top Christian Albums**: Nielsen SoundScan.
- **Billboard Top Gospel Albums**: Nielsen SoundScan.
- **Billboard Top World Albums**: Nielsen SoundScan.

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**Additional Information**

- **RIAA Certification**: Represents the number of units sold plus equivalent sales or streaming units for each album. For example, RIAA certification for an album is based on the total number of units sold plus equivalent sales or streaming units for that album.
- **Additional Sales Data**: Provided by Nielsen SoundScan.

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**Contact Information**

- ** Nielsen SoundScan**
- **www.billboard.com**

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**Billboard April 24, 2004**

Meanwhile, Lil’ Flip makes his first appearance in the top 10 with “Same Old Flip.”

Of the seven other times Flips has been on the chart (all but one were as a featured artist), the closest the Houston native came to No. 1 was as a guest on David Banner’s “Like a Pimp,” which peaked at No. 15 in July 2003.

MAROONED AT 5: “This Love” by Maroon5 inches up The Billboard Hot 100 from 6-5, becoming the first pop/rock airplay-only song to reach that region of the chart this year.

With ratings, and therefore audience totals, favoring stations that play R&B and hip-hop, it has become increasingly difficult for pop or rock titles to garner as much listener impressions to find the upper regions of the chart.

“This Love,” which spent four weeks atop Hot Digital Tracks, seems destined to climb no higher. Beyoncé’s “Naughty Girl” is in high pursuit, moving 9-6 with a 12.7 million listener increase, compared to Maroon5’s 3.8 million increase.

It seems that the No. 5 rank has become the ceiling on the Hot 100 for pop/rock titles that don’t have a retail-available single. The last three airplay-only titles from this genre reach the upper echelon of the chart—3 Doors Down’s “Here Without You,” Matchbox Twenty’s “Unwell” and “Bring Me To Life” by Evanescence Featuring Paul McCoy—all stalled at that position. You would have to go back exactly one year ago to find a higher peak when 3 Doors Down topped out at No. 4 with “When I’m Gone” in the April 26, 2003, issue.

RURAL ROUTE RUCKUS: While a solo female artist has not topped Hot Country Singles & Tracks in more than two years, the most likely candidate to end that drought is not one of the format’s veterans but a feisty rookie with momentum to spare. Epic newcomer Gretchen Wilson takes the checkerboard flag into country’s top 10 faster than any new artist debuted in nearly eight years and do so with the chart’s biggest increase. Up 608 detections in its seventh week, “Redneck Woman” shoots 14-5, the quickest trip into the top 10 for a new artist this year. LeAnn Rimes “Blue” peaked at No. 10 in the July 6, 1996, issue.

Considering the sluggish speed of the country chart, Wilson’s ascension can be characterized as lightning-fast. In the top 10 this issue, the average number of chart weeks is 19.2. Of the five debut singles by newcomers since the top 40 this issue, the average chart stay is 13.8 weeks.

NEXT STOP: “Last Train Home” by Lostprophets makes a rare three-spot jump from 4-1 on the Modern Rock chart. It is the biggest climb into the pole position on the chart since “Smooth Criminal” by Alton John made an identical leap to No. 1 in the Aug. 17, 2001, issue.

The song “That Home” displaces LeAnn Rimes “Blue” at No. 2. and “Bring Me To Life” by Scotto, moving into the top 10 of the Mainstream Top 40 chart with a 14-9 jump. The track is the second Modern Rock No. 1 to make that position of the Mainstream Top 40 chart this year following Linkin

Park’s “Numb,” which matches the total of all of 2002. Grammy Nominees, “The Reason” moves 3-2 with 11,000 paid downloads, only 1,000 behind chart leader “My Band” by D12.

Additional reporting by Anthony Colombo in New York.
European collection societies were also asked to provide comments and data on the impact of the merger and their contractual relationships with their members. Munich-based GEMA chairman Reinhold Kreile says he is concerned about whether the merger would adversely affect authors' rights.

"GEMA is not saying that this merger endorses the advantage in such rights, but believes it is necessary for the Commission to determine whether there is any risk of such adverse effect," Kreile says.

"This is the basic function position that GEMA has in such cases. Aside from that, we do not comment on the economic affairs of our contractual partners."

Kreile says the EC has asked GEMA about the status of European royalty rates. GEMA is embroiled in a conflict with trade body IFPI Germany over the level of mechanical rates paid by the labels to collecting societies.

At the same time, Universal Music has polled the EC about the issue against BIEM, the trade body representing European societies collecting mechanical rights.

Kreile says IFPI's action could be seen as an "arbitrary act of an oligopoly" exercising a dominance in the market "on the surface." He says it is natural to ask whether the merger would serve to additionally strengthen this oligopoly.

The questionnaire seeks information on the respondents' biggest customers and sales results and asks whether the market has changed significantly since the EC's 2000 probe into the proposed EMI/Warner Music merger.

"[The commissioners] are on an information binge," says an executive with a major party to the merger. "They've asked for a great deal of data and given a very short deadline. That's part of the problem." British retailer HMV has replied to its questionnaire. HMV Group CEO Brian McLaughlin declines to comment on his company's contributions to the probe. European retail body GERA says it has not received a questionnaire.

Additional reporting by Emmanuel Legrand in London.
Anastacia
Continued from page 5
Jackson’s “Damita Jo” debuted at No. 20.
In this issue, “Anastacia”—which finds the singer echoing her dance/pop roots for more rock terrain—remains in the European chart’s pole position for a second consecutive week.
And on the official U.K. Charts Co.’s singles chart, lead single “Left Outside Alone” rises 5-4 this week.
“Just to start our fiscal year with a No. 1 album,” Sony Music International (SMI) president Rick Dobbs says.
According to the label, in its first three weeks of international release, “Anastacia” has shipped 1.5 million units.
The success of the album is a direct result of the high profile the singer/songwriter has enjoyed in Europe for the past five years.
“We made a strategic decision to release the album in two phases,” notes Julie Borchard, New York-based Sony Music U.S.’s senior VP of international marketing.
The first phase was the European and Australian release. The second phase, the U.S. release.
Indeed, Anastacia is considered a superstar everywhere except her native United States.
Her previous albums, “Not That Kind” (2001) and “Pieces of A-Kind” (2002), have sold 124,000 and 279,000 units in the States, respectively, according to Nielsen SoundScan.
Such figures confirm that Anastacia’s name is on its rise in her home territory, says David Massey, executive VP of A&R at Sony Music U.S. and SMI.
“And the new one will be her biggest yet.”
Last year, Anastacia went public with her battle against breast cancer.
In the months since, the artist—who also suffers from Crohn’s disease—has become more of a household name in the States. This fact is not lost on Anastacia or her label.
The artist acknowledges that the media attention over her cancer helped inspire her eyes to tear. “But I was never given this opportunity in the past—my success never happened here,” she explains.
“What most surprised me was that I was going public about breast cancer,” she continues. “I was giving it a face and taking the shame out of it.”
Indeed, breast cancer is now an official part of Anastacia’s story. Still, New York-based Epic senior VP of worldwide marketing Piero Giramonti says, the label would never employ an exploitative agenda to promote Anastacia in the United States.
“People will pull what they want for a story, but we’ll be focusing on her music,” he notes.
RETURN TO SPROCK
With the enthralling, emotionally charged new album, Anastacia seamlessly merged soul, pop and rock. She has dubbed this musical marriage—equal parts Tina Turner and Gwen Stefani—“sprock.”
She explains, “I wanted the album to be full of passion, character and desire. So, I went after producers who have given such things to the artists they’ve worked with.”
Enter Glen Ballard, Dallas Austin, Dave Stewart, John Shanks, Ric Wake and Richie Jones.
“For the first time in my career, I felt like I was driving the car,” the artist says. “They all allowed themselves to be passengers so that they could help me find me.”
In the process, they helped Anastacia unlock her inner rock chick.
Songs like “Recover,” “I Do” (featuring P.D.O. frontman Sonny Sandoval), “Welcome To My Truth” and “Heavy On My Heart” are rugged, muscular and full of confidence.
“Left Outside Alone” was delivered to U.S. mainstream and adult top 40 formats the week of April 12.
And while it’s too early to tell whether it will be embraced by radio programmers, its international success may give it a major boost.
“She has found her sound,” says Sam Zniber, PD of Clear Channel-owned hot AC network MIX in Sydney.
“It’s perfect for an AC or hot AC station.”
It’s also perfect for MTV Europe. MTV Networks Europe senior VP of music Harriett Brand acknowledges. The video for “Left Outside Alone” is airing on all of MTV’s European channels.
Internationally, “Left Outside Alone” will be followed by “Sick and Tired” in summer and “Heavy On My Heart” in fall.
In September, Anastacia will commence a three-month headlining European tour. Until then, she will travel between the United States and Europe.
“I’ll go where my support is needed,” says Anastacia. “But I must have the support before I put myself out there. I’ve never been one to force-feed a country. But as Europe knows, if a country wants me, I am there.”

FUSE
Continued from page 1
channels all fighting for a piece of the coveted 12-34 market.
By putting the music back in music television, Juris hopes to convince viewers that Fuse is unique, and preferable to other stations.
“We came to the market as a different kind of music channel that would focus on new music and would be driven by our viewers,” Juris says.
Industry observers, however, wonder whether music videos alone can make the difference in a crowded field.
“The irony is, Fuse might be best at putting music back into music television, but the way you get a core audience is to have a series,” says pro-media Robert Thompson, director of the Center for the Study of Popular Television at Syracuse University in New York.
Thompson says that though viewers may complain about the paucity of music videos on MTV, regular programming pulls in a larger audience than videos do.
“I think it’s likely that Fuse might take what MTV and MTV2 did and diversify its programming,” he says.

TALE OF THE TAPE
Finding the right formula to differentiate Fuse from the other music channels is Juris’ biggest challenge.
After a year on the air, the network has made progress, but it still has a long way to go, according to industry data.
Unlike MTV and MTV2, Fuse is available only to digital cable and satellite subscribers. That is a potential U.S. audience of 36 million.
In contrast, MTV, which launched in 1981, has a reach of 402 million cable and satellite subscribers worldwide, according to parent company Viacom, which also owns CBS and music-oriented channels VH1, BET and CMT, among other holdings.
Of those MTV subscribers, about 88 million are in the United States, while MTV2, which launched in 1996, reaches about 55 million U.S. cable and satellite subscribers.
MTV was the top ad-supported cable network in prime time among adults 18-34 for the week ending March 28.
MTV had six of the top 10 ad-supported cable shows for adults 18-34 in that same week. No Fuse program made the top 10.
Fuse ranked MTV in only one category: the number of music videos it airs.
In a recent 24-hour period, Fuse’s programming was made up entirely of music videos, compared with 79% at MTV, 75% at MTV2 and 38% at VH1, according to Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems, a billboard sister company (see sidebar, this page).

NICHE MARKET
Despite its overwhelming underdog status, Fuse still has the potential to carve a niche for itself, Thompson says.
“There is room for [Fuse]? Absolutely. We have at least three, maybe four or five cartoon networks [and] three women’s channels,” he says.
“For young audiences, there is room for more.”
MTV cornered the market on hip hop when it launched in 1981, and Fuse will have to somehow convince its younger viewers that it speaks to them more directly.
“MTV has been so good at being this definition of young, hip programming that very few have attempted to play for that same audience and in that same style,” Thompson notes.
To build Fuse’s own brand of cool, Juris likes to take shots at MTV.
A week after this year’s MTV-produced Super Bowl halftime fizzy with Janet Jackson, Fuse ran an ad in the New York Post that poked fun by declaring, “MTV, we at Fuse are standing up.”
Then there was the time Juris leased a billboard located just outside Viacom’s Times Square headquarters and distributed 2 million cups with a slogan, “Where’s the M in empeee-tee?”
“The way they are presenting themselves in the marketplace is clever and witty,” V2 Music marketing director Juris says.
Juris says the ads reflect Fuse’s personality.
“We have a rebellious, snarky point of view and add a little bit of cynicism and irony to everything that is happening,” he says.
“You do need a signature,” Thompson points out.
People have access to many more channels than they are going to watch, he adds, so Fuse needs to become one of the dozen or so channels people flip to first when they are channel surfing.
Fuse plays to a limited group that you go to regularly,” he says. “To become one of the channels in that group, ‘you need an identity.’

DAVID AND GOLIATH
Juris’ marketing strategy hasn’t gone unnoticed at MTV.
While Fuse has focused “all their attention and effort on us,” MTV spokeswoman Sam Zniber, “we are going to continue to focus on our audience and on breaking new music.”
When it comes to new music for Fuse, Juris is trying to target independent channels.
Many artists say exposure on Fuse is beneficial, although some are concerned about aligning themselves with an MTV rival.
“MTV2 can take away an opportunity later on MTV,” the Crystal Method’s Scott Kirkland says, referring to Fuse’s sponsorship of the duo’s current tour.
“But you can’t worry about that too much. You ultimately have to do what is best for your current single.”
Fuse plays the video for the Crystal Method’s “Born Too Slow,” directed by Gone Verbinske; MTV2 doesn’t.
“I think MT2’s format is less experimental than Fuse,” Kirkland adds.

VOTING FOR VIDEOS
Although digital cable reaches far fewer households, it is more interactive than traditional cable. As a result, Fuse has more opportunities to involve viewers in its programming.
For example, “Next Big Thing” and “Oven Fresh” allow viewers to vote for featured acts.
Fuse programming also incorporates game elements. “Fuse TV” allows viewers to pick hits and misses and gain “IMX dollars” for use on the fuse.tv Web site.
New programs debuting in June include “The Daily Downlow,” which will show the 10 most-downloaded songs in the country and offer free downloads of each, and “Fuse Clues,” which will feature music videos and information related to online puzzles at fuse.tv.
Like MTV, MTV2 and other networks, Fuse is trying to raise its profile among music fans.
Fuse has the chance to make its strategy is tour sponsorship. Aside from the Crystal Method’s current outing, Fuse sponsored Deftones and Staind tours (Billboard, Nov. 15, 2003) last fall.
Fuse will also be involved in this summer’s Vans Warped tour (Billboard, Feb. 28).
Though the terms of each Fuse deal are different, most include advertising in the program’s channel in exchange for Fuse advertising on tour programs and signs. Most bands also provide Fuse with diaries and Web chats from the road.
Fuse is what “MTV was in its embryonic stage,” Staind manager Michael Papale says. “We think there was definitely an impact on Staind ticket sales because of the Fuse partnership.”
Pirates
Continued from page 1

have all used its data, as well as MTV and MTV2.
All of which raises the question, Does the industry's use of peer-to-peer data for marketing purposes somehow add legitimacy to the very service that it is trying to stamp out through an aggressive legal campaign?

"Just as it is valuable to understand how pirated CDs are hawked at flea markets, the same applies to the online world. That in no way is any justification for the illegal activity or those who facilitate it," an RIAA spokesperson says.

SEARCHING DATA

BigChampagne, which is based in Beverly Hills, Calif., and opened for business in 2000, tracks the two basic activities that can be monitored on peer-to-peer networks: queries, or searches, and "acquisitions," or downloads.

Then they match a computer's IP address to its zip code, creating a map of P2P activity.

Eric Garland, CEO of BigChampagne, says searches can isolate the use of any form of copyrighted material, from music, feature films, software and videogames to instruction manuals or TV episodes.

Webpns, which opened in 2001 in Studio City, Calif., employs a similar strategy, except it monitors traffic across "superpeers," or computers acting as file-sharing devices, Fagot says. At a client's request, it inserts a searchable digital file into a filter to see who is searching for what by zip code, he says.

Maverick has subscribed to BigChampagne reports since 2000.

"Sometimes you're in a vacuum," Welt says, "and having more information on songs that people in your market [prefer] helps you stay focused on your goal."

For labels, the instantaneous research into a target audience can translate into increased radio spins and more record sales.

A case in point is Maverick's story of the Year and its single "Until the Day I Die." It recently ranked among BigChampagne's top 20 downloads.

But the single was getting substantially less radio play than another top 20 artist like Blink-182 and Audioslave.

With data in hand, Welt took his case to radio stations.

"Week after week, we looked at BigChampagne reports and data on the conference call," Welt says. "We gave them a different picture of what was happening."

Eventually, Welt persuaded stations to try BigChampagne to play "Story" during prime-time listening hours, which he believes helped CD sales. Story of the Year's album, "Page Avenue," recently went gold.

Though BigChampagne's "Top Swaps" chart often mirrors the Billboard Mainstream Top 40, "sometimes it lets you see things before they happen," Welt says. "You might not be aware that the buzz has already started."

BILLYARD CHART?

Nielsen SoundScan is considering the tracking services to create a standardized metric for P2P activity, similar to how it monitors legal downloading for Billboard charts.

But the industry has let it be known that it would oppose a chart that specifically tracks P2P music downloads.

Some executives liken it to billboard tracking CDs that have been shoplifted.

"It's not the same without precedent," the news media frequently report on the latest development or the next iteration of business model," Cohen says.

"We've had great first starts, but for them to be great long-term businesses, they have to evolve," he adds.

Over the long term, some industry insiders think P2P services will go legitimate.

The industry is already privately discussing how to eventually monetize file traffic.

That eventually, however, will hinge on copyright litigation and cooperation among major labels, independent labels, publishers, software manufacturers, artists and Internet service providers.

"It's going to be a difficult transformation, but not impossible," Garland says.

"Our original intent was to treat [the tracking of] downloadable music as a proof of concept," he adds. "This can be done."

Blue Note
Continued from page 1

by American Apparel.

Accompanying the launch of A New Perspective is the April 20 release of "Blue Note Revisited." The 13-track collection features contemporary artists reminiscing vintage recordings.

The shirts are currently available for $20 at blumonte.com and rapoode.com. They are being presented to lifestyle boutiques and independent record stores worldwide, where they will retail for $26-$28. The shirts will be distributed in the United States by Zero Traders, which will work with various agents and distributors around the world.

According to Blue Note VP of marketing Zach Hochkeppel, there is substantial international interest in the collection—particularly in Japan, France and the Italian Kingdom.

"Blue Note has great brand recognition around the world," Hochkeppel says. "It’s known by people in the worlds of jazz, hip-hop, DJ culture and beyond. A majority of people are hip to the Blue Note name."

Indeed, Blue Note has an incredibly rich history. A New Perspective celebrates and recognizes this—but not in an overt, in-your-face manner.

“For us, it had to be more subtle,” Hochkeppel notes. “You’re either hip to the references, or you’re not.”

Blue Note and Rapoode began discussing design ideas last year, Hochkeppel says. At the time, both companies noticed that Madison Avenue was co-opting the design ethic of the old Blue Note label.

"We began looking for evergreen "Blue Note" imagery," Hochkeppel explains. "Cool messages and cool graphics were also key. These clothes are for those in the know, as well as for those who simply like the message or design."

The initial wave of the New Perspective line focuses on album covers by Reid Miles, Blue Note’s chief designer in the ’60s, and Francis Wolff.

Featured music artists include Art Blakey ("Indestructible"), McCoy Tyner ("The Real McCoy"), Larry Young ("Unity") and Ornette Coleman ("Love Call").

These say a lot about the times we’re living in,” says Lainie Coppietto, president of Aurelia Entertainment, a marketing firm. "And some of the messages are as timely as ever."

She continues, "You can protest without saying anything at all. You let the shirt do all the talking. At the same time, you can be listening to ‘Blue Note Revisited’ on your iPod. Fashion and music have never been more connected.

"Blue Note Revisited” features remixes by DJ/producers Herbert (Michel Petrucciani’s “Caravan”), Jazzavon (Eddie Gale’s “Song of Will”), Kenny Dope (Bobby Hutcherson’s “La Malanga”) and others.

The CD and A New Perspective were heavily promoted and marketed at the Blue Note Jazz Fest, held the week of April 5 in Paris.

Illegal Downloads: The Stats

"I think file sharing is very stable. We have not seen a decrease as a result of RIAA’s efforts," says John Fogat, a consultant to Webpns.

Eric Garland, CEO of BigChampagne, reports that an average of 8.8 million unique users of popular file-sharing networks were monitored on any given time during the first quarter this year, compared to 6.7 million users in the third quarter of last year.

Garland says that 57% of all current peer-to-peer traffic involves music downloads.

"The total number of iTunes users is trivially small next to the number of Kazaa users," says Fred von Lohmann, staff counsel for Electronic Frontier Foundation, a San Francisco-based cyber liberties group. "In contrast, it’s a niche market."

At press time, Hochkeppl was getting the new fashion line into the hands of such Blue Note artists as Norah Jones, Yorwen Marsalis and Meadjsi, Martin & Wood.

"We’re going to bring shirts to the entire Blue Note roster," he says. "And while we would never impose it on our artists, we hope that they might wear the shirts on the street, in fashion shoots or onstage."

Good news. Jones has already spotted wearing the designs. Ditto for DJ/producer King Britt, jazz guitarist Charlie Hunter, actor/comedian Dave Chapelle and others.

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LOS ANGELES—For almost 20 years, Steve Beeks has championed the independent home video business.

Beeks added to his indelible stature with his recent appointment as president of Santa Monica, Calif.-based Lions Gate Entertainment. He joined Lions Gate last December after its $210 million purchase of Artisan Entertainment, where he had served as president of the home entertainment division (Billboard, Nov. 8, 2003). In his new position, he reports to Lions Gate CEO Jon Feltheimer.

The newly merged companies have more than 8,000 home video titles, representing the industry’s largest independent library, and claim to be No. 8 in the market, with a 4.35% share. The company’s Family Home Entertainment (FHE) arm—formerly part of Artisan—is No. 4 in the family video market, claiming a 6.6% share.

At Artisan, Beeks increased home video revenue to $300 million from $115 million in six years. During his tenure, Artisan pioneered high-definition DVD, releasing the titles “Standing in the Shadows of Motown” and “T2—Extreme DVD” in the format, in conjunction with Microsoft’s Windows Media 9 player.

Artisan also pursued partnerships with such children’s companies as Mattel and Fisher Price to create video series for Barbie and other popular toy franchises.

“Each business that Artisan went into, they owned the category,” says Mike Dunn, president of Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment. “I respect what they have done with the children’s and exercise business and the way they have managed their theatrical catalog.”

Beeks’ indie résumé also includes stints at Republic Pictures, where home entertainment revenue grew to $70 million from $15 million during his eight-year tenure, and Hallmark Home Entertainment, a company he founded.

Q: What are your new responsibilities at Lions Gate?

A: The interesting thing about this job is that I don’t get rid of any of my old responsibilities. I will continue to be responsible for the home entertainment activities of the company. In addition to that, I will have responsibilities for certain operating functions of the company, like business and legal affairs, corporate matters like human resources and the operating functions of the company, as well as some of the Canadian operations.

Q: With the merger complete, what are some of the challenges of being in charge of such a big home video division?

A: The challenges are making sure we continue doing as a combined company what made the two companies so successful up until now, which is aggressively managing libraries and all the brands that the companies represent. [It also means] taking advantage of the operational advantages to which Artisan had access, primarily the big operating department, the fact that we have vendor management capability with the mass merchants, the fact that we can ship to 10,000 storefronts direct to store.

At the same time, we have made a commitment in the company’s evolution in that we have a theatrical slate unlike either company has ever encountered at any point in the past. We have 18 motion pictures going out theatrically this year.

Q: Have the two companies been fully integrated?

A: We physically integrated the two operations seven days after the transaction was closed. The transaction was closed Dec. 15. We made all the personnel changes and shifted everybody around over the next few days, and on the 22nd, the companies were physically merged together. Lions Gate personnel moved into what was the old Artisan office.

Literally seven days later, we were operating as one company with one focus. It was a merger that was, in a way, meant to be.
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