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4. THIS WEEK

COUNTRY SINGLES SALES

VIDEOS

HOT DIGITAL SONGS

TOP DVD SALES

R&B ADULT

THE BILLBOARD 200

HOT R&B/HIP-HOP

HOT COUNTRY

HOT DIGITAL SONGS

HOT VIDEO

POP 100

HOT SINGLES SALES

HOT R&B/HIP-HOP

HOT COUNTRY

HOT DIGITAL SONGS

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HOT DIGITAL SONGS

HOT R&B/HIP-HOP
Everyone has been talking about it. "Mobile is the future; get on the train!" We hear it at cocktail parties and swanky business dinners.

We nod knowingly and say, "Yes, yes. I know. I’m on top of it."

Well, I think the truth is, almost everyone knows the music business is NOT on top of it. You might have a lone "mobile" expert on staff. But at the executive level, all are winging it.

I was one of you until about six months ago. Then I was thrown headfirst into mobile land. Billboard partnered with CTIA—The Wireless Association—on its official mobile entertainment conference. We successfully launched our first event Sept. 26 in San Francisco (the next one is in April). And I’ve been introduced to Billboard Mobile, a very cool application that lets phone junkies download ringers (master and polyphonic) from the Billboard charts and access breaking news, a trivia game and a concert tour finder.

To launch Billboard Mobile, I had to become a wireless expert. It was scary. I found myself in a sea of new jargon and had to learn quickly about the advantages of different carriers and the interests of handset makers, using terms like "WAP" and "short code." I was interviewed by a slew of tech magazines and analysts, who I’m thankful gave Billboard Mobile top marks.

Truth be told, I’m still scared. Back in the day, being a music journalist meant understanding music, not technology. As music folks, we know what makes a good bridge in a song, we know which single to go to market with first (most of the time), we know the promo game, what we know which songs move it. Most of us are still figuring out downloads. That is why the music business is in the poor state it is.

Unless everyone gets on the train, the train is going to pass you. By the top-level music exec, not just your digital experts, need to "get it." Full-song, over-the-air downloads are on the horizon. Today’s young consumer discovers new music via the Internet or a mobile device, not in record stores. How are you going to reach tomorrow’s music buyer?

One reason Billboard got into mobile is that Billboard.com has 2.5 million unique monthly users, all music fans. They want Billboard on their mobile devices, so we gave it to them.

On a deeper level, I feel that Billboard, in this time of business turmoil, has to be a leader. In the pages of the magazine, on our Web sites and at our conferences, it’s our job to inspire and challenge the business. If Billboard can go mobile, so can you.

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**Saving CBGB: Supporters Still Have Time To Rally**

**BY LITTLE STEVEN’ VAN ZANDT**

As that great protest singer Yogi Berra once sang, "CBGB ain’t over till it’s over." Yes, an eviction notice for failure to pay rent has been served. Yes, every city in the world wants the club to relocate to a place where it might feel more welcome. And yes, Hurricane Katrina was a bigger, more serious tragedy and all the attention and money went there, as it should have.

But CBGB is still open. There are bands playing every night. The lawyers will be in court for at least a few months. So this gives the record industry one more chance to try and save the last important rock club in New York.

One more chance to keep the landlord, Bowery Residents’ Committee executive director Muzzy Rosenbloom, from being the most despised man in New York forever.

One more chance to keep Mayor Michael Bloomberg from being embarrassed by losing the last historically significant rock landmark—and, by the way, one that brings in millions of dollars in tourism activity, and always will.

The mayor has tried to talk to Rosenbloom, so has Gov. George Pataki.

FORTY-THREE city council members, the Coalition for the Homeless, the Creative Coalition, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, the Local Community Board, historic preservation societies, filmmakers Jonathan Demme and Jim Jarmusch and artists from Blondie to Public Enemy all support CBGB staying where it is.

Why? Because a new band can walk in there tonight and play on the exact same stage in the exact same location as the Ramones, Blondie, the Patti Smith Group, Television, Richard Hell & the Voidoids and the Dictators.

And as de from that, one landlord should not be able to take on the entire city, the city’s best interests and the entire rock ’n’ roll industry, and win. And right now, he is winning.

The reason he is winning is he has $30 million of taxpayers’ money and Hilly Kristal has only himself and his one personal lawyer fighting for survival.

We need money to fight.

We need artists and executives with real power to speak to power and the other board members of the Bowery Residents’ Committee.

We need the club where it is, not in a different state or city or on a different block.

The music industry will give more than $100 million to hurricane relief. We always give, and that is something to be proud of. But lately everybody wants to pretend we are all born rich and famous and successful. And that is why we are able to give.

Well, once upon a time we were just starting out. And we had plenty of clubs in which to find our way and develop our talent. And one by one they are closing. It is not just the music business. The problem is infecting our entire society.

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**Changing of the Guard**

**BY STEVIE V**

Blondie doesn’t have a personal lawyer. They have one, they are closing.

One more chance to keep Blondie, one more chance to stop the Ramones, one more chance to keep CBGB.

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**There is no development anymore. No patience. No long-term thinking. The entry-level doorways to our culture are disappearing before our very eyes.**

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ALICIA BARES HER SOUL.

ALICIA KEYS

UNPLUGGED

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EMINEM FIRMS SUE RINGTONE COMPANIES

Eminem’s publishing administrators Eight Mile Style and Martin Affiliated sued five companies for selling ringtones of his songs online. The copyright infringement suit, filed Oct. 4 in U.S. District Court in Detroit, against Cellus USA, Matrix.im, Fannobile, Myphonefiles and nextonex.files.com, has not been served on the defendants yet. Attorney Howard Hertz says that unlicensed karaoke providers are the next target.

NOREAGA GOES REGGAETON

Queens, N.Y.-based rapper Noreaga has inked a deal with Def Jam CEO Jay-Z’s new world music label, Roc La Familia, to release an all-reggaetón album. The album, “Nore a La Familia,” is set to drop in March and will feature guest appearances by current reggaetón sensations Daddy Yankee, Hector “El Father” and Zion & Lennox.

STREAMCAST TO SELL DOWNLOADS

Embattled peer-to-peer technology company StreamCast Networks, developer of the Morpheus file-sharing software, has inked a deal to sell downloads from independent music distributor IRIS Distribution. In addition to selling songs from IRIS, it will explore the distribution of free music videos and offers, as well as offering Morpheus users free content paid for by sponsors.

GLOBAL ANTI-PIRACY ALLIANCE FORMS

A coalition of business leaders from some of the world’s top companies in various industries launched an initiative Oct. 4 to address the theft of intellectual property at

Musicland Taps New CEO As Turnaround Continues

The appointment of Jack Chaloner to replace Eric Weissman as Musicland chairman/CEO comes at a critical juncture in the ongoing 28-month old turnaround effort at the 900-unit Minnetonka, Minn.-based chain. The major music vendors see the upcoming fourth quarter as a make-or-break period for the chain. Some say Musicland’s performance will determine its ability to make holiday product payments, which come due in January and February. Others project that Musicland will have liquidity through the first quarter.

Beyond that, the vendors wonder if Musicland will have the financial wherewithal to fund the rollout of its new retail initiatives, including interactive digital media bars. Sources say retrofitting could cost as much as $300,000 per music store.

Despite the uncertainties, at least three of the majors, as well as most independent labels and distributors, say they will support Musicland by expanding credit lines so the chain will have well-stocked stores for the holiday selling season. However, a senior executive at one key vendor remains worried about the chain’s viability.

“i just don’t see a positive end play for Musicland,” he says.

The Musicland operation has been enduring shock therapy and dramatic changes to return it to fiscal health, one executive familiar with the company says. “Can it get to the finish line?” the executive asks.

“Yes. But will it be out of court? That remains to be seen.”

Some see the possibility of a prepackaged Chapter 11 filing on the horizon. That would allow Musicland to shutter its unprofitable stores. In 2004, it continued on >>

Digital Sales Rising

IFPI Says Paid Downloads May Make Up For Physical-Sales Drop

LONDON—According to figures released by the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry, total sales of physical recordings in the first half of 2005 fell. But that decline was largely offset by a rise in digital sales.

For the first half of this year, the retail value of physical recorded music was down 6.3% compared with last year, settling at $12.4 billion, with a corresponding 6.6% drop in unit sales. But the silver lining is that digital sales have more than tripled to $790 million from $220 million during the same period last year.

Taken together, the figures yield a combined retail value of $13.2 billion, cutting the year-on-year loss to only 1.9%.

“We’ve known over a long period of time about the problems with physical sales,” IFPI’s London-based chairman/CEO John Kennedy says. “But we feel this year’s fairly close to last year as the number of markets where digital music has found its feet grows. There is great cause for optimism.”

Digital sales, including mobile phone downloads but excluding the equally fast-growing ringtones, now account for 6% of the total global business.

“It’s a real business now, it is real money,” says Matthieu Lauriot-Prevost, senior VP of global marketing at EMI Music in London. “We’re now organizing our companies in terms of marketing, promotions and sales to reflect that there is a business here.”

EMI has already predicted publicly that digital sales will account for 25% of its sales in five years. Another observation that Lauriot-Prevost makes is that four of EMI’s top 10 monthly digital tracks are catalog classics, with current hits accounting for the remainder.

“Digital, as a percentage of our total sales, has doubled in figures in 2005,” he continued on > p8
MUSICLAND (cont.)

Tower Records finished a three-year turnaround effort with a prepackaged Chapter 11 filing that forced a debt-to-equity conversion on three recalculating bond holders. In that filing, all vendors were paid full.

While most vendors would consider such a filing by Musicland a soft landing, company insiders say it would be a worst-case scenario. They insist the turnaround can be completed without that step.

Yet vendors wonder how Musicland can complete its turnaround without another equity infusion from parent Sun Capital. The Boca Raton, Fla.-based firm manages $2 billion in assets, including investments in about 45 companies. Sun Capital assumed ownership of Musicland from Best Buy in June 2003 in a transaction that essentially was cash-free. At that time, Musicland was 14 days from liquidation, according to company insiders.

Although Sun Capital saved the day for the chain, executives at the investment firm initially resisted pleas from the majors to “put some skin in the game.” It was not until April that Sun Capital finally injected $25 million in cash. That step pleased vendors, but they still characterize it as not being big enough.

In the meantime, the management team Sun Capital set up soon has been trying to restore the chain to fiscal health while planning for the store of the future. Weissman, who is starting his own consulting and investment firm, had established himself as a turnaround specialist when he led Alliance Entertainment Corp. and Chuck E. Cheese in 1997 and built it into one of the industry’s leading wholesalers.

Under Weissman’s leadership, a projected $118 million loss in earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization was cut to just $48 million for the year ended February 2004. Losses were further reduced to $17 million in the year ended February 2005, sales were up.

This year, Musicland management is hoping to break even on EBITDA, even though sales projections are falling short. The goal for next year is for the chain to generate enough EBITDA to fund capital expenditures and cover interest expense, according to company insiders.

Weissman’s familiarity with the changing music industry landscape was integral to revamping its store concept. But he is not a retailer, and some are applauding Chadsy’s in-stallment because of his retail background, which includes stints at May Department Stores, Kohl’s, Target and Sunglass Hut International.

Chadsy’s experience is expected to help Musicland implement its game plan. That strategy includes digital and ringtone download kiosks, poster and T-shirt printing, and a digital entertainment bar. In addition, some new vendors will help Musicland finance store remodels, company executives say.

Chadsy says he has to earn the confidence of vendors. But he says they should not be concerned about the company’s ability to carry out its strategy.

“We want to make sure we have the right capitalization for next year,” he says. “I wouldn’t be here today if I didn’t have confidence that our partners are behind us. Sun Capital views Musicland as a signature investment.”

For his part, Sun Capital co-CEO Marc Leifer says, “If we can turn the corner on profitability and the equity markets become less negative on the sector, we would still like to take the company public eventually.”

DIGITAL SALES (cont.)

from >>p7

Thanks especially to iTunes Music Store,” says Martin Mills, chairman of U.K.-based independent Farnborough Group. “Sales in the United States are particularly significant.”

Such executives as Kennedy also believe the digital marketplace is growing thanks to the industry’s use of litigation and education to discourage illegal downloads.

Some of the most successful digital markets for the labels have included the United States, Japan, Germany, and Italy. Digital sales totaled a combined $133 million—with mobile sales representing a staggering 96% of that. Paul Brindley, managing director of digital entertainment consultancy Music Ally in London, is bullish about digital sales. It will become “a significant revenue earner in the entire business,” he says. He adds that some digital music service providers boast of large quantities of downloads with out specifying which ones had been paid for and which had been downloaded free in promotions. He argues that the distinction is vital for understanding whether the improved digital sales are actually replacing the losses in physical sales, but not many labels or e-tailers break down those figures.

From >>p10

New releases now rack significant digital sales. Gwen Stefani made musical history this month when her “Hollaback Girl” became the first track to pass the 1 million downloads mark, according to her label, Interscope.

Another successful digital market was the United Kingdom, where single digital downloads sold through the likes of iTunes and Napster rose tenfold to 10 million units.

The most spectacular performance was in Japan, where online mobile sales totaled a combined $133 million—with mobile sales representing a staggering 96% of that. Paul Brindley, managing director of digital entertainment consultancy Music Ally in London, is bullish about digital sales. It will become “a significant revenue earner in the entire business,” he says. He adds that some digital music service providers boast of large quantities of downloads with out specifying which ones had been paid for and which had been downloaded free in promotions. He argues that the distinction is vital for understanding whether the improved digital sales are actually replacing the losses in physical sales, but not many labels or e-tailers break down those figures.

LEGAL BY SUSAN BUTLER

Labels Face File-Sharing CounterSuit

NEW YORK—An Oregon woman sued for unauthorized file sharing is trying to throw the book at a number of major labels, counter suing them for everything from electronic trespass and invasion of privacy to computer fraud.

Tanya Andersen alleges that she is a disabled, 42-year-old, single mother of an 8-year-old girl. She lives on a limited Social Security income, using her computer solely to communicate with friends and family across the country and for Internet commerce. Andersen claims she has never downloaded music in any form.

After a “Jane Doe” lawsuit filed by the major labels resulted in an Internet service provider identifying Andersen through a nine-digit Internet protocol address, a law firm for the labels contacted her by letter. In June, when she denied illegally downloading more than 1,000 music files, the labels sued her in the U.S. District Court in Portland, Ore., for copyright infringement.

One of Andersen’s attorneys, Lory Lybeck with Lybeck Murphy in Mercer Island, Wash., tells Billboard that the labels’ representatives refused Andersen’s offer to inspect her computer or to consider that this may be a case of mistaken identity. Instead, they tried to “coerce,” a settlement of an unfiled action.

“It should not be hard for big organizations to understand that you’re dealing with hundreds of thousands of nine-digit codes and that mistakes can be made,” Lybeck says. “I think that copyright infringement is wrong, but collateral damage is worse if you can take a little bit of care and take the machine out of the lawsuit. Spend an hour or two [to investigate] before turning the lady’s life upside down.”

Andersen filed a counterclaim Sept. 30 against the labels and record companies who sued her—Atlantic, Priority, Capitol, Universal Music Group and BMG Music.

While Andersen maintains she never illegally downloaded music, her attorneys are introducing a number of other legal allegations. They argue that MediaSentry, which identifies unauthorized file sharing for the labels, did not have Andersen’s permission to inspect or copy her private computer files. The counterclaim also claims MediaSentry bypassed Andersen’s computer security system, breaking into her computer to “secretly spy and zeal or remove private information.”

Andersen’s attorneys point to testimony of Tom Mizzone, MediaSentry VP of data services, in the Arizona Kazaa lawsuit to support their claim that the company breaks into computers. Last December, Mizzone testified that his company takes snapshots of copyrighted music files.

Recording Industry Assn. of America senior VP of legal affairs Stanley Pierre-Louis says MediaSentry acted appropriately. “What we’re doing is what any other [Kazaa] user does, which is to go onto the networks and download from people who have chosen to make files available on their networks.”

He adds that Andersen and other alleged offenders are “opening their door and putting [the files] on the front step, saying, ‘Here it is.’ And then saying, ‘I can’t believe you’ve invaded my privacy!’ It’s not as if we’re navigating their hard drives.”

It is not unheard of for defendants to go to great lengths, such as contacting their legislators or counter suing, to defend themselves. Pierre-Louis says. Some have even testified before Congress and then set aside the suits when the evidence was revealed.

“There have been a few instances of counterclaims by defendants,” he says. “And we have prevailed in each instance.”

www.americanradiohistory.com
Dear Ketel One Drinker
Can we just say, you looked great the other night.
P2Ps Race For New Business Models ...

NEW YORK—In the wake of the Supreme Court’s July ruling against Grokster, a growing number of peer-to-peer file-sharing companies are scrambling to develop new business models. Whether they can convert traders of free files into paying customers—and do so before the record industry closes their lines of business—remains to be seen. MetaMachine, the New York-based parent of edonkey, intends to rid its network of pirated music files, the company declared at a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing Sept. 28. It also announced plans to settle its copyright infringement dispute with the Recording Industry Assn. of America. The company—one of seven served with cease-and-desist orders in mid-September—says its company “couldn’t afford to fight” impending litigation from the recording industry. It predicts that P2P companies still operating in the United States will come to the same conclusion in the coming months.

This is not the first time the major labels have used the courts to beat P2P services into submission. In 2001, generation technologies ever did, and have been significantly more difficult to police. Warnings are coming from within the P2P community that history is poised to repeat itself. “Making all of the American-based peer-to-peer companies go into some sort of closed system is not going to resolve any of the problems the industry is seeing with market erosion from file sharing,” StreamCast CEO Michael Weiss says. “That’s just going to force users into offshore-based or open-source file-sharing solutions.”

Yagan acknowledges that retaining the appeal of the old P2P world will be a central challenge for file-sharing services as they transition to a commercial business model. edonkey has yet to work out the details of its own plan. “The peer-to-peer themselves haven’t quite figured out what they are when they grow up,” says Vance Ikezoye, president and Audible Magic, a leading P2P filtering solution. This time around, the labels appear to be allowing for greater experimentation with new business models. Among those being considered are services that approximate the “free” proposition by offering extensive sampling and try-before-you-buy features, or that allow for the mixing of DRM-protected files with “gray market” material, like live bootleg tracks, not registered with leading content-filtering services.

“An important component of discovering music from a community is the ability to sample effectively,” says one major-label-technology executive, speaking on the condition of anonymity. “We just want to make sure that we are fairly compensated for the value that music generates in those sorts of services.”

P2P services may face an even more daunting challenge than revamping their business models: beating the clock. They may be running out of time as the recording industry moves to shutter file-sharing services.

“Any P2P thinking about flipping a switch will severely underestimate what it takes, just as Mesh did,” says Mesh executive chairman Robert Summer. “None of the currently operating P2Ps have anticipated life after settlement. They are pretty much starting from ground zero.”

...While BitTorrent Lands VC Cash

‘Please Don’t Call Us A P2P’ Network Eyes Movies, Music Distribution

Most peer-to-peer file-sharing companies these days are receiving cease-and-desist letters. BitTorrent—at one point associated with one-third of all P2P traffic—is getting cold hard cash.

On Sept. 26, the company landed $8.7 million of venture capital funding from Doll Capital Management and could be on its way to becoming the entertainment industry’s Internet distribution platform of choice. Since the collapse of the original Napster in 2001, venture capitalists have avoided funding anything that smacked of P2P or piracy. But BitTorrent has been very good at distancing itself from that stigma.

P2P forks let users find files on each other’s hard drives and trade them. BitTorrent is a publishing tool that allows multiple users to download large files very quickly by sharing the distribution load between them. Even though these large files are sometimes unlicensed Hollywood blockbusters or the entire catalogs of top musicians, BitTorrent continues to sidestep legal challenges.

In part, this is because BitTorrent does not help users search and discover files published with its technology, distancing itself from the actions of those who do.

And while many claim P2P technology can be used for legal purposes, BitTorrent has an A-list roster of legitimate business users in place.

Red Hat and Linspire use it to distribute Linux open-source operating systems. Game publisher Blizzard Entertainment uses it to send software updates to more than 4 million “World of Warcraft” gamers worldwide. Even NASA uses it to distribute its World Wind satellite imaging application.

“IT would be an unbelievably expensive infrastructure to serve everybody in the world that wants your movies on demand,” says Eric Garland, CEO of P2P monitoring service BigChampagne. “BitTorrent [is] the most powerful media platform ever conceived because distribution is free, and it’s viral.”

BitTorrent has never charged for its software, operating from T-shirt sales and donations by appreciative users. According to BitTorrent COO Ashwin Nalin, the company will use the funding to develop a more commercial business model.

The plan is to act as a distributor, connecting content publishers with those who have downloaded BitTorrent files, basically a paid download relationship with the licensor through one of the BitTorrent publishers,” Nalin notes. BitTorrent’s bid faces challenges. No entertainment companies were yet willing to comment on plans to use BitTorrent. Microsoft has revealed plans for a similar technology dubbed Avalanche, claiming to operate 30% faster. And streaming media—cheaper, less prone to piracy, and pushed by media heavyweights Google, AOL and Yahoo—may trump downloading as the prevailing model.

“Perhaps the biggest hurdle for BitTorrent is whether it can keep its massive user base as it commercializes its technology,” says Stewart Allop, a venture capitalist with Andreessen Venture Associates. “If they pursue a revenue model to satisfy its new shareholders, they may sacrifice one thing for the other.”
4 TEAM CAPTAINS... CHOSE 55 ARTISTS... FROM 42 BANDS... FOR 1 GROUNDBREAKING ALBUM
China Pressed On Piracy

By Emmanuel Legrand and Bill Holland

The International Federation of the Phonographic Industry chairman/CEO John Kennedy and his Recording Industry Assn. of America counterpart, Mitch Bainwol, visited Beijing Sept. 26-28, pushing the Chinese government to step up its action against piracy and make conditions more favorable for international music businesses to operate in China.

Kennedy and Bainwol met with the representatives of the Chinese Ministry of Culture and the National Copyright Administration of China, among others.

“It is our interest to have a legitimate market grow,” Kennedy says. “And it will be helped when international companies are able to set up companies and operate in China.”

Chinese regulations stipulate that an international company cannot wholly own all the required subsidiaries of a major-label operation. While Bainwol and Kennedy praised the progress that has been made, they add that China still needs to do much more to stop physical piracy. According to IFPI estimates, China is the world’s 2nd-largest music market with total sales in 2004 of $1.06 billion.

According to Kennedy, 90% of the recorded music sold in China is from pirated sources, and only a few of the country’s 86 known optical disc factories are manufacturing legitimate products.

The two leaders also asked for criminal prosecutions to be included in the country’s legislative arsenal against piracy, and for more cooperation with authorities in plant inspections. Kennedy says Chinese officials “made no promises” regarding prosecution.

“I think UMG is preparing for the next wave of technol- ogy,” says Cathy Pellow, whose hourlong alternative music video show “Refused TV” airs weekly in 5 million homes in Southern California.

She predicts that astecno- logy expands to allow cheap, easy downloading of music videos to iPods and other handheld devices, UMG will be poised to profit because it will have drained the marketplace of its clips.

UMG has not previously charged a fee to U.S. TV outlets. It is generally assumed that the outlets provide a promotional service for artists.

UMG executives declined to comment. However, a source close to the situation says the company plans to take the money it would have spent on video duplication and shipping and shift it to other areas of mark- eting and artist development.

“It’s going to be the status quo in the music business,” predicts the source, who seconds Wein- stein’s belief that other major labels are gearing up to charge servicing fees.

UMG decided on the flat fee by multiplying the number of videos it sends out each year by the $30 it spends to duplicate each title. “UMG is not making any money here,” the source says.

The fee demand went out to such national entertainment man—obviously [they] have no idea what we do here.”

The video veteran, who was one of the first to play clips by a number of top hip-hop artists, including Nelly, Damian Marley and Young Jeezy, feels UMG underestimates the power of local exposure.

Before you get MTV to play a video on “Total Request Live,” you have to have something to build it up, to get to that point,” he says.

Jay Seidt, executive producer of Music Mix USA, which airs on NBC, CBS, Fox and the WB affili- ates in the Southeast; hopes managers and acts will rally around the shows: “They might actually become a voice in sup- porting us and letting UMG know of the snowball effect.”

Warner Music Group, EMI and Sony BMG declined to com- ment. WMG already charges AOL for access to its music video library.

Irrespective of the outcome of an upcoming case brought against Napster last month in federal court, predictions are that more labels will want to levy a service fee for digital distribution.

“The much-anticipated debut of a Microsoft/UMG music subscription service is on hold as negotiations between the computer giant and the major record labels have bro- ken down over pricing,” according to entertainment sources.

According to several sources, Microsoft informed the labels it was unhappy with the licensing model established for other subscription serv- ices and wants a better deal. Online subscription serv- ices like Napster, Rhapsody and Yahoo Music Unlimited pay labels a per-user mini- mum of $6-$8 per month. Mi- crosoft reportedly was nego- tiating for a lower rate, which labels resisted.

A Microsoft representative declined to comment. It is un- clear whether this is an at- tempted power play by Micro- soft or simply a signal for a re-evaluation period.

No timeline was given for talks to resume.

However, a source close to Microsoft says the company is not abandoning its interest in a music subscrip- tion service. “So there is a ball in the labels’ court.”

There’s no question Mi- crosoft is going to get into this business,” the source says.

“It’s just a matter of when. It’s all about the labels right now.”

Sources at the major rec- ord companies, however, call the dispute over royalties a red herring.

“For Microsoft to say the economies are not feasible is disingenuous,” one label source says, noting that Nap- ster, Rhapsody and Yahoo all manage to operate with the same financial terms that Mi- crosoft was offered. “It seems amusing that Microsoft can’t figure out a way to make it work. They could buy us to- morrow and we’d be just a rounding error on their bal- ance sheet."

Yahoo set the online music subscription service world on its head in May when it started offering an unlimited portable service for only $5 per month, undercutting competitors Napster and Rhapsody by $5 a month. Yahoo is able to sub- sidize the service through ad- vertising revenue, and labels say Microsoft should be able to do the same.

Microsoft currently has the only digital rights manage- ment system used for portable subscription serv- ices. Its MSN portal claims more than 400 million unique visitors per month worldwide, and the company owns the most widely used operating system and Internet browser on the market.

Last spring, Microsoft of- fered a 5-for-1 track giveaway to attract new users to the MSN Music Store, indicating its willingness to subsidize digital music.

As such, some feel the delay is more likely a result of internal Microsoft politics. The company recently reorgan- ized its business into three di- visions. The MSN Music Store now falls under the Enter- tainment and Devices divi- sion, led by Xbox chief Rob- biie Bach.

The majors have met Mi- crosoft’s withdrawal with mild surprise and a collective shrug. The MSN Music Store is largely considered an also- ran in the digital music space, having failed to have a signif- icant impact against such competitors as Apple Com- puter’s iTunes Music Store.

So far, Microsoft has been notoriously bad at all things dealing with music online,” another label source says.

China Pressed On Piracy

IFPI, RIAA Heads Seek Action From Beijing

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“It is our interest to have a legitimate market grow,” Kennedy says. “And it will be helped when international companies are able to set up companies and operate in China.”

Kennedy says regulations concerning Internet piracy are also being drafted and that Chinese authorities welcomed the music industry in discussions of online and mobile market concerns.

“We should be able to bring the benefit of our expertise,” says Kennedy, who plans to travel to China three times per year. “Wouldn’t it be good if on this issue we sat on the same side of the table as the government?”

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The two leaders also asked for criminal prosecutions to be included in the country’s legislative arsenal against piracy, and for more cooperation with authorities in plant inspections. Kennedy says Chinese officials “made no promises” regarding prosecution.

Bainwol suggests that China, now a World Trade Organiza- tion member, has a self-interest in thwarting piracy. “The Chinese leaders with whom we met asserted their commitment to strengthening the fight against copyright piracy—both online and on the street—due to the recognition that this is vital to promoting Chi- nese creativity as well as eco- nomic development.”

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AN UNPRECEDENTED EVENT IN METAL HISTORY

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IN STORES OCTOBER 11

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Razor’s Tie With XXL
Marketing-Minded Label, Savvy Magazine Join For Hip New Hip-Hop Collection

Razor & Tie Entertainment knows a thing or two about branding. Just look at what the New York-based company has done with the successful “Kidz Bop” series, which encompasses CDs, videos and toys.

Now, R&T is partnering with monthly hip-hop music/culture magazine XXL for a bit of co-branding. On Nov. 15, R&T will release “XXL Raps Volume 1,” the first compilation from the magazine. It is also the first time R&T has entered into a joint venture with a magazine to release a CD.

“We’ve been doing compilations for a long time,” R&T co-owner Cliff Chenfeld says. “But this time, we’re combining the relevancy and cutting-edge quality of a brand like XXL with our ability to market compilations in a way that’s a good arrangement. It’s our way of pooling our resources.”

XXL executive publisher Jonathan Rieggold says the idea for a compilation has been bandied about for years. But, he adds, “it was really important for us to focus on our integrity from a journalistic standpoint. Then, after gaining trust from the consumer, we can grow into other areas.”

Unlike numerous compilations that flood the market hawking the greatest hits, “XXL Raps” takes a different approach: It spotlights album tracks and singles from the past two years—not necessarily the biggest hits. That said, there is a certain cool vibe that flows throughout the 18 tracks.

In this way, the tracks capture the magazine’s slogan: Hip-hop on a higher level.


Now, R&T may not have lots of knowledge in hip-hop, but it is great at branding and marketing. It is the reverse for XXL, which knows the hip-hop world inside and out, but likely needs assistance in the marketing department. In this way, each side strengthens the other, with the ultimate goal being increased CD sales.

So, while XXL is promoting the disc via sister periodicals under the Harris Publications umbrella (King, Scratch, Rides, Fuego), R&T is focusing on a full-threat media campaign, encompassing the small screen and the Internet.

Just as it has done for its own releases—as well as the releases of other labels (majors and indies)—R&T, with its in-house media buying division, will incorporate direct-response TV ads and e-marketing into the mix.

R&T has changed its business model to remain competitive. “When everyone else was going nuts and crazy, we weren’t,” Chenfeld says. “Now that they’re all pulling back, we can experiment.”

Staying with R&T, the company has also partnered with Chuck E. Cheese for a national, chainwide “Kidz Bop” contest/sweepstakes promotion—with the grand prize winner receiving a party at a Chuck E. Cheese location and all future and current “Kidz Bop” audio and video releases.

Fatboy Goes Slim: In a somewhat subliminal” branding partnership, British DJ/producer Fatboy Slim “appears” in the print campaign for the new iPod Nano. While it may not immediately register, those that read the ad’s “fine print” will notice that Slim’s latest album, “Palookaville,” is spotlighted in a very cool, subtle way.

By the way, Slim’s U.S. label, Astralwerks, is also responsible for the “Six Feet Under: Everything Ends” soundtrack, which recently experienced a surge in sales following the final episode of the HBO drama (Inside Track, Billboard, Sept. 3).

One track, in particular, helped propel these sales. “Breathe Me” by Sia was heard in its entirety during the gripping closing scenes. Thanks to the attention, Astralwerks will soon release Sia’s 2004 international album, “Colour The Small One.” The emotion-packed “Breathe Me” is one of many highlights on the beautifully chilled album.

Lip Service: Readers of this column know that country artist Chris Cagle is no stranger to brand marketing (Making the Brand, Billboard, Sept. 24). Now it appears he has taken a cue from other artists who have name-checked national consumer brands in their recordings.

His new Capitol Nashville album, “Anywhere But Here,” includes a track called “Wal-Mart Parking Lot.” The song’s chorus could not be more vivid: “There were freaks and hippies in my high school/Football players all tryin’ to be cool. Kids fallin’ in and out of love/On the hoods of Chevys, in the beds of trucks/We were slummin’ our way through life til our senior year/But man we sure did learn a lot/In that Wal-Mart parking lot.”

Fortunately, in Cagle’s case, such lyrics come off as sincere and lived in (file a well-worn pair of Levi’s 501s)—not gratuitous at all. Pass the Courvoisier, please.

LatIn TV LeadEr RetOols LinUp
Miami—In an effort to more directly reach the increasingly coveted, and ever elusive, young Hispanic audience, cable network mun2 has completely revamped its programming.

Beginning Oct. 5, the bilingual cable network, which is a division of Telemundo cable and wholly owned by NBC Universal, its competitors, reached 40 million households, including 5.9 million Hispanic households. Mun2, in comparison, had 15 million total households and 3 million Hispanic households. Its closest competitor for the Hispanic youth audience is MTV Espanol, which was available to 1.3 million Hispanic households.

“...Youth stuck between two worlds and live in a multilingual, multigenerational home—how do you put that in a box?”

—Lucía Ballas-Traynor, MTV Español/VHUNO

versal, launched new shows and a new look aimed at appealing to a broader segment of Hispanic youth.

Specifically, mun2, whose programming is at least 50% music-driven, is broadening its focus from East Coast, urban genres to include a wide range of styles, from reggaeton to regional Mexican.

The overhaul is the result of months of research by youth marketing firm Look-Look. That research is ongoing, says Antoinette Zel, senior executive VP of network strategy at Telemundo.

Zel, the longtime president of MTV Latin America/Nickelodeon, came to Telemundo late last year. Growth of mun2, which aims at Latinos 12-34, was a priority.

“Shows that had been around for a long time needed to evolve as the audience had changed,” Zel says. “Kids age every three years. It was really about being relevant and being authentic.”

According to an executive familiar with the numbers, ratings for first-quarter 2005, mun2 was the third-most-watched Spanish-language cable network in the country, behind Galavisión and Fox Sports. Galavisión, which belongs to Univision and has a much broader distribution than mun2, says the new programming has revitalized interest in broader distribution for the network.

“We hope,” she adds, “to see growth in the year to come.”
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What’s In A Name? Years Of Brand Value

Branded entertainment is the catchphrase these days as artists hook up with clothing lines, perfumes and beverages. But let’s get back to the basics of branding in the music business. It all starts with a name.

Just a few words define a look, a sound, an attitude. The Beatles. Cher. Kiss. And while the more savvy groups register their name as a service mark or trademark with the U.S. Trademark Office, many of them do not realize that keeping rights in the names takes more than U.S. registration.

Rights vary throughout the world, and names can be bought and sold.

Take, for example, Little River Band from Australia. Beeb Birtles, Glenn Shorrock and Graeme Goble are the original voices that created the band’s ‘70s sound. Guitarist Stephen Housden later joined the band, and bass player Wayne Nelson jumped onboard in 1980.

As various members began going their own ways, Housden bought rights in the band name and filed Australian, U.S. and European Community trademark registrations. Today he continues to perform with Nelson as Little River Band.

Birtles, Shorrock and Goble informed Housden that they intended to perform as the Original Little River Band. Housden’s company sued them in Australia and then in Florida.

The parties entered a settlement agreement in the Aussie suit in 2002; Birtles, Shorrock and Goble formed BSG, agreeing only to use the LRB name to describe themselves as former members of that band. Yet the Florida case continued, with the court issuing an injunction. Plans for a BSG release on Capitol Records came to a halt.

BSG’s U.S. lawyer, Jonathan Reichman with Kenyon & Kenyon in New York, tells Legal Matters that his clients thought the Australian settlement agreement covered their rights worldwide, so they did not respond to the Florida action. When Reichman began fighting the injunction, he learned that the Florida court did not know about the Australian settlement.

The parties then reached another settlement in July 2005. LRH’s U.S. attorney Jeff Darcy with Winderweedle, Haines, Ward & Woodman in Orlando, Fla., says this agreement clarified everyone’s rights.

Under the settlement, Housden’s company owns the name Little River Band, which is currently on a U.S. tour. BSG’s members may not present live musical entertainment using the LRB name, except they may use the name when saying or advertising that they are “former members” of LRB, “founding members” of BSG or “the original voices” of LRB.

When BSG includes this on records or in videos or ads, the name Little River Band cannot appear before—or independently of—the name BSG and cannot appear in typeface larger than two thirds the typeface size used for BSG.

Ensuring that band members set up a deal to set out who owns rights in the name when a member leaves the group is important, but so is trademark registration.

There are basically four types of trademark registrations: state, national, European Union “community” and international.

Many states have procedures to register marks for protection within that state. Most countries have national offices where trademark owners register their marks, such as the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (usppto.gov), IP Australia (ipaustralia.gov.au), the Japan Patent Office (jpo.go.jp) and the German Patent and Trademark Office (dpma.de).

The mark may be registered in an individual country within Europe, preventing others from using a substantially similar mark for similar goods or services in that country.

For protection throughout the EU with one registration, a person may apply for a community trademark with the Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market (oami.eu.int).

There is also international trademark protection within a group of countries that are part of international agreements under the so-called Madrid System for the International Registration of Trademarks. The trademark owner can seek protection throughout these Madrid Union countries by filing an application in their home country and following certain procedures (see wipo.int/madrid/en).

Who may own rights in a trademark will vary among territories, so often a band will learn that it cannot use the name in some countries.

For example, in “common law” countries like the United States, generally the first one to use the mark—even if not registered—owns the rights. In “civil law” countries like continental Europe, the first one to register a mark owns the rights—even if not the first to use it.
Kenny Chesney

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Ian's Chinese Delivery
San Francisco-based Independent Online Distribution Alliance has signed a worldwide exclusive digital distribution deal for the catalog of state-owned music company China Record Corp. The two-year deal is with Beijing-based distributor CRC Jiamian Cultural Development. Financial details were not disclosed. IODA CEO Kevin Arnold says his company plans to market the CRC catalog to all major music-download services and will focus specifically on "reaching the large Chinese populations in cities on the West Coast in the U.S. and in Canada, as well as metropolitan areas around the globe." CRC, China's oldest record company, has operated since the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, and has an estimated 60,000 titles in its catalog. Titles cover traditional Chinese music, orchestral recordings and contemporary pop/rock material by such acts as rock star Cui Jian and top female singer Na Ying.

—Paul Kendall

Warner Gets Taste of Sugar
Italian independent label Sugar has signed a domestic distribution deal with Warner Music Italy. The three-year agreement takes effect Jan. 1. Sugar has been distributed in Italy by Universal Music Italy since 1995. The Milan-based label is home to tenor Andrea Bocelli, pop singer Elisa and alternative acts Avion Travel and Negramaro.

The new arrangement will not affect existing international distribution agreements that Sugar has for its acts, most notably for Bocelli, who is licensed to Universal outside Italy. The Sugar label is part of the family-owned Sugarmusic holding company, which also includes retail, new media and music publishing interests. Filippo Sugar is president of the holding company.

—Mark Worden

Universal India Goes Mobile
Universal Music India has partnered with leading Indian wireless solutions operator Mauj Telecom to offer select international repertoire to Indian consumers. Mauj will service content to leading mobile operators nationwide and via its own internet portal, wap.mauj.com. Mauj claims to have partnerships with more than 25 operators and portals worldwide.

The agreement is effective immediately. The first offer for Mauj clients is 60 days of exclusive access to content from Bon Jovi's "Have a Nice Day" and Shaggy's "Clothes Drop" albums. The content includes ringtones, video ringtones, wallpapers, animations and logos, but not full-track downloads.

Mumbai-based Universal Music India managing director Rajat Kakar says the exclusive wireless deal is the first the company has struck for international content.

—Nyay Bhushan

Digital One-Stop for Malaysia
Malaysian labels and publishers aim to launch a "one-stop" digital licensing center for master ringtones within the next few weeks. Trade body the Recording Industry Assn. of Malaysia (RIM) will host the licensing rights and fee collection center, which could be operational by month's end. RIM chairman Sandy Monteiro says the idea is to streamline the current process, whereby service providers wishing to use master ringtones have to obtain separate licenses from RIM, Digital Licensing of Malaysia, Performers and Artists Rights Malaysia, Music Authors Copyright Protection and the Malaysian Publishers Assn.

"It's still a work-in-progress proposition," Monteiro admits. "There are a number of hurdles to cross, including administrative fees to be charged by RIM and the standardization of licensing rates."

—Christie Leo

Australian Biz Is Amped Up
Industry Looks To New Award To Recognize Domestic Talent, Stimulate Sales

SYDNEY—The Australian record industry is united in support of a new initiative that will offer home-grown artists an equivalent to the United Kingdom's annual Nationwide Mercury Prize—and a

award, he has assembled a 12-person steering committee representing label executives, publishers, retailers, promoters, managers, musicians and publicists.

The Amp winner will be announced in March during a Sydney gala featuring performances by nominated acts, with 300 executives expected to attend. The broadcast partner has not yet been named.

The 1,200 stores operated by members of the Australian Music Retail Assn. will promote the award. "We'll give the awarding album and the runners-up a lot of upfront prominence in our outlets," says AMRA chairman Geoffrey Bonouvrie, a member of the Amp steering committee.

The trade body will display the final eight albums after the shortlist is announced in February. They will also promote the prize during the Oct. 3-Jan. 6 entry period.

"Indie stores are manned by passionate music lovers who have strong ties to indie musicians," says Bonouvrie, who runs Mall Music, an indie store in Sydney's Brookvale district. "We will be actively telling people about the prize and urging them to enter."

The award should be embraced as a "sign that our industry is maturing, where we're willing to contribute rather than just take," says Sebastian Chase, managing director of MGM Distribution in Sydney. MGM claims to handle 80% of the country's independent releases.

There are also more tangible rewards on offer. The Amp winner will collect a cash prize of $25,000 Australian ($19,000) donated by collecting society the Phonographic Performance Co. of Australia, representing recording artists and labels.

Bounevrie suggests an Amp win could bolster sales, pointing to the annual televised Australian Record Industry Assn. awards, which he says can immediately increase sales of established groups by 20%. The effect can be much more intense for an unknown, he adds, citing folk-rockers the Waifs, whose album "Up All Night" (Jarrah/MGM) entered the ARIA top 10 after it won and performed at the 2003 awards. The album eventually sold gold (35,000 units shipped). In the United Kingdom, recently Nationwide Mercury Prize winner Antony & the Johnsons "I Am a Bird Now" (Rough Trade) had shipped 40,000 units, but doubled that number within hours of its victory, according to the label.

"I was always impressed by how the albums in the Mercury Prize shortlist get an extra boost of popularity and recognition," says Murphy, formerly managing director of Mushroom Distribution Services and Zomba Records Australia.

"The prize is not just about encouraging quality and creativity," he adds. "It's another fantastic vehicle to promote Australian music."

The Amp is open to "all these acts who work around the fringes of the music industry," notes Lindy Morris, former drummer of veteran Australian alt-rock band the Go-Betweens who is now a lecturer in music industry courses and an artist representative on the PPCA board.

"There's no commercial imperative," she adds. "There is a lot of great underground music out there; we have a thriving culture. Our records are often better than those coming from abroad."
LOS ANGELES—The video rental model is losing steam and revenue, and the major companies are showing it in their stock.

Consumer rental spending was still strong last year at more than $8 billion; however, that total marked the third year in a row that rental spending had decreased, according to Adams Media Research.

The big rental chains have also undergone major business changes. Top-ranked Blockbuster, which operates more than 9,100 stores worldwide, introduced its “No Late Fees” program and the Blockbuster Movie Pass, a store-based subscription rental service. In support of the second goal, it launched Blockbuster Online and a game “store in stores.”

Video Gallery is diversifying by experimenting with DVD vending machines to help extend store hours and increasing its focus on games.

“From Blockbuster to Video Gallery, changes. Top-ranked their Video to new chain Randy stronger titles.”

Also, Hollywood Entertainment and Movie Gallery merged operations to become a 4,800-store joint chain.

Add to these developments flourishing online rental competition, increasingly lower sells-through prices and a slate of new releases of films that did poorly at the box office.

All of these factors have led to troubling financial reports from Blockbuster and Hollywood/Movie Gallery. Blockbuster shares are down about 33% from this time last year, and Movie Gallery shares are off about 54%.

Both have also reported continued quarterly decreases in same-store revenue. Movie Gallery, for example, expects its third-quarter same-store revenue to fall by 8%-10% compared with last year.

Meanwhile, online rental outfit Netflix is reporting increased revenue and a subscriber base of 3.2 million.

The challenges have spurred a number of changes at the big rental outlets as they try to stay afloat.

On the brick-and-mortar side, diversification is key while the market waits for stronger titles.

Blockbuster spokesman Randy Hargrove says the chain is trying to offset the decrease of in-store rentals with new revenue streams. “Our mission is to transform Blockbuster from a store you go to to rent a movie to a brand you go to to rent, buy or trade a movie or a game in-store or online,” he says.

To achieve the first goal, the chain introduced its “No Late Fees” program and the Blockbuster Movie Pass, a store-based subscription rental service. In support of the second goal, it launched Blockbuster Online and a game "store in stores."

As Hargrove says.

Even Netflix, which appears to be leaving the brick-and-mortar dust in the dust—its stock is up 71% in the past year—is forging new strategies.

Ted Sarandos, chief content officer of Netflix, says his company has a “laser focus on the consumer. We’ve stepped up to one-day delivery for most of the country and continue to invest in improvements to our infrastructure, movie availability and how fast we can process returns.”

The company is also exploring electronic delivery of movies and has started selling previously viewed DVDs, services that complement regular rentals, Sarandos says.

Even though Blockbuster has its own online rental service—which had 1 million subscribers less than a year after it launched—Sarandos predicts it is too little, too late for the major chains’ brick-and-mortar-centered financial outlook.

“The proposition of online DVD rental is so much better that there will be a shift in the business strong enough to start leading to the closure of brick-and-mortar stores,” he says.

Business is expected to pick up starting in the fourth quarter, and the introduction of next-generation DVDs early next year will be a big opportunity.

“The good news is that the titles that are coming are showing some nice increases in box-office yield,” Johnson says. “The high-definition product will have high retail price points, so rental will be a much better value proposition.”

Others add that increasing gas prices may further spike rental business, as consumers seek out more home-based entertainment.

“Home video is a way to hunker down,” says Video Software Dealers Assn. president Bo Andersen, who sees the industry gaining strength moving forward. “For sells-through to grow and rental to stay flat, consumers are spending more dollars on home video, and that means both sides are working well.”
Labels Ironing Out Kinks Amid Fall Shipping Delays

With the music industry gearing up for the holiday selling season, there have been a couple of hiccups in the product flow to stores. WEA had trouble meeting the Sept. 26 street date at some accounts for the new Neil Young "Prairie Wind" album and for the limited-edition version of His "Dark Light."

And as Sony Corp.'s manufacturing and fulfillment operations finally take over those duties in the United States for BMG releases (replacing former BMG parent Bertelsmann's Arvato system), Sony BMG Music Entertainment Sales is experiencing expected difficulties associated with such a transition.

"Recently, the majors have been scrambling to get product to stores on time," one merchant says.

At WEA, there has been a "rash of [delays] lately," an executive at a small chain says. "They are shipping an enormous amount of new releases. They got backed up on Disturbed and Paul Wall, and then I heard they had problems with the Neil Young CD booklet," all of which contributed to uneven product shipments. Most accounts Billboard surveyed did not receive the Young set till Tuesday, and some not till Wednesday, creating their usual four- or five-day head start to prepare for street date.

But one executive at a large chain says "Prairie Wind" reached most of its stores on time, though one undisclosed region did not get the album until Tuesday or Wednesday. The Him limited edition showed up even later at most accounts.

Retailers attribute WEA's difficulties to the fact that it no longer owns its press plant. Cinram bought WEA's manufacturing and fulfillment operations in 2003. WEA declined to comment.

Cinram handles EMI's manufacturing as well, and some accounts said they received the new Supergrass just one day before street date.

Meanwhile, new Sony BMG titles have also been missing in action occasionally. According to retail sources, Sony BMG catalog distribution is also weak, with "fill" — the percentage of titles ordered that are actually delivered — falling below expectations.
Additionally, sources say Sony BMG indie distribution arm RED has been late on new titles, with some stores receiving albums just in time for street date. Sony BMG Sales Enterprise co-president Bill Frohlich admits there have been a “couple of kinks” during the transition, but says the company advised accounts of possible delays.

In a transition of this magnitude, Frohlich says, “You can do all the planning you need, and you try to be proactive, but sometimes you just don’t know what type of problems can occur. “We are on top of problems and we are fixing them or working around them,” he continues, “We are doing whatever needs to be done to make them right.”

PASSING THE BUCK: Fans of Gang of Four could get a surprise Oct. 13 in the band’s “Return the Gift” album, which reunites the original four members. Half of the 20,000 copies expected to ship for street date will contain a crisp, new $1 bill wrapped in the CD booklet so it cannot be seen from the outside, according to sources at Sony BMG. The album features newly recorded versions of songs from the band’s first two sets, “Entertainment” and “Solid Gold.”

THE ENVELOPE, PLEASE: At the Galaxy Music Distributors awards banquet, held Oct. 1 in Pittsburgh, Columbia Records was named label of the year, Universal Music & Video Distribution picked up the award for major distributor and Caroline topped the independent sector. UMVD’s Bill Ambrose was honored as sales representative of the year.

At Trans World Entertainment’s convention last month in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., awards went to Jack Shultz for regional manager of the year, while the district manager title went to Bill McCielen for mall stores and Alex White for free-standing stores.

CONDOLENCES: Gary Gutman, a sales representative at Big Daddy Music Distribution, died of a heart attack Sept. 6 in Briarwood, N.Y. He was 52.

Gutman, who started his career at Record Shack, had worked at a host of one-stops, including Win and Stratford. He joined Big Daddy earlier this year. “He immediately became an integral part of the Big Daddy family,” says Burt Goldstein, who heads the Kenilworth, N.J.-based indie distributor. “His tireless efforts and his quiet, polite way endeared him to all of the accounts he represented.”

Gutman is survived by his wife, Deborah, and sons Adam and Eric.

Retail Track also sends condolences to WEA president John Esposito. His brother Jeff died in a car accident in the last week of September.

GANG OF FOUR has packaged a $1 bill inside 10,000 copies of its new release, “Return the Gift.”

Taking a back-to-basics approach and not doing much marketing. It’s very word-of-mouth and grass roots.”

Wray describes it as a “make-or-break” set for the label, which is dedicated to keeping its releases current. “I think this will do well, but if the tenor of the whole enterprise doesn’t change, it’s going to be different in the future.”

Wray says, “The new one is supposed to sell the old one. The last title is only one disc, but it has a 72-page booklet and is expensive to manufacture. If no money is around, how can we keep it in print? We’ve managed to get so far, but maybe at our own personal expense.”

But Wyatt is not concerned about having to scale back if “Good for What Ails You” does not meet expectations. “Even if I had the funding, I’m not keen on doing an eight-disc set,” he says. “I’d want to hone it down. Even a single CD with a 52-page booklet is more than the average CD, so we could still do some gems.”

U2 Top Draw At Touring Awards

U2's mammoth Vertigo tour is a finalist in four categories for the Billboard Touring Awards, the most of any outing this year.

Vertigo is a finalist in the top tour, top draw and top boxscore categories, and U2's management company Principle Management is a finalist for top manager.

The Billboard Touring Awards recognize the year's highest achievements in the concert industry. The awards, which are based on box-office data gathered from Billboard Boxscore reports from Nov. 24, 2004, through Sept. 30, 2005, will be presented at an Oct. 26 reception at the Roosevelt Hotel in New York that wraps the second annual Roadwork conference.

Neil Diamond and Kenny Chesney are also finalists in the top tour category, which reflects gross dollars. U2, Chesney and Dave Matthews Band are finalists in the top draw category, which reflects total attendance. Chesney's A Place in the Sun tour is also in the running for top package.

Another multiple finalist is the Bonnaroo Music Festival in Manchester, Tenn., which is among the leading performers in the top boxscore and top festival categories.

The breakthrough act award recognizes an artist or band in its first decade that cracks the top 25 tours listings for the first time. Coldplay and Rascal Flatts fit that description this year.

Finalists in the top manager and top agency categories are based on the combined totals of all the acts they represent in the top 25 tours.

The Dave Matthews Band will receive Roadwork's Humanitarian Award for the band's philanthropic efforts (Billboard, Oct. 1). Pioneering promoter Jack Boyle, chairman emeritus for Clear Channel Entertainment and founder of Cellar Door Concerts, will receive the Legend of Live Award.

For more information on Roadwork '05, go to billboardevents.com...

**COMPLETE LIST OF BILLBOARD FINALISTS**

**TOP TOUR**
U2, Vertigo

**TOP DRAW**
U2, Kenny Chesney

**TOP PACKAGE**
Kenny Chesney with Gretchen Wilson, Uncle Kracker and Pat Green

**BREAKTHROUGH ACT**
Rascal Flatts, Coldplay

**TOP SMALL-VENUE TOUR**
Bruce Springsteen, Sarah McLachlan, Mark Knopfler

**TOP AMPHITHEATER**
Twickenham for the Performing Arts, Mansfield, Mass.

**TOP ARENA**
Madison Square Garden, New York

**TOP SMALL VENUE (NON-RESIDENT BOOKING)**
Fox Theatres, Atlanta

**TOP SOXSCORE**
U2, Croke Park, Dublin, June 24-27

**TOP INDEPENDENT PROMOTER**
Jam Productions, Chicago

**TOP MANAGER**
Principle Management

**TOP PROMOTER**
Clear Channel Entertainment

**TOP MANAGER**
Principle Management

**TOP INDEPENDENT PROMOTER**
Clear Channel Entertainment

Cream’s MSG Run Could Reap Sweet Merch Sales

Merchandising Company Steve Gerstman Services Prepares For Legendary Power Trio’s Only North American Shows

Cream merchandise sales at New York’s Madison Square Garden will very likely rise to the top.

In a big coup for a small firm, boutique merchandising company Steve Gerstman Services nailed down the merchandising rights contract for the band’s Oct. 24-26 run at MSG.

And, given the success of the Cream reunion in London earlier this year, as well as the fact that these shows will be the only North American performances for the legendary power trio, merch sales could well set a record for MSG.

SGS president Gerstman, a veteran of such large merchandising firms as Winterland, Signatures and Brokick, became involved with Cream through his long association with Eric Clapton, for whom he has handled merchandising for years. Clapton was also SGS’s debut client when Gerstman opened his doors in 2001.

For the May 25 Cream Shows at London’s Royal Albert Hall, SGS partnered with Chris Cooke Management, and the legendary venue saw merch per capita soar past $40 per head.

“The Royal Albert Hall Cream dates turned out to be quite a story,” Gerstman says. The per-show capacity of 3,000 at the London dates provided a nice blueprint for the MSG run, but sales patterns at arenas and theaters differ. “Four sellouts at Royal Albert is like one sellout at Madison Square Garden,” notes Gerstman, who adds that the product line at MSG will probably be one-third larger than in London, with as many as 25 items.

“We looked at the numbers at Royal Albert and broke it down into different items and what sold well,” Gerstman says. A top seller in London was a black T-shirt with the cover of iconic Cream album “Disraeli Gears” on the front and event info on the back. A similar shirt will be sold at MSG, with its own event-specific info. Likewise, a poster by artist John Van Hamersveld that was available at the London shows will be offered in a similar version at MSG. The entire Cream product line will range in price from a $10 key chain to a leather bomber jacket that could go as high as $400.

“We'll have to be creative and load the beer, but there is a bit of risk involved with doing that. Not only do you not know overall...continued on >>>p23
The live sports and entertainment industry lost a pioneer when executive Loris Smith died Sept. 22.

Smith, 70, was COO of concessions/facility management firm Ogden Entertainment in New York before retiring in 1998. He also served as an executive VP at Ticketholder and GM of the Javits Center in New York (billboard.biz, Sept. 28).

But what Smith is probably best remembered for is his stint in the 1980s as GM at the Meadowlands Sports and Entertainment Complex in East Rutherford, N.J., which includes Giants Stadium and what is now known as Continental Airlines Arena.

Veteran promoter John Scher, co-CEO of Metropolis Entertainment, credits Smith with helping the arena and stadium management business evolve.

"I’ve had three or four mentors in my life, and Loris Smith certainly was one of them," Scher says. "He was awfully responsible for bringing facilities into the modern business, and he was among the first to treat promoters with the respect they deserved."

When the Meadowlands Arena opened in 1981, Smith looked at promoter Scher as a valuable revenue producer, just like his hockey and basketball teams. "Loris treated me like a franchise, because I brought in a lot of income to him," Scher recalls. "The way Loris looked it was, ‘I’ve got the Nets, the Devils, John Scher and Ringing Brothers.’"

That was not a typical posture for a building manager at the time. Scher points out, "We never got respect for the amount of business we brought in, all the popcorn, beer and parking we were selling," Scher says. "The Meadowlands Arena was the first venue that would share some suite revenue. Not a lot, but some.

Scher believes, and history shows us, that an inability to share in ancillary revenue—and perhaps a lack of respect, as well—is what led promoters to get into the venue business in the first place with the promoter-owned shed boom of the mid-1980s through the early 1990s.

Smith’s management culture remains at the Meadowlands through a line of succession that began with Michael Rowe. Rowe was followed by Bob Cast Ironovo, who was succeeded by Ron VanDeVeer, who is now VP/Purpose at Continental Arena. This year, according to VanDeVeer, the arena will host the most concerts in the country.

DIMEBAG REMEMBERED:
The swastika-shooting of Dimebag Darrell Abbott by a psychotic fan last December in Columbus, Ohio, still resonates in the minds of those who make their living performing concerts.

In addition to Nickellback penning a track about the incident (Billboard, Oct. 8), Cody Canada and Mike McClure of Cross Canadian Ragweed have written "Dimebag," which appears on the new CCR release, "Garage."

Abbott’s death "hit very, very close to home," singer/guitarist Canada says. "Of course, we were fans. Anybody that starts off as a garage band is a fan of Abbott’s former band, Pantera."

But what really sticks in the minds of musicians is how Abbott’s unkindly death occurred.

"The guy was just up there playing his music, and somebody just walked up and took his life right in the middle of a show," Canada says. "I knew people were murdered everyday, but it hits a little closer to home when it’s in your profession."

Canada says CCR has become more mindful of security following Abbott’s slaying. "Some of those real rowdy gigs, it’s hard to close your eyes and get into it, because you’re already thinking."
Wireless Industry Fires Up Search Engines

During the past few years, entertainment companies have flooded the mobile market with wireless versions of popular titles in hopes of finding something that will resonate with consumers. But the story to date has been more about availability than usage. An estimated 97% of the content available goes unpurchased.

Now, a new class of wireless technologies is emerging with the purpose of helping mobile users more easily discover new services and content—and buy them.

At the CTIA—The Wireless Assn.’s Wireless 1. T. & Entertainment conference Sept. 26-28, mobile search was all the buzz. On the “Emerging Opportunities: New Media/Content” panel, the state of mobile search and discovery was identified as a major barrier to wireless entertainment sales.

“The mobile browsing experience is crap,” said panelist Deep Nishiar, director of product management at Google. Google and Yahoo have mobile search engines, but they primarily point users to mobile-enabled Web sites outside a carrier’s network. Wireless operators would much rather offer services that limit users to the content that exists on their content deck, or at least give preference to it.

One company aiming to provide that is JumpTap, every piece of mobile content available for sale on the carrier’s deck related to that artist, including ringtones, wallpaper and games. All are listed on a single screen and available for preview and immediate purchase.

Without such a service, searching for all available mobile content related to an artist involves hunting and pecking through the various mobile applications that carriers make available.

Another company, Moritcicy, operates a content delivery platform that includes a mobile search function, for carriers willing to sell content from outside their network portals. Moritcicy chief technical officer Jud Bowman says 49% of the sales made through its platform are titles found with the search capability.

Amp’d Mobile, an entertainment and youth-focused carrier scheduled to go live in November, inked a deal with Fast Search & Transfer for a version of its mobile search technology, customized to Amp’d’s younger audience.

Of course, mobile search only works if users are actively seeking information about a specific point of interest. Carriers say customer awareness is the most immediate priority.

“The minute they understand what they can do with these things their eyes just light up,” says Jim Ryan, VP of consumer data at Cingular. “We know that he strikes up conversations with strangers at sports bars just to show them how to use their phone. ‘Once I show them what it can do, they look at their phone like they’ve never seen it before.’

Startup firm Snapin has created a tutor for carriers, offering users more information about the capabilities of their phones based on real-time usage. For instance, if a user purchased a ringtone, the tutorial would open a dialogue box that reads, ‘Did you know you can assign different ringtones to different contacts in your address book?’ If the user then requests more information, the program would provide step-by-step instructions.

Bongo, a company that facilitates about half of all offshore content sales in Europe, has added a “browse and buy” feature to its service that sends a customized Web page to any user responding to a short-code advertisement. Rather than simply sending users the requested file, Bongo adds a link to the file and a range of additional related content. The company says 46% of the information requests it receives on this system result in a sale, versus only 18% via traditional short message service.

Finally, a peer-to-peer discovery platform called MobilePhone debuted at the CTIA conference. MobilePhone is a social community site, much like myspace.com, but focused on the mobile user. It sells a variety of content from its site and allows members to share and recommend anything they have purchased.

‘People need to be able to find what they’re looking for,” the tutorial says. “There have been advances, but the carrier deck is often limiting.”

Virgin’s Web Connection

Online service Virgin Digital has partnered with Orb Networks to give users access to the entire Virgin Digital library from any Internet-connected device. The forthcoming service, called Virgin Digital Connect, is designed to let users navigate Virgin Digital and stream songs through such devices as cell phones and PDAs. Because no downloading is required, digital-rights-management compatibility is not an issue.

Ericsson Picks Up EMI

EMI Music North America is licensing its catalog to Ericsson for use as ringback tones. Ericsson is one of many wireless companies developing the technology to offer subscribers ringback tones—music clips that callers hear while waiting for the line to pick up. Under the terms of the deal, any carrier using Ericsson’s ringback technology will have access to the EMI catalog, subject to label approval.

Playing with Red

The next installment of Activision’s “True Crime” videogame series will feature rapper Redman as an unbreakable character. The soundtrack will include two original Redman tracks and the debut of his single “Rush Da Security,” from his “Red Gone Wild” album (due Nov. 15).

Activation licensed more than 80 songs for “True Crime: New York City” from such diverse acts as Jay-Z, Fat Joe, A Tribe Called Quest, the Ramones, the Velvet Underground, My Chemical Romance, the Bravery and Bob Dylan.
When Brian McLaughlin retires as COO of the HMV Group Dec. 31, music retailing will bid farewell to one of its most experienced and respected global executive.

McLaughlin's HMV career stretches back to the 1960s. Starting as a sales assistant, he rose to become U.K. managing director before assuming his current post in 2001.

Known as a tough negotiator, McLaughlin was a key figure in HMV's post-1980s expansion. When he joined in 1968, HMV had nine outlets, all in the United Kingdom. Now it has more than 400 music stores worldwide and a new U.K. download service, HMV Digital.

After announcing his retirement in 2004, McLaughlin agreed to remain for one more year. When he does leave his full-time role in December, he will remain a nonexecutive director of HMV Group and will continue to chair the fund-raising committee at Nordoff Robbins Music Therapy, which he has long championed.

McLaughlin describes his Nordoff- Robbins role as "squeezing as much money as possible out of the music industry." He adds with a grin: "I think everybody's happy that I'll only be doing that for charity from now on."

Q: How is music retail holding up in 2005?
A: Specialist music retailing is under threat globally from mass merchants like the supermarket chains we have in Britain. I was talking to a senior record company guy with North American responsibilities recently, and he said 58% of his business now comes from Wal-Mart and Future Shop.

While we've lost some share to the supermarkets, others have lost a lot more. If HMV didn't have such a robust infrastructure, we'd be in trouble too.

I believe the record companies have a responsibility to ensure the specialist sector manages to survive and thrive. I hope we never get to a stage where only supermarkets and big-box operators are left to break new artists, because they won't do it.

Q: Could the Bob Dylan deal with Starbucks or the Rolling Stones' Best Buy exclusive happen in the United Kingdom?
A: It's unlikely. I have the utmost respect for the executives that run the U.K. record industry. They understand there's no point antagonizing their biggest customers.

Q: Could the Bob Dylan deal with Starbucks or the Rolling Stones' Best Buy exclusive happen in the United Kingdom?
A: It's unlikely. I have the utmost respect for the executives that run the U.K. record industry. They understand there's no point antagonizing their biggest customers.

Q: What has made HMV's model work while others have fallen away?
A: You've got to be a good retailer. The offer you have—the brand, the service, the knowledge and the range—is only fine as long as you can execute it.

We've built on a fantastic brand, run by really good people. For me and those who've worked with me, the brand and the "dog and trumpet" [logo] always had real musical authority and history. When people look back at what we've done, I hope they'll say we were good custodians of that brand.

We also have a real set of strong beliefs in what made a record retailer successful—you had to be interested in music, had to have knowledge and had to enjoy working in the music business.

Q: What is the key to dealing with labels?
A: Building good relationships with people. I've always been honest with labels. When people spoke to me, they knew I knew something about the business and could see I had a genuine passion for it. They may have disagreed with me or disliked certain things I said, but they knew I was always batting for either HMV or the industry.

There's still massive support from the British record industry for specialist retailers. [HMV U.K. & Ireland managing director] Steve Knott tells me every company is being nothing but supportive. The record industry in Canada has been very good to us, and it's getting a lot better in Japan. We've just sold the Australian operation in order to focus on the larger businesses, but the Australian record industry always recognized HMV as a very influential route to take when breaking a new artist.

Q: How will HMV Digital to the group's future?
A: When the customer ultimately decides what channel they want to use, we're now positioned in all the channels. Before, we were at a disadvantage through not having a digital download offer.

There's a lot of in-store interest in HMV Digital, and we're selling the hardware. The service isn't iPod compatible, but it's going to be difficult for Apple to maintain its current market share as more devices become popular. An awful lot of those are compatible with our service.

Q: What were the high points of nearly 40 years at HMV?
A: Being offered the job to run the business, managing the business and then seeing it become a public company in 2002. When you leave school at 15, then—God knows how many years later—somebody asks you to become managing director of a business, it's an enormous, daunting prospect. But it's also a fabulous privilege to get that opportunity.

Q: What are your aims for Nordoff-Robbins?
A: All the chairmen of the U.K. record companies have always been terrific supporters of Music Therapy. My job now will be about raising money and broadening the appeal of the charity outside the music business. We keep knocking on the same doors, and I worry that one day they might not open.

But there are lots of business people who want access to the music industry—and Nordoff-Robbins links with the music business make it an attractive charity.

Brian McLaughlin

BY TOM FERGUSON

HIGHLIGHTS

BRIAN MCLAUGHLIN
1966 Joins HMV as sales assistant in Portsmouth, England
1980 Becomes HMV U.K. operations director
1987 Promoted to HMV U.K. managing director
2001 Named COO of HMV Media Group
2005 Becomes chairman of Nordoff Robbins Music Therapy fundraising committee

A: In Germany, the HMV model was rejected by the business. We went there, and the plan was to expand rapidly—if we got support from the record companies. We didn't get it. There was too much politics in the German record industry at the time.

Some of those executives that I speak to now look back and say, "Weren't we daft not to help you come into Germany?"

Q: HMV closed its final U.S. stores last year. What did you learn from this 15-year American experience?
A: We'd probably have done a lot better if we'd put the right management in. I don't think there was any rejection of the HMV model—our Fifth Avenue store in New York was always profitable, for example, despite top-dollar rents.

So our fundamental mistakes were not necessarily to do with geography. But if you send people in to open new stores who have no idea about retailing or how to deal with landlords, you're likely to go home with nothing left in your pockets. That's what happened to us.

If we'd made those mistakes anywhere else, the results would have been the same.

Q: Could you set HMV going back into the States?
A: Probably not. As things stand, the dynamics of that market have changed so much, I think it would be very difficult for a specialist music chain to make money in America. Rents are a big problem in America, and the range of CDs and DVDs are being driven down every week.

Q: HMV was in Germany from 1996 to 2003, but only opened three stores. Why?
A: In Germany, the HMV model was rejected by the business. We went there, and the plan was to expand rapidly—if we got support from the record companies. We didn't get it. There was too much politics in the German record industry at the time.

Some of those executives that I speak to now look back and say, "Weren't we daft not to help you come into Germany?"

Q: How are the other overseas businesses?
A: We've been applying principles from the HMV U.K. blueprint to our businesses in Japan and Canada. Having said that, there's no substitute for good leadership, and that's what [HMV Canada president] Humphrey Kadaner brought to the Canadian business, for example. No matter how good your blueprint is, you need somebody to implement it.
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Text message "BILLBOARD" to FUN (386) from your Cingular Wireless handset to download Billboard Mobile.

www.americanradiohistory.com
When it comes to filling the pipeline for hip-hop hits, Houston does not have a problem. Houston rappers Paul Wall, Mike Jones and Slim Thug—each of whom honed his craft on the mix-tape circuit—are among this year’s biggest national breakout artists. But they are just the leading edge of a movement that has long flirted with mainstream success.

Wall is the city’s most recent breakout story. His Swisha House/Asylum Records debut, “The People’s Champ,” claimed the No. 1 spot on The Billboard 200 in the Oct. 1 issue. Four weeks after its release, it sits at No. 17 with sales of 294,000 units, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Star Trak/Geffen/Interscope artist Slim Thug bowed at No. 2 on the big chart in July with “Already Platinum” (128,000 units). The album is now closing in on gold status, with 348,000 copies sold.

Leading the mainstream charge in April was Wall’s labelmate Jones. Thanks to the BET- and MTV-pumped first single “Still Tippin’” (featuring Slim Thug and Wall), “Who Is Mike Jones?” bowed at No. 3 on The Billboard 200 and has sold 1.1 million copies to date.

“When ‘Still Tippin’ started picking up, it was like, ‘Yeah, we got our foot in the door,’ ” Wall says. “But we’re not con- 

MIKE JONES, left, and SLIM THUG are at the forefront of Houston’s current rap scene. Photos by Kevin Mazur/Wireimage.com.

continued on >>p28
HOUSTON (cont.)

from p27 onward: with just this. We want to go through it and bring a bunch of people with us.”

Among the next wave poised to break nationally is Wall’s former partner, Chamillionaire. Nicknamed “the Mixtape Messiah,” he will make his major-label album debut Nov. 22 with “The Sound of Revenge” on Universal Records.

“People are tired of hearing the same thing over and over again,” Chamillionaire says. “They want something new. Timing is everything, and it’s up to us to take advantage while it is hot.”

VIBRANT MARKET

For Asylum president Todd Moscowitz, it was timing—and the ability to recognize a scene others had overlooked. “I wish I could say we discovered it. But there’s been an incredibly vibrant hip-hop music scene going on there for 20 years. Everyone knew about the Geto Boys and Scarface, but not the entire scene. All we did was shine a spotlight on it.”

After its launch in September 2004 by Warner Music Group, incubator label Asylum wasted little time getting down to business and tapping into Houston’s rich rap culture. The label’s first round of marketing and distribution announcements included pacts with Houston indie strongholds Rap-a-Lot and Swisha House.

Founded by James Prince in 1986, Rap-a-Lot is home to influential local pioneers the Geto Boys. Preceding Ice-T and 2 Live Crew with raps about murder and other inflammatory subject matter in 1990, the Geto Boys sparked moral outrage while drawing attention to Houston’s percolating rap scene.

The Geto Boys scored an R&B hit with “Mind Playing Tricks on Me” from their 1992 platinum album “We Can’T Be Stopped.” But widespread mainstream success eluded them. Rap-a-Lot released a Geto Boys reunion album earlier this year. The label’s catalog also sports albums by Yankin, Dirty, Do or Die and Geto Boys member Scarface.

Swisha House began 10 years ago as a mix-tape production house, helmed by DJ Michael Watts. Jones, Wall and Slim Thug all got their starts there, as did Chamillionaire. A label division was started in 1999 with Slim Thug as one of its standout acts. He left to sell records and mix tapes with his own crew, the Boss Hogg Outlawz, and eventually signed with the Neptunes’ Interscope-distributed Star Trak label.

Houston’s rap honor roll also includes gangsta duo UGK (aka the Underground Kings). Though UGK’s Chad “Pimp C” Butler and Bernard “Bun B” Freeman never broke nationally on their own, Jay-Z enlisted the pair for a guest stint on his top 10 R&B/top 20 pop hit “Big Pimpin” in 2000. Bun B is currently enjoying his own resurgence. In addition to guest appearances on the Slim Thug, Jones and Chamillionaire albums, he is readying a solo set, “Thill,” for release Oct. 18 on Rap-a-Lot.

Arguably, the most influential Houston rap icon was the late DJ Screw. The producer/remixer, born Robert Earl Davis Jr., introduced the term “screwed and chopped” to the rap lexicon in 1989. He manually slowed down hit tracks by using the pitch control on a turntable—the better to listen to while hallucinating on codeine-infused cough syrup.

Called “syrup sippin’,” the practice led to DJ Screw’s death in 2000 at the age of 30. Hundreds of mix tapes before that, however, his Screwed Up Click, including players like Lil’ Keke and Big Pokey, helped Houston rap forge its signature sound. It also opened the door to a lucrative mix-tape cottage industry that spawned Swish House and seminal production outfits like Wreckshop and Beltway 8.

By this time, Houston’s rap culture was firmly entrenched. The music became a deep reflection of the city’s languid pace, its searing heat and its obsession with slick cars that sported fancy spoke rims and custom grills.

“Everything we do is laid-back,” says Otan “Big O” Smith, who along with Derrick Jones owns popular Houston retailer Music Depot. “We’re in no hurry to go anywhere nor do something fast. And that’s how the music is: something you can really feel and bob your head to.”

FLIPPING FOR LIL’ FLIP

Another element leading to Houston’s hip-hop renaissance was the success of Lil’ Flip. The Sony Urban Music/Columbia artist jumped from selling 702,000 units in 2002 with “Underground Legend” to moving 1 million in 2004 with his second Sucka Free/Sony Urban Music set “U Gotta Feel Me.”

Fans did. The album spawned crossover hits “Game Over (Flip)” and “Sunshine” (featuring Lea). The latter climbed to No. 2 on The Billboard Hot 100 and the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart.

“It had been awhile since there’d been a breakout artist in Houston,” says EMI Publishing executive VP “Big” Jon Platt, who has been watching the Houston market for the last seven years and signed Slim Thing to a worldwide publishing pact. “When Flip’s record popped and he started doing press about where he was from, people outside Houston started paying attention to what else was there.”

Wall concurs. “Lil’ Flip just proved to people that although this style is different and they might not understand it, it’s working. So that drew a lot of attention to the rest of us in Houston.”

So did a short-lived partnership between Chamillionaire and Wall. Chamillionaire began freestyling in 1996 with Swisha House, along with fellow North Side Houstonians Wall and Slim Thug. Exiting Swisha House, childhood friends Wall and Chamillionaire teamed up as Color Changin’ Clique on the 2002 album “Get Ya Mind Correct” for local indie Paid in Full, headed by Houston radio personality Mad Hatta. The album sold more than 100,000 units and was nominated for independent album of the year.
by The Source magazine.
After leaving Paid in Full, Chamillionaire and Wall went their separate ways. Wall returned to Swisha House, while Chamillionaire launched his own label, Chamillitary Records, before signing with Universal.

Even before the majors took notice, Houston rappers had been doing just fine. "You can become pretty wealthy in Texas alone if you just sell here," producer Salih Williams says. "But it's a blessing to have people outside of Texas liking what we do here."

One-half of the Austin-based production duo Carnival Bears with his brother Tomar, Williams produced "Still Tippin" as well as Wall's "Sittin' Sidewayz" and such Houston classics as Big Mo's "Barre Baby."

"A lot of major labels didn't have a grasp of how big we were and didn't feel our numbers were legitimate," Wall says. "But we're stubborn. When record labels were offering us pennies, we were like, 'We don't need your money. Fuck the fame. We're happy being local because we're rich.'"

Many of the Houston rappers have set their sights beyond music to other individual hustles. Like their predecessor DJ Screw, who operated Screwed Up Records & Tapes, these rappers are crusing down various entrepreneurial avenues. Wall co-owns TV Jewelry, while Jones is working on a clothing line. Chamillionaire plans to return to school and earn a degree in business. Slim Thug is involved in real estate and owns a couple of record stores.

WALKING A THIN LINE
So, will success spoil this fertile scene?
"These artists have such a great love for Houston that they don't let it be tainted," Smith predicts. "A lot of guys came before Jones and Wall, but they could never break out of the regional stranglehold that we have here. By branching out to work with artists and producers from other parts of the country, they enhanced the sound slightly, broadening it for the masses. As long as they're still able to keep that Houston culture intact, the sound will remain true."

That balance was certainly on Chamillionaire's mind while recording "The Sound of Revenge." The album has a guest lineup that includes Lil' Flip (on lead single "Turn It Up") and Krayzie Bone, plus production by Scott Storch, Mannie Fresh and Cool & Dre.

"I tried to walk the thin line between commercial and street," Chamillionaire says. "If you make the album too street, it won't cross over; if you make it too commercial, then the streets won't get it. Coming from the underground, I need both."

Others contend that Houston's strong musical infrastructure, including local radio, clubs and the thriving mix-tape business, will safeguard the city's rap formula. "If labels are smart, they will listen to these acts and work with them, not against them," EMI's Platt advises.

That is something Moscowitz says Asylum is doing with the 30 Houston artists it has signed. "They just needed a catalyst, and that's all we've done. We don't say, 'Get with this or that producer', we give the music and culture the respect it deserves."

He acknowledges that the current signing frenzy has the potential to dilute the scene. "The risk is in people looking at this as hip-hop's version of Seattle's grunge-rock era. If you're just trying to get into the scene, you'll miss the point. At the end of the day, you need to find the stars."

Currently being lauded as a star in the making is Kiotti, who signed to Asylum six months ago through Unauthorized Entertainment.

In the wings at the Swisha House camp are Archie Lee and Coota Bang. At Chamillitary Records, Chamillionaire is grooming his brother Rasaq, who appears on Chamillionaire's "The Sound of Revenge." Other labels getting into the game include Del Jam, where president Jay-Z recently signed Houston's Aztek to his Roc La Familia label, and Sanctuary Urban, which has inked Papa Rooh.

Among other up-and-comers cited by those on the scene are Magnio (formerly with Swisha House), female rapper Shei Atkins (Paid in Full), Z-Ro (Rap-A-Lot) and Chingo Blingo.

For some, however, the jury is still out regarding Houston rap's sales potential. Anderson Yee, a GM for Tower Records in Seattle, cites the Jones CD as a consistent seller, but adds that it is too early to tell whether Jones is the beginning of a wave of top-selling Houston artists.

Yee is encouraged by first-week sales for Wall, but adds that they are far from "Kanye West numbers."

"Rap tends to be a little more market-specific," Yee says. "There's always mainstream stuff that will carry over, and hype does have a lot to do with how well this stuff sells, whether the hype is manufactured or real. Everyone is just trying to keep their finger on the pulse."

Additional reporting by Ivory M. Jones in New York and Todd Masters in Los Angeles.
Allaire Studios in upstate New York is notable for its unique ambience and amenities. "If you can't be inspired here, you don't have a pulse," MercyMe's Bart Millard says.
Despite the closure of many legendary recording studios such as the Record Plant and the Hit Factory in the past two years and the well-chronicled rise of home studios, commercial studio survivors and newcomers echo the famous quote by Mark Twain: "The rumors of the death of the big studios are greatly exaggerated."

However, the studios that have survived are emerging with a new business model built around managing leaner budgets, sharpening their services and diversifying the business. Additionally, a new crop of studios is shying away from the traditional New York-Los Angeles-Nashville recording hubs, instead opting to create luxury "destination studios" in outposts as varied as Las Vegas and Lexington, Ky.

"That there’s no more studios being built is a myth," says studio designer John Storyk of Welters-Storyk. "What happened is that the business model changed. It changed the first time somebody body recorded a digitized project in their house. Things got democratized. But until there comes a time when singing and playing and live microphones are no longer needed, there’s going to be a need for a closed-spaces recording environment and architectural events."

Indeed, famed sound engineer/designer Rupert Neve, who will deliver the keynote at the Audio Engineering Society Convention Oct. 7-10 in New York, says most big-name artists and top labels will always need the services of the big boys to polish projects.

"We talk disparagingly about the kid who can put together a record in his bedroom," Neve says. "It’s very possible for someone to record an album in a small room or even a car. But he finds out sooner or later that it’s not a finished product. He will seek out a mastering house. The thing needs finishing. It needs a producer."

"Even in the era of Pro Tools and digital devices, the fascination with large acoustic spaces is part of what I hope is a rebirth," producer Phil Ramone says. "So maybe now you use the big [con]sole studio, a big room, for a week."

And that full-service facility will meet your every need. "The staff has to be smaller and more efficient and know what is expected of them," says Zoe Thrall, who served as GM for the now-shuttered Power Station and Hit Factory. "You have to be really smart about how you run the studio.

STAYING ALIVE

Studio survivors say they constantly assess the market to determine their next direction.

For some, consolidation has been the answer to the shrinking studio arena. Two popular New York commercial studios, Sound on Sound and Right Track, announced their merger just before the AES convention.

Sound on Sound GM Chris Babicz says the united company will occupy Right Track’s building at 168 W. 48th St., and will remodel several rooms.

Right now, Babicz says, times are flush and Sound on Sound "has all the work we can handle in all of our rooms." He chalks it up to the "time of season" and the decreased number of studios.

While many studio insiders feel New York’s costs simply prohibit running a studio there, one entry to the high-rent district is Tainted Blue, a remodeled outlet on the site of the old Penthouse of Quad Studios in Times Square. Andrew Koss and Patrick Shaw, both 26-year-old songwriter/performers, bought the studio in April. They plan to use the room for their own work, to produce young artists and to rent out to other producers. Luckily, Koss says, "our breaking-even point is renting out the studio a few days a month.

Studies in other recording mainstays are looking for room to grow. Alan and Diana Cartee opened Cartee Day Studios in 2000 in Nashville. "The first project we did was Alan Jackson’s ‘Drive’ album," Alan Cartee says. Since then, Willie Nelson, Toby Keith, Trace Adkins, George Jones, Jerry Lee Lewis and Jeff Foxworthy have all frequented the studio. Cartee will open a second studio in Music City this month.

Cartee attributes his success to diversity. "I’ve always been involved in publishing, songwriting and some production—a little bit of everything," he says. "You’ve got to be diverse. That’s part of surviving right now."

Cartee admits things have gotten tougher on Music Row. When he built the first studio, the rate was $2,500 per day. "When I got finished renovating a year later, it was down to $1,500-$1,800 per day.

Veterans in other recording centers report similar rate adjustments. "I’ve had to," says engineer Bob Clearmountain, who has recorded or mixed tracks for a long list of acts including Bruce Springsteen and the Rolling Stones. "Everybody has. It’s unrealistic if you don’t. You won’t work."

And, Clearmountain admonishes, anyone who thinks studio rates and recording budgets will ever return to their former heights needs a reality check. "I don’t think you’ll ever see a ‘golden era’ like the 70s and 80s again," he says. "Let’s be frank, in most cases, the costs were inflated. Labels can’t and won’t toss around $300,000 for an album anymore. If you can get $100,000 now, you’re really lucky. Most budgets are less than that."

NEWCOMERS IN AND OUT OF TOWN

Even as labels continue to tighten their purse strings, a wave of luxury residential studios is emerging—most of them outside the usual recording meccas.

One destination studio that continues to thrive four years after its opening is Allaire Studios in upstate New York. Owned by Randall Wallace and his wife, Jackie, the studio is located in a mansion that was built in the 1920s. The Wallaces bought it in 1998 and opened the studio in 2001. Like many studios outside of large urban areas, Allaire offers a refuge in which to create.

The first project was Norah Jones’ Grammy Award-winning album "Come Away With Me." Since then, David Bowie, Tim McGraw and Christian rock act MercyMe, among others, have used the facilities.

Studio manager Mark McKenna credits Allaire’s success to its unique ambience and amenities, including a personal chef. "We are only two hours from New York, but when you are up here, it feels like you could be anywhere," he says. "It’s on top of a mountain, and you can see for miles. It’s very serene, calm and quiet."

MercyMe lead singer Bart Millard puts it simply: "If you can’t be inspired here, you don’t have a pulse."

McGraw has recorded his last two albums at Allaire and says before going there he had contemplated locations in Scotland, the Bahamas and Italy. "It’s a really great environment," he says. "It has huge, bright rooms, a fireplace and wooded floors, big windows. It has a real warm sound."

"There’s a lot of studios that have accommodations, but they kind of squeeze you in," McKenna says. "We are fortunate enough to be able to accommodate almost any number of people. With Tim [McGraw], we had to put up 22 people, which we were able to do."

Like Allaire, several new studios are tied to other ventures, leaving the owners less vulnerable to the fluctuations of the studio business.

Tops among the new entries is the New Studio at the Palm Casino Resort in Las Vegas, which opens next month. Pro audio veteran Thrall is director of studio operations.

Thrall, who is also an engineer, artist manager and vice chairman of the AES convention, says she took the Palms job partly because the studio is a destination in itself, and Las Vegas, unlike New York, is not saturated with studios.

She says New Studio will operate as a two-room, full-service facility. "I intend on competing with the top studios in the world," she says. "I’ll be reaching out on an international basis, just as I did with the Hit Factory."

Even though the studio has yet to open, Thrall says, "I’ve been pleasantly surprised at the amount of interest in it."

Similarly, St. Claire Recording, a $3 million studio in Lexington, Ky., just opened its doors. Owned by banker Will Parks and his son John, St. Claire is a studio/hotel with four luxury suites and amenities galore. It has already garnered a nomination for a 2005 Technical Excellence & Creativity Award for creative studio design.

Will Parks has referred to the venture as a "field of dreams" and is hoping that now that he has built a world-class studio in Lexington, people will come. St. Claire studio manager Rob Bennett plans to "reach out to national acts as well as be a creative hub for local and regional talent."

Another newcomer, Sonoma Mountain Studio Estate, a luxury facility in Northern California wine country, has a unique business model and perhaps one that many studios will adopt in the future: It positions itself as a new music company that includes an independent label, SME Records, and a music publishing arm, as well as a studio. The facilities are available to artists signed to SME and to high-end clients who want the privacy of an estate environment.

Owner Bill Zabot, an entrepreneur who sold his communications business before the high-tech bubble burst, has invested millions to create what amounts to a gated plantation overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

Instead of a daily rate, clients pay a monthly sum for the private studios, residences and such amenities as a limo, full-time chef and, for the nautically minded, use of a yacht docked in Sausalito, Calif. Veteran producer David Kershbaum (The Bluebeaters, Bryan Adams) is currently on-site working with SME artists.

"We look at the studio as an asset, a tool, rather than the end-all and be-all," Zabot says.

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Australia turns to new A&R breed to drive global hits

By Christie Eliezer

A
ustralia has a long history of creating international stars. But for record companies Down Under today, global success is more essential than ever.

Amid falling CD sales at home, labels realize that having hits abroad is no longer just an option. Executives say a record that does not look like it will translate abroad is not worth working in the first place.

When the Australian music industry convenes Oct. 23 at the Sydney Superdome for the annual Australian Record Industry Assn. Awards, it can celebrate that its status as a repertoire source for the world has been confirmed of late by the international breakthroughs of Jet, the Vines, Ben Lee and Delta Goodrem.

In the past few years, a score of other Australian acts have achieved some measure of success outside their homeland, including Missy Higgins, the Cat Empire, Xavier Rudd, End of Fashion, Evermore, Rogue Traders and Sarah Blasko. Higgins, Blasko and Evermore and Lee are among the leading nominees for this year's ARIA Awards.

In addition, the industry is placing its bets on international breakthroughs by a new breed of feisty talent with names like Butterfinger, Airborne, the Sparrows, Vassy, Kate Alexa, 67 Special, British India, Ginger, the Wish and Kid Confusion.

But the question remains: Can labels turn their enthusiasm for these new acts into global cold cash?

"There hasn't been a lot of great A&R in Australia," Warner Music Australia president Ed St. John says. "As an industry we signed a lot of great hands but haven't done a lot of great things with them."

Looking beyond what he calls "a lot of wasted opportunities" in the past, St. John and other executives say Australia is turning to a new breed of A&R executives who understand how to break acts worldwide.

Universal Music Australia managing director George Ash says, "The real challenge is finding the A&R skills so we can help artists realize their talent. As far as international success goes, this is the biggest challenge facing the Australian music industry."

But EMI Music Australia managing director John O'Donnell (who as A&R director of Sony Music in the mid-1990s signed hit acts Silverchair and Something for Kate) sharply disagrees. "Our product stands up, and we're good at developing and A&R'ing acts," O'Donnell says. "The problem is, you're battling against a U.S. act signed to a U.S. label who have home-ground advantage."

Sony BMG chairman/CEO Denis Handlin is a longtime believer in employing A&R execs from the United States and Britain.

"There are some good local A&R people here," Handlin explains. "But to inject international A&R people into our company has brought a wealth of experience and new ideas in the way we do things and results that can be achieved."

"Delta Goodrem is a great example of this," he continues, citing the Australian pop singer who has scored a hit on the Billboard Hot Adult Contemporary Songs chart with "Lost Without You" from her U.S. debut album on Columbia Records.

"If we can promote the creation of world-class content from Australia, we will continue to be able to play on the world stage," Handlin adds.

Executives believe that the trend of recent years will continue as Australian record companies seek to work with their overseas affiliates to A&R albums for the global market. That is what led to the success of Jet, Higgins, Evermore and others. Meanwhile, the rejuvenation of the live scene in Australia has triggered a new generation of acts.

"They're exciting and diverse in style. We're in for some very good years," enthuses Michael Parisi, outgoing managing director of Festival Mushroom Records.

St. John adds, "These acts hit the road and create a large fan base for themselves, so record companies don't need to create an audience from scratch."

Live prowess also helps up-and-coming acts deliver the goods at international showcases. Increasingly, Australia's music industry has turned to such events as the South by Southwest Music & Media Conference in the United States, Canadian Music Week and Germany's PopKomm as launching pads.

The need to find global markets is clear from the sales figures at home.

Recorded music sales in Australia in the first half of 2005 fell in value by 11.8% to $209 million (A$160.9 million) and by 7.3% to 22.7 million units, according to the ARIA.

Even music DVDs, a growth sector since 2003 worth $50 million Australian ($38.5 million) annually, have failed to sustain that momentum.

However, the labels see positives. The second half of 2005 is showing an upswing, digital sales are set to explode late next year, and Australian singles make up 25% of the country's top 100.

The major labels remain aggressive about A&R, marketing and digital opportunities.

Sony BMG last month reported that sales of tracks online hit 2 million, as the company expanded sponsorship deals with Internet and mobile phone companies.

In the wake of its U.S. success with Goodrem, Sony BMG is receiving interest from its affiliates in United Kingdom and continental Europe for troubadours Pete...
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Murray and Alex Lloyd and dance-rock act Rogue Traders. Handlin also believes atmospheric rock band Augie March and soul diva Paulini “have good prospects.”

Universal Music Australia diverted more resources to domestic marketing, digital and mobile business, and made A&R a major priority. “We anticipate significant growth from our investments in this area,” Ash says.

Universal has a push on crossover roots performer Xavier Rudd, Eran James and Starky. Its power trio Wolfmother, on Modular Records, has been signed to Interscope for the United States and to Island in the United Kingdom. Cut Copy is also with Island U.K.

Universal label Dew Process has sent two acts into the international market. Blasko, whose debut album “The Overturn and the Undercore” went gold in Australia with sales of 35,000 units, has signed with Universal for North America and Mercury Records in Europe. And Cherry Tree/Interscope will launch the Grates next year in the United States.

EMI’s global focus is on End of Fashion and singer/songwriter Higgins, released on the Eleven The Music label at home and signed to Warner Music in the United States and Europe. EMI expects new releases from Jet, Silverchair and the Vines through 2006.

St. John took over Warner Music this year (he was managing director of pre-merger BMG Australia). They’ve brought in new marketing and A&R heads and increased resources to digital media, and says he is changing the company’s culture to become more competitive. One new Warner band, the Veronicas, is signed to Sire Records for the world; another, Evermore, is signed direct to Warner Australia and New Zealand and Sire for other markets. A third, melodic rock band Thirsty Merc, has garnered much affiliate interest as well.

The independent-label sector is also buoyant. Stuart Watters, chief executive of Australian Independent Record Labels, estimates that his members collectively have a 25% share of the recorded-music market and release 80% of Australian music.

AIR set up global deals to get indie acts on download sites and showcase at trade fairs. Indies continue to secure international deals for their acts.

Festival Mushroom Records is giving priority attention to Chloe Lattanzii, rock band Eskimo Joe, singer AmieI and, through a licensing deal with Albert Productions, blues outfit Dallas Crane.

Shock Records expects to announce international deals soon for guitar bands Love Outside Andromada and the Mess Hall. Among other Shock acts, Jamaican-born soul singer Roy Young, released on the Public Opinion label at home, has a U.S. deal with Tommy Boy Records, and the Casarovas, released on Rubber Records through Shock in Australia, have signed with Universal Music imprint Fontana.

International deals also are imminent for Liberation Records acts Josh Pyke, released on the Ivy League label at home, as well as the Hot Lies and the Howling Bells.

As record labels look abroad to offset shrinking CD and DVD sales, the rest of the Australian music business remains strong.

Revenue from all sectors was estimated at $5.1 billion Australian ($3.9 billion) in 2004-2005, according to research group IBISWorld, with audio equipment accounting for the largest share of that pie with sales of $1.1 billion Australian ($847 million).

Publishers are equally as aggressive at finding new talent. “The volume of writers collaborating or going on co-writes overseas is the highest it’s been,” BMG Music Publishing managing director Peter Karpin says.

Figures for 2004-2005 from the Australasian Performing Right Assn. showed net distributable income climbed to $107.8 million Australian ($85 million), up by nearly 10%.

Revenue from radio was up 14% to $33 million Australian ($25.4 million) and TV was up by 5% to $40 million Australian ($30.8 million), while income from consolidated general licensing like public performance rose 11% to $26.6 million Australian ($20.4 million).

Foreign revenue rose 10% to $17.2 million Australian ($13.2 million).

Revenue from the Australasian Mechanical Copyright Owners Society grew 12.5% to $37.9 million Australian ($29.1 million). Ringtone revenue rose by 125% while independent-label mechanical royalties were up 25%.

According to APRA CEO Brett Costle. 2004-2005 produced APRA’s largest pool of license fees from national concert tours, with $3.6 million Australian ($2.7 million) collected from 350 tours.

The live sector sold 12.5 million tickets and grossed $689.6 million Australian ($531 million) in 2004, and is expected to grow.

In June, the Australian Entertainment Industry Assn. released its first Ticket Attendance and Revenue Survey, which showed the live sector is twice as large as the Australian Bureau of Statistics previously estimated. The association, which commissioned the survey, is pushing for government to introduce tax breaks for promoters to similar to those offered to the domestic film industry, to attract outside investors.

The report did identify issues the touring industry must address, including high ticket prices for emerging artists and acts who fail to fulfill fan expectations in concert.

A series of international tours that targeted baby-boomer fans sold so well in the market that four Australian concert promoters were listed in Billboard’s global Boxscore recap for November 2004-May 2005.

“The tour sector remains buoyant,” says Michael Gudinski, managing director of Frontier Touring, which ranked highest among the Australian promoters in the Billboard recap. “We’ve had one of our best years so far...”
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ARTISTS TO WATCH (cont.)

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THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT
The Butterfly Effect has built its popularity through word-of-mouth — first from dynamic live shows and later when Roadshow Music marketed its 2003 tour set, "Begins Here," with street teams, Web site branding and exposure in heavy rock magazines, according to A&R manager Dave Lawrence.

Sony BMG issued the album early this year in Europe, and a tour followed. The band will showcase the album on their current tour, which will continue through November in the United States, where it was released by Megaforce Records/RED.

The group is recording its follow-up, "Imago," in Los Angeles with producer Joe Barassi, with its release set for March.

THE VERONICAS
A punchy grunge-pop sound and teen anthems made the Veronicas — 20-year-old identical twins Jess and Lisa Origliasso — an instant hit.


Sire Records CEO Seymour Stein, who signed the Veronicas for the United States, says, "When I met them, they reminded me so much of my early meetings of Madonna; they're so totally determined to be successful."

YOUTH GROUP (below)
Youth Group formed in 1998 in Sydney, weaving an angular mix of rock and folk around the melancholy songs of frontman Toby Martin, who is currently working toward a Ph.D. in Australian indigenous country music.

The band enjoyed a popularity surge following 2004's "Skeleton Jar" album (Ivy League Records), which Epitaph released in North America and Europe.

Youth Group tour those two territories extensively with college radio support. Andy Cassell, A&R director at Ivy League, believes the band's 2006 album will find a wider base. "The songs are so much stronger," he says, "and showcase even more why Toby is so unique."

DALLAS CRANE (above)
An atypical Australian melodic blues-rock band that thrives on roadwork, Dallas Crane has staged five tours in the last year that have reached 75,000 people.

"Without question, they're a band that connect instantly with a crowd," says Fifa Riccobono, CEO of Sydney-based Albert Productions.

The band declined offers of U.S. and European tours until its second album arrives in early 2006.

With radio support only from the alternative-rock Triple J Network and college radio, Albert Productions marketed Dallas Crane through handset downloads and appearances on sports TV shows.

CHLOE LATTANZI (above)
When Chloe Lattanzi was in her mid-teens, she appeared in Australian musicals and toured Japan with her mother, singer Olivia Newton-John.

The Hollywood, Calif.-based artist's debut album, a mix of poetic lyrics and grunge alt-rock, arrived in early 2006.

"Anyone expecting a sugary pop record is going to be surprised," says Michael Parisi, outgoing managing director of Festival Mushroom Records, her Australian label. "It is very sexy, cutting edge, soulful and highly intelligent. She set out to make a statement with this record."

WOLFmother
Sydney's Psychedelic rock trio Wolfmother has not made a video or received acknowledgement from the mainstream media. Yet thanks to word-of-mouth, airplay on the Triple J Network and coverage in music and surfing publications, the band sells out its club dates.

The act showcased for potential labels in late 2004 in the United Kingdom and this year in the United States.

"Their music has the epic spirit of Led Zeppelin or Pink Floyd while still sounding very 'now,'" Sydney-based manager John Watson says.

The act is signed worldwide to Sydney label Modular. It is distributed by Universal for Australia and New Zealand, by Interscope in the United States and by Island Def Jam in the United Kingdom.

Its debut album, produced by Dave Sardy, arrived this month in Australia and is set for international release in early 2006.
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CULLUM HAS NEW ‘TALES’ TO TELL

You cannot fence in Jamie Cullum.
He is a spunky 26-year-old pianist who infuses the pop tunes he sings with jazz. He pens his own lyrical—and at times witty—songs as well as demonstrates his prowess as a song stylist.
His appeal ranges from teenagers to the fiftysomething crowd.
And he not only entertains with a plucky panache but also displays heartfelt emotion in his live performances.
As for where Cullum believes he fits in, he shrugs. "I know lots of music, and I like making music for music fans, not for the jazz snobs or the fashion-conscious teenager. I like having the opportunity to cross boundaries," he says.
The U.K.-born and -based Cullum is an unlikely pop upset who sells incredibly well. Debut disc "Twentysomething" has moved more than 2 million copies worldwide, and is the top-selling jazz disc ever in the United Kingdom, with 1.2 million units sold, according to his label.
His second set, "Catching Tales," out Oct. 11 in North America on Verve Forecast, is pegged to soar even higher than the 325,000 copies his first album did stateside.
"Catching Tales" came out Sept. 26 on Universal in the United Kingdom and Europe, and debuted at No. 4 with first-week sales of 38,290 units, according to the Official U.K. Charts Co.
Yet, in talking about his last two whirlwind years, Cullum is not the least bit nonplussed by all the attention, nor is he worried about a sophomore slump. "I’m just having fun," he says, in a telephone interview from the United Kingdom. "I like to perform. I enjoy it so much." Cullum’s boyish demeanor is spiked with enthusiasm—he punctuates the conversation with frequent exclamations of "Absolutely!" He is excited about "Catching Tales," recorded live in the studio, with only a few nips and tucks in the mix.
"This time we recorded in a more ragtag fashion," he says. "We came up with a more rugged, less perfect sound. We even kept the laughs in the mix. I wanted to sound younger and be happy with my own imperfection. If anything, I sound old and experienced on ‘Twentysomething.’"

FACT FILE

Label: Verve Forecast (U.S.)/Universal (international)
Management: Direct Management Group (North America); AIR Management Group (Europe)
Booking: Chris Daiston, Creative Artists Agency (North America); Mike Greek, Helter Skelter (Europe)
Publishing: EMI Music (ASCAP)
Best-selling/last studio album: "Twentysomething" (2004), 325,000 (U.S.)
CULLUM (cont.)

For that first album, Cullum was marketed as a jazz-pop crossover artist. "The studio tried to rope in Italy and Spain with the new release.

Dickon Stainer, GM of Universal Classics & Jazz in London, says the campaign for "Catching Tales" shares one thing with "Twenty Something": longevity. "Twenty Something" was still in the upper reaches of the charts at Christmas 2004, more than a year after its U.K. release.

"We're hoping we can engineer a similar life cycle for this record, which we think has a greater potential in terms of developing Jamie's audience into new areas," Stainer says. But he admits that such a campaign will require the label expanding its promotion and marketing in order to encompass the different audiences that this record reaches out to.

In the United States, where Cullum will headline a tour in early 2006, Verve Music Group senior VP/GM Nate Herr says the new CD is "a major priority for us." Verve Forecast will be working "Catching Tales" jointly with sister pop label Universal in the States.

Herr notes that while "it is not uncommon to see three generations of family at his concerts," the main target is listeners in their 20s and 30s, skewing slightly female. "Herr says the radio focus will be on commercial and non-commercial triple-A, as well as playing a strong role in getting the word out. A week-long TV ad campaign begins Oct. 8 with 30-second spots on such channels as Style Network, HGTV, Food Network and Bravo as well as CNN's Headline News.

At retail, "Catching Tales" will have a high profile. Dave Alder, chief marketing officer at Virgin Entertainment Group North America, says he has high expectations: "Jamie's the perfect artist for Virgin retail. He has an accessible repertoire, a great music style and appeals to a wide variety of customers. His first CD performed very well, and I believe this album will do even better. He has huge crossover potential." Plus, Alder notes, the timing of the tour - the album is "going to make an excellent holiday gift." "

Additional reporting by Steve Adams in London.

IT’S TWISTA’S TIME TO BRAG A BIT

The career of Windy City rapper Twista is a testament to the fact that good things come to those who wait. Although his name had been buzzing around the underground hip-hop circuit for more than 10 years, it was not until 2004 that he first got to experience mainstream success, when the single "Slow Jamz" leapt to the top of The Billboard Hot 100. His album, "Kamikaze," went on to sell 1.8 million copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

With the Oct. 4 release of "The Day After" (Atlantic Records) and the steady chart rise of its lead single, "Girl Tonite" featuring Trey Songz, Twista is out to prove that last year was just the beginning. "Girl Tonite" is No. 7 on the R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay chart this issue.

Twista says the success of his last album helped erase any doubts he had about his career. "It's like, my saga is up. I got my mojo because I see there's nothing wrong with my music or nothing wrong with me as an artist," he says.

Along with his newfound self-confidence comes a new side of Twista that he believes will be a welcome change to his longtime followers.

"People are used to hearing Twista from an underdog, hungry level," he says. "Now it's time to hear Twista from an 'I'm holding-it-down-in-the-game-let-me-brag-a-little-bit-and-talk-a-little-shot level. Here's the platinum Twista talking mess.'" To help showcase his new side, he teamed up with his in-house producer, Tool, and enlisted outside help from the Neptunes, Banner and DJ Smurf.

Noticeably absent this time around is a reunion with fellow Chicagoan Kanye West, who produced "Slow Jamz" and its follow-up single, "Overnight Celebrity," on the last album. But before fans wonder if this is the beginning of hip-hop's latest beef, Twista quickly quashes the idea.

"We did work together, but those songs just happened to be the ones that didn't make it," Twista says. "It wasn't anything in particular with him. Besides, I figured it was my chance to step out on my own and prove that I can hold my own. I've been doing this since before he was here, so I wanted to show that I could still do it after." Atlantic Records executive VP Ronnie Johnson has full confidence that Twista can do it on his own. He says the label's initial shipment topped 500,000 copies. "We know that there is a great deal of demand and anticipation for this new release," Johnson says.

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Doing It For Yourself
Dance Music Summit Focuses On Independence, Self-Reliance For Artists, Labels

The domineering theme this year's Billboard Dance Music Summit?
"You can do it—on your own." That applied to new artists finding an audience without major-label help, small labels digitally distributing product and established artists creating alternate revenue streams through sponsorships and licensing. The event was held Sept. 19-21 at New York's Union Square Ballroom.

"Making music is easier than it's ever been," Astralwerks GM Errol Kolosine said during the Sept. 19 "Marriage Counseling" panel. "Do you really need this big machine?"

This sense of possibility and emboldened independence comes as a result of well-documented shifts in the industry at large: booming online communities, improved digital distribution, increased value placed on branding. Such developments have made the dance world's usual role—that of the DJ, if obscure, outsider—a newly powerful and desirable one.

Even Kevin Kiernan, director of U.S. business development for Sony BMG, admitted that dance "is more of a priority now at his company because of new avenues to reach specialized communities. "Digital environments make it easy to find pockets of interest for certain releases," he said during another Sept. 19 panel, "The Me Generation." "And digital-only releases make it so you don't have to get the whole machine working to get the music out there."

He cited Sony BMG's recent signing of of fame Mylo as an example of the power of a developed online community. Mylo self-released his "Destroy Rock and Roll" in the United Kingdom on his own Beatroot Records, and has sold 190,000 copies, according to Kiernan, partly because of his online presence. "We would have never picked up Mylo, but the fanbase is rabid," Kiernan said. The album is slated for U.S. release Dec. 6 on Beatroot/Sony BMG.

For an artist without the backing of a major, online communities like my-space.com can serve as mission control. According to My-Space VP of marketing and communications Jamie Kantrowitz, who also spoke on the "Me Generation" panel, the site hosts more than 450,000 artist pages. They range from major-label artists who have be placed on the block, like Billy Corgan, to the band down the block. She also reported a "poignant rise" in dance interest in the past five months. "We're grow-
The Show Must Go On

Vibe Awards Return in Wake of Last Year’s Stabbing Incident

For the chief executives at Vibe magazine, the answer was obvious: The show must go on.

The show in question: the Vibe Awards. Now in its third year, the music and fashion-themed ceremony will be taped Nov. 12 in Los Angeles for broadcast Nov. 15 once again on UPN. Last year’s awards, also in Los Angeles, were marred by a melee stemming from an altercation in the audience. A man stepped up to that year’s special honorees, rap icon Dr. Dre, and slapped him. The assailant was later allegedly stabbed by Young Buck, a member of G-Unit.

Despite the incident and ensuing publicity, Vibe publisher Kenard Gibbs says support from national sponsors, UPN and record labels validated the magazine’s desire to move forward. “For obvious reasons, it was up in the air at one point,” Gibbs recalls. “Everyone was very concerned as to what would be the fallout of something like this. But after conversations with UPN, our advertisers and the record community, we found everyone was committed to supporting this platform.”

While acknowledging the glut of awards shows, Gibbs and Vibe editor-in-chief Mimi Valdes maintain that there is a crucial need for minority-targeted ceremonies. “Regardless of what happened last year, it’s our mission to do this,” Valdes declares. “There still aren’t a lot of outlets on network TV to expose urban music artists, especially new talent. We want to celebrate the spectrum of artists and culture this music has to offer.”

There will be a couple of changes, however. This year the Vibe Awards will move to the Sony Studios lot from last year’s location of the Santa Monica Municipal Hangar. The relocation will not only add a Hollywood feel to the show, Gibbs notes, but will also eliminate concerns regarding security for the invite-only event. “The problem occurred with the talent, not with the invited guests,” Gibbs adds. “We’ve since had a number of conversations with the management of various talent. Everyone agrees unanimously that we all have to collectively do a good job of being responsible.”

The program’s format is also being slightly altered. The mini fashion shows staged during past ceremonies have given way to a new honor, the V-Style Award. The award is in keeping with Vibe’s mission to advance the role fashion plays in the urban music lifestyle. “It seems more organic this way versus all of a sudden the ceremony stops and there’s a fashion show,” Valdes says. “The latter approach hasn’t been successful.”

Blending awards and fashion is a unique proposition, Gibbs adds. “But we remain committed to refining and continuing this platform.”

Hosts and performers will be announced shortly, but Billboard has exclusively learned that Mary J. Blige will receive the VLegend award at this year’s ceremony.

Returning sponsors include General Motors, Pepsi, Brand Jordan and McDonald’s. Vibe Awards are a production of Vibe magazine, Flavor Unit Television Entertainment and White Cherry Entertainment.

FROM THE CLOSET: R. Kelly’s “Closet” saga continues. “Trapped in the Closet, Chapter 1-12” comes out Nov. 1 on DVD via Jive. Never-before-seen footage, a making-of documentary and running commentary on the complete series round out the package. In advance of the DVD, BET’s “Access Granted” will debut Chapter 6 in the “Trapped” single marathon during the week of Oct. 10. The following week has been declared “R. Kelly Week” on MTV2.

And there is still more Kelly to come. “Remix City, Volume 1” hits stores Nov. 15. The 12-track compilation on Jive features signature Kelly songs as “Bump N’ Grind,” “Ignition” and “Down Low (Nobody Has to Know).”
Jazz Notes

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Making Music In Monterey

Jazz Festival's Standout Includes Sets From Rollins, Bennett And Bley

It may have been the Monterey Jazz Festival's 48th birthday this year, but at the three-day jazz extravaganza—which took place Sept. 16-18 at the county fairgrounds in Monterey, Calif.—there was a buzz on preparations already in motion for the silver 50th. A 300-member crew shot footage throughout the weekend, and even fest GM Tim Jackson admitted he was thinking ahead, saying that the 2007 festival was just around the corner and will be extra special.

This year’s gathering actually proved to be special in its own right, with peak performances scattered throughout the main arena stage and four satellite venues. Highlights included sets by saxophonist John Handy with guest vocalist Steve Miller, pianist Jon Jang's brilliant sextet; sparkplug jazz/R&B vocalist Ledi, the ever-panet-70s-old sax giant Sonny Rollins; and a tour de force finale by guitarist Pat Metheny with tenor saxophonist David Sanchoz.

The wonder of the fest was Tony Bennett. In his first-ever performance there, he captivated the packed arena. The 79-year-old singer wowed the locals with "I Left My Heart in San Francisco," then lifted the thick curtain of fog to let the harvest moon shine with his magical saunter through "Fly Me to the Moon.”

The biggest surprise was bassist/bandleader Kyle Eastwood, in Dizzy's Den, showing that he was a woodshedding phenom in his Paris home since his last, lackluster festival performance in 1999. He performed funky, bluesy tunes with his electric sextet from his new CD, "Paris Blue," released Sept. 20 by Rendezvous Entertainment.

But top honors went to Carla Bley, another Monterey first-timer who played piano and conducted her big band in her memorable festival-commisioned piece "The Black Orchid," inspired by her first gig in 1955 at the cocktail lounge in nearby Pacific Grove. "This is the first time we played this," Bley said back-stage, after a show that featured her complex and whimsical arrangements. "It will get better as we take the work on tour to Europe next year. That's when we'll record it. Until then, this will change nightly.”

As for arranging the piece, "it didn't fully come together until I got the rhythm feel. That's when the Frankieenstein went the bolt of lightning and started moving," she said with a laugh.

ERRATA: In the last Jazz Notes, we mentioned the song "Who's Minding the Store?" from Dianne Reeves CD "Good Night, and Good Luck"—the soundtrack to the film of the same name. The song was penned by Rosemary Clooney's manager Allen Swindorf with collaborators Matt Catingub, Earl Brown and Alanis Bidalenagal.

NEW GUITAR GOD: The winner of the 118th annual Thelonious Monk Jazz Competition is 27-year-old guitarist Lage Lund, a native of Skin, Norway, and a grad of Berklee College of Music in Boston and the Juilliard Jazz Studies program in New York. He received a $30,000 scholarship.

The finals took place Sept. 19 at the Kennedy Center's Eisenhower Theater in Washington, D.C., and were co-hosted by Herbie Hancock, Thelonious Monk Jr. and Billy Dee Williams. The panel of judges featured a who’s who of jazz guitarist: Bill Frisell, Pat Martino, Russell Malone, Stanley Jordan, John Pizzarelli and Earl Klugh.

The competition showcases a different instrument each year and has provided a Launch pad for the careers of saxophonist Joshua Redman, vocalist Jane Monheit and pianists Marcus Roberts and Jacky Terrasson. This year’s show will air Feb. 26 as a two-hour program on BET and BET Jazz.

FIXING A HOLE: After years of negotiations, renowned jazz club Yoshi's in Oakland, Calif., will spin off a sister location in San Francisco. The groundbreaking ceremony will take place Oct. 11.
Reggaetón’s presence, Sony BMG A&R VP Ken Komisar says, broadens the appeal of Martin and his music. “Ricky is a mainstream pop artist in most respects, or a Latin artist, no matter what the approach is,” Komisar says. “This is an idea that has been shied away from youth of today. This is what the youth are listening to, so why not give them what they want?”

“I like,” however, is not a reggaetón album. It is not even an urban album, despite the inclusion of several songs along those lines.

“I would categorize it as world music,” Bruno Del Granado says, referring to some of the tunes’ Middle and Far Eastern influences. Del Granado, president of Entertainment Media Factory, has been hired by Martin to help market the album. “I can’t really call it Latin, I can’t really call it Anglo.”

Will the world embrace those sounds? Del Granado and Columbia are counting on Martin’s broad appeal, but some questions remain: Even if “Life” can engage a younger demographic, many of Martin’s fans are now in their 30s, and it remains to be seen whether they will like the new sound.

On the plus side, it looks as though Martin’s loyal Latin fan base is receptive to the new project; Latin radio has given “I Don’t Care” a warm reception. “It’s very strong for the Latin market,” says Nestor Rocha, PD for the Envision network. “The track is different, but you hear a new maturity. You can tell he went to look for new elements of fusion, and it’s a very strong production.”

“Life” will be marketed simultaneously to the English and Spanish markets by Columbia and Sony BMG Norte, although there are no plans for a Spanish version of the album. Martin will make appearances on mainstream and Spanish-language TV shows, from “TRL” and “The Oprah Winfrey Show” to “Don Francisco Presenta” and “Desde América.” This month, Martin will promote the album in Europe. In November, he kicks off his world tour in Mexico, playing 15 Latin countries before launching a U.S. and European tour in 2006.

Martin’s edge in the Latin market comes from a solo career that spans 15 years and seven albums, of which only two have been in English. It just so happens that those albums included some of the biggest pop hits in recent memory:

“When he broke in the English side, it was a huge departure, and now he’s departing again,” Sony BMG Norte president Kevin Lawrie says. “Ricky is tremendously determined and the record company is as well” to make this a success.

“Our goal has always been a methodical setup to slowly reintroduce Ricky at all levels, from the streets to the music industry,” Lawrie says. “We didn’t want to live off a name—Ricky Martin. We’re in the business of a career.”

The older, calmer Martin seems ready to embrace the new, but also to continue to build on his past. In other words, do not expect “The Cup of Life” and “Livin’ La Vida Loca” to disappear from that reality. They will both be part of his tour, performed, he says, more energetically than ever.

“I can humbly say they are songs that marked an era,” Martin says. “They are meaningful, and it’s marvelous to go into a restaurant and still have people say to you: ‘Hey, ale, ale.’”

**NEW SOUNDS REDEFINE TROPICAL MUSIC**

By Leila Cobo lcbobo@billboard.com

If you judge the landscape of tropical music in the United States by what you hear on the radio, you may conclude that traditional tropical music like salsa and merengue has been killed off by reggaetón. But if you listen closely, you will also hear other music that defies what has long been considered “tropical.”

There is the innovation of Aventura and Andy Andy, a young, urban bachata act with something to say. Then there is the peppery salsa band N’Klabe, which sings the infectious “I Love Salsa!” (you get the drift) and is now charting with “Amor De Una Noche,” featuring reggaetón artist Voltio.

Rather than declaring that tropical music is dead, then, it seems listeners are searching for different sounds within the genre, and are still undeterred about what they really like.

Labels are ambivalent, but most executives agree on one thing: Tropical music needs an infusion of youth. “Salsa needs a young, successful act to lift it up again,” says Juan Hidalgo, president of indie label J&K, which specializes in all types of tropical music. “Radio is not supporting salsa or merengue.”

Radio supports: to a slightly greater extent, bachata, J&K’s acts include Monchy & Alexandra, the top-selling group in the genre, and up-and-comer Domenic Martinez.

Aside from bachata, Hidalgo is missing all kinds of tropical rhythms with, of course, reggaetón. “Reggaetón mixed with tropical music, with bachata, with salsa, with Jamaican music,” he says. “Really, you can talk about ‘hurban’ formats, but reggaetón is tropical music, because it’s music to dance to, played with certain percussion instruments.”

Also falling under the broad umbrella of tropical are acts like Bachá, a duo nominated for a Latin Grammy Award in the best contemporary tropical album category. Its sound, like that of such contemporaries as Casab & Bacilos, defies description.

It is music to dance to, built upon Colombian and Venezuelan rhythms (rather than Cuban), but it has tinges of pop; Bachá’s single “La Cira,” a story about hidden agendas, could be a mini soap opera. Where to put it?

“If you ask me, it’s definitely a tropical group,” says Julio Bague, who produced Bachá’s self-titled Sony BMG album and is creative director at Peer music. “But because of the way radio formats are laid out, it’s getting played on pop radio.”

Bachá—made up of Colombian Juliana Barros and Venezuelan José Luis Chacín, a former member of iconic Venezuelan tropical group Guaco—is up against a wide variety of sounds in its Latin Grammy category. They range from Carlos Vives’ mix of valenciana and rock to Monchy & Alexandra’s contemporary bachata to Los Van Van’s Cuban timba.

“Tropical music is changing, and it’s changing in the sense that it’s returning to its original roots, which is a more urban salsa sound, more reflective of what happens in the streets,” says Lorenzo Braun, who heads Sony BMG Urbano. The division of Sony BMG Norte includes tropical and urban acts, from major stars like Marc Anthony to newcomers like N’Klabe.

“If we want a bigger audience,” Braun says, “we need to support these younger groups that younger audiences can relate to.”

**REGGAETÓN SAMPLER:** Billboard will bow a reggaetón compilation this month; the two-CD radio-only promo sampler features 18 tracks from such acts as Hector “El Father” Bimbo and Glory featuring Don Omar. The compilation will be presented to the industry Oct. 10 at 7:30 p.m. at South Beach Macarena in Miami Beach. Come celebrate with us! R.S.V.P. to marcioalval@ yahoo.com.

**FACT FILE**

Label: Columbia
Management: EMI Music Publishing (EMI)
Booking: Creative Artists Agency
Publishing: Sony BMG Music Publishing (SBN)
Biggest-selling English-language album (U.S.): “Ricky Martin” (1999), 7 million
Last English-language album (U.S.): “Sound Loaded” (2000), 1.8 million

www.americanradiohistory.com
Cartoons Inspire New Duo Danger Doom

Rapper Daniel Dumile’s MF Doom monster is a nod to Marvel Comics villain Dr. Doom, and when he is alone, he admits, he pretends he is talking to cartoons. So when friend and producer Danger Mouse—alias Brian Burton—asked an album for the Grey Album character, MF Doom could not resist. He also did not think it would happen.

The cable channel was once Danger Mouse’s main source of income. Before he was producing albums for Gorillaz and Cee Lo, he was writing music for Tomatomi, the network’s block of anime cartoons. “He has these ideas that are all ill,” MF Doom says. “I always like, ‘How can you pull that off?’ He told me, ‘You’ve got to go with that.’”

But for the most part, the references are relatively subtle. DeMarco says this was at Cartoon Network’s urging. “We wanted to do it and make it cheesy and sound like a sell-out,” he says. “We didn’t want to do it there. The head of the channel just thought you could do it if you’ve never seen Adult Swim.”

Epitaph president Andy Kaulkin says the project simply fell into his lap. Kaulkin became a Danger Mouse fan after hearing “The Grey Album.” He says as soon as the producer asked the label to back the new album, Danger and Doom said they would try and find a label to back this project, DeMarco says. “I didn’t really know how to put out a record. Once they got with Epitaph, they circled back to us.”

The network will take the lead in marketing the album. For the past six weeks, the station has been running spots touting it during Adult Swim, and on Oct. 10 begins airing a longer, informercial-like ad. In November, DeMarco says the network will air a video for the song “A.T.H.F.”

Epitaph will also work the track “Sofa King” to college radio as well as specialty shows, with plans to stage album listening parties on 50 college campuses. Danger Mouse and MF Doom are plotting a tour for next year, and the plan is to bring along the “Aqua Teen” characters. Everyone should be in costume,” MF Doom says. “The pair are already underground favorites, and retailers are counting on the Cartoon Network tie-in to this one of the better-selling independent hip-hop albums of the year.

“I’ve heard it and thought it was awesome,” says Brett Hayden, a manager for Blooming- ton, Ind.-based Tracks. “It’ll be humongous. We sell MF Doom like nuts.”

MF Doom concedes the record is out of step with much of mainstream hip-hop, and the cartoon theme may not be for everyone. “The violence style of hip-hop may be popular, but you need a break,” he says. “If you don’t want to watch a [Sylvestor] Stallone movie, you can watch some Steve Martin. I’m more like those dudes. I’m bringing Chevy Chase to the rap game.”

FACT FILE

Label: Capitol
Management: Normal
Booking: Little Big Man
Publishing: Warner/Chappell

Best-selling album (U.K.): “The Magic Numbers” (2005), 265,000

Numbers Add Up

Band Looks To Build On Its U.K. Success With U.S. Bow

U.K.-based quartet the Magic Numbers were critically acclaimed but largely unknown at the out of 2005. But by June, the act’s self-titled debut for Heavenly/EMI was greeted with a No. 7 debut and first-week sales of 38,000, according to the Official U.K. Charts Co. Sales have now surpassed 265,000 units.

Although American recognition for the band’s engagingly melodic pop-rock may take longer, label and act are encouraged by the setup for the U.S. release, which came out Oct. 4 on Capitol.

Frontman Romeo Stodart says his own de facto focus group: “I’ve got family and friends in New York, and they say there’s a real buzz going around about the band.” That is due in part to a bevy of upfront U.S. press, including a feature in GQ, a Spin album review and a place among Rolling Stone’s “10 New Artists to Watch.”

But, as in Britain, the key to the Magic Numbers’ success lies in the U.S. The band made a well-received appearance at the South by Southwest Music and Media Conference and Festival in March in Austin. The quartet returned to the States to play the inaugural Vegoose Festival Oct. 3 in Las Vegas. That will be followed by a U.S. tour in November featuring some headline dates and a place on the Bright Eyes/Feist package.

“Vegoose is a great jump-off point for them,” Capitol producer manager Reed Seerman says. “Pretty much across the board, the buzz that’s been coming over about this band as a live act is just mind-blowing. That’s going to be the main selling point.”

Stodart adds: “If the tour goes down well and people say, ‘You’ve got to go and see this band,’ if it grows in the same way it did in the U.K., it’ll be ideal.”

The Magic Numbers played their first gig in London in fall 2002. The quartet, comprising...

Artists Bend Their Voices

New Orleans Musicians Record Albums To Benefit Varied Causes

Their houses may be torn and ransacked following Hurricane Katrina, but their spirits are beautifully unbowed.

A wide range of New Orleans musicians, many of whom already have played a multitude of benefit concerts, are now converting their talents to albums that are donating proceeds to a wide range of causes.

Leading the charge is Irma Thomas, whose strong, steady, soulful vocals appear on four projects. “For me, this is therapy,” she says. “I’d rather be busy doing what I love to do than sitting at home contemplating what I need to do. I’ll get to that point later.”

Like many artists, Katrina Dumas has no home to return to. First up is “1 Believe to My Soul,” which came out Oct. 4 via Work Song/Rhino/Starbuck Hear Music and is available through the coffee retailer and at traditional retail stores throughout the United States and Canada.

Produced by Joe Henry, the album features new tracks from New Orleans patron saints Allen Toussaint and Thomas, as well as from Ann Peebles, Billy Preston and Mavis Staples. The project, recorded in June, was always slated to come out in October, but after Katrina hit, the involved labels decided to donate $10 from every copy purchased at Starbucks and $3 from those sold through other retailers to the American and Canadian armed of the Red Cross.

Henry says more volumes are planned. Additionally, a show featuring Thomas, Toussaint, Peebles and Staples will take place Oct. 25 at New York’s Town Hall.
two brother-and-sister teams, has an international background: Stodart and sister Michele were born in Trinidad, but moved to New York when he was 16, and lived there for six years.

When they relocated to London, the twosome met another sibling pair, Sean and Angela Ganon, who became their first friends in Britain.

Armed with a mutual love of country music, Americana and harmony, the four eventually formed the Magic Numbers.

As the band gigged extensively in the United Kingdom, word of the members' countrified harmonies and upbeat melodies spread quickly. "I knew that they had it," says Heavenly managing director Jeff Barrett, who first saw the quartet play in January 2004. "They have such a good time at their shows, and it's so inclusive, you just knew that was how it was going to grow."

"I first heard them at [London club] the Borderline," recalls Nigel Harding, head of music at London alternative rock station XFM. "I was so blown out, I went back for more the week after."

Harding adds that in October, the station was the first to play "Hymn for Her," a 7-inch available at the band's shows, on its "X-posure" program. "We knew we were doing right," Stodart says, "because more and more people kept coming and we were selling out shows. But since the album came out, it's been insane."

"The Magic Numbers" was also shortlisted for the 2005 Nationwide Mercury Prize. The next U.K. single, "Love's a Game," will be released Oct. 24.

In the United States, Capitol will take previous British single "Forever Lost" to triple-A radio Oct. 25. "We're really going to be focusing on all the markets they're playing in," November, Seeman says, "because that's where we're really expecting a reaction."

New Orleans or the tragedy. Thomas recorded "Backwater Blues," while Toussaint picked "Yes We Can Can." Among the other acts on the set are Randy Newman, Dr. John and Buckwheat Zydeco. Proceeds go to Habitat for Humanity.

Still to come is "Sing Me Back Home: Songs of Faith & Fun—A Benefit to Renew Orleans." The album, which is being recorded in Austin through Oct. 12, features Thomas, members of the Meters and the Neville Brothers, the Subdudes and Willie Tee, who gave a stirring performance Sept. 24 at a MusiCares benefit.

Lee Sacks, who is producing the project with Grammy Award-winning engineer Ray Bardani, says he has met with a number of interested labels and expects to announce distribution plans shortly. "Almost all the artists on our record were directly impacted by the storm," Sacks says. "Many of them still haven't seen their homes; they're still underwater."

Proceeds will go to a number of causes, ranging from regional food banks to restoration of Louisiana's wetlands. Staggersingly, in the face of having lost so much, Thomas and Toussaint have seen the blessings through the sorrows. "So many people have reached out in wonderful ways," Toussaint says. "New York has been wonderful."

He is living in New York until he can return home.

He adds that for comfort, "I've been able to turn to the pen. It's quite an inspiring time, the balancing act of tragedy and kindness. I've taken hard to pen daily and am inspired in many directions."

In other words, if we are lucky, some of Toussaint's compositions will show up on future volumes of "I Believe to My Soul."

IREMA THOMAS has recorded songs for four albums whose proceeds will benefit a range of causes.
Ideas, Genres ‘Collide’ On Crowder’s Latest

One of the things that has made worship music such a phenomenon in the Christian genre in the past few years is that worship leaders come in a variety of musical shapes, styles and packages. Among the more unique worship music outfits is the David Crowder Band. The six-member group developed a loyal following around its native Waco, Texas, before gaining a national audience with the 2002 Sixstepsrecords/Sparrow release “Can You Hear Us?” David Crowder and his compadres followed with the critically acclaimed 2003 collection “Illuminate” and just released their most ambitious set, “A Collision,” Sept. 27. It debuts at No. 1 on the Billboard Top Christian Albums chart this issue.

“It’s always a surprise to me,” Crowder says of the direction the album took. “I never really know where the things are going until we get there.” That laid-back attitude befits an artist who has a guitar and a beard named after him. In 2003 Anderson Gardens named the Crowder Acoustic after the band’s leader, and recently a Web site popped up, growyourcrowder.com, which also has a link to the band’s site.

“It’s all about the facial hair,” Crowder says of the quirky site. “You submit photos and register your ‘crowder’ with this Web site. It’s a little scary.” In concert, Crowder tells audiences that when mankind’s depravity meets God’s divinity, it is a beautiful collision. That became the inspiration for the band’s new set.

The project is divided into four parts and contains 21 tracks, among them the first studio version of the road-tested favorite “Here Is Our King” and a cover of Loretta Lynn’s “Everybody Wants to Go to Heaven.” The band even tackles bluegrass for the first time with a rendition of the Hank Williams classic “I Saw the Light.”

“We tried to get bluegrass under our fingers, and somehow I think it still comes out sounding very much,” says Crowder, who recorded part of the song with Marty Stuart at Johnny Cash’s cabin in Nashville. (Stuart is ex-ex-wifey of Cash’s, but the two remained close throughout Cash’s life.) Bluegrass is hard stuff to play. That was a brand-new thing for us. We play a little more lurchingly than bluegrass kind of dictates.”

During the making of the record, the band mounted four webcams in Crowder’s barn to let fans view the recording process 24 hours a day for four weeks. At one point, Crowder issued an open invitation for people to come out to the barn for a barbecue and to sing on the bluegrass number. He admits his wife was concerned, but he assured her his mother would probably be the only one to show up. He was wrong. “We had about 150 show,” he says. “Man, they were fired up. There were two guys who had driven from L.A. to Waco, a 22-hour drive. My jaw was on the floor when they said that. The people who wound up coming, the music had already meant a whole lot to them. So by the time we all gathered around a microphone to sing on the bluegrass deal, it was just crazy.” “A Collision” is aptly titled, as the record is an engaging combination of people and musical genres, as well as musings on life and faith.

“I was really pleased with the end product,” says Crowder, who will headline a tour this fall with Shane & Shane and the Robbie Seay Band. “It could be just this big mush of a bunch of genres of music, but it feels like there’s a cohesiveness to it all.”

Randall Gives Recording Another Shot

After 10 years in the Nashville label system, Jon Randall did not think he would ever want to record another album.

Signed to BNA Records in the mid-90s, he recorded two records for that label, but the second was never released. He then moved to Asylum Records and recorded an album, but the label folded before it could come out. He next joined the Eminent Records roster, but that label also folded shortly after releasing Randall’s album “Willin.”

Understandably, since then, he has focused on songwriting, scoring his biggest success with the recent Brad Paisley/Allison Krauss hit “Whiskey Lullaby,” which he wrote with Bill Anderson. More than a dozen other artists have recorded his tunes, but Randall says “Whiskey Lullaby” validated him as a writer and gave him more confidence in his abilities.

Still, Randall was “in limbo” about recording again. “I had my fill of spending all this time making a record and not knowing if it was going to come out or not,” he says.

He met producer George Massenburg when the latter produced a Seldom Scene CD that Randall had played on. That meeting, and the encouragement of Sony Music Nashville president John Grady, convinced Randall he wanted to give it another try.

“I decided to jump back in with all the faith in the world in John Grady and none at all in the music business,” he says.

Randall wanted this album to showcase his renewed focus on the songwriting craft. “Unfortunately,” he says, “my songwriting is not really in the box that is Nashville, something he says Sony was “cool with.”

He signed with Sony last fall and enlisted Massenburg, best-known for his work with Little Feat and Linda Ronstadt, to produce his new album, “Walking Among the Living.” It was released Sept. 20 on Epic Records to well-deserved critical acclaim, but has yet to chart.

Massenburg employed the unusual method of recording the album with Randall and the full band performing together live, rather than part by part. Randall says that was done to replicate the feel of his live performances, where he gets his most “soulful.”

Randall wrote all but one of the tracks on “Walking Among the Living,” which includes his own version of “Whiskey Lullaby.” Knowing it would be hard to top the hit version, Randall enlisted a string section and turned the song into what he calls an “art piece.”

The album is enhanced by guest vocals from Krauss, Patty Loveless, Sonya Isaacs and Randall’s girlfriend and labelmate Jessi Alexander. He also enlisted former New Grass Revival members Sam Bush, Bela Fleck and John Cowan to play on the bluegrass track “My Life.”

A single featuring Loveless, “I Shouldn’t Do This,” was released to—and largely ignored by—country radio, as most of Randall’s work has been. His only top 20 hit was 1996’s “By My Side,” a duet with then-wife Lorrie Morgan.

“I’ve just given into the fact that, after all these years, I’m not finding a lot of support there,” Randall says of radio. “I want to be viable at radio. I would love to have a big hit, but that’s out of my hands. So much of it is just about finding your audience, and I’ve kind of just been all over the map.”

Randall performed Sept. 28 on “The Tonight Show With Jay Leno.” Two days later he embarked on a 15-date tour opening for Vince Gill. He is also opening a few dates for Trisha Yearwood this fall, and will tour in Europe at the end of November.
ALICIA KEYS
Unplugged
Producers: Alicia Keys, Peter Edge, Jeff Robinson
Record Label: J Records
Release Date: Oct. 11
The phrase “truly entertaining” does not apply to many artists nowadays, but Alicia Keys is one exception. This self-assured, illuminating “MTV Unplugged” performance underscores Keys’ boundless passion for her craft. Radio hits like “Karma,” “If I Ain’t Got You,” and “Fallin’” sound new again, pumped up by Keys’ creative arrangements and cunning piano stylings. Then there is her knack for dusting off the old material and making them her own. Brenda Holloway’s Motown chestnut “Every Little Bit Hurts” gives way to a nicely updated version of the Rolling Stones’ “Wild Horses” with Maroon 5’s Adam Levine. Her something borrowed, there is something new: wisty single “Unbreakable” (which samples the Eddie Kendricks-covered “Going to Town”) and the intriguing “Stolen Moments,” co-written with R&B icon Al Green. It is hard to believe Keys is only two albums into a career that strikes the perfect balance between old-school soul and contemporary R&B —GM

RICKY MARTIN
Life
Producers: various
Columbia
Release Date: Oct. 11
Do not think Ricky Martin’s hip-hop tinged single “I Don’t Care” fully represents his first English-language album in five years. “Life” is a mélange of styles, with hip-hop, reggae/in and dance

NATASHA BEDINGFIELD
Unwritten (3:54)
Producers: Wayne Rodrigues, Danielle Brisebois
Writers: N. Bedingfield, D. Brisebois, W. Rodrigues
Publishers: various
Epic (CD promo)

The Pussycat Dolls formed radio with debut party crasher “Don’t Cha,” featuring Busta Rhymes. Now, the pop tarts aim for artist credibility with a surprisingly pretty, simple love ballad that might remind old-schoolers of the Cover Girls or Sweet Sensation. Frankly, that is about the last thing we would have suspected from what is essentially a novelty act, but “Stitchin’” is beautifully sung, craftily produced and refreshingly gimmick-free. The chorus of “Just keep on stitchin’ forever” is clever enough to adhere to the ears, while the sweetness that pervades the track is unlike anything else on the air. What a wonderful elixir for the tough-girl trend —CF

THE PUSSYCAT DOLLS: Stickwitu (3:28)
Producers: Ron Fair, Tal Herzberg
Writers: F. Golde, K. Livingston, R. Palmer
Publishers: various
A&M (CD promo)

DAN PENN & SPOONER OLDHAM
Moments From This Theatre: Dan Penn and Spooner Oldham Live
Producers: Neil Brockbank, Bobby Goldsboro, Proper American
Release Date: Sept. 13
At the sound of this recording, one could not meet two more likable guys than Dan Penn and Spooner Oldham, longtime pillars of the Muscle Shoals/Memphis soul scene. The songwriting duo has provided others with such tasty morsels as “I’m Your Man,” “Baby, I Love Your Way,” “Til You Turn Around.” This is Cullum’s deliverance on originals like the full sail-jaunt “Nothing I Do,” the finesse-fueled alcohol-ground” and the Motown soul-ish “Mind Trick.” He plays the crooning jazz card on the boisterous “I’m Glad There Is You,” while putting a hip electronics twist on the standard “Only Have Eyes For You.” The two standout tracks are Cullum’s reflective “21st Century Kid” and the unreleased, hip-hop-energized opener, “Get Your Way.” a collaboration with Dan the Automator built on a brass swinging sample from a Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra tune —DO

LZ PHAIR
Somebody’s Miracle
Producers: John Alagia, John Shanks, Dino Meneghin Capito
Release Date: Oct. 4
First the good news: Somebody’s Miracle is more respectable than the 1993 effort, an album that embarrassingly found her chasing a top 40 sound. Somebody’s Miracle, by contrast, sees Phair bringing back a bit of maturity and complexity to her songwriting, including the not-getting-any- younger struggle of “Wind and the Mountain” and the loneliness-fueled alcohol abuse referenced in “Table for One.” The problem, however, is that even the few noteworthy moments are lost in the banality of the music. With production from John Alagia and pop sensibility from John Shanks, Somebody’s Miracle frames Phair’s conversational vocals in a professionally dull backing. The album oozes Southern warmth and welcome touches of personality with believable guitar work. Pyro is distributing, a spring 2006 tour is promised —KS

GANG OF FOUR
Return the Gift
Producer: Andy Gill
V2
Release Date: Oct. 11
Gang of Four’s politically charged, rhythmically propulsive rock ‘n’ roll is arguably more influential than ever these days, but the group’s four founding members have remained artistically silent for nearly 25 years until now. Andy Gill, the band’s founder and rhythm guitarist, has released a solo album on “Return the Gift” —just new versions of 14 old favorites —it is tantalizing to imagine how many copies the disc would sell if only the name “Franz Ferdinand” were slapped on the cover. If anything, the classics like “Natural’s Not In It,” “Not Great Men” and “Damaged Goods” sound even more caustic than the originals, as if Gang of Four was hellbent on showing the youngsters how it is done.

And while there isn’t fresh material on “Return the Gift,” the Daggers” The Rich Man” and “Blood and Flames” —BT

ELECTRONIC
ANDY BELL
Electric Blue
Producers: Manchester Clique, Andy Bell
Sanctuary
Release Date: Oct. 4
Andy Bell and Verve chloride will celebrate the 20th anniversary of Erasure next year, but frontman Bell sets up this solo debut. “Electric Blue” finds him reveling in —surprise, surprise — all things pop and dance, but with a twist. Those that have found Clarke’s recent musical arrangements a bit too sparse continued on >>p48
will appreciate the beefer production work. On the shuffling "Shaking My Soul," British outfit Manhattan Claque (aka Philip Larsen and Chris Smith) surround Bell's vocals with Motown-flavored rhythms. The discolicial jam "I Thought It Was You" finds Bell dueting with Scissor Sisters frontman Jake Shears, while Claudia Brücken of Propaganda fame enlivens the gorgeous "Love OneSelf," which recalls Alison Moyet's "This Love." Throughout, Bell remains as bewitching as ever.—MP

SOUL

VARIOUS ARTISTS

I Believe to My Soul

Producers: Joe Henry, Rhonda Rouse

Release Date: Oct. 4

“I Believe to My Soul” gathers the classic artists for meet-and-greet session. Allen Toussaint, Billy Preston, Mavis Staples, Irma Thomas and Ann Peebles conjure up a sweet soul jamboree of Staxy, down-home, country-tinged, swamp-gospel numbers. No affect, no gilt, just 13 honeyed tunes that flow down smoothly. Of the covers, Peebles’ luminous read of Bob Dylan’s “Tonight I’ll Be Staying Here With You” is among the best, and Toussaint (who plays piano throughout) stars trio new songs, including the horn-riffing “Mi Amour” and the catchy instrumental “Turvalu.” He also revisits his lyrical beauty, “Riverboat.” Another highlight is the sprightly “That’s Enough” that Preston and Staples deliver with churchy joy.—DO

COUNTRY

JUNIOR BROWN

The Austin Experience

Producers: Michael Bishop, Junior Brown

Release Date: Sept. 27

Always inventive and often surprising in the studio, gui-tsteel wizard Junior Brown still manages to take his game to another level onstage. This concert, recorded last spring in the friendly confines of the Continental Club in Austin, is a great audio showcase of a junior gig. He lets it all hang out on frisky country burners like “Broke Down South of Dallas” and “Party Lights,” and obliquely trots eccentric standards like “My Way Thru the Trees to Dead.” “Lifeguard Larry” and the hard-charging, chicken-pickin’ “Highway Patrol.” But the real mindblower, as always at a Junior concert, is the frenetic freeform on a sweeping 10-minute, surf-channel like ride that is just about as cool as it gets. The only thing better is being there.—RW

RECORDS

GOO GOO DOLLS Better Days

Producers: Glenn Ballard

Writer: J. Rzeznik

Publisher: Corner

Release Date: Sept. 27

For the follow-up to her 2003 self-titled debut, Brazilian singer Maria Rita turns to the basic, singing in front of a sparse piano-bass-drum ensemble. With exposed vocals (“Despedida” is sung simply with brushes) and recorded entirely live, this is a risky concept. But Rita is a superb singer with a remarkable vocal range, intonation and emotional depth. There is a tinge of melancholy on much of this album, even in midtempo, soaring tracks like opener “Caminho Das Aguas” and the lullaby incarnation of “Cai Por Pecado.” “Brasil” is Spanish is present in Jorge Drexler’s “Mal Intento,” which, ironically, sounds like a bossa. As a bossa, “Segunda” includes a live, jazzy version of the saucy “Cona Oute,” followed by the pensive “Fala Ouca,” which utilizes a harmonium. They are two contrasting faces of one versatile singer.—LC

Dvd

THE PIXIES Pixies Sell Out Rhino

Release Date: Oct. 4

The reunion tour everybody saw, and never happened. This was just a success—it was an international sensation that found the Pixies in the presence of the biggest audiences of their career. The focus of the tour document “Pixies Sell Out” is, naturally, the performance, with the quartet tearing into staples like “Gigantic,” “Bone Machine,” “Monkey Gone to Heaven” and “Debaser” as if they had never spent more than a decade apart. Three songs from the 2004 Coachella festival are especially notable, capturing the moment when 50,000 people saw with their own eyes that the Pixies’ roar was still mighty. Offset footage is scarce, but includes amusing clips of the band touring Disneyland and eating Thanksgiving dinner together.—CT

MOOTLEY CRUE

FEATURING CHESTER BENNINGTON

Home Sweet Home (4:41)

Producer: Desmond Child

Writer: N. Sixx, T. Lee, V. Neil

Release Date: Sept. 14

It is turning out to be a bummer year for ‘80s fans, with new projects from Depeche Mode, INXS (sort of), Erasure, Madness and Tours. But that’s OK. Chester is a one-man band in the work. His first solo work in 12 years is predictably theatrical, mosaic and nonconformist. That is to say that it takes several listen to fathom what is going on, and even then, it is a best guess. But there is that voice, angelic, fragile and ever bewitching. It is all about atmosphere here. Bushing sign of the double-CD “Aerial” arrives Nov. 8. In the meantime, this track is available at the best digital download site.—CT

TONI BRAXTON Trippin’

(4:04)

Producer: Bryan-Michael Cox

Writer: B. Cox, J. Austin, T. Braxton

Publisher: various

Release Date: Sept. 27

Toni Braxton stands as one of the premiere R&B/pop vocalists of the 1990s, with one indelible hit after another, courtesy of L.A. Reid and Babyface. On new album “Libra,” she sets off without them, with mixed results. Previous single “Please” was sexy and adventurous—and a successful departure—but “Trippin” seems like a track designed for Ciara, Braxton’s former label mate. It is not displeasing, but Braxton comes across as more of a renaissance woman that demonstrates her desire to refine her image and move away from his standing as Bush’s frontman. While his distinctive gravelly vocals remain familiar, he has succeeded in delivering something entirely different to fans. The question now is whether or not after the success of “Glycerine” and “Swallowed” that will impress old fans and draw new ones.—KT

AC

JIM BRICKMAN FEATURING WAYNE BRADY Beautiful (3:41)

Producer: David Grow Writers: J. Brickman, J. Kugel, J. Jones

Publisher: various

Release Date: Sept. 27

AC staple Jim Brickman has created an ideal concept album in covering songs from and inspired by the Disney soundtrack. The original “Beautiful,” which he co-wrote with “Cinderella” in mind, features Emmy Award winner Wayne Brady in a song that sounds like a classical Disney reading along the lines of “Beauty and the Beast” or “A Whole New World.” No wonder it adults continue to embrace Brickman, an innovator with the foresight to realize that there is always a place for melodies that resonate with mature audiences. Truly one of his best offerings ever. Look for his third PBS special in November, from Walt Disney World.—CT

CRITICS’ CHOICE

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

All albums commercially available in the United States, except those noted. Single releases from various artists are eligible for consideration. Two new releases, one from Jonathan Cohen and singles reviews copies to Chuck Taylor (both at Billboard, 770 Broadway, Sixth Floor, New York, N.Y. 10034) or to the writers in the appropriate bureaus.
Wilson Parties Louder; Top 10 Keeps On Churning

In her second time around, Gretchen Wilson stands second to none. A gap of less than 2,000 copies prevented first album “Here for the Party” from upending Usher on The Billboard 200 in last year’s May 29 issue, when Wilson start 36% higher with the new “All Jacked Up,” at 263,500.

Look for Canadian band Nickelback to replace the country star on The Billboard 200 throne next issue with its own 250,000 slab sale. Still, Wilson’s base might be large enough to hold court on Top Country Albums, where Sara Evans is poised to start in the ballpark of 120,000-130,000, more than double her prior best.

COUNLIKE AN EGYPTIAN: Welcome to the latest hiccup caused by the 53-week period that was Nielsen SoundScan’s 2004 tracking year. And do not blame SoundScan’s crew, because these calendar quirks date back centuries to the likes Julius Caesar and, before him, the Egyptians.

While 2004 began with the week that included New Year’s Day, the current year started the week after that holiday frame. Thus, same-week comparisons have been off-late through the first 29 sales weeks of 2005.

To better sync the two sales years, SoundScan has added the volumes of the 39th and 40th frames of 2004 to its basic prior-year numbers, an adjustment that artificially widens the gap behind last year’s album sales by almost 2%.

As a result of the acceleration, SoundScan’s basic data shows album sales trailing the 2004 pace by 10.4%, compared with 8.5% last week.

The shift has some sales folks frowning, but SoundScan has made such a move more than once, the last time being 1999, following a 53-week 1998. The difference between then and now: The industry posted at least some gain in each annum from 1991 to 2000, so tweaking to prior-year numbers during that growth streak raised nary a peep.

In the adjusted comparison that removes New Year’s week from 2004 numbers—and which SoundScan has been posting on its Web site since January—all sales are down by 7%. Effective this issue, that same comparative is being added to Billboard’s Market Watch.

Added shortly to Market Watch will be an accounting of Track Equivalent Album Sales, offering an enhanced view of the music market by approximating album volume from the booming marker of digital track sales. In this equation, 10 track downloads will represent one album sale.

Furthermore, the Market Watch configuration breakdown for album sales will soon show the percentage sold via downloads.

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For weeks ending Oct. 2, 2005. Figures are rounded. Compiled from a national sample of retail store and rack sales reports collected and provided by Nielsen SoundScan.
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<td>Gretchen Wilson</td>
<td>Music Of The Sun</td>
<td>MCA (15.98)</td>
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<td>Keysia Cole</td>
<td>The Way It Is</td>
<td>Arista Entertainment (15.98)</td>
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<td>Tony Yayo</td>
<td>Thoughts Of A Predicate Foe</td>
<td>Rawkus (15.98)</td>
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<td>My Chemical Romance</td>
<td>Three Cheers For Sweet Revenge</td>
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<td>Pretty Ricky</td>
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<td>Genius And Friends</td>
<td>Varèse Sarabande (15.98)</td>
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<td>Brooks &amp; Dunn</td>
<td>Hillbilly Deluxe</td>
<td>Arista (15.98)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chyanne</td>
<td>U.S.A. - State Of Alabama</td>
<td>EMI (15.98)</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Caparozza Twins</td>
<td>Nothing But a Heartache</td>
<td>EMI (15.98)</td>
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<td>Michael Buble</td>
<td>It's Time</td>
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<td>Herbie Hancock</td>
<td>Possibilities</td>
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<td>Who Is Mike Jones?</td>
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<td>Dierks Bentley</td>
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<td>In Your Honor</td>
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<td>Ryan Cabrera</td>
<td>You Stand Watching</td>
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<td>Jason Aldean</td>
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<td>Lucky Johnson</td>
<td>Ray J</td>
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<td>CeCe Winans</td>
<td>Purified</td>
<td>EMI-Capitol (15.98)</td>
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<td>Coldplay</td>
<td>All Day Every Day</td>
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<td>Lifehouse</td>
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<td>Eric Clapton</td>
<td>Back Home</td>
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<td>Tracy Chapman</td>
<td>Where You Live</td>
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<td>R. Kelly</td>
<td>TRL 3 Reloaded</td>
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<td>Darien Cooke</td>
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**THE BILLBOARD 200 ARTIST INDEX**

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Week Sales</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ILL NINO</td>
<td>One Nation Underground</td>
<td>107,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>BLACKALICIOUS</td>
<td>Crazzy Frog Presents Crazy Hits</td>
<td>103,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIG &amp; RICH</td>
<td>Horse Of A Different Color</td>
<td>101,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.B. KING &amp; Friends</td>
<td>Something To Be</td>
<td>98,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALY &amp; AJ</td>
<td>Into The Rush</td>
<td>96,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PANIC! AT THE DISCO</td>
<td>A Fever You Can't Sweat Out</td>
<td>94,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>IL DIVO</td>
<td>Il Divo</td>
<td>92,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>KIDZ BOP KIDS</td>
<td>KIDZ BOP 8</td>
<td>90,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>COMMON</td>
<td>20-85 The Experience</td>
<td>88,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEZEKIAH WALKER</td>
<td>Stand Up</td>
<td>86,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VAHARI</td>
<td>Heartbreak's My Weapon</td>
<td>84,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROB THOMAS</td>
<td>Something To Be</td>
<td>82,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOSSE STONE</td>
<td>Get Me Back</td>
<td>80,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEETHER</td>
<td>Let Her Lead</td>
<td>78,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAGLES</td>
<td>The Very Best Of Eagles</td>
<td>76,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEORGE JONES</td>
<td>Hit Me Again</td>
<td>74,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>JOSS STONE</td>
<td>Mind Body &amp; Soul</td>
<td>72,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEETHER</td>
<td>In The Name Of The Game</td>
<td>70,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEORGE STRAIT</td>
<td>发行</td>
<td>68,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>PROJECT 666</td>
<td>And The Rest Will Follow</td>
<td>66,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>MAROON 5</td>
<td>来自美国乐队</td>
<td>64,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>DADDY YANKEE</td>
<td>Bailando</td>
<td>62,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>RELIENT K</td>
<td>Crossfade</td>
<td>60,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>ANNA NAUGHTY</td>
<td>Wreck Of The Day</td>
<td>58,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>ALESSIO</td>
<td>I Gotta Make It</td>
<td>56,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>LONESTAR</td>
<td>Coming Home</td>
<td>54,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>MONTGOMERY GENTRY</td>
<td>You Do Your Thing</td>
<td>52,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>FRANKIE J</td>
<td>The One</td>
<td>50,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>KINDRED THE FAMILY SOUL</td>
<td>In This Life Together</td>
<td>48,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>JOSHDUB</td>
<td>JOSHDUB</td>
<td>46,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>DESTINY'S CHILD</td>
<td>Destiny Fullfilled</td>
<td>44,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CELTIC WOMAN</td>
<td>Number Ones</td>
<td>42,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>MIND OVER MAGIC</td>
<td>The Science In Black And White</td>
<td>40,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>THE COLLEGE DROPOUT</td>
<td>Disney's Remix Mania</td>
<td>38,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOUNDTRACKS</td>
<td>Hustle &amp; Flow</td>
<td>36,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>TRACE ADDIS</td>
<td>Songs About Me</td>
<td>34,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>带着爱的旅程</td>
<td>32,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This set (opening with 5,000 copies) features Christian acts performing tunes inspired by the film due Dec. 9.

At No. 184, Canadian quartet that Parade scores 1,000 with its first full-length; 62% of first-week sales are from non-traditional or niche retailers.

At No. 158, Canadian quartet that Parade scores 1,000 with its first full-length; 62% of first-week sales are from non-traditional or niche retailers.
### HOT 100 AIRPLAY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>GOLD DIGGER</strong></td>
<td>P Diddy</td>
<td>Bad Boy Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>LIKE YOU</strong></td>
<td>Jay-Z</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>SOUL SURVIVOR</strong></td>
<td>Jill Scott</td>
<td>Universal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><strong>TOUCH THE SKY</strong></td>
<td>Rascal Flatts</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>WE BELONG TOGETHER</strong></td>
<td>Robin Thicke</td>
<td>Atlantic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><strong>PLAY</strong></td>
<td>Ne-Yo</td>
<td>Jive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><strong>RUN IT</strong></td>
<td>Kanye West</td>
<td>Roc-A-Fella</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td><strong>YOUR BODY</strong></td>
<td>Jennifer Hudson</td>
<td>RCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td><strong>MY HUMPS</strong></td>
<td>Lil Jon</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><strong>WE MAKE UP WHEN SEPTEMBER ENDS</strong></td>
<td>Carlos Vives</td>
<td>Warner Bros</td>
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### ADULT TOP 40

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>YOU AND ME</strong></td>
<td>Tim McGraw</td>
<td>Warner Bros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>BETWEEN THESE HAZEL EYES</strong></td>
<td>Jamie Foxx</td>
<td>RCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>THIS IS HOW WE BREAK FOR THINGS</strong></td>
<td>Train</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><strong>LA TURTA</strong></td>
<td>Jennifer Lopez</td>
<td>Atlantic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>MAKE IT MINDED</strong></td>
<td>Ne-Yo</td>
<td>Jive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><strong>BRIGHTSIDE</strong></td>
<td>Switchfoot</td>
<td>Sony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><strong>YOU'LL THINK OF ME</strong></td>
<td>Mary J. Blige</td>
<td>Mushroom</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td><strong>GOOD IS GOOD</strong></td>
<td>The Black Eyed Peas</td>
<td>Atlantic</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td><strong>ONLY YOU</strong></td>
<td>Daniel Powter</td>
<td>Virgin Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><strong>HOLIDAY</strong></td>
<td>Mariah Carey</td>
<td>Epic</td>
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### ADULT CONTEMPORARY

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>LONELY NO MORE</strong></td>
<td>The Black Eyed Peas</td>
<td>Atlantic</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>BREAKAWAY</strong></td>
<td>Katherine Jenkins</td>
<td>Epic</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>OLYMPIC MEDAL</strong></td>
<td>Train</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><strong>BREATHING</strong></td>
<td>Joss Stone</td>
<td>RCA</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>NO MORE CLOUDY DAYS</strong></td>
<td>James Morrison</td>
<td>Island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><strong>WE WILL BE THE NEXT</strong></td>
<td>Ke$ha</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><strong>HEAVEN</strong></td>
<td>Seal</td>
<td>Geffen</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td><strong>SHE WILL BE LOVED</strong></td>
<td>Dido</td>
<td>RCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td><strong>GIVE A LITTLE BIT</strong></td>
<td>Trisha Yearwood</td>
<td>RCA</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><strong>LIVE LIKE YOU WERE DYING</strong></td>
<td>Switchfoot</td>
<td>Atlantic</td>
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### MODERN ROCK

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>BOW</strong></td>
<td>My Morning Jacket</td>
<td>Atlantic</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>BETTER DAYS</strong></td>
<td>Switchfoot</td>
<td>Atlantic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>LOVE IT</strong></td>
<td>Switchfoot</td>
<td>Atlantic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><strong>BEST OF YOU</strong></td>
<td>Switchfoot</td>
<td>Atlantic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>DON'T REMIND ME</strong></td>
<td>Switchfoot</td>
<td>Atlantic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><strong>HOTTIE</strong></td>
<td>Switchfoot</td>
<td>Atlantic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><strong>HOLY</strong></td>
<td>Switchfoot</td>
<td>Atlantic</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td><strong>FEEL GOOD INC</strong></td>
<td>Switchfoot</td>
<td>Atlantic</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td><strong>FAT TIE</strong></td>
<td>Switchfoot</td>
<td>Atlantic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><strong>SUGAR, WE'RE GONNA</strong></td>
<td>Switchfoot</td>
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### HOT DIGITAL SONGS

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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Carlos Vives</td>
<td>Warner Bros</td>
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Data for week of October 15, 2005. For chart reprints call 646.654.4633. Go to www.billboard.biz for complete data chart.
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<td>American Popfest: Best of the Decade</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>BMG Rights</td>
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<td>Miley Cyrus</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Saved by the Bell TV Soundtrack</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>New Line</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>All About the孟菲斯: Greatest Hits</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
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<td>Various Artists</td>
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*Source: Billboard*
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<tr>
<th>R&amp;B/HIP HOP AIRPLAY</th>
<th>RHYTHMIC AIRPLAY</th>
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<tr>
<td>**1</td>
<td><strong>GOLD DIGGER</strong> <strong>(FEAT. KELLY ROWLAND)</strong> **(BAD A$$)</td>
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<tr>
<td>**2</td>
<td><strong>LIKE YOU</strong> <strong>(THEO HAYS)</strong> <strong>(WISERING)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>**3</td>
<td><strong>I SHOULD HAVE CHEATED</strong> <strong>(KELLY CLARKSON)</strong> <strong>(MCA)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>**4</td>
<td><strong>YOU BELONG TOGETHER</strong> <strong>(CHARLIE WILSON)</strong> <strong>(EUPHORIA)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>**5</td>
<td><strong>WE BELONG TOGETHER</strong> <strong>(CHARLIE WILSON)</strong> <strong>(EUPHORIA)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>**6</td>
<td><strong>LOOKING FOR A LOVE</strong> <strong>(CHRIS BROWN)</strong> <strong>(JIVE)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>**7</td>
<td><strong>CRAZY</strong> <strong>(CHRIS BROWN)</strong> <strong>(JIVE)</strong></td>
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<td>**8</td>
<td><strong>NO Culture</strong> <strong>(CHRIS BROWN)</strong> <strong>(JIVE)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>**9</td>
<td><strong>I CAN'T STOP LOVING YOU</strong> <strong>AUBREY PARGER)</strong> <strong>(BAD A$$)</strong></td>
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<td>**10</td>
<td><strong>TELL ME</strong> <strong>(CHRIS BROWN)</strong> <strong>(JIVE)</strong></td>
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<td>**11</td>
<td><strong>THEY BURN</strong> <strong>(CHRIS BROWN)</strong> <strong>(JIVE)</strong></td>
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<td>**14</td>
<td><strong>THEY BURN</strong> <strong>(CHRIS BROWN)</strong> <strong>(JIVE)</strong></td>
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<td>**15</td>
<td><strong>THEY BURN</strong> <strong>(CHRIS BROWN)</strong> <strong>(JIVE)</strong></td>
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</table>

**ADULT R&B**

| **1 | **CHARLIE LAST NAME: WILSON** **(CHARLIE WILSON)** **(EUPHORIA)** | **3 | **DAMIAN "JR. GONG" MARLEY** **(GHETTO YOUTHS)** **(UMRG)** |
| **2 | **WE BELONG TOGETHER** **(CHARLIE WILSON)** **(EUPHORIA)** | **4 | **BET** **(MIKE JONEZ)** **(BAD A$$)** |
| **3 | **WE BELONG TOGETHER** **(CHARLIE WILSON)** **(EUPHORIA)** | **5 | **WE BELONG TOGETHER** **(CHARLIE WILSON)** **(EUPHORIA)** |
| **4 | **WE BELONG TOGETHER** **(CHARLIE WILSON)** **(EUPHORIA)** | **6 | **WE BELONG TOGETHER** **(CHARLIE WILSON)** **(EUPHORIA)** |
| **5 | **WE BELONG TOGETHER** **(CHARLIE WILSON)** **(EUPHORIA)** | **7 | **WE BELONG TOGETHER** **(CHARLIE WILSON)** **(EUPHORIA)** |
| **6 | **WE BELONG TOGETHER** **(CHARLIE WILSON)** **(EUPHORIA)** | **8 | **WE BELONG TOGETHER** **(CHARLIE WILSON)** **(EUPHORIA)** |
| **7 | **WE BELONG TOGETHER** **(CHARLIE WILSON)** **(EUPHORIA)** | **9 | **WE BELONG TOGETHER** **(CHARLIE WILSON)** **(EUPHORIA)** |
| **8 | **WE BELONG TOGETHER** **(CHARLIE WILSON)** **(EUPHORIA)** | **10 | **WE BELONG TOGETHER** **(CHARLIE WILSON)** **(EUPHORIA)** |
| **9 | **WE BELONG TOGETHER** **(CHARLIE WILSON)** **(EUPHORIA)** | **11 | **WE BELONG TOGETHER** **(CHARLIE WILSON)** **(EUPHORIA)** |
| **10 | **WE BELONG TOGETHER** **(CHARLIE WILSON)** **(EUPHORIA)** | **12 | **WE BELONG TOGETHER** **(CHARLIE WILSON)** **(EUPHORIA)** |

**HITPREDICTOR**

Data for week of October 15, 2005 | CHARTS LEGEND on Page 66
HOT COUNTRY SONGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist/Producer (Songwriter)</th>
<th>Chart Rank</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>SOMETHING TO BE PROUD OF</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>BETTER LIFE</td>
<td>Craig Morgan</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>REDNECK YACHT CLUB</td>
<td>Craig Morgan</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>SOMEONE'S HERO</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>A REAL PLACE TO START</td>
<td>Craig Morgan</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>STAY WITH ME (BRASS BED)</td>
<td>Craig Morgan</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>PROBABLY WOULDN'T BE THIS WAY</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>AS GOOD AS I ONCE WAS</td>
<td>Craig Morgan</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>ALL JACKEP UP</td>
<td>Craig Morgan</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>SKAROBE (WITH MAISEY WILLIS)</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>LOCKHEED</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>YOU'RE LIKE COMIN' HOME</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>THE GREATEST WHO YOU'D BE TODAY</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>COME A LITTLE CLOSER</td>
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<td>BILLY'S GOT HIS BEER GOGGLES ON</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>BEST I EVER MAD</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>TEQUILA MAKES HER CLOTHES FALL OFF</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>MONTAGE OF TWO COUNTRY BIG TOWN ON INDEPENDENCE (BIG TOWN ON INDEPENDENCE)</td>
<td>Craig Morgan</td>
<td>43</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>GOOD OLD DAYS</td>
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<td>SHE LETS HIM GO</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>MUST BE Doin' SOMETHIN' RIGHT</td>
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<td>22</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>USA TODAY</td>
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<td>MISS ME Baby</td>
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<td>B / NEVER PROMISED YOU A ROSE GARDEN</td>
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<td>&quot;IF I WAS AN ANGEL&quot;</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>&quot;BABY GIRL&quot;</td>
<td>Craig Morgan</td>
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COUNTRY SINGLES SALES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist/Label (Promotion/Label)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>SOMETHING TO BE PROUD OF</td>
<td>Montgomery Gentry</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>&quot;WILD WEST SHOW&quot;</td>
<td>Craig Morgan</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>&quot;BABY GIRL&quot;</td>
<td>Craig Morgan</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**HITPREDICTOR**

**LAMBERT BOWS AS SONY MATES MATE MOLD HEAD**

With spins detected at 35 monitored stations, "Nashville Star" ala Miranda Lambert grappled the Hot Shot Deb with the third single and title track from "Kerosene," bowing at No. 5.

It's Lambert's highest debut besides lead single "Me and Charlie" which started at No. 43 last October. With 75.5 spins, the Texas native also posts the only new entry on this week's HitPredictor scoreboard (see above).

The Sony Nashville operation also continues its lock on the chart's topper as Montgomery Gentry's "Something to Be Proud Of" dominates for a second week. It is the first time the Columbia brand has spent more than one week atop the chart since July 1996, when Ricchard led for two weeks with "Daddy's Money."

"Proud" leads Keith Urban's "Better Life" by 4.1 million impressions, but the duo is gunning for a third week...something to Columbia single has done since Shenandoah's "Next to You. Next to Me in 1999."

—Wade Jenson

**BETWEEN THE BULLETS**

wieseem@billboard.com

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data
**Latin Songs**

At No. 20, Chayanne's "Chupame" taps in from the top 10 Latin Albums, with its Hot Flot, page 45.

**Latin Albums**

Top albums return after year absence. Song moves to Tropical Airplay. It is now No. 1 on the Billboard chart.

---

**Latin Songs Chart**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label (Price)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LA TORTURA</td>
<td>Shakira Featuring Alejandro Sanz</td>
<td>Sony Latin (15.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOLO QUIERES EN SILENCIO</td>
<td>A.Blanco &amp; EL MUNDO</td>
<td>Sony Latin (15.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELLA Y YO</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>R料理 MIX (15.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO PUEDO OLVIDARTE</td>
<td>Beto Y Sus Canarios</td>
<td>Sony Latin (15.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUÉ CORRIDA</td>
<td>Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Latin (15.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUE IRONIA</td>
<td>50 Cent &amp; Osito Fantastico</td>
<td>Sony Latin (15.98)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CANTA CORAZÓN</td>
<td>Alejandro Fernandez</td>
<td>Sony Latin (15.98)</td>
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<td>LA LOCURA AUTOMÁTICA</td>
<td>El Secreto De Los Ángeles</td>
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<td>C U R A L E</td>
<td>Celia Cruz</td>
<td>Sony Latin (15.98)</td>
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<td>P E T A L O S</td>
<td>Tito El Bambino</td>
<td>Sony Latin (15.98)</td>
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<tr>
<td>H O T B O X</td>
<td>Baby Ranks, Daddy Yankee, Toyo Tun Tun, Willy Y Wendy &amp; Hector</td>
<td>Sony Latin (15.98)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MAYOR QUE YO</td>
<td>Baby Ranks</td>
<td>Sony Latin (15.98)</td>
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<tr>
<td>YO QUISIERA</td>
<td>Riky Rick &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Latin (15.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEUEN DE TI</td>
<td>Sergio Vega</td>
<td>Sony Latin (15.98)</td>
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</tbody>
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**Latin Albums Chart**

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<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label (Price)</th>
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<td>LA CAÍSA NEGRA</td>
<td>Juanes</td>
<td>Sony Latin (15.98)</td>
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<td>REGGAETON LATINO</td>
<td>Don Omar</td>
<td>Sony Latin (15.98)</td>
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<tr>
<td>ALGO MAS</td>
<td>La SA Estacion</td>
<td>Sony Latin (15.98)</td>
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<td>VETE VETE</td>
<td>Olga Tanon</td>
<td>Sony Latin (15.98)</td>
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<td>D A R I A</td>
<td>La SA Estacion</td>
<td>Sony Latin (15.98)</td>
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<td>NO TE FRECUEPES POR MI</td>
<td>Chayanne</td>
<td>Sony Latin (15.98)</td>
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<td>Los Tigres Del Norte</td>
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<td>POR RESARTE</td>
<td>K-Paz De La Sierra</td>
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<td>DEUEN DE TI</td>
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**Latin Songs**

**Latin Albums**
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<th>JAPAN</th>
<th>ALBUMS</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Mr. Children</td>
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<td>Kumi Koda</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Noriyuki Manabe</td>
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<td>James Blunt</td>
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<td>KATIE MELUA</td>
<td>NEW</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>David Gray</td>
<td>NEW</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Jamiroquai</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Marc Anthony</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>DAVID GRAY</td>
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<td>NEW</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>PSY 7 D LA VIE</td>
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<td>NEW</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>LOUISE ATTACHE</td>
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<td>Don't Cha</td>
<td>NEW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Love To Be Loved By You</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tes Pas Cap Pinochio</td>
<td>NEW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>SANS TOI</td>
<td>NEW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Don't Cha</td>
<td>NEW</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>THE NIPPER DOLLS</td>
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<td>La Vida Is an Rincón de Sueños</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Rasmus</td>
<td>NEW</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Natalia y la Forquetina</td>
<td>NEW</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Shakira</td>
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<td>A Winged Victory</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Wings Of A Butterfly</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>IN YOUR FACE</td>
<td>NEW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>NIGHTWISH</td>
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<tr>
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<td>PETI NÉELA</td>
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<td>WE BE BURNIN'</td>
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<td>WE BELONG TOGETHER</td>
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**ALBUM CHARTS**

- Albums with the greatest sales gains this week.
- Where included, this award indicates the title with the chart's largest unit increase.

**SALES CATEGORIES**

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<th>Artist/Title</th>
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<th>Sales</th>
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<tr>
<td>Stevie Wonder</td>
<td>10/25</td>
<td>5,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Green Day</td>
<td>10/25</td>
<td>1,600</td>
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<tr>
<td>Norah Jones</td>
<td>10/25</td>
<td>1,200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bon Jovi</td>
<td>10/25</td>
<td>1,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luttrell Vandross</td>
<td>10/25</td>
<td>1,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bob Seger &amp; The Silver Bullet Band</td>
<td>10/25</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Beach Boys</td>
<td>10/25</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack Johnson</td>
<td>10/25</td>
<td>950</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barbra Streisand</td>
<td>10/25</td>
<td>750</td>
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<tr>
<td>Journey</td>
<td>10/25</td>
<td>490</td>
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<tr>
<td>Morris &amp; Fun</td>
<td>10/25</td>
<td>470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luther Vandross</td>
<td>10/25</td>
<td>450</td>
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<td>Johnny Cash</td>
<td>10/25</td>
<td>380</td>
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<td>Creedence Clearwater Revival</td>
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<td>350</td>
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<td>Lynyrd Skynyrd</td>
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<td>200</td>
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<td>Mariah Carey</td>
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<td>Bob Dylan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dope Boys</td>
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<tr>
<td>AL Green</td>
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**TOP INTERNET**

- Albums with the greatest sales gains this week.
- Where included, this award indicates the title with the chart's largest unit increase.

**SALES CATEGORIES**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist/Title</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Sales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sheryl Crow</td>
<td>10/25</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neil Young</td>
<td>10/25</td>
<td>2,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>David Crowder Band</td>
<td>10/25</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryan Adams &amp; The Cardinals</td>
<td>10/25</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Black Eyed Peas</td>
<td>10/25</td>
<td>1,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soundtrack</td>
<td>10/25</td>
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<td>Jonny Lang</td>
<td>10/25</td>
<td>1,000</td>
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<td>Sinead O'Connor</td>
<td>10/25</td>
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<td>Sade</td>
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**AWARDS CREDITS**

- Recording Industry, U.S. (RIAA) certification for net shipment of 500,000 albums (Gold).
- RIAA certificate for net shipment of 1 million units (Platinum).
- RIAA certification for net shipment of 10 million units (Diamond).
- Numerical within Platinum or Diamond symbol indicates album's multi-album level.
- For boxed sets, and double albums with a running time of 90 minutes or more, the RIAA multiplies shipments by the number of discs and/or tapes.
- Certification for net shipments of 100,000 units (Gold).
- Certification for net shipments of 200,000 units (Platinum).
- Certification for net shipments of 400,000 units (Multi-Platinum).

**MUSIC VIDEO SALES CHARTS**

- RIAA certification for net shipment of 25,000 units for video singles.

**DVDS SALES/VIDEOS SELLING/RENTALS**

- RIAA gold certification for net shipment of 50,000 units or $1 million in sales at suggested retail price.
- RIAA platinum certification for sales of 100,000 units or $2 million in sales at suggested retail price.

**TOP POP CATALOG**

- Catalog Albums 2-year-old titles that have taken no. 100 on the Billboard 200 for at least two consecutive weeks. Titles that have appeared on The Billboard 200 and Top Pop Catalog have been removed.

**TOP GOSPEL**

- Catalog Albums 2-year-old titles that have taken no. 100 on the Billboard 200 for at least two consecutive weeks. Titles that have appeared on The Billboard 200 and Top Gospel Catalog have been removed.
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LAUNCH PAD

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TOP HEATSEEKERS

ARTIST

1. HEZEKIAH WALKER
2. PROJECT 86
3. MARC Broussard
4. BUDDY GUY
5. JOHN FULLER
6. NARRATIVE
7. DAVID PHPELS
8. HINDER
9. AQUAPALOOZA
10. MARK SCHULTZ
11. LEELA JAMES
12. THE BABY EINSTEIN MUSIC BOX ORCHESTRA
13. ANDY ANDY
14. ANA GABRIEL
15. MATSYAHU
16. CALEXICO/IRON AND WINE
17. SHOOTER JENNINGS
18. GOD FORBID
19. JENNIFER RIVERA
20. MIKE RIZZO/ST. JOHN
21. JACEO
22. ANTONIO BADA
23. DARWIN HOBBES
24. PAUL VAN DYK
25. MARC Broussard
26. SHIRLEY CAESAR
27. THE FALL
28. AVENTURA
29. AKWID
30. YAGA & MACKIE
31. ANOUSHKA SHANKAR
32. HEZEKIAH WALKER
33. PAUL VAN DAV
34. MARC BrouSSARD
35. SHIRLEY CAESAR
36. THE FALL
37. 27
38. AVENTURA
39. AKWID
40. YAGA & MACKIE
41. ANOUSHKA SHANKAR
42. HEZEKIAH WALKER
43. PAUL VAN DAV
44. MARC BrouSSARD
45. SHIRLEY CAESAR
46. THE FALL
47. 27
48. AVENTURA
49. AKWID
50. YAGA & MACKIE
51. ANOUSHKA SHANKAR
52. HEZEKIAH WALKER
53. PAUL VAN DAV
54. MARC BrouSSARD
55. SHIRLEY CAESAR
56. THE FALL
57. 27
58. AVENTURA
59. AKWID
60. YAGA & MACKIE
61. ANOUSHKA SHANKAR
62. HEZEKIAH WALKER
63. PAUL VAN DAV
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65. SHIRLEY CAESAR
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93. PAUL VAN DAV
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95. SHIRLEY CAESAR
96. THE FALL
97. 27
98. AVENTURA
99. AKWID
100. YAGA & MACKIE

April 18, 2005

1. A Fever You Can't Sweat Out
2. Project 86
3. And The Red Hill Will Follow
4. DisneyRemixed
5. Bring Em In
6. Apologies To The Queen Mary
7. Extreme Behavior
8. I'm A Church
9. Strange And Beautiful
10. Stories & Songs
11. A Change Is Gonna Come
12. Baby Einstein: Lullaby Classics
13. Live At Stubb's
14. Siren Song Of The Counter Culture
15. Put The O Back In Country
16. W: Constitution Of Treason
17. Parrandera, Rebaja Y Atrapas
18. Throb!
19. Straight Out Da Po
20. Flores De Alquiler
21. Silent Alarm
22. Antologia De Un Rey
23. Rosie
24. Collection
25. Worshipper
26. Careeren
27. I Know The Truth
28. How To Save A Life
29. God's Project
30. Los Agucatos De Jiquilpan
31. La Moda
32. My Better Self
33. I've Got My Own Hell To Raise
34. Road To Rouen
35. Almost Honest
36. Bone-A-Fide
37. Unabatable And More (Soundtrack)
38. Alaska

TOP VIDEO SALES

1. POOH'S HEFFALUMP HALLOWEEN MOVIE
2. BARBIE AS THE PRINCESS AND THE POPSTAR
3. BARBIE AS THE SWAN LAKE
4. BARBIE IN THE NUTCRACKER
5. CLIFFORD: PUPPY LOVE
6. DON'T MISS THE BOAT
7. SHREK 2
8. LEAGUE OF EXTRAORDINARY GENTLEMEN
9. TITANIC: THE NICE TITANIC COLLECTION (10.98)
10. THE ADVENTURES OF SHARK BOY AND LAVA GIRL IN 3-D: DIMENSION INFINITY (13.98)
11. DESPERATE HOUSEWIVES: THE COMPLETE FIRST SEASON TOWNE HOMEPAC
12. BARBIE AND THE MAGIC OF Pegasus
13. THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY: WIDESCREEN
14. TROY STORY (10TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION)
15. ORDINARY MAGICIAN: THE COMPLETE SEASON 2
16. CRASH (FULL SCREEN)
17. BATTLESTAR GALACTICA: THE COMPLETE FIRST SEASON
18. MINDHUNTERS
19. MALLRATS: 10TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION
20. SMALLVILLE: THE COMPLETE FOURTH SEASON
21. CRASH (FULL SCREEN)
22. SAMARA (WIDESCREEN)
23. THE OUTSIDERS: SPECIAL EDITION

TOP VIDEO GAME RENTALS

1. Madden NFL 2006
2. NCAA FOOTBALL 2006
3. BURNT REVENGE: ELECTRONIC ARTISTS
4. CREATURES OF THE SHAPELESS UNIVERSE: SHADOW OF THE RIFT: PART 1
5. HOME ALONE
6. HOME ALONE 2: LOST IN NEW YORK
7. SPACEBALLS
8. DOA: WOMEN OF HONOR
9. ALOHA SCOOBY DOO

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911-13 MANZANITA STREET

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2783 LA CASTANA DRIVE
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Murray Weisberg 310.461.4200

Open 2-5 10/09/05

3716 VIA DOLCE
Marina Del Rey. Beautiful townhome in Marina w/ lg rsl, w/ newly remodeled bath & walk-in closet. Open 1 foor plan in kit and dining room.
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14739 HUSTON STREET
Sherman Oaks. 2 bd/1 ba. 3rd bedroom possible. Built in 1949, lots of charm & "panache", carport, pool house, ftp, patio, hdwd firs, custom kitchen.
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Southern California's Prom Kings gave a special performance at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center recently in Twenty Nine Palms, Calif., to welcome home the 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment from Iraq. The battalion, also known as the "Thundering Third," is the only Marine Corps ground force to have served three tours in Iraq. The band performed songs from its self-titled debut album and toured the Marine Corps base. Pictured with some of the Marines are, from left, band members Mauricio Brandole, Joey Holleman, Chris Carney and Luke Pickrell. (Photo: Alisha Swindle McArthur)

Curb Records president Mike Curb and record research president Joel Whitburn honored country music song writer Arnold Sept. 9 at Curb's Nashville office as the only artist to have his song number one on the Billboard Country Singles chart for seven consecutive decades, from the 1940s to the 2000s. Pictured, from left, are Curb, Arnold and Whitburn.

On the eve of Bon Jovi's new release, "Have a Nice Day," the band performed at the Sept. 19 opening of AEG Live's Nickelodeon Times Square in New York. The concert was broadcast to millions at select movie theaters across the country courtesy of Bon Jovi's partnership with Natevibe Live. Shown, from left, are band member Tico Torres, AEG Live president/CFO Randy Phillips, Jon Bon Jovi, network Live founder and CEO Kevin Wall, AEG Programming senior VP Bill Wilson and band members Richie Sambora and David Bryan. (Photo: Theo Wargo/WireImage.com)

Christian acts Casting Crowns and Steven Curtis Chapman performed to a sold-out crowd during Disney World's annual Night of Joy, a two-day concert event that began Sept. 9 at the Magic Kingdom theme park in Orlando, Fla. Casting Crowns lead singer Mark Hall, second from left, and Chapman take a moment backstage to pose with Disney's most popular residents before the show. (Photo: Alisa Swindle McArthur/Provident Label Group)

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BIGGIE AND KORN, DEAD AND ALIVE

Track readers may have already heard the news or been somewhat confused by the news. The new Notorious B.I.G. single, "Hold Ya Hand," which combines Biggie's voice with a sample from Bob Marley's "Johnny Was." The cut will be found on the upcoming Bad Boy album "The Notorious B.I.G. Duets: The Final Chapter," due Nov. 29. Although the label has yet to reveal the full roster of collaborators, Track has learned that one song will pair Biggie with Lil Wayne, an act that is very much alive. The quartet is currently in the studio working on a track titled "Charmayne" that will utilize unreleased Biggie raps. "All we got was two verses," Korn frontman Jonathan Davis tells Track. "We changed everything around. It's fuckin' weird to be doing a song with someone who is deceased!"

Meanwhile, Korn's Virgin single, "See You on the Other Side," will arrive Dec. 6. "There are some straight-ahead, heavy rock tunes, but they're a different kind of heavy," Davis says. "It's like we have this industrial bastard child that fiend its head out of us."

THE MADONNA POD

We hear that Madonna may follow in U2's footsteps and sanction a branded iPod, preloaded with her vast catalog, around the release of her upcoming album "Confessions on a Dance Floor." How quickly Madison learns — it was only last month that she began allowing the iTunes Music Store to sell her songs by the track. Exactly which iPod model will be involved is unclear, but indications point to a custom pink Nano. Other acts may soon follow, as Apple Computer is said to be courting various international stars.

NEW CRUZ ON THE SCENE

Songwriter Eduardo Cruz, brother of Spanish actress Penelope Cruz, has signed a record deal with Warner Music Latina. Cruz will begin to record his album next year in Los Angeles, sources say. Mexican producer Aureo Baqueiro will produce the set. This is the younger Cruz's first foray into recording.

STILL GOING STRONG

Inside Track wishes we had sepia-toned photos of Grammy Jones' energy. Not only is he co-producing the Broadway-bound musical version of "The Color Purple," he is simultaneously composing a film score for the first time in 20 years. The film is rapper 50 Cent's theatrical debut, "Get Rich or Die Tryin'," which premieres next month. "The Color Purple" opens Dec. 1. Also on Jones' to-do list: a new album with his band "Po No Mo" is slated for late November through Interscope Records. 50 Cent. Jamie Fox, Jermaine Dupri and Snoop Dogg are among the artists and producers who are recording signature Jones tunes like "One Hundred Ways," "Stuff Like That" and "The Secret Garden."

BABY BLUES

Quel scandale! That was all Inside Track could think upon seeing the latest update on the Web site for the country music star Chris Cagle, titled "A Personal Message From Chris Cagle." "As many of you are aware," the posting read, "I had been anxiously awaiting the addition of a new baby to make the family a little bit more complete. So, both mother and child are in good health. Since the birth, however, we have discovered that biologically, the child is not mine." Whoops! Talk about fodder for the next sad country song. Cagle's new album hits stores Oct. 4, and will, we hope, fare better than his love life. The title? "Anywhere But Here." We could not make this stuff up, folks.

JONATHAN DAVIS OF KORN

DISTRIBUTION: RED Distribution in New York promotes Steve Mulli to VP of sales and marketing. He was VP of field sales.

BOOKING AGENCIES: The Agency Group in Toronto appoints Nick Storch as an agent based in New York. He was an agent at Face the Music Booking.

Entourage Talent Associates in New York names Mark Dinerstein as an agent and production/event consultant. He was record label buyer and concert promoter at PACE Concerts/Clear Channel Entertainment.

MUSIC VIDEO: VH1 in New York names Brett Henne VP of corporate communications. He was director.

Submit submissions to shan@ billboard.com.

HURRICANE RELIEF

Several labels are contributing previously recorded and live tracks by superstar artists to a hurricane Katrina relief album coordinated by Concord Music Group and the Recording Industry Assn. of America. Neither Concord nor the RIAA would divulge specific names included on the set, which is due in early November. All proceeds will go to the American Red Cross. Habitat for Humanity and MusiCares.

FIGHTING HUNGER

Bruce Springsteen is again partnering with World Hunger Year for the 21 dates on the third leg of his Devils & Dust tour. At each concert, a local anti-hunger or anti-poverty organization will receive a pair of tickets to auction off and a table to pass out literature and collect donations. The first two legs of the tour raised more than $250,000 for 12 groups.

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