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-Thalía

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LONDON'S WAKE-UP CALL

It started with "London Calling," then it was "The Street Parade," and finally "London's Burning." The titles of these three Clash tracks sum up the crazy and tragic week Londoners recently endured. There was the impressive July 2 display of good will from the Live 8 audience supporting debt relief for Africa. The public exuberance of Londoners July 6 when their city won the right to host the 2012 Olympics, and the brutal wake-up call of terrorist bombings the following day.

Live 8 was a glorious day in London. The artists and their audience interacted for a serious cause—and it made a difference on the eve of the G8 summit in Scotland.

Everyone at the concert in Hyde Park seemed to understand that the idealistic motivation for the event was far more important than the show itself. But boy, was it a show great!

Winning the Olympics bid was another reason to rejoice (even for this writer, who was born in Paris). For the British music industry, the 2012 event will be a fantastic occasion to display its talents on a global scale.

The insanity of July 7 dramatically toned down the celebration. With the mood turned somber, Londoners were forced to reflect on the state of the world in which we live. The resiliency of people is admirable.

Much has been said about the "stiff upper lip" that the British display in the face of adversity, and this seems very much the case. Lives have been shattered, souls have been taken, and life goes on in this great capital. But as in post-Sept. 11 New York and post-March 11 Madrid, something remains in the air that is likely to haunt this old town for a long time.

For many, music provides solace and inspiration.

"I’ve been beat up, I’ve been thrown out/but I’m not down, I’m not down," the Clash’s Joe Strummer sang. Some 25 years later, those words are more relevant than ever.

—Emmanuel Legrand

OPINION  EDITORIALS  COMMENTARY  LETTERS

Why We Need A Day In D.C. For The Recording Arts

BY NEIL PORTNOW

At its core, music is about connecting. We’ve all experienced the connection between music fan and music maker. Those of us fortunate enough to work in this community also have witnessed unique and magical interactions—singer and musician, performer and songwriter, producer/engineer and artist—and other connections beyond the sight of the fan.

In this spirit, I ask for your help in creating another important connection: one between music professionals and those who shape the policies under which we work and create.

If we belonged to most other industries, we already would have something that our own industry lacks: an annual grassroots advocacy day in Washington, D.C. On any given day in the nation’s capital, you will find organized groups of citizens from around the country meeting with members of Congress to promote their particular business interests and concerns.

And while many of these organizations have been effective in bringing their members to D.C. for lobbying visits, what we’ve missed is a community-wide, annual presence in Washington to promote our unified message: that the recording arts and sciences are an essential contributor and vital element of our nation’s culture and economy.

The Recording Academy, many other leading music organizations and the Recording Arts and Sciences Congressional Caucus are working together to launch such an event this year. On Sept. 7, we will begin the inaugural Recording Arts Day to Washington on Capitol Hill, and I invite our industry’s creative community and leadership to join us.

Recording Arts Day will consist of meetings with legislators and other policy makers, a lunchtime music event in the Capitol and an evening of “Grammys on the Hill” honoring our friends in Congress and the arts. Our hosts will be Rep. Mary Bono, R-Calif., and Rep. Steny Hoyer, D-Md.—co-chairs of the RACSC—along with a number of those legislators who continually work to advance the rights of the music community. Our goal is to thank these friends—and to make more.

Now, some may wonder if such a unifying day is possible in an industry with many different sectors, each with varying (and sometimes conflicting) priorities. Current negotiations in music licensing for the digital age illustrate the real and challenging issues among music stakeholders.

But while there may be issues that sometimes divide us, there always will be many issues that unite us. We all can agree that our overriding mission is to provide the highest-quality music to the fan and consumers while securing fair compensation for those who create and distribute the music.

The recent positive and landmark Supreme Court decision in the MGM v. Grokster case is a perfect example of our combined strength in action. Many segments of our community filed amicus briefs, including the Recording Academy, which certainly had an impact on the court’s thinking and opinion. And just last month, the leaders of nearly every music membership organization gathered for a first-ever summit to build consensus on our common issues. Clearly, the time is right to visit Congress—as a formidable coalition dedicated to advancing the rights of the music community as a whole.

So I hope you will join us Sept. 7 and help create a new Washington tradition: an annual Recording Arts Day on Capitol Hill. For more information, please visit grammy.com/advocacy.

While our industry may have such activities to connect their constituents to Congress, none could do it with the harmony of a unified music community. After all, connecting is our business.

Neil Portnow is president of the Recording Academy.
A voice like no other...

His legacy will live on forever.
THANKS TO ALL OF THE RECORD LABELS, PERFORMERS AND RADIO STATIONS WHO HELPED MAKE THE BET AWARDS '05 A RECORD-BREAKING SUCCESS!

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★ Cable's #1 Program Among African Americans!
★ #1 Awards Show Among African Americans!
★ #1 Cable Show of the Week!

...and did you check out Soundscan the next week?

BET CHOOSES ENTERTAINMENT PRESIDENT
BET has named noted film/TV director Reginald Hudlin as its new president of entertainment. He starts immediately, and will divide his time among BET's Washington, D.C., headquarters and its Los Angeles and New York offices. Hudlin's film credits include "House Party," "Boomerang," "The Great White Hype" and animated feature "Bebe's Kids." On the TV side, Hudlin's resume includes HBO's "Cosmic Slop," Fox's "The Bernie Mac Show" and the upcoming Chris Rock show, "Everybody Hates Chris."
-Gail Mitchell

GOOD TIMES FOR $40M
Fitness/wellness DVD company Gaam has purchased budget video company GoodTimes Entertainment in a $40 million deal. Gaam, based in Broomfield, Colo., reports that the purchase may generate an extra $200 million in annual revenue. The catalog of New York-based GoodTimes features fitness and children's titles including the "The Bo" line and such projects as "Benji" and "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer." The deal was finalized by the end of the third quarter.
-Jill Kipnis

NAVARRE CFO EXITS
James G. Gilbertson, CFO of New Hope, Minn.-based independent wholesaler Navarre, has resigned. He will consult for the company until Aug. 15, according to a statement. In announcing Gilbertson's resignation, Navarre stated it is actively searching for a new CFO. Gilbertson joined Navarre in that capacity in 2001.

BUSINESS BY BRIAN GARRITY

Smellie Leaving Sony BMG

Sony BMG Music Entertainment COO Michael Smellie is exiting the company at the end of the year, citing personal reasons. Billboard has learned.

Smellie is the highest-ranking former BMG executive involved in the day-to-day operations of Sony BMG. After leaving his current position, he is expected to retain a consultancy role as an adviser to company CEO Andrew Lack.

"I wanted to go back to Sydney in Australia, where my family are, and spend a little bit more time as a father and husband and a little less time as a COO," Smellie says. "I need a new balance in my life."

Lack adds: "It's fair to say we are going to continue to work together pretty closely to the extent that Michael has the time to give me... There isn't anything on my plate that I wouldn't want Michael's input on."

A successor for Smellie is yet to be named. No timetable has been offered for identifying his replacement.

Smellie is one of the major architects of the Sony BMG merger, an undertaking that has seen $350 million in cost savings and the elimination of some 2,000 jobs. Smellie and Lack oversaw the integration of the corporate, administrative, sales, distribution and international operations of the two far-flung global music operations.

Smellie in particular played a key role in shaping the personnel structure of the company's international operations.

He resigns just 11 months after the combination of Sony and BMG, and at a time when the company is still attempting to realize the full benefits of the merger.

As of midyear, Sony BMG Music continued on >>8

DIGITA BY BRIAN GARRITY and RAY WADDELL

AOL, AEG, XM Link For Online Programming

AOL, XM Satellite Radio and Anschutz Entertainment Group are betting big that Live 8's recent success as an online programming event was no fluke. The companies are spending about $15 million on a new joint venture called Network Live. By the fall, it is expected to begin distributing programming blocks of music concerts and comedy performances through an array of digital platforms five nights per week.

The initiative marries the concert industry's desire for new outlets for its events with digital programmers' growing appetite for content.

Network Live will be based in Los Angeles and have a staff of about 100 by the end of first-quarter 2006. Veteran music promoter Kevin Wall, who executive-produced Live 8, will be CEO of the new company.

He is also an equity partner. In addition to being investors, AOL and XM, which carried extensive Live 8 coverage, will be the initial licensees of Network Live programming.

"The idea that we could pull together a venture like this that could create live programming across digital platforms is something that is better to do together than do alone," XM Satellite Radio president/CEO Hugh Panero says.

AOL figures to be a major beneficiary of Network Live. The company already produces its own live music events for the Web—efforts that cost as much as $100,000 each—and it is looking to add more original entertainment programming for its new Internet portal, aol.com.

"AOL Music Live has been a big success for us, and we thought, 'How do we scale this up? How do we do it financially? How do we do it production-wise?'" AOL executive VP of programming and products Jim Bankoff says.

continued on >>p8
Major P2Ps Find Common Ground

In the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court's June decision against Grokster, the music industry appears to have made new friends from old enemies.

On July 11, file-trading service iMesh unveiled a licensing deal with Sony BMG Music Entertainment. The service is days away from announcing a similar agreement with Universal Music Group, according to sources close to the situation. A little more than a year ago, iMesh was the target of a music-industry anti-piracy campaign. "We bear no grudge," says Thomas Hesse, head of Sony BMG's global digital business group. "We've had discussions with a number of these players before. At the time, given the legal environment, they felt they'd rather not go legit. Given the new legal environment, they may be willing to go legit now. But those who won't come clean, we will pursue with the full force of the law and the additional instruments we've been granted by this court decision.

There are still plenty of conflicting visions for a legal peer-to-peer future. The operators of Morpheus and Kazaa have proposed ad-revenue sharing models for labels to profit from the tracks traded on their services, but only a few indie labels have signed on. Major-label executives say they doubt that services like Kazaa or Morpheus have any intention to respect copyrights, regardless of revenue-sharing proposals. "There is a difference between a company whose business thrust is to provide a safe, legal way of providing music in new and exciting ways, and companies whose entire business model is based on copyright infringement," a major-label executive says. iMesh is one of the original file-trading sites, launched shortly after the original Napster in 1999. The company was named along with Grokster and StreamCast in a lawsuit by the Recording Industry Assn.

"The new iMesh service keeps the P2P interface, so users can scan each other's hard drives for files to download. But the system features filtering technology from Audible Magic that determines whether songs are protected by copyrights. The system limits access to protected files to 30-second clips. For immediate access to the full track, users can pay 99 cents or subscribe—with rates yet to be determined. iMesh's stated intention is to block access to tracks from labels without an iMesh deal in place. EMI Music Group, Sony BMG and UMG all have registered their repertoire with Audible Magic and SnoCap, a similar service run by former Napster leader Shawn Fanning. Sources say Warner Music Group is in advanced negotiations to do the same. But iMesh and other P2Ps must strike separate deals with each label for the rights to sell these tracks and to establish a revenue-sharing agreement. MusicNet will operate the download and subscription services, providing access to more than 1.5 million tracks and handling the retail transactions. But iMesh also wants to provide access to the more than 15 million tracks they estimate are currently available via file-trading networks.

"From a user standpoint, the objective is to have something simple and straightforward," iMesh president Talmon Marco says. "The back-end system has to figure out whether this is free or not, whether somebody has to be compensated or not, what can be shared and what can't, and whether it's MP3 or not."

According to Audible Magic CEO Vance Ikezyo, several P2P companies currently operating unauthorized services have contacted Audible Magic about its filtering technology as a potential option to go legitimate following the Supreme Court's anti-Grokster ruling. "The Grokster decision recognized filtering as a legitimate and viable technology," he says. "Some P2P vendors are still evaluating what this means for them and what they're going to do."

Even with the support of the labels, authorized P2Ps services face the hurdle of convincing users to pay for a service they once received for free.

"We've already seen this play out with the original Napster," says Eric Garland, CEO of P2P traffic measurement service BigChampagne, noting that after Napster implemented a filtering service in response to industry lawsuits, users abandoned it overnight. "If people want to pay for music or purchase copy-protected files, they will do so from Steve Jobs."

"We are going to continue to work together pretty closely."—Sony BMG CEO Andrew Lack

SONY BMG (cont.)

from >>p7 Entertainment is running second to Universal Music in market share. The company has racked up sales of 77.1 million units, for a 27.3% share. During the same period last year, when Sony Music and BMG were separate companies, they had combined sales of 96 million units, which would have represented a 31.4% share, putting them in the top spot, just slightly ahead of UMG. Lack and Smellie say Sony BMG is just hitting its stride. "On the performance side, we're starting to cook," says Lack, who has been keen to downplay the significance of market-share comparisons. "We're literally just this summer, emerging with the kind of performance we've expected for the company."

Smellie says the company was more preoccupied with integration during the first quarter than it originally hoped, but that project is now essentially complete. "We haven't released a record the CEO Ball Schmidt-Holtz. Smellie supervised the merger-restructuring of BMG—an initiative that saw the consolidation of the company's creative operations into a single structure under the leadership of Clive Davis and Charles Gold- stock. He also revamped the company's international operations by dismantling BMG's regional fiefdoms and creating a single global management and marketing structure."

NETWORK (cont.)

from >>p7 "We decided the way to go about it was to go to a part of this venture," Bankoff believes Network Live will also give AOL added appeal to advertisers.

Still on the to-do list for the new company is showering up specific concerts to distribute and finding distribution partners in areas like wireless communications, cinema chains and satellite and digital cable TV. "We're creating a network for the future, which is being able to access digital entertainment content anytime, anywhere, on any device."

Much of Network Live's programming will come from AEG, a leading concert promoter, venue operator and creator of pay-per-view programming. AEG is expected to deliver Network Live as many as 40 concerts this year. However, the venture also will be able to work with other promoters and venue operators.

"Kevin's going to have flexibility to go to other owners of content not related to our company that want to come and use Network Live," AEG president/CEO Tim Leiweke says. "I think you will see him having relationships with Clear Channel, House of Blues, and for that matter, I think you will see other festivals and other forms of content, including comedy and sports, that ultimately will have a strong perform and a place within Network Live."

That said, Leiweke is clear that AEG events and AEG venues are obviously first when there is a choice. 

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A lot more Asian teenagers are wearing black and refusing to tidy their rooms. Canadian punk band SIMPLE PLAN shot to No.1 throughout Asia after being featured on MTV. Imagine how many of today’s youth must have been influenced by MTV for this to happen. It’s just another success story from MTV.

To be part of the MTV craze, visit www.mtvasia.com.
Pino Out At EMI Latin Departure Triggers Speculation On New Structure

he executive structure of EMI's U.S. Latin division is poised for major changes following the sudden departure of president/CEO Jorge Pino.

Pino, a charismatic label head known for his marketing savvy and fierce artist advocacy, left the company July 6.

The move shocked employees, who were in the midst of a marketing meeting in the company's Miami office when Pino said goodbye.

EMI declined to comment for this report, but employees say they were told Pino was leaving to pursue new ventures. EMI Latin America president/CEO Marco Bissi, to whom Pino reported, will oversee the U.S. Latin division for the time being.

Sources within EMI and around the Latin music industry say Pino was forced out by an impeding joint venture between EMI and Televisa Records, the new label created by Mexican media giant Televisa.

Two former BMG U.S. Latin executives are driving the Televisa venture: ex-chairman Rodolfo Lopez Negrete and Adrian Posse, who had been VP of A&R. It is uncertain which roles, if any, they might play in EMI's structure.

No formal announcement or confirmation has been made regarding the venture, and sources inside EMI say no internal announcement was made. In the meantime, Bissi has taken steps to reassure employees that Pino's departure will not affect day-to-day operations. Bissi has also placed calls to several artists to reassure them of a smooth transition, according to several managers.

EMI is currently working albums by Thalia (due July 19), Ricardo Montaner (due in August) and Tony Touch (released last month).

Speculation about Pino's departure had existed for months. Sources close to Pino say the executive renewed his contract last year.

EMI employees say they saw nothing out of the ordinary in the days before his departure.

Several artist managers who requested anonymity express dismay at Pino's exit.

"I think Jorge is a star," one says. "He'll end up on his feet." An industry veteran, Pino came to EMI in 2001 from Sony Discos, where he was senior VP/GM. Pino was instrumental in building Sony Discos' successful Latin pop division, developing the careers of artists including Ricky Martin, Chayanne, Jric Velasquez and Shakira.

At EMI, Pino inherited such acts as Thalia, Carlos Vives and Kumbia Kings. But he also recruited new talent and committed company resources to its development. The career of Obie Bermudez—whose most recent album, "Todo El Año," sold 35,600, according to Nielsen SoundScan—was largely helmed by Pino. And JD Nathasha, whose debut album has yet to make a strong sales impact a year after its release, has received continued support from EMI.

However, EMI Latin's domestic market share has slipped in the past year. For the first half of 2005, EMM, EMI's distribution arm, had an 8% share of the Latin market, down from 9% during the same period last year.

In the past 12 months, Pino hired two key staff members: Veteran promotion executive Pietro Carlos became senior director of promotion last September, and Richard Brill was appointed VP of marketing in January. Both remain at the company.

Jorge Pino

Jorge Pino surprised EMI Latin staff with his July 6 departure.

"This requires innovative solutions," the document reads. "The best way of achieving territorial clearances is not necessarily by building on existing models that originate in the analogue environment."

A senior source at a Continental rights society warns that the proposal could create more hassle for online services than simplifying the licensing processes. "Instead of having repertoire licensed geographically, online services may well have to deal with 25 societies in 25 EU countries to make sure they have licensed all the repertoire—and all these societies have different tariffs," the executive says.

Authors' rights groups had a mixed reaction toward the draft. The European Grouping of Societies of Authors and Composers has criticized the plan as draconian. "We are very worried," says Isabelle Proust, Brussels-based legal adviser for GESAC. "We do not agree with the commission's diagnosis of the music sector, and we don't agree with the prescription."

GESAC chairman Bernard Miety, who is also president of French society SACEM, says he will confer with other GESAC members to outline an answer to the EC.

Emma Pike, director general of British Music Rights, an authors' rights umbrella body, applauded the EC's examination of the market. "There is no question," she says, "that it makes sense to streamline the licensing of online services."

GLOBAL

Rights Orgs React To EC Proposal

BRUSSELS—European publishers and others who may start doing business with collecting societies outside their national borders, if a European Commission report's recommendations are followed.

The EC (the European Union's executive authority) issued the controversial report July 7, suggesting major changes in the way EU licensing societies operate, in order to meet the multiterritorial needs of online music services.

"Study on a Community Initiative on the Cross-Border Collective Management of Copyright" will serve as the basis for a policy proposal by the European Commission (the EU cabinet) in October.

In its document, the EC's Internal Market Department concludes that the absence of EU-wide copyright licenses for online content services is hindering the development of the legitimate digital music business.

Currently, a rights holder authorizes a society in their country to handle licenses and collect royalties. That society has its own royalty rates but also enters "reciprocal agreements" with societies in other countries to handle licenses and collect royalties locally at their rates.

The draft proposes a new structure that would allow rights holders to choose their own collecting societies in other territories.

The proposal says new technologies have prompted demand for multiterritorial licensing.
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ALBUM IN STORES JULY 26

What's The Deal With Teens? Just Keep It Real

NEW YORK—Want to reach the almighty and lucrative teen market? Follow these simple rules: Keep it real, remain authentic, and stay relevant. And do not talk down to teens. They hate that.

That was the consensus at the What Teens Want—East conference, held July 12 at the Marriott Marquis here. Billboard hosted the one-day event with sister VNU publications Adweek, Brandweek, Mediapage, The Hollywood Reporter and Sporting Goods Business, plus Nielsen Entertainment. Sponsors included National Cinema Media and Teen Vogue. It was clear from the panels and presentations that young people today live media-saturated lives. On average, a teen spends nearly nine hours daily interacting with media sources, often while multitasking, according to blackplanet.com executive director Omar Wasow, who moderated the panel “Hooking Up With Teens in an Online and Mobile World.” In comparison, teens spend about 2.5 hours daily with their parents and 50 minutes on homework.

Factor in their monthly personal discretionary income and it’s no wonder that brands from iPod and Virgin Mobile to Columbia Records and Nike want a piece of the teen pie. According to data compiled by the Harrison Group, boys between the ages of 13 and 18 have a monthly income of $695 (those with jobs) and $339 (without jobs). Conversely, girls in the same age range have monthly incomes of $760 (with jobs) and $122 (without jobs).

In other words, Harrison Group vice chairman Jim Taylor remarked, young girls are expected to work for the money. Regardless of the sex, when it comes to marketing to teens, marketers must never forget that teens are cynical and smart. “The message must be on-point,” Insound/DrillTeam CEO Steve Kleinberg said during the “Grass Roots and are seen as being in the know,” Hit Frequency Marketing founder and CEO Ron Vos said. During her one-on-one interview with Columbia Records executive VP Charlie Walk, Billboard co-executive editor Tamara Conniff noted that teens’ “bullshit meter” is more acute than it was 10 or 15 years ago. So, instead of force-feeding them information, Walk explained that it is now about “marketing elegantly to them.”

In addition to Internet radio and teen magazines like US Weekly (which Walk called “crack for kids”), Walk cited instant-message screens, myspace.com and 3G cellular phones as important pieces of teen real estate. After nine hours of sitting through the day’s panel discussions, 14-year-old attendee Amit Gilad, who lives in Los Angeles and plays in a band (Jammnation), told Billboard: “It’s like hearing aliens analyze the human race.”

Additional reporting by Jordan Heller Weissmann in New York.
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RICHARD DUNN, Artist Development/RAn, Beach Music
JONATHAN DUQUETTE, VP R&B, label representative, North America (Bling Tone)
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UMG Dominates U.S. Market Share Rankings

NEW YORK—Universal Music & Video Distribution was the driving force of the U.S. music industry in the first half of this year. Market share for the perennially No. 1-ranked company rocketed to 32%, its highest since the 1998 PolyGram-Universal merger.

The company’s first-half dominance is even more apparent in the current-album market. Not only led the industry in that category, it snared six of the 10 bestselling albums, including the top three. 50 Cent’s "The Massacre" was No. 1, moving 4 million units as of July 3, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

What is more, Universal Music Video Distribution increased its scans in a period when album sales were down 7.6% (Billboard, July 16). Scans declined for the other three majors as well as the independent sector, though the indies boosted their collective market share.

In the six-month period ended July 3, Universal Music Video Distribution’s market share was up nearly five percentage points from the 27.1% it garnered in first-half 2004. On a unit basis, that translates to 90.5 million, an 8.5% increase from the 82.8 million for the corresponding period of 2004. Universal Music Video Distribution’s current-album market share is even stronger, at 35.7%, outpacing No. 2 distributor Sony BMG Music Entertainment Sales by nearly 10 percentage points.

Right behind "The Massacre" are Mariah Carey’s "The Emancipation of Mimi," which has shifted 2.3 million copies, and the Game’s "The Documentary," with 2.1 million. Other top sellers for Universal include the Killers’ "Hot Fuss," Gwen Stefani’s "Love Angels Music Baby," and Eminem’s "Encore."

While it is clear that Universal Music Video Distribution has hit power, its strong first half extended to catalog sales, where it was the only major to enjoy an increase—albeit slight. Its share of 26.1%—up from 24.3% in first-half 2004—added 454,000 units to its 27.7 million total from the corresponding period last year.

Some retailers attribute Universal Music Video Distribution’s outstanding first half to its controversial JumpStart program, particularly as it relates to catalog. JumpStart lowered wholesale prices significantly but eliminated cooperative advertising funds that traditionally had gone to retailers.

UMV’s competitors maintain that JumpStart does not make financial sense. But the skepticism that retail displayed during the program’s September 2003 launch has dwindled, especially after an April 2004 revamp. At that time, Universal Music Video Distribution raised list prices by $1 but kept wholesale costs fixed and added buying discounts for some catalog purchases.

White Plains, N.Y.-based Nielsen SoundScan determines market-share rankings based on point-of-sale information. It collects the data for all formats and configurations from retailers, rack accounts and other merchants, including mail-order companies and online stores.

The accounts surveyed generate 85% of U.S. music sales. Based on this data, Nielsen SoundScan estimates totals for the full market.

Nielsen SoundScan calculates current-album market share by counting sales occurring in the first 18 months of an album’s release (12 months for classical and jazz titles), except for those that remain in the top half of The Billboard 200.

THE RUNNERS-UP

Ranked No. 2 in total album market share, Sony BMG Music Entertainment Sales garnered 26.6%, nearly nine percentage points above the third-place indie sector. But that share is down from first-half 2004, before the Sony-BMG merger, when the companies’ combined total was 30.2% (BMG with 16.4%, Sony with 13.8%). That translates to scans of 92.2 million units midway through last year and 74 million for the same period this year.

But if the company’s independent distribution arm, RED, is included, Sony BMG’s market share comes in at 27.8% (see company chart, this page). The merged Sony BMG initially was expected to challenge Universal Music Video Distribution’s outstanding first half to its controversial JumpStart program, particularly as it relates to catalog. JumpStart lowered wholesale prices significantly but eliminated cooperative advertising funds that traditionally had gone to retailers.

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**Ritmo Latino Opens Store Numero 42**

With Latin music the only genre increasing its U.S. sales in the first half of the year, Ritmo Latino continues to ride the wave to help create the chain just opened its 42nd store, in the Glendale area of Phoenix.

According to Ritmo Latino founder and president David Massry, this is the first of four outlets planned for the Phoenix market. Massry says he is currently negotiating a couple of leases. "We might open another store this year, and two more next year," he says. The Glendale outlet takes up about 3,500 square feet and carries about 11,000 albums, 2,000 books and 1,300 movies, according to Ritmo Latino director of operations Jack Feinstein. Because this is a new store, he expects the assortment to grow and change as the chain adapts to the market. Naturally, the books and movies, like the music, are in Spanish.

The store features an Internet cafe and listening stations where customers can sample any CD in the store. Massry says: "We try to make all of our stores exciting," he adds. "Some have an arcade. Some have an Internet cafe where you can check your e-mail." Members of the chain's frequent-buyer program—which costs $10 a year and provides a 10% discount on purchases—can use the computers for free. (Nonmembers pay for computer time).

Five Ritmo Latino locations include a store-within-a-store, usually with a separate entrance, for the chain's Ritmo Rock concept, geared to rock fans. In addition to Arizona, the Tinton Falls, N.J.-based chain fields stores in California, Texas, Illinois, Nevada, Florida, New Jersey and Washington, D.C. It has opened eight stores in the last 18 months.

**SPRUCING UP:** Virgin Entertainment Group North America is not finished pruning its store portfolio. The chain will shutter two California locations in addition to its Burbank store: Sacramento (scheduled to close Aug. 31) and Costa Mesa (Sept. 22). The closures, along with the previously announced transfer of the lease for the chain's Vancover store to HMV, are part of a VEGNA effort to ditch underperformers.

After experiencing difficulty during the 2003 Christmas selling season, the company began a turnaround effort that appears to be working. For instance, last year, VEGNA management recognized that it needed to close or renegotiate leases on about 10 of its stores (Billboard, Oct. 2, 2004). Since then, it has closed its Long Island, N.Y., and Columbus, Ohio, outlets.

Meanwhile, the chain is still searching for new locations. It will open a Los Angeles flagship on Hollywood Boulevard this fall. It has also begun refurbishing its Times Square store in New York.

"Virgin Entertainment Group remains fully committed to entertainment retail," the company said in a statement. "Virgin Entertainment Group believes that its mission of creating the finest entertainment retail experience in the country is predicated on the quality of its stores rather than the quantity of its locations. Virgin believes that the key is to not spread its distribution too thin, but rather to create true destination retail experiences in America's destination cities."

With music sales declining this year, VEGNA and other merchants continue to seek new product lines. "We have to look at our own business and develop other options," Virgin Entertainment Group global CEO Simon Wright says. "But music is the glue that holds everything together. Music will be the central core of the store, even though we might see the percentages change a little bit. When the customer walks into the Virgin Megastore, they are walking into a record store."

**MARKET SHARE (cont.)**

The market share for Fontana, UMG's new indie distribution arm, is not available. But because it shipped its first releases March 15, Fontana's impact on UMG's overall market share is probably minimal. If the other three major-label-owned indie distributors were excluded, then Koch would be the largest indie distributor and the sector would have just a 13.4% slice.

Moving back to the majors, WMC, including ADA, had a 16.7% total market share, up from last year's 16.1%. But if ADA is subtracted, WMC's WEA distribution unit garnered 14.1%. That is down from the 14.6% it had in first-half 2004 and leaves the company in fourth place. WEA has moved 40.5 million units so far this year, down from the 44.6 million it moved in first-half 2004.

In current-album market share, WEA tallied 12.3%, down from the 12.7% it had this time last year; its bestselling title was Green Day's "American Idiot," which ranked No. 4 at midyear, with 1.9 million scanned.

EMI Music Marketing finishes last with a 9.4% share, down from the 10.7% it had midway through last year. The company has scanned 28.3 million units so far this year, versus the 32.7 million it moved during the same period in 2004.

In current-album market share, EMM's distribution unit garnered 8.1%, down from 10.7% halfway through 2004. Its best-selling title, Coldplay's "X&Y," has scanned 1.4 million copies since its June 7 release.

Moving to the R&B rankings, UMG placed first with a 44.2% share, up significantly from 15.4% in first-half 2004. Within the genre, the company's rap share also increased, to a whopping 55%. Sony BMG ranked second in R&B with a 25.2% share. That is down from the combined 36.7% share for Sony and BMG last year. Within that, the company's rap share is off significantly, to 8.4% from a combined 21.2% last year.

On the other hand, WMC, under the stewardship of North American chairman/CEO Lyor Cohen, shows signs that it could once again be a player in R&B and rap. Its R&B share was 11.7%, up from 9.7% in the prior first half, while its rap share was 12.8%, up from 9.9%.

The indie sector ranked fourth in R&B, with 11%, up from 9% this time last year; its rap share stood at 19.7%, up from 14.5%. EMM lost R&B share, notching 7%, while its rap share dropped to 4.1%.

In country, UMD's 32% share squeaked ahead of Sony BMG's 31.6% to score the No. 1 spot. WEA ranked third with 17.9%. EMM took fourth with 10.1% and the independent sector garnered 8.4%.

In Latin albums, UMD's reign of the hill, with a 51.6% share, up more than five percentage points from first-half 2004.

Though acquisitions fueled the company's initial rise to lead the Latin genre, the share increases for this year came through organic growth. UMD increased its Latin scans by 2.1 million units in the first half. That is about 25% of UMD's overall 7.6 million-unit increase.
The Indies

TODD MARTENS tmartens@billboard.com

CD Baby Grows Up

Retail Web Site Expanding Across Pacific, For Starters

Look for Portland, Ore.-based indie e-tailer CD Baby to sprout branches in foreign territories. Founder and CEO Derek Sivers is in the process of opening satellite offices in Japan and Australia, with more countries potentially to follow.

CD Baby VP of marketing Alex Steininger says about 35% of the site's orders come from overseas. And that has led to proposals from people in countries like Japan, Australia, Spain and England to helm offices in those places.

Customers outside the United States have expressed wishes to save money on shipping and avoid customs. "We got [to] thinking about it, Steininger says, "and if we could make it work, it was definitely something we wanted to do."

Steininger says CD Baby has maintained a list of those who have offered their help in other countries. Japan will be the first overseas office, and Australia should follow. Steininger says Canada and England are also high on the list. "We're really looking into every market we plan to work in."

BIography: After working for Omaha, Neb.-based Saddle Creek for five years, label manager Justin Krabel was happy to show his bias in a documentary about the label.

Krabel and filmmaking partner Rob Walters admit to playing favorites for the upcoming "Spend an Evening With Saddle Creek: The First 10 Years of Saddle Creek Records."

"It's very tender to me, Krabel says. "But this is how we remember it and how we saw it all happen."

The 90-minute movie includes interviews with every band on the Saddle Creek roster during the 2003-2004 filming, including Bright Eyes, Cursive and the Faint, as well as footage from 50 live performances.

New York-based Plexifilm will issue the movie Aug. 23 on DVD, following its premiere Aug. 21 in Omaha.

"Plexifilm are the only people I ever even thought about putting it out," says Krabel, a former manager of an AMC movie theater. "We needed their expertise. And we had no idea how to start our own DVD label. Then this would seem too much like a commercial."

Krabel says talk of taking the film on a college tour has been kicked around. "Our summer is going away rapidly, and that's still in the planning stages."

FOCUS ON REDEYE: Rod-eye Distribution in Haw River, N.C., continues to ramp up its roster of artist-run labels, having reached an agreement with

the Proclaimers’ Persevere Records. The Scottish duo will issue a new album, "Restless Soul," Sept. 6.

Redeye will distribute the act's previous album, 2003's "Born Innocent," which had been handled by the Warner-owned Alternative Distribution Alliance. Redeye also recently struck deals with Juliana Hatfield's Ye Olde Records and All for One Music, the label started by Go-Go's bassist Kathy Valentine.

In other Redeye pickups, the company has signed U.S. distribution deals with Arena Rock Recording and the recently formed Expunged Records, both based in Portland, Ore.

The pop-focused Arena Rock has issued recordings from the likes of the Autumn Defense, Calla and Elf Power. The label will have new releases this fall from atmospheric rock six-piece the Swords and the folk/rock Taldemonomic. ADA previously distributed Arena Rock.

Expunged was started last year by entertainment attorney Anthony Davis. This fall, the label will issue a tribute to the late Elliott Smith, featuring a number of acts from Portland. Smith's hometown. Contributors include baroque pop outfit the Decemberists, pop act the Helio Sequence, rock group the Thermals and hip-hop duo Lifesavas.

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Music from EMI
Satellite radio providers are taking aggressive steps to extend their programming into delivery channels outside the automobile. Many feel the end result will be an integrated digital music store.

"In the next few generations, there will be ways to download and purchase songs straight off the satellite signal," Gartner G2 analyst Laura Behrens says. "Now that the chips are tinier, the devices smaller and the processing is more powerful, these guys are asking themselves what other services they can put onto their receivers that makes them even more compelling."

The automotive market remains primary for Sirius Satellite Radio and XM Satellite Radio. But for their next stage of growth, satellite radio providers are targeting home electronics and portable devices. To succeed, they will have to compete with today's Internet-based digital music services targeting the same user. And while Sirius and XM tout the strength of their programming as a competitive advantage, analysts expect the appeal of on-demand music will be too great to resist.

Satellite radio providers require a separate subscription for each additional device. Even if you have a subscription for your car, you need another one for a home receiver. It is too soon to tell if consumers will pay additional fees to access the same service in different locations. So far, only 10% of today's satellite radio subscribers pay for the service on multiple devices.

Several Internet-based services already offer not only commercial-free radio, but also on-demand à la carte and subscription-based music, and consumers may resist paying for both.

"Tell me why you would pay whatever your monthly cell phone bill is, plus a $10-a-month music subscription service, plus $12.95 for Sirius," Goldman Sachs analyst Mark Winkens says. "You're paying a awful lot of people now. So the opportunity for XM and Sirius is to offer the same type of service, their own download store, to remain competitive."

Competition from high-definition radio services, which plan to add song purchasing capabilities to their radio feeds, provides additional motivation for satellite radio's retail play. Technically, it is not that challenging. Satellite radio receivers simply need to add an additional channel that allows for two-way communication with the network so purchase requests can be registered.

On the business side, satellite radio providers would have to either partner with an existing digital music service provider, or renegotiate their licensing agreements with music labels to allow them to sell digital tracks as opposed to merely broadcast them.

"All three of these channels—wireless, Internet, satellite—they're all emerging markets," NPD Group analyst Ross Rubin says. "There has to be a recognition that the barriers of crossing over from one of these channels to the other are lowering. Technological improvements are beginning to blur the line between what comes from the sky, what's coming from your cell phone carrier and what's being beamied from your home network."

Neither Sirius nor XM would confirm any behind-the-scenes maneuvers. Both services acknowledge discussions with digital music service providers for a variety of possible partnerships.

"We're talking to a lot of people," Sirius spokesman Jim Collins says. "We've talked about a digital platform that has a lot of possibilities."

In December, XM filed a patent for a device that could time-shift live broadcasts and subsequently purchase select tracks via "a tiny" subscription on the device.

"The user can navigate and selectively listen to the songs in the stream and select song titles for purchase and authorized, permanent storage," the filing reads.

In April, XM also conducted a survey with select subscribers to determine their interest in either leasing or buying music directly covered via its programming. For an extra monthly fee, the hypothetical service would allow users to press a "save" button to add a song playing over the XM channel to a leased memory system—like a TiVo for radio—and transfer saved tracks to a computer or portable MP3 player.

Subscribers could keep these tracks as long as they pay their monthly fee—a business model similar to Internet-based digital subscription services.

"We're always looking at different ways to expand the reach of our service," says XM spokesman Chance Patterson, who could not confirm the status of such a service. "We have a nationwide reach, we have lots of content, and as we move ahead we'll look at what opportunities there are to integrate our technology in different ways... it's an interesting time."

Meanwhile, Sirius and XM remain in the very early stages of market development. Almost every car manufacturer at this point offers one service or another as a dealer-installed option, expected to result in a combined 8 million subscribers by the end of 2005.

"There's a tremendous amount of room to grow here," Collins says. "There are over 200 million cars on the road today and about 100 million homes. Add the growth rate of new cars and light trucks, shopping malls, restaurants and you're going to have 350 million potential units here."

**BITS & BRIEFS**

**MSN ROCK STAR**

Microsoft's MSN online network will host the official Web site for the "Rock Star: INXS" reality show, featuring online voting, exclusive videos, contestant blogs, music loads and other services. The show, airing on CBS, follows contestants as they compete to be the next lead singer of INXS. Fans also can vote with the MSN Messenger messaging application, watch exclusive footage on MSN Video that is not shown on TV and download songs sung by contestants (both their version and that of the original artist) at MSN Music.

**FUSION FLASH CONCERTS**

Ford Motor is promoting the fall launch of its new Fusion automobile with a series of "flash mob" free concerts featuring Jermaine Dupri, Fat Joe, Collective Soul and others. Only those registering at the company's Web site or sending the word "go" via a mobile short code will receive details on where and when the concerts will be held. Registrants receive instruction through mobile text messaging or e-mail just hours before each event.

**DISNEY MVNO**

Mickey Mouse is coming to a mobile phone near you. Walt Disney Internet Group will operate its own wireless phone service called Disney Mobile, leasing Sprint's wireless network. The service will target the family market with Disney-branded entertainment content, including ringtones, games and graphics. The service is expected to be available next year.

**HOT RINGTONES**

**Billboard**

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<td>LA TORTURA (ARISTA AND SHANG-HEE ZI)</td>
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<td>LOVERS AND FRIENDS (SHONINA &amp; THE EAST SIDE MOVE FEATURING CORY &amp; LLAMAS)</td>
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<td>DROP IT LIKE IT'S HOT (DIRTY ROCK'S FEATURING PRETTY PAPER)</td>
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<td>DON'T THINK WITH MY HEART (THE BLACK EyED PEAS)</td>
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The Black Eyed Peas make their first appearance among the top 20 ringtones with "Don't Think With My Heart." Download increases 60% from last week as the title takes a 20-position jump.

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*SATellite* by Antony Bruno

Are Downloads In Satellite Radio's Future?

*This is an excerpt from an article published in Digital Entertainment magazine.*
Legal Matters
SUSAN BUTLER sbutler@billboard.com

The Label’s Bankrupt: Here’s The Good News

Few music lovers feel a thrill hearing horror stories of recordings getting tied up in a label’s bankruptcy. When it happens, a label’s rights to an artist’s services, sound-recording copyrights, master recordings and the inventory of CDs are usually swept up by someone who purchases them from the bankruptcy trustee. In some cases, the recordings fall into a bottomless pit, never to be heard again.

Three lawyers beat the odds recently when they rescued eight albums by four recording acts—Peter Conte, Piffaro, Red Priest and Terra Nova—from the bankruptcy of Troy, N.Y.-based classical label the Dorian Group.

The attorneys—Bernard Rosnick in Bala Cynwyd, Pa.; Paul Rapp in Housatonic, Mass.; and Peter Irvine in Northampton, Mass.—also successfully argued that rights under several recording and master-licensing contracts could not be sold.

Most artists and master-recording owners who grant rights to a label want their records released only by that company or else want their rights back (a “reversion”) of rights so they can make their own deal with someone else. As a result, lawyers often spend hours negotiating specific phrases in recording and license deals with labels, describing what they want to occur if the company goes broke, closes or files for bankruptcy.

Those provisions are in entertainment contracts all the time, but it’s also clear that they are unenforceable in a bankruptcy,” says Wayne Terry, a bankruptcy attorney with Mitchell, Silberberg & Knupp in Los Angeles.

This is because federal bankruptcy law, which protects creditors, trumps state law, which governs contracts. Judges see such contractual provisions as an attempt to destroy the effect of bankruptcy law, Terry says.

“They courts are very likely to run roughshod over the otherwise enforceable state law contract rights of an artist in the interest of getting a few shekels in for the creditors.”

While a contract that requires a label to return masters if it files bankruptcy will not be enforced, artists and owners of masters can try a few other things in their contracts, Terry says. They will need bargaining clout, however, since most labels will shy away from the risk of losing any rights.

The provisions should clearly address three types of property: copyright in the sound recording, the physical master recording and the inventory of CDs.

In artists’ recording agreements, Terry says a clause may require the label to continuously publish the albums (keep records available for sale to the public) or else the copyrights and the masters revert to the artist. Since the label might not be selling records while in bankruptcy, the artist can demand that the trustee keep selling them. If the trustee does not, the artist/creditor can argue that the copyrights belong to the artist. Yet Terry says there is no guarantee a bankruptcy judge will enforce this.

In master licenses, Terry notes two primary approaches: taking a security interest and granting contingent rights.

Secured creditors have first dibs to get their assets back from a bankrupt debtor. To do this in a master license, a contract should state—in legal terms—that the owner grants rights in the copyright and the master, subject to a security interest, with the rights reverting to the owner if the label fails to perform its contractual obligations.

As a comparison, a bank has a lien on the title to a car when it lends money for a consumer to purchase it. If the consumer fails to pay, the bank owns the car and can take it back.

To hold a security interest in recordings, the owner of the masters must also “perfect” the security interest, Terry says, by filing certain documents with state agencies and with the U.S. Copyright Office. An alternative method to try
SYDNEY—Australia's live entertainment business is convinced that tax breaks and better marketing could provide the incentive to attract more investment into the sector.

Brendan Schwab, Melbourne-based CEO of the Australian Entertainment Industry Assn., confirms that talks have begun with the government about regulatory changes such breaks would require.

In early June, the AElA had initial talks with the Ministry of Arts in Canberra. Additional meetings with other government departments are being planned over the next few months.

The talks are primarily about gaining tax breaks like those applied to the film industry. The government offers investors a series of write-off opportunities for investments in local film productions or movies shot in the country.

Schwab says that while tax deductions for investment in Australian films is a great incentive, "we are disappointed that live entertainment is presently discriminated against, even if it is unintentional. We think what we have to offer has the same cultural benefit to Australia."

The tax breaks for films led to an 84% rise in investments within five years, according to the government-controlled Australian Film Commission. Some in the film business believe greater investment allowed it to create such international box-office hits as "Crocodile Dundee," "Strictly Ballroom" and "Lantana."

"The ripple effect from such tax deductions for the live entertainment sector would be equally as fantastic," predicts Michael Jacobsen, managing director of Sydney-based concert and theatre promoter Jacobsen Entertainment. "It would mean more shows, more employment and busier venues."

He adds it would also strengthen the financial base for Australian promoters who present international and Australian acts and productions through the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. Jacobsen, for instance, holds the global licensing for the "Dirty Dancing" musical.

The AElA has a trump card in its negotiations. Its inaugural Ticket Attendance and Revenue Survey, released June 16, proved that the live sector creates much greater revenue than previous government estimates.

Until now, the only figures were from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, which uses a sample of data from music promoters and theater production companies. It estimated that total box-office income was $331.6 million Australian ($252 million) in 2002/2003.

The AElA report, using sales from ticketing agencies and performing arts companies, estimates that 12.5 million tickets, worth $689.6 million Australian ($524 million), were sold in 2004.

The figures cover 10 categories including rock concerts, musicals, opera, ballet, plays and classical concerts, as well as one-off events as "Carols by Candlelight" and WWE wrestling.

With musicals and theatre accounting for half the sales, and contemporary music shows making up 23% of the figure, the AElA says there is now evidence that most of the income is generated by commercial promoters. Yet up to 80% of government subsidies go to not-for-profit performing arts companies.

The AElA also wants changes in tax rules regarding contributions by arts philanthropists. Currently, tax benefits from private benefactors only apply to such government-subsidised arts as opera or ballet, which together constitute 12.5% of gross income from 2004 ticket sales. The AElA believes that private contributions should equally apply to commercial promoters.

On Aug. 9, the AElA will hold a summit in Sydney with its 280 members to discuss the best ways that changes to the tax laws can benefit the industry. The AElA membership includes promoters and producers, performing arts companies, venues and such service providers as ticketing companies and lighting and sound suppliers.

The AElA also wants input from members about marketing strategies. That 13 million people attended a live show last year (Australia's population is 20 million) indicates that its marketing should not be aimed at enticing first-timers to events. Rather, Schwab says, it should encourage existing customers to return frequently.

To this end, promoters have been experimenting with tier pricing of tickets.

Schwab believes raising the profile of the concert business would widen its customer base. This would also help fulfil its need to attract corporate sponsorship to shows and tours.

HAMBURG—A move by the German music industry to boost consumer awareness of new titles will cause major changes in album release schedules in the world's fourth-biggest music market.

Under a proposal by German music industry trade group BPW, record companies would adjust their release schedules beginning in late September. The plan calls for retailers to make new releases available on Friday instead of Monday.

BPW has also proposed to revamp the schedules for the country's sales charts, again in late September. The change would see the charts compiled from Friday to Thursday instead of the current Monday-Saturday period.

The charts would then be available to labels on a Sunday night and published on a Monday, rather than Thursday. That would give retailers and labels the chance to stock up on key chart performers ahead of the prime buying days of Friday and Saturday.

The release-date change, which is still being discussed within BPW, would allow retailers and labels to maximize weekend sales of new releases, says Alexander Maurus, managing director of marketing for Warner Music Germany/Switzerland/Austria.

Maurus is also chairman of BPW's chart and marketing committee, which drew up the changes after conducting market surveys.

"We need new concepts that increase public perception of the value of music and that offer an even better service to potential music buyers," Maurus says. "Our aim is to establish Fridays and Saturdays as the days for music in Germany."

Maurus says the new release-date strategy could also boost online music sales, as such online vendors as Amazon.com and download services report much higher traffic on Friday evenings than at other times of the week.

Gerd Gebhardt, BPW chairman and the German affiliate of the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry, says the Friday release date would allow the industry to take advantage of the relaxation of German laws covering Saturday opening hours for retailers.

Prior to a 2003 change in the law, stores could open only from noon until 4 p.m. on a Saturday. "Now, they can remain open until eight in the evening," Gebhardt says. "This means we can make the most of the day's potential."

Stores do not generally open on Sundays.
Canada’s Podcast Challenge

Industry Seeks To Outline A Business Model For Burgeoning Digital Format

TORONTO—As podcasting’s profile grows (Billboard, June 18), Canada’s music industry is grappling with determining its business model.

Canadian Music Reproduction Rights Agency president Basskin says that authors’ body is being approached by commercial and amateur podcasters seeking licenses.

“IT’s great that people want to work with rights holders after so much unauthorized distribution of music,” Basskin says, “but we still don’t know how to handle [podcasting] yet. How do you price it? How do you track it?”

“There are going to be hiccups as we each figure out what to charge,” Canadian Recording Industry Assn. president Graham Henderson says. “Also, while the big players—major broadcasters and others who’ll provide content from the Web directly to the computers or portable media devices of consumers who request it.

One step toward establishing the overall licensing of podcasts was taken in March by SOCAN. The performing rights agency proposed to the Copyright Board of Canada a rate covering musical works in podcasts.

SOCAN’s proposal calls for broadcasters to pay a minimum monthly fee of $200. Canadian ($163) or 15% of their gross monthly revenue from podcasting (whichever is greater).

podcast.”

Utilized initially by amateurs to create their own audio programs, podcasting hit the mainstream last month when Apple Computer launched the latest version of its iTunes software worldwide, enabling users to access more than 3,000 audio programs—most of them talk-based.

Government-owned broadcaster CBC Radio—which began offering talk- and music-related podcasts in late May—reports that more than 80,000 CBC Radio 3 podcasts were downloaded in the first week of the software’s launch.

“This is a dream scenario for the independent Canadian musicians featured on CBC Radio,” says Krista Harris, executive director of production and resources at the broadcaster.

Podcasting has already been attracting attention from Canadian media firms. Toronto-based broadcaster Corus Entertainment, for example, provides podcasts for its specialty radio programs “The Ongoing History of New Music” and “Legends of Classic Rock.” And the Toronto Star newspaper launched a podcast in May with an audio version of music journalist John Sakamoto’s weekly “Anti-Hit List” column.

The bulk of podcasting in Canada, however, remains the province of hundreds of amateur hobbyists. “We don’t really know how much Canadian podcasting is really out there,” Basskin admits.

Basskin shares the view of many Canadian music industry figures that podcasts are MP3 files containing music that are accessible to millions worldwide without suitable payment.

“The relationship between the content of a podcast and potential cannibalization of [music] sales,” he says, “is very real.”

The release-date change has met with guarded approval across the industry. Executives are keen to give an additional boost to sales in a market that has been clobbered in the past four years.

“It wouldn’t be a bad idea,” says Marcus Grabowski, buyer at the Cologne branch of chain store WMM. “Customers would be able to buy the latest hits during the weekend, meaning that shops could be busier.”

The proposed change is “an interesting idea that deserves support,” says Maarten Steinkamp, president of Sony BMG Continental Europe and chair- man/CEO of Sony BMG Germany. “It could also be a great opportunity for retail, if they are proactive and act like entrepreneurs—which is not always the case.”

German sales charts are compiled by Baden-Baden-based Media Control GfK, based on computerized point-of-sale transactions.

In the next few weeks, Maurus says label executives will be involved in discussions with retailers and Media Control to fine-tune the chart project.

Firm Pioneers Recommendations Technology

MADRID—Online music services have long tried to identify and categorize consumer tastes in order to make further sales recommendations. Now science may have found a way to greatly elevate the sophistication of such interactions.

A group of Spanish artificial intelligence researchers (and music fans) say they have advanced the art of defining consumer patterns, by applying AI technology to musical tastes.

The technology is being used by musicstrands.com, which uses “social recommendation technologies” to select and propose new music based on the music consumer is playing and has played recently. Purchases can be made via Apple Computer’s iTunes; Windows Media Player compatibility will be added this year.

Musicstrands.com VP of marketing and communication Gabriel Aldaz says it is the only music recommendations site that offers advice based on what people really listen to.

“We are using technology in a different way to offer our users real music’s choices.”

Musicstrands.com has a multinational staff of 30 working in offices in Corvallis, Ore., and in Bellaterra, outside Barcelona.

Musicstrands.com’s current version started in June from its dual bases. Launch was preceded by a four-month trial in which more than 1 million recommendations were made to an average of 6,000 visitors per day.

Leading Spanish promotion and management company RLM says it is talking to Musicstrands.com about promoting its acts, including Alejandro Sanz, Miguel Bose, Ana Torroja, Malú and Revolver.

“While musicstrands.com is a very necessary tool for both the music industry and Web site users looking for new music,” RLM product and promotion manager Raquel Perea says, “Until the success for the independent Canadian musicians featured on CBC Radio,” says Krista Harris, executive director of production and resources at the broadcaster.

Responding to a special request for television coverage of the!!! industry’s annual conference, the Copyright Board of Canada decided to take up the issue of forward-looking technology for music.

“A much-needed initiative,” says Gary Richardson of the Canadian Copyright Commission, who is overseeing the proposals.

Richardson says the project is a study into what musicstrands.com is doing are new developments that could be adopted by the industry.

Richardson is leading a series of meetings with stakeholders over the next 12 months, with the aim of presenting the proposals in a comprehensive report to be submitted to the Copyright Board of Canada in October 2005.

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Philadelphia’s Live 8
A Clockwork Show

Electric Factory president Larry Magid says the July 2 Live 8 show in Philadelphia was “as close to perfect a show as you could have.” The show was staged in front of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, produced by Electric Factory in conjunction with Russell Simmons and Live 8 executive producer Tim Sexton, and drew an estimated crowd of 700,000-800,000.

The Live 8 lineup in Philadelphia included the Black Eyed Peas, Bon Jovi, Dave Matthews Band, Def Leppard, Destiny’s Child, Jay-Z, and many more. The band included the band produced the Live Aid show at Philadelphia’s JFK Stadium 20 years ago, says Live 8 ran over by just 46 minutes, and despite the huge crowd there were only four arrests and no serious injuries.

Two days after Live 8, Electric Factory produced the Elton John headlined AIDS/HIV benefit, the Sunoco Philadelphia Freedom Concert, at the same site, drawing a crowd estimated at 300,000.

Magid estimates the Philadelphia Live 8 show cost between $5 million and $6 million to produce. “But that’s just a drop in the bucket if those 10 shows are able to alter history, which I believe in my heart is happening right in front of us.”

SECOND GENERATION: Veteran promoter Louis Messina, president of the Messina Group/AEG Live in Houston, has been “bringing rock ‘n’ roll to America” (in his words) for some 30 years. Now his twin sons—drummer Louis and guitarist Nicholas Green—are doing the same thing on a different level as their band Bojones axles on to break on through” to the other side.

A rocking power trio fresh out of Bellaire High School, Bojones owns a whirling, insistent rock sound that has been compared to such bands as the Mars Volta and Coldplay; and thanks to Chris, the band features a lot more biting guitar than the latter.

Perhaps dad’s connections helped Bojones nail down gigs at such Houston-area venues as Fitzgerald’s and the Rhythm Room, as well as opening for such acts as the Vines, Three Days Grace, Jet and even 3 Doors Down at the Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion in the Woodlands, Texas. But the band is definitely paying its dues, doing the van thing on the road, all with the pitalls that entails.

“They just finished five days on the road sleeping in the van like all new bands,” Messina says. “It was Spinal Tap after their show in Fort Worth (Texas).” They blew the engine out in the van there, so a $100 payday cost them $4,000. I guess it’s kind of like I started, everything going wrong out of the box.”

Earlier this year Bojones recorded a 10-song CD at Houston’s Sugarhill Recording Studios. The band produced the CD itself, Messina says, for $1,500.

Asked what advice he offers Bojones about the music business, Messina says, “Work hard, be true and get high guarantees while keeping your ticket prices down.”

Meanwhile, Messina is enjoying high-profile suffers serving as tour director for Kenny Chesney, who is on the road with Pat Green and Gretchen Wilson. A born rock promoter who has found success in country, Messina believes the rock/pop business is missing something that country music still has.

“I met with an agency (recently) in Los Angeles, and I was complaining about ‘loyalty and fairness.’ Messina relates, “and the head of this agency said, ‘Fairness doesn’t work in this business anymore. It’s all about who’s going to write the biggest check.’ There is no loyalty in the contemporary music business, unlike country music, which is nothing but loyalty and developing an act.”

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BOJONES got this advice from proud dad of two-thirds of the band, promoter Louis Messina: "Work hard, get high guarantees, and keep ticket prices down."
Business Is Down, But No One’s Sweating—Yet

As touring enters the meat of its season, industry pros are cautiously optimistic the industry can overcome a year that was depressed for many and disastrous for some.

Most promoters feel the flow of blood has been slowed, but early numbers reported to Billboard Boxscore for January through May are certainly less than encouraging compared with the same period last year: total dollars down 19%, total attendance down 22%, number of shows down only 10%.

Recognizing that a lot of numbers have not come in yet, average figures are not much better—average gross per show is down 9.8%, average attendance is down 13%.

So are things really as bad out there as this might suggest? Most promoters Billboard contacted say no, and the sense of panic that was starting to creep in this time a year ago does not seem prevalent.

“January-May numbers are misleading for 2005, because numbers for 2004 January-May were unusually high,” says Michael Rapino, chairman of Clear Channel Music Group, the world’s largest promoter.

“We started 2004 with one of our strongest quarters in years,” Rapino points out, “then in June the bottom fell out.

Still, as CCMG goes, so in large part goes the concert business, and Rapino says numbers to date for 2005 are behind last year. “But we expected that when we built a budget last fall,” he adds. “We knew the real test would be the summer numbers.”

AEG Live, the world’s second-largest promoter, is not currently on a pace to equal its $454 million from last year. With only Loggins & Messina, King Tut, half of Paul McCartney’s tour and the upcoming Bon Jovi trek as in-house touring projects this year, AEG Live is not as active as in the past two years.

Others find themselves a little ahead of the game. “Actually, things are better for House of Blues Concerts than a year ago,” HOB Concerts executive VP Alex Hodges observes. “We may not be back to some great days yet, and there are always going to be some surprises up and down, some bumps in the road. But it’s a different day today than a year ago, much healthier.”

At this point in the game, there are some clear home runs. McCartney, U2, the Rolling Stones, Neil Diamond, Kenny Chesney, Coldplay, Dave Matthews Band, Jimmy Buffett, Oasis, Ozzyfest, Toby Keith, Warped, the Eagles and Motley Crue are all strong, based on concerts already played or ticket sales from upcoming shows. And there are even some breakout successes, with such acts as Green Day and Rascal Flatts taking their touring game to new levels.

But what about the 20-30 rank-and-file tours rolling through sheds this summer that will ultimately define 2005’s success or failure?

“We really have no stiffs this summer,” Rapino says. “We have great sellouts like [U2, the Rolling Stones, McCartney, etc.], and we have a lot of shows that are surprising us with great sales.”

Hodges adds, “There are a lot of strong artists still setting dates, too. It’s going to be a good year.”

GOOD DEALS OR NOT?

That is not to say there are not some red flags out there. The normally reliable jam band genre is experiencing some softness (as evidenced by the cancellation of the Zooma tour and lower-than-expected sales for such bands as Widespread Panic), and some classic rock and hip-hop tours have been a struggle, insiders say.

As always, some shows are a much tougher sell than others, but that is when promoters just promote. “As with any year, we have some shows that are not performing to expectations,” Rapino says, “but that is what a promoter gets paid to do: create demand and aggressively sell.”

And it appears the industry is trying to address issues like ticket prices and fan experience. Rapino says that for the first time in five years, CCMG will reduce average ticket prices at sheds by about $4 and will substantially lower talent costs by means of “buying smarter and more selectively.”

He adds that he expects CCMG to grow revenue beyond 2004 by more than 10%.

“So success in 2005 is not debatable at our company,” Rapino says. “We have made great progress in running a better business and reversing some key metrics.”

Rapino told Billboard in an earlier interview that he was shooting for 25% increases in amphitheater attendance and customer satisfaction. “Lawn seats we’re still forecasting to be up in double digits, so ticket sales is a target we will hit,” he says. “And it’s too early to tell, but our research is in motion, and we know we are making changes every day to our venues that are 100% directed by our nightly exit surveys.”

Rather than the rampant discounting and “fire sales” that were prevalent last year, promoters seem to be more focused on pricing tickets correctly right out of the gate. “We are pricing the lawn or upper tier in arenas this lower this year,” Hodges says.

“We are not going to discount nearly as much. The live concert is a unique experience, and the fans are coming if the tickets are priced to the market in the first place.”

CCMG’s competition has accused it of only discounting shows that are not selling well, but a promotion around the Live 8 benefits saw CCMG offer a July 24-$18 ticket promotion on some 400 concerts, including shows by Coldplay, Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers, Eminem/Snoop Dogg, John Mellencamp, James Taylor, Alan Jackson, Backstreet Boys and Ozzyfest.

Ticket pricing, though, is always a function of artist guarantees, and CCMG’s competition says talk that CCMG would be more prudent in bidding for talent and forcing up artist guarantees has not come to bear. “Nothing has changed,” says Louis Messina, president of the Messina Group/AEG Live, who is enjoying nightly sellouts on the road with Chesney. “The problem is the price of talent is still being ramrodded up through the roof. It’s the artists’ game.”

Insiders say AEG Live and CCMG competed fiercely for the Bon Jovi tour, but Hodges says HOB often refuses to play the “run up the bid” game.

“Offers are still out of sight, and one must compete. But you’ll see us doing fewer shows as we are looking at risks,” he says, adding HOB will “step aside if bids are too high. Fewer shows is even OK if we can earn a living.”

Rapino points out, “We never said we were not going to be aggressive on going after the tours and artists we felt were the right ones for our venues (and/or) markets. Our goal was to buy smarter. Some artists are worth big offers, and some are not. We have said no when we had to and put the pedal down when needed.”

Independent Washington, D.C., promoter Seth Hurwitz says he is having a good year programming the Merriweather Post Pavilion in Columbia, Md., with acts including the White Stripes, 3 Doors Down, Petty and Green Day. He offers the following observation: “Quality, not quantity, is the only answer. Trying to make a show that you never should have booked more palatable to the agent and public will never work. Perhaps we need ‘Just Say Pass’ bumper stickers.”

So while fierce competition exists, promoters seem to be on the same page in agreeing the concert business requires TLC these days.

“It is no secret that the music business is mature, and much like other mature industries it requires innovative products and marketing to ignite growth,” Rapino says. “I am optimistic that the industry is embracing the need to evolve the live proposition and ensure the fan is satisfied. The industry is not going to rebound and grow if we do not change.”
As U.S. Secretary of Commerce, Carlos M. Gutierrez oversees a cabinet agency with a $6.5 billion budget focused on promoting American business at home and abroad. Appointed to his post in February, Gutierrez wasted no time taking on the big issues. He flew to Moscow and Beijing in late May and early June, meeting with Russian and Chinese leaders to underscore the U.S. government's increasing impatience with the lack of adequate intellectual-property protection in those markets.

For the former Kellogg Co. chairman/CEO, opening international markets to U.S. companies to create jobs and build a stronger America is a top priority.

Q: For years, the United States Trade Representative has spotlighted China and Russia as major pirate nations. But this new outreach effort by the Bush administration seems to be a couple of notches up from placing a country on a trade warning list.

A: Well, yes, we've been concerned, and we've told them. We're talking about a crime here, not a trade practice.

We don't see a big difference, if any, between counterfeit money and counterfeit music or movies. We have to think about it as a crime. So, you know the statistics: 90% of all music in these countries is counterfeit. We can't allow that; that is not acceptable. And [now] they know that.

Q: Is lack of access to legitimate markets a part of the problem?

A: Well, that's where it starts. You take for example the movie industry. The Chinese have imposed a limit as to how many new films we can export. We don't believe there should be a limit. We don't limit the number of Chinese films that come into the U.S. Those are the types of negotiations we're having. If people can't access the films and the music legally, then it opens up a market for pirates. They think just the opposite—that allowing more movies and music will promote piracy. We don't agree with that.

Marketing practices are important, and also enforcing their laws is important. When I was in Beijing, lo and behold, some guy came up to me and offered me a $50 copy of the new "Star Wars" movie. I was with a Chinese [trade] minister, and she said her feelings were hurt because we put safeguards in place for textiles. I said my feelings were hurt when that guy offered me a "Star Wars" rip-off for a dollar.

Q: Why do you think China will pay us any more attention now, when they've been giving us empty promises for a decade?

A: I'll say two things. One, we are getting more and more aggressive on this, and they know we are getting even more demanding in our quests for results.

The other thing is, we're beginning to see the Chinese, for example, taking more interest in protecting their own intellectual property. They're adopting more patents in China themselves—Chinese companies, not foreign companies. They have an Oscar-winning film, "Memoirs of a Geisha," which is literally in the Chinese box office now. The Chinese have more of an interest in protecting their own intellectual property, which is going to help as well.

Q: What if IP protection doesn't improve in China and Russia?

A: I'll say two things. One, we are getting more and more aggressive on this, and they know we are getting even more demanding in our quests for results.

The other thing is, we're beginning to see the Chinese, for example, taking more interest in protecting their own intellectual property. They're adopting more patents in China themselves—Chinese companies, not foreign companies. They have an Oscar-winning film, "Memoirs of a Geisha," which is literally in the Chinese box office now. The Chinese have more of an interest in protecting their own intellectual property, which is going to help as well.

Q: Some have said that's why piracy continues in those countries, because it helps the domestic economy by providing jobs.

A: We're talking to the government about that. And it's very hard to argue against that, because we've told them, we're talking about a crime here. Russia and China want to be part of the world economic community, and they have to be role models, and they can't be supporting crime.

So that's why, when we are negotiating new treaties, we put into these agreements state-of-the-art intellectual-property rights protection—like in the Central America Free Trade Agreement. It has some critically important provisions to safeguard the music and movie industries from piracy. It provides stronger civil customs protection against piracy and counterfeiting, such as seizing or destroying goods at the border, and [gives us the authority] to go inside their customs facilities for inspections.

Q: Are you a big music fan?

A: Absolutely. I was living in New York City when the Beatles were on "The Ed Sullivan Show," and ever since I've been a huge music fan. I even played drums in a little band there when I was young. I also like Caribbean and tropical music, especially salsa. But I listen mainly to American music. I'm waiting to see where the Rolling Stones are going to tour!
CROSSOVER STAR RECLAIMS HER ROOTS

BY PHYLLIS STARK

Who is Fern Holloway? If you're one of the handful of insiders in her organization, you know that is the alias under which prereleases of Faith Hill's new CD, "Fireflies," were sent to members of her management team and label.

After Hill's last album, 2002's "Cry," leaked out on the Internet ahead of street date, plans were put in place to keep this new album under wraps until just before its Aug. 2 release.

After all, there's a lot riding on this project which, if all goes according to plan, will be Warner Bros. Nashville's blockbuster for this year and well into next.

"Fireflies" is Hill's sixth album. Each of her previous projects has a multiplatinum certification from the Recording Industry Assn. of America, so expectations are equally high here. Her last two albums each debuted at No. 1 on The Billboard 200.

The 14-track "Fireflies" was produced by Hill, Byron Gallimore and Dann Huff and recorded intermittently over a two-year span in 2003 and 2004.

Like Hill's last few albums, "Fireflies," contains a mix of musical styles. But it is arguably the strongest collection of songs she has ever put together.

Country radio programmers who complained that there was nothing they could play on "Cry" (see story, page 26) will discover a wealth of potential singles. And fans who know Hill from her pop crossover hits are likely to find something to like on this CD as well.

The leadoff track, "Mississippi Girl," returns Hill solidly to the country format where her career started and continued even after she became a crossover star, beauty magazine cover girl and Hollywood actress.

The biographical "Mississippi Girl," is No. 4 on the Billboard Hot Country Songs chart this issue. If it reaches the summit, as it is expected to do, it will be Hill's ninth No. 1 country hit. She has also had eight top 10 hits at adult contemporary radio.

STALKED' BY JOHN RICH

Big & Rich's John Rich, one of Nashville's hottest songwriters, contributed "Mississippi Girl" and two other songs to the album, including likely next single "Like You Never Loved at All." The latter includes guest vocals from Hill's husband and fellow country star, Tim McGraw.

On tour with McGraw last summer, Rich says he followed Hill around asking her questions until he had enough material to write "Mississippi Girl," which even includes a verse about Hill's first small acting role in the film "The Stepford Wives."

Hill agrees with Rich's version of events, noting, "It's kind of sounds like a stalking, doesn't it?" But it paid off for Rich, who wrote the song with Big & Rich guitarist Adam Shoenfeld.

"To be able to write a song that gives somebody like Faith Hill an entrance back into where she wanted to come—good lord—that's bigger than getting an ASCAP check," Rich says. "It's a silver bullet back at the target she was wanting to get back to with...continued on >>p26
Back On The Air

BY PHILLIS STARK

After hitting a rough patch in her relationship with country radio with her last album, 2002’s “Cry,” Faith Hill is being warmly embraced again by the very programmers who once turned on her. “Mississippi Girl,” the first single from her new set, “Fireflies,” has become the fastest-rising single of Hill’s 12-year career.

“Country radio needs its superstars and this upcoming Faith Hill project is good for us,” KZLA Los Angeles assistant PD/music director Tony Campos says. “I think based on the ‘Mississippi Girl’ single success, we will be happy to see her back.”

Radio was singing a very different tune in the summer and fall of 2002. The single “Cry” was researching poorly and many country programmers were convinced there was nothing else they could play from an album they considered to be too pop.

Indeed, subsequent singles “When the Lights Go Down” and “You’re Still Here” peaked on the Hot Country Songs chart at Nos. 26 and 28, respectively. “Cry” stopped at No. 12.

Many programmers were not just disappointed, they were downright hostile toward Hill.

In a November 2002 Billboard story, Keymarket Communications VP of programming Frank Bell said of Hill, “It’s great [that] she wants to be the next Celine Dion, but at least put some country instrumentation into the mix so it doesn’t sound so odd in between George Strait and the Dixie Chicks.”

Jon Anthony, who was then assistant PD/music director at WMZQ Washington, D.C., called the “Cry” album “a huge disappointment.”

“It’s not because she made a pop record,” he said. “It’s the fact that she didn’t give country radio a single song on it that fits our brand.”

Radio’s reaction took Warner Bros. and Hill’s manager, Gary Borman, by surprise. After all, this was an artist who had, by this time, already produced 17 top 10 hits for country radio.

“I just don’t get it,” Borman told Billboard at the time. “We have no idea what we did to warrant this response. She has done nothing but be a great ambassador for country in the mainstream.”

Today, as country radio stations nationwide spin “Mississippi Girl” hard, programmers are saying they’re glad to have Hill back.

“Faith needed to come back home to country and it sounds to me like she did it,” WIRK West Palm Beach, Fla., PD Mitch Mahan says. “Her previous ventures into pop were great for her, not so great for us.”

“Faith is one of the most high-profile female artists the format has,” says WZTK/WNCB Birmingham, Ala., PD Justin Casas, who calls the new single “part autobiographical and part political spin.”

As Keymarket’s Bell, today he says, “It’s gratifying to see one of country’s true superstars return to her roots. We need to remember country fans did not leave Faith. She left them in search of greener pastures in the world of pop. Luckily for all concerned, she recognized what was happening and returned to the format with power and passion.”

“I was kind of lost in the process and didn’t realize we were working on the album for that long.”

—FAITH HILL, ON WHY MAKING ‘FIREFLIES’ TOOK TWO YEARS

definitely a different record, but I had to make that record and I am so proud of it,” she says.

From the moment Bennett became executive VP of Warner Bros. Nashville last fall, he says he was constantly being asked when Hill’s album would be ready. Now, he declares the finished project was worth the wait.

Borman credits Warner Music Group chairman/CEO Tom Whalley for his patience during the making of the album, which was highly by Faith and has really let her explore and find the voice and the material that became this record,” Borman says. “You can only imagine the pressure he was under to deliver a [Hill] record.”

Once the recording process drew to a close, Hill was startled to realize “Fireflies” had taken two years.

“I was just kind of lost in the whole process and I didn’t realize that we had been working on this album for that long,” she says. “Towards the last six months it all started to fall in place.”

Hill says the strength of her albums comes largely from the songs she chooses to cut, since she is not a songwriter herself.

“I rely completely on the songs that are brought to me in order to make an album,” she says. “I just took this long to figure out what it was I wanted [those songs] to say.”

Hill recorded more than double the 14 songs that ultimately made the album. But she says all the songs she chose for the final cut are “me in some kind of way.”

In addition to Rich, “Fireflies” contains songs from many of Nashville’s A-list writers including Rivers Rutherford, Darrell Scott, Craig Wiseman and Troy Verges.

But Hill’s secret weapon on this album is the discovery of singer Scotty McKenna. Until now a largely unknown talent, McKenna is about to become a hot commodity thanks to Hill’s inclusion of three of her songs on “Fireflies,” including the title track.

It was the discovery of McKenna’s songs, Hill says, that put the whole album on track. In fact, Hill had once previously declared the album finished. But when she found McKenna’s work through publisher Melanie Howard and A&R scout Missi Gallimore, Hill called her co-producers and told them she wanted to go back in the studio.

“I think they all wanted to downgrade the album,” she admits.

McKenna writes from the perspective of a woman old enough to have seen enough of life to have been disillusioned and inspired by it. The first song of McKenna’s that Hill heard, “If You Ask,” is one of the three she recorded.

“I really felt like I could interpret these songs. I feel like I wrote them,” Hill says. “It’s hard to make that connection sometimes. That’s why, as an artist, I have to be really patient and be strong in what it is I want to do. Sometimes I just have to experiment with a lot of stuff and figure out what I want to say and how I want to say it.”

Hill says co-producers Gallimore and Huff helped her find the right voice.

“They’re unafraid to try something.”

Borman says the plan for “Fireflies” is to buck the current trend of putting all the marketing muscle into an album’s first few weeks. The marketing team is instead opt-
This series highlights the achievements of individuals and companies that drive the fields of music and entertainment forward with their artistic and business vision.

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Power Players 2005

Pop music is always likely to target the young and project a youthful image. But images often clash with reality.

 Nearly 50% of U.S. music consumers are age 35 or over, according to the Recording Industry Assn. of America. Further, the RIAA notes, older music fans are more likely to buy their music than to download it for free.

 So record companies have good reason to nurture the adult pop audience.

 This Power Players report on adult pop focuses on 20 of the most successful labels promoting their artists to the adult contemporary format.

 For this report, the Billboard chart department determined the top 20 AC labels for the 12-month period ending May 7. The labels were chosen for this report and ranked according to that recap.

 In addition, recaps of the top AC acts and AC titles for the same 12-month period were produced, and those results help explain how these labels achieved Power Player status.

 Certainly, the major-label powerhouse pop artists are well-represented here. But notably, so are such country crossover artists as Tim McGraw, Martina McBride and Shania Twain; such younger acts as Maroon 5, Los Lonely Boys and 3 Doors Down; and indie acts ranging from Evanescence and Katrina Carlson to veterans like Rick Springfield and Hall & Oates.

 Label executives concede it may be more difficult than ever to grab the attention of the adult music consumer. Here are 20 labels that have done so with laudable success.

 —THOM DYFFY
1. **RCA Music Group, New York**
   Clive Davis, CEO/chairman, BMG North America
   Web sites: rcarecords.com, jrecords.com
   Top AC acts: Maroon5, Dido, Kelly Clarkson

The RCA Music Group was on a roll in the adult pop market during the chart recap period for this Power Players report. It ranks No. 1 on the Top Adult Contemporary Labels recap. Maroon5 on Octone/J/RMG is the No. 1 act on the Adult Contemporary Artists recap, followed by Dido on Arista/RMG at No. 6 and Kelly Clarkson on RCA/RMG, who ranks at No. 12.

“We are, thankfully, blessed with good records from Clive [Davis],” says Adrian Moreira, BMG VP of adult format promotion. But Moreira also notes the importance of persistence for acts like Maroon5 which, despite initial disinterest from radio, went on to score three songs on the Top Adult Contemporary Titles recap, including the omnipresent “This Love” at No. 2.

While the Internet is becoming a “massive platform” to market AC artists, Moreira says “terrestrial radio . . . remains the biggest means of exposure for our acts.”

Looking ahead, Moreira says AC radio will soon have a new single from Jem, while upcoming albums from Santana and David Gray also will be marketed by RMG via adult pop avenues.

—MICHAEL PAOLETTA

2. **Columbia Records, New York**
   Don Ienner, chairman, Sony Music Entertainment/North America
   Web site: columbiarecords.com
   Top AC acts: Five for Fighting, John Mayer, Train

In a hip-hop nation, Columbia Records is one of several labels whose dedication to pop and adult-oriented artists remains indisputable.

The label was able to break a nontraditional Ballard, Five for Fighting’s John Ondrasik, and place his “100 Years” in the top five at AC during the past year. Columbia has also turned John Mayer into a household name, thanks to a string of hits and two Grammy Awards. In fact, “Daughters,” for which Mayer won his second trophy in 2005, was a song the singer never wanted released to radio, but label execs nudged him, sniffing a hit.

Columbia has a veritable smorgasbord of musical flavors on its AC roster, including Chris Botti, Switchfoot, Jessica Simpson, Wilson Phillips and Bruce Hornsby. In 2005, the label has found success with developing artist Anna Nalick. But Columbia’s greatest achievement for the year may well be the release of Australian singer/songwriter Delta Goodrem, whose debut “Lost Without You” went to AC radio this month.

—CHUCK TAYLOR

3. **Curb Records, Nashville**
   Mike Curb, chairman
   Web site: curb.com

Though best-known as a country label, Curb Records has quietly become an AC powerhouse. The label ranks No. 3 on the Top Adult Contemporary Labels recap, thanks to the success of country crossover artist Tim McGraw, former “American Idol” contender Kimberly Locke and Christian crossover act MercyMe on Curb/INO.

Curb’s biggest crossover success came from McGraw’s “Live Like You Were Dying,” which is No. 15 on the recap of Top Adult Contemporary Songs. McGraw previously tasted AC success with a cover of Elton John’s “Tiny Dancer.”

Two other Curb artists, LeAnn Rimes and year on the Adult chart, after logging 18 weeks at No. 1 and finishing at No. 1 for 2004. The song also scored big at mainstream and adult top 40.

This year, Epic has successfully developed singer/songwriter Howie Day, pushing his “Col-lude” into the top 20 on mainstream and adult top 40 and AC.

—CHUCK TAYLOR

4. **Epic Records, New York**
   Don Ienner, chairman, Sony Music Entertainment/North America
   Web site: epicrecords.com
   Top AC acts: Los Lonely Boys, Celine Dion, Gloria Estefan

Epic Records achieves its No. 4 ranking in the AC label recap for this report on the strength, in part, of two format staples, Celine Dion and Gloria Estefan.

But Epic’s top story over the past year has been Los Lonely Boys’ debut single, “Heaven.” The song has already completed more than a and Republic/Universal/UMRG group 3 Doors Down sit at No. 23 and No. 24, respectively, on the AC artists recap.

While terrestrial radio remains the best way to reach adult music consumers, UMRG GM Andrew Kronfeld aims to expose the music everywhere, from satellite radio to TV shows to advertising, and through brand partners. “Millions of people became aware of Michael McDonald through the MCI partnership,” he notes. “We couldn’t have spent that much money on a TV campaign—but MCI can.”

That said, he adds that it is key for artists to retain their integrity when partnering with a brand. “The last thing you want to do is alienate fans.”

This summer, UMRG hopes for AC crossover hits with Jack Johnson’s “Good People,” Stevie Wonder’s “From the Bottom of My Heart” and Kem’s “Find Your Way (Back in My Life).” Forthcoming CDs from India.Arie and Wonder will certainly be marketed to adult audiences.

—MICHAEL PAOLETTA

5. **Universal Motown Record Group, New York**
   Mel Leventer, CEO
   Web sites: universalrecords.com, motown.com
   Top AC acts: Michael McDonald, Elton John, 3 Doors Down

The combined successes of veteran and newer acts boosted Universal Motown Record Group to No. 5 on the Top Adult Contemporary Labels recap. Motown/UMRG’s Michael McDonald, No. 5 on the AC artists recap, revisited the Motown catalog and scored one top 10 AC hit (“Ain’t No Mountain High Enough”) and one top 40 AC hit ("Reach Out, I’ll Be There"). With two titles each, Rocket/Universal/UMRG artist Elton John

—BUTCH WAUGH, RCA NASHVILLE

6. **RCA Nashville, Nashville**
   Joe Galante, chairman, RCA Label Group
   Web site: rcabelgroup.com
   Top AC acts: Martina McBride

It took only one artist, Martina McBride, to propel RCA Nashville to No. 6 in the AC rankings for this report. McBride’s hit “This One’s for the Girls” logged nine weeks at No. 1 on the Billboard Adult Contemporary chart, and “In My Daughter’s Eyes” peaked at No. 3.

“I have a group of programmers that I send music to throughout the year,” RCA Label Group executive VP Butch Waugh says. “Luckily some of the programmers I send music to really like country music and country artists.”

AC WMGC Detroit began playing “This One’s for the Girls.”

“They started getting calls instantly. That started the domino effect,” Waugh says, adding that AC WNIC Detroit also jumped on the record. “We didn’t actually service it to AC or hot AC. They came to us.”

Waugh admits it is hard to target the adult-consumer. “Their lives are hectic and they have so many things competing for their attention that it’s really tough to get them,” he says. “But we’ve found there’s a lot of button-pressing that goes on between AC, hot AC and country [radio stations]. It takes [multiple] formats to get their attention, but when a song connects, they respond quickly.”

—DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

7. **Island Def Jam Music Group, New York**
   Antonio “L.A.” Reid, chairman
   Web site: islanddefjam.com
   Top AC acts: Shania Twain, Lionel Richie, Hoobastank

With acts like Shania Twain, Lionel Richie and Hoobastank as part of its family, Island Def Jam Music Group is a powerful force in the adult music market. For this report, IDJMG ranks No. 7 on the AC labels recap.

Twain certainly helped. The Mercury/IDJMG country-pop diva ranks No. 11 on the AC artists
recap, with four singles on the AC titles recap, including "Forever and for Always," which is still garnering airplay.

For Hoobastank, IDJ/MG VP of promotion, Mike Easterlin recalls, the label "needed a huge story to cross [the hit] "The Reason" to AC radio."

The format responded—after the track was a certified smash at rock, top 40, modern rock and adult contemporary.

Like Twain, Island/IDJ/MG's Richie—No. 18 on the AC artists recap—has built a sturdy following in the adult music market.

Recent AC singles from IDJ/MG include Mariah Carey's multifomat smash "We Belong Together," Twain's "Don't It" and Bryan Adams' "This Side of Paradise." Courtesy Jayce's recent Island debut, "Traveling Light," and Richie's new CD, due later this year, are primed for adult listeners.

—MICHAEL PAOLETTA

Tom Whalley, chairman/CEO
Web site: wbr.com
Top AC acts: Seal, the Goo Goo Dolls, Seals & Crofts

To market a top AC act like Warner Bros. artist Seal takes "months and months of set up," senior VP of promotion Tom Biery says. In the case of Seal's "Love's Divine"—the No. 9 artist and song in the AC recaps for this report—the label concentrated on the artist's online presence and heavy TV licensing before tackling radio.

"There was already this mass TV exposure going into radio," Biery recalls. "He was everywhere."

Warner Bros. is applying the same long-term approach to the upcoming set from the Goo Goo Dolls, the No. 25 act on the AC recaps.

To bridge the gap between the group's 2002 effort and the new album, the label last year released the CD/DVD "Live in Buffalo, July 4, 2004," featuring the AC hit "Give a Little Bit."

The plan, Biery says, was to take "a song that we could have a huge AC record with and that will hopefully be on the new album, so we'll already have one hit away when we launch the new record."

—MARGO WHITMIRE

Jason Flom, chairman/CEO, Atlantic Records Group
Web site: atlanticrecords.com
Top AC acts: Matchbox Twenty, Phil Collins, Ryan Cabrera

Atlantic Records has as much heritage in the music world as the American flag, which makes Matchbox Twenty the label's chief patriot. The enduring band continues to light the way for Atlantic on the AC charts, with "Unwell" riding the top 10 on the AC survey through much of 2003 and 2004. It continues to garner more than 500 spins each week at the format.

And the current label is currently working the solo project from Matchbox Twenty lead singer/songwriter Rob Thomas, whose debut "Lonely No More" is a top three hit in 2005. Meanwhile, Atlantic demonstrated strength across the AC spectrum, with success over the past year from format stalwart Phil Collins as well as new teen idol Ryan Cabrera. The label also logged hits from Hootie & the Blowfish, the Corrs and Jet.

—CHUCK TAYLOR

Craig Kostich, senior VP of marketing
Web site: reprisesrc.com
Top AC acts: Josh Groban, Michael Bublé, Chris Isaak

TV—from Starbucks commercials to performances on "The Oprah Winfrey Show"—has become a massive radio primer for Reprise acts Josh Groban and Michael Bublé.

While AC radio originally resisted Groban's operatic style, his countless talk-show appearances "warmed up an audience that's reflective of who mainstream AC radio programs attract," Reprise senior VP of promotion Phil Costello says. "It took several months to even get traction going because radio programmers at that time were playing a lot of standard artists."

Groban ranks No. 10 in the AC artists recap for this report, on the strength of his AC hit "You Raise Me Up," his self-titled 2001 debut album and its 2003 follow-up, "Closer." The albums have sold a combined 9 million units, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Buble's presence on tour, as well as on his Starbucks and Target ads, built awareness of his February release, "It's Time."

"Adult formats have spread to a much younger demo than anybody realizes today," Costello says. "When you're using the Internet and TV and touring, it eventually trickles down to a younger audience."

The label is busy prepining new adult-targeted studio sets from Enya and Eric Clapton.

—MARGO WHITMIRE

Andy Slater, chairman
Web site: hollywoodandvine.com
Top AC acts: Keith Urban, Tina Turner

Crafting marketing campaigns for adult-oriented artists is "not about a sprint, it's about a marathon," says Phil Quaritano, president of EMI Music Marketing and executive VP of EMI Music North America. Capitol Records' top AC artists, Tina Turner and Keith Urban, prove the point in different ways.

To drive Turner's AC hit "Open Arms," Capitol focused on her branding appeal through major ad campaigns. With Urban, whose records are released by Capitol Nashville, radio and the Internet are playing major roles.

Urban ranks No. 7 on the AC artists recap for this report, and his "You'll Think of Me" is No. 6 in the AC songs recap.

"Keith has a huge amount of young fans, and now he is being shared with their parents," Quaritano says.

Capitol is working the new Coldplay album, "X&Y," to an adult audience and also targeted that market with Amos Lee's self-titled album and Joss Stone's "Mind Body & Soul" and "The Soul Sessions."

"The iPod is growing in appeal to all demographics," Quaritano says. "The Internet is becoming more important as adults become more savvy. Adults tend to be passive consumers of radio, so spikes there won't be that fast or steep."

—JILL KIPNIS

12. Interscope Records, Santa Monica, Calif.
Jimmy Iovine, chairman, Interscope/Geffen/A&M
Web site: interscope.com
Top AC acts: Sheryl Crow, Counting Crows, Vanessa Carlton

Interscope, the No. 12 AC label in the recaps for this report, has earned its ranking thanks to AC hits from Sheryl Crow (A&M/Interscope), Counting Crows and Vanessa Carlton (both Geffen/Interscope). Crow's track "The First Cut Is The Deepest" is No. 7 on the top AC titles recap while the Crows/Carlton hit "Big Yellow Taxi" ranks at No. 46.

Crow's manager, Stephen "Scooter" Weintraub of W Management in New York, says labels and managers need to act early in an artist's career to win an adult audience.

Crow, for example, initially got airplay on more youth-leaning stations including modern rock formats, but Weintraub wanted to ensure that she would have long-term appeal to a broader audience. Thus, she went on tour with such adult-leaning rockers as Bob Dylan, the Eagles and the Rolling Stones.

"If you try to just be trendy, you won't have a long career," Weintraub says. "We appealed to both the younger and older audiences early on and were able to get endorsement and commercial opportunities. At this point, she doesn't need to be marketed."

—JILL KIPNIS

13. Lava Records, New York
Jason Flom, chairman/CEO, Atlantic Records Group
Web site: lavarecords.com
Top AC acts: Uncle Kracker, Dobie Gray, Vanessa Williams

When Lava Records was founded in 1995 by Jason Flom, it was an imprint for Atlantic Records and pretty much one-trick pony, with Kid Rock. Other signings included Twisted Sister, Skid Row and White Lion. But over time, Lava has outgrown its boutique status and now boasts a versatile roster.

Lava fostered one of the biggest hits in AC history with Uncle Kracker featuring Dobie Grey in a remake of Grey's "Drift Away." The song spent nearly six months at the top of the AC list. Lava also made strides with the introduction of Cherie in 2004, whose "Older Than My Years" was among the purest ballads of the year.

The label also signed Vanessa Williams, who had been AWOL for several years. A Christmas album, "Silver & Gold," and a subsequent '70s-themed set produced four AC hits.

Meanwhile, "Drift Away" continues to be an anchor at the format. After more than two years, the song remains a flagship for Lava, logging 750 spins per week at radio.

—CHUCK TAYLOR

Bob Cavallo, chairman, Buena Vista Music Group
Web site: hollywoodrecords.go.com
Top AC acts: Kelly Clarkson, Rascal Flatts, Jesse McCartney

TV and radio have proved a winning combination for Hollywood Records when it comes to reaching adult audiences. "I truly think that in today's environment you need both," says Nick Bedding, Hollywood Records VP of adult format promotion.

All three acts represented by Hollywood on the AC chart recaps for this report have both mediums to thank for their continued успех.
hitmaker status. Clarkson (on loan from RCA), winner of the first “American Idol” competition, scored big with “Breakaway,” which was featured in the Disney movie “The Princess Diaries 2: Royal Engagement.” The song has spent 18 weeks at No. 1 on the Billboard Adult Contemporary chart.

“American Idol” also played a role in the crossover success for Rascal Flatts, which performed “Bless the Broken Road,” a previous country hit for the trio, on this season’s finale with winner Carrie Underwood. “That helped us market to AC pop stations,” Beding says.

Teen sensation Jesse McCartney appears on the TV drama “Summerland,” and also had music in “Princess Diaries 2.” But, Beding says, it still comes down to the music. “A hit record manages to blur the borders at many formats. With [McCartney’s] ‘Beautiful Soul,’ we were able to take a hit song and everything came together.”

—MELINDA NEWMAN

15. **DK-E Records, New York**

Brian Doyle, Rob Kós, partners

Web site: hallandoes.com

**Top AC act:** Hall & Oates

Among the best-selling duos in pop history thanks to a string of ’70s and ’80s hits, Daryl Hall and John Oates continue to enjoy success well into their fourth decade.

Hall & Oates now release recordings on their own U-Watch imprint through DK-E Records, via their management company Doyle-Kós Entertainment.

The duo’s most recent album, 2004’s collection of remakes “One Kind of Soul,” garnered major attention on AC radio with its first single, a cover of the Spinners’ ‘I’ll Be Around.’ The track is No. 19 on the top AC titles recap for this report, spurring DK-E’s ranking at No. 15 on the top AC labels recap.

DK-E Records partner Brian Doyle says TV ads and direct-response marketing were key to breaking “One Kind of Soul.”

“Once you reach consumers, they’ll buy the records,” he says. “Television is the most effective way to reach them, if not the most affordable.”

—TODD MARTENS

16. **Wind-up Records, New York**

Alan Meltzer, CEO

Web site: winduprecords.com

**Top AC acts:** Evanescence, Finger Eleven, Seether

Led by Evanescence and its hit single “My Immortal,” Wind-up has had three acts score major success in crossing over into the AC world. But the label had not planned to work any of the three—Evanescence, Finger Eleven and Seether—to the AC market. VP of promotions Lori Holder-Anderson says, “We are generally cautious about taking records to pop radio because it’s so expensive.” Holder-Anderson says. Instead, she says, Wind-up heavily researches where its artists are winning fans, and attempts to crack the AC market only if it is a safe bet.

But for Finger Eleven, she notes, the track “Thing One” was “a huge alternative song, and our research showed it scored really well with females,” she says. “We figured if alternative females are this passionate about this song, a pop audience would be passionate about it too.”

Holder-Anderson says penetrating the AC market is a challenge, and placement on TV or film soundtracks can be a godsend. For instance, Wind-up intends to take new signing Omnisoul to AC radio, but the group will first be introduced via the soundtrack to “Fantastic 4,” which Wind-up is releasing this month.

—TODD MARTENS

17. **RCA Victor, New York**

Jeb Hart, senior VP of worldwide marketing

Web site: rcavictorgroup.com

**Top AC acts:** Jim Brickman, Roch Voisine, Tara McClean

With four AC hits in the past 12 months from Jim Brickman—and his collaborators Roch Voisine, Tara McClean and Michael Bolton—RCA Victor claims the No. 17 spot on the AC labels tally for this report.

Brickman has scored at the adult format with his solo effort, “Till I See You Again” (Windham Hill/RCA Victor), his duet with McClean (“You”) and “My Love Is Here” and “Hear Me ( Tears Into Wine),” which feature Voisine and Bolton, respectively.

The Voisine partnership is credited to Windham Hill/RCA Victor, while the McClean duet arrived via Windham Hill/BMG Strategic Marketing Group/RCA Victor.

According to Jeb Hart, RCA Victor senior VP of worldwide marketing, Brickman’s success in the adult market is partly due to the relationships he cultivates with AC radio programmers.

“He partners with local AC radio stations on his tour dates,” Hart says. In addition to radio and touring, Hart says TV is an important marketing channel for artists like Brickman—with morning TV providing a key boost for record sales.

Further down the road, Hart says the label will market new act Judd & Maggie first to triple-A and then hopefully cross it to adult top 40.

—MICHAEL PAOLETTA

18. **Red Ink, New York**

Bob Morelli, executive VP/GM, Red Distribution

Web site: redmusic.com/redink

**Top AC acts:** Simply Red, Rick Springfield, Richard Page

Red Ink provides marketing services to baby labels and artist-run imprints within the Red Distribution system, and has had tremendous success with veteran artists in the AC field. It ranks at No. 18 on the top AC labels recap for this report.

“My team of people will work to develop the marketing plans and budgets and help to facilitate them,” Red Ink senior VP/GM Howie Gabriel says, “so it’s pretty exciting that a young label doesn’t have to spend money on a young staff.”

Simply Red and Rick Springfield took advantage of Red Ink’s services, each bringing their own imprint to the label. Richard Page, who also ranks among Red’s top AC acts, duets with Springfield on “Broken Wings,” the first single from the latter’s upcoming album, “The Day After Yesterday.”

Aside from Red’s radio promotion, active Web sites have been crucial for Simply Red and Springfield. Additionally, the acts tour regularly and both have dates booked throughout 2005. In addition to a new Springfield set, Red Ink will release a new Simply Red album in October and a live DVD in November.

—TODD MARTENS

19. **Geffen Records, Santa Monica, Calif.**

Jordan Schur, Polly Anthony, co-presidents

Web site: geffenrecords.com

**Top AC acts:** Counting Crows, Ashlee Simpson

Success from two acts was enough to give Geffen a spot at No. 19 on the recap of top AC labels. Geffen/Interscope artist Ashlee Simpson captured teen and adult fans with “Pieces of Me,” from her triple-platinum debut “Autobiography.” The album got a tremendous send-off via Simpson’s MTV show, which charted the making of the album.

The DreamWorks/Geffen track “Accidentally in Love,” featured on the “Shrek 2” soundtrack and in the film, catapulted Counting Crows onto the adult charts, and ultimately lead to an Academy Award nomination for the act.

The widespread success of “Accidentally in Love” was the result of a three-year plan that included the release of the Crows’ studio album “Hard Candy,” a greatest-hits set, touring and the movie tie-in.

To broaden the Crows’ appeal, Geffen and manager Gary Gersh strategically placed the group on tour with such younger artists as John Mayer. The plan was to expand their audience from the top to bottom,” Gersh says. “It culminated in the band playing in front of billions of people for the Academy Awards.”

—MELINDA NEWMAN

20. **Kataphonic Records, Santa Monica, Calif.**

Katrina Carlson, owner

Web site: kataphonicrecords.com

**Top AC act:** Katrina Carlson

Kataphonic Records, the independent label owned and operated by singer-songwriter Katrina Carlson, broke through to AC radio with Carlson’s sophomore effort, “Untuck’d.” The singles from the album performed strongly enough to propel Kataphonic to No. 20 on the top AC labels recap for this report.

Carlson released four singles from the 2003 set, but it was the first, “I Know You by Heart” featuring “Into the Night” singer Benny Mardones, that put her on the AC map.

“We were able to go to all the major AC stations because of Benny and his track record,” Kataphonic GM Gregg Bell says. “Because of his relationships at radio, his presence immediately opened doors for us.”

Bell says the AC market would have been difficult to crack without Mardones’ star power.

“If you look at AC, there are very few artists who don’t come from somewhere else, whether it’s No Doubt or Evanescence or someone from the ‘American Idol’ world,” he says. “We actually set out to break Katrina at adult AC, and then the press started to help us.”

Thanks to the label’s distribution via Lightyear/WEA, Bell says such retailers as Borders Books & Music and Barnes & Noble have welcomed in-stores with Carlson, who also has had success with mainstream live bookings including a three-night stint at the Los Angeles County Fair. Carlson has a new album due later this year.

—TODD MARTENS
BABYFACE IS BACK

LOS ANGELES—Grown and sexy. The phrase aptly describes the audience that recently gathered for the taping of BET's forthcoming Kenneth "Babyface" Edmonds special. It's also the title of the songwriter/producer's latest album. "It means being comfortable with who you are, where you are in your life," Babyface says of the title for the July 26 J Records release. "That confidence is what makes you sexy. But there's still a certain amount of youth quality to the record."

Which prompts the question: How will Babyface's latest fusion of youthful sensibilities and his patented, silky R&B fare with the public? The answer four years ago was, "Not very well." "Face2Face" featured a falsettoed and profanity-spewing Babyface getting edgy with Snoop Dogg and others. Despite a top 10 R&B hit with the sexy, Neptunes-produced "There She Goes," the album has sold less than 500,000 units, much less than his previous efforts.

"The actual process was amazing," Babyface recalls of "Face2Face," whose release date unfortunately coincided with the Sept. 11, 2001, tragedies. "I did mixed things on that, which was good. You can always learn. "It's still a very important record in my career. Things I learned about singing differently, messing around with how a song might flow differently... I wouldn't have been able to grow without doing that record."

He also stresses that while "Grown & Sexy" is contemporary, it features "classic Babyface songs tweaked with some of today's production values so it can keep the same fans and still grab a new audience."

In other words, there will be no major surprises as there were on "Face2Face." BMG North America CEO Clive Davis "wanted me to do something with a youthful, fun edge to it without people asking, 'What are you doing?'" Babyface says.

AN EXPANSIVE CAREER

KHHT (Hot 92 Jamz) Los Angeles music director Damon Knight believes that the masses will accept "Grown & Sexy." "It will introduce a new generation of R&B faithful to a man that 'grown folks' already know and love," he goes on to call the album's first single, "Sorry for the Stupid Things," the "perfect apology anthem."

Knight's prediction is on point, gauging by the audience's reaction when Babyface performed the single and the title track during the BET taping. Whether strumming his guitar, playing keyboards or just singing and... continued on >>>12

FACT FILE

Label: J Records
Management: Susan Markheim, Azoff Management
Booking: Creative Artists Agency
Publishing: Faze 2 Music (BMI)
Top-selling album: "Tenor Lover" (1989), 3 million (according to the Recording Industry Assn. of America)
Last studio album: "Face2Face" (2001), 371,000

Music

R&B/HIP-HOP BY GAIL MITCHELL

LATEST BUZZ

>>> YANKEE'S PEPSI DEAL

Reggaeton star Daddy Yankee has signed an endorsement deal with PepsiCo Internacional in Puerto Rico, and will appear in local TV ads by summer's end. The artist, who received an undisclosed amount for the endorsement, will also license his music for the ads, according to PepsiCo international marketing director Javier Figueroa. The campaign will ultimately extend into print and other media.

—Leila Coho

>>> WALKER HITS CURB

Country artist Clay Walker has joined the Curb Records roster and is working on his first album for the Curb/Asylum imprint with producer Keith Stegall. Walker, who spent most of his career on Giant Records, has landed six No. 1 singles on the Billboard Hot Country Songs chart. —Phyllis Stark

>>> MATA TOPS AWAs

Billy Mata was named entertainer of the year and Western swing male artist at the Academy of Western Artists' 10th annual Willie Rogers Awards held July 12 at the Eisemann Center in Richardson, Texas. Wylie & the Wild West were named Western duo/group with Wylie taking the top modeling award. Bill Barwick was named Western male vocalist with newcomer Jumi Fisher taking top female vocalist. The Lost Canyon Rangers won the Rising Star Award. AWA members select the winners. For a complete list of winners, go to billboard.com/awards.

—Deborah Evans Price
BABYFACE (cont.)

joined by brother Kevon on several songs), a clearly invigorated and impassioned Babyface fed off the love fest between himself and an appreciative, singing audience.

Of course, part of that can be attributed to his Grammy Award-winning talent as a songwriter/producer. He arguably was the face (no pun intended) of R&B/minor music from the late ’80s through the ’90s. His writing and production skills graced hits by Bobby Brown (“Every Little Step”), Sheena Easton (“The Lover In Me”), Johnny Gill (“My My, My”), Whitney Houston (“I’m Your Baby Tonight”), Boyz II Men (“End of the Road,” “I’ll Make Love To You”) and Eric Clapton, whose Babyface-produced “Change the World” won a record of the year Grammy in 1996. A year prior, Babyface scored acclaim for the “Waiting To Exhale” soundtrack.

That litany of hit collaborations does not take into account Babyface’s earlier success with Anthony “L.A.” Reid (now Island Def Jam CEO)—first as members of the Deele (“Two Occasions”) and wax co-founders of LaFace Records, home to Toni Braxton, TLC, OutKast and Usher. Or Babyface’s own solo career, which took off with the 1989 No. 1 R&B/#7 pop single “It’s No Crime.” His solo hit list includes such crossover classics as “ Tender Lover,” “Whip Appeal,” “Never Keeping Secrets” and “When Can I See You.”

Precisely the performance of his new songs with his oldies but goodies at the taping, Babyface said he is as “shocked as anyone” by the scope of his work. In putting together the special and a short co-headlining with Anita Baker, he says he prepared by listening to his old songs with a fan’s ear.

“I heard passion; that’s what I think made people gravitate to my music in the first place. If I don’t do anything else, I’ve got to make sure I have that passion.”

Which underscores the joy and drama associated with the love and relationship themes he has always written about. And “Grown & Sexy” is no exception. Writing again with longtime colleague Darryl Simmons, Babyface produced the album with Greg Fergani. In addition to the single and title track, other tunes include the tongue-in-cheek “Goin’ Outta Business” and the Curtis Mayfield-vibing “Gettin’ 2 Know U.” “On Business,” Luther Vandross’ heir apparent name checks the recently deceased balladeer in the breakup song, singing, “You can take your Usher CDs, I’m going to take my Luther with me.”

MAKING SURE ADULTS GET ‘SEXY’

Acknowledging that reaching adult audiences through video play can be limited, J Records manager of urban marketing Michelle Sanchez-Boyce says the label opted to shoot the special. “There aren’t many outlets for an adult video to be played,” she says. “We figured we’d get a good run for our money by creating a stylized visual to promote the album.”

The hour-long special—which audience was culled from contest tie-ins with radio and blackplanet.com—will premiere July 26. It will also be edited into a half-hour show, a video and a commercial spot. Set to air the various formats of footage are BET and its sister stations BET Jazz, VH1 and VH1 Soul.

A five-city W Hotel promo tour kicked off July 1 in New Orleans; its other markets are Los Angeles, New York, Chicago and Atlanta. TV and a lifestyle marketing campaign round out the label’s efforts. Attendees win tickets through local radio stations.

The even-busier Babyface is producing a Maurice Gibb tribute album (Billboard, July 16) that lists Paul McCartney, Jagged Edge, Sheryl Crow, the Black Eyed Peas and Rascal Flatts among its contributors. (“Even Snoop Dogg wants to come,” he says.) He is also working with singing Musiq and Calvin Richardson on their new projects. But he feels there may be another Babyface record inside him. “It might be another six months; I’ll cut it this time.” Meanwhile, he is no novice to being part of the “new” old school: Mariah Carey’s No. 1 song “We Belong Together” samples his “Two Occasions.”

“Mariah did me a huge favor,” he says. “It’s official now. Old school used to be Marvin Gaye and Teddy Pendergrass. Now new’ old school is New Edition and Babyface. And that’s a good thing.”

\[image: www.americanradiohistory.com]

FACT FILE

Label: Atlantic Records
Management: Bill Silva Management
Booking: Little Big Man
Publishing: Goo Eyed Music (ASCAP)
Top-selling album: “Waiting for My Rocket to Come” (2002), 930,000

MrAZ

BY MARGO WHITMIRE

You Can Call Jason ‘Mr. A-Z’

With his trademark wit intact, singer/songwriter Jason Mraz battles the sophomore slump head-on with his ambitious second effort, “Mr. A-Z.”

The 12-song collection, due July 26, showcases an artist who is “more comfortable, more confident. Less precious about things,” he says.

The simple sweetness of potential campfire singalong “Life Is Wonderful!” to the dizzying hip-hop funk of first single “Wordplay,” the Atlantic album is indeed a bolder forum than his 2002 effort, “Waiting For My Rocket to Come.” That album thrust Mraz from the coffeehouse circuit into the top 40 spotlight with the standout “Remedy.”

The song, which Mraz wrote with the Matrix, reached No. 4 and No. 7 on the Billboard Adult Top 40 and Mainstream Top 40 lists, respectively. An extensive college campus tour also launched the track to No. 1 at triple-A radio.

“I was nervous before that signing was a sellout move,” says the Virginia born artist, who played New York and Los Angeles haunts before scoring his first major-label deal. “You have a lot of people in the coffee shop community who give up on you. This time around I’m more relaxed and have a take-it-or-leave it attitude.”

In fact, with lyrics like “I got your remedy for those who don’t remember me” and “for the people who write me off like I’m a one-hit wonder/Gotta find another way to keep from going under,” Mraz’s cheeky “Wordplay” is heading critics off at the pass.

The song is “kind of a parody on what a first single should be,” he says, “and was written to kind of alleviate the pressures I was putting on myself.”

KXMB Las Vegas PD Justin Chase says “the vibe has been good” with a lot of listeners requesting the tune. “I think it’s connecting so well because of his songwriting and ability to play on words.”

After writing and arranging “Mr. A-Z” during a six-month period, Mraz brought a self-produced version to producer Steve Lillywhite, who helped the singer complete the project during the next six months.

Atlantic marketing VP Dan Venable says the label has “amazing expectations” for the new set.

The first step, he says, was getting Mraz back on the road: Mraz recently opened for Alanis Morissette on her Jagged Little Pill Acoustic tour.

“Tell us more about waiting a year and to be available on radio and retail in the daytime,” Venable says. At the shows fans were able to pre-order “Mr. A-Z,” ensuring delivery on street date. Included in the deal is a three-song EP that contains the single and two non-album cuts.

Mraz also headlined 30 college campuses recently, targeting what Venable calls his “immediate” demographic of 18- to 24-year-olds.

Though Venable says the label shipped just 13,000 copies of “Waiting for My Rocket to Come” to retailers initially, three years later the album has sold 930,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Looking at Mraz’s audiences now, Venable says, “you really see what the last album accomplished. Everything from 16-year-olds and guys to 32-year-old couples” have become fans.

Mraz will headline a North American tour starting Sept. 20. The jaunt will run through the first week of December.

Mraz also contributed three non-album songs to the “XM Hear Music Series” compilation distributed in 4,500 Starbucks locations nationwide.

Mraz will play private gigs as part of the Target Red Room series, an invitation-only event. Mraz recently finished shooting a fall TV and print campaign for the Gap and will perform on “The Tonight Show With Jay Leno” on the album’s release date.

Additional reporting by Michael Libby in Los Angeles.

\[image: www.americanradiohistory.com]

Latin Notes

LEILA COBO lcobo@billboard.com

Updating Traditions

Dominican star Chichi Peralta, one of merengue’s most compelling artists, has signed a recording deal with indie label Vene Music, Billboard has learned.

Peralta is following in the footsteps of Juan Luis Guerra, with whom he played for seven years—and whose last album, “Para Ti,” was released on Vene/Universal.

Peralta’s “Mal Que Suficiente” comes out in September. It will be his first album since “De Vuelta al Barrio,” which won a 2001 Latin Grammy Award for best merengue album.

“The band has never stopped working,” says Peralta, who was formerly signed to indie label Caiman. The silence in recording, he explains, wasn’t rooted in the lack of interest in his former deal, but also, in the search for a new sound.

First single “Zafumera” is a duet with Chilean singer Joe Vasconcelos (no relation to percussionist Nana Vasconcelos), who sings in Spanish and Portuguese.

The fact that merengue sales have dwindled in the past few years doesn’t worry Vene executives, who very successfully marketed Guerra’s album.

“Peralta still has his fan base,” marketing director Fidel Hernández says. “I’m convinced that tropical music, with good lyrics and good production, is completely competitive.”

TRADITION: When La #1 Banda Jérez bills itself as “not your grandfather’s banda,” it ain’t kidding.

With songs that bear such names as “La Cabrera” (think of a word that rhymes with witch), the 13-man troupe from Jerez, Tex., seeks to preserve the sound of traditional banda music, yet tell it like it is.

“Our lyrics are about what’s happening and about what people talk about every day,” bandleader Marco Antonio Flores Sán-
Hicks & Co. Keep Busy
Warner Bros. Executive, Colleagues Juggle Multiple Ventures

Christopher Hicks wears three hats these days. Hicks is six months into his dual gig as VP of urban music at Warner Bros. Records and publishing arm Warner/Chappell. And he's still a principal in the Atlanta-based production/management/publishing company Noontime.

"People think we're not working together," Hicks says of the Noontime collective who are also longtime friends. "We're joined at the hip. We're just being more effective by spreading out and doing our own things."

The "we" includes Hicks, Terry Ross, Henry "Noonie" Lee and Ryan Glover. Among the quartet's individual ventures is the male fashion brand RyanKenny (Billboard, Sept. 18, 2004). A partnership between Glover, Kenny Burns (a partner in Studio 43) and Derek Dudley (a partner in Artistic Control Management), the 18-month-old RyanKenny is carried by Saks Fifth Avenue and Bloomingdales.

"We're ground-up developers," Hicks says. "We decided two years ago that we're in the urban culture business, not just the urban music business."

Musically, the Noontime camp is home to, among others, songwriter/producers Jazze Pha (Clara), Bryan-Michael Cox (Us3r) and Teddy Bishop (Toni Braxton). Pha is partnered with Lee on his label Sho' Nuff, which just signed a joint-venture pact with Capitol (Billboard, April 30).

Similarly, Cox and Hicks are partners in their own label, Beat Factory. Its roster includes singer O with Blackground Records, former Destiny's Child member LeToya (who has dropped her surname, Luckett) with Capitol and Bella, a female trio signed to Warner Bros.

Dismissing a query about possibilities of a conflict of interest ("We don't double dip"), Hicks allows that he's still in a "learning and building" phase at WB. He also works with Naim Ali, West Coast VP of A&R at WB. Ali was instrumental in bringing Houston's Swishahouse label to the fold via Asylum. One of Hicks' first moves in his dual WB role was to establish a publishing/joint venture with Swishahouse, whose roster includes platinum-certified rapper Mike Jones and another about-to-blow-up rapper via Atlantic, Paul Wall.

Among Warner Bros.' other urban acts is Leela James (whose "A Change Is Gonna Come" arrived June 21) and Cuna. Cox is due to executive-produce Noontime's male group ATL, which joined the WB roster after a stint at Epic.

Among other acts being groomed through the Noontime channels are Sho'Nuff/WB signee Jody Breeze (also a member of Bad Boy's Boyz N Da Hood, working with Pha) and production team the Corna Boys (Marques Houston, BS). Songwriter David Young, managed by Noontime's Ross, has signed with Warner/Chappell. He's already working with Mary J. Blige. Another Noontime management client is songwriter/artist Johnna Austin (Marijah Carey, Aaliyah), who is readying his solo debut for So So Def/Virgin.

"It's what you hear in the streets. That's the language people speak, which unfortunately, isn't what you hear on the radio."

Not at all. Given its naughty title, "La Cabrona" was an underground hit with limited airplay, both here and in Mexico.

Now, the band's new single, "Billete Verde," from the July 19 album by the same name, is also set to cause a stir of a different kind.

The track, whose title is a direct reference to dollars ("The Green Bill" is the translation), talks about those who leave Mexico for work, leaving families behind.

"And while they're out there working, their wives are here getting all dolled up and going out," Flores says wryly.

The story, Flores says, is one played and replayed every day in his neck of the woods. And that, he adds, is what Banda Jerez is all about. The group, which has several members still in their teens, wanted to return to the essence of banda, distancing itself from the more pop-learning sound that several groups have now adopted.

But with "Billete Verde" devoid of racy language, the group is hoping to finally get significant airplay in the United States...

Rhythm & Blues
Gail Mitchell gmitchell@billboard.com
Overseeing programming at Music Choice is a big job. The company operates 45 music channels broadcast in more than 40 million digital cable homes in the United States. It has also started a variety of extension services: video-on-demand offering a weekly mix of music videos and originally produced content, an original programming service for mobile phones via Sprint and a broadband destination that features a mix of its audio and visual content. The task of ensuring that this content-hungry sleeping giant is fed falls upon Damon Williams, senior director of programming for Music Choice. Williams, who spent 12 years in radio before joining the company in 1998, tells Billboard why Music Choice is emerging as a favored outlet for developing and indie artists.

Q: What’s the programming philosophy at Music Choice?
A: We see value in exposing music to consumers as opposed to playing the same records all the time. Typically at radio where you might see power rotations into the 70s and 80s on a song, we’re rotating a power song typically 40 times a week.

Q: Music Choice touts its support of indie labels. How do you help them in ways other outlets can’t?
A: It is very difficult for smaller labels to get their artists on the radio or placed on programs from the other video outlets. We have a lot of homes and a lot of potential impressions, and from a programming standpoint we’re willing to give them that opportunity.

Q: How do you support music from developing acts?
A: We started a program called “Fresh Crops” last August. It is a new- and emerging-artist program that highlights three artists on a monthly basis that we think are going to emerge into the next big things.

Q: Which emerging artists have benefited from Music Choice exposure?
A: Mike Jones. That’s a project we got involved with very early.

Q: How has the push onto phones, VOD and broadband affected programming strategies for artist promotions?
A: When we produce a piece of content, we create programming that works across all of our different platforms. So it becomes a marketing and distribution program for the labels.

Q: On-demand technologies are allowing consumers to decide what they want to see or listen to. How is that having an impact on traditional methods of programming?
A: We can see exactly what content people are accessing. That absolutely guides us as to what videos we should make available and what types of artists we should be investing resources in.
Maroon5's Next Step

Following the phenomenal success of “Songs About Jane,” Maroon5 is hard at work crafting new material for its sophomore album for Octone/J Records.

“We’re kind of re-creating the sort of vibe that we had set up when we were writing the songs to the first record,” guitarist James Valentine tells Billboard, “where we rented a house and we got some instruments set up.

Selling 4 million copies domestically of its label debut does give a band a nice boost of self-esteem, Valentine admits. “Now at least we know that we have the world’s ear, and I think that does bring some confidence, but at the same time, we’re not going to stop really pushing ourselves to develop our songcraft.”

While Valentine says no sure direction for the project has emerged, the band is leaning toward more uptempo material.

Even though the album won't be out for some time, Maroon5 fans will get a new look at the band with the Sept. 20 release of “Friday the 13th—Live at the Santa Barbara Bowl.” Available on CD and DVD, the project includes previously unreleased songs and a cover of Oasis’ “Hello.”

A FOND REMEMBRANCE: Celine Dion, Mary J. Blige, Fantasia, Ruben Studdard, Monica and Angie Stone are among the artists contributing songs for “To Luther, With Love... A Tribute to Luther Vandross.”

The collection, which was in the works long before Luther Vandross’ July 1 passing, will come out Sept. 20 on J Records.

Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis are helming many of the tracks. Jam stresses that much time was spent pairing artists with songs. “It’s important to give each artist their own palette. Like when Mary J. Blige does ‘Never Too Much,’ it’s how it would have sounded on her ‘What’s the 411?’ album. That’s the sort of approach that we took with it, so that it becomes her song. Celine Dion just stuns you with how beautiful she sings ‘Dance With My Father,’ and really, all the artists are like that.”

However, Jam says working on the album renewed his appreciation for how much Vandross brought to his material. “A lot of times we’ve taken a song and it was a great song when Luther sang it, and when Luther doesn’t sing it, it somehow loses something.”

A portion of the album’s proceeds will go to a charity that is yet to be determined.

DOUBLE DUTY: Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis are also hard at work on Janet Jackson’s next Virgin album, due in 2006.

Lewis says the trio, who are celebrating 20 years of working together, have found a new, yet familiar, rhythm. “It used to be a lot of involvement from all of us, and at some point when Janet became more confident with her writing ability, she [did] the bulk of the writing. And it’s kind of back full circle. We’re all kind of back in there doing it again together, which I really enjoy.”

Jam adds, “It’s the physical nature of sitting in the same room and really hashing it out. It’s like, ‘You’re not going to leave until we get a lyric, so it’s fun.”

Some recording has taken place at Jermaine Dupri’s studio. Dupri, who is president of Virgin Urban and Jackson’s boyfriend, is also executive producer on the album.

...
After a number of major labels passed on the Prom Kings, the band and its management decided to take matters into their own hands and self-release their first single. Not only did the Los Angeles-based group end up charting its song “Alone” on the Mainstream Rock list for more than six months, it ultimately got a better label deal than it had expected.

On Aug. 2, the Prom Kings will release their self-titled debut through Three Kings Records via a distribution deal with Geffen/Universal Music & Video Distribution.

Major labels passed on the quartet’s modern rock blend of good-time anthems and emotional outpourings with dark, nu-metal undertones when the Prom Kings did showcases two years ago. So Three Kings Records hired veteran promoter Stu Cohen to push “Alone” to radio to get labels’ attention. After the song entered the chart in February (ultimately peaking at No. 24), the phone started ringing.

Vocalist Chris Carney’s older brother Michael—the band’s co-manager and the album’s co-producer—says the group ultimately decided to sign with Geffen because label president Jordan Schur “is a guy who’s thinking out of the box.” Geffen will also distribute Three Kings Records other seven acts, including singer Jewls and country artist Cody McCarver.

Schur said in a statement that the Prom Kings have been “developed the right way—through touring and lifestyle/street/new media marketing. Kids have had an opportunity to discover the band prior to radio and TV—their following is a clear indication these efforts are paying off.”

With next single “Birthday” headed for radio and “The Prom Kings” arriving in stores in August, Chris Carney is excited about the band’s progress. “It’s really cool for us just to get as far as we’ve gotten,” he says of bandmates Joey Hol-lean (guitar), Mauricio Brandao (bass) and Luke Pickering (drums). “If we die today, everybody in the band will be super stoked, because we had a single that came out and cracked rock radio. We can’t wait to find out what’s down the road.”

The road is where the Prom Kings just returned from, having played shows with Crossfade, Seether and Powerman 5000 in June. There is also a possibility that the band will play some dates on the current 3 Doors Down tour.

Added exposure includes the video for “Alone” appearing in the upcoming Harrison Ford movie “The Wrong Element,” while ESPN’s SportsCenter licensed “Birthday” for a Fourth of July edition of the show. Additionally, the group’s song “Blow” will appear in the DreamWorks film “The Island” (out July 22) and on its soundtrack.

**Cracker Barrel Is Full Of Music Sales**

Restaurant/Retail Chain Seeks More Exclusives After Successful Alison Krauss Set

A successful partnership with Alison Krauss + Union Station that resulted in the sale of more than 125,000 albums in just two months has executives at Cracker Barrel Old Country Store seeking other artists for similar deals.

Next up will be Charlie Daniels, who has just inked a deal to issue an album exclusively at Cracker Barrel. The project, which does not yet have a title or release date, will feature patriotic music and some of Daniels’ best-known songs, including “The Devil Went Down to Georgia” and “In America.” Daniels records for his own Blue Hat Records label. His last studio album, 2003’s “Freedom & Justice for All,” has sold 41,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Cracker Barrel VP of marketing Chris Tomasso calls Daniels “an American icon.” He notes that Daniels’ continued relevance is obvious, thanks to recent appearances at the Super Bowl as well as overseas, where he performed for U.S. troops. Cracker Barrel is in advanced negotiations for a similar deal with an established female country star and is also talking to several other artists, including some Americana and folk acts.

Tomasso says the company, known for its hybrid restaurant/retail stores, likes to make deals for exclusive music products, because “we’re a unique concept, and we like to do things in unique ways.”

On May 10, 529 Cracker Bar- rel stores in 41 states and crackerbarrel.com began selling “Home on the Highways” from Krauss and her band for $11.99. Two months later, according to the restaurant, it has become the fastest-selling CD on the 2-year-old Cracker Bar- rel music label. The enhanced CD features 11 favorites that the band selected from previously re- leased albums. It also contains eight minutes of bonus video, including a jam session and footage of the band members touring Cracker Barrel’s decor warehouse. Cracker Barrel is the sponsor of the group’s current tour (Billboard, Jan. 15).

Krauss and Union Station record for Rounder Records. Their most recent CD for that label, “Lonely Runs Both Ways,” has sold 625,000 copies since its release last November, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Tomasso says Cracker Bar- rel aims to convince labels like Rounder that an exclusive album sold at its stores could acquaint new fans with an act. Based on the current envir- onment in the record-label in- dustry, any exposure for their artists through nontraditional channels would and should appeal to them,” Tomasso says. “It’s an opportunity to expose their artist to a whole new group of potential fans...”

Cracker Barrel declines to release the terms of its licensing deals with other labels.

The company, which sells everything from candles and candy to toys and T-shirts in its stores, has a significant and growing music presence. The Lebanon, Tenn.-based chain markets the “American Leg- ends” CD series, which includes performances from such artists as Elvis Presley, Ray Charles and Johnny Cash; the “Heritage Music Collection” series, featuring such artists as Doyle Lawson and Ralph Stanley; and the Grand Ole Opry “Live Classics” CD collections.

The “American Legends” series has sold more than 400,000 units since August 2004, according to Cracker Barrel. The Opry collections have sold 30,000 units since April, the company says.

“We see a lot of potential in the music category, and we’ve certainly seen growth in [that] category,” Tomasso says. “It’s something we plan to pursue further.”

**ON THE ROW:** Blacktop Mu- sic Group, the Nashville pub- lishing company partly owned by Clint Black, has signed songwriters Roxie Dean and Lonnie Wilson to its roster. Blacktop also promoted Abbey Burkhart to professional man- ager. Burkhart is a three-year veteran of the company.
Southern Gothic Tales

Singer/songwriter Jim White’s 1997 debut album, “The Mysterious Tale of How I Shouted Wrong-Eyed Jesus,” so inspired Brit commercial director Andrew Douglas that he hired White to drive him and a crew through Deep South to uncover the dark, religious roots of his Southern Gothic folk music.

The resulting documentary, “Searching for the Wrong-Eyed Jesus,” is now opening in select cities nationwide. It is distributed by Shadow Distribution.

“I was already a fan of alt-country artists like Johnny Dowd, the Handsome Family and 16 Horsepower,” says Douglas, who also spotlights these artists in “Wrong-Eyed Jesus.”

Douglas traveled to Pensacola, Fla.—where White grew up—with the idea of making a feature film based on the short story White wrote for his album’s CD booklet.

But after spending time with White, Douglas changed the project to a road trip.

Through Douglas’ commercials are “fun, adventurous” spots like a Ford truck dragging an iceberg through the Artic, the “Wrong-Eyed Jesus” story proved an adventure of a different sort.

“The got the album and thought, ‘Weird story, weird album—this representative of some real world, or is this guy just taking acid?’” White says.

White chauffeured the filmmakers in a ’70s Chevy on a journey through the South’s junkyards, truck stops, trailer parks, fundamentalist churches, jails, juke joints, scrapy yards, coal mines, mountains, swamps and backwoods. “But God bless the English people,” he says, “because they really do have affection for traditional Southern music, whether black blues or white gospel—and they help the tradition stay alive, because Americans don’t care.”

Now living in Athens, Ga., the Luaka Bop artist’s most recent album is 2004’s acclaimed “Wrong-Eyed Jesus.”

“Drill a hole in that substructure and tell me what you see.”

White wrote the “Wrong-Eyed Jesus” story after finishing the then-unnamed album. The basic premise, White adds, is that “some things cannot be apprehended. You can’t really say, ‘Look! I see God,’ because as soon as you do, it’s contaminated by ‘Look! I see!’ So they kind of transposed that notion to the South: The South is a mystery like God is a mystery.”

Douglas sees White’s informal tour guide role as central to his storytelling film’s gritty strength. “You see his own conflict with the South throughout the film,” he says, “and points to the power of the film’s music performances, which complement the travel log.”

“Dis music function almost as speech—disclosure.”

Luaka Bop has released the album’s soundtrack, and Home Vision Entertainment will issue the DVD in February.

GROVES WAVES ‘FLAG’

For singer/songwriter Shaun Groves, getting back to his first love sparked the songs on his new Racketown Records album, “White Flag,” which hit shelves July 12.

That first love is teaching. For the past 18 months he and his road manager, Brian Seay, have taught a college and young adult Bible study class at his home church in Franklin, Tenn.

“Whether it’s music or the Bible or art, I’ve always enjoyed teaching.” Groves says. “I usually walk away with my head much fuller than it was before.”

“White Flag” was inspired by a study Groves taught on the beatitudes, Jesus’ sermon on the mount found in the Bible’s book of Matthew. Before he became absorbed in those passages, Groves admits he was having a difficult time writing for his third record.

“I found myself writing like a marketing guy and radio promoter. I didn’t like what was coming out. It wasn’t me,” he says. “It was just what I thought was successful, and it felt gross. So I just took some time off from writing, and I really wondered if I’d ever write a good song again.”

Groves realized his best songs were always shaped by personal experience. “I had always written about what I was going through in life, what God was teaching me, and it all came back to the beatitudes,” he says. “I was obsessed with them. They were changing me and making me think completely different than I’d thought before about what it means to be a Christian in America today. I finally gave in and just wrote about that.”

The beatitudes include such scriptures as “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth, and ‘Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.’

Groves discusses how the Beatitudes manifest themselves in his music in the next Higher Ground.
The timing may be a bit off, but saxophonist Tim Ries is still psyched about his new CD, "The Rolling Stones Project" (Concord Jazz). Originally scheduled to street earlier this year, the album will finally see the light of day Aug. 9 — when he’s right in the middle of a monthlong rehearsal for the Rolling Stones’ world tour, which kicks off Aug. 21 in Boston.

On his third tour with the band, Ries won’t have much time to support his album, a spirited collection of Mick Jagger-Keith Richards songs given a jazz treatment. "It’s a Catch-22," Ries says, shortly before embarking to Toronto and Japan with his own band. "When the album comes out, I’ll be working with the Stones, but because of the tour there might be a buzz about my album."

There already is in Japan, where "The Rolling Stones Project" was released May 18 on Sony Japan jazz imprint Village Records and promptly sold 10,000 copies in two weeks.

The CD features a who’s-who of top drawer jazzers, including pianist Bill Charlap, guitarist Bill Frisell, bassist John Patitucci and drummer Brian Blade. Vocalists include Sheryl Crow, Luciana Souza, Lisa Fischer and Norah Jones, who appears on a killer version of "Wild Horses."

The bonus guests include Stones Charlie Watts, Richards and Ronnie Wood, who all contribute to "Slippin’ Away" and "Honky Tonk Woman." When Ries first started working on the project, he sought the Stones’ blessing and received it enthusiastically. "Charlie wanted to be on it, then Keith and Ronnie," Ries says, "and then it snowballed into something bigger than I ever imagined."

**JARRETT RARITY:** In the wake of his superb two-CD solo piano improvisation, "Radiance" (ECM), Keith Jarrett will go it alone Sept. 26 at New York’s Carnegie Hall. It will be his first solo concert in the United States in more than a decade. The next day ECM will release his DVD, "Tokyo Solo 2002."

**CHICO TO ARTURO:** On June 29, the street corner of West 88th Street and West End Avenue in New York was officially named Arturo "Chico" O’Farrill Place in honor of the late Latin jazz composer/arranger/bandleader. His son, Arturo O’Farrill, led his father’s Afro Cuban Jazz Orchestra at a free concert in nearby Riverside Park before the sign’s unveiling. In related news, O’Farrill’s jazz at Lincoln Center band, Afro-Latin Jazz Orchestra, released its debut CD, "Una Noche Inolvidable," June 28 on Palmetto Records, while his "Live in Brooklyn" solo CD on Zoho Records streeted June 14.

**THREE DOT LOUNGE:** It seems Concord Records’ purchase of catalog-heavy Fantasy Records is not having such a smooth transition. Former Fantasy president Ralph Kaffel, who joined the label in 1971 and was responsible for developing the catalog, resigned June 15 as consultant to the Concord Music Group . . . When Joe Zawinul and his band the Zawinul Syndicate opened their summer tour June 30 at the Fano Jazz Festival in Italy, little did they know they would encounter a terrorist group that threatened to set off a bomb if the band reached a certain volume level. The concert was canceled.
FRANK BLACK
Honeycomb
Producer: Joe Tiven
Bad Pony
EMI
Release Date: July 19

Having parted ways with his band the Catholics and lately frequenting big venues with the reunited Pixies, rock troubadour Frank Black returns as a solo artist with "Honeycomb," recorded live in Nashville with some of the city's most esteemed talents.

Consume professional that he is, Black turns this exercise (recorded in a week on the eve of the Pixies tour) into one of his finest hours. With the likes of Steve Cropper, Spooner Oldham, David Hood and Anton Fig on the job, Black's soulful songs bloom in unexpected ways. It is by an album about loneliness, and it is beautifully expressed in moments like the bluesy, mournful guitar solo in "My Life Is in Storage" or the haunting "Lone Child." Black has often had a yearning for the old-time heart of rock 'n' roll, and on "Honeycomb," he gets very close.—TC

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Jermaine Dupri Presents... Young, Fly & Flasy Vol. 1
Producers: Various
So So Def/ Virgin
Release Date: July 19

This compilation is the first phase of the theme songwriter/producer/LAmerine Dupri's watch as Virgin president of urban music. The collection is already gaining traction with the Dupri-fronted single "Gotta Getcha," which is No. 35 on the Billboard Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart this issue.

The hypnotizing track—co-written with Missy Elliott—shows Dupri still knows his way around a party beat. While no new ground is broken, songs on the strength-empowered are worthy of hitting the dancefloor and the repeat button. Of note are the anthemic, anti-bling track "So What?" ("So what do you got raps?") featuring Cato and "Throw'd Off" featuring new So So Def/Virgin artist T. Waters. Also making appearances: Dupri proteges Da Brat and Bow Wow.—GM

WITNESS
Sneak to the Generations
Producer: Michael Brooks
AXEM
Release Date: July 12

After 18 years, Witness is something of a gospel institution. On this latest outing, sisters Lisa Page Brooks and Leah Jones are rejoined by founding member Lou Ann Stewart as they continue to make music that combines traditions as diverse as old-school gospel and modern g- roup R&B. Producer/Songwriter Michael Brooks lends an ever- steady hand behind the scenes, maintaining continuity in the group's sound and material as well as edging it onto new contemporary ground. The trio delivers compelling vocal interplay and stunning solos on a number of standout singles. "Touch Your Promise" has a spare but melodic hip-hop groove. "It's Your Victory" is hard-hitting, funky R&B, while "Restore Me" is a lushly orchestrated ballad. Nine albums is an already definitive career. Witness remains as relevant as ever.—GE

YING YANG TWINS
Badd (3:48)
Producer: Mr. Collipark
Writers: M. Crooms, D. Holmes, J. Jackson, M. Jones
Publishers: Various
TVT Records (CD promo)

Now that they've whispered their way into ear canals across the country, Ying Yang Twins continue their raunchy ways on "Badd," the second single from "U.S.A. United State of Atlanta." The infectious tune features rising Houston rapper Mike Jones and the song's producer, Mr. Collipark. "Badd" finds the raucous duo in search of "a dime that's top of the line." The song conjures images of YYT's early days, where they supplied music to inspire frenzied jump-shaking from any foot within ear hearing distance. While their lyrics may make more than a few people blush, what else would one expect of a duo who first grabbed national fame by demanding women to get low and shake it like a salt shaker?—IMJ

MELISSA ETHERIDGE
Refugee (3:35)
Producer: John Shanks
Writers: T. Petty, M. Campbell
Publisher: Almo (ASCAP)
Island (CD promo)

Melissa Etheridge takes on Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers' "Refugee" at the first single from her forthcoming greatest-hits album, "The Road Less Traveled." While the Petty original had an uncluttered, solid groove and a fairly uptempo beat, Etheridge goes the slow-burn, jangle-rock route. She and producer John Shanks throw in a mess of guitars and twirl the song into a semi-personal anthem that sounds like a love affair.

Now that the singer's radio fortunes have faded over time, her stellar Grammy Awards performance earlier this year might make programmers take a second listen.—KC

ROCK

THE VARIOUS ARTISTS
The Dukes of Hazzard: Music From the Motion Picture
Producers: Various
Columbia
Release Date: July 19
The soundtrack to the upcoming film "The Dukes of Hazzard" offers a who's who of classic Southern rock, featuring the Allman Brothers Band, Lynyrd Skynyrd and the Charlie Daniels Band, among others. The music supervisor, "Morning Becomes Eclectic" host Nic Harcourt, also made sure to include such gems as the James Gang's "Funk #49," Montgomery Gentry's "Hillbilly Shoes" and Stevie Ray Vaughan & Double Trouble's "Pride & Joy." Unfortunately, the obligatory new songs don't quite fit. Jessica Simpson turns Nancy Sinatra's camp dance hit "These Boots Are Made For Walkin'" into a vapid pop tune, while Willie Nelson's shaky vocals on "Good Ol' Boys" are no match for Waylon Jennings' rowdy original theme song. Sometimes it's best to not mess with the classics.—KK

PELICAN
The Fire In Our Throats Beckons the Thaw
Producer: Pelican
Hydra Head
Release Date: July 26

The meticulously detailed instrumental metal of Pelican is in its prime, as songs explore multiple moods and atmospheres. Guitarists Laurent Lebeque and Trevor de Bouw are not in the business of creating riffs. Epic seems to be on their mind, and the two play with the dynamics of noise and texture to build their set pieces from the ground up. Yet while Pelican's songs have a tendency to explode in an intense blast of guitar wizardry, on "The Fire In Our Throats Beckons the Thaw" it is more serene moments that stand out. On "March to the Sea" and "Last Day of Winter," Pelican uses the dexterity of a jazz band, baring its emotions with a twisted guitar string and a soft cymbal rush.—JM

LATIN

NORTEC COLLECTIVE
Tijuana Sessions Vol. 3
Producers: Various
Nacional Records
Release Date: July 26
Nortec Collective is five acts that play a blend of electronica, techno and norteño music, equally appealing to a wide variety of musical tastes. This album can be summed up with the slightly schizoid "Don Lopee," which alternates from mambo and jazz to norteño and banda. More straight-ahead are the nortec beats of "Olivadia Compa" and the happy-go-lucky tripping of "Tijuana Man Me Have" (sung in English). Indeed, Nortec Collective doesn't adhere to the borders of language or styles. The entire album is a distinct sound overall, each of the artists make their stamp as well, some leaning toward a more Mexican sound (as the band Fussible does), some distinctly Mexican (Cifloria). The quality varies, but it's the kind of album listeners can sink their teeth into, and often, it tastes pretty good.—LC

COUNTRY

KENTUCKY HEADHUNTERS
Big Boss Man
Producers: Kentucky Headhunters, Tom Long
Curb Entertainment
Release Date: June 21
A gigantic asteroid struck the Southern United States, near EDMONTON, Ky., it's likely the fine sound of the Kentucky Headhunters would come wailing out of the rubble. Though they're inventive songwriters, here they raid the classic Sony/ATV catalogue and body-slamming such standards as the title cut and turning the Patsy Cline gem "Walkin' After Midnight" into a stalker's confession. The guys are loose and rowdy on a rousing "Take These Chains From My Heart" and have an intoxicating take on Roger Miller's "Chug a Lug." They even inject some soul into their tango-continued on >>>40

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Bob Dylan’s “Like a Rolling Stone” and Joe South’s “Don’t It Make You Wanna Go Home.” It’s by no means a perfect effort (a heavily-handled “Hey Good Lookin’” is almost painful), but the Headhunters remain arguably the most consistent and durable Southern rock outfit on the planet.—RW

GOSPEL

MARION WILLIAMS

Remember Me

Producer: Anthony Heilbut Shanchane

Release Date: June 21

Considered by many to be the finest, most thrilling and original gospel singer music has ever produced. This definitive, 24-song collection, lovingly assembled and annotated by gospel scholar Anthony Heilbut, makes that contention difficult to dispute. With a four-octave range and staggering interpretative skills that run from a bluesy growl to notes as high as the heavens, Williams—who died in 1993—had a major hand in defining and expanding gospel, as well as strongly influencing secular R&B. Half selections here are previously unreleased, and capture some of Williams’ finest moments. The million-selling “How I Got Over,” “The Lord Will Make a Way Somehow” and the definitive take on Thomas A. Dorsey’s “The Day Is Past and Gone” only scratch the surface of this essential anthology from one of gospel’s true treasures.—GE

WORLD

GERALD TOTO, RICHARD BONA, LOKUA KANZA

TotoBonaLokza

Producer: Laurent Bizot Sunnyside

Release Date: July 19

French producer Laurent Bizot had one of those light-bulb-over-the-head moments when he brought together three extraordinary musicians—Gerald Toto (from Martinique), Richard Bona (Cameroun) and Lokua Kanza (Congolaise)—in a Paris studio. “TotoBonaLokza” offers the best of several worlds in several languages: English, Lingala, Douala and Creole. One might expect distinctly syntactical sounds from a pair of Africans and an Afro-Caribbean singer, and that rhythmic factor is certainly at play. Yet most of the tunes are more jazz improv with West African musical sensibilities, seasoned with a bit of doo wop, Caribbean zouk and timeless R&B. That’s a varied set of influences, but the songs aren’t complicated. The music is an arresting interplay of voice, synths and acoustic instruments that will set up camps in your CD player.—PVV

VITAL REISSUES

MR. SCRUFF

Mrs. Cruff

Producer: Mr. Scruff

Release Date: July 12

Ninja Tune’s reissue of Mr. Scruff’s 1997 full-length debut is an important piece of the artist’s chronology, revealing just how far Andy Carey has come in his DJ career. A collection of his previously released 12-inch singles, “Mrs. Cruff” is a hodgepodge of linear triphop, dub, electro pop and a dash of jazz, with each song nearly the same tempos as the previous. Replete with harmless samples and the occasional trumpet solo, the album begins with a humble beginning to what would be a much more entertaining future. Tracks like the ethnic-influenced “Chicken in a Box” and the apocalypse-inspired “Boy’s Fritz” capture the potential; others drag and aren’t of much use for dancing. While his loops seem fresh enough at times, it’s easy to hear Scruff sacrificing out his addictive signature sounds.—KH

DVD

TWISTED SISTER

Liotta Wacken—The Reunion

Eagle Vision

Release Date: June 28

Over “The Game,” “The Twist,” and “I Wanna Rock,” this definitive career-spanning collection—appropriately labeled “Distortion,” Sept. 13—Thankfully, Ron’s not trying to reinvent the wheel—Run-D-M.C. was the first rap act to incorporate electric guitar into its music—which “Mind on the Road” upholds. Nicking a drum beat, guitar riff and scream from Joan Jett’s 1982 classic “I Love Rock ‘N Roll,” the single sounds like it could have easily come out 20 years ago, which is a good thing. It’s hard to imagine R&B radio’s take on this, but modern could certainly be interested, and depending on the popularity of his forthcoming MTV series, “You’re a Superstar,” it could certainly also come to the table.—BT

ADDITIONAL REVIEWS:

Jumpin’ Jack Flash

Roll

and

H IT P O P

BOWLING FOR SOULS

Ohio (Come Back to Texas)

Producer: Russ-T Cobb, Janet Reddick

Writers: L. Reddick, Malay, Bruno

Publishers: various

Release Date: July 21

This is a remarkable single. At a time when dance music is having a withering moment, the group Bowling for Souls has struck down patr. Their sound is uncluttered with rhythms accompanied by human backing vocals instead of computer synth work. “Ohio (Come Back to Texas)” is an amazing piece of work, a real standout. Both tracks, “Ohio (Come Back to Texas)” and “A Tribute to Miss New Orleans,” are excellent. The lead and backup vocals are amazing. It’s a pity that this single is not being promoted to DJs.

R&B

LATOYA LONDON

 Appreciate (3:41)

Producer: Williams, Dreamy

Writers: various

Publishers: various

Release Date: July 21

The group Latoya London are back with a new single, “Appreciate.” The song is a slow, mid-tempo R&B number. The group consists of Latoya London, Myla, and Jennifer. The lead vocal is sung by Latoya London, while the backing vocals are provided by Myla and Jennifer. The song is produced by Williams and梦诗. It was released under the label Dreamy. The single is written by various writers and published by various publishers. It was released on July 21st.

DANCE

UTADA: Exodus ‘04

various times

Producer: Timbaland

Writers: T. Mosley, F. Hills, Utada

Publishers: various

Remixers: various

Release Date: July 21

Utada’s new single, “Exodus ‘04,” is a fantastic dance-pop曲目. The song is produced by Timbaland and features various writers and remixers. The single is released under the label Dreamy. The single is written by various writers and published by various publishers. It was released on July 21st.

CRITICS’ CHOICE:

A new release, regardless of chart potential, highly recommended for musical merit.

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

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

CONTRIBUTORS:

Tom Carpenter, Kent Caufield, Lela Cordon, Sarah Eny, Kasey Hardy, Mary Jones, Kathy Kroll, Todd Martens, Gail Mitchell, Chuck Taylor, Brain Taitman, Christa L., Titus, Shane Taylor, Phil Van’Vick, Ray Waddell

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

www.americanradiohistory.com
LONG TO 'BELONG'
» Mariah Carey's "We Belong Together" (J Records) holds at No. 1 for an eighth week on the Rhythm Chart. This marks the chart's longest reign by a female artist since Ashanti's "Foolish" had a stretch of the same length starting in April 2002. "We Belong Together" also holds at No. 1 for a fourth week on Pop 100 Airplay.

'ILLINOIS' PRIMAR
» Susan Stevens, "Happiness," the second in a line of albums, he plans for all 50 states, scores the best Nielsen SoundScan week yet for the Asthmatic Kitty label (8,000 copies). The title is No. 1 on Top Heatseekers and No. 4 on Top Independent Albums.

EIGHT IS ENOUGH
» Mary Mary's "Heaven" locks eight weeks at No. 1 on billboard.com's Hot Gospel Songs, the most by any act since the chart launched in April. Donnie McClurkin's "I Call You Faithful" ruled for seven.

Kelly's 'Closet' Saga Opens Door To No. 1 Album

Aside from earning his fifth No. 1 on The Billboard 200, R. Kelly's ninth list leader on Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums earns the singer a piece of chart history.

Kelly

Counting its two collaborations with Jay-Z, Kelly has nine No. 1 albums on the R&B/Hip-Hop roll, more than any other artist since the chart switched to Nielsen SoundScan data in November 1992.

Prior to the arrival of his new "TP.3 Reloaded," he had been tied with Jay-Z and the late 2Pac, who each had eight No. 1s on that list in the SoundScan era.

In the chart's history, the only acts with more No. 1 albums are the Temptations with 17, followed by Stevie Wonder and Aretha Franklin with 10 each.

With first-week sales of 430,000, this is the fourth time a Kelly album has started in the No.100 plus club. His best start was when "TP.2.com" rang $43,000 in 2000. In 2003, "Chocolate Factory" opened with $32,000, but the new album's total far exceeds the 403,000-unit opener he saw last year for "Happy People/Save Me."

The engine driving the new album is "Trapped in the Closet," the five-part opus that is Kelly's biggest hit on R&B/Hip-Hop Songs since "Ignition" reached No. 2 in 2003. BET and VH1 devoted multiple windows in the weekend that followed the album's July 5 release to run all five chapters back-to-back.

A DVD with all five "Closet" clips accompanies the "Reloaded" CD. Word is that Kelly had so much fun with them that he had decided to lens chapters six through 10, although no firm plans have been announced about how those episodes will be fed to retail.

FLAVA: In a year that has seen rock titles flourish on the Billboard 200, this week's top 10 reminds us that R&B and hip-hop still pay a lot of bills.

With new entries by Missy Elliott and Weeble following the aforementioned R. Kelly at Nos. 2 and 8 (see Between the Bullets, page 47), respectively, six of the top 10 albums also appear on Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums. Hint: George Strait didn't record any of them.

Furthermore, through the first 27 weeks of 2005, the year's three best-selling albums each topped the R&B/Hip-Hop list for multiple weeks: 50 Cent's "The Massacre" (4.1 million), Mariah Carey's "The Emancipation of Mimi" (2.4 million) and the Game's "The Documentary" (2.1 million).

To this point, those three are the only titles to surpass 2 million copies in 2005, although a carry-over from last year, "American Idiot" by rock band Green Day, is closing in on that mark, with 1.9 million of the 3.6 million it has sold to date being scanned since this year began.

LIVE AIN'T: Aside from ripples seen on some catalog albums and on Hot Digital Songs (see Between the Bullets, page 44), it appears televised and webcast coverage of Live 8 during the July 2-3 weekend did not have great impact on U.S. music sales, especially when compared with the fast reaction that occurred in the United Kingdom.

Jumps by Beane (11-5) and Razorlight (29-9) into the top 10 on England's albums chart were attributed to their Live 8 appearances, as were gains there by the Killers, Joss Stone, R.E.M., Scissor Sisters, Snow Patrol and four Pink Floyd albums.

In the United States, Live 8's reunion of Pink Floyd is the only obvious beneficiary on the Billboard charts, as "The Dark Side of the Moon" rises 10-3 on Top Pop Catalog, with a 26% gain and the album's largest unit increase since Christmas week. Green Day rides a 12% gain for a 27-20 jump on The Billboard 200, but most of that acceleration is attributed to an advertised sale price at Target stores.

Other spikes on the catalog list that might be attributed to Live 8 include Green Day (13-11, up 7%), and (up 15%), the Beatles (No. 19, up 3%) and U2 (No. 36, up 3%).

Also on Top Pop Catalog, although one of Luther Vandross' albums is pushed backward, all three on the list see gains of at least 8%, with "Dance With My Father" garnering a 15% lift and moving 6-5.

Market Watch

A Weekly National Music Sales Report

For week ending July 10, 2005. Figures are rounded. Compiled from a national sample of retail store and radio sales reports collected and provided by Nielsen SoundScan.

**DISTRIBUTORS' MARKET SHARE: 05/30/05-07/03/05**

- UNIV
- Sony
- BMG
- Index
- EMI
- WEA

**Total Albums**

- 10.9%
- 13.4%
- 31.8%
- 25.7%
- 18.3%
- 11.4%
- 18.1%
- 34.7%
- 25.4%
- 18.1%

**Current Albums**

- 10.5%
- 11.4%
- 34.7%
- 25.4%
- 18.1%

**Market Watch**

**Weekly Unit Sales**

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<th>ALBUMS</th>
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<th>DIGITAL TRACKS</th>
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**Weekly Album Sales**

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SALES BY ALBUM FORMAT

For more details, see www.americanradiohistory.com
### HOT 100 AIRPLAY

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<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist/Label</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>WE BELONG TOGETHER</td>
<td>Faith Hill (Columbia)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>JUST A LITTLE BIT</td>
<td>Kelly Clarkson (RCA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>GRIND WITH ME</td>
<td>Usher feat. D.J.非常好 (A&amp;M)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>PIMPIN' ALL OVER THE WORLD</td>
<td>Missy Elliott (Def Jam)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>SOMETHING MORE</td>
<td>Mariah Carey (Columbia)</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>HOLIDAY</td>
<td>Britney Spears (Jive)</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>BACK THEN</td>
<td>Mariah Carey (A&amp;M)</td>
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<td>MUST BE NICE</td>
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<td>BETTER NOW</td>
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### ADULT TOP 40

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<td>John Mayer (Capitol)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>SPEED OF SOUND</td>
<td>Coldplay (Parlophone)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>INCOMPLETE HAZEL EYES</td>
<td>Kelly Clarkson (Atlantic)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>EXILE</td>
<td>Tom Cochrane (BMG)</td>
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<td>SOMETHING MORE</td>
<td>Michael J. Fox feat. Patsy Cline (Columbia)</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>Faith Hill (Columbia)</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>I'LL LET YOU GO</td>
<td>Kesh (BMG)</td>
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### MODERN ROCK

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<td>4</td>
<td>INCOMPLETE HAZEL EYES</td>
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<td>Michael J. Fox feat. Patsy Cline (Columbia)</td>
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<td>Coldplay (Parlophone)</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>INCOMPLETE HAZEL EYES</td>
<td>Kelly Clarkson (Atlantic)</td>
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Data for week of July 23, 2005. For chart reprints call 646-654-4633. Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data.
**POP 100**

**Top Songs**

1. **DONT PHUNK WITH MY HEART**
2. **BEHIND THESE HAZEL EYES**
3. **COLD**
4. **DON TCHA**
5. **IT S THE CARS**
6. **LISTEN TO YOUR HEART**
7. **INSIDE YOUR HEAVEN**
8. **SCORE**
9. **SOMEBODY ELSE S MIND**
10. **SWITCH**

**Singles Sales**

1. **DONT PHUNK WITH MY HEART**
2. **BEHIND THESE HAZEL EYES**
3. **COLD**
4. **DON TCHA**
5. **IT S THE CARS**
6. **LISTEN TO YOUR HEART**
7. **INSIDE YOUR HEAVEN**
8. **SCORE**
9. **SOMEBODY ELSE S MIND**
10. **SWITCH**

**Airplay**

1. **DONT PHUNK WITH MY HEART**
2. **BEHIND THESE HAZEL EYES**
3. **COLD**
4. **DON TCHA**
5. **IT S THE CARS**
6. **LISTEN TO YOUR HEART**
7. **INSIDE YOUR HEAVEN**
8. **SCORE**
9. **SOMEBODY ELSE S MIND**
10. **SWITCH**

**Hot Singles Sales**

1. **INSIDE YOUR HEAVEN**
2. **WE BELONG TOGETHER**
3. **DON TCHA**
4. **SOMEBODY ELSE S MIND**
5. **SWITCH**
6. **WE BELONG TOGETHER**
7. **INSIDE YOUR HEAVEN**
8. **WE BELONG TOGETHER**
9. **DON TCHA**
10. **SOMEBODY ELSE S MIND**

**HitPredictor**

**Top Airplay**

1. **DONT PHUNK WITH MY HEART**
2. **BEHIND THESE HAZEL EYES**
3. **COLD**
4. **DON TCHA**
5. **IT S THE CARS**
6. **LISTEN TO YOUR HEART**
7. **INSIDE YOUR HEAVEN**
8. **SCORE**
9. **SOMEBODY ELSE S MIND**
10. **SWITCH**

**HitPredictor Chart**

- **Owen Efan**
- **Backstreet Boys**
- **Kerry Urban**
- **Kanye West**
- **Gwen Stefani**
- **Kelly Clarkson**
- **T-Pain**
- **Kelly Clarkson**
- **Outta Control (Remix)**
- **T-Pain**

Data for week of July 23, 2005

**Full Chart**

www.americanradiohistory.com
BETWEEN THE BULLETS 

Missy Elliott's "The Cookbook" dished out enough servings to enter the Top Rap Albums chart on billboard.com at No. 2 on July 23rd. With 176,000 sold, she also bows at No. 2 on the Billboard 200 and Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums, trailing R. Kelly's "TP3 Reloaded" on both charts. This is a bigger week than her last album, "This Is Not a Test!" saw in 2003, but the sum falls shy of the 250,000 plus stars that her third and fourth albums scored in 2001 and 2002.

The lead single from "Cookbook," "Lose Control," is the highest-ranked hip-hop track on Hot Digital Songs (No. 3). Also, Louisiana rapper Webbie bows at No. 4 on the Top Rap/Hip-Hop albums chart with his debut, "Savage Life." He currently has two singles on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs and is featured on the "Hustle & Flow" soundtrack.

—Raphael George
### R&B/HIP-HOP AIRPLAY

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<th>Artist(s)</th>
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<td>&quot;We Belong Together&quot;</td>
<td>Kelly Rowland</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>&quot;Listen&quot;</td>
<td>Aaliyah</td>
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<td>&quot;Let's Work&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;Soulman&quot;</td>
<td>Hudson</td>
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<td>&quot;Want It Bad&quot;</td>
<td>P. Diddy</td>
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<td>&quot;Problematic&quot;</td>
<td>Ginuwine</td>
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<td>&quot;I'm Still Satisfied&quot;</td>
<td>Ludacris</td>
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<td>&quot;Just A Friend&quot;</td>
<td>Young Jeezy</td>
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<td>&quot;Can't Keep My Hands Off You&quot;</td>
<td>Lupe Fiasco</td>
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<td>&quot;Burnin'&quot;</td>
<td>Jeezy</td>
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<td>&quot;Doin' It&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;I'm On You&quot;</td>
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### R&B/HIP-HOP SINGLES SALES

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<td>&quot;Dance&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;I Will Always Love You&quot;</td>
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### ADULT R&B

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<td>1</td>
<td>&quot;We Belong Together&quot;</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>&quot;I'm Gonna&quot;</td>
<td>Whitney Houston</td>
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### HITPredictor

See chart legend for "tabs" and explanations. Yellow indicators recently tested. * Indicates new Release.
**HOT COUNTRY SONGS**

**As Good as I Once Was**

**Artists:** Toby Keith

**Chart Position:** 1

**Country Hits Chart:** 1

**HOT COUNTRY SONGS: 117 country charts are electronically monitored by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems. 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Airplay awarded to live versions of songs in the top 100 Airplay and Audience charts for the first time with increases in both detections and audience. © 2005 NBS.
### Latin Airplay

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<td>R. ROSARIO/KASEDAI, D. MIKES</td>
<td>PROMO JOHN LEGEND/INTERSCOPE</td>
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<td>Don’t Cha (W. Roach/Kaseada)</td>
<td>D. MIKES</td>
<td>PROMO JOHN LEGEND/INTERSCOPE</td>
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<td>Above &amp; Beyond (R. Rosario Mix)</td>
<td>D. MIKES</td>
<td>PROMO JOHN LEGEND/INTERSCOPE</td>
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<td>Let’s Go (E. Van der Westhuizen Mix)</td>
<td>D. MIKES</td>
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<td>I’ll Be Missing You (X. Gonzalez Mix)</td>
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### JAPAN

**Albums**

2. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
3. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
4. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
5. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
7. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
8. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
10. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)

### UNITED KINGDOM

**Albums**

1. *The Streets - Tourist Attraction* (Universal)
2. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
3. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
4. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
5. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
7. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
8. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
10. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)

### FRANCE

**Albums**

1. *Kendji Girbal - Kier* (Sony BMG)
2. *Shakira - Sale el Sol* (Sony BMG)
3. *Shakira - Sale el Sol* (Sony BMG)
4. *Shakira - Sale el Sol* (Sony BMG)
5. *Shakira - Sale el Sol* (Sony BMG)
6. *Shakira - Sale el Sol* (Sony BMG)
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8. *Shakira - Sale el Sol* (Sony BMG)
9. *Shakira - Sale el Sol* (Sony BMG)
10. *Shakira - Sale el Sol* (Sony BMG)

### CANADA

**Albums**

1. *Shaggy - Stuntin* (Atlantic)
2. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
3. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
4. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
5. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
7. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
8. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
10. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)

### ITALY

**Albums**

1. *The Offspring - Greatest Hits ... And More* (Columbia)
2. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
3. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
4. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
5. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
7. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
8. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
10. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)

### SPAIN

**Albums**

1. *The Offspring - Greatest Hits ... And More* (Columbia)
2. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
3. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
4. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
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7. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
8. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
10. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)

### SWEDEN

**Singles**

1. *The Streets - Tourist Attraction* (Universal)
2. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
3. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
4. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
5. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
7. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
8. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
10. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)

### AUSTRIA

**Albums**

1. *Green Day - American Idiot* (Reprise/Warner)
2. *The Offspring - Greatest Hits ... And More* (Columbia)
3. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
4. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
5. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
7. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
8. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
10. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)

### NORWAY

**Singles**

1. *Atomic - Total Eclipse of the Heart* (Reprise/Warner)
2. *The Offspring - Greatest Hits ... And More* (Columbia)
3. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
4. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
5. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
7. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
8. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
10. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)

### WALLONIA

**Singles**

1. *Alf - Clear Skies* (Belmusik)
2. *The Offspring - Greatest Hits ... And More* (Columbia)
3. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
4. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
5. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
7. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
8. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
10. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)

### MEXICO

**Albums**

1. *The Offspring - Greatest Hits ... And More* (Columbia)
2. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
3. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
4. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
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7. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
8. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
10. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)

### FINLAND

**Singles**

1. *The Offspring - Greatest Hits ... And More* (Columbia)
2. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
3. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
4. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
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7. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
8. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
10. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)

### GREECE

**Albums**

1. *RIP Adidas - Greatest Hits* (EMI), *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
2. *The Offspring - Greatest Hits ... And More* (Columbia)
3. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
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8. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
10. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)

### HUNGARY

**Singles**

1. *Dolap - Mi Vanyasztok* (Universal)
2. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
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7. *Coldplay - X&Y* (Parlophone/EMI)
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**EUROCHARTS**

**SINGLE SALES**

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| 1    | COLDPLAY | X&Y | LOWE RECORDS | 7786 
| 2    | R. KELLY | I’m Not Thinking | JIVE | 7785 **1908** |
| 3    | MARK KNOPFLER | Shangri-La | SONY MUSIC | **1909** |
| 4    | VARIOUS ARTISTS | More Than 50 Most Loved Irving | IRVING | 7784 |
| 5    | LEE WESTOVER | Move This World | STAND UP | 7783 |
| 6    | CALEB TEKCI | Natural Mystic | SONY MUSIC | 7782 |
| 7    | THE PEACEMAKERS | Live At Ben’s Boys Town | LEGACY RECORDS | 7781 |
| 8    | FOOFIGHTERS | My Love Is A Monster | ESSENTIALS | 7780 |
| 9    | THE WHITE STRIPES | Get Behind Me Satan | SONY MUSIC | 7779 |
| 10   | DAVID MATTHEWS BAND | Stand Up | LEGACY RECORDS | 7778 |
| 11   | JOHN PRINE | Fair & Square | LEGACY RECORDS | 7777 |
| 12   | THE BLACK EYED PEAS | Monkey Business | LEGACY RECORDS | 7776 |
| 13   | IL DIVO | In Diano | LEGACY RECORDS | 7775 |
| 14   | JACK JOHNSON | In Between Dreams | LEGACY RECORDS | 7774 |

### Top Soundtracks

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<td>1980-1990 ISLAND</td>
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SALES DATA COMPILED BY

TOP DVD SALES

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Beatles drummer Ringo Starr, left, and artist Peter Max put the finishing touches on two Baldwin Grand pianos at Max’s New York studio June 20. One of them was used during the taping of Starr’s June 29 concert of Dylan’s Greatest Hits Theater for the PBS series “Soundstage.” The other Baldwin will be auctioned for charity later this year.

The BMI Christian Music Awards selected writers and publishers of the year’s most-performed Christian songs June 20 in Nashville. Building 429’s “Glory Defined” won for song of the year, and Casting Crowns’ Mark Hall was named songwriter of the year. Pictured, from left, are the Gospel Music Assn.’s John Stylt; Provident Music Group’s Terry Ryan; BMI’s Joyce Rice; Casting Crowns’ Melodee Devevo and Juan Devevo; and Proper Management’s Norman Miller. (Photo: Steve Lowry)

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**WHO NEEDS SKIM?**
Sources say dates are being "unofficially" held for three concerts at Madison Square Garden in October for legendary power trio Cream. The group — guitarist/vocalist Eric Clapton, drummer Ginger Baker and bassist Jack Bruce — reunited May 2-6 for four sellouts at London’s Royal Albert Hall that grossed more than $3.6 million and drew 18,086, according to Billboard Boxscore. Prior to the London show, Cream had not performed together since its 1993 induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame; the group officially disbanded in 1968. Neither Madison Square Garden nor Clapton’s agent would confirm that the dates were being held.

**MEMORIAL OF THE HOUR**
Sean "P. Diddy" Combs has been called many names, but never "linguist." The artist/entrepreneur butched several attempts at Yiddish while hosting a July 13 UJA Federation of New York luncheon honoring Edgar Bronfman Jr. In accepting his honor, the Warner Music Group chairman/CEO recited a number of other names for Combs, including "king" and "check receiver." After getting a chuckle from Combs, Bronfman quickly added: "You got yours, now show me mine." In April, Combs sold WMG a 50% stake in his Bad Boy Entertainment.

The event at the Pierre Hotel attracted the cream of the music biz crop, including Universal Music Group bigwig Doug Morris and WMG’s Lyor Cohen, both of whom offered warm tributes to Bronfman. Also saluting Bronfman was legendary Elektra Records founder Jac Holzman, who was lured back into the WMG fold last spring as senior adviser to the chairman. The annual event raised a record $750,000 for the UJA and the Music for Youth Foundation.

**SUMMER FEVER**
Donna Summer has entered a one-off deal with Universal for her new single, "I Got Your Love." Beginning July 26, the track will be available for digital download at iTunes. "I Got Your Love" was written by the singer and Bruce Roberts; it was produced by Roberts and Peter Stengaard. Summer, who is spending the summer on tour, is in discussions with labels to secure an album deal.

**BRIDGE SCHOOL BRIGADE**
The annual Bridge School concerts—which benefit a school for children with special needs founded by Neil Young and his wife, Pegi, in Hillsborough, Calif.—have traditionally featured stripped-down performances by some of rock’s biggest names. Past performers include Bruce Springsteen.

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**RECORD COMPANIES:** Alliant Music Group in Los Angeles appoints Kendall Duffie COO. He was head of A&R at Light Records.

TVT Records in New York ups Joey Carvello to senior VP of promotion. He was VP of crossover promotion.

Island Def Jam Music Group in New York promotes Martine Reynolds to senior VP of rhythm and crossover promotion. She was VP of rhythm promotion.

Moraine Records in Nashville names Nina Rosman national director of promotion. She held the same position at Gulf Coast Records.

Walt Disney Records in Burbank, Calif., names Sonia Tyler manager of marketing. She was strategic global brand manager at Proctor & Gamble/Sebastian International.

**PUBLISHING:** EMI Music Publishing U.K. in London names Alex Jones-Donelly senior VP of A&R. He was head of music and live music at BBC Radio 1.

**MUSIC VIDEO:** MTV Networks Latin America in Miami appoints brand experts to oversee each of its three Latin American channels. MTV Latin America taps Josh Greenberg as senior VP of programming and creative strategy. He was VP of creative marketing at Fox Network. Nickelodeon Latin America ups Tatiana Rodriguez to VP of programming and creative strategy. She was VP of programming and acquisitions. VH1 Latin America promotes Vicente Sols to VP of programming and creative strategy. Seis was VP of programming and music programming.

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**HOME VIDEO:** Universal Music & Video Distribution in Universal City, Calif., promotes Joy Slusarek to VP of national sales. She was senior account executive.

**RADIO:** Sirius Satellite Radio in New York names Steve Leeds VP of talent-industry affairs. He was senior VP of promotion for Virgin Records.

**RELATED FIELDS:** Music Choice in New York promotes Damon Williams to VP of programming and production. He was senior director.

Gorgeous PR in New York promotes Rachel Reynolds to account executive. She was junior publicist.

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