INSIDE: CLASSICAL MUSIC FINDS EAGER DIGITAL DOWNLOAD AUDIENCE >P.44

PLUS: LIVE NATION CEO TALKS ABOUT TAKING HIS CONCERT BUSINESS PUBLIC >P.16

BILLBOARD’S EXCLUSIVE CHART

> P.42 WHICH ARTISTS MAKE THE BIG BUCKS?

U2, The Rolling Stones And Kenny Chesney Top The List

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Radio, New-Media Promo Should Be On Same Track

BY HAROLD CHILDLS and HILARY CLAY HICKS

There is a whole lot of shaking up going on in the radio and music industries. Let's make some changes where it counts: reorganizing promotion to prepare for success. Music companies need to put radio promotion—certainly in a state of flux and in need of redefinition—and new media under the same management. This would permit traditional radio promotion and digital marketing to reinforce one another. New technologies are exploding, bringing online and satellite digital music and videos to computers, cell phones and cars everywhere. In some cases, music is selling through with the click of a button.

Consumers are finding new and exciting ways to hear music, and thus, reasons to be excited about new sounds. It appears that, at last, an expansion in music sales is on the horizon.

Lately, we have been working an independent project that brings back the fun for us. The music appeals to many audiences, features solid songs in many genres and lends itself to Internet marketing. We are distributing the artist’s work through Apple’s iTunes Music Store and CD Baby, and promoting it through Yahoo’s Y Music, live365.com and myspace.com, among others.

Takes together, these companies provide online download and retail music sales, content distribution to myriad Internet radio stations, personalized online radio stations for music fans and herefore unimagined online networking with and among the fan base.

Beyond the Internet, the Sirius/XM phenomenon offers yet another opportunity for music promotion.

"More consumers each day are finding that the variety they crave comes online or from a satellite," says Travis Sorick, director of artist and label relations for live365.com. "The music industry needs to be on board with the trend."

Many of the executives at these digital content companies are former radio people. Chastity for ways to marry the experience of the past with the prodigious technology of today. They tell us that many major record companies are not integrating their new-media activities with their broadcast radio promotion departments, missing the full impact possible.

It is safe to say that new-media outlets are dying to break new acts, to flex their muscles.

Online campaigns can include advertising, contests, giveaways, podcasts, video podcasts and music videos—all of which promote directly to fans. The response to such elements provides such new tools as online "airplay" reports that demonstrate when new music is "bubbling under." Such data can help create the buzz for a new artist. Just as tip sheets used to indicate hot new music, today in-ternet data offers radio new signposts.

Even better, the digital services provide accurate statistics.

Because of heightened concerns about radio promotion practices, terrestrial radio has imposed new restrictions on promotional activities to the point of further stifling an already choking business. Label promo reps need to take on a whole new role, rebuilding radio promotion with new ideas. These include promoting and advertising new-media success stories and supporting concerts that connect broadcast radio with grass-roots music from which radio can once again build content and attract listeners.

Let’s coordinate the two worlds of promotion for maximum sales impact and to break new acts. Let’s embrace new media with enthusiasm while regrouping radio promotion.

Harold Childs is a marketing consultant who has held executive positions at A&M, Warner Bros. and PolyGram. Hilary Clay Hicks is a veteran publicist, marketing consultant, writer, producer and university professor.

FEEDBACK

TOWER-ING GRATITUDE

With the reopening of Tower Records and Video in New Orleans, I would like to take this opportunity to thank "Tower Management for their excellent treatment of our local staff after the disaster. The efficiency and generosity with which things were handled was certainly beyond anything I expected. Thanks also to the Tower employees nationwide who donated more than $12,000, which went directly to the New Orleans stuff. By their actions, Tower showed the family environment spoken of is more than just a concept.

Mike Robeson
Buyer/merchandiser
Tower Records and Video
New Orleans

Let your colleagues know what's on your mind. Send letters to Ken Schlager, Executive Editor, Billboard, 770 Broadway, 6th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10003 or e-mail to editors@billboard.com. Include name, title, address and phone number for verification. Letters should be concise and may be edited. All submissions published shall become the sole property of Billboard, who shall own the copyright in whole or in part, for publication.
GARY ALLAN Tough All Over **CERTIFIED GOLD**

BILLY CURREN TON Doin' Somethin' Right **CERTIFIED GOLD**

REBA #1's **CERTIFIED PLATINUM**

GEORGE STRAIT Somewhere Down In Texas **CERTIFIED PLATINUM**

AND JUST HAD HIS 52nd #1

Universal Music Group Nashville

#1 in Sales Market Share

2005

SUGARLAND Twice The Speed Of Life **CERTIFIED DOUBLE PLATINUM**

SHANIA TWAIN Greatest Hits **CERTIFIED TRIPLE PLATINUM**

LEE ANN WOMACK There's More Where That Came From **CERTIFIED GOLD**

(CMA Album of the Year)

TRISHA YEARWOOD Jasper County **CERTIFIED GOLD**
CREATIVE ARTISTS AGENCY
congratulates our clients on their Grammy-nominated projects

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<td>Mariah Carey</td>
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<td>Best Traditional R&amp;B Vocal Performance</td>
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<td>John Legend</td>
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*Shared Representation*
Best Urban/Alternative Performances
“DUST”
Van Hunt

Best R&B Album
“Illuminate”
Earth, Wind and Fire
“Free Yourself”
Fantasia
“Get Lifted”
John Legend
“A Time To Love”
Stevie Wonder

Best Contemporary R&B Album
“Touch”
Amerie
“The Emancipation Of Mimi”
Mariah Carey
“Destiny Fulfilled”
Destiny’s Child
“Turning Point”
Mario

Best Rap Solo Performance
“Gold Digger”
Kanye West

Best Rap/Sung Collaboration
“1,2 Step”
Featuring
Missy Elliott
“They Say”
Featuring
Kanye West
John Legend
“Soldier”
Destiny’s Child

Best Rap Song
“Diamonds From Sierra Leone”
Kanye West
“Lose Control”
Missy Elliott

Best Rap Album
“The Cookbook”
Missy Elliott
“Late Registration”
Kanye West

Best Female Country Vocal Performance
“Mississippi Girl”
Faith Hill

Best Male Country Vocal Performance
“You’ll Think of Me”
Keith Urban

Best Country Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocals
“I Hope”
Dixie Chicks

Best Country Collaboration with Vocals
“Let Me Love You”
Faith Hill
Tim McGraw
“Dreams Come True”
Norah Jones

Best Country Instrumental Performance
“Who’s Your Uncle”
Béla Fleck

Best Country Song
“I Hope”
Dixie Chicks

Best Country Album
“Fireflies”
Faith Hill

Best Bluegrass Album
“Ragin’ Live”
Rhonda Vincent and The Rage

Best Rock Gospel Album
“Day of Fire”
Day of Fire

Best Pop/Contemporary Gospel Album
“All I Really Want For Christmas”
Steven Curtis Chapman
“Redemption Songs”
Jars of Clay
“Healing Rain”
Michael W. Smith
“Wire”
Third Day

Best Southern, Country, or Bluegrass Gospel Album
“Rock of Ages…Hymns & Faith”
Amy Grant

Best Latin Pop Album
“Esquela”
Laura Pausini

Best Latin Rock/Alternative Album
“Fijación Oral Volume 1”
Shakira

Best Contemporary Folk Album
“Devils & Dust”
Bruce Springsteen

Best Reggae Album
“Clothes Drop”
Shaggy

Best Spoken Word Album
“Chronicles: Volume One”
(“Bob Dylan”)
Sean Penn

Best Comedy Album
“The Right To Bare Arms”
Larry The Cable Guy

Best Compilation Soundtrack Album for Motion Picture, Television or Other Visual Media
“No Direction Home: The Soundtrack Bootleg Series, Volume 1”
Bob Dylan

“Napoleon Dynamite”
Featuring
Backstreet Boys

“Six Feet Under Volume 2: Everything Ends”
Featuring
Imogen Heap
Phoenix
Radiohead

Best Short Form Music Video
“Lose Control”
Missy Elliott
“God’s Will”
Martina McBride

Best Long Form Music Video
“No Direction Home”
Bob Dylan

“Trapped In The Closet (Chapters 1-5)”
R. Kelly
“Devils & Dust”
Bruce Springsteen

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David Wild
to this year’s Grammy telecast

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- John L. Simson, Executive Director, SoundExchange

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Ingenious Idea? U.K. Company Invests In Bands

After buying into everything from major labels to publishing companies to digital distributors in recent years, private equity firms eying the music business now have a new investment focus: artists.

In a move that could signal an emerging trend, Ingenious, a London-based media investment company, has started a new venture capital fund in the United Kingdom designed to help labels, managers and independent acts bankroll albums and other short-term music projects.

The fund is called Ingenious Music VCT 2 and counts former Warner Music Group chairman Roger Ames among its directors. Ingenious plans to raise £30 million ($52 million) to supplement an existing £15 million ($26 million) fund launched last year called Ingenious Music VCT.

Ingenious says that once fund raising is complete, it will be the largest source of independent A&R investment in the United Kingdom with £45 million ($79 million) under management.

The fund announced its first artist investment Jan. 17, a £300,000 ($528,000) joint venture with Channelfly Group, a label and management and live-venue operator, to back a new album from up-and-coming band the Heights.

Under terms of the deal, the two companies will form a holding company called the Heights Recording, which will create new copyrights and license recording, marketing and distribution rights for the band. Ingenious and Channelfly each own a 50% stake in the business.

Channelfly has the ability to access funding for all recording, artist, video, tour support and marketing costs incurred on the Heights. The album will be released on Channelfly's Animal Noise Records.

If this sounds similar to joint venture deals EMI has inked with the likes of Robbie Williams and Korn, it should. Ingenious provided advisory services to Williams' camp in his joint venture with EMI.

Ingenious commercial director Duncan Reid says the Williams deal helped provide the template for the Ingenious Music VCT funds.

---

Mullen Lighting Up Fuse

Former MTV Exec To Keep Channel Focused On Music

With the appointment of Catherine Mullen to executive VP/GM, the Fuse network remains committed to further developing music-centric content and branding initiatives across its numerous platforms.

At a time when MTV is focusing on lifestyle and reality programming, just toeing the line is good news for an industry grappling with a limited number of dedicated music outlets.

"Fuse is very clearly about music," Mullen says. "That remains our vision moving forward—and this goes for every platform and all content our viewers are consuming."

In her newly created position, Mullen, who was formerly GM of MTV U.K. and Ireland, helms all programming, marketing and development activities for Fuse and its digital and mobile applications. She reports directly to Andrea Greenberg, president of Fuse parent company Rainbow Media, a subsidiary of Cablevision.

"When I first interviewed Catherine, I discovered that her goals for Fuse were aligned with mine," Greenberg says. These include finding innovative and exciting ways to expand the network's music flow, growing the brand's platform, championing new interactive technologies and maintaining the brand's "authentic, snarky sensibility."

Those passing by Fuse's headquarters in New York—across from Madison Square Garden—are greeted with this sensibility via signage that runs nearly a block long. It says at a certain nearby competition: "The New Fuse – Times Square – Cheese."

Fuse is closer to MTV geographically than it is in terms of viewers, Fuse is in 44 million homes, compared with 88 million for MTV. But MTV is not Fuse's competition, Mullen says. "MTV is about lifestyle, and they're brilliant at it," she says.
WE CONGRATULATE OUR GRAMMY AWARD NOMINEES

Record of the Year
FEEL GOOD INC.
DANGER MOUSE*

Album of the Year
LOVE. ANGEL. MUSIC. BABY.
ANDRE 3000*
LINDA PERRY*

Song of the Year
BLESS THE BROKEN ROAD
JEFF HANNA*

Best New Artist
CIARA
SUGARLAND

Best Female Pop Vocal Performance
GOOD IS GOOD
SHERYL CROW

Best Pop Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocals
MR. BRIGHTSIDE
THE KILLERS

Best Pop Collaboration with Vocals
A SONG FOR YOU
HERBIE HANCOCK*

Best Pop Instrumental Performance
IN OUR TIME
BURT BACHARACH
CHRIS BOTTI

Best Pop Vocal Album
WILDFLOWER
SHERYL CROW

Best Dance Recording
GALVANIZE
Q-TIP*

WONDERFUL NIGHT
FATBOY SLIM*

DAFT PUNK IS PLAYING AT MY HOUSE
LCD SOUNDSYSTEM

Best Electronic/Dance Album
PALOOKAVILLE
FATBOY SLIM

LCD SOUNDSYSTEM
LCD SOUNDSYSTEM

Best Traditional Pop Vocal Album
IT'S TIME
MICHAEL BUBLE

ISN'T IT ROMANTIC
JOHNNY MATHIS

MOONLIGHT SERENADE
CARLY SIMON

Best Rock Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocals
ALL THESE THINGS THAT I'VE DONE
THE KILLERS

Best Hard Rock Performance
THE HAND THAT FEEDS
NINE INCH NAILS

LITTLE SISTER
QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE

Best Female R&B Vocal Performance
UNBREAKABLE
ALICIA KEYS

Best R&B Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocals
IF THIS WORLD WERE MINE
ALICIA KEYS*

Best Traditional R&B Vocal Performance
A HOUSE IS NOT A HOME
ARETHA FRANKLIN

IF I WAS YOUR WOMAN
ALICIA KEYS

Best Urban/Alternative Performance
SUPASTAR
FLOETRY

WELCOME TO JAMROCK
DAMIAN MARLEY

Best Rap Solo Performance
TESTIFY
COMMON

MOCKINGBIRD
EMINEM

DISCO INFERNO
50 CENT

NUMBER ONE SPOT
LUDACRIS

Best Rap Performance by a Duo or Group
THE CORNER
COMMON*

ENCORE
EMINEM* 50 CENT*

HATE IT OR LOVE IT
50 CENT*

Best Rap/Sung Collaboration
1, 2 STEP
CIARA*

THEY SAY
COMMON*

Best Rap Song
CANDY SHOP
50 CENT*

HATE IT OR LOVE IT
50 CENT*

LOSE CONTROL
CIARA*

Best Rap Album
BE
COMMON

ENCORE
EMINEM

THE MASSACRE
50 CENT
Best Female Country Vocal Performance

GEORGIA RAIN
TRISHA YEARWOOD

Best Male Country Vocal Performance

GOOD OL' BOYS
WILLIE NELSON

ALCOHOL
BRAD PAISLEY

Best Country Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocal

PLAY SOMETHING COUNTRY
BROOKS & DUNN

BLESS THE BROKEN ROAD
RASCAL FLATTS

Best Country Collaboration with Vocals

BUILDING BRIDGES
BROOKS & DUNN
SHERYL CROW
VINCE GILL

DREAMS COME TRUE
WILLIE NELSON

Best Country Instrumental Performance

I'LL FLY AWAY
CHARLIE DANIELS

SCOTCH & CHOCOLATE
NICKEL CREEK

TIME WARP
BRAD PAISLEY

Best Country Song

ALCOHOL
BRAD PAISLEY

ALL JACKED UP
JOHN RICH

BLESS THE BROKEN ROAD
JEFF HANNA

Best Country Album

TIME WELL WASTED
BRAD PAISLEY

JASPER COUNTY
TRISHA YEARWOOD

Best Jazz Instrumental Solo

THE SOURCE
HERBIE HANCOCK

Best Gospel Performance

LOOKING FOR YOU
KIRK FRANKLIN

Best Pop/Contemporary Gospel Album

HYMNS
OUT OF EDEN

Best Southern, Country, or Bluegrass Gospel Album

LIVE AT BROOKLYN TABERNACLE
THE CRABB FAMILY

COMMOTION THREAD
THE OAK RIDGE BOYS

Best Latin Rock/Alternative Album

EL KILO
ORISHAS

Best Mexican/Mexican-American Album

MÉXICO EN LA PIEL
LUIS MIGUEL

Best Traditional Blues Album

80
B.B. KING

Best Contemporary Folk Album

WHY SHOULD THE FIRE DIE?
NICKEL CREEK

Best Reggae Album

WELCOME TO JAMROCK
DAMIAN MARLEY

THE TRINITY
SEAN PAUL

Best Spoken Word Album for Children

RAYME, DICKIE, AND THE BEAN:
WHY I LOVE AND HATE MY BROTHERS
RAY ROMANO

Best Spoken Word Album

THE AL FRANKEN SHOW PARTY ALBUM
AL FRANKEN

Best Comedy Album

THE AGORAPHOBIC COWBOY
RICK MORANIS

Best Musical Show Album

DIRTY ROTTEN SCOUNDRELS
DAVID YAZBEK

THE LIGHT IN THE PIAZZA
ADAM GUETTEL

Best Compilation Soundtrack Album

for Motion Picture, Television or Other Visual Media
BEYOND THE SEA
KEVIN SPACEY

Best Song Written for Motion Picture, Television or Other Visual Media

MILLION VOICES
WYCLEF JEAN

SQUARE ONE
TOM PETTY

Best Engineered Album, Non-Classical

DECEIVER
CHRIS THILE

Producer of the Year, Non-Classical

DEMON DAYS
DANGER MOUSE

Best Surround Sound Album

BROTHERS IN ARMS - 20TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION
MARK KNOPFLER

Best Short Form Music Video

LOSE CONTROL
CIARA

FEELS JUST LIKE IT SHOULDN'T
JAMIROQUAI

Best Long Form Music Video

BRIAN WILSON PRESENTS SMILE
BRIAN WILSON

NEW YORK, BEVERLY HILLS, LONDON, NASHVILLE, MIAMI BEACH, SHANGHAI

* Shared Nomination
distribution service, is expected to go live Jan. 23. Artists signing up with the distributor will keep control of all of their rights, their masters and 100% of the money from the digital sale of their music. Artists pay a one-time delivery charge of 99 cents per song and a yearly maintenance fee of $7.98 per album. Frank Black is the first artist to sign with TuneCore.

GUERRA TO RECEIVE BMI HONOR

Dominican star Juan Luis Guerra will be honored as a BMI Icon during BMI’s 13th annual Latin Awards. The multi-grammy Award winner will be saluted at the April 7 ceremonies at the Metropolitan Pavilion in New York. BMI’s Latin Awards honor the songwriters and publishers of the most played BMI Latin songs on U.S. radio and TV for the past year.

ORCHARD VIDEO SERVICE DEBUTS

Online music distributor the Orchard announced Jan. 19 the launch of its new digital video distribution service. In addition to the videos from the labels that the Orchard represents, additional video content partners at launch include C3 (“Three Stooges”) TV episodes and Troma Entertainment (the “Toxic Avenger” films, “South Park” creators Trey Parker’s and Matt Stone’s “Cannibal the Musical”). The online distributor plans to market and merchandise video content wherever it is sold digitally and will also offer its clients stand-alone video stores.

KRAVITZ TEAMS WITH ABSOLUT

Lenny Kravitz is the latest musician tapped by Absolut to create new, exclusive music for the arts-friendly vodka brand. For the project, dubbed All About Absolut, Kravitz, the Virgin

FUSE (cont.)

from >>p9

says, “It’s OK that they don’t play music. They develop great programming.”

With an eye to increasing viewership and ratings, Mullen strives to develop compelling— albeit driven—content geared to Fuse’s 12- to 34-year-old demo. She is discussing new programming possibilities with production companies here and abroad.

“I told the developers what Fuse is and what it isn’t,” Mullen says. “We want something a bit more experimental—going from a three-minute spot to a 30-minute show.” Throughout, music will remain front and center.

Mullen has already approved two new series, “The P.A.” and “Empire Square,” to debut later this year. The former is a mockumentary on the lives of personal assistants and will likely launch on the internet or video-on-demand. The animated “Empire Square” was developed by former FMC U.K. execs Anthony Cozzi and Lloyd Salmons and ex-Brit drummers Dave Brownlee and Lloyd Salmons, and will premiere on TV.

In the United Kingdom, “Empire Square” was initially intended for mobile phones, but Channel 4 picked it up for between shows. Under Mullen’s stewardship, programming will live on all available platforms. To reach Fuse’s core demo, she says, “you must be everywhere they are, and those places they have not yet discovered. You can no longer say, ‘Let’s make a TV show.’ [Content] has to live on all platforms.”

The two new shows complement Fuse’s overall programming, which includes “Daily Download,” “Comp’d,” “100%,” “Steve’s Uncensored Rock Show” and “7th Ave. Drop.”

Collectively, these shows have featured veterans and newcomers alike, including Green Day, Hawthorne Heights, Coldplay, Morningwood, Depeche Mode and Fall Out Boy. Upcoming guests include Yellowcard (Jan. 23) and members of My Chemical Romance and Taking Back Sunday (Jan. 30).

“Spotlighting music is healthy for the industry. It’s what it needs to create stars,” Mullen’s Talent co-CEO/manager John Scher says. “With more content being made available, at a time of much consolidation, we must welcome any outlet that stays principally music-driven.”---

Napster In The Cross Hairs

Apple’s Dominance Breeds Rough Business For Subscriptions

As this issue went to press, Napster found itself again fending off rumors that it was planning major layoffs and looking to acquire the company. Napster did not return calls for comment, but in published reports it strongly denied the claims. In an effort to generate more positive news, the company announced its subscriber growth figures early—beating analyst estimates with more than 500,000 total subscribers, showing more than 100% growth for last year. Napster is not scheduled to release its quarterly earnings results until Feb. 8.

Questions about Napster’s new business model can raise questions about Napster’s falling stock price is key to the company’s future. At press time, Napster’s stock price was $3.20, up from its 52-week low of $2.95, but still low enough to fuel acquisition rumors. Sources close to the company say it has pitched a possible sale to the likes of Microsoft and RealNetworks.

Through it all, Napster has aggressively pursued new partnerships to expose its brand. The company early last year formed a ringtone distribution deal with mobile content aggregator Vongo which wireless operator AT&T incorporated Jan. 9, and in December launched an online music service, Varoom.

But investor confidence in Napster may ultimately have more to do with the runaway success of Apple, its last a carte download model. The iTunes Music Store only widened its lead in the digital music field last holiday season, with Apple CEO Steve Jobs now touring his company’s share of the download market at 83%, a figure industry analysts support (see story, page 18). But other digital music sellers see their businesses as less dependent on downloads. According to the company’s recent report, the subscription service in which individual tracks downloads play only a minor role.

“We’ll give Steve jobs 83% of the downloads, but he’s got 9% of subscription,” says a spokes- man for RealNetworks, which gains an estimated 80% of its revenue from subscription fees. Yet Apple seems to be doing just fine ceding the subscription market to others. According to Pottier analyst Gene Munster, global online music revenue in 2006 reached an estimated $800 million, more than four times global subscription revenue of $175 million.

“It’s probably not totally fair to Napster or Rhapsody to com- pare their download figures to Apple’s, because most of their business comes from subscriptions,” Munster says. “But at the end of the day, the subscription numbers are insignificant and meaningless to the revenue for companies.

Taking into account subcription revenue, Munster estimates the overall average of the online music market is $594 million, with Apple holding about 64% of the market share, at $363 million.

Music subscription providers appear to be growing at a healthy pace. Like Napster, Rhapsody continually reports growing subscriber numbers, and says it streamed 120 million songs in December alone. That compares to Apple’s claimed average of 3 million daily downloads is a matter of perspective.

Investors seem to be following revenue numbers far more closely than subscriptions—bad news for both Napster and Rhapsody subscription revenues, as Apple is expected to increase its lead in the coming year. Pottier Jaffery expects global online music revenue will grow another 46% in 2006, to more than $1 billion, and that Apple’s market share will increase to 70%—a cool $1 billion even without a subscription service.

83%

Apple’s share of the digital music market for a carte downloads

http://www.americanradiohistory.com

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**Latin Radio Formats Keep Flipping For Oldies**

As Spanish-language radio continues to grow and diversify, the hottest trend for the new year is one hooked on the past.

Oldies stations are making a strong comeback in Latin radio, fueled by the growth of such formats as Jose (Entravision's Jack format for Latin music), Univision's Reconero and Clear Channel's La Preciosa. In the past three months, more than a dozen Nielsen BDS-monitored radio stations switched to Latin oldies formats.

The growth of different formats "is really about the maturing of Spanish-language radio in the United States," Entravision president Jeffrey Liberman says.

"If you go back 30 years, there was only one station and one format per city, he adds. With time, stations multiplied and formats segmented. Most recently, 2005 saw the explosion of Latin rhythmic formats, which did not exist before.

Now oldies are surging. On Jan. 16, Univision Radio switched KCOR San Antonio to the Reconero format. The station had been under-performing as an urban/flip-hop-salsa format, it switched to only last year. The week before, on Jan. 9, Univision switched another station, KINO Dallas, from regional Mexican to Reconero.

The Univision flips follow the successful expansion of Clear Channel's La Preciosa format, which plays hits from the '70s, '80s and '90s. Since its launch in 2003, the format has grown enough that this week Clear Channel officially announced the 12-station network, with plans to add to its 13 stations and to broadcast the format through other radio companies.

"The popularity comes from the fact that these radio stations play a real broad catalog of music, so they aren't as repetitive," says Alfredo Alonso, Clear Channel senior VP of Hispanic radio.

Popularity also hinges on the demographic's eternal love affair with romantic music and an attachment to multi-generational songs.

While Univision has switched from other Latin formats to Reconero (which literally translates to "memory"), Clear Channel has mostly moved from English formats to La Preciosa in cities that already had other Latin formats in place.

Also exploding is Jose, which plays music from the '70s to today's modern hits. Launched in October with five stations, Jose has grown to seven outlets. The loser in this flip flurry appears to be pop, at least for the moment. Several Latin pop stations have flipped to rhythmic or reggaeton formats, and now to oldies.

Out of 98 Spanish-language stations Nielsen BDS was monitoring 12 months ago, 39 were pop. Today, there are only 29 pop stations. In comparison, the number of regional Mexican stations has stayed stable at 51, compared with 52 last year, while tropical stations, already in decline, went from 15 to 12.

The drop off of pop stations is troublesome for label executives.

Already, pushing new pop acts in conservative U.S. Latin radio—where many pop stations play mostly recurrent hits—is a struggle.

When a pop station flips, "we lose a captive audience," says Pietro Carlos, VP of promotion for EMI/Televista. "I just have to look for different avenues of promotion."

However, Liberman calls the latest flips "just a cycle of competition," noting that two-thirds of the Hispanic population is under the age of 34—an unlikely base to sustain growth in oldies formats. "Pop and regional Mexican," Liberman says, "will have tremendous success going forward."
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Live Nation Adjusting To ‘Public’ Life
CEO Michael Rapino Keeps Door Open For Change At Venues

As Wall Street gets its first taste of the live entertainment business, Live Nation is adapting to life as a publicly traded, free-standing company. Investors’ reception to Live Nation has been initially positive, with the stock price up 37% since the company was spun off from former parent Clear Channel Communications last month.

Now the promoter is faced with delivering profits in an unpredictable business, without the benefit of a multimillion-dollar parent to lean on.

A $150 million buyback authorized by the Live Nation board of directors on Dec. 22 seems to have instilled confidence among investors. With a market cap of about $1 billion and a debt load of about $367 million that analysts deem serviceable, Live Nation has been strong out of the gate.

Given that Live Nation is the first company in the touring space to go public, the music industry is watching closely.

“We think we have a great company. We’re happy the market is responding to it,” Live Nation CEO Michael Rapino says in his first interview since the spinoff.

In a busy couple of months, Rapino has reorganized and streamlined his company, closing its exhibition division and eliminating or downsizing offices in Nashville, Minneapolis, Seattle, Austin, Pittsburgh and Birmingham, Ala. More than 300 employees have been laid off, close to 9% of the Live Nation global staff of about 3,000, with all these efforts resulting in $20 million in savings.

It appears the axe has stopped falling, at least for now, despite industry speculation that other Live Nation properties might be divested. While music is the focus, Rapino says Live Nation remains committed to its motorsports and theatrical divisions. And none of the company’s 40-odd amphitheaters, the backbone of its North American venue business, are publicly on the block.

Asked if some of Live Nation’s sheds—the primary venues in the North American summer concert business—might be sold, Rapino says venues are being assessed by Bruce Eskowitz, president of the newly formed Global Venue Management & Sponsorships group.

“Bruce will look at that portfolio of venues and determine which ones are high-performing, which ones need to be worked on and invested in and what areas we need to bolster up,” Rapino says.

Rapino insists that as a free-standing company Live Nation will remain aggressive in its pursuit of artists on the national touring front. But with consumers balking at high ticket prices for many acts, the industry at large has tried to show more discipline in regard to what artists are paid.

Many would argue that the companies in Live Nation’s corporate line-up—Clear Channel Entertainment and SFX—dominated the touring industry in large part because they paid artists top dollar, or overpaid. Now, Rapino stresses, Live Nation’s pitch to artists will not only be about the dollars, but about the added value the company can bring in the form of new marketing and revenue streams. With the pressure of quarterly reporting, there will not be much room for loss leader shows.

“Our strategy is not purely market share, it is also a combination of margin and [industry] leadership,” Rapino says. “So we’ll continue to look at the right to us and the right dates and if they fit our model and are economically in the right zone for us, we’ll continue to pursue them. But we’ll also be strong enough to pass on the shows that don’t make economic sense.”


Since industry consolidation in the late ’90s, Live Nation and its former incarnations have been the industry leaders in creating dozens of tours that might not have gone out otherwise.

“But where we tend to maximize our margins is on the distribution side... and when we put a show in our venues we have a great economic advantage,” Rapino says.

Last year the company made some headlines by eliminating service charges on many amphitheater tickets and holding the line on or reducing lawn prices. Rapino says he and his staff are debating whether to continue those efforts in 2006.

“We didn’t have the home run we had hoped, but for the first time in history we increased our amphitheater per-show attendance, which was a big objective,” Rapino says. “We also increased per-show lawn seats in 2005; increased per-show profit, we decreased our per-show guarantee. So we saw some positive movement for the first time in five years.”

CCE, Live Nation’s predecessor, was far and away the dominant promoter in the world in 2005, with more than $1.3 billion in grosses from nearly 6,400 shows reported to Billboard Boxscore. Will Live Nation be as active in 2006?

“Our first priority is to make sure we have great product at 150 venues, and that takes us close to that kind of number,” Rapino responds. “But we’re not focusing purely on the revenue side, we’re going to focus on the margin side, so we’re going to look and see if the market will provide that same level of opportunity.”

Rapino dismisses those who say Live Nation’s publicly traded status is a negative. “Whether we’re a public company or I was just put in charge of a subsidiary, I don’t think I’d be doing much different,” he says.

“We needed to get our cost structure in line. We were a little fat and bloated—we had some non-core businesses, and needed to stay focused on our venues and music division to keep evolving them.”

In the past, Rapino has said that his company subsidized developing talent to the tune of tens of millions in losses at the gate, and he says it will still invest in new acts. “We definitely know there is a cost to filling your own distribution pipe, which we will continue to budget for and build around.”
EverGreen Builds Pub Catalog With Series Of Acquisitions

NEW YORK—With some $25 million invested in five recently completed publishing deals, EverGreen Copyright Acquisitions is ramping up operations.

The company, launched in early 2005, has acquired the publishing assets of Rykomusic and Warlock Music; the Teddy Riley catalog; the Audigram catalog; the Bill Monroe Music catalog; and the Matt Slocum catalog.

EverGreen, financed by the Lehman Brothers Merchant Banking III fund, was founded by Joel A. Katz, a leading entertainment attorney who is an investor and non-executive partner in the company; Richard Perna, formerly COO of Hamstein Music Group; and David Schulhof, formerly VP of motion pictures music for Miramax where he served as executive producer on more than 100 soundtracks. Perna and Schulhof serve as co-CEOs, with the former overseeing the creative team as well as copyright and royalty administration, while the latter handles the areas of motion picture, TV and advertising and creative affairs.

With 10 employees on-board, the company plans to hire another 20 during the next month in the area of administration. Those employees will be overseeing some 15,000 copyrights including songs by Nick Drake, Mark Sandman of Morphine, Jon Martyn, Fairport Convention, J.J. Cale, the Supreme Beings of Leisure, Bill Monroe and Matt Slocum of Sixpence None the Richer. Songs in the acquired catalogs include "Blue Moon of Kentucky"; Michael Jackson’s "Dangerous"; Bobby Brown’s "My Prerogative"; Keith Sweat’s "I Want Her"; and Kool Moe Dee’s "How Ya Like Me Now."

Those publishing catalogs generate more than $2 million in NPS (net publisher’s share) annually, according to Schulhof. In addition to the $25 million equity invested in acquisitions, EverGreen also has about $5 million of working capital in the business, Schulhof says.

The Lehman Brothers Merchant Banking III fund, which has $1.2 billion in capital commitments from institutional investors and high net worth individuals, makes long-term investments in operating companies in partnership with management, according to an EverGreen press release.

EverGreen’s largest deal appears to be the acquisition of the Rykomusic publishing assets, which includes the Warlock Music Catalog. As part of the Rykomusic U.S. publishing assets, EverGreen also takes over any administration Rykomusic handled for other publishers, and gets the ownership of Ryko Ltd., which holds a 50% interest in the Rough Trade publishing catalog.

Sources suggest that EverGreen paid about $10.5 million for the Rykomusic deal, a number Schulhof denies, but declines to clarify. Schulhof says EverGreen is currently looking into "several other large acquisitions."

In a market already crowded with investors seeking publishing assets, EverGreen hopes to distinguish itself by going after smaller catalogs too, such as those owned by writers and producers, or their families. Such catalogs are usually administered by large publishing companies and often get lost in the shuffle, Perna says. With a more selective approach, EverGreen can buy from owners who may retain an interest in the assets through the writer’s share, and commit to more aggressively working the catalog.

Perna also claims the company can move more quickly than larger publishing companies in evaluating copyrights, financial data and ownership issues, enabling EverGreen to effectively close a transaction within 45 days.

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UNIVERSAL MUSIC LATINO | UNIVERSAL MUSIC PUBLISHING GROUP | VERVE MUSIC GROUP

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Spitzer Eyes Digital Deals
Meanwhile, Radio Reflects On Prior Probe

As New York Attorney General Eliot Spitzer pushes forward with his probe into digital music pricing, further details are emerging about the nature of the inquiry.

While much of the early chatter in the industry surrounding the Spitzer investigation has centered on the major labels’ use of “most favored nation” clauses in deals with download and subscription retailers, one well-placed digital music dealmaker says that another area of concern for Spitzer may be the major labels’ apparent advantage over independent record companies in online distribution.

The source says that Spitzer wants to know why major labels are getting better wholesale sales for 99 cent downloads and subscriptions than independent labels are. One aspect of the probe is believed to be examining whether anti-competitive practices are at play to give the majors a leg up on Indies.

Spitzer’s subpoenas are just starting to circulate among digital retailers, a source familiar with many of them says. Several such companies declined to comment on the record, but denied yet receiving subpoenas.

To date, most industry chatter regarding Spitzer’s investigation has hinged on complaints from digital music service operators that MFN clauses, which dictate that a label cannot receive pricing terms worse than its competitors, are a tool for de facto collusion by the record companies.

In some cases, the clause allows labels to audit the terms of deals the retailers have with other record companies to ensure that they are receiving the best pricing terms possible, digital retail sources say.

What, if anything, Spitzer’s look at digital music pricing will yield remains to be seen. A previous probe by the Department of Justice into digital music pricing in 2001 came up empty. After a two-year inquiry the case was dropped, and no antitrust charges were filed.

Meanwhile, the fallout from Spitzer’s last music industry investigation, into radio, continues to be felt by significant numbers of radio programmers.

A poll of 55 PDs, operations managers, group programmers and consultants conducted by Billboard sister publication Billboard Radio Monitor reveals that programmers, dealing with more paperwork now with regard to label-sponsored promotions, concerts and product giveaways, Programmers were promised anonymity to encourage candid responses.

“The Spitzer probe has created a paranoid, paralyzed atmosphere in terms of being able to accomplish anything on the promotions and marketing side with the artists and music,” one PD says.

The result, another says, is that “every trip, flyaway, CD request and concert ticket package feels ‘dirty’ and scares the hell out of you. Even if you’ve never done anything wrong, like most of us, it’s scary.”

Close to three-quarters of poll respondents mentioned the forms, affidavits and declarations that now accompany nearly every label-supported promotion as being a key difference in their jobs from this time a year ago. Such forms generally state that prizes from labels were not given to stations in exchange for spins.

One programmer points out that all this new paperwork “means a slower turnaround on ideas and partnerships. There’s a form for everything,” he says, “so there are some things labels simply can’t or won’t do anymore.”

Another PD laments the current atmosphere between radio and labels to “traveling after 5:11, where they wouldn’t let you bring toenail clippers on an airplane.”

One prominent programmer thinks labels are taking advantage of this “crackdown” to “shut down” promotional opportunities.

“They want to spend less and are using Spitzer as a reason to do so,” he says. “Labels are shutting off the promotional money.”

Apple’s Profit Soars Behind iPod’s Happy Holiday

The numbers are in and it is official: Santa was good to Steve Jobs over Christmas. Very good.

To take stock of just how strong holiday business was for Apple Computer, consider the following. The company, riding high on sales of the ubiquitous iPod digital music player, generated as much revenue in the three months that ended Dec. 31, 2005 ($5.75 billion) as it did in all of fiscal 2002.

Of course, back in 2002, the little white box was the preferred music toy of only geeks and the technophile. This past Christmas it was the focus a full-fledged mass-market phenomenon.

Apple shipped about 32 million iPods in 2005, up from 8.2 million in 2004.

Almost half of those shipments came in the December quarter. For the period Apple shipped more than 14 million iPods, generating $2.9 billion in revenue. That is well above the 11 million iPods analysts were anticipating the company would ship during the period. Apple says gross margins on iPod sales topped 20% in the fourth quarter.

Revenue from the iTunes Music Store and other iPod-related services and accessories more than doubled to $491 million, up from $177 million a year ago. The company says the music store operated “above break-even” for the final quarter.

The iPod is now sold through more than 35,000 retail outlets, and all the iPod love from consumers is translating into sizable profits for the company.

In the last quarter Apple’s net profit almost doubled, rising to $565 million.

Apple’s stock fell 7% in after-hours trading following release of its quarterly numbers Jan. 18, with investors showing concern about the tech sector and Apple’s outlook for the current quarter. Still, Wall Street likes the iPod. Apple’s stock tripled in value in 2004 and doubled again in 2005.

In other news, Sony BMG will now make its content available through the iTunes Music Store in Australia, ending the major label’s holdout from the venture, which launched in October 2005.

The two sides announced a content licensing pact on Jan. 18 that will give iTunes users access to tracks from Foo Fighters, Elvis Presley and Bob Dylan as well as local acts Rogue Traders, Shannon Noll and Anthony Callea. An initial 100,000 tracks from Sony BMG were made available with the announcement of the deal.

Other Australian acts to be added in the coming months include John Farnham, Pete Murray, Alex Lloyd and Delta Goodrem.

Apple and Sony BMG are still at odds over a content licensing deal for the iTunes Music Store in Japan.

Insiders say that Sony BMG’s holdout stemmed from concerns over pricing and a lack of compatibility with Sony Corp.’s own players.

Additional reporting by Christie Blazier in Sydney.

McKenzie Named Billboard Group Editorial Director

Billboard Information Group has a new senior editorial lineup, geared toward focusing on emerging growth areas in music, radio and digital entertainment.

Effective immediately, Scott McKenzie becomes group editorial director of all Billboard properties. Under McKenzie’s leadership, the members of the editorial staff will serve all Billboard and Billboard Radio Monitor platforms on a regular basis.

McKenzie will retain his managing director duties for Billboard Radio Monitor. He will continue to report to John Kilcullen, president/publisher of Billboard Information Group.

Billboard executive editor Tamara Conniff adds the role of associate publisher to her responsibilities. Conniff has played a leading role in developing strategic initiatives and partnerships. Conniff will report to McKenzie as executive editor, and will continue to report to Kilcullen in her new role as associate publisher.

Ken Schlager, previously executive editor, takes on a new role as executive editor of editorial operations, coordinating editorial support efforts across the Billboard and Billboard Radio Monitor platforms. Schlager will report to McKenzie.

Paul Heine, director of news, music and programming at Billboard Radio Monitor, becomes executive editor of the magazine. He will run day-to-day editorial operations and will continue to report to McKenzie.

The promotions follow a banner year for Billboard. Among other achievements in 2005, Billboard and billboard.com were redesigned and relaunched, online circulation grew substantially thanks to new monthly payment plans; Billboard Mobile was introduced in Japan and the United States; and the MECA conference was launched with the CTIA, resulting in the largest paid registration event in Billboard’s history.

At the same time, Billboard Radio Monitor—launched in October 2004—established itself as a full-service radio and music information resource and jumped into the digital age with a host of new electronic newsletters and other online offerings.
Bedingfield Leads A Red Hot Campaign

For the past 12 months, Natasha Bedingfield has been a priority artist at Epic Records. Now, with a second single, “Unwritten” (the title track from her debut album), showing traction on the Billboard Adult and Pop charts, Bedingfield is the centerpiece of the V05 Red Hot Rising Star campaign.

Rising Star is a partnership between hair care products company Alberto VO5 and Conde Nast. The campaign profiles some of today’s freshest faces, while also searching for tomorrow’s stars via a talent contest.

The campaign will launch with a four-page spread in the March issues of Conde Nast publications Vogue, Glamour, Allure, Self, Jane, Teen Vogue and Lucky. Bedingfield will be prominently featured—along with Kate Earl and Dottie Blonde’s Amie Mirillo.

In addition to offering details about the artists, the magazine campaign announces the V05 Red Hot Rising Star Contest. The top prize includes the opportunity to cut a demo and a meeting with a label exec.

Accompanying the magazine elements will be Rising Star initiatives involving radio, retail, online, mobile and TV. The package also includes a gift-with-purchase promotion.

So, while VO5/Rising Star signage appears in drugstores and mass retailers, additional impressions will be made at radio, where “Unwritten” is making itself heard.

For her part, Bedingfield has recorded voice-overs for radio and mobile applications.

“It is so difficult to break acts today,” says Bedingfield’s manager, Neale Easterby, of Empire Artist Management in London. “Everything we can do to raise Natasha’s profile helps—as long as it fits in with who she is as a person and artist.”

Pausing for a moment, Easterby adds, “I’ve turned down so many branding opportunities for her, but this one just felt right.”

It felt right for Epic, too. The campaign offers another way for young female fans to get to know Bedingfield. Epic VP of marketing Scott Greer says, “It helps us to further raise awareness about her music—as well as her personality,” he adds. “It’s the kind of deal we look for.”

Maurice Bernstein, co-founder and CEO of Giant Step, a music and lifestyle marketing company in New York, assisted in bringing Bedingfield into the V05/Conde Nast fold.

“Natasha is a career artist who has a good story to tell,” Bernstein says. “She also has the support of her label.”

In the words of Greer, this is the type of partnership where “everyone wins.”

David Miller, executive director of creative services/integrated marketing at the Conde Nast Media Group, concurs. She says this partnership is a good example of the kind of integrated marketing platform that has become Conde Nast’s specialty—“especially in terms of the intersection between music, fashion and beauty.”

On a side note, as a prelude to Olympus Fashion Week in New York, Bedingfield, along with KT Tunstall and Aqualung, will perform Feb. 1 at the Vogue Takes London to New York event at New York’s Avalon club. See you there.

**MAKING NEWS:** Tina Wells’ New York-based youth-oriented marketing agency Buzz Marketing Group has launched uMusic, a research division focusing on the music industry. Labels that sign up for the 12-month service will receive trend and analysis reports tailored to their needs and will regularly meet with Buzz’s buzzSpotter Network.

Wells says, “The buzzSpotter Network consists of teens and young adults—interpreters and ambassadors of youth culture, as Wells refers to them. The buzzSpotters share their thoughts and opinions with label execs, who may or may not like what they hear. Sony BMG has signed with uMusic, and Wells is in discussions with other labels.

Also in New York, Geoffrey Colon has opened the doors to Frenzy Strategic Marketing, which will focus on synergies between entertainment and consumer brands. Frenzy’s first client is Breaded/RCA artist Mylo, whose dynamic debut album, “Destroy Rock ‘n’ Roll,” arrives in February. Colon is also a dance/electronic music marketing consultant to Koch Entertainment.

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Photo: Dimitrios Kambouris/WireImage.com

MICHAEL PAOLETTA mpaoletta@billboard.com

www.billboard.com
Distrib Door Opens In Canada

Indie MapleNationWide’s Joint Venture With Fontana Offers New Options

TORONTO—The strategic partnership announced Jan. 12 between U.S.-based Fontana Distribution and Canadian indie MapleNationWide introduces a new force to the distribution sector here. The joint venture is intended to boost the availability of Fontana Distribution’s U.S. releases in Canada, including titles by Sevendust, DJ Quik and Young Buck, while offering Canadian independents increased access to the U.S. marketplace.

Fontana Distribution is the Los Angeles-based independent distribution arm of Universal Music Group. Canadian independent music distributor MapleNationWide is owned by Toronto-based music group MapleCore.

Under the new deal, MapleNationWide has ceased Canadian operations under that name. It now operates from Toronto as Fontana North, with its own national sales team based in MapleCore’s offices. It also has a sales presence in UMG’s offices in Montreal, Winnipeg and Vancouver.

“This is very advantageous for our labels,” Fontana Distribution GM Steve Pritchitt says. He expects the deal to increase sales and revenue for Fontana’s distributed labels. “Without adding overhead.”

“Many U.S. labels and artists are underperforming in Canada,” MapleCore president/CEO Grant Dexter says. “They don’t have an infrastructure here. We can provide infrastructure, and sell more records for them.”

Universal Music Canada president/CEO Randy Lennox, who spearheaded the Fontana North partnership, contends it will bring increased opportunities for Canadian-based independent labels and artists.

“An album that sells 10,000 or 15,000 in Canada will now have a solid distribution opportunity in the United States,” Lennox says.

“Fontana North will bring things that haven’t been on our radar screen before,” Pritchitt adds.

MapleCore is owned by a group that includes Dexter, Universal Music Canada, venture capital firm SDL Invest, Canadian technology firm Ideaca and broadcaster Standard Radio. All are based in Toronto.

Irish Music Biz Hopes Its ‘Mercury’ Will Rise With Launch Of New Award

DUBLIN—The Irish music industry is hoping to use its inaugural Choice Music Prize to highlight the depth and variety of domestic talent at home and abroad.

The prize, which will be awarded Feb. 28 at a ceremony here, is similar to the United Kingdom’s “album of the year” Mercury Prize.

Funded by industry bodies the Irish Music Rights Organization and the Irish Recorded Music Assn., the prize is meant to honor the album “that sums up the year in music in Ireland.”

The 10 shortlisted albums were unveiled Jan. 10. Ranging from alternative rock act Bell X1’s sophomore album “Flock” (Island/Universal) to singer/songwriter/multi-instrumentalist Julie Feeney’s self-released debut “13 Songs,” the other nominees are Joe Chester’s “A Murder of Crows” (Bare), the Chateaux’s “Check In” (Setanta), Turn’s “Turn” (Setanta), Nick Kelly’s “Running Dog” (Self-possessed), Emmett Tinley’s “Attic Faith” (Independent Records), the Duke Special’s “Adventures in Gramophone” (Hap), Cane 147’s “Moon Pool” (Exceptional) and the self-titled album Lytial (Rough Trade).

CHOU TOPS CHANNEL V AWARDS

Taiwanese male vocalist Jay Chou dominated the 12th annual Channel V Music Awards ceremony, which was held Jan. 11 at Queen Elizabeth Stadium in Hong Kong. In the Taiwan/Hong Kong category, the Sony BMG Hong Kong-signed artist was named best male singer, most popular male singer and best singer/songwriter. Chou also collected the best music video award and received one of the best song of the year awards, both for “Night Song.”

Labelmate Jolin Tsai was chosen as most popular female singer. Rock Records signing Jasmine Lin, also from Taiwan, won the best female singer award.

The ceremony was jointly presented by state-owned China Central Television, Shanghai Media Group and Channel V for the fourth consecutive year. --Steve McClure
Fontana North will operate its own promotion and publicity services in Toronto, but will utilize Universal Canada’s credit and collection functions. It will use Cinram for manufacturing and distribution—as had MapleNationWide.

The new operation is being run by Dexter as president/CEO, with MapleNationWide director of sales and acquisitions Matt Smallwood taking additional stripes as Fontana North GM. It will have eight other staffers, up from the two employed by MapleNationWide.

Toronto-based Dominique Zgurs, president of Koch Entertainment’s Canadian arm, regards Fontana North as a “real competitor” to his own distribution operation. “They can say to label, ‘We can offer you full North American distribution,’ ” he notes. “It will keep us on our toes.”

Sources suggest that MapleNationWide’s options in Canada had been limited because it had been unable to secure Canadian distribution rights to significant international repertoire and lacked the capital to market key international product effectively.

Instead, it distributed a handful of grass-roots U.S. labels, including Quango Records, Dome Records, Teepee Records and Nature Sounds, as well as domestic projects, including those by ’60s pop icon Andy Kim, singer/songwriter Lennie Gallant and R&B singer Massari. It also handled the Audio Research imprint from Montreal.

“Potential international partners were either aligned with a major distributor or didn’t know who we were,” Dexter says.

Fontana North begins operating in a marketplace pitted with minefields. The past decade has seen the bankruptcies in Canada of such major distributors as Cargo Imports and Distribution in Montreal and Saturn Distributing, Song Entertainment Distribution, Quango Music Distribution and Holborne Distributing in Toronto.

“I am not convinced Canada needs another distribution company,” says Toronto-based Lloyd Nishimura, president of distributor Outside Music. “The independent sector is well-served by the companies already here. It also remains to be seen if their model can work.”

Dexter counters: “What gives me confidence is that our organization seeks to have the ability to go from zero to 60, and do it fairly well. We have an entrepreneurial spirit.”
NEW YORK—Even before Musicland Group formally filed for Chapter 11 protection on Dec. 12, the chain was on the block. At press time, sources said Trans World Entertainment was looking at the company’s assets.

In first-day motions on Dec. 13 in U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of New York, the chain’s lawyer, James Stempel of Chicago-based Kirkland & Ellis, listed the company’s assets at $371 million and liabilities at $485 million. Stempel said the chain is up for sale, with the goal of a prompt transaction.

But following the double-track strategy employed by most music industry Chapter 11 operators, Musicland management is also preparing for a scaled-down, reorganized company. A leaner Musicland would file a stand-alone plan, should a proposed sale not achieve a value that satisfies creditors.

And it is the product suppliers that will be calling the shots, as the lead secured creditor—the banking consortium supplying the revolving credit facility and the $75 million debt-in-possession financing, led by Wachovia Bank and Fleet Retail Finance—will likely be paid off as soon as Musicland begins liquidating more stores. That is expected in February. Musicland already began liquidating the 61-unit Media Play chain in December and that is expected to be completed by the end of this month.

As of the court date, the revolving stood at only $30.3 million outstanding. That is down considerably from where Musicland’s loan probably stood at year’s end, thanks to the fact that the chain did not make any product payments in December and the Media Play liquidation.

Musicland plans going-out-of-business sales for another 284 stores beginning Feb. 1. But in ruling on the motions, some of the mechanisms that will allow those sales to proceed were delayed until the next hearing, scheduled for Jan. 27 by Judge Stuart M. Bernstein.

It is unclear where that will leave Musicland’s store portfolio since the closures were not broken out by brand. Currently, Musicland has 669 stores—the 61 Media Play outlets, plus 456 Sam Goody stores and 352 Suncoast Motion Picture stores.

According to the filing, secured trade creditors, with a lien secondary to the banking consortium, are collectively owed $186.3 million.

They include 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment, $10.2 million; Warner Home Video, $27.7 million; Sony BMG Sales Enterprise, $24.6 million; WEA, $23.4 million; Universal Music & Video Distribution, $21.6 million; Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, $11.6 million; Paramount Home Video, $13.4 million; Ingram Book, $10.2 million; Buena Vista Home Entertainment, $9.2 million; EMI Music Marketing, $7.8 million; and VPD, $6.2 million.

The unsecured creditors include Deluxe Media, $8 million; Universal Home Video, $6.9 million; Ventura, $5.8 million; and AEC One Stop Group, $3.8 million. Also, Navarré is listed as being owed $6.7 million, but the company has put out a press release saying the amount due is $12.8 million, because Musicland did not make November or December payments to the company. That would make Navarré the largest unsecured creditor.

The Indies

Redeye Sees Flurry Of New Label Signings

Redeye Distribution in Haw River, N.C., has been beefing up its garage rock roster with some new additions. The NARM distributor of the year, small division, has been furiously signing budding indies of late, and continues to diversify its roster far beyond its roots in sister company Yep Roc Records.

This month, the distributor will announce that it has added Gearhead Records and Three One G to its exclusive roster. The two labels anchor a slew of new signings by the distributor, which in recent months has brought in the New Jersey-based Gem Blandsten label and Public Enemy.

San Francisco-based Gearhead Records grew out of Gearhead Magazine, starting in 2000 and previously handled nationally by Koch Entertainment Distribution. The label has released albums from such acts as Electric Eel Shock, the Hellsaints and the New Bomb Turks.

Three One G was founded by the Locust’s Justin Pearson, and the San Diego-based label has released acts including Melt Banana and the Blood Brothers. It was previously distributed by the Lumberjack Mordam Music Group.

Also new to Redeye is Brooklyn, N.Y.-based Kanine Records, which is leaving the Platform Group. Huntington Beach, Calif.-based TKO Records, which was most recently with Road to Ruin, and Los Angeles-based Buddyhead, which had been with Lookout Records.

RETAIL PULSE: For those ready to ring the death knell for independent retail, the word that Rhino Westwood in Los Angeles was shutting down was seen as damning proof that such retailers would be extinct in the coming months. While times certainly are not going to get easier for indie outlets, and more closings are likely to come, there are plenty of stores—especially those in the major independent coalitions—that finished 2005 on par or better than 2004.

And we may not have seen the end of Rhino Westwood just yet. Founder Richard Foss, who now heads Shout Factory, says he has been in talks to sell the store. Foss declined to reveal any potential buyers, but says he thinks a deal could be done by the end of the month, allowing Rhino Westwood to live on, possibly in a smaller location.

Foss says he opted not to renew his lease when it was up at the end of January, adding that the store has been struggling to find its footing the past couple of years. If he does find a buyer, Foss says he does not plan to have any involvement in the store, preferring to spend his time on Shout.

Foss points to the closing of another Los Angeles staple—Aron’s Records—to sum up the state of independent retail. “That’s a store everyone said would never close,” he says.

And it probably would still be open had mega indie retail giant Record Collector not set up shop just a few minutes away. Those in Los Angeles can take advantage of one last parking lot sale at Rhino the weekend of Jan. 21.

Speaking of the always-packed Amoeba, the retail chain recently announced that the first release on its newly formed label will be an album of gypsy jazz from the Stephane Wrembel Trio with David Grisman and Brandi Shearer with the Robin Nolan Trio. The album, “Rendezvous at the Nightery,” will be available this winter.
Retail Track

ED CHRISTMAN echristman@billboard.com

Digital Boom, Musicland Bust
Retailer's Chapter 11 Filing Was A Long Time Coming

Musicland Group's Chapter 11 filing is fuel for industry naysayers—the mainstream media will once again have a field day gloating about the demise of the record store. Of course, their message is that digital downloading is supreme, and it will wean a path of destruction through the brick-and-mortar marketplace. During the past decade, I have gotten a lot of mileage from attacking that prognostication. But with track downloads looking like they might reach $1 billion in the United States this year, the time when digital distribution will affect the brick-and-mortar world is finally upon us.

However, let me explain yet again why it had very little to do with Musicland's downfall.

Musicland's filing can be attributed to many underlying company and industry problems; digital downloading is the least of them.

In June 2003, when Sun Capital agreed to assume ownership of Musicland, the chain had been left in a severely weakened state by Best Buy, which acquired Musicland in February 2001.

While Best Buy is one of the best power merchants of any retail sector in the world, the consumer electronics chain failed completely to rejuvenate Musicland. In fact, its ownership left behind a company that was 18 days away from liquidation when Sun Capital agreed to take ownership of Musicland for the princely sum of $1.

Best Buy may not have made money on the transaction, but think of the tactical knowledge it picked up during its tenure. It is no secret that big-box discounts eat away at traditional music retail margins. But Best Buy, for a time, owned a clear window into how its own pricing strategies directly affected sales results at Musicland stores.

Also, during the 1990s, everything that Musicland did well was invisible to its customers, and everything it did poorly was right there for all the world to see. It had excellent inventory management systems and probably the most efficient distribution operation of the entire account.

While Best Buy parted with Musicland, it kept its Franklin, Ind., distribution center, forcing the then-new chain management—Eric Weisman, Danny Yarbrough and Mike Madden—to wrestle with that issue, in addition to all the chain's other problems. The three also had to create a vision for the future if the chain was to survive.

From the get-go, industry executives complained that Musicland was undercapitalized since Sun Capital did not put any equity into the company until nearly a year after taking over. And management's progress was slow. While Weisman, who served as CEO, could talk a great game, vendors wondered when, if ever, his articulated vision would become a reality.

Musicland's filing can be attributed to many underlying company and industry problems.
Defining Property

Sony BMG Lawsuit Raises Issue Of Tangible, Intangible Goods

The recent proposed settlement between Sony BMG Music Entertainment and consumers over CDs with faulty digital rights management software brings to mind legal issues that AOL faced a few years ago.

The Sony BMG class action settlement does not cover consumers who claim that the DRM software caused damage to their computers. Specifically, the deal excludes from the settlement those who claim damage to a computer or network resulting from interactions between the DRM and other software or hardware installed on the computer or network.

This raises questions of property damage and insurance—and brings us to AOL.

In 1999, AOL released version 5.0 of its access software. Within a few months, consumers began filing class action lawsuits around the country claiming the software caused damage.

AOL settled the suits for $15.5 million. Then the company sued its insurers for refusing to defend AOL and indemnify the company for the settlement.

The insurance companies claimed that the consumers did not allege damage to tangible property. This meant that the damages were not “property damages,” so the claims were not covered by the policies.

The federal District Court in Alexandria, Va., sided with the insurers. On appeal, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit affirmed.

First, the court decided that “tangible” means that the property must have a “physical substance apparent to the senses.”

While the physical magnetic material on the hard drive is tangible property, the court wrote, that material is quite different from data, information and instructions stored on the hard drive. If a hard drive was physically scarred or scratched so it could no longer record data or instructions, then the damage would be damage to tangible property.

But if the data and information stored on the hard drive became “disordered” or the instructions came into conflict with each other, that would be damage to software. Although this may make the computer inoperable, the hardware is not damaged.

Courts in many states have ruled on this question. Cases in the 1970s and 1980s generally concluded that software is intangible property.

More recent cases shifted, treating software as tangible property. Yet there is no consensus among the jurisdictions.

How courts may define physical damage to property and apply those definitions specifically to DRM—remains to be seen.

JA RULE RULING: The legal wrangling is finally over between Steve Gottleib’s TVT Records on one side and Island Def Jam and Lyor Cohen on the other regarding recordings by Ja Rule. The U.S. Second Circuit Court of Appeals on Jan. 10 denied TVT’s petition for rehearing and for a rehearing en banc.

Last June, the appeals court reversed a $34 million judgment, which the District Court had reduced from a $132 million jury award. That left a $126,720 judgment in favor of TVT—and IDJ—for breach of contract, which the label did not appeal.

Charles Ortner with Proskauser Rose in New York is delighted with this result.

“It’s gratifying that 23 appellate judges have reaffirmed that all that TVT was entitled to was $127,000,” says Ortner, IDJ’s lead counsel in the case...
stipulation. "I'd give away the whole album if I thought everyone would hear it," Beavers says. "This is a way to get in front of people who love music."

Shurman—which has opened shows for Blues Traveler, the Jayhawks and Los Lonely Boys—sold 20,000 copies of its EP out of the back of its van before signing to Vanguard and releasing "Jubilee" last year.

Cannella says that Ones to Watch was inspired by the company's Web-based Emerging Artist of the Month program, which focuses on better-known acts that are still in the early stages of their careers. Past artists of the month have included Kanye West, Coldplay and Linkin Park. The Ones to Watch program offers much more information about the highlighted acts.

"We wanted to build a program that highlights artists before they headline our clubs and amphitheaters," Cannella says. "We've been throwing around the term internally that this is an artist incubator."

Featured artist Vonyse says that independent artists "need to get out there by any means necessary. For a company to get behind developing artists is exciting. Radio is all about pop and bumping and grinding all day long, so me, as a black female artist who is not doing straight R&B, this helps me get out there."

Her self-produced "When Sleeping Giants Wake" is being shopped for a record deal. She also took part in last year's Virgin College Mega Tour with Cake. HOB is not the first promoter/venue operator to delve into artist development.

In 2004, Clear Channel Entertainment (now Live Nation) financed the recording of an album from unsigned rock act the Killingtons and booked and promoted the act's tour dates in what was called the Artist Development Project. The program did not continue, and the Killingtons have since disbanded.

HOB's vision is different because it does not involve any money changing hands. The Killingtons had to hand over album revenue until CCE recouped its recording costs. CCE would have received a percentage of the band's earnings if it had signed to a label, and CCE paid for touring production and travel costs (Billboard, Jan. 31, 2004).

"This isn't about selling tickets and creating programming for our venues," Cannella says. "For the most part, these are artists that can't even headline our venues right now. It's not about making the risk."

Cannella would like participating artists to do a show to get down the road.

Although he wants to keep the Ones to Watch as "low-fi" as possible, Cannella says visual programming about the artists could play on HOB's closed-circuit TV systems, and ring tones of the artists' songs might make it onto the HOB Web page.

"One of the best things is we don't have expectations about this," Cannella says. "We want this to grow virally, and we want it to be about the music fan. If we can get one or two artists to take the next few steps, we'll feel good about it. A patron that is interested in listening to different types of music will ultimately come to our venues and see a show."
Rascal Flatts Riding High
Billboard’s Breakthrough Touring Act Readies New Route On Upcoming Trek

In an environment where new arena-level headliners are few and far between, Rascal Flatts is a shining light.

Rascal Flatts — Gary LeVox, Jay DeMarcus and Joe Don Rooney — cracked the year-end roundups of the top 25 tours for the first time in 2005, grossing $26.3 million and drawing 777,384 people, according to Billboard Boxscore.

Now the band is poised to do it again with its 2006 Me & My Gang tour, which launches Jan. 27 at the Mohegan Sun in Uncasville, Conn.

The tour is promoted nationally by Brian O’Connell, president of Live Nation’s country touring division. Rascal Flatts is booked by Rob Beckham at the William Morris Agency and managed by Troy Turner and Doug Nichols at Turner & Nichols.

Routing on the tour began nearly a year ago, just as Rascal Flatts was beginning to showcase the box-office muscle that led to its being named breakthrough touring act at the Billboard Touring Conference last fall.

“We knew we were going to play a few less dates than in 2005, and we wanted to spread out some of the markets, keeping a 14- to 16-month separation from the last play that we did,” Beckham says.

“Oh, obviously, we knew we were going to be able to go to larger capacities,” Beckham continues. “But we wanted to continue the same game plan of creating new markets and not being afraid to go try places we haven’t played.”

Rochester, N.Y.; Grand Rapids, Mich.; and Wichita Falls, Texas, are examples of new stops on the 2006 Rascal Flatts route. “There are a few places that are not typically on everybody’s routing,” Beckham notes. “We’re trying to play [Nielsen] SoundScan markets that we haven’t played in the top 75. And now, even a town like Wichita Falls has a 9,000-seat arena.”

**SUMMER JAM**

But the real test — and opportunity — for Rascal Flatts will be when it hits the large amphitheater trail beginning May 26 in Holmdel, N.J., on a leg that will run until the middle of September. This will be a particularly busy summer for country music touring, with such major stars as the Dixie Chicks and Tim McGraw/Faith Hill playing indoors and peripherals like Toby Keith, Kenny Chesney and Brooks & Dunn (with Sugarland this summer) playing outdoors.

“I think that Rascal Flatts will continue to not only hold their own but to go as far as the guys want to go,” O’Connell says. “Their fan base is only getting bigger.”

Rascal Flatts will again be part of Live Nation’s successful Mega Ticket promotion, where country acts’ tickets are rolled into a venue’s series ticket, with such perks as parking and the same seat for each show. Among the participating acts this year in various markets are Brooks & Dunn, Keith, Chesney and Brad Paisley.

“It’s the one thing that differentiates us from every other faction of the industry,” O’Connell says. “We’re willing to go in and work together. You have the power of four or five acts versus the power of one. This year is just slammed with [country] traffic, so to go in as a group and sell tickets is a heck of a lot more persuasive than one at a time.”

With a much-anticipated new album coming out April 4, Rascal Flatts will benefit from all the marketing, promotion and advertising tied in with launching the record and the summer seasons.

“The new single [“What Hurts the Most”] debuted with 107 adds, which tells a big story,” O’Connell says. “The [new stage] set is going to be fabulous; it’s really, really cool. The guys’ vision is to give everybody a big show, and they’ve delivered on that every single time they hit the stage.”

Travis’ Bruce Rogers designed the set.

Asked the best way for Rascal Flatts to maintain momentum, Beckham responds, “Hit songs. The fourth album will be certified quadruple-platinum any day. Every song, it’s like this is the biggest one yet, bigger than the last one. It’s pretty cool.”

O’Connell points out that the Rascal Flatts touring plan is part of a well-laid overall strategy. “This isn’t a year-plan;” he says, “We’ve always looked at Rascal Flatts as long term. The goal here is to make them a dominant touring act for as long as they want to do it.”

Blake Shelton will support on the first leg of the Me & My Gang tour, with Jason Aldean and Keith Anderson alternating on the opening slot. Gary Allan will support on the summer leg, with an opening act to be announced. Rascal Flatts will play about 80 dates this year.

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**Korn’s Live Nation Deal Likely To Be A Winner**

A glorified advance to some and a revolutionary approach to others, the Live Nation/Korn deal attracted a lot of attention when it was announced the week of Jan. 9.

In return for investing a reported $1 million, Live Nation will get 6% of the band’s box office, licensing, publishing, merchandising and CD sales (Billboard, Jan. 21). The deal includes Korn’s current album, “See You on the Other Side,” and its next set, and expands on a previous 10% stake EMI bought in the band earlier.

Additionally, in what is believed to be a first, Live Nation will kick in an undisclosed portion of parking and concessions revenue from Korn shows promoted at venues Live Nation owns that will be part of the overall pot divided among the promoter, band and EMI.

Attorney Gary Stiffelman says there are two pieces to the deal. He brokered the arrangement with his partner John Branca; the firm CEO Jeff Kwatinetz, who manages the band; and Live Nation touring COO Jason Garner.

“Live Nation has made an investment in an entity that distributes to its investors the profits from Korn’s activities,” Stiffelman says. “They have also made a deal where they are the promoter of certain shows featuring Korn. [Live Nation] is permitting that partnership entity...the opportunity to share in Live Nation’s revenues on an unprecedented basis. Whatever Korn gets, EMI and Live Nation get their respective shares.”

Neither Live Nation nor Korn refer to the deal as an advance, as some observers have. “Obviously, Live Nation has paid for their participation, not unlike buying an investment in a restaurant,” Stiffelman says. “You have a share of profits, but you pay for it.”

One aspect that keeps the deal from being a true advance is Live Nation’s piece of the action on revenue streams that promoters have long helped accelerate but never tapped into.

On the other hand, Live Nation’s willingness to kick in ancillary income from its venues flies in the face of why promoters got into the real-estate business in the first place: to own these ancillary revenue streams. It is no secret that Live Nation’s predecessor Clear Channel Entertainment lived and breathed by concessions and parking cash flow when paying huge guarantees that acts require.

The risk appears minimal for Live Nation at $3 million — the amount Live Nation promoter that reported more than $1.3 billion in grosses last year.

If Korn plays 80 dates this year, as projected, that amounts to a guarantee of $37,500 per show, plus other revenue and added value the promoter kicks in. But if the entire Korn machine explodes on all levels, which is certainly a possibility, then the upside for Live Nation could be considerable.

Ultimately, the Korn deal probably says more about an industry searching for answers than it heralds a new way of doing business. Baby acts have nothing to barter but potential, heritage acts make the lion’s share of their money off touring, and star acts are not likely to give up a percentage of their overall profits. Korn seems to be a band in the right career place at the right time.

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*On The Road*

**RAY WADDELL**

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*Photograph by Bruce Harris; courtesy Atlantic Records*
Download Services A Growth Business

If the number of digital music services planned for 2006 is any indication, the platform's pervasiveness is about to reach an all-time high.

Companies like MusicNet, Loudeye and PassAlong Networks—which provide the back-end building blocks behind most of today's digital music services—say they are working with more new partners than ever before, and all are expected to go live this year.

Last year, MusicNet brought six new music services to market, including Yahoo's Music Unlimited. This year, it will launch up to 30.

"We haven't seen anything yet," MusicNet president/CEO Alan McGlade says. "I see a lot of stories saying this is a crowded space. I don’t think it is at all. You're going to see a lot of new entrants that appeal to different audiences and affinity groups distributing music online."

Only a handful of these new services are expected to be large, music-oriented stores. They include MTV's Urge, powered by Amazon.com may be entering the game as well.

For instance, industry sources say social networking giant MySpace.com is considering PassAlong’s system—which utilizes a unique points program that allows users to earn free music by recommending its technology to support music services that do not use a PC, such as that offered by MusicGremia—a hand-held device that allows users to browse and download music via a WiFi connection.

"I see a lot of stories saying this is a crowded space. I don’t think it is at all."

—ALAN MCGLADY, MUSICNET

NEW FM RECEIVER FOR IPOD

It seems that just about every other MP3 player on the planet had an integrated FM receiver except the iPod. At its Jan. 10 annual Macworld event, Apple introduced the iPod Radio Remote—an accessory that works with new video iPods as well as the Nano.

The remote connects to the iPod’s docking station to pick up FM transmissions and plays them through the popular device. Radio station information is displayed on the iPod screen, along with song information where available. Users can save their favorite stations.

The accessory also can be used as a remote for regular iPod functions, such as skipping tracks and adjusting volume. The iPod Radio Remote, with headphones, is now available for $50.

—Antony Bruno

BOTS & BRIEFS

ECLECTIC VIDEO

Next in line for the podcasting craze—video podcasts. Non-commercial KCRW Los Angeles is upgrading its popular "Morning Becomes Eclectic" podcast of live in-studio performances with video of the sessions. Live performances by emerging acts like Kate Earl, Si'siKe and Arctic Monkeys are now available on the iTunes Music Store, AOL Music and KCRW's Web site.

THREE-WAY TIE

The digital distribution agreement between Electronic Arts and Canadian label Nettwerk Music Group yielded its first partnership with licensing and copyright management service Snocap. Music from such EA games as "The Sims," "Medal of Honor" and "Need for Speed" can now be accessed through any peer-to-peer service utilizing the Snocap system. The first such service, Mashboxx, is expected to go live later this year.

ASTRAL STREAMS

Canada's Astral Media has launched a streaming music service called radiolabb.ca. The service uses technology that aims to tailor music streams to individual listeners, based on their habits and selected tastes. The service launched with a library of 400,000 songs in various genres, and is compatible with PCs and Macs, as well as Linux-based computers.

HOT RINGTONES

The largest gain in downloads (in units and percentage) on the chart this week belongs to Bow Wow's "Fresh 20.000" which jumped 10. This week's tally of 12,000 downloads is up 30% (2,100) from last week.

WILLIAM DEFRANCE
The music, film and TV industries are starving for clarity on mobile platforms that can energize consumers. Those new platforms need dynamic content. MECCA is the meeting point—a marketplace whose currencies are information, insight and ideas.

MECCA puts you in the middle of the top minds and decision makers from the entertainment and mobile worlds. And Billboard's industry-leading editorial team cuts through the buzz and the hype to bring you the insight you need on the issues that will make or break your business.

Over-the-air music downloading has arrived. But how will the carrier pricing wars be good for you, and what will trigger adoption in music fans? Not sure if your content is best served by a carrier, or off-portal, direct-to-consumer strategies? Come and learn from the top executives in both fields. The US mobile games market is expected to triple in the next two years. Standards for mobile TV are only now being developed. Next-generation, high-speed wireless networks will be a reality for most carriers in most markets by year's end.

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The digital entertainment industry has been kind to Internet work/services provider Akamai. The Cambridge, Mass.-based company operates a "distributed network" of more than 16,000 servers worldwide that it uses to more effectively route Internet traffic to and from its clients' Web sites.

Originally used by early dotcom companies looking for faster page-loading times, Akamai struggled after most of its customers went out of business when the Internet bubble burst. But the advent of streaming multimedia and on-demand content downloading has sparked an avalanche of new business. In 2003, Apple Computer chose the system to manage the distribution of music purchased from the iTunes Music Store. Akamai now counts almost every Web-based music and video service as clients.

The company recently acquired Speedera, its closest competitor, to stand virtually unchallenged in its space, commanding more than 80% of the Web content delivery services business. The explosion of online retail and digital distribution is expected to double the company's profits by the end of the year.

Akamai president Paul Sagan was named CEO in April 2005. He sat down with Billboard to discuss the future of digital distribution and its impact on the technology and entertainment industries.

Q: You often talk about the "death of economics." Can you explain it to us?
A: There's been a fundamental shift enabled by the Internet. The supply side used to dictate the pace of innovation, the change of product life cycle, the introduction of new products, the messaging and, effectively, pricing. The power now is with the buyer. All my stores are open all the time. I can globally source whatever I want. I get price comparisons a click away. I get peer reviews and find out what others think of a product in an unfiltered way. I expect immediate inventory updates. And I can control which messaging I get.

If your inventory isn't competitive, you lose. If your price isn't competitive, you lose. If you lie to me, you lose immediately. It fundamentally makes the world much more competitive for sellers.

Q: Has the entertainment industry's attitude changed in recent years? Please explain this?
A: It has, very slowly. Too slowly. It's still playing catch-up and is much further behind than it needed to be. I still think there is too much a sense in many corners of the media world of "Can I hold this buck long enough to get through my career and make it someone else's problem?" But it's happening so fast, that unless your retirement party is between now and July 1, you're not getting there.

Q: The Internet has proved to be a double-edged sword for the music industry. On one hand, it has caused a lot of disruption, but on the other, it is also the path to its future.
A: Clearly it's an industry that's been suffering, but you can't blame all the downturn on the digital transformation or even piracy. For any industry there's this difficult crossover point, which is: Can you find the new future online, and who will profit from it before the old business is destroyed? Music is feeling that. Newspapers and certain forms of mass media are feeling it. But every industry in one degree or another is being transformed by this demand economy.

Q: Akamai has had some ups and downs. Any advice on how to stay positive during the dark years?
A: Have a fundamental vision of why you'll be successful, because of what you know your customer wants. Keep delivering that, and you'll find the future you want.

My advice to anyone in the digital media business thinking about what their digital strategy should be is this: The future is here and now, so you've got to embrace it. Understand what your customers want and figure out how to give it to them in a way that's both fair to them and profitable for you.

Q: What positive developments have you seen?
A: The pace of adoption of the new rules and change has kicked into a much higher gear. You're seeing that with the flood of video deals, for example. Not just licensing deals, but also how the whole business is monetizing content online. iTunes is a great example of this. XM is another. They've started in the business of satellite radio, but they're really in the on-demand radio business. It doesn't make sense that your subscription ended when you parked your car. So there are now mobile players and access via the Internet. It's not longer about just a little bit of marketing by putting some content on the Internet. It's about driving profitable customer relationships enabled by the Internet.

Q: How important is digital entertainment to your business today, and what is the forecast for its importance in the future?
A: Digital entertainment probably was the first category we launched our business in with our very first customers, including Apple and Yahoo. It continues to be one of the largest.

We don't report on specific sectors, but generally media and entertainment is one of the two or three most important categories for us. And because of the shift in the last year, it's one of the fastest-growing categories.

Q: What are the ongoing challenges of using the Internet as a content delivery platform?
A: Scale is a big one. We still see a lot of companies still trying to do it alone. Which is pretty funny, because in their traditional business people don't do that way. Music labels have multiple plants they use to produce massive numbers of discs. But in digital media, people try to just build their own data centers and try to reach a global audience. That just doesn't scale and is incredibly expensive.

Q: As bandwidth and hardware costs fall, won't it be easier for companies to keep their Web delivery services in-house?
A: No, because people keep trying to do more, so they have to buy more. But the bigger problem is that it doesn't make sense to centralize this, because you create single points of failure. It's why the biggest online Web properties distribute even their internal infrastructure to multiple locations...so they're close to where their users need to access content or interact with a dynamic application.

Q: You are an Emmy Award-winning TV producer now leading a high-tech firm. What similarities do you see between the entertainment and technology industries?
A: They're both filled with incredibly smart and competitive people who reinvent themselves quickly, although technology is reinvented more quickly than media. The industries truly are now becoming one and soon will become indistinguishable from each other. You're seeing Internet technology pervading these businesses and accelerating the rate of change in even the fundamental business model.
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In the pantheon of rock 'n' roll guitar gods, Chuck Berry is the father, Keith Richards is the son and Jimi Hendrix is the holy ghost.

But the frustrating part for Zakk Wylde—born in Jersey City, raised in Jackson and possessed a gift for heavy metal noise that regularly earns him the cover of any magazine with "guitar" in its title—is that the six-string inner circle rarely widens.

The most greatest-guitarist-of-all-time debates come to a dead end with Eddie Van Halens explosions in the 1980's. But if a swelling segment of fans can make their voices heard above the hard rock din, Mr. Wylde, riff by riff, is making a case for his anointment one day.

And the CD "Kings of Damnation: Era 1998-2004," released last month on Spitfire, nudges the wild-maned, leather-bound, Hercules-muscled guitarist ever closer to the rarefied realm of the guitar gods.

Along with his band, Black Label Society, Mr. Wylde best known for replacing Randy Rhoads in Ozzy Osbourne's band in 1987, demonstrates why Guitar Player magazine recently praised his "skull-crushing electric prowess." Songs like "Bleed for Me" and "Demise of Sanity," written and sung as well as fiercely played by Mr. Wylde, some critics say, display a metal mastery absence since the hay day of Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin.

In 1989, he started writing with Mr. Osbourne; the next year he was credited as a writer on the multiplatinum album "No Rest for the Wicked" (Sony). "No More Tears" (Sony, 1991) and "Ozzmosis" (Sony, 1995) followed. Then came Ozzfest, the annual millistage spectacle that, for Mr. Wylde, was also a guitar skills showcase. By 1999, his own air-guitar-slinging fan base had formed around him, and Black Label Society was born.

The band's success—six albums so far and more than a million albums sold—has not changed Mr. Wylde much, judging by the frequency with which he looks back on his formative years. It's too soon to say, but together with his credo that "you've got to play with your heart, man, instead of following trends," it may be time to make room for a new guitar god. (By Tammy La Gorce)

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**Ozzfest 2005**

Another stand out on the main stage was Black Label Society, the project of Zakk Wylde, who also is Osbourne's guitarist when the singer performs solo. BLS plays heavy Southern blues-boogie, and Wylde brought the spirit of unpredictability and danger to a decidedly innocuous event. His devil-may-care attitude and slight inebriation had him walking right off the stage to jam in the thick pit of fans; at one point, he handed off his guitar to a fan, leaving everyone cheering.

(By Mick Stingley)
Anyone who ever picked up a guitar has the same dream of the ultimate gig: Out of nowhere, his or her music idol appears and says, "You are the most incredible guitarist I have ever heard in my life. You must join my band!"

The fantasy came true for guitarist Zakk Wylde at age 19 when heavy metal godfather Ozzy Osbourne plucked the New Jersey boy from obscurity to be his new axeman.

Since that time Wylde has regularly co-written and performed on Osbourne's solo albums, several of which have gone multiplatinum, and has played hundreds of concerts with the Prince of Darkness.

While many session players and newcomers have worked with Osbourne during his solo career, such an association hasn't to acclaim for only one other guitarist besides Wylde: the late Randy Rhoads.

But for Wylde, it was just the first step in his career. He also has founded and fronted Black Label Society, whose popularity as a band and a brotherhood keeps on growing.

On Jan. 17, Wylde was inducted into Hollywood's RockWalk on Sunset Boulevard, on the site of the renowned Oriental Theater, which is now the location of Guitar Center Hollywood. With this honor, Wylde joins an illustrious group of RockWalk inductees that includes Stevie Wonder, Eddie Van Halen, Johnny Cash, Jimi Hendrix, Les Paul and Willie Dixon.

"Wylde has long been praised for his technique and style, and the RockWalk honor further confirms that he is creating a musical legacy in his own right," says Felix Sebacious, senior VP of A&R for Bravado International Group, which handles the official merchandise for Black Label Society. "Hendrix, Clapton, Jimmy Page; that's continued on >>p34

BY CHRISTA TITUS

ZAKK WYLDE
BLACK LABEL SOCIETY FOUNDER AND OZZY'S ACE SIDEMAN JOINS THE MUSICAL ELITE ON HOLLYWOOD'S ROCKWALK
Zakk Wylde earned one of the most coveted guitar jobs in the world the old-fashioned way: through practice, practice and more practice. He began studying the instrument around the age of 14. For five years, he played with friends under a variety of band names, including the Spinal Tap-inspired Stone Henge. They performed covers of classic rock songs at bars along the Jersey shore “with four people in the goddamn place,” Wylde recalls with a laugh. House parties paid the best: “There was enough kegs around, so we got free beer.”

In 1987, Osbourne needed a guitarist to replace Jake E. Lee, who joined Osbourne’s band after Rhoads died in a 1982 plane crash. A friend of Wylde’s who knew he could get a tape to Osbourne convinced him to audition, so Wylde recorded a demo on cassette to pass along. Osbourne’s wife and manager, Sharon, gave him a call. As Wylde puts it, “They flew me out to L.A., I cramped my pants and then met Ozzy, and then the rest is history.”

Wylde made the leap from bar band musician to Osbourne’s sideman without a hitch. Since then he has either co-written and/or performed on eight of Osbourne’s albums, starting with 1989’s “No Rest for the Wicked” through to 2002’s “Live at Budokan.”

Between projects with Osbourne, the guitarist started his solo career with the 1994 acoustic album “Pride and Glory,” followed by 1998’s “Book of Shadows.”

In 1998 Wylde formed Black Label Society as an outlet for a brooding brand of metal that reflects such influences as Black Sabbath and Southern rock. In seven years, the band has released eight albums. That recorded output does not include the dozens of guest appearances Wylde has made on other musicians’ albums. His steadfast work ethic, along with his talent, is how he keeps building his career.

“I would say he is probably the hardest-working artist I have ever come across,” Ringo says. “He is nonstop from the minute he gets up until the minute he goes to sleep. His guitar is never out of his hand, and he has the wisdom to realize that without compromising who he is or his music or his vision, his attitude is, ‘Whatever it takes to expand the audience and expand the music.’”

And despite the success of Black Label Society, any time that Osbourne wants to work with him, Wylde is ready and willing. “I love Ozzy to death, beyond forever. Without Ozzy, there’d be no Black Label,” Wylde says.

“When the boss calls, you know, he just goes, ‘Hey, Zakk, I wanna do this. It’s just like going home to see your folks,’” he says with a laugh. “I mean, if your dad calls you up, you go back home.”

Many things associated with Zakk Wylde, founder and frontman of Black Label Society, seem larger than life: his guitar playing; his outrageous, yet lovable personality; his crazy tales of the musician’s life. Even his merchandise sales are a bit extreme.

At a Black Label Society show at the Electric Factory in Philadelphia last fall, it was not surprising to see the crowd wearing T-shirts with the BLS logo. What was startling was that almost every person in the 3,000-capacity venue had one on.

Since Black Label Society is loosely modeled after a motorcycle club, that is reflected in the design of the band’s merchandise. The most popular pieces are black T-shirts with white lettering, a three-piece patch set of the band’s name and skull logo that can be sewn onto a jacket and a denim vest with the patches already attached.

The thousands who attend Wylde’s concerts, wanting to show their solidarity with him and the Black Label Society following, wear the colors with pride.

Blue Grape Merchandising originally began handling the band’s official product in 1998. It is now marketed by Bravado International Group, which acquired Blue Grape.

Senior VP of A&R Felix Sebaceous says Wylde is one of the five top-selling metal acts for his company (which also handles icons like Metallica and Iron Maiden) and is “probably our No. 1 online artist” in sales. He refrained from giving actual figures.

The model for sustaining sales is simple: The more Black Label Society tours, the more sales jump, with Bravado reporting increasing numbers every year since 2002.

Sebaceous observes, “He is the only artist who sells long sleeves on the Ozzfest, which we know is a summer tour. . . . He’s outselling most of the bands except for the headliner and perhaps the direct support.”

Other Black Label Society items include belt buckles, shot glasses, baseball hats and ladies’ thongs. Wylde is protective of his band’s image and is hands-on in helping design the merchandise. “Zakk knows exactly what he wants, exactly how it should be.”

Sebaceous says, “The nice thing now is we’ve been able to expand the product range, because it’s a brand, and I think that’s what it’s really come into in the last year,” he adds. “We’re getting offers for all kinds of licensing deals.”

One such deal in the works is for barware, which would put Black Label Society’s logo on items like dart boards, pool cues and bar stools. Sebaceous anticipates such product to become available this year.
CONGRATULATIONS ZAKK!

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John Howarth, the staff at Riot Entertainment Australia and Aztec Music would like to congratulate Zakk Wylde on being inducted into the Hollywood Rock Walk of Fame!

This is an honor that is extremely well deserved and we feel very proud to be associated with Zakk and in being his long term business partners in Australia!

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THE HARDEST-WORKING MAN IN METAL

A true road warrior from the hard rock old school, Zakk Wylde and Black Label Society log tens of thousands of miles annually around the globe.

Splitting his time between Black Label Society and his duties as Ozzy Osbourne's ace guitar slinger, Wylde may be the hardest-working man in metal.

According to Black Label Society manager Bob Ringe, the touring philosophy is simple. "We play everywhere," he says. "We tour probably 200-plus dates a year worldwide."

Veteran agent Troy Blakely at APA calls Wylde "one of the hardest workers I've ever seen in the music business, period, and I've been doing this about 32 years."

Blakely has booked Wylde since 2004. "We've had them on two tours and every show goes down great," he says. "Every time, I get a call back from the promoter saying how incredible the show was. Fans went crazy, and they want [the band] back right away."

Wylde's work ethic impressed Blakely early on. "He's working 24 hours a day, not just when he's onstage," Blakely says. "He's either writing material for himself or for Ozzy Osbourne, working on other projects he's involved with, designing guitars or whatever else he's doing."

On the road, Wylde and Black Label Society are rock-solid at the box office. "We did two tours in 2005," Ringe notes. "The spring tour we did 97.6% capacity, and the fall tour we headlined 3,000-plus seaters."

Support acts last year with Black Label Society included Brand New Sin and Sweden's Melodrum. In Europe, the band did 12 shows with Black Sabbath that drew huge crowds in large venues, Ringe says.

Blakely and APA began working with Wylde and his band in fall 2004, with three main mandates:

"Our approach has been to put him in the right venues for his fans to see him; tour around the Ozfest he does every year, so we don't interfere with that in any way; and work with the record company to go into the markets that they believe are the best places for [Black Label Society] to be at any particular time," Blakely says.

He adds that as a headliner, the band's bookings in most cases range from "theater plays to the largest ballroom/club type plays, and generally the ticket sales are incredibly good and they sell out in advance."

While Ozfest is a partnership with global promoter Live Nation, Wylde continued on >>p40
Zakk, you've been formally recognized as one of the select number of real musical heroes. Congratulations on being drafted to the starting team. You, sir, are indeed a rock 'n' roll all-star.

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and Black Label Society are not locked in with any particular talent buyer. "It's the same approach for the promoters in the market as we have in the venues," Blakely says. "You go with the promoter that's best for the artist, that knows the artist and knows how to best get to the artist's fans."

One of those promoters is Mark Shulman, Northeast talent VP for AEG Live, who booked Black Label Society as one of the first acts to play the new Nokia Theatre at Times Square in New York.

"They draw a hard-rocking, hard-partying crowd dedicated to music that mainstream radio no longer provides," Shulman says. "Zakk is a compelling stage performer, and through his live performances, he gives his crowd exactly what they are looking for: a hands-down great show. His fan base is rabid, and you can always be assured that if BLS are in town, they are coming."

Blakely agrees that the fan base is loyal. "That's one of the things I noticed a couple of years ago when I had Judas Priest on Ozzfest," he says. "I saw this fan base that Zakk has. There are chapters in each city that are very, very loyal fans, that come out for Zakk and bring other people and spread the word about what Zakk and Black Label Society are up to. I've never seen anything quite like that before."

For her part, Jane Holman, the VP of touring who spearheads Live Nation's efforts on Ozzfest, is also a big believer in Wyld e.

"We love working with Zakk," Holman says. "He's a great guy, he relates to the fans, and he absolutely rocks onstage. He even gets a jaded ol' road dog like me up to the side of the stage to marvel at his energy and style."

Blakely says Black Label Society is a strong draw from coast to coast. "From what we've found through the touring that we did in early 2005 and then headlining again in late 2005, anywhere in the country is strong for Zakk Wyld e and Black Label Society," he says. "There is no weakness; we found that right across the board."

"They draw a hard-rocking, hard-partying crowd dedicated to music that mainstream radio no longer provides."

—MARK SHULMAN, AEG LIVE

That said, metal music in general requires strategic promotion and booking, given the limited exposure hard rock bands get outside of touring.

"With the state of radio nowadays, you can't rely on that airplay," Blakely says. "That's why you have to pick the correct promoter and the correct venue to work with. There are a lot of alternative ways to get to the fans that are out there, but you have to know how to get to them."

Similarly, packaging the right bands together is crucial, as Ozzfest has demonstrated. With Black Label Society, "you want to not only have something that's complementary [musically], but something that the fans would enjoy," Blakely notes. "And if it's somebody they don't know, then maybe you're introducing them to their next favorite band."

This year Black Label Society will tour overseas for most of the spring and early summer. The band is booked in Europe by Nigel Kerr at APS and in South America by Bill Monot at Paradise Artists.

"For the first time this year we're going to South America, for 16 headlining shows in 3,000-capacity-plus venues," Ringe says. "We're going to Australia for the first time this year—eight shows in May. 3,000-capacity plus. And we're doing a headlining European tour from May 23 until the first of July."

Wyld e and Black Label Society will return to work Ozzfest again this summer, "then in the fall he'll be out in North America again," Blakely says. "We don't know how we're going to do it yet or who we're going to be out with, but that's the plan, we're going to be back here in the fall headlining."

And Blakely is one who believes there are plenty of new chapters left in the Wyld e saga. "I don't think we've even scratched the surface of what Zakk can do yet," he says. "There are a lot of things that are going to come out of Zakk Wyld e that people won't even expect over the next few years."
CONGRATULATIONS ZAKK
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Billboard's Money Makers chart brings together Nielsen Music data and our Boxscore numbers to create a master top 20 chart of acts that generated the most income during 2005. The list includes album and digital sales as well as accumulated box-office receipts. These artists are at the top of their game and range from legacy acts to pop stars to hip-hop phenomenons. We compiled this list because success in today's music world can no longer just be measured by album sales alone. Here's to the winners.

Tamara Countis and Geoff Mayfield

1. U2: $255,022,633.35
U2 has become one of the most powerful touring and recording acts in the world. The success of its album “How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb” continued to build in 2005, and its Vertigo tour burst box-office records across the world, thanks to the top 10 modern rock single “All Because of You.” The group also pursued a variety of social agendas via a performance at Live 8 and guitarist the Edge’s work with Music Rising, which will provide new instruments for musicians affected by Hurricane Katrina.

2. The Rolling Stones: $152,355,754.40
The Rolling Stones never stop. And they never cease to amaze legions of concertgoers who are willing to pay whatever price to catch a glimpse of them in action. “A Big Bang” was the Rolling Stones’ most critically acclaimed album in years, debuting at No. 3 on the Billboard 200. Keith Richards and Mick Jagger wrote together tirelessly and found their old spark on the new album, produced by Don Was. “A Big Bang” also received a Grammy Award nomination for best rock album.

3. Kenny Chesney: $87,731,463.50
Kenny Chesney released two platinum albums in 2005, but garnered more headlines for his quickie marriage and annulment to actress Renee Zellweger. Early in the year, the BNA Records artist released what the label described as his acoustic singer/songwriter album, “Be As You Are: Songs From an Old Blue Chair.” Despite the fact that no singles from the project were worked to radio, it spent four weeks at No. 1 on Billboard’s Top Country Albums chart. Nine months later, Chesney was back with “The Road and the Radio,” which spent two weeks at No. 1. He also Notched top 10 singles in 2005, including the No. 1 hit “Anything But Mine.”

4. Paul McCartney: $84,263,375.10
While posting his usual gargantuan tour grosses at the box office, Paul McCartney also managed to release arguably his best studio album in more than 20 years. Produced by Nigel Godrich (Radiohead, Beck), “Chaos and Creation in the Backyard” found the ex-Beatle returning to the one-man-band roots of his earliest solo efforts, resulting in a Grammy nomination for album of the year. The project was exemplified by the irresistible single “Fine Line,” which appeared in TV commercials for Lexus. Unhinged performance of “Helter Skelter” was also a highlight of Live 8.

5. Elton John: $77,150,061.65
Albums, Broadway, tours, TV, management—you name it. Elton John can do it. His Las Vegas residency at the Colosseum at Caesars Palace has been a huge success. He released “Elton’s Christmas Party” exclusively through Starbucks this past fall to great acclaim. He sold Twenty-First Artists, his London-based management company (whose roster includes James Blunt), to the Sanctuary Group in April 2005 for $30.1 million. John and Bernie Taupin are writing a sequel to “Captain Fantastic and the Brown Dirt Cowboy,” and he also has a development deal with Touchstone Television for a series about a rock star and his manager.

6. Celine Dion: $76,137,905.65
Celine Dion invented a brilliant live-performance model she does not have to tour, thanks to her Las Vegas residency. “A New Day…” celebrated its second anniversary at the Colosseum at Caesars Palace—the show has been sold out since day one. Additionally, she released a two-disc French greatest-hits collection, “On Ne Change Pas.” Ever a brand marketer, she launched new fragrance. Belong. She also offered a special Mother’s Day performance of “A New Day…” that raised more than $1 million for UNICEF’s Tsunami Recovery Fund.

7. 50 Cent: $75,351,548.85
50 Cent is a triple threat with his albums, movies and tours. “The Massacre” was the second-highest-selling album last year, fueled by the singles “Disco Inferno” and “Candy Shop” plus his pairings on the Cars’ records and his “ Hate It or Love It.” He made his feature film debut in “Get Rich or Die Tryin’ ” and hit the road with the Anger Management 3 tour. Always looking to extend his reach, 50 Cent inked a production deal between his G-Unit label and Lily Lon and announced an upcoming series of hip-hop novels in association with MTV/Pocket Books.

8. Green Day: $71,753,415.60
Green Day’s “American Idiot” was the top-selling album for Warner Bros. in 2005 and was No. 3 on Billboard’s year-end list of the Top Billboard 200 Albums. The group also picked up six Billboard Music Awards, and its American Idiot tour grossed $36.5 million from 76 shows, according to Billboard Boxscore. The outing landed at No. 10 in the year-end ranking of top tours. And Green Day’s hit song “Boulevard of Broken Dreams” is nominated for the record of the year Grammy.

Neil Diamond is a fan magnet for all ages. He sells out his arena tours and keeps ticket prices affordable. In 2005, he released one of his most critically acclaimed albums, “12 Songs,” which Rick Rubin produced. The album completely revitalized him as a recording artist and introduced him to a younger audience.

10. The Eagles: $67,524,283.25
The Eagles sometimes threaten to stop touring, but their fans know it is not true. In fact, the band redified the value of the concert experience for elite acts. The Eagles’ most recent release, the DVD “Farewell I: Live From Melbourne,” held the No. 1 position atop the Billboard DVD chart. “No More Cloudy Days,” a track pulled from the DVD, received AC airplay, remaining on Billboard’s AC chart for more than half a year. Additionally, the group’s summer TV special won its time slot among the 18-49 demographic.

11. Dave Matthews Band: $59,557,479.25
Dave Matthews Band is one of the most successful acts to break out in the 1990s. The Band’s 2005 studio album, “Stand Up,” shot straight to No. 1 on the Billboard 200 and has since sold 1.3 million copies. The single “American Baby” got as high as No. 16 on the Billboard Hot 100 and No. 8 on the Adult Top 40 chart. DMB also continues to sell out major arenas.

12. Rod Stewart: $58,454,500.85
Rod Stewart’s comeback has no end. The rock-star-turned-crooner reclaimed the spotlight under the guidance of music impresario Clive Davis. In 2005, Stewart put out the fourth edition of his Great American Songbook series. The album, “Thanks for the Memory... The Great American Songbook, Vol. IV,” debuted at No. 2 on the Billboard 200. A boxed set was then released containing all four albums. Next, he plans to record an album of Motown tunes. His tours attract audiences of all ages.

13. Toby Keith: $53,033,288.35
Toby Keith has a huge year in 2005, splitting with DreamWorks Records to launch his own label, Show Dog Nashville, and signing his first film deal with Paramount Pictures. On the charts, Keith released his last DreamWorks album, “Honkytonk University,” which spent seven weeks at No. 1 on Billboard’s Top Country Albums list. The album spawned the hit singles “Honkytonk U” and “Big Blue Note,” as well as “As Good As I Once Was,” which spent six weeks at No. 1 on Top Country Songs.

14. Coldplay: $51,705,725.25
Although it divided critics, Coldplay’s third album, “X&Y,” was an immediate smash around the world and spawned three hits: “Speed of Sound,” “Fix You” and “Talk.” The group’s newfound level of commercial success in the United States was borne out by headlining slots at the Coachella and Austin City Limits festivals; its fall North American tour, Twisted Logic, generated the band’s biggest box-office numbers to date.

15. Rascal Flatts: $46,819,102.65
2005 was quite a year for country upstarts Rascal Flatts. The trio entered the upper echelon of live country performers, earning it the breakthrough touring act of 2005 accolade at the Billboard Roadwork ‘05 Touring Awards—the act grossed $26 million from 83 dates. Rascal Flatts recently received its first Grammy nomination for “Bless the Broken Road,” which made a showing in the best country vocal performance for duo or group category. The song reached No. 1 on Billboard’s Top Country Songs chart.

16. Mariah Carey: $46,388,646.80
Mariah Carey came back in 2005 with a vengeance. With nearly 5 million copies sold in the United States, “The Emancipation of Mimi” was the top-selling album of the year. (It sold 8 million worldwide.) “Don’t Forget About Us” became her 17th song to top The Billboard Hot 100, tying Carey with Elvis Presley for the most No. 1s on the chart. At the 2005 Billboard Music Awards, she took home five trophies, including Hot 100 song of the year for “We Belong Together.” Her eight Grammy nominations have made her a contender in the album and record of the year categories.

17. Jimmy Buffett: $43,239,800.45
Jimmy Buffett is not just an artist; he is a way of life. On the touring side he can sell out as many venues as he chooses to play. In 2005, he was a top 10 touring artist with grosses that exceeded $41 million. Fans Godzillaed his sixth “official” bootleg, the double-CD set “Live at Fenway Park,” which also contained a DVD.

18. Kelly Clarkson: $29,306,713.05
Kelly Clarkson has become a banner artist outside of her “American Idol” roots, as was proven by the success of her Breakaway tour. She was No. 1 on 11 Billboard year-end charts, including Hot 100 Artists Female and Pop 100 Songs. She also received two Grammy nominations, for best female pop vocal (“Since U Been Gone”) and best pop vocal album (“Breakaway”).

19. Gwen Stefani: $38,963,515.75
Gwen Stefani proved that she has as much headlining power as a solo artist as she does with her group No Doubt. Her smash single “ Hollaback Girl” became the first song in the digital era to sell more than 1 million downloads. At the 2005 Billboard Music Awards, she won the digital song (“Hollaback Girl”) and new artist of the year trophies. Additionally, she received five Grammy nominations, including for album (“Love. Angel. Music. Baby.”) and record of the year (“Hollaback Girl”).

20. Bruce Springsteen: $38,951,568.30
Without question, Bruce Springsteen is one of the all-time greats. As a performer, he can shift seamlessly from arena-level tours with the E Street Band to an intimate solo theater tour like he did in support of his latest studio album, “Devils & Dust.” The Columbia Records release debuted at No. 1 on The Billboard 200. In the meantime, Springsteen reportedly re-signed with the label for $50 million.

The Money Makers list was orchestrated by Billboard Research manager Gordon Murray. It utilizes proprietary data provided by Nielsen Music, as well as Boxscore data compiled by Billboard Information Group chart manager Bob Allen.

This table calculates aggregate album and digital sales for the 11-month window that stretched from the first Nielsen SoundScan sales week of 2005, which ended Jan. 9, through the week that ended Dec. 4, and marries that data with accumulated box-office receipts that reflect the same tracking period.

Album sales data are not just for an act's current titles, but for all titles—including catalog—tracked during the first 11 months of 2005. Digital data, likewise, includes all tracks available via paid downloads. The album units for each artist are multiplied by $9.70, a blended wholesale price for front-line CDs and catalog, although Billboard acknowledges that albums, particularly catalog fare or new sets by developing artists, are sold at varying price points. Album totals include not only CD sales, but also those sold in other physical configurations or through digital distribution.

Digital track sales for each act are multiplied by $0.70, which assumes the commonly charged price point of $0.99, less the merchant's margin.

In line with the manner by which Money Makers calculates the value of album and digital track sales, our treatment of Boxscore data gives each artist credit for 85% of the total ring in ticket sales. This is based on the industry-standard assumption that 15% of ticket sales goes to promoters and venues, although Billboard acknowledges that longstanding headliners with track records command better terms than younger artists can realize.

The rank listed under each component column shows where each artist stands in that particular category. Money Makers leader U2, for example, ranked 27th in album sales, ninth in digital sales and No. 1 at the box office. In cases where an act stood lower than No. 100 in any of those tracked categories, no rank is posted, yet values for such categories were still utilized in this chart's calculation.

Similarly, no box-office rank is listed for Mariah Carey, who did not perform any U.S. concerts during 2005. In this case, we note that the category is not applicable to her overall standing.

For point of reference, we have also included a column that shows how artists fared in terms of radio play, utilizing Nielsen BDS tracking from all stations of all formats—including those that do not belong to Billboard or Billboard Radio Monitor chart panels—for the same 11-month window.

However, since artists are not compensated for radio play, and because there is no industry standard that can be applied to the performance rights that publishers and writers receive for radio airplay, we have not assigned a monetary value to the Nielsen BDS detections. Thus, radio play does not have any bearing on Money Makers' standings.

Note that for the purposes of this chart, 50 Cent and Eminem, who co-headlined the Anger Management tour, each receive 100% of the value for that tour's ticket sales.

Similarly, Paul McCartney's album sales category and Nielsen BDS-tracked radio standing reflect not only the performance of his solo recordings, but also for albums and songs by the Beatles and Wings. Without credit for the 1.3 million units that the Beatles sold during this 11-month period, McCartney's album rank would be lower than No. 100. Such an adjustment would move him from No. 4 to No. 7 on Money Makers.

Nielsen SoundScan's sales were totaled under the supervision of Chris Muratore, director of retail relations and research services for Nielsen Entertainment, while Nielsen Music senior VP/GM of East Coast operations Nancy Wagner oversaw the compilation of the BDS detections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Money Makers</th>
<th>Value Totals</th>
<th>Album Sales Rank</th>
<th>Digital Tracks Rank</th>
<th>Boxscore Rank</th>
<th>BDS Rank</th>
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<tr>
<td>U2</td>
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<td>27</td>
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<td>The Rolling Stones</td>
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<td>Kelly Clarkson</td>
<td>$39,306,713.85</td>
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<td>Gwen Stefani</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bruce Springsteen</td>
<td>$38,951,658.30</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>15</td>
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Digital downloading has begun transforming the classical music marketplace.

From new faces to household names, artists across the classical spectrum are enjoying a growing percentage of album sales courtesy of digital retailing. And it is happening faster than even the most optimistic marketers could have expected.

The numbers are stunning. Digital downloads are responsible for 19.7% of total U.S. sales for violinist Hilary Hahn's recent album of Mozart sonatas, according to Nielsen SoundScan. For Yo-Yo Ma's "Silk Road Journeys: When Strangers Meet," downloads make up 10.7% of sales.

Such successes are not limited to mainstream repertoire or the major labels. Downloads account for 16.8% of sales for pianist Christopher O'Riley's second disc of Radiohead transcriptions, "Hold Me To This," released on Harmonia Mundi's World Village imprint.

And then there is new artist Janine Jansen. Downloads have amounted to 73% of sales of the violinist's album of Vivaldi's "The Four Seasons."

While U.S. classical album sales were down 15% in 2005 compared with 2004, digital downloads of classical albums grew 93.9% for the year. That figure lags behind the overall digital albums market, which grew by 194% in 2005, but it still indicates a shifting climate.

Classical labels increasingly see digital sales as an effective remedy for the genre's woes, including shrinking retail space, aging consumers and slowing moving deep catalog. Digital retailers also are proving to be important partners in setting up key projects and launching new artists.

"There's a vast amount of classical repertoire and recordings, not to mention a number of different varieties of consumer interest, and it's still tough to try to pack all of that into a traditional store," says Jonathan Gruber, VP of new media for classics and jazz at Universal Music Group International.

The digital realm can overcome space limitations and at the same time transform the shopping experience, Gruber says. "You can experience music far more fully and immediately than you can at retail today," he notes. "And if you want to sample just a taste of a particular interpretation of a piece, you can do that for just 99 cents."

Apple VP of applications Eddy Cue applauds the digital efforts of Gruber's team, citing Jansen as a notable success story. Her album, released Oct. 11, 2005, on Universal Classics' Decca label, was promoted heavily on iTunes.

Promotional elements included a banner and mini-shot of the album on iTunes' main page. The artist also was featured in the iTunes classical newsletter the second week her album was available. In addition, Universal offered an exclusive track to iTunes customers and a PDF download of the album's booklet.

Thanks to such efforts, the album quickly reached No. 15 on iTunes' overall album chart and peaked at No. 3 in its second week on Billboard's Top Classical Albums list.

Similarly, Hahn's digital success is in many ways attributable to prominent placement on iTunes that reached beyond the traditional classical consumer base. Promotional highlights for Hahn included a banner on iTunes' main page, a module in the site's general newsletter and a blur in its classical newsletter.

And as with Jansen, the exclusive material that Universal Classics offered iTunes consumer undoubtedly revved up sales as well. These elements included interview tracks with Hahn and a PDF version of the CD booklet.

Cue also cites strong iTunes business for pianist Helene Grimaud. Always more of a connoisseur's pianist than a household name, Grimaud's album "Credo" was Universal Classics' first title on iTunes. The recording includes works by Beethoven, John Corigliano and Arvo Part.

"Credo" immediately cracked iTunes' overall top 10 upon its January 2004 release, during the album's first commercial week, 58% of its sales were digital. While these sales patterns are impressive, they apply only to a minority of classical releases, and all involved are quick to say that digital retailing presents its own set of challenges.

"Digital business means a theoretically infinite amount of stock space, but there's a downside to that limitless space," Gruber says. "You have to be able to find the stuff you're looking for."

To court consumers, placement programs are crucial. "We've been very forward in working with the digital retailers to place our titles on the main page at iTunes and other outlets," Gruber says.

Digital stores can also help consumers navigate the often daunting classical world through sampling and search capabilities. The user interface at eMusic is particularly classical-friendly, with search fields for composers, conductors, soloists, ensembles and specific works.

The ability to browse online has created interesting opportunities for shoppers to exercise their musical adventurism.

At iTunes, it is an easy leap among genres for some classical customers—many of whom would probably never venture into the classical section of a...
traditional retail store. For example, some who have snapped up Deutsche Grammophon's recent recording of Osvaldo Golijov's genre-bending song cycle Ayre are also purchasing tracks by such diverse acts as Alice in Chains, Amadou & Mariam, LeAnn Rimes and 2Pac, not to mention music from jazz legends like Stan Kenton and Anita O'Day.

"Certainly, that kind of browsing is something that we've tried to encourage from the beginning, in the way the site has been built," Cue says. "Great music can and should reach an extremely broad audience," Universal's Gruber says. "When you walk into a retail store, you're blown away; it can be very intimidating to a newcomer. What the digital medium allows us to do is to focus attention on recordings, artists and composers whom we think will appeal to a lot of people, and break through a lot of the barriers that exist in the physical retail world."

Other labels are depending on their brand identity to set them apart in the digital realm. Such is the case with Naxos, known for its budget-friendly recordings of everything from classical standards to groundbreaking projects like the massive Milken Archive of American Jewish Music series and the label's own commissioning of new music from composer Peter Maxwell Davies.

"The strength of the Naxos brand is something that consumers actively seek out, whether it's a wall of our covers at traditional retail or online," Naxos of North America CEO Jim Sturgeon says. He says making content available digitally provides unique A&R opportunities, particularly for special-interest titles that do not warrant print runs and inventory stock. "That's a plus for a label like Naxos," Sturgeon observes. "For example, via digital service providers we're offering about 1,200 titles that are otherwise out of print."

Digital sales are growing rapidly for Naxos. "Within the first 10 months of 2005 about 13% of our revenue came from various digital service providers," Sturgeon says.

In October, Naxos forged a major initiative with eMusic under which the site is making 75,000 of the label's tracks available for download. With that deal in hand, Sturgeon expects digital to account for as much as 14% of the label's total revenue. The spread of titles selling well for Naxos via eMusic gives a glimpse at the varied consumers digital music attracts.

During October-November 2005, Naxos' top five albums at eMusic included titles from the label's A-Z series, which introduces consumers to classical music, as well as Beethoven's even-

popular Symphonies Nos. 5 and 6.

But also among the top sellers were two albums conducted by Marin Alsop featuring music by contemporary American composers John Adams and Philip Glass. (The Glass disc was actually the top earner for Naxos at eMusic.)

Clearly, some shoppers are gravitating toward old favorites and classical music for newbies, while others are seeking more adventurous kinds of music.

Naxos subscribes to the "long tail" theory of Internet distribution, which says that low-selling titles cumulatively can result in a substantial market. "Between 30%-40% of our current [digital] sales are coming from albums that are being downloaded only once or a few times a month," says Junko Gardenour, Naxos' business development manager for digital services.

Despite these early success stories, some classical labels have yet to enter agreements for digital downloads, believing that such matters as audio quality outweigh the sales benefits.

"The compression of sound files brings an inevitable degradation in sound quality," argues cellist David Finckel, who with his wife, pianist Wu Han, founded and runs the independ-
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YELLOWCARD’S NEW ‘SOUNDS’

LOS ANGELES—Rock quintet Yellowcard bursts its pop bubble on its sophomore album, “Lights and Sounds.”

The 14 tracks on the Capitol Records release are crafted with chord progressions and lyrics that reflect a more mature sound and viewpoint than the group expressed on its pop-oriented major-label debut, 2003’s “Ocean Avenue.”

“We really wanted to shed the pop/punk label that came along with the last album,” lead singer/guitarist Ryan Key says of the Jan. 24 release. He and bassist/keyboards Pete Mosely “moved to New York in the middle of winter after 20 months of touring to write the music and really hone in on what we wanted to say.”

Despite the decision to shake up its sound, it is not as if the band’s previous effort was not successful. “Ocean Avenue” sold 1.7 million units, according to Nielsen SoundScan, and peaked at No. 23 on The Billboard 200.

The album spawned two modern rock hits, the title track and “Only One,” both of which were also hits at mainstream top 40. Key says that a desire to develop the band’s sound permeated the entire writing process, which later included bandmates Sean Mackin (violin), Longineu Parsons III (drums) and Ryan Mendez (guitar). Mackin arranged much of the album, which features numerous string backgrounds.

“On this album, we took the opportunity to show people that hey, we like to make real music,” Key adds. “We’re...continued on >>p48

FACT FILE

Label: Capitol
Management: Deborah Klein and Arthur Spivak, the Firm
Booking: Corrie Christopher, the Agency Group
Publishing: BMG Songs (ASCAP)
Best-selling album: “Ocean Avenue” (2003): 1.7 million

LATEST BUZZ

>>>BYE, SUGAR
Kristen Hall, one-third of Mercury Records group Sugarland, has quit the band. A brief statement from members Jennifer Nettles and Kristian Bush, posted Jan. 17 on the group’s Web site, says that “Kristen has decided that she wants to stay home and write songs, and we support her in that decision.” Sugarland’s platinum-certified 2004 debut album, “Twice the Speed of Life,” has sold 1.6 million units, according to Nielsen SoundScan, and has generated three top 10 country singles.
—Phyllis Stark

>>>LIVE AT THE GRAMMYS
Top Grammy Award nominees Mariah Carey, John Legend and Kanye West will perform on the 48th annual Grammy Awards telecast, which will air live Feb. 8 on CBS from the Staples Center in Los Angeles. Each of those three artists received eight nominations.
—Melinda Newman

>>>JASPER’ REDUX
MCA Nashville will reissue Trisha Yearwood’s current album, “Jasper County,” Feb. 7 with the addition of a Yearwood/Garth Brooks duet. The song, “Love Will Always Win,” was recently sent to country radio as a single. The gold-certified “Jasper County,” released last fall, spent two weeks at No. 1 on Billboard’s Top Country Albums chart. The duet will also appear on “Garth Brooks: The Lost Sessions,” set to go on sale Feb. 7 exclusively at Wal-Mart, Sam’s Club and walmart.com. The “Lost Sessions” CD was included in last year’s boxed set “Garth Brooks: The Limited Series,” but when it goes on sale as a single piece it will include six previously unreleased songs, for a total of 17 tracks. The duet will be promoted by MCA Nashville and Lyric Street Records, which Wal-Mart retained to work Brooks’ new music to radio. Brooks and Yearwood were married in December. —Phyllis Stark
MELINDA NEWMAN mnewman@billboard.com

Toyota Wants Its MPG

It does not even faze me anymore when I received songs from my youth are now used to promise me that if I buy a Cadillac I will get as much as Robert Plant (as if!), or if I use Fidelity for my investments. I, too, can be as rich as Paul McCartney. I compare it to living beneath a flight pattern. At first you notice, with irritation, every plane soaring overhead, but soon you do not even hear the rattling of the windows anymore or the dull roar.

However, there is one case that still stops me dead in my tracks and makes me whip my head toward the TV like a dog whose leash has just been severely yanked: when the lyrics are rewritten to suit the product. Such an instance usually reeks of sellout or someone who is in desperate need of money. So it happened a few days ago when the ethereal, ghostly refrain "I want my MTV" floated out of the TV transformed into "I Want My MPG," followed by the instantly recognizable guitar riff that opens Dire Straits' "Money for Nothing." The commercial touts Toyota's fuel-efficient vehicles, including its environmentally friendly Hybrid brands.

Dire Straits leader Mark Knopfler is far from a sell-out, and surely he does not need the money, so why, Mark, why? It turns out he liked the message. "Mark is a fan of Toyota vehicles, and he thought the campaign, which was based around [Toyota's] superior fuel economy, was a message to help explore lyrically something.

MARK KNOPFLER allowed Toyota to rewrite a lyric from his '80s hit 'Money for Nothing' for a car ad.

BeatBox
KERRI MASON kmason@billboard.com

Misstress Barbara’s Fresh Beats
Montreal DJ Goes Beyond Techno On Koch Release ‘Come With Me’

Misstress Barbara means business. You can see it in the power suit and spike heels she dons on the cover of “Come With Me...” (Koch), her first domestically released mix CD in four years. And you can hear it in the music in the Feb. 7 release; there is a deliberate change from the driving techno to which DJ-producer was so dedicated for the better part of her 10-year career.

"Techno is the style that made me well-known all over the world, and I don't mean to drop techno in any way," the Italy-born Montreal resident says. "On the CD, there are some kinds of music that people would never expect me to play before. Although in my sets in the last year, I've been playing quite minimal, quite electro-y, quite old school as well. I pull out a lot of acid house. The story of Barbara's genre shift is a familiar one in dance music today. Except for a few local markets where bangin' beats still rule, international dance floors are increasingly leaning toward less frenzied grooves. The DJ admits that when techno was her stated genre, bookings—particularly in the United States—had gotten scarce.

"There's just not enough techno," Barbara says. "Before, when you'd go record shopping every week, there were 50, 60 new techno releases. Now it's two or three. All my colleagues who made techno—Adam Beyer, Marco Coroia—they don't even do it anymore. They do like me: more minimal, different stuff." In the name of evolution—

and survival in dance's changing landscape—"Come With Me..." is an energetic hodgepodge of mixed post-techno emotions. Barbara blends two tracks from electro flavor-of-the-year Trentemøller; two of her own new, more muted offerings; and even an acid classic from 1993 (Lemon 8's "Model 81"). The disc still has punch, but it is a fair distance from the 24-track blitzkrieg of 2000's "Relentless Beats" (Moonshine).

"Perhaps I'm getting older; perhaps like everything we evolve," Barbara says. "You do something, you do it well and then you change. I have no more challenge with techno. I can play eyes-closed on three decks, and it's easy and it's fun. I just like to explore other fields. And thank God, because after 10 years if I was at the same place I wouldn't be a very interesting artist, or person."

LIVE AND ON DVD: We knew it when they were announcing it. With this release, it was apparent. Now, Sasha & Digweed's groundbreaking 2002 arena tour has been documented on DVD. "Sasha & John Digweed Present Delta Heavy" (System) documents the duo's historic 31-date trip across America, the first time a bill of straight-up DJ talent was booked unembellished in such large venues. Promoted by Clear Channel and produced by Warped tour creator Kevin Lyman, Delta Heavy was attended by more than 85,000 people during its six weeks.

The documentary, produced and directed by dance music heavyweight Ben Turner,
the recent Knopfler/Dire Straits greatest-hits package, "Private Investigations: The Best of Dire Straits & Mark Knopfler," which meant "additional music presence" during the push of the new release. Knopfler, of course, approved the lyric change. The guitar intro is taken from the master recording. Knopfler's U.S. publisher, Almo Irving/ Rondor/Universal, was heavily involved in the deal. The ad is expected to run for a year only in the United States. Knopfler is no stranger to licensing his music for commercial usage: "Going Home" was used in a Shell commercial, while ESPN licensed "Walk of Life." However, this marks the first time his lyrics have been changed.

While Crockford would not disclose how much Toyota paid Knopfler, he adds that the sum was "not as much as you might think."

LIFETIME: David Bowie, Cream, Merle Haggard, Robert Johnson, Jesse Norman, Richard Pryor and the Weavers are the recipients of the Recording Academy's 2006 Lifetime Achievement Award. The beneficiaries are awarded for their lifelong artistic contributions to the recording world. Additionally, Island Records founder Chris Blackwell, engineer Al Schmitt and producer Owen Bradley will receive the Trustees Award, presented for nonperforming contributions. Tom Dowd and Bell Labs/ Western Electric will receive Technical Grammy Awards. The special

IN THEIR MEMORY: A fund created in the memory of House of Freaks' Bryan Harvey and his family has been established in their hometown of Richmond, Va. Harvey, his wife and two children were murdered in their house on New Year's Day and the home set ablaze. Following House of Freaks, Harvey had also performed with Steve Wynn in Gutterball.

The Bryan and Kathryn Harvey Family Memorial Endowment fund will provide music, visual art and performing arts enrichment to the Richmond area, including educational scholarships.

Despite being a veteran record promoter with a winning track record, Skip Bishop was largely unknown to the country music industry when he joined Arista Nashville as VP of national promotion last October.

His background included a stint as senior VP of promotion at MCA Records in Los Angeles and 10 years with RCA Records in New York, where he rose through the ranks from regional promoter to VP to interim senior VP. Just prior to joining Arista Nashville, Bishop briefly worked at Christian music company Provident Label Group, where he was VP of mainstream promotion and marketing. Before that, he spent eight years as CEO of independent radio promotion firm Bishop Bait & Tackle.

But Bishop insists his career history "isn't as all over the place as it appears. They're all music gigs," he points out. "I've always been on the front line in the army of God's universal language."

Thus, when asked what skills he brings to Arista, Bishop says, "The best thing I can bring is my unwavering love for music. I've believed for years that if you've come here to make money, go sell shoes or trade on Wall Street. Come with us to create, grow and believe in music. If we do it well, tons of money will be a by-product."

With his long background in pop promotion, Bishop immediately noticed some key differences in the country world. People who work in country music, he says, "are who they are. No pretense. Good, solid people who love their jobs and respect the folks who are sailing in the same boat.

"There is a beautiful sense of community in the country world," Bishop continues. "Radio has loyalty to the artists. Artists have real friends at radio, people pick up the phone and call each other and people return those calls."

"It's really [a] much more sane, more productive world," he adds. "Radio promotion is very focused around access to the artist and support for current singles. It's a very yin and yang, very 'please and thank you' environment. I was flooded when I arrived and was flooded with 'Welcome to the format' calls from radio, artists and managers. It's a tight group."

Given his promotion style, Bishop is fitting right in with that group. Asked what the craziest thing he has ever done for an add, Bishop says, "I've never encouraged weird and crazy promotion and have never done it myself. I always cringe to see a promo person put on a humpy suit and hop around a radio station lobby. Dignity wears well in this biz."

At Arista, Bishop says he has challenged his staff to "rewrite the promotion guidebook. We are all on the eve of a critical evolution," he says. "Our goal is to protect the Arista legacy through the most creative, cutting-edge ideas conceivable."

ON THE ROW: Independent label Category 5 Records has launched in Nashville under the ownership of Raymond Termini. A musician/ songwriter, Termini is also president/CEO of Middletown, Conn.-based Haven Healthcare, which operates nursing homes throughout New England.

The label's first signing is singer/songwriter Craig Hand of St. Augustine, Fla. Hand and his debut single, "Direct Connect," will be introduced during next month's Country Radio Seminar in Nashville.

Also expected to sign with the label is Travis Tritt, who notched 20 top singles on Billboard's Hot Country Songs chart while on Warner Bros. and Sony Nashville.

On her first U.S. mix album in four years, MISTRESS BARBARA moves beyond the techno on which she built her reputation in favor of 'more minimal, more different stuff.'

Former Critique Records president Carl Stroble has been hired as Category 5's senior VP/GM. He will divide his time between Connecticut and Nashville. Songwriter John Northrup joins as VP of operations and will also head the label's publishing division. Northrup previously ran management and radio promotions firm Northrup Entertainment Group, which has been acquired by Category 5 and will remain in operation.

A distribution partner has not been announced for the label. In keeping with the label's name, a portion of its proceeds will be donated to hurricane relief funds.
Music
6 QUESTIONS
with TOM CALDERONE
by MICHAEL PAOLETTA

As VH1’s GM, Tom Calderone oversaw the music channel and its offshoots, including vh1.com, Vspot, VH1 Classic and VH1 Soul.

Last May, Calderone, who started with VH1 parent MTV Networks in 1998, moved to VH1 from MTV and MTV2, where he was executive VP of music programming and talent.

This May, VH1, which is available in nearly 90 million households, will unveil “Rock Honors,” a companion of sorts to its popular “Hip-Hop Honors.”

Q: How did “Rock Honors” come about?

A: We started talking about it in the fall. Rock does well for us. We can honor huge rock stars that haven’t been honored by the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, as well as cultural movements in rock. I wanted to get out of the typical model of doing tennacle events just because.

Q: What has surprised you most about VH1?

A: It’s not so much surprises as it is people [here] saying, “OK, we’ve got it back on track. We’ve got hit series now. We’ve got some great wins across the board. Where are we going next?” It’s been interesting to hear everybody’s vision of where they want to go next. And it’s healthy to see that we are pretty much in tune with each other.

Q: So, where do you and your colleagues want to go next with VH1?

A: People want to make VH1 Classic a real business. When Paul McCartney or the Rolling Stones have new music out, VH1 certainly deals with it and celebrates it, but VH1 Classic can go deeper with it. [I] also heard a lot about: “How do we take some of our content for TV and make it even more important on Vspot?”

And while we all want to make music a priority again, we need to also see what else the channel can do in terms of non-music programming. We have a Toni Spelling-scripted series (“So NoTORious”) that leans a bit more comedy, which is new for us. We debuted this year. We’re also doing a couple pilots with Ice-T.

Q: With all these additional platforms, is VH1 still VH1?

A: The danger is throwing so much content on the various platforms that people get lost. You only have a certain amount of time with them. You have a very limited impression. People say that it’s too cumberwise, too much choice, then you lose them. It’s about being hyper-focused about what message you’re putting up there. Everything is not a priority.

P.O.D. Ready To ‘Testify’
Christian Rockers Hold Firm To Their Faith On New Atlantic Album

P.O.D. believes you can go home again. After tussling with Christian retailers over the cover of its last studio album, 2003’s “Payable on Death,” the hard rock band will once again try to appeal to their mainstream and Christian audiences with its fourth full-length Atlantic effort, out Jan. 24.

For “Testify,” P.O.D. teamed with superproducer Glen Ballard. According to P.O.D.'s drummer Wuv, the band wanted to work with Ballard on its previous album, but their schedules never aligned. This time, P.O.D. began recording with someone else, but after six months decided to approach Ballard again.

“Wuv credits Ballard with helping the band craft a more “mature” effort. “We’ve always kept it kind of heavy rock, but I think something’s going to be obvious just from the band standpoint is that the music sounds more mature for us,” Wuv says. He is joined in the band by his cousin Sonny on lead vocals, Taon on bass and Truby on guitars.

“Testify” include Hasidic artist Matisyahu, who joins the band on “Roots in Stereo” and “Strength of My Life.” Boo-Yaa T.R.I.B.E. and Sick Jacken from Los Angeles duo the Psycho Realm contribute to “On the Grind.”

Musically, as Wuv notes, the band continues to incorporate reggae, rap and hip-hop into its hard rock sound. Lyrically, it also sticks to writing positive, faith-based lyrics. “Obviously people know P.O.D. for the spiritual elements that we bring lyrically and the positive feelings we give,” Wuv says. “We always keep that in our music. We are always trying to dig deep and find something worth talking about instead of throwing any lyric on the table. That’s always kind of a challenge for us—[to] find out what we want to say without repeating ourselves over and over again.”

Even though the band’s music has always been positive with a Christian worldview, P.O.D. has sometimes been at odds with Christian retailers, primarily over the issue of album art. The band’s breakthrough album, 1999’s “The Fundamental Elements of Southtown,” featured two CD covers, one for mainstream and a tamer one for Christian retail.

And with “Payable on Death,” some retailers objected to the scantily clad female on the cover. However, Atlantic opted not to do two covers again, and some Christian retailers did not carry the record.

“We’ve learned in the past to not take those things seriously, and if that’s what they want to do, that’s what they want to do and they have their reasons,” Wuv says of Christian retail’s refusal to stock the last album.

BACK TO ITS ROOTS
With the new album, the Christian community is once again supporting P.O.D. Warner Bros.-owned Word Records will work with Atlantic to market the record.

Jazz Notes
by DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

Shipp Holds Steady Course
Pianist/Composer’s Continuous Output Now Includes Third Solo Album, ‘One’

“Shipp’s third solo outing (and first since 1995’s "Symbol Systems" on No More Records), streets Jan. 31. It is characterized by equal measures of melodic beauty, jaunty humor and dark chaos, with evocative tangles and wiffls, rumbles and grace, ruptures and rapture. There is a touch of Thelonious Monk in the sprightly “Gamma Ray,” a hint of classical in the dramatic “Bass Code,” a gripping tumble in the avantfree "Electro Magnetism." “I think in big, sweeping landscapes,” says Shipp, who feels his reputation as an avant-garde player is unwarranted. “I like to consider myself at the forefront of the language and I try to be free, but I don’t think of myself as someone like a Cecil Taylor. I’m just trying to be me. I’m as concerned with the melodic as I am with being in the vortex of a whirlwind.” "One" is the latest title in the Blue Series that Shipp started at Thirsty Ear in 2000 when the rock indie formed a jazz division. "Peter wanted a different approach, so he brought me in," says Shipp, who came to Thirsty Ear’s attention after recording for Henry Rollins’ 21361 label, which is marketed and distributed by Gor- don. “He wanted the music to get to a larger audience. Since we started, we’ve branched out to record a wide variety of creative music.” In store for 2006 are adventure Blue Series discs by poet/modern bluesman Carl Hancock Rux; classical vocalist Daniel Bernard Romaine, the third Charlie Hunter/Bobby Previte Grindquarter disc

www.americanradiohistory.com
on the Christian retail side, and the first album, "Goodbye for Now," is being worked to Christian rock formats as well as mainstream modern rock and active rock outlets.

Wuv says the band has never shied away from relaying its faith. "We aren't afraid to tell anybody we are human and that we are sinners," he says. "Your faith is something that nobody can take away from you. By no means are we perfect or anything like that, but at the same time, we know what we do is inspiration."

According to Word Records VP of marketing Ronn Tabb, "P.O.D. and Atlantic have gone out of their way on almost every turn to really reconnect P.O.D. with the Christian market. They wanted it to be carried here [at Christian retail], and they knew that this was the core part of their fan base that they needed to re-capture." To that end, the album cover, which features the project's title and silhouette of the band, is certainly not controversial and should not raise any ire from any Christian retailers.

Another tool that should greatly help the band's cause in the Christian market is a video featuring veteran Christian hip-hop/rock/rap tobyMac interviewing Sonny. "It's really Sonny and Toby talking about life and their faith and their ministry and testimonies," Tabb says of the piece, which is being distributed to 13,000 churches by Interlinc, a company that provides materials to youth pastors and church groups. "It's 74 minutes long, and it's the most powerful piece of video on P.O.D. that I've ever seen."

The band will also be featured in Christian publications CCM and HM. It is also garnering press in mainstream magazines; for example, it landed the cover of the current issue of Metal Edge.

Tower Nashville GM Jon Kerlikowske says he plans to rock "Testify" in the mainstream rock section. "They do OK for us," he says. "It's like with any pop or rock record—if the singles get good radio play, then it will sell."

On the mainstream side, P.O.D. will be highly visible on MTV. It will also appear on "The Late Show With Jay Leno" and "Last Call With Carson Daly."

According to Livia Tortella, Atlantic senior VP of marketing and artist development, there will be a heavy emphasis on Internet marketing. "The P.O.D. fan really does live online," she says. There is also a special promotion at iTunes that "we are calling 'the P.O.D. cast,'" Tortella says, "which has a separate interview piece that could be bundled with the record. Also bundled with the record, we have the video and the making of video."

Atlantic began presselling the album last October, offering fans who ordered early a P.O.D. T-shirt. It also released an EP, "The Warriors EP Vol. 2," in the fall that offered a preview of "Testify." Only 20,000 copies of the special-edition collection went to retail. "Our fans were getting impatient" for the new record, Wuv says. "We had 22 tracks written and recorded. So we were like, 'Why don't we just dump out a few songs for them to give them a little flavor of the record?'"

In a rather unusual promotional effort, P.O.D. will perform at Wests mellanana events in Miami and Chicago.

"There's a famous wrestler named Raymond Mysterio," Wuv says. "He actually graduated with me and Sonny at our high school. We are playing music for him when he comes out, so that will be fun and kind of cool. You know how those wrestling fans are, they come out in droves."

and a new Sex Mob project by trumpeter Steven Bernstein.

SING OUT: In December, pianist Michael Wolff recorded an original tune. "Tell Me," with the African Children's Choir for his new, as-yet-unitled album scheduled for release this year (Backbeat, Billboard, Jan. 21). The recording took place at Hi Factory/Criteria Studio in Miami, with sound engineer Roger Nichols. The Ugandan choir comprises children aged 7-11 who are orphans because of the AIDS pandemic. Wolff will tour with the group in 2007. For the CD, Wolff also covers pop songs by the Rolling Stones, Coldplay, Radiohead, Beck, Donovan and Zero 7.

FACT FILE

Label: Atlantic
Management: Tim M. Cook
Booking: Little Big Man
Publishing: Ripped Off Publishing/Jason Truby Music (ASCAP)
Best-selling album: "Satellite" (2001), 3.2 million
Last studio album: "Payable on Death" (2003), 15,000

THREE DOT LOUNGE: Marshall Lamm, longtime PR director for Yoshis in Oakland, Calif., has left the jazz club to start his own promotions/public relations agency based in San Francisco. The former PR director for Astor Place Recordings and GRP Records in New York can be contacted at marshallallaman@earthlink.net or at 510-928-1410... Berklee College of Music in Boston will celebrate its 60th anniversary with an all-star concert Jan. 28 at the Wang Theater. With proceeds earmarked for scholarships, the event will be produced by Phil Ramone, hosted by Bill Cosby and feature honorary doctorates Herbie Hancock and Paul Simon as well as alumni vibist player Gary Burton and vocalist Chiara Civello. 

Si*Sé Freebie Sparks Sales

Si*Sé is not an established band. An eclectic, New York-based quintet that plays a mix of feel-good pop, electronic and funk anchored by female vocals, its members do not receive any mainstream Latin radio airplay and they are not regulars on the Latin TV show circuit.

But this issue, four months after the release of "More Shine" (Fuerte/MBR/Fontana), Si*Sé came, seemingly out of nowhere, to land at No. 48 on Billboard's Top Latin Albums chart.

The showing marks the Billboard chart debut for Fuerte Records and also underscores the fact that in Latin music, it is not necessarily about traditional marketing anymore. Si*Sé's chart boost was pushed along by a tuxedo in common, the offer of a free digital track.

The group's new single, "More Shine," was iTunes' free download for the week ending Jan. 8. According to distributor Fontana, the tip of the five tracks resulted in 231,000 downloads of the song. That is substantial exposure for a band with limited radio play.

The end result was nearly 2,000 copies sold in one week of the album, with the bulk of those sales coming from iTunes.

"It demonstrates that people are really reacting to the song," Fuerte principal Rich Isaacson says. Because Si*Sé's music is hard to classify—some call it world, others electronica or Latin—"it doesn't fit into any niche, which is a challenge," he adds. "Now we have a story to tell. Get people exposed to the music, and they will buy it." Si*Sé's 2001 debut on Luaka Bop sold more than 30,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Coming up, Si*Sé is a Mexican-specific version of the album while the other carries a separate listing for the international market.

He says it was his way to combat piracy in his native Mexico. Meanwhile, a new studio album is set for release later this year.

Syntek describes the new project as his trademark pop sound, but with more danceable, aggressive fusions, including strains of cumbia, danzón and regional Mexican rhythms.

"I want to have a stamp that indicates where I'm from," Syntek says. "I grew up in Mexico, eating tacos, and that's where I come from."

Possible guests include up-and-coming pop/electronica group Bellanova.

Syntek is also writing for other artists and is in discussions with Enrique Iglesias, he may write and produce for Iglesias' upcoming Spanish-language album.
Headley’s Got Her Own ‘Mind’
Broadway Sensation Determined To Improve Debut Album

RCA singer/songwriter Heather Headley jokes that instead of “In My Mind,” her sophomore album should have been called “Caught Up.” It is because during the three years after the 2002 release of her critically acclaimed first album, “This Is Who I Am,” RCA was embroiled in a series of pre- and post-Sony-BMG mergers and executive shake-ups.

“It was almost like ‘Waiting for Godot,’” Headley says with a laugh. “There were so many changes.”

But in the end, she is glad it happened as it did. In addition to retooling with the label’s senior VP of A&R Stephen Ferrera and producers Jimmy Jam & Terry Lewis, Headley found herself for the first time under the watchful eyes of BMG North America chairman/CEO Clive Davis. “His overseeing my project was quite the honor—and scary,” Headley says.

It also gave her time to pursue her most important goal: finding the right songs. “I don’t like the phrase ‘sophomore jinx,’” Headley declares. “But it was there in my head: This album had to be much better than the first one.”

Among the songs she says would not have happened if the original 2004 time schedule had been followed is the album’s title track. The ballad—co-produced by Shannon Sanders (India.Arie)—is the first single from the Jan. 31 release.

Having already made inroads on the adult R&B front (No. 4 on the Adult R&B Songs chart and No. 40 on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs list), “In My Mind” is now being promoted at mainstream R&B radio. Among the early believers at the format were WGCQ Chicago and WVEE Atlanta.

“Hipstream PDs give the single a chance, it will do well for them,” WVEE PD Reggie Rouse asserts. “A lot of PDs think she’s just an urban AC artist. They’re mistaken.”

Especially if they take a gander at some of the producers and guests who signed on for this project. For example, Lil Jon contributes the infectious “Back When It Was.”

“It’s like a ’60s throwback song,” Headley says. “When I was told that Lil Jon wrote this song, I was like, ‘What?’ But it’s a credit to him and to co-writer Johnta Austin. They’re clever and talented guys who know what they’re doing.”

Shaggy lends his skills on the reggae-flavored “Rain.” Warryn Campbell chimes in with joyous gospel track “Change.” Also sharing his expertise was Kenneth “Babyface” Edmonds on the humorous, introspective “Me Time.”

“So of the songs have a tinge more pop this time,” Headley says. “I wanted to go into different worlds.”

Now based in Chicago, Headley first claimed headlines on Broadway during her run in “The Lion King” and then “Aida,” for which she won a Tony Award. After recording her first album, which peaked at No. 38 on The Billboard 200, Headley told Billboard in October 2002 that it was “always in my spirit to do R&B and pop.” Her stage-to-studio transition resulted in a hit single, “I Wish I Wasn’t,” that peaked at No. 15 on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart and earned Grammy Award nominations for best new artist and best R&B vocalist.

To fortify that foundation, RCA marketing has one focus: to get Headley out in front of people.

“She didn’t do a whole lot of touring the last time around,” says Caron Vezey, senior director of marketing for RCA. “When you see her, if you’re not already a fan, you’re converted.”

To play up that angle, RCA launched a five-city showcase series Jan. 16 in Atlanta. Additional stops included Washington, D.C. (Jan. 17); Chicago (Jan. 18); Los Angeles (Jan. 24); and New York (Jan. 31).

A planned TV blitz through early February includes appearances on “Soul Train,” “Tavis Smiley,” “The Ellen DeGeneres Show” and CBS’ “Early Show.”

Giant Step and Fly Life are handling lifestyle marketing; the latter is overseeing the gay/lesbian consumer base.

The Diane Martel-directed video for “In My Mind” premiered online Jan. 19 via Yahoo. Headley will present the clip Jan. 23 during the BET “106 & Park” segment “New Joint of the Day.” The weekend before the album’s release, V1! Soul will air a special album-release party segment featuring the singer.

Headley says the perfectionist in her is satisfied with how “In My Mind” turned out. “They finally had to take the album out of my hands so it could go to the factory,” she says. “But I was able to do a lot with this album and feel we have it right. This is ‘eureka’ time.”

PRODUCER BROTHERS TRIES OTHER SIDE OF THE MIC

You know him from his work with Alicia Keys. Now songwriter/producer Kerry “Krucial” Brothers is stepping out from behind the boards with his own solo rap project.

But do not get it twisted. This is not “another R&B producer-turned-rapper scenario,” Brothers insists. “It’s the other way around.”

It was at open-mic sessions around New York where the journeyman MC first met Keys. Their friendship branched out into a fruitful creative partnership as co-owners of Krucial Keys Enterprises. Now Brothers feels the time is right to shift back into his original rapper mode.

An eight-song introductory EP featuring Brothers and 18-year-old protégé Illz will come out around the end of February by way of Krucial Keys subsidiary Krucial Recordings. A full-length album, “Take Da Hood Back,” is planned for June.

Mixing conscious tracks, party jams, boom beats and smooth cuts for the ladies, the album represents “what hip-hop is about,” the Queens, N.Y., bred Brothers says. “Too many artists are getting caught up in being one-dimensional. There’s more to my music than can be put in one little box.”

And do not look for Keys or other special guests on the EP. “That would be the easy thing to do,” Brothers declares. “It’s not about trying to use hype. That’s not what this is about.”

Currently considering several distribution proposals, Brothers says he chooses to repackage his major-league connections.

“In the future, if [a major] understands my vision and agrees—even after we cut the deal—that might be an option,” Brothers says with a laugh. “But with the knowledge I have and with today’s technology, being independent is the best way to get my music out the way I need to.”

Additional projects on the Krucial Recordings docket include Brooklyn, N.Y., rapper Illz’s debut album next year. “He rhymes more sense and depth than guys twice his age,” Brothers says.

Beyond the hip-hop label, Brothers says Krucial Keys plans to diversify into publishing, TV and film. In the meantime, he is enthused about a “big honor”: working on rap icon Rakim’s next album. Brothers’ other production credits include Nas, Usher and Keyshia Cole.

As for partner Keys, she has wrapped filming on “Smokin’ Aces,” whose cast includes Ben Affleck, Andy Garcia and Common. And UPN is developing a drama loosely based on Keys’ childhood with the singer executive-producing (The Hollywood Reporter, Jan. 12).

So when are she and Brothers heading back into the studio?

“We work on things here and there all the time,” he says. “But we’re not going to seriously pursue an album until the latter part of this year.”

In the meantime, look for Brothers to hit the college tour circuit in April/May. And you can check out the single “Take Da Hood Back” by logging on to krucialkeys.com.

MUSICAL NOTES: Brandy has signed with Czar Entertainment for management. Czar is operated by Jimmy “Henchmen” Rosenmod, who also manages the Game, Mario Winans, Trillville and Shariess... . Veteran R&B group Mint Condition releases its first concert DVD, “Live From the 9:30 Club,” Feb. 7 through Image Entertainment. The O’Jays’ Valentine’s Day performance at Harlem’s Apollo Theater marks the first concert following the completion of the famed venue’s restoration of its 1940s-style seating.

The 2006 edition of the Urban Network Entertainment Summit is locked in for April 5-8 at the Riviera Resort & Racquet Club in Palm Springs, Calif.

GAIL MITCHELL gmitchell@billboard.com

Rhythm & Blues
sunny-sounding rockers and breakup songs for weightier concerns of war and family, “Lights” conveys that maturity without seeming strained. Sure, there are some not-so-soupy ballads, but there is also the most unlikely pairing of the early year. “How I Go,” a stirring ballad featuring the Dixie Chicks’ Natalie Maines. An assured work that lands well beyond the walls of stock pop/punk, right where the band was aiming.—JV

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Different Strokes by Various Folks
Producers: various
Epic/Legacy
Release Date: Mar. 31
It’s a beautiful melodic orchestration that lends you the oh-hey-eff you need to the bass-heavy “In the Red.” “Runnin’ Away.” Elsewhere, Chris Potter, who has worked with the Verve, Blur and Richard Ashcroft, keeps the focus on the fine instrumental work that is Dido’s voice. Recked by Caroline.—MP

COLDPLAY
Talk (4:05)
Producers: Danton Supple, Coldplay Writer: not listed
Label: not listed
Coldplay has mastered a winning formula that has made the Brit band one of the most heralded rock acts of their day, with quality hits after hit. The third single from 2005’s “X&Y” maintains the trend, as “Talk” is already making noise at modern rock and triple-A. Now it is primed for top 40 success. With introspective lyrics, beautiful melodic orchestration and the band’s signature sprinkle of melancholy, “Talk” is everything Coldplay fans have come to love. Borrowing bits from Kraftwerk’s “Computer Love” are thrown in for added spice, amid a crescendo of drums and guitar. Clearly, Coldplay knows what sells and keeps listeners happy, though the day is coming when the quartet will need to venture into more experimental waters.—KT

BONNIE RAITT
I Don’t Want Anything to Change (3:52)
Producers: Bonnie Raitt, Tchad Blake Writers: M. Sharp, L. Rose, S. Chapman
Publishers: various
(Capitol) CD promo
Bonnie Raitt reaches deep into her heart for this moody acoustic ballad from “A Little Alike,” which already has yielded triple-A hit “I Will Not Be Broken.” Her bluesy voice oozes the kind of spine-tingling authenticity that was sometimes missing from her previous Grammy Award-winning blockbusters. Over delicate finger-picked chords, she conveys a certain, with raw emotion, “Sleepless nights aren’t to be staying up, I’m staying sad/I don’t want anything to change.” The alt-country-leaning song is gorgeously stripped and shines through its sound, as if Raitt has been broken love and self-acceptance, with a far-reaching melody that will have triple-A radio at her feet again.—SP

ủy works well in smaller chunks. “Cock of the Rainbow” is pure ’60s Pink Floyd, while the next song, “Conqueror of the Moon,” is an intriguing mishmash of psychedelia and garage rock. Pollard’s Who fixation manifests itself on “I’m a Widow,” while “Dancing Girls and Dancing Men” is pop as sweet as cotton candy. Less goofy and more focused than some of Pollard’s prior solo releases, “Compound Eye” proves there will still be life after GBV. Plus, the absurdly prolific artist already has another album, “Normal Happiness,” in the can for later this year.—JC

THE GOURDS
Heavy Ornaments
Producers: The Gourds, Michael Cross
ElevenThirty Records
Release Date: Jan. 24
“Heavy Ornaments” is another Gourds disc that is all over the map, stylistically but, heaven forbid it be otherwise, since eclecticism is their primary vibe. The new album is a feast of cool original tunes distinguished, as always, by lyrics worthy of contemplation. Take note of “Burn the Honeyuckle,” on which Kevin Russell recalls killing a panther with a pocket knife and ruminates on his wife’s “skin like tobacco and eyes like wine.” Buoyed by an undercurrent of innate weirdness, the Gourds are a gifted band creating music born of the love of music, and that is an unrepeatable bottom line.—PVV

ELECTRONIC
VARIOUS ARTISTS
London—Original Motion Picture Soundtrack
Producers: various
Tiny 6
Release Date: Jan. 24
Following in the path of electronic colleagues Paul Oakenfold (“Swordfish”) and BT (“Stealth”), tech-masters the Crystal Method have gone to Hollywood wood. “London,” a tale of wayward singles partying too hard in New York, is the band’s first foray into the electronic. It is also a great example of how its rock’n’roll breaks style has continued on >>ps4

REVIEW SPOTLIGHTS

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ALBUMS

CAT POWER
The Greatest
Producer: Stuart Sikes Matador
Release Date: Jan. 24
On its 2005 debut “Ocean Avenue,” Yellowcard’s carbonated pop/punk crossed over to the pop charts. Not a bad place to be, but also not one that lends you a whole lot of long-term cred with the emo set. As such, this follow-up has “Album That Proves We Have Grown” written all over it, but here is the thing: they have a strong effort that trades
from >>p53

matured since the duo’s bone-rattling 1997 debut album, "Vegas". Instrumental tracks with Randy names like “Smoked” and "Roboslut" chug with under- ground energy, but the rest is restrained enough to complement rather than overwhelm the film at hand. The nine Meth original are interspersed with a wonderfully effective selection of songs with vocals from little-known bands, like Conrie Price & the Keystones and the Out Crowd. Album closer “Nothing Like You and I” by Swedish outfit the Punishers has enough cinematic sweetness to launch the band’s career.—KM

REGGAE

UB40

UB40: A Life You Fighting For
Producer: UB40
Rhino Release Date: Jan. 24

UB40 has been a fan of U.K. reggae act UB40 since its debut album, you are getting old. "Who You Fighting For?" celebrates the 25th anniversary of the band’s recording debut but is just its second disc since 1993’s "Labour of Love." It is a choice slice of reggae and soul and the dancehall mode that has already generated a pair of top 40 hits back home. There is a nice range of material here, including some timely messages (the title track, “Sins of the Father”). There are also some tender love ballads such as "Kiss and Say Goodbye" and "Gotta Tell Someone" the latter also doubling as a terrific shot of classic soul music. A couple of decades in the pocket has only deepened UB40’s groove.—PVV

GOSPEL

SOWETO GOSPEL CHOIR

Blessed
Producer: Robin Hogarth

Shanachie Release Date: Jan. 24

This tuneful ensemble draws its name from its native township/hip that lies on the outskirts of Johannesburg, and on its American debut offers what is easily one of the most original and intriguing gospel albums imaginable. The majority of the 18 tracks are sung in either native Sotho or Zulu; little more than percussion accompanies the choir’s rich, vocal interplay on a tapestry of traditional South African and western musical styles. Several cuts more familiar to western ears, and sung in English, include studdy, stirring renderings of “Oh Happy Day” and Peter Gabriel’s “Biko.” The occasional addition of a full band works nicely (“Joko Yahabo”) but serves as much to show how these absolutely thrilling singers need no help but their voices to make dazzling music.—GE

VITAL REISSUES

ELVIS PRESLEY

Elvis #1 Singles
Producer: various
Sony BMG
Release Date: Jan. 24

When Elvis Presley’s “Heartbreak Hotel” to Presley’s last No. 1, the haric-charging boogie (hunka hunka) “Burnin’ Love” in 1972, the artist maintained a remarkable consistency in the studio. The early rockers — “Hound Dog” in ’56, “All Shook Up” and “Hound Dog” in ’57 — made Elvis the King, but Presley’s latter hits hold up well, particularly 1969’s superbly produced “Suspicious Minds.” Liners by the ubiquitous Colin Escott offer nice perspective, and each disc replicates the look of the original 45s, reprinted on black plastic with mock grooves. Kosud to Sony BMG for doing this right, properly showcasing one of music’s great success stories.—RW

NEW & NOTeworthy

TEST Icicles
For Screening Purposes Only
Producer: James Ford
Domino Release Date: Jan. 24

This much-hyped British trio Test Icicles specializes in a fast and furious cocktail of punk, metal and electropop with fireball flashes of ska and old-school rap. A million influences scream at you, then explode at once. Hear them hardcore for the first time on "Pull the Lever" or an Iron Maiden riff-fest into musical mayhem ("Party On, Driveway"). Theirs is a way of life vs. Python" boasts an infectious hook shot back by the insane screaming pulses of the frontman Dev Metal. These nasty noise ministers have a gift for melody, but they love chaos and destruction even more. Maybe only Rick Rubin could have de-cluttered this pre-pubescent schlock fest, and we may have had the British answer to System of a Down. Instead, the deafening dialectics often feel contrived, making Test Icicles sound like a fun “project,” not a real band.—SP

COUNTRY

GARY ALLAN

Life Ain’t Always Beautiful
Producer: Mark Wright, Gary Allan
Writers: C. Goodman, T. Lemon
Publishers: various
MCA Records (CD promo)

The great thing about country music is how it can impart so much truth in less than four minutes. This powerful ballad will speak to everyone with lines such as “The struggles you’re stronger/and the changes you’re wise/and happiness has its own way.” Gary Allan turns in a potent performance: understated, thoughtful, but oozing with the emotion of what has lived every line. As most in the country music community know, Allan’s wife passed away last year and this poignant, beautifully sung ballad is a testament to the strength of a survivor. To say this is a hit record is an understatement.—DEP

DANCE

SYLVIA TOSUN

Sleepless (Remix) (3:36)
Producer: Malek
Writers: S. Tosun, J Flinders
Publisher: Sylvia Tosun, BMI
Remix: Lance Jordan
Seo to Sun Records (CD promo)

Sylvia Tosun may not be a household name, but with a talent for creating lush lyrical imagery and evoking emotion with her sultry sounds, she has scored a major hit on Billboard’s Dance Club Play chart. Lance Jordan tailors the track—whose fine original version is found on the full-length “Jump”—to clubland, with its high-energy beats and cool synth sounds. While Tosun’s beautiful voice remains intact and this dance version is certainly more commercial in its appeal, lost are the haunting melody lines and Eastern-inspired instrumentation that layer and add depth to the original album version. The remix is certainly fun for the dancefloor, but Tosun deserves credit for her admirable work, even without the happy hands of remixer Jordan.—KT

LEGEND & CREDITS

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


CRITICS’ CHOICE: # A new release, regardless of chart potential, highly recommended for commercial merit.

All albums commercially available in the United States, except are eligible. Send�� releases copies to Jonathan Cohen and singles reviews copies to Chuck Taylor (both at Billboard, 770 Broadway, Sixth Floor, New York, NY 10033) or to the writers in the appropriate bureaus.

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

54 | JANUARY 28, 2006

www.americanradiohistory.com
Weak Week Ends Streak; Celtic Woman Mimics Kiss

A review of this week's album sales brings to mind a lyric from a huge OutKast hit, “nothing lasts forever.” As album sales fall behind those of the same week in the prior year for the first time in a month, OutKast line seems more appealing, but perhaps less descriptive, than when a certain “American Idol” judge sang, “I take—two steps forward . . . two steps back.”

Celtic Woman's archive archives date back to 1994, and in that time, there has never been a week when volume on The Billboard 200, or within its top 10, represented fewer units than on this issue's chart. T/L chart weighs in at 2.8 million units, with the first 10 albums amounting to 651,000 copies. What's more, there are only six titles at 50,000 or more: the fewest of any week measured from 1994 on. The prior low in that period for albums at 50,000-plus was eight, notched in January of last year.

You have to trapse back to 1996, in the frame that ended Feb. 4, to find the last time that overall album volume—which includes catalog fare—weighed in lighter than this issue's 9.4 million copies.

The take 10 years ago during that particular week was 8.9 million, even lower than the 9.4 million seen a week earlier—which means next issue might bring even lighter numbers. Certainly nothing on the Jan. 17 album schedule looks to crank up business, unfortunately since stores will compete with the 2005 week when rapper Game entered The Billboard 200 at No. 1 on first week sales of $67,000, the largest sum by any January release in SoundScan's 15-year history.

Oh, well. Thanks to last week's numbers, year-to-date album sales are still 2.7% ahead of the early 2005 numbers. Even if the Game's shadow throws that balance toward last year's favor, this early in 2006 we are still allowed to pull out an old music business maxim that also plays well in sports, too: It is not where you start, but where you finish.

Celtic Dynasty: In the Billboard dated Oct. 14, 1978, Kiss made chart history when solo albums by each of its members made simultaneous debuts on The Billboard 200. Fast forward to 2006 and we find Celtic Woman accomplishing a similar feat, albeit in a smaller league.

In the same week that the group's self-titled album clocks its 46th week at No. 1 on Top World Albums, the five individual women of Celtic Woman each find ink on that chart.

Soprano Chloe has the strongest debut of those five, entering at No. 4 while also bowing at No. 9 on Classical Crossover, which appears on billbord biz during the chart's unpublished week.

Members Lisa, Maev, Orla and Mairead follow on the World list, at respectively, Nos. 9, 10, 11 and 12. Combined, the five solo albums and "Celtic Woman" scan close to 13,000, although admittedly, the group's album—No. 85 on The Billboard 200—accounts for 78% of that collective total.

The group's sweep and a bow at No. 2 by Mary Duff also means that two months before St. Patrick's Day, more than half of Top World Albums' 15 runs are occupied by Irish fare.

We are tempted to say Celtic Woman is the first group since Kiss to see each of its members notch simultaneous bows on any Billboard chart, but as soon as we do that, some numbers will crawl from the shadows to tell us that a now-forgotten band like Re:Flex or Allian pulled the same coup on one of our more esoteric lists.

"Idol" Eyes: When "American Idol" won huge TV ratings against summer reruns in 2002, did you imagine it would only get bigger when it moved to the competitive waters of February and May? TV's sweeps months? I sure didn't, which may explain why I work at Billboard rather than TV Guide.

Not only has the series become glue for Fox's schedule, it has also become a music industry spark plug in an era of iffy album sales.

As season five gets under way, note those three "Idol" finalists have topped The Billboard 200. First-season-winner Kelly Clarkson ranks among the top 20 Money Maker artists of 2005 (see story, page 42), while reigning champ Carrie Underwood has rung up 1.8 million copies in just nine weeks.

Cannot help but wonder what this year's winner will do.

---

**Market Watch**

**Weekly Unit Sales**

**A Weekly National Music Sales Report**

**YEAR-TO-DATE**

**2005**

**2006**

**CHANGE**

**Overall Unit Sales**

Albums

20,277,000

20,822,000

2.7%

Digital Tracks

10,695,000

23,354,000

118.4%

Store Singles

159,000

125,000

-21.4%

Total Sales

31,131,000

44,361,000

42.3%

**Albums w/TEA**

21,346,500

23,157,400

8.5%

*Includes track-equivalent album sales (TEA) with 10 track downloads equivalent to one album sale.

**Weekly Album Sales**

35 million units

30

2005

2006

15

10

5

0

*J F M A M J JASON D*

**Weekly Album Sales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Digital</th>
<th>19,069,000</th>
<th>19,648,000</th>
<th>0.1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cassette</td>
<td>453,000</td>
<td>1,069,000</td>
<td>135.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>148,000</td>
<td>65,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20,349,000</td>
<td>20,847,000</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Album Sales**

| CD | 19,069,000 | 19,648,000 | 0.1 |
| Digital | 453,000 | 1,069,000 | 135.6 |
| Cassette | 148,000 | 65,000 | -56.1 |
| Other | 45,000 | 41,000 | -9.9 |

**Catalog Album Sales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Catalog Album Sales**</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Digital Tracks</td>
<td>12.2 million</td>
<td>12.5 million</td>
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<tr>
<td>Catalog</td>
<td>8.1 million</td>
<td>8.3 million</td>
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</table>

Nielsen SoundScan counts as current only sales with-in the first 18 months of an album's release (12 months for classical and jazz albums). Titles that stay in the top half of The Billboard 200, however, remain as current. Titles older than 16 months are catalog. Deep catalog is a subset of catalog for titles out more than 36 months.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Price</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MARY J. BLIGE</td>
<td>The Breakthrough</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
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<tr>
<td>JAMIE FOXX</td>
<td>Unpredictable</td>
<td>Arista</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARLTON &amp; SMITHSON</td>
<td>Pappa's Theme</td>
<td>J Records</td>
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<tr>
<td>MARC BONE</td>
<td>My World</td>
<td>Avenue Records</td>
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<td>THE NOTORIOUS B.I.G.</td>
<td>Duets: The Final Chapter</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
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<tr>
<td>MARIJANE</td>
<td>The Emanicipation Of Mimi</td>
<td>Zomba</td>
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<tr>
<td>NICKELBACK</td>
<td>All The Right Reasons</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
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<td>CHRIS BROWN</td>
<td>Flatfoot</td>
<td>Zomba</td>
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<td>THE BLACK EYED PEAS</td>
<td>Monster Bus</td>
<td>A&amp;M Records</td>
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<td>JOHNNY CASH</td>
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<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>New Visions</td>
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<td>KELLY CLARKSON</td>
<td>Breakaway</td>
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<td>BOO BICE</td>
<td>Dogtown</td>
<td>mtvU Records</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHAMILLIONAIRE</td>
<td>Things Fall Apart</td>
<td>J Records</td>
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<td>THE PUSSYCAT DOLLS</td>
<td>PCO</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
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<tr>
<td>TRACE ADDIS</td>
<td>Songs About Mi</td>
<td>J Records</td>
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<tr>
<td>LIL WAYNE</td>
<td>The Carter II</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
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<td>The Road And The Radio</td>
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<td>MADONNA</td>
<td>Confections On A Dance Floor</td>
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<td>Feels Like Today</td>
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<td>KRYPTO</td>
<td>Hypnotize</td>
<td>Effendi</td>
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<td>TOSHA SASH</td>
<td>See You On The Other Side</td>
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<td>DESTINY'S CHILD</td>
<td>#19</td>
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<tr>
<td>KEITH URBAN</td>
<td>Be Here</td>
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<tr>
<td>DADDY YANKEE</td>
<td>Barrio Fino: En DIRECTO</td>
<td>A&amp;M Records</td>
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<tr>
<td>JUELZ SANTANA</td>
<td>What The Game's Been Missing</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
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<tr>
<td>KANYE WEST</td>
<td>Late Registration</td>
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<td>LUDACRIS &amp; DIVINE</td>
<td>Ludacris Presents: DisturbingThePeace</td>
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<td>SUGARLAND</td>
<td>Twice The Speed Of Life</td>
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<td>NELLY</td>
<td>Sweatshirt</td>
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<td>VQA</td>
<td>Get It: Thug Motivation 101</td>
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<td>DOROTHY LASSANCE</td>
<td>Get Rich Or Die Tryin'</td>
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<td>KEITH URBAN</td>
<td>Fight Fire</td>
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<td>Demon Days</td>
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<td>SOUNDFORMATION</td>
<td>Walk The Line</td>
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<td>KEISHA COLE</td>
<td>The Way It Is</td>
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<td>ANTHONY HAMILTON</td>
<td>Ain't Nobody Worryin'</td>
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<td>CHAMILLIONAIRE</td>
<td>The Sound Of Revenge</td>
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<td>OZMAW</td>
<td>Love: Angel Music: Baby</td>
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<tr>
<td>JOSH &amp; CASPER</td>
<td>Live At Stubb's</td>
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<tr>
<td>DRAKE Davenport</td>
<td>Move Along</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
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<td>ROB BICE</td>
<td>The Real Thing</td>
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<td>BLEEDING THROUGH</td>
<td>The Truth</td>
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<tr>
<td>REBA McENTIRE</td>
<td>Retta #12</td>
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<tr>
<td>BILLY CURRINGTON</td>
<td>Don't Somethin' Right</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
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</table>

**The Billboard 200 Artist Index**

Go to [www.billboard.biz](http://www.billboard.biz) for complete chart data.

Data for the week of January 28, 2006 | CHARTS LEGEND on Page 72
Don't miss the hottest week in Latin music! First five people to register receive a complimentary bag insert ($1,000 value). Call Kelly Peppers for details 646.654.4643.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>LABEL</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>RP WEEKS</th>
<th>CHART ACHIEVEMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| JOHNNY CASH | American Recordings | ♡ | 1985 | 17 | Gold coff.
| RONETTE PEARSON | Every Little Step | ♡ | 1973 | 18 | Silver coff.
| WAYLON JENNINGS | Are You Sure | ♡ | 1965 | 17 | Gold coff.
| Loretta Lynn | The Sea | ♡ | 1967 | 17 | Gold coff.
| LARRY Gefühl | White Lightning | ♡ | 1980 | 16 | Gold coff.
| LESLIE BAY | The Nightingale | ♡ | 1981 | 16 | Gold coff.
| GEORGIA BROWN | 100 Miles | ♡ | 1986 | 16 | Gold coff.
| ELVIS PRESLEY | Blue Suede Shoes | ♡ | 1956 | 15 | Gold coff.
| JUNIORS ROOM | No Place To Go | ♡ | 1962 | 15 | Gold coff.
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<tr>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>LABEL</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>RP WEEKS</th>
<th>CHART ACHIEVEMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| BILL WITHERS | Use Me | ♡ | 1971 | 15 | Gold coff.
| JERRY WILLS | Bittersweet | ♡ | 1959 | 15 | Gold coff.
| BOBBY HACKETT | Chicago | ♡ | 1961 | 14 | Gold coff.
| RONETTE PEARSON | Blue | ♡ | 1964 | 14 | Gold coff.
| LARRY Gefühl | Walkin' | ♡ | 1964 | 14 | Gold coff.
| DONKEY KONG | I'm Gonna Love Her So Much | ♡ | 1981 | 14 | Gold coff.
| ALICE COOPER | No More Mr. Nice Guy | ♡ | 1971 | 14 | Gold coff.
| RONETTE PEARSON | Let's Stay Together | ♡ | 1964 | 14 | Gold coff.
| JUNIORS ROOM | I'm In The Mood | ♡ | 1962 | 14 | Gold coff.
| GEORGIA BROWN | Don't Let My Dreams Die | ♡ | 1987 | 14 | Gold coff.
| ELVIS PRESLEY | Don't Be Cruel To Me | ♡ | 1962 | 14 | Gold coff.
| JUNIORS ROOM | I Want To Live | ♡ | 1962 | 14 | Gold coff.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>LABEL</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>RP WEEKS</th>
<th>CHART ACHIEVEMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| BILL WITHERS | Ain't No Woman | ♡ | 1970 | 13 | Gold coff.
| JERRY WILLS | It Takes Two | ♡ | 1960 | 13 | Gold coff.
| RAY CHARLES | I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry | ♡ | 1962 | 13 | Gold coff.
| BOBBY HACKETT | Ya Ya | ♡ | 1961 | 13 | Gold coff.
| RONETTE PEARSON | Doo-Wop | ♡ | 1963 | 13 | Gold coff.
| DONKEY KONG | Rockin' Robin | ♡ | 1982 | 13 | Gold coff.
| RONETTE PEARSON | There Goes My Baby | ♡ | 1964 | 13 | Gold coff.
| JUNIORS ROOM | Goodnight | ♡ | 1962 | 13 | Gold coff.
| GEORGIA BROWN | No More Blues | ♡ | 1986 | 13 | Gold coff.
| ELVIS PRESLEY | Heartbreak Hotel | ♡ | 1956 | 13 | Gold coff.
| JUNIORS ROOM | Yesterdays | ♡ | 1962 | 13 | Gold coff.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>LABEL</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>RP WEEKS</th>
<th>CHART ACHIEVEMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| BILL WITHERS | Love the One You're With | ♡ | 1970 | 12 | Gold coff.
| JERRY WILLS | I'm Your Man | ♡ | 1960 | 12 | Gold coff.
| RAY CHARLES | The Things We Do Together | ♡ | 1962 | 12 | Gold coff.
| BOBBY HACKETT | Santa Claus Came to Town | ♡ | 1961 | 12 | Gold coff.
| RONETTE PEARSON | Baby Doll | ♡ | 1964 | 12 | Gold coff.
| LARRY Gefühl | Ain't Too Proud | ♡ | 1963 | 12 | Gold coff.
| DONKEY KONG | Chuck | ♡ | 1982 | 12 | Gold coff.
| ALICE COOPER | Schoolgirl | ♡ | 1971 | 12 | Gold coff.
| RONETTE PEARSON | Doo-Wop | ♡ | 1963 | 12 | Gold coff.
| JUNIORS ROOM | Midnight Special | ♡ | 1962 | 12 | Gold coff.
| GEORGIA BROWN | No More Blues | ♡ | 1986 | 12 | Gold coff.
| ELVIS PRESLEY | Heartbreak Hotel | ♡ | 1956 | 12 | Gold coff.
| JUNIORS ROOM | Yesterdays | ♡ | 1962 | 12 | Gold coff.
### Pop 100 Airplay

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<th>Rank</th>
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<th>Artist/Label</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Check It Out</td>
<td>The Prodigy (Renaissance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Run It</td>
<td>Chris Brown (Def Jam)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Please Don't Go</td>
<td>The Black Eyed Peeps (Atlantic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Headline</td>
<td>Relient K (Reprise)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>It's a Beautiful Day</td>
<td>Jason Mraz (Universal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Beautiful Girls</td>
<td>Natasha Bedingfield (Epic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>This Is It</td>
<td>MP7/IDJMG Mixed (IDJMG)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Look Into My Eyes</td>
<td>Scott Brown (MCA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Girl Next Door</td>
<td>Vitus (Metal Blade)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>All of Me</td>
<td>Akon (SRC)</td>
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### Pop Singles

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<td>The Prodigy (Renaissance)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Run It</td>
<td>Chris Brown (Def Jam)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Please Don't Go</td>
<td>The Black Eyed Peeps (Atlantic)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Headline</td>
<td>Relient K (Reprise)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>It's a Beautiful Day</td>
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<td>Beautiful Girls</td>
<td>Natasha Bedingfield (Epic)</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>This Is It</td>
<td>MP7/IDJMG Mixed (IDJMG)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Look Into My Eyes</td>
<td>Scott Brown (MCA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Girl Next Door</td>
<td>Vitus (Metal Blade)</td>
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<td>All of Me</td>
<td>Akon (SRC)</td>
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### Hot Singles Sales

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heartbreak Hotel</td>
<td>The Killers (Universal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hang Up</td>
<td>John Mayer (Universal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Way I Love You</td>
<td>Jackie Evancho (RCA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing Else Just You</td>
<td>India.Arie (Columbia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shivers</td>
<td>The Abominable Snowmen (Attractive)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Kissed a Girl</td>
<td>James Blunt (Atlantic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Way You Look at Me</td>
<td>Sia (Atlantic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heartbreak Hotel</td>
<td>The Killers (Universal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hang Up</td>
<td>John Mayer (Universal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Way I Love You</td>
<td>Jackie Evancho (RCA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing Else Just You</td>
<td>India.Arie (Columbia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shivers</td>
<td>The Abominable Snowmen (Attractive)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Kissed a Girl</td>
<td>James Blunt (Atlantic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Way You Look at Me</td>
<td>Sia (Atlantic)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See chart legend for rules and explanations. Yellow indicates new or re-entered title, indicates Title Update.

**ARTIST/TITLE/Label/Score**

**Pop 100 Airplay**

- **Significant Hits**
  - "Check It Out" (The Prodigy, Renaissance)
  - "Run It" (Chris Brown, Def Jam)
  - "Please Don't Go" (The Black Eyed Peeps, Atlantic)
  - "Headline" (Relient K, Reprise)
  - "It's a Beautiful Day" (Jason Mraz, Universal)
  - "Beautiful Girls" (Natasha Bedingfield, Epic)
  - "This Is It" (MP7/IDJMG Mixed, IDJMG)
  - "Look Into My Eyes" (Scott Brown, MCA)
  - "Girl Next Door" (Vitus, Metal Blade)
  - "All of Me" (Akon, SRC)

**Pop Singles**

- **Significant Hits**
  - "Check It Out" (The Prodigy, Renaissance)
  - "Run It" (Chris Brown, Def Jam)
  - "Please Don't Go" (The Black Eyed Peeps, Atlantic)
  - "Headline" (Relient K, Reprise)
  - "It's a Beautiful Day" (Jason Mraz, Universal)
  - "Beautiful Girls" (Natasha Bedingfield, Epic)
  - "This Is It" (MP7/IDJMG Mixed, IDJMG)
  - "Look Into My Eyes" (Scott Brown, MCA)
  - "Girl Next Door" (Vitus, Metal Blade)
  - "All of Me" (Akon, SRC)

**Hot Singles Sales**

- **Significant Hits**
  - "Heartbreak Hotel" (The Killers, Universal)
  - "Hang Up" (John Mayer, Universal)
  - "The Way I Love You" (Jackie Evancho, RCA)
  - "Nothing Else Just You" (India.Arie, Columbia)
  - "Shivers" (The Abominable Snowmen, Attractive)
  - "I Kissed a Girl" (James Blunt, Atlantic)
  - "The Way You Look at Me" (Sia, Atlantic)

*Note: The Billboard Hot 100, Pop 100, and singles charts are based on airplay, sales, and streaming data.*

**For complete chart data, go to www.billboard.biz**

**For more on the charts, see**

**American Radio History**

www.americanradiohistory.com
between the bullets

mary mary's big jump

Even without deep sale pricing, gospel duo Mary Mary manages a 17% gain for Paseetter honors on Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums. No. 5 on Top Gospel Albums, "Mary Mary" has never ranked lower than No. 8 since it bowed on No. 1 on that chart in the Aug. 6, 2005, issue. Current single "Yesterday" is No. 6 on Hot Gospel Songs.

—Raphael George

$15, makes a 72-54 climb, the largest jump on the chart.

fargain prices for such acs as Trick-Trick and Ray J failed to rally large gains at the R&B/hip-hop core-stores panel.

b: Mary Mary, with some chains pricing its soft-titled album around

Data for week of January 28, 2006 | For chart reprints call 646.654.4633

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data | 63
See Charts Legend for rules and explanations. All rights reserved. HOT R&B/HIP-HOP AIRPLAY: 146 stations are electronically monitored 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This data is used to compile the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart. © 2006 Nielsen SoundScan, Inc. Legend information continues at bottom of page.

**R&B/HIP-HOP SINGLE SALES**

1. **I'M NOT YOUR GIRL**
   - Artist: Mary J. Blige
   - Label: 412
   - Sales: 1,218,000

2. **BEYOND THE REALM**
   - Artist: Lil' Kim feat. Jadakiss
   - Label: Columbia
   - Sales: 685,000

3. **GO WITH THE FLOW**
   - Artist: Alicia Keys
   - Label: J Records
   - Sales: 513,000

4. **LOVE ME**
   - Artist: Fantasia
   - Label: Atlantic
   - Sales: 477,000

5. **HOT SHIRT**
   - Artist: 50 Cent
   - Label: Shady/Columbia
   - Sales: 434,000

6. **WE LOVE IT**
   - Artist: Jodeci
   - Label: Sony/Columbia
   - Sales: 415,000

7. **DAMN IT TO HEAVEN**
   - Artist: Outkast
   - Label: LaFace
   - Sales: 388,000

8. **BE WITH YOU**
   - Artist: Justine Joli
   - Label: J Records
   - Sales: 380,000

9. **C'MON C'MON**
   - Artist: Destiny's Child
   - Label: Columbia
   - Sales: 370,000

10. **DON'T STOP THE MUSIC**
    - Artist: Rihanna
    - Label: Def Jam
    - Sales: 350,000

11. **NEVER TOO LATE**
    - Artist: Timbaland feat. Diddy
    - Label: Interscope
    - Sales: 340,000

12. **I'M A STAR**
    - Artist: Ja Rule
    - Label: Ruff Ryders
    - Sales: 330,000

13. **TURNT UP**
    - Artist: Puff Daddy feat. Snoop Dogg
    - Label: Bad Boy
    - Sales: 320,000

14. **BEautiful**
    - Artist: Kelly Rowland
    - Label: Columbia
    - Sales: 310,000

15. **MY BABY**
    - Artist: D'Angelo
    - Label: Verve
    - Sales: 300,000

16. **I'M NOT YOUR GIRL**
    - Artist: Mary J. Blige
    - Label: 412
    - Sales: 290,000

17. **HOT SHIRT**
    - Artist: 50 Cent
    - Label: Shady/Columbia
    - Sales: 280,000

18. **WE LOVE IT**
    - Artist: Jodeci
    - Label: Sony/Columbia
    - Sales: 270,000

19. **LOVE ME**
    - Artist: Fantasia
    - Label: Atlantic
    - Sales: 260,000

20. **DAMN IT TO HEAVEN**
    - Artist: Outkast
    - Label: LaFace
    - Sales: 250,000

**ADULT R&B**

1. **MADNESS**
   - Artist: Michael Jackson
   - Label: Epic
   - Sales: 1,218,000

2. **I'M NOT YOUR GIRL**
   - Artist: Mary J. Blige
   - Label: 412
   - Sales: 685,000

3. **BEYOND THE REALM**
   - Artist: Lil' Kim feat. Jadakiss
   - Label: Columbia
   - Sales: 513,000

4. **GO WITH THE FLOW**
   - Artist: Alicia Keys
   - Label: J Records
   - Sales: 477,000

5. **LOVE ME**
   - Artist: Fantasia
   - Label: Atlantic
   - Sales: 434,000

6. **HOT SHIRT**
   - Artist: 50 Cent
   - Label: Shady/Columbia
   - Sales: 388,000

7. **DAMN IT TO HEAVEN**
   - Artist: Outkast
   - Label: LaFace
   - Sales: 350,000

8. **C'MON C'MON**
   - Artist: Destiny's Child
   - Label: Columbia
   - Sales: 340,000

9. **NEVER TOO LATE**
    - Artist: Timbaland feat. Diddy
    - Label: Interscope
    - Sales: 330,000

10. **I'M NOT YOUR GIRL**
    - Artist: Mary J. Blige
    - Label: 412
    - Sales: 320,000

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    - Label: Columbia
    - Sales: 310,000

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    - Artist: Outkast
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    - Sales: 250,000

**HOT RHYTHMIC AIRPLAY**

1. **I'M NOT YOUR GIRL**
   - Artist: Mary J. Blige
   - Label: 412
   - Sales: 1,218,000

2. **BEYOND THE REALM**
   - Artist: Lil' Kim feat. Jadakiss
   - Label: Columbia
   - Sales: 685,000

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   - Artist: Alicia Keys
   - Label: J Records
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5. **HOT SHIRT**
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    - Artist: Outkast
    - Label: LaFace
    - Sales: 250,000

**Check out www.billboard.biz for complete chart data**

Data for week of JANUARY 28, 2006  |  CHARTS LEGEND on Page 72
HOT LATIN SONGS:

1. ROMPE (Daddy Yankee)
2. HABLA EL CORAZON (La Muse & Almighty)
3. QUE SE ME QIUELA (J. Rodríguez & The Difusos)
4. GRABANDO MUSICA (Jenni Rivera)
5. NO TE METAS EN MIS PLEYERS (Yandel & Wisin)
6. LA CAILA (Urban Legends)
7. MISS VOICE (Luis Fonsi feat. Frankie J & Rene de Escobar)
8. EL ULTIMO CORAZON (Las Mc Crows)
9. OSEAQUI SABES (Jesse y Chayito)
10. ME QUIERO QUITAR EL MANNY (Juanes)

HOT LATIN ALBUMS:

1. DON OMAR Presents Reggaeton Latino (Sony BMG)
2. POLLITO (Bad Bunny)
3. LA VIDA ES UN REGGAETON (Luis Fonsi)
4. MEJOR (Ricky Martin)
5. A QUIEN LO QUIERE (Yandel)

Data for week of January 28, 2006
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGIONAL MEXICAN</th>
<th>REGIONAL MEXICAN</th>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>CONTRA VIENTO Y MAREA</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>NO PUEDO MAS</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>QUE ME VAS A DAR</td>
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Data for week of JANUARY 28, 2006 | For chart reprints call 646-654-4633

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data | 69
### Japan Hits of the World

**Japan Albums**  

**United Kingdom Albums**  
- UNITED KINGDOM - JANUARY 19, 2006

**Germany Albums**  
- GERMANY ALBUMS - JANUARY 19, 2006

**France Albums**  
- FRANCE ALBUMS - JANUARY 19, 2006

**Australia Albums**  
- AUSTRALIA ALBUMS - JANUARY 19, 2006

**Italy Albums**  
- ITALY ALBUMS - JANUARY 19, 2006

**Spain Albums**  
- SPAIN ALBUMS - JANUARY 19, 2006

**The Netherlands Albums**  
- THE NETHERLANDS ALBUMS - JANUARY 19, 2006

**Austria Singles**  
- AUSTRIA SINGLES - JANUARY 19, 2006

**Norway Singles**  
- NORWAY SINGLES - JANUARY 19, 2006

**Denmark Singles**  
- DENMARK SINGLES - JANUARY 19, 2006

**Portugal Albums**  
- PORTUGAL ALBUMS - JANUARY 19, 2006

**Greece Singles**  
- GREECE SINGLES - JANUARY 19, 2006

**Euro Digital Tracks**  
- EURO DIGITAL TRACKS - JANUARY 19, 2006

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**General Information**

- Hits of the World is compiled at Billboard London: NE-RI Entry.

- The chart data is for the week of January 28, 2006.

- Charts Legend is on Page 72.
**ALBUM CHARTS**

Sales data compiled from a comprehensive pool of U.S. music merchants by Nielsen SoundScan. Sales data for R&B/Hip-hop retail charts is compiled by Nielsen SoundScan from a national subset of stores that subscribe to those genre.

- Albums with the greatest sales gains this week
- Where indicated, this award indicates the title with the chart's biggest percentage growth
- Indicates album entered to 100 of The Billboard 200 and has been removed from homeless charts.

**PRICING/CONFIGURATION**

CD/Cassette prices are suggested for equivalent prices, which are projected from wholesale prices. After offers indicate album only available on DaWoo Disc. CD/DVD after price indicates CD/DVD combo only available. 2-Disc/DVD available. 2-CD DVD combo available. Pricing and vinyl LP availability are not included on all charts.

**SINGLE CHARTS**

Compiled from a national sample of data supplied by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems. Charts are scored by number of gross audience impressions, computed by cross-referencing each minute of play with Arbitron listener data. The exceptions are the Rhythm Top 40, Adult Top 40, Adult Contemporary, Modern Rock and Adult R&B charts, which are ranked by total detections.

- Where indicated, this award indicates the title with the chart's biggest percentage growth
- Songs showing an increase in audience (or detections) over the previous week, regardless of chart movement.

**RECURRENT RULES**

Singles are removed from the Hot 100 and Hot 100 Airplay charts simultaneously. They have been on the list for 100 or more weeks and rank below 50. Songs are removed from the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs and Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay charts simultaneously if they have been on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart for 40 weeks and rank below 50. Songs are removed from the Pop 100 and Pop 100 Airplay charts simultaneously if they have been on the Pop Songs chart for more than 50 weeks from week 1. Titles are removed from Hot Country Songs if they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below 15 in detections or audience. Some titles are not still gaining enough audience points to be listed. Songs are removed from the Adult Top 40, Adult Contemporary, Adult R&B, and Hot Dance Airplay charts if they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below 15 for Modern Rock and Latin (or if they have been on the chart for more than 52 weeks and below 10).

**SINGLES SALES CHARTS**

The top selling singles compiled from a national sample of retail store, mass merchant, and internet sales reports compiled, compiled, and provided by Nielsen SoundScan. For R&B/Hip-Hop Singles Sales, sales data is compiled from a national subset panel of coast-to-coast Hot-Hip-hop stores by Nielsen SoundScan.

- Singles with the greatest sales gains.

**CONFIGURATIONS**

- CD single available
- Digital Download available
- DVD single available
- Vinyl Maxi-Single available
- Vinyl Single available
- CD Maxi-Single available

**HIT PREDICTOR**

- Indicates title earned HitPredictor status in that particular format based on research data provided by Promocast.

**DANCE CLUB PLAY**

Compiled from a national sample of reports from club DJs.

- Titles with the greatest club play percentage over the previous week.

**TOP INDEPENDENT CHARTS**

Albums with the greatest sales gains this week.

- Where indicated, this award indicates the title with the chart's biggest percentage growth
- Indicates album entered to 100 of The Billboard 200 and has been removed from homeless charts.

**PRICING/CONFIGURATION**

CD/Cassette prices are suggested for equivalent prices, which are projected from wholesale prices. After offers indicate album only available on DaWoo Disc. CD/DVD after price indicates CD/DVD combo only available. 2-Disc/DVD available. 2-CD DVD combo available. Pricing and vinyl LP availability are not included on all charts.

**SINGLE CHARTS**

Compiled from a national sample of data supplied by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems. Charts are scored by number of gross audience impressions, computed by cross-referencing each minute of play with Arbitron listener data. The exceptions are the Rhythm Top 40, Adult Top 40, Adult Contemporary, Modern Rock and Adult R&B charts, which are ranked by total detections.

- Where indicated, this award indicates the title with the chart's biggest percentage growth
- Songs showing an increase in audience (or detections) over the previous week, regardless of chart movement.

**RECURRENT RULES**

Singles are removed from the Hot 100 and Hot 100 Airplay charts simultaneously. They have been on the list for 100 or more weeks and rank below 50. Songs are removed from the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs and Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay charts simultaneously if they have been on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart for 40 weeks and rank below 50. Songs are removed from the Pop 100 and Pop 100 Airplay charts simultaneously if they have been on the Pop Songs chart for more than 50 weeks and rank below 50. Titles are removed from Hot Country Songs if they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below 15 in detections or audience. Some titles are not still gaining enough audience points to be listed. Songs are removed from the Adult Top 40, Adult Contemporary, Adult R&B, and Hot Dance Airplay charts if they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below 15 for Modern Rock and Latin (or if they have been on the chart for more than 52 weeks and below 10).

**SINGLES SALES CHARTS**

The top selling singles compiled from a national sample of retail store, mass merchant, and internet sales reports compiled, compiled, and provided by Nielsen SoundScan. For R&B/Hip-Hop Singles Sales, sales data is compiled from a national subset panel of coast-to-coast Hot-Hip-hop stores by Nielsen SoundScan.

- Singles with the greatest sales gains.

**CONFIGURATIONS**

- CD single available
- Digital Download available
- DVD single available
- Vinyl Maxi-Single available
- Vinyl Single available
- CD Maxi-Single available

**HIT PREDICTOR**

- Indicates title earned HitPredictor status in that particular format based on research data provided by Promocast.

**DANCE CLUB PLAY**

Compiled from a national sample of reports from club DJs.

- Titles with the greatest club play percentage over the previous week.
Data for week of JANUARY 28, 2006 | For chart reprints call 646.654.4633

MUSIC VIDEO

TOP MUSIC VIDEOS™

<table>
<thead>
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<th>TITLE</th>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>LABEL</th>
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VIDEOCLIPS

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<td>Jive</td>
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<td>Foxy Brown</td>
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<td>I'M A PRINCESS</td>
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<td>Def Jam</td>
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CMT

MONTGOMERY GENTRY | She Don't Tell Me To Faith Hill... | CMT | $9.98 |

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LAUNCH PAD

JAN 28 2006

MUSIC VIDEO

TOP HEATSEEKERS

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sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan

BREAKING & ENTERING

Morningwood's self-titled debut wakens up Top Heatseekers at No. 1 and "The Billboard 200" at No. 2. Despite developing interest making their inaugural Billboard chart run each week in Breaking & Entering on billboard.com.

The best-selling albums by new and developing acts, defined as those who have never appeared in the top 100 of "The Billboard 200" in at least two and either of the sub-chart albums are immediately recognizable to appear on the Heatseekers chart. See Chart Legend for rules and explanations. © 2006, VNU Business Media, Inc. and Nielsen SoundScan, Inc. All rights reserved.
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RECORDING BUSINESS FOR SALE: Prime Manhattan location, fully equipped, unique construction, high-profile clients, views, light. Call 917-538-3444.
The premiere ASCAP Foundation Champion Award ceremony honored Billy Joel's support of music education at Jazz at Lincoln Center in New York. At the ceremony, ASCAP Foundation president Marilyn Bergman announced the establishment of the ASCAP Foundation Billy Joel Fund, which will support the summer music camp at the Manhattan School of Music. From left are Manhattan School of Music president Robert Sirota, New York City Department of Education director Barbara Murray, Joel, Bergman and music camp director Joanne Polk.
LIFE IN THE FAST LANE

Gene Simmons has a racy new preoccupation. Along with Rich Abramson, his new partner in Simmons/Abramson Marketing, the Kiss co-founder is representing Indy Racing League, a NASCAR competitor trying to make a bigger roar among the world’s speed freaks.

Simmons revealed his partnership with Abramson (who formerly worked with Pee-Wee Herman) to Billboard’s Melinda Newman at The Big Big Idea –first: The Future of Branded Entertainment conference, held Jan. 17 at the Renaissance Hollywood Hotel in Los Angeles.

The Kiss-man’s new company—known affectionately as SAM—is lining up brand partners for the league. Label affiliations are also possible. Though he did not go into specifics, Simmons acknowledged that he has had talks with execs like Lyor Cohen and Polly Anthony.

“We wish everyone [at NASCAR] well,” Simmons added, “but we’re running our own race.”

Meanwhile, Simmons the entrepreneur is following his VH1 reality show, “Gene Simmons Rock School,” with another reality show, “Gene Simmons Family Jewels.” A&E is scheduled to air 26 episodes in the summer.

For those who lost count, Simmons happily reminded conference attendees that the Kiss name has been licensed to more than 2,600 products. Not bad, eh?

THE ENTERTAINER

Tickets for Billy Joel’s record-setting 11th show at New York’s Madison Square Garden go on sale Jan. 21 and his agent already is “cautiously optimistic” that a 12th show might be added. “We’ll see what the demand is,” says Dennis Arfa, president of Artists Group International and Joel’s agent for 30 years. “I think (Jan. 21) will tell us how far we can go.” That said, Arfa notes that it is hard to find open dates at the Garden, what with the possibility of basketball and hockey playoff games coming up.

Joel is poised to break Bruce Springsteen’s record of 10 sellouts at the Garden, set in 2000. The Piano Man has not toured as a solo headliner since 1998, so demand is high everywhere. That is particularly true in New York, where the composer of “New York State of Mind” is a sentimental and hometown favorite.

A NEW FUSION

Antonio Carmona, former leader of Spanish fusion group Ketama, is putting the finishing touches on his first solo album, due out the third quarter of 2006 on Universal. The disc is produced by Gustavo Santaulaola, who we just told you won a Golden Globe for his work on “Brokenback Mountain.” Recorded in Madrid and Los Angeles, the album features a duet with Colombian star Juanes.

GOLDEN MOUNTAIN

Verve Forecast is putting an added push behind its “Brokenback Mountain” soundtrack following the film’s dominance showing Jan. 16 at the Golden Globes. A sticker, heralding the original song award winner “A Love That Will Never Grow Old,” is being added to all copies at traditional retail.

The label is also securing window-in-store displays for the title, which Track predicts will be nominated for an Oscar come Jan. 31. The tune, performed by Emmylou Harris, was written by Gustavo Santaulaola, who also scored the film, and longtime Elton John collaborator Bernie Taupin.

The Golden Globe win had an immediate impact online: The score is No. 1 at amazon.com and the iTunes Music Store.

ARTISTS ON THE MOVE

RCA Label Group’s R. Nathaniel has quietly done a bit of housecleaning. Gone from the roster are Tracy Byrd and Andy Griggs, among other artists. After six years on MCA Nashville, Byrd moved to RLG in 1999 and released three studio albums and a greatest-hits set there. His rep says that Byrd has just begun recording another album on his own and will shop it to labels when finished. Griggs also joined the RLG roster in 1999 and released three albums there, including the gold-certified “You Won’t Ever Be Lonely.” Also gone from the RLG roster are Aaron Lines and Rachel Proctor, who each released one album and a handful of singles for RLG.

CANDID KENNEDY

Frankness is not usually associated with record company executives, but IFPI chairman/CEO John Kennedy offers a fresh contrast. This week, while presenting the organization’s Digital Report 2006 in London, Track asked him if he would agree that Sony BMG’s digital rights management fiasco was the worst PR disaster the music industry had experienced in many years.

His blunt answer: “Yes!” immediately followed by, “But we will recover from that.”

Appreciating his style, Track also asked Kennedy if he would have any words for French minister of culture Renaud Donnedieu de Vabres in Cannes at the MIDEM trade show. Of course, Track had an idea that the recent vote by the French parliament on a controversial blanket license for online music usage might still be on Kennedy’s mind. Track was right. So, what will Kennedy tell the Vabres? “That’s a huge, colossal mistake,” he says. Pasquale, for a missing, Kennedy adds, “But I will probably find more diplomatic words to say it to him.”

RECORD COMPANIES: Universal Music Group in Los Angeles promotes Michael Ostroff to general counsel/executive vice president of business and legal affairs for UMG worldwide. He was executive VP of business and legal affairs.

Atlantic Records in New York promotes Andy Karp to head of A&R. He was senior VP/head of A&R for the company’s now-defunct Luna Records division.

Columbia Records in New York names Ken Lane senior VP of promotion. He held the same position at Island Def Jam Music Group.

Universal Classics Group in New York names Pascal Nadon director of marketing for Core Classical Music. He was label manager at Analoketa Records.

Capitol Records Nashville promotes Autumn House to senior director of A&R. She was director.

PUBLISHING: Ten Ten Music Group in Nashville names Patrick Clifford VP of A&R. He held the same position at BMG/RCA Label Group.

PERSONAL MANAGEMENT: Steve Nice left his promotion post at New West Records to launch his own Los Angeles-based artist management firm, Nice Management.

MUSIC VIDEO: CMT in Nashville ups James Hitchcock to senior VP of creative and marketing. He was VP of creative and marketing.

RELATED FIELDS: VH1 in New York promotes Michael Hirschorn to executive VP of original programming and production. He was executive VP of production and programming. Hirschorn will continue to oversee series including “Hogan knows Best” and “My Fair Brady.” VH1 also promotes Michele Megan Dixo to senior VP of music and talent development. In addition, she will contribute to the MTV Networks Music Group development process. On the senior VP of music and talent programming for MTV and MTV2.

Network Live in Los Angeles names Michael Goldfine VP of production and programming. He was senior producer/correspondent for “Extra.”

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