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Spanish Niche Formats: A Radio Gold Mine

BY ALFREDO ALONSO

There are few demographics with greater promise to marketers than 18- to 34-year-old Latinos. The Hispanic population is the fastest-growing segment in the United States, and a second generation of state-side born Latinos is gaining more and more clout politically. So, there is no doubt among music professionals about the staying power of "urban" and other niche Spanish radio formats.

Urban—urban with an "h" for Hispanic—is a Clear Channel Radio format where bilingual DJs play a mix of up-and-coming, Spanish-flavored pop music. (Airplay is reflected on Billboard Radio Monitor’s Latin rhythm chart.) The format relies heavily on the wildly popular musical style dubbed reggaetón—a fusion of salsa, hip-hop and rap that originated in Puerto Rico in the late '90s. Reggaetón gained a great deal of popularity and credibility during the past few years behind the successes of Daddy Yankee, Don Omar, Shakira and others.

Daddy Yankee, the unofficial ambassador of reggaetón, held the top spot on Billboard’s Top Latin Albums chart for 13 weeks through the April 1 issue, was named songwriter of the year at the ASCAP Latin Music Awards in March, and is a finalist in seven categories for the upcoming Billboard Latin Music Awards.

But skepticism remains. As recently as January at Midem in Cannes, executives speculated on multiple occasions that urban and other niche Spanish formats are merely "the flavor of the day." Evidence indicates otherwise.

NEW FORMATS ARE WORKING

At Clear Channel, we are seeing remarkable traction with urban stations. KLOO, Houston, America’s first urban outlet, increased its average quarter-hour audience share by 42% after introducing the format in November 2004. (AQH is a key audience metric closely followed by media buyers and advertisers.) KABQ-FM Albuquerque, N.M., flipped to the format and went from No. 15 to No. 6 in the market after achieving a 126% increase in AQH share among the highly coveted 18-34 demographic. WMEG Miami flipped to urban, and in February 2005 saw an 85% increase in AQH, compared with its former format in the most recent Arbitron report.

Hubba is not an anomaly. Other niche Spanish formats have recently gained momentum as well. La Preciosa, a Clear Channel format featuring Hispanic songs from the '70s, '80s and '90s that cater to the Hispanic 25-34 audience, has exceeded expectations. KELG, Dallas, for example, launched the La Preciosa format in August 2005 and defeated longtime market leader KLOX (Spanish oldies station) and KESS (regional Mexican) in its target audience, becoming the top-rated station for persons 25-34. Comparable successes have been seen in San Jose, San Diego, Las Vegas and Tulsa. The format has been so successful, Clear Channel launched it as a national network.

Like Hubba, Super Estrella, a format that Entercom Radio launched in the late '90s, features the latest Spanish-language pop/rock music mixed with some reggaetón. Super Estrella has consistently been the key platform for today’s Latin crooners to reach the young Hispanic music lover. The format is found not only in Los Angeles, but in markets that are quickly growing. Its success in those markets reflects the Hispanic community’s growth in second-tier markets. In Sacramento, Calif., for example, the top-rated Hispanic station in 2005 was a Super Estrella outlet, according to the most recent Arbitron survey.

WHY THE SUCCESS?

Quantifying successes like these peeks up the ears of advertisers and broadcasters alike, but equally compelling are the reasons why. Those skeptical about niche Spanish formats have often said the demand for targeted Hispanic formats was limited to tropical and regional Mexican music. For a time, this argument held water, but with the Latin population exploding and diversifying at an intensity as high as it has, conventional formats no longer meet the needs of new niche markets.

In terms of sheer numbers, consider for a moment that half of the nation’s population growth since 2000 has been in the Hispanic pool, according to a recent Brookings Institution report. The Hispanic population is diversifying, too. What was once represented almost wholly by Mexicans and Puerto Ricans is now joined by Dominicans, Colombians, Panamanians and Venezuelans.

Now consider how Hispanics are adopting U.S. characteristics. More than half of U.S. Hispanics were born in another country and half of Hispanic youngsters younger than 18 were born here, according to the Pew Hispanic Center. Second-generation Hispanics represent a new cultural landscape, one that blends aspects of their parents’ homelands with new American-influenced nuances.

It is not, however, the demographic shift alone that explains the achievements of these new radio formats. Radio success has and always will come down to product. Hubba, La Preciosa, Super Estrella and others inject fresh life into airwaves that have remained stagnant for too long. Hubba, for example, taps into a wealth of innovative reggaetón talent that would not have otherwise found its way to American airwaves.

In fact, Daddy Yankee, Don Omar and Shakira have shown tremendous crossover appeal, latching listenership from seemingly noncompetitive stations. Accordingly, since national media buys are based on efficiency, and with buyers trying to reach Cubans, Colombians and Mexicans simultaneously, a crossover artist like Shakira, who lends herself to an English-language campaign, can help stretch media budgets.

Hubba and similar niche Spanish radio formats are here to stay, and those who ignore their promise are doomed to miss out on a gold mine.

Alphonso Alonso is senior VP of Hispanic Radio for Clear Channel Radio.

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1973–2006
Q1: Sales Down, Biz Up

Touring Pulls Out Of Slump

For the first time in a while, the concert business has pull up some numbers worthy of applause.

With nearly $37.5 million in grosses and 7.3 million in attendance for first-quarter 2006, the North American concert business shows signs of emerging from a two-year slump.

Driven by such acts as Bon Jovi, Billy Joel, Coldplay and Aerosmith, North American concert dollars are up 28% from a year ago, and attendance is up 19%, according to figures reported to Billboard Boxscore. Global numbers, with plenty of help from U2’s Vertigo tour, are up about half that amount in both categories.

The strong start has promoters enthusiastic. “All artists were playing to bigger audiences than ever,” [which] shows the fans will come when given a quality show,” Live Nation CEO Michael Rapino says.

Some of the increase can be attributed to a rapid Q1 2005, with a beatish industry coming off a brutal 2004 summer. But the number of shows in North America for Q1 2006 is virtually the same as a year ago, while the average attendance per show is up nearly 16%, 2,595 shows were reported in Q1 2006, versus 2,527 for Q1 2005.

Some promoters are encouraged by the new talent that is developing. “The most encouraging thing about 2006 is the solid sales at larger venues for some continued on p8

Download Numbers On The Rise

A promising new baseline is emerging for digital music sales in 2006.

Weekly download consumption, now averaging around 10 million tracks, is running more than 30% above pre-Christmas levels, and more than 50% above where it was a year ago.

And it’s not just track sales that are on the rise. Digital album sales are likewise growing. Weekly album download volume—currently running at a rate of more than 500,000 units—is up close to 40% from pre-Christmas levels, and up 119% from the same period a year ago.

Analysts and major label executives are cautiously optimistic that the new volume may be enough to help save the music business from another year of declining revenue.

Ever since music fans downloaded a record-breaking 20 million songs during the week between Christmas and New Year’s Day 2006, industry watchers have been anxiously waiting to see where the sales tide for digital sales would ultimately settle.

The new watermark is nowhere close to the 108% sales bump the digital singles market experienced in that last week of December. But technology and distribution executives at the major labels were never holding their collective breath that download sales would keep pace at almost triple the average of 7 million tracks that were being downloaded weekly during most of December. Label distribution executives like Ron Werre, president of EMI Music Marketing, says redemptions of gift cards—given in tandem with iPods—affected heavy download volume in the closing days of 2005 and the early months of 2006. Apple shipped more than 14 million iPods in its December quarter—almost twice as many devices as it had shipped in all of 2004.

Evidence of a market largely free of holiday gift card redemptions has only begun to surface since early March.

In comparison to the volume of music downloaded through peer-to-peer networks, continue continued on p8

Road Rise

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EMI Earnings Up

EMI Group says it expects to report a 4% increase in revenue and 12% jump in profit before tax, amortization and exceptional items for the financial year ended March 31. The company estimates digital revenue will rise continued on p8
The HD DVDs vs. Blu-ray war has hit the streets. A HD DVD, one of two next-generation formats angling to take over the DVD market, officially launched mid-April with a library of titles and players hitting stores. The studios are heralding a new era of home entertainment. But analysts, retailers, and executives wonder aloud whether consumers would care.

A total of four HD DVDs release hits stores, three from Warners in the Video - The Last Samurai, "Phantom of the Opera," "Million Dollar Baby"—priced at $28.99, and one from Universal Studio Home Entertainment, "Serendity," priced at $14.98. Universal plans to release nine additional titles in the coming weeks and Warner, 17 more. Two HD DVD Toshiba players—one priced at $499.99 and one at $799.99—began hitting shelves at Best Buy, Sears and Wal-Mart and were in 3,000 stores by April 21, according to Jodi Sully, VP of marketing for Toshiba America Consumer Products. "We're filling the pipeline to retailers and sales reports so far are very positive," Sully says.

Billboard called more than a dozen retail locations in California, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Jersey and New York and found more than half had the Toshiba players in stock. A quarter of the stores had sold out, but no store carried more than three units—an indication of retail expectations.

"We're encouraged by everything we hear so far, but we also know there's a long way to go to get high-definition product into the marketplace and sold not only to early adopters but to the mass market," says Steve Nickerson, senior VP of marketing management for Warner.

"People aren't clamoring for the next generation of DVD," says Laura beholden, analyst Gartner Consulting, "It's too complicated, too expensive, and they don't see the benefits." The format war isn't helping, as analysts say most consumers will wait until a winner emerges before investing in the technology. "That's one of the bigger barriers," Forrester Research analyst Ted Schuder says. "A consumer will need an HD TV, special cables and, of course, a player." Blu-ray, the other next-generation format, is expected to have titles hitting the market May 24, but players aren't expected for a month after that.

Ultimately, the gaming industry may play an important role in introducing consumers to HD technology. Microsoft is bringing an HD DVD-compatible Xbox into the market later this year, and Sony will offer a Blu-ray-enabled PlayStation in November. Larry Mandorf, DVD/audio buyer for Newbury Comics, says expectations for HD products were high at the New England 2005 mid-year show, but "it's going to be a work in progress as the format war plays out.

The Last Samurai is among Warner Home Video's initial slate of HD DVD releases.

TOURING FROM >>P7 breakthrough bands, says Alex Hodges, executive VP at House of Blues Concerts. He adds that Fall Out Boy, My Chemical Romance, the Strokes, Dashboard Confessional, the Black Eyed Peas and others are breaking through to larger venues.

"It's not quantity, but the quality—commercially speaking—of the acts that are on the road in any given period," says Randy Phillips, CEO of promoter AEG Live. "This is why it is so hard to do a quarter-to-quarter comparison and why our business is not particularly conducive to the type of quarterly accounting required by Wall Street analysts."

Still, any increase in great news for a business that has been flat at best for the past two years. And healthy numbers give the industry a head start going into the busiest part of the year. Last year, a busy fall with tours by U2, the Rolling Stones, Neil Diamond and Paul McCartney helped offset a 10% decline in dollars at midyear.

There will likely be no need for such a super-star billing this year given the strong spring/summer slate. Madonna's upcoming tour will sell out arenas at comparable ticket prices to last fall's heavy hitters. Tim McGraw/Faith Hill, Kenny Chesney, Jimmy Buffett, Dave Matthews Band, Rascal Flatts, Mariah Carey, Bruce Springsteen, Pearl Jam, Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers, Toby Keith, Ozzfest, Warped and others (including international dates by U2 and the Stones) are already selling lots of tickets or are as close to guaranteed winners as the industry can offer.

Given the uncertainty of the business and the economy, any money in the bank is a good thing. "With $1-per-gallon gas prices, I would worry about the summer if I were in the amphitheater business," says Phillips, whose company promotes primarily in arenas.

April in general tends to be a time of cautious optimism for those in the concert business. "This time of year we always wonder if we have enough depth to carry a full year, but I believe it will be a good year," Hodges says. "Hopefully, there will be fewer big losers than we saw last year."
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SEC Targets Promoter Utsick
Commission Claims He Lied To Investors About Shows’ Profitability

The concert business has long pondered colorful impresario Jack Utsick’s rapid rise to the elite of the concert promotion world. He says he built his entertainment empire through hard work, but the Securities and Exchange Commission says the growth came on the backs of defrauded investors.

Utsick and others are in hot water with the SEC in connection with an allegedly fraudulent offering that raised $100 million from more than 3,300 investors. Utsick settled and settled a civil injunctive action April 17 in the U.S. District Court in Miami. Utsick was charged, along with his Worldwide Entertainment company’s business dealings were Entertainment Group Fund, American Enterprises, Entertainment Funds and their principals Robert and Donna Yeager (billboard.biz, April 19).

Utsick and the other defendants, without admitting to or denying the allegations of the complaint, have consented to a permanent injunction, an asset freeze, repayment of amounts they received and penalties.

Even so, it does not appear that Worldwide Entertainment and its subsidiaries are out of the concert promotion business. “The company is going to promote shows, and Jack is going to work with the company to do that,” Utsick’s attorney Michael J. Rosen says.

The SEC alleges Utsick et al. told prospective investors that their investments would earn annual returns ranging from 15% to 25% and, in some instances, an additional 3% of the profits generated by Utsick and his companies.

Utsick’s entertainment projects included theatrical productions and concerts for such acts as Shania Twain, Alicia Keys, Elton John, Santana, the Pretenders and Aerosmith. His projects also included investment in the Paris Hilton film “National Lampoon’s Pledge This,” a modeling agency—Utsick created a site for it when he showed up at the 2004 Billboard Touring conference with half a dozen models in tow—and the Omega Records label, along with numerous nightclubs, restaurants, other venues and real estate holdings.

But the SEC says Utsick and his companies paid earlier investors with funds raised from new investors because most of the concerts lost money. Teresa Verges, assistant regional director for the SEC in Miami, acknowledges that in most instances Utsick did produce the concerts he said he would produce. “But...he lied to investors about the profitability of those shows and the returns, because most of the projects in fact lost money,” Verges says.

Terms of the settlement prohibit Utsick from commenting on details of the case. But Utsick’s camp asserts that funds raised by investors were used to finance thousands of entertainment events that came off as promised, as well as purchase of assets during the company’s rapid growth.

The SEC complaint alleges that from at least 1998 through late 2005, Utsick and his co-defendants sold unregistered securities in special purpose limited liability companies to raise funds for a variety of entertainment ventures produced and/or promoted by Utsick.

The investments in the LLC or loan agreements were usually for a term of one year, with many investors rolling over their principle—an purported profits—from project to project.

Although the offering materials for each venture identified the particular concert or event for which funds would be used, Utsick conspired the funds in two operating accounts (Worldwide or Entertainment Group), from which he paid all business and personal expenses.

“There was no accounting,” Verges says. “The records were in shuffles.”

Utsick maintains that when funds were used for purposes other than producing events, they were still used in an effort to benefit investors. And as far as the SEC’s charges of shady accounting, Utsick says they can be attributed to accounting controls that were inadequate to handle the company’s growth.

During the past several years, Utsick has become one of the most active and revenue-generating promoters in the world, acquiring several regional independent promotion companies and joint-venturing tours, concerts and venues in international markets.

Last year, Utsick was involved in 821 concerts that grossed $112.8 million, fourth among all promotion companies, according to Billboard Boxscore. Jack Utsick Presents/Worldwide growth has been explosive, up from $23 million reported in 2002.

Very few shows from Utsick and Worldwide have been reported this year.

“I put my heart and soul into this business for 30 years, and despise the troubled times of the last three years created by market conditions, we still managed to survive and do what was right by our people,” Utsick says.

Utsick promotes around the globe. As such, “repatriation of funds”—bringing monies back to the United States—is a key aspect of the case.

Verges declined to say what led to the SEC investigation. Utsick’s companies have been under receivership since January, directed by attorney Mike Goldberg. The SEC has asked the court, which has not ruled yet, to expand Goldberg’s receivership into an SEC receivership, which would give him broader powers over all the corporate entities involved under the auspices of the SEC case.

After further accounting, the SEC will attempt to negotiate a resolution with Utsick and the other defendants. If unable to do so, Verges says, the SEC will turn to court to ask for the return of all funds the defendants received. “Our goal is to get those funds, as well as any penalties that are assessed, to be put into a fair fund and returned to investors,” she says.

Utsick’s involvement in promoting will be restricted, at least for now. “He certainly can’t engage in anything that would be construed as possibly violating his injunction,” Verges says. “That includes selling securities, raising funds, etc. His assets are frozen. He’s subject to an injunction and a repatriation order, the companies are in the hands of a receiver, and that’s where we stand until a final judgment is entered.”

Utsick’s camp says it will push on. “Jack is not a con man, and Jack is not a thief,” Rosen says. “This business that he has developed over the course of time is not going out of business, and Jack will continue to work with the receiver to reorganize and grow this business.”...
BRIDGING WORLDS  UNITING CULTURES

BAD BOY LATINO
LAUNCHING SUMMER 2006
IS THE WORLD READY?
Catalog Brings Sony Corp. Clout

Company Gains Leverage—And More of Sony/ATV—From Restructured Jackson Deal

Now that Sony Corp. has better positioned itself to acquire half of Michael Jackson’s 50% stake in Sony/ATV Music, publishing experts say the company may acquire more than control of a catalog. It may gain some much-needed, deal-making clout.

Jackson reportedly restructured debt and his stake in Sony/ATV Music earlier this month. His portion was used to secure loans left unpaid. That stake is now relatively safe from his creditors, but expected to be controlled—and leveraged—by Sony.

A source close to Jackson says that Sony now has the option to acquire half of Jackson’s Sony/ATV share, and will likely do so in the next 18 months. The move would give Sony a 75% controlling interest in the company.

But Sony will not have to wait until it takes control to leverage the catalog’s rights. Oleg Berletzmann, says the contractual right to control the company is enough to secure financing now. The expected growth of Sony/ATV, currently valued at $1 billion, is dramatically increasing the value of the company. Berletzmann says that Sony is searching for its new financial leverage to acquire BMI’s recorded music or the major publisher’s catalog, which includes songs by Coldplay, R. Kelly, Justin Timberlake and Alain Morissette.

Some music industry executives credit Sony Corp. group executive Bob Wiesenthal for landing Sony in this strategically advantageous position.

Last year, Fortress Investment Group was threatening to foreclose on a $272 million loan to Jackson. If this occurred, Jackson risked that its composition rights (many held by Warner/Chappell Music) and in Sony/ATV could be sold at fire-sale prices, possibly ending its future royalties. Sony risked finding itself with an undesirable partner and the revealing of financial records to public officials for Jackson’s interests.

Financially helped, Jackson avoids this by knowing its relationship with Cribinak, garnering a deal for Jackson to pay off the loan and keep royalties flowing. Sony undoubtedly used this opportunity to restructure its deal with Jackson to gain an advantage over the catalog, says a legal expert who asked not to be identified.

That left Fortress with the option to accept payment for the loan or get back into the game—it held a contractual right to match any third party’s offer. Fortress made the final deal, loaning about $220 million to Jackson earlier this month. New Horizon Trust, which now holds the combined rights of his compositions and the Sony/ATV interest, secures $300 million of the loan. John Branca, Jackson’s former attorney, who negotiated the landmark deal between Jackson’s ATV and Sony in 1995, set his 5% interest in Jackson’s share for at least $13 million and as much as $20 million. This appears to clear current claims against the Sony/ATV catalog, except for a pending lawsuit by Jackson’s former broker, Prescient Acquisition Group. Prescient wants at least $27 million for setting up potential financing. It agreed to refrain from holding up the Sony/ATV deals long as New Horizon and Jackson notify Prescient before any of the publishing assets are transferred or encumbered.

“Bob Wiesenthal did a brilliant job,” says Bandier, who was one of the bidders for the ATV catalog that Jackson acquired in 1995. Whether Sony can make the Jackson refinancing deal hit pay dirt will depend in part on how much it pays Jackson when it takes over controlling interest and on the success of the Beatles’ expected digital play.

SONY BMG: MERGER MOVES IN NASHVILLE

NASHVILLE—RCA Label Group Nashville and Sony Music Nashville are separate operations no longer. In a delayed aftermath of the Sony-BMG merger, the company has restructured its country efforts, moving all its Music Row labels under a single umbrella called Sony BMG Nashville.

Joe Galante, the highly successful label kingpin who previously served as chairman of RLG Nashville, will head the newly combined group as chairman. John Grads, the well-liked president of Sony Music Nashville, steps down. A source close to the company says the merger is as much a leadership streamlining effort as it is about combining operations. So far Grady is the only executive out a job. And there are no immediate plans to consolidate or shutter any imprints, the source adds. Galante will command an overarching A&R center of the company’s country labels and report to Schmidt-Holtz. Schmidt-Holtz called Galante “a proven leader.”

There is no word yet about what’s next for Grady. He took the helm at Sony in May 2003, arriving from Nashville-based DMZ Records, where he also served as president. Prior to that, he was a senior executive at Universal Music Group Nashville. Among his biggest successes at Sony was the 2004 breakthrough of Gretchen Wilson with her quadruple-platinum “Here for the Party” album.

Sony and BMG have a large presence in Nashville. BMG comprises the RCA, BNA and Arista Nashville labels. Its heavyweights include Kenny Chesney, Alan Jackson, Brooks & Dunn, Miranda Lambert and Carrie Underwood and Sara Evans.

Sony Music Nashville comprised the Columbia and Epic labels, with key acts including Wilson, Montgomery Gentry, Van Zant and Miranda Lambert.

BMG’s Nashville operations finished second among the major labels in country market share last year, at 25.5% more than double Sony’s 12.6% country share, Nielsen SoundScan reports. Through the first quarter of 2006, BMG claims 23.2% share in country versus 12.9% for Sony.Industrywide country music sales slipped 3% in 2005 to 73.3 million units, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Year-to-date country sales are up 23% at 21.6 million units. ---

REGGAETÓN Boosts Latin Sales

Reggaetón may be rising the sales tide for Latin music in the United States, but regional Mexican music continues to be the anchor.

This is according to just-released Latin year-end numbers from the RIAA. Latin music shipments to retail in the United States and Puerto Rico totaled 55.6 million units for 2005, a 14% jump over the 48.6 million units posted in 2004.

The general marketplace saw a 3.9% decline in units shipped during the same period. The Latin increase translates into a 16% growth in dollar value for 2005 over 2004.

Many pundits, including RIAA VP of Latin music Rafael Fernández, have attributed the rise to such artists as Daddy Yankee and Don Omar, as a key factor in the continued growth of Latin shipments.

“The reggaetón craze has created a new buzz,” Fernández says. “You’ve brought in new listeners.”

Responding to reggaetón’s popularity, the RIAA added a new “urban” subgenre to its shipment report, beginning with the fourth quarter. Urban pop, rap, reggaeton, hip-hop, pop, rock, and hip-hop. Meanwhile, regional Mexican music continues to dominate Latin music sales, generating 46% of shipments. Pop/rock came in second, with 39%, and tropical a distant third, with 9%.

But the regional Mexican numbers fall far short of the genre’s 60% share in 2004. Fernández also cites the RIAA’s ongoing anti-piracy program as a contributor to the former attorney who, as a player from 2004, the organization shut down 16 plants that were manufacturing unlicensed CDs. Latin product accounted for 60% of all seizures in those plants. ---

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**The Billboard Latin Music Awards program is produced and televised LIVE on Telemundo April 27th, 8pm EST.**
LONDON—Reawakened audiences and TV marketing are lifting veteran AC artists out of the oldies circuit and back onto British charts and mainstream concert stages.

American easy-listening staples Johnny Mathis, Andy Williams and Neil Sedaka are among those enjoying hit albums and renewed respect as their classic material reconnects with fans in the United Kingdom.

The latest example is "The Very Best of Neil Sedaka—The Show Goes On," released March 20 by Universal Music TV and certified gold by the BPI three weeks later for shipments of 100,000. Sedaka toured Britain to coincide with the release of the album, which features his hits from the 1960s and 1970s, plus five new songs. His 16-date itinerary included Birmingham Symphony Hall and Sheffield City Hall (with capacities of 2,260 and 2,346, respectively) and a showpiece London concert at the 5,266-seat Royal Albert Hall.


Sony BMG VP of commercial marketing Darren Henderson says that in the majority of cases, it's a "best-of" album that drives a resurgence of an artist.

"Historically," he adds, "record companies hadn't focused on the over-40s market, but now..."  

"When I toured there last year," he says, "some were 60, some of them were 70s. Before that, I didn't have that 16-year-old audience."

British AC vocalist Tony Christie has seen similar growth in his fan base, thanks to his success last year of his reissued 1971 hit "(Is This the Way To) Amarillo." The UMTV single topped the Official U.K. Chart Co. list for seven weeks, selling more than 1 million copies, and boosting his touring receipts.

"When I promoted the album on the tour" prior to the single, Christie says, "I was playing smaller places and not making money because of taking out a 12-piece band. On a second tour, when the single was No. 1, I did the Albert Hall and the big city halls, which made it more viable. Interest has been tremendous, particularly y from young kids who'd never heard of me."

Of course, much of these AC artists' renaissance is driven by their core, loyal fans going to shows and buying records. Berg says U.K. mass merchants have been key to the success of several hit UMTV releases during the past two years. Those have included Engelbert Humperdinck's "His Greatest Love Songs," Christie's "Definitive Collection" and Paul Anka's "Roc'N Swings."

Such stores provide "an easy option for people that don't want to go to a conventional record shop," he notes. "That's why there's been massive growth in the over-40 market. When they do their shopping, they can pick up what they've seen advertised on TV."

"Before I toured there last year, I didn't have that 16-year-old audience."

—ANDY WILLIAMS

Within Sony BMG we have a dedicated team creating artist 'best-of' packages that are largely targeted at that market..."  

Mathis' U.K. dates this September—his first in 12 years—were prompted by the gold album "The Very Best of Johnny Mathis" that Columbia released in January, says his promoter, Danny Betesh, director of Manchester, England-based concert promoter Kennedy Street Enterprises.

Betesh also promoted Sedaka's tour and two British tours by Williams, who has charted with three compilations in the United Kingdom in recent years. Williams' popularity initially spiked alongside a growing, general interest in the lounge scene, which saw his 1967 hit "Music To Watch Girls By" soar to the top 10 in the United Kingdom in 1999 on the Official U.K. Charts Co. list.

Now, 77, Williams is recording his first studio album in roughly 20 years. "There's a great loyalty [in Britain] for established artists," he says. "I think it's because we're not walking around the streets there, and they remember the best part of you."

Williams' second coming has yielded a new generation of fans at his shows.

Web radio may not be heard nearly as much as its terrestrial counterpart. But it is becoming a bigger player, for music fans and labels alike.

In the last year, the use of Internet radio has spiked noticeably. According to data unveiled by Arbitron and Edison Media Research, the monthly audience for Internet radio among listeners 12 or older jumped 71% last year, from 37 million to 52 million. The weekly Internet radio audience jumped 50% to 30 million, after growing only 8% a year for the preceding three years.

"This is one of the biggest year-over-year increases ever," says Bill Rose, Arbitron senior VP of marketing and business development. "At this stage of the game, to see that kind of growth is noteworthy."

According to Arbitron's most recent figures as of press time, Yahoo remains the largest Internet radio destination with 2.6 million weekly listeners. America Online Radio places second at 1.9 million, with Clear Channel's collective stations trailing with 880,000 listeners—just edging out MSN, but growing more rapidly than its competitors.

Although Clear Channel is a distant third, it may be uniquely positioned. While 30 million weekly listeners certainly is a milestone for Internet radio, it is still only 12% of the overall population. Analysts say it would need to reach 20% penetration to be considered a necessary element of any media or promotional plan. As such, record labels view Internet radio as a blip on their promotional radar.

"We're dealing with it, but it's nowhere near the impact of terrestrial," says onesource who didn't want to be identified, citing sensitivities over the ongoing payola investigation by New York state Attorney General Eliot Spitzer. "That's what moves albums out of stores."

Clear Channel is leveraging this dependence on terrestrial radio—and its dominant position in it—to gain a leg up on its online rivals. In an effort to drive more traffic to its Web sites and Internet radio streams, the company has added various audio and video on-demand services to affiliated Web sites.

Now, Clear Channel can negotiate for exclusive access to new music for these services by offering promotions that run on-air and online. According to Clear Channel executive VP of online music and video ERIN HANSON, the idea is to make the Web site an extension of the on-air programming.

"We'll have half our stations participating in a promotion telling users to go to the Web site to listen to the CD when the single may not be getting heavy play," he says.

Most recently he added exclusive tracks to its "Sneak Peak" program from Rihanna, Godsmack, Carrie Underwood and Bruce Springsteen before they appear in stores. Other on-demand initiatives include streaming music videos licensed from major labels, the in-studio performance series "Striped" and an emerging-artist program called New Wave.

As a result, the total number of weekly on-demand streams has exploded 1000% since the beginning of the year, from 130,000 the first week of January to 1.4 million in mid-April. Unique monthly visitors to Clear Channel Web sites have reached 3.5 million.

Arbitron's Rose says such efforts will ultimately drive Internet radio traffic further, as one digital music service tends to raise awareness of others.

"Those kinds of unique content plays are increasingly more important," he says. "In the last year, there's been a lot of activity revolving around things like podcasting, satellite radio, downloading from iTunes and so on. That activity raised all boats digitally. In essence what we're seeing is a bunch of pent-up demand that's just caught up."
New Way To Collect Royalties In Europe?

Historic changes are afoot for songwriters and publishers worldwide whose music is broadcast via satellite, cable and the Internet from Europe.

For decades, the reciprocal relationships of the collecting societies ensured that rights holders had little or no control in Europe over their royalty collections. Soon everyone, including American songwriters and publishers, may have to offer more, or no control in Europe over their royalty collections. Songwriters and publishers may be able to choose who handles their licensing and collects their royalties for digital music—and societies may have to offer more to attract members.

In January, the European Commission—the European Union's regulatory arm—sent a Statement of Objections (SO) to 24 European societies that administers public performance rights and to CISAC, the international trade group for collecting societies. The confidential SO came after the EC investigated complaints by broadcasters RTI and Music Choice Europe over the way the societies license performance rights in recorded compositions for broadcast via satellite, cable and "new forms of exploitation."

A nonconfidential version obtained by The Publishers' Place reveals the EC's conclusion that CISAC and the societies violated EU competition laws: a CISAC model contract and the societies' contracts with each other include anti-competitive membership and territorial restrictions.

If responses to the SO from CISAC and the societies do not convince the EC otherwise, they will be forced to change the way they do business and pay hefty fines.

For most American songwriters, indie publishers and lawyers, the European licensing and royalty-collection process is shrouded in mystery, it is very different from the U.S. process, and collecting societies' agreements and accounting are confidential.

In the United States, songwriters and publishers voluntarily select one of three societies (ASCAP, BMI, SESAC) to grant performance licenses for compositions—and to collect the royalties—to those who must acquire such a license (broadcasters, webcasters, live-performance venues, etc.).

In Europe, many national laws require that certain rights be transferred to, or managed by, a local society. Only one performance rights society administers the rights in each EU country, in many countries that society also licenses mechanical (reproduction) rights.

Most societies worldwide enter into contracts with each of the other societies to license and collect royalties within its country. The local society retains a certain amount collected and pays the remainder to the society whose members' compositions generated the revenue.

During its investigation of the 24 EU societies, the EC found territorial restrictions in all of their contracts. Membership restrictions were found in 23 of them. The membership restrictions were framed so that each society agreed that it would not accept members of other collecting societies or whose nationality was that of another society's nationality.

Under the territorial provisions, each society was granted the right to license in its own country all of the compositions of the other societies' members; the society could not license the other societies' repertoire—or its own—outside that society's country.

As a result, broadcasters and digital music services must negotiate with the society in every EU country to secure a license granting rights to broadcast throughout Europe. Publishers and songwriters may only join societies in their own countries.

The EC concluded that the membership restrictions discriminated between members on the basis of nationality, prevented potential members from choosing between societies, and prevented societies from competing for members.

With the territorial restrictions in all of the contracts—that forming a network among the societies—the provisions "cement the structure" of the market. They excluded other forms of licensing; excluded other ways of organizing and competing in copyright administration; and confined each society to operate only in its own country.

The EC wrote that the restrictions also prevented broadcasters from obtaining licenses from the optimal society, prevented access to the market by new competitors capable of administering performance rights, created barriers to new ways of administering copyright by existing societies; and effectively restricted the availability of licenses only to certain existing channels of distribution.

The SO stated that without the restrictions, songwriters and publishers could increase their revenue by reducing fees from multiple societies. They could select the society that provides the best quality of service, cost and membership benefits.

CISAC says in a press release that its SO response notes that membership restrictions were voluntarily dropped from the model contract, and territorial restrictions are important for several reasons, including that broadcasters could not otherwise secure million of dollars from one society.

If the EC stands firm, American songwriters and publishers may find that they could join an EU society to collect performance income generated in Europe rather than collect through ASCAP, BMI or SESAC.

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At SunTrust Private Wealth Management, we understand the amount of hard work that goes into your music. But more than that, we understand what's important to you. For over 18 years, our client advisor have helped music industry professionals keep their finances in tune. Whether it's intellectual property lending or customized wealth management plans, we handle the details so you can spend your time doing what you love. To learn more, visit a SunTrust Private Wealth Management music banking office in Nashville, Atlanta, or Miami, or call us at 800.322.3137.
Blogging Enters The Wireless World

Nick Lachey and Jessica Simpson are back together.

In the wireless world, anyway. Both are participating in a new mobile blogging service offered by Sprint called BlogStar, which also counts Wesley Snipes, the Game and Bam Margera as contributors. The rich-and-famous stars are documenting their lifestyles with camera phones and posting pictures, text and, eventually, video to their personalized mobile blogs. Access to each blog costs $5 per month. Subscribers receive alerts when new posts are uploaded, to which they can leave replies and discuss with other subscribers.

It's just one example of how the blogging and social networking that has taken the Internet by storm is going wireless.

At a time when ringtone and wallpaper image sales are beginning to flatten, the music industry is looking for new mobile revenue streams and promotional opportunities. MySpace has a tremendously strong impact on the music industry and now the pieces are in place for a wireless version to do the same.

BlogStar CEO Keith Yokomoto —founders of the original Artist-Direct service— says he and ArtistDirect co-founder Ted Field formed BlogStar to better capitalize on MySpace's promise.

"Just imagine, if 10,000 of your fans were all connected," Yokomoto says. "You send out a blog that goes straight to their cell phone, and you’ve got an army of folks out there blogging back in real time. How powerful is that?"

On paper, the marriage of blogs and mobile phones seems like a perfect match. Everyone seems to have a mobile phone, and increasingly these devices have photo and video capture as included. Supporters say the ability to blog on the fly rather than hold off until reaching a computer adds a more intimate, real-time element to the experience.

Yet mobile blogging is no slams dunk. Camera phones may be ubiquitous, but only the most expensive actually take decent pictures, and video phones are even more expensive. What’s more, carriers face a herculean task in convincing subscribers—who for years have been trained to view their mobile devices as a tool for making voice calls—to start thinking of their phones as a mobile computer.

Companies like Text100, MyMMSSblog.com and SMS ac pioneered the mobile blog space by providing wireless subscribers a means of posting camera phone pictures and test messages online. But their services never grew much beyond their novelty factor. Sprint’s BlogStar service is one of many attempts to put a recognizable face on mobile blogging to generate interest and awareness among mobile phone subscribers—in this case by relying heavily on star power.

"It introduces it to [subscribers] and gets them to step over the chasm and get into the trial mode," says John Styers, director of data communications for Sprint.

In the last two months, however, the 800 pound gorillas of the online social networking scene began muscling their way into mobile as well. In March, MySpace—by far the most influential service with 36 million unique visitors and more than 60 million members as of March—struck a deal with startup youth-oriented wireless operator Hello. Users will be able to update their MySpace profiles with text and photos, as well as access the profiles of others, from their mobile phones. It’s expected to go live later this spring.

At the CTIA Wireless 2006 industry conference in early April, MySpace rival FaceBook—with about 10.5 million monthly unique visitors—rolled out a mobile extension to its service with Cingular, Sprint and Verizon Wireless. Members initially will only be able to post text updates to their FaceBook profiles, with photos expected over time. Others are following their lead. Interactiving’s Rabbble mobile blog service now runs on Cingular and Verizon Wireless, which charges subscribers $3 per month to join. Los Angeles-based startup Juice Wireless launched its juicercaster blog service at CTIA as well. Unlike online blogs now creating wireless extensions, Juicecaster was built from the ground up to integrate online and wireless posting and access.

Buzznet has been doing the same for the last two years, and recently won a contract with concert promoter GoldenVoice to power the integrated online and mobile social networking site of the upcoming Coachella music festival in Indio, Calif. (Billboard, March 18).

Wireless operators could not be more thrilled. The wireless industry has long believed that the successful mobile music content and applications will be those that best take advantage of the communication elements of wireless. For years, the industry has been throwing everything it had at consumers to see what would stick.

"It’s not creating technology for technology’s sake," Sprint’s Styers says about the potential for mobile blogging. "If it’s satisfying consumers’ needs and wants using technology [that] provides an entirely new use case for the mobile phone. Any time you add that kind of material impact to the daily lives of a large consumer base, it’s going to have an effect on your traffic."

AOL Music

Top Songs

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Weekly Placements</th>
<th>Total Monthly Placements</th>
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Top Videos

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<td>AMBER JONES</td>
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<td>CHUCK IT TO THE DOCTOR</td>
<td>3,600,391</td>
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<td>THE BLACK EYED PEAS</td>
<td>YOU ARE NOT ALONE</td>
<td>2,652,671</td>
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<td>TAT</td>
<td>THAT SONG THAT DOLLS</td>
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Tune is the lead single from the "Me and My Gang" album, which sits at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 for a second week. It has sold 11 million in its two weeks of release.

Bits & Briefs

A MOBILE MAVEN

Emerging hip-hop artists looking to break into mobile distribution have new allies in Maven Strategies and QMobile, which have partnered to create a direct-to-consumer mobile marketing platform.

QMobile will create ringtones and other mobile content exclusively for participating acts. Maven is spearheading artist development activities and creating marketing opportunities between artists and retail clients.

Fans can buy content from QMobile’s gtones.com Web portal or via short code, which QMobile and Maven will market through TV, radio, print and Internet advertising.

Participating acts include Quisar Lee, Big Floozy and Sity.

BEEMER PODS

BMW released a new adapter for connecting a driver’s iPod through the in-vehicle stereo system that extends the capability to six new model lines of sedans and sports wagons.

The new interface for iPod means every current BMW model vehicle now has a seamless iPod connection option.
Welcome seekers.

The Buzzcocks formed in 1976 when Pete Shelley and Howard Devoto saw the Sex Pistols and then promoted their first gig in Manchester, England. By the Pistols' second gig, in July of 1976, Shelley and Devoto had recruited Steve Diggle and John Maher and the Buzzcocks opened the show. Their four-track EP "Spiral Scratch" would trigger the independent label movement, and Shelley and Diggle are still swinging. After a quiet '80s they returned and, with their current rhythm sections of Tony Barber and Phil Barker, have put together two great albums in a row, including their latest, "Flat-Pack Philosophy." Go get it, classic punk fans.

Rhino has a best-of-collection from the Replacements coming in June with two new tracks. Paul Westerberg and Tommy Stinson reunited and Chris Mars added backing vocals.

Arthur Lee, frontman of the visionary Love, has leukemia and, we're hearing, no health insurance. Look for benefit concerts in New York and Los Angeles in May or June. Among other things, Lee's first three albums with Love are considered classics, culminating in 1968's "Forever Changes." He was also responsible for arranging Jimi Hendrix's first recording session, which was on Lee's composition "My Diary," recorded by R&B singer Rosa Lee Brooks. He was the first psychedelic black artist, before Hendrix, Sly Stone or George Clinton.

The Raconteurs changed their name to the Saviours for Australia because of a little-known jazz band with the same name. Intake deeply, there's revolution in the air. See you next week.

For more of this column, go to billboard.com.
Indie Revolt Up North

Canada’s Leading Independent Labels Depart CRIA

TORONTO—Canada’s music community is reeling over the resignation of six leading Canadian independent labels from the Canadian Recording Industry Assn.

In a letter to CRIA president Graham Henderson, the companies stated: “It has become increasingly clear that CRIA’s position on several important music industry issues are not aligned with our best interests as independent recording companies.”

The indie revolt came in response to CRIA’s March 15 filing to federal government regulator the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission on its imminent commercial review of radio policy.

Sources describe the six labels’ exit as a stinging rebuke for the CRIA, coming only weeks ahead of the May 15 start of CRTC hearings in Ottawa.

The April 12 letter was signed by representatives of Anthen Records (Bruce Cockburn, Blackie & the Rodeo Kings), True North Records (Sarah McLachlan, Linus Entertainment), the Children’s Group (Susan Hammond) and Aquarius Records (Sunn 41).

The CRIA “is advocating things we don’t believe in,” says Donald Tarlton, chairman of the Donald K. Donald Group, which operates Aquarius Records.

The labels complain that:
- The CRIA’s proposals are too focused on the interests of major labels.
- The letter notes that the CRIA’s CRTC submission stated it had decided “to advocate solely on behalf of the four major foreign multinational labels.”
- Suggested changes to Canadian content (CanCon) quotas will negatively affect the growth of independent music.

The CRTC set the quota of domestic music for radio at 35% in 1998. The CRIA wants that level to remain, but has proposed new methodology prioritizing records by emerging artists. It also suggests easing current quota restrictions on Canadian artists recording or co-writing outside the country.

“What are foreign-owned, multinational companies doing commenting on Canada’s cultural policies and funding programs?” Tarlton asks.

- The CRIA wants to reallocate funding from the Foundation to Assist Canadian Talent on Records, diverting it away from independents.

Toronto-based FACTOR distributes funds from the federal government and Canadian broadcasters to companies in Canada’s independent sector.

The CRIA is suggesting that a portion of FACTOR monies could be allocated instead to Radio Star Maker Fund, a broadcaster’s initiative that supports the marketing of recordings by mainstream Canadian artists, whether or not they are independent labels.

True North president Bernie Finkelstein says, “We do not share the CRIA’s vision of Canadian content or of FACTOR. The best way to show that was to resign.”

Henderson describes the labels’ decision to leave as “evolutionary”: the indie labels involved say he spent a week trying to coax them to remain. “We understand why they are doing what they are doing,” Henderson says. “The key issue is, ‘Who speaks for who?’ They disagree with us on only two or three key points.”

The indie labels’ say the chasm is bigger than Henderson claims. “Our interests are now different,” from the CRIA’s, Anthen Records VP Pepi Cecconi says. “We are far apart on issues now.”

Insiders suggest several of the independent labels may leave the CRIA in the coming weeks, which could leave the CRIA’s longstanding claim to represent Canada’s record industry in tatters.

The CRIA, which was founded in 1965, operates with an upper tier of four “Class A” members: Universal Music Canada, EMI Music Canada, Sony BMG Music Canada and Warner Music Canada. The second-tier—“Class B”—includes independent labels and domestic manufacturers. It is reduced to 22 members following these departures.

Class A members have voting privileges and pay a significant—though unspecified—annual membership. Class B members pay $600 annually but do not have voting privileges. Many complain they are rarely consulted on industry issues.

“While I certainly know how to control the purse strings of CRIA, I found it difficult to continue to support a trade association that doesn’t represent the common goals of all its constituents,” the Children’s Group president Michelle Henderson says.

The departing labels are among the 175 members of the 30-year-old Canadian Independent Record Production Assn., which represents the interests of the English-language independent music sector in Canada.

Because of their shared interests, the CRIA and CIRPA often work in tandem on key issues. However, CIRPA strongly supports FACTOR. It has also put its own proposal before the CRTC suggesting CanCon be boosted to 45% and vigorously supports Canada’s levy on blank recording media, which Henderson recently criticized (Billboard, April 8).

... 

Veteran rock band RUSH’S label Anthem Records is exiting the CRIA.

>>UMGI ADDS BRAND

Former MTV executive Harriett Brand has been appointed senior VP of business development at London-based Universal Music Group International, effective immediately.

In her new role, Brand will be closely involved in shaping the company’s new business development program by fostering alignments with UMGI partners around the world.

Brand reports to UMGI chairman/CEO Lucian Grainge. She split from MTV last May after 13 years serving most recently as senior VP of music for MTV Networks International in London. Prior to that, she held various senior roles with EMI in the United States and Europe.

—Lars Brandle

>>SPAIN BIZ HONORS RODRIGUEZ

Veteran Cuban troubadour Silvio Rodriguez will become the fifth artist to receive a Latin music lifetime achievement honor at Spain’s annual Premios de la Musica awards when he performs at the ceremony.

The honorary award was announced prior to the nationally televised event by awards organizer the Academy of Music Arts & Sciences. The winners of awards in 28 categories according to the rules will be announced at the ceremony. Winners are selected by members of authors and publishers society SGAE and artists association AIE.

Rodriguez, 59, was a leading light of Cuba’s “New Trova” singer-songwriter movement that emerged during the 1960s. He released his debut album “Días Y Flores” (Egrem) in 1975 and currently operates his own studio, label and publishing companies in Cuba.

—Howell Llewellyn

>>WILLIAMS CALLS IN

British hitmaker Robbie Williams has joined forces with cell-phone carrier T-Mobile International and handset manufacturer Sony Ericsson to launch its first branded mobile phone in Europe.

The “Robbie Williams Edition” phones are manufactured by Sony Ericsson as part of its W300 Walkman line, featuring a 7-track capacity MP3 player. The Williams phone will be issued to coincide with Williams’ June 23 Dublin concert, which kicks off the European leg of his world tour.

The branded model features an embossed Williams logo on the back and comes with a live recording, a ringtone, an animation clip activated every time the phone is switched on and a Williams sound bite triggered by receipt of a text message. It will be available at retail throughout the nine European markets in which T-Mobile operates, with prices varying according to local tariffs.

The phone was developed through an arrangement among Williams’ management company IE Music, his label EMI Music and Sony Ericsson.

—Juliana Koranteng

>>DIGITAL DOMINATES U.K. SINGLES

Legal downloads accounted for 78% of all U.K. singles/ single track sales in first-quarter 2006, according to labels body the BPI. The figures for the three months ending March 31 are based on point-of-sale data collated by charts compiler the Official U.K. Charts Co.

According to the OCC, single-track downloads in the quarter were up 152% year-on-year to 11.5 million units. In 2005, downloads generated 44% of all singles sales.

Compared with Q1 in 2005, the combined digital and physical singles market registered 44% growth to 14.8 million units. Value figures were not published.

—Lars Brandle

>>ITALY DEBUTS DIGITAL CHART

Universal Music Italy pop-rock vocalist Gianna Nannini’s “Set nell’aria” was the first No. 1 on labels body FIMI’s inaugural digital singles chart, published April 10.

Mary J. Blige’s “One” (Universal) and Madonna’s “Sorry” (Warner Bros.) took second and third place, respectively.

The chart is based on sales data gathered by Nielsen SoundScan from 10 digital stores, including iTunes Music Store, MSN Music Club Italy and Tiscali Italy. Sales figures were not published.

The Nannini single has been on FIMI’s AC Nielsen-complied sales chart for the same week. FIMI does yet include digital sales data in that chart.

According to FIMI, more than 14 million tracks were bought through legal digital channels in Italy during 2005, representing 4% of the total market. IFPI figures put total sales of recorded music in Italy at $669 million in 2005.

—Mark Woroden
With New Portal Partner, Indies Enter China

LONDON—Britain’s musicians have a new route to China. After establishing a presence in Beijing last year, the Assn. of Independent Music has helped open up new channels for British artists in the world’s most populous country.

The indie labels’ trade body has sealed what it describes as a groundbreaking, promotion-oriented deal to stream music clips through Chinese Web portal Sina, which boasts 180 million registered users.

AIM chairwoman/CEO Alison Wenham put ink to paper April 13 for what promised to be a memorable first trip to Shanghai.

“We’re now in a strong position by having a very big partner,” she says. “It’s a market opportunity that needs to be developed, and Sina is the biggest ISP in China. It’s a very good starting point.”

If Sina is the pipeline, then the British music sector is setting about pushing quality content through it. “We’ve been in Asia for 10 years, and this is the most significant deal we’ve been involved with. It’s the most exciting because it’s really accepting the Internet as mass media,” says Stuart Watson, president of Singapore-based marketing and promotion specialist SWAT Enterprises. The agreement was brokered by SWAT, which established an office for AIM in Beijing last May.

“Sina is doing a great thing for the [music] industry,” comments Sonja Chen, managing director of independent artist management company/record label Oriental Sky in Shanghai. “The Internet is a very powerful media in China, and there is a large audience there interested in indie music while there’s no product in the physical market. So to get the music online will speed uptake of local and foreign indie music.”

Through the pact, Beijing-based Sina will offer British video content via a dedicated “U.K. Music” area of its portal. Basement Jaxx, Stereophonics and the Prodigy are among the acts whose repertoire is being made available.

It is unlikely, however, that the Prodigy’s infamous clip for “Smack My Bitch Up” would pass China’s censors. Those same censorship rules, Watson notes, were applied to the Rolling Stones, who rolled into China for a brace of concerts in early April with a set list devoid of such risque hits as “Brown Sugar.”

“You have to accept that in China there is still a degree of censorship,” Watson notes. “As long as the artists that we work with accept that this is a different country, and that you have to play it by the rules in that country, then it will be fine.”

According to IFPI estimates, international repertoire accounts for only 5% of legitimate sales in China, so finding any vehicle for local exposure could be seen as a victory for overseas labels.

TV is limited to state-run CCTV and a handful of channels operated by local governments; radio typically does not devote much airtime to foreign acts.

“Opportunities to use TV to promote foreign artists are limited, MTV Mandarin is legally only distributed in Guangdong province on a 24-hour basis while elsewhere it is syndicated through hotels and program blocks on CCTV,” notes Vivek Couto, executive director of consulting firm Media Partners Asia.

Asian executives say that competing for the limited airtime against local music/entertainment content combines to crowd out all but the biggest foreign artists.

“Sina’s video-streaming services, including TV programming, news clips and full-feature films, recently achieved a landmark of 1 million unique users per day, an indication that it is the ideal platform to promote overseas brands and artists,” Couto adds.

Last year, U.K. Trade and Investment (a government organization) financially supported the opening of AIM’s Beijing office and helped develop the strategy that led to the Sina deal. The UKTI has also helped fund various of AIM trade missions to China in 2004 and 2005.

For the time being, the content covered under the new pact is restricted to track samples on a promotional basis, as legislation is still being developed to reimburse labels for streaming in China. “No money has changed hands,” Watson says. Nevertheless, the agreement contains provisions for British labels appropriately remunerated should this situation change. And when it does, it is anticipated that downloads, ringtones and other digital music products will become part of the offering.

“We’re looking at it as a platform to promote British music and popularize it so we can create avenues to monetize it later on,” Watson says. “I hope that by the end of 2006, we would see some touring, some ringtone money coming in and possibly some downloads. If we get just a fraction of the 180 million people who go to the site, we can make some of the acts popular quite quickly.”

Additional reporting by Tim Culpan in Taipei, Taiwan.
House Of Blues Sets Sights On Southeast

Perhaps seeing an opportunity in a reduced Live Nation profile in the Southeast, House of Blues Concerts is beefing up its presence in the region.

Julie Gejer has promoted Chuck Dinkins to talent buyer and hired former Live Nation talent buyer Shari Pessar. Dinkins and Pessar will book an extensive list of venues in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee.

Both will report to Orlando, Fla.-based HOB VP Jim Mallonee, who oversees programming, marketing and promotion for all the region’s HOB-produced festivals and shows, including those booked at Atlanta’s HiFi Buys Amphitheatre and Booth Amphitheatre in Cary, N.C. (near Raleigh).

Although primarily responsible for booking House of Blues Orlando and Fort Lauderdale, Pessar will also book or co-book other HOB-promoted venues in the region. Pessar was a senior talent buyer for Live Nation in Florida. She began her career in the concert business at Fantasma Productions in 1992, and later worked for Cellar Door Concerts as a buyer for a series of clubs in Jacksonville, Fla., Orlando and Fort Lauderdale.

Dinkins will serve as primary talent buyer for House of Blues Myrtle Beach (S.C.), Center Stage at the Plex in Charleston, S.C., and Sloss Furnaces outdoor venue in Birmingham, Ala. Like Pessar, Dinkins will also program or co-book other venues throughout the Southeast. The former professional skateboarder joined HOB in 2011 and was an assistant talent buyer.

Live Nation now books Nashville and Birmingham out of its Houston office. But Mallonee stops short of saying HOB is making aggressive moves in the region to take advantage of the competition’s reduced profile.

“House of Blues is committed to the market and the region, and we believe on-site or near-site dedicated resources is a great way to serve the region,” Mallonee says.

There are operations, production and marketing personnel in Orlando, Atlanta and Myrtle Beach.

By being on the ground more often in specific markets, “we can simply be more on-site, or near-site dedicated resources is the key to success. That’s how we build the region. It’s our strategy,” he adds.

NO ‘M’ IN ATLANTA

As pointed out in last issue’s Madonna story (Billboard, April 22), her upcoming Confessions tour, which stops in fewer than 25 cities, is skipping entire regions of the country, including the Southeast. That’s bad news for Atlanta’s Phillips Arena.

“We can be more efficient and in more one-on-one positions with venues, radio, sponsors, artists and everyone involved in events.”

—JIM MALLONEE, HOUSE OF BLUES CONCERTS
Music Biz Puts ‘Signatures’ On Deal With Baseball

Whether it is rock’n’roll at an NFL tailgate party or the stadium PA blaring Metallicca’s “Enter Sandman” when New York Yankees reliever Mariano Rivera takes the mound, sports and music have always gone hand in hand.

The latest example comes from artist licensing and merchandising company Signatures Network’s new partnership with Major League Baseball’s online unit, MLB Advanced Media. MLB.com will execute the Web sites and online ticketing, merchandise, fan clubs and other efforts for Signatures acts including buyO chute, Tom Petty, Madonna and Lynyrd Skynyrd.

Signatures Network will combine its relationships with artists and an understanding of their needs with mlb.com’s expansive new media infrastructure and information technology. The two entities will split profits after overhead and artist royalties (billboard.biz, April 12).

In the as-yet-unnamed joint venture, Signatures will continue to work with the artists, mlb.com will control the technology, and both will create cross-promotional activities for artists. It’s “all about the execution,” Signatures CEO Dell Furano says. “MLB.com has this state-of-thethe-art infrastructure and all elements of the technology...and they have done a remarkable job of building the online business of Major League Baseball.”

For mlb.com, the partnership expands the reach of new-media infrastructure that has seen mlb.com grow to 2 billion visitors annually in slightly more than five years. During baseball season, up to 7 million fans access mlb.com daily.

MLB also dips into what Furano gauges as the $1 billion-plus artist Web site business, which generates revenue from ticket sales, fan club subscriptions, downloads, merchandise, CDs and DVDs, and advertising. “This revenue will be drawn from other sources as the artists sell more tickets and music off their own sites,” Furano says.

MLB Advanced Media generated revenue totaling $195 million in 2005 and could improve that by as much as 70% this year, says Jim Gallagher, senior VP of corporate communications for mlb.com, an entity owned equally by all 30 major league teams. He adds that non-baseball ventures will bring in as much as $40 million this year for the company, with about half of that coming from the Signatures sponsorship.

In the next 30 days, the venture will debut new sites for Petty, Lindsay Lohan and Rob Thomas. Their Web sites and those built for other artists “will focus on selling music, selling tickets, selling merchandise and building up the fan base worldwide with all the data that goes along with that,” Furano says.

Privately held Signatures generated revenue of more than $130 million in 2005, managing official sites for such bands as U2, Kiss and others. But Furano says mlb.com’s “abilities on webcasting, online ticketing, e-commerce marketing, etc., were significantly advanced beyond what Signatures or other companies in this space were doing.”

For its part, mlb.com will launch 20-30 new artist Web sites in the next year. “Building those Web sites, and providing content editors and infrastructure is a major job,” he adds.

The huge success of U2.com in particular, which helped make the band’s 2005-06 Vertigo tour a success through a massive pre-sale, points toward more artists boosting their Web presence, Furano believes.

“Artists’ Web sites will be a growing tool to promote their franchise, their fan base and combine all elements of their career, selling their music, concert tickets, merchandise and providing the source for fans’ timely, updated information,” Furano says. “We’ve been able to show the artists that by using their Web sites they can generate new sources of revenue and promote their franchise directly.”

Artist relationships already in place will help the mlb.com/Signatures alliance move quickly. “From our merchandising relationships we already have contracts with the artists, we have royalty reporting with the artists, we have almost all their artwork and imagery digitally archived, we’re on the road with them,” Furano says. “With Major League Baseball and their tools, this will provide a lot more marketing services to the artists.”

The Web sites are owned and controlled by the artists, Furano says. A comprehensive artist Web site has to “speak to the artist’s franchise in a way that’s not too commercial and that reflects the artist’s image.”

It is a concept mlb.com is well familiar with. “Baseball has individual stars, as does music, and we already have the ideal sites for [baseball stars] Alex Rodriguez, Barry Bonds and Derek Jeter,” Gallagher says.

The huge amount of activity on the online secondary ticket market has changed the business and will fuel interest in these sites by artists and fans. “I spend a lot of time with artists showing them what their Web site can be,” Furano says. “It’s really important that everyone collaborates—the manager, the agent, the promoter—to make certain that the fans get the best tickets and they not end up in the secondary market.”

Geared Up And Ready To Go

New York Ballrooms Hammerstein And Grand Offer Multimedia Opportunities

The building has been sitting on West 34th Street in Manhattan for nearly 100 years since Oscar Hammerstein built it as the Manhattan Center Ballroom. “Hidden in plain sight,” says Peter Ross, president/general counsel of Manhattan Center Productions.

Few people know the imposing structure, which houses two live venues—the Hammerstein Ballroom and the Grand Ballroom—also has two newly upgraded state-of-the-art TV studios, two recording studios and two video postproduction editing suites. All these assets are interconnected, giving the studios the ability to capture performances at either venue as high-quality audio and video products.

“We can offer our clients a complete service experience and fulfill every possible event and production need,” Ross says. In addition to their traditional use for recording and mixing projects, the two audio studios have been elements in the production and broadcast of five-concert programming, including CMT’s “Crossroads” series, VH1’s “Storytellers,” an Oxygen Media TV concert by the Go-Go Dolls and a DVD from veteran reggae artist Beres Hammond. “Because of all we have in the house, [we] can create a whole variety of products,” Ross says, “whether it is a live album, a television show or whether it is recorded live for webcasting, later broadcast or a DVD.”

The studio can also be used for marketing purposes. “Last year, country music band the Beggars did their album release here with a live webcast, and then they also added broadcast into movie theaters around the country,” Ross says.

Tom Forrest, president of Talight TV, has produced three shows for “Crossroads” at the studios including an installment with Dave Matthews and Emmylou Harris shot in the Grand Ballroom, and says the facility’s one-stop approach is unique in New York. “The Hammerstein Ballroom is also so appealing with its great natural design and producer-friendly atmosphere,” he adds.

Studio manager Obie O’Brien says that some artists and managers still don’t realize what’s available. “Bringing in an audio or video truck is not necessary,” he says. Both recording studios are equipped with Pro Tools, and there is also a 48-track Studer tape machine available. Also on staff is chief technician Joel Scheuneman, one of the audio facilities (Studio 7) was designed 10 years ago with surround sound in mind because “of our history and of recording orchestral music for film scores in the Grand Ballroom, which is renowned for its acoustics for orchestral music.” Studio 7 offers a custom-modified Neve VR for surround monitoring.

Newly hired director of video productions and operations Daphne Walter says the entire operation will soon be high definition. The facility already has nine Ikegami 720 HD cameras. Two Profile digital servers offer 10 channels and 200 hours of storage. And SD1 Kalypso switches with six channels of digital video effects are new for each control room.
Making The Same Mistake Twice?
Physical Retailers Couldn't Stop The Death Of The Single, But Digital Stores Might

A

s the music industry moves further into the digital era, major label executives are wondering if record companies will make the same mistakes twice. Will the foibles of the physical world happen all over again?

It took 50 years for retail evolution and consolidation to get to the point where accounts like Wal-Mart, Best Buy, Target, and—just you wait—Starbucks can pick their moments to push the majors around. So far most major label execs seem to be oblivious to the fact that they are behind the 8-ball from day one in the digital world. If you don't believe me, look at the behemoth-like entities they are dealing with in that space: Apple, Microsoft, AOL and Yahoo. And let's not forget the mobile phone carriers.

Apple's iTunes already practically dictates pricing strategies, and you can be sure if CEO Steve Jobs wants pricing and positioning money for the iTunes front page, a crack would appear in the majors' so-called united opposition to that. And once one of them gave in, it would very quickly become a slippery slope.

That battle is yet to come. But other battles are already taking shape.

Earlier this year, Island Def Jam Music Group broke from the industry strategy of allowing download stores to sell singles as soon as the song got radio airplay. It withheld Ne-Yo's "So Sick" from being sold as an individual track until the album it was on, "In My Own Words," came out Feb. 28. That album debuted at No. 1 on The Billboard 200.

Also, Atlantic Records withheld T.I.'s "What You Know" from online digital download until the "King" album streeted March 28. However, a promotion with Sprint allowed its customers to download the song.

Those moves remind all of what happened in the single. In the early 1990s, labels began to hold off on issuing physical singles for songs whose radio play was escalating. Before long, some hit radio songs were never issued as singles and by the end of the 1990s, that configuration was all but history.

Labels feared that singles cannibalized album sales and forced shoppers to buy the higher-priced, more profitable albums for the one song they wanted. You would think that strategy wouldn't work in the digital download world, but then maybe you never worked at a major label.

"Like everybody else, we are experimenting with different strategies in the cyber world, to see what impacts album sales and genre sales," one senior distribution executive says. "And I don't think anybody has any answers yet."

Even T.I.'s equation (up-and-coming artist + huge radio play = no commercial track availability until street date = first-week album sales of more than 500,000 units) doesn't yield a clear-cut answer. "Sure, T.I. had explosive sales," says the head of sales at an East Coast-based major label. "But you could argue that it was his moment. Who knows if the lack of a single impacted album sales?"

Whether it did or didn't, another label executive thinks that is the wrong question. "How can we go to Congress and want copyright protection, and then on the other hand not give the consumers what they want?" he asks. "We want to change habits from stealing and then we turn around and encourage piracy by telling customers the song they want is not commercially available."

Those mixed messages are only getting louder and more frequent. Recently, for example, Epic rereleased Shakira's "Oral Fixation Vol. 2," with new track "Hips Don't Lie," featuring Wyclef Jean.

Sources say the label wanted the bonus song to be available only as part of an album purchase in the cyber world, not as an individual download. It's unclear what happened to those plans, but the rereleased version of "Oral Fixation Vol. 2," which streeted March 28, is not available on iTunes as of April 17.

Major label executives are no doubt sincere when they say they don't want to repeat the mistakes of their past—it's just that they may not be able to help themselves. Luckily, then, that it seems these new digital companies have learned more from the major label missteps of the '90s than the major labels did. Sources suggest that in the Shakira case, Epic ran afoul of an iTunes policy that doesn't let music manufacturers play games with track availability.

It's this very power dynamic that is so different in the physical and digital spaces. In the brick and mortar world, labels blame to blame poor customer service for retail woes. They forget that merchants are at the mercy of label policies that eroded margins; killed the single; gave (and give) exclusives to big box merchants; and see songs released out of synch with an album's street date or in versions that are commercially unavailable.

All of which means that, far too often, record store merchants have to tell customers that whatever song they are looking for is not available the way they want it. Apple almost certainly sees the role the labels played in that development.

But Apple and the other new, massive e-tailers have the power to ensure that if the labels want to shoot themselves in the foot, they don't hit e-commerce, too.---

Epic wanted a new SHAKIRA track with Wyclef Jean added only on digital versions of the rereleased "Oral Fixation Vol. 2."
KINGS OF THE BEACH
Spalding Taps Rock Group Stereo Fuse To Move Volleys

Whatever your preference—softball, volleyball, football, soccer, baseball—top sports-ball manufacturers Spalding makes it one for you. As the NBA’s official brand, the company is best-known for basketball, but now it would like to get another ball in the air: youth-centric beach volleyball.

Taking a cue from the action-sports market, which has championed music on numerous fronts, Spalding has tapped under-the-radar rock group Stereo Fuse to help with this effort.

The co-branded partnership centers around a value-added gift with the purchase of a Spalding all-weather King of the Beach volleyball: a Stereo Fuse sampler, which includes the full version of “I’m in Love” and snippets of four album tracks.

The songs offer a preview into Stereo Fuse’s new album, “All That Remains,” due June. The group, previously with Wind & Wire, is now signed to Tosec Cove.

Partnering with a band like Stereo Fuse “makes Spalding identifiable with the youth market—specifically the under-30 crowd,” says Billy Berger, president of Brand X Marketing, which serves as the marketing arm of Spalding’s volleyball division. Berger notes this is the first time Spalding is incorporating music in this manner into a retail promotion. “Volleyball is a sleepy category for Spalding,” he says. But by using music to help with the brand’s identity, Spalding is poised to go from “sleepy” to hip and cool in the eyes (and ears) of volleyball enthusiasts.

Tucson Cove VP of artist relations and development Rob Evanoff was only too happy to sign on to this deal, which, up to this point, has involved no exchange of money between band and brand.

“As a small company, with the retail landscape shrinking, we look for all ways to work outside the box,” Evanoff says. “And when you realize how big volleyball is — particularly beach volleyball — it just makes sense to get a band like Stereo Fuse involved.”

It also helps that the band has the same under-30 demo as beach volleyball, Evanoff adds. The King of the Beach volleyball retail price for $40 and is available at Target, Sports Authority and Big 5, among other retailers. It will also be featured in the Spike Nishimura spring catalog, which caters to volleyball enthusiasts.

The potential reach for Stereo Fuse is substantial. In addition to the CD sampler, Spalding is featuring Stereo Fuse on its Web site as well as on kingsoffbeach.com. Tucson Cove, meanwhile, is linking Spalding to its site. Berger and Stereo Fuse manager Wil Sharpe, who is also a beach volleyball player, are in discussions to have the band perform at events sponsored by King of the Beach, including the U.S. Junior Beach Volleyball Tournament.

A possible tour of “volley bars” (sports bars with indoor volleyball courts) is also being discussed, Berger says. Evanoff adds that the label is in the process of securing Stereo Fuse to perform at the upcoming Bank of the West Beach Games in Huntington Beach, Calif. Surely, the King of the Beach will figure into this.

WELCOME HOME: Sheraton Hotels & Resorts, like other hotel chains (can you say Hilton?), is in the midst of an overall image revamp. A couple of weeks ago, the Starwood property launched a $20 million campaign worldwide. Dubbed “Warm Welcome,” the campaign encompasses TV ads, phone cards, prepaid postcards and a signature lobby scent.

The campaign’s core words include “warm,” “comforting” and “connections.” In essence, Warm Welcome invites guests to “belong.” To help with this, a new, nearly chiller-up version of “We Belong”—a top five hit for Pat Benatar in 1984—is heard in the 15- and 30-second spots.

The Deutsch agency created the ads (which are scheduled to air through the fall) and the specially designed phone cards and postcards.

“The campaign revolves around the universal emotion of feeling welcome,” Deutsch senior VP/group creative director Mike DePippo says. “And though it’s a romantic song, certain lyrics of ‘We Belong’ speak to that.”

While DePippo will not comment on whether his agency will use music for future Sheraton spots, he says it should do so, the Warm Welcome campaign will return to old favorites rather than new songs. Stay tuned.

The Indies

Artist’s Yellow Tangerine Imprint Begins To Ripen

French chanteuse Keren Ann Zeidell originally started Yellow Tangerine to release side projects outside of her deal with Blue Note. But once the record label signed with Warner Music Group’s Alternative Distribution Alliance—and she found more artists—Zeidell started to view the label as a fully functioning imprint.

Zeidell, who records under the name Keren Ann, recently signed young composer Nico Muhly, who has collaborated with Bjork and Antony & The Johnsons. Yellow Tangerine will release his debut later this year.

“At first, Yellow Tangerine was meant to be a tool for personal projects,” Zeidell says. “But the opportunity to release Nico’s music was new and exciting.” It will be Yellow Tangerine’s second release.

The label’s first release, however, is likely the one that piqued the interest of ADA. On June 20, Yellow Tangerine will release the self-titled debut from Lady & Bird, which is Zeidell’s side project with longtime collaborator Bardid Johannsson.

The album was originally released in Europe in 2003 on French imprint Labels, and isn’t too far a departure from Keren Ann’s 2005 Blue Note release, “Nola.” That album has sold 17,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, and 50,000 in Europe, according to EMI.

Zeidell says it was manager Tom Sarig who brought her to the distributor. Zeidell and Johannsson say they are considering some live dates to support the release, and are relieved that the album is finally being issued outside of Europe.

“It had been a burden to our U.S. fans that they had to order the record from Europe,” she says. “We wanted to make it easier for them.”

The two say they did not approach EMI about releasing Lady & Bird outside of France, preferring to keep it separate from Zeidell’s solo work.

SWAG FOR SPOKES: While most indie labels look to the Internet and other new-media ventures to promote their artists, Trustkill Records was inspired by a more traditional form of media: the baseball card.

Starting with the release of Bleeding Through’s “The Truth” in January, the Trenton, N.J., rock-based label rolled out a series of artist-branded trading cards, each with stats and tidbits about the act on the back of the card.

Trustkill founder Josh Grabelle says he’s been surprised at the number of inquiries about the cards the label has received, given that most of artists are already all over the Web. “It’s enough interest, Grabelle says, to have him planning another series.

Within about a week of the Bleeding Through album coming out, we started receiving emails from fans offering $200 for a set,” he says. “That’s insane. If someone collects them all, I’m sure it’ll be on eBay.”

Right now, there’s one card for each of Trustkill’s 15 acts inserted at random in all of the label’s CDs. Up next will be individual cards for each band member, and Grabelle hopes to have retailers involved by the end of this year. He’s thinking of offering a complete set as a value-added item for fans who purchase more than one Trustkill CD.

The label has another notable promotion up its sleeve. When it releases the debut album from Long Island, N.Y.-based hardcore act This Is Hell on May 16, initial pressings will contain a coupon for a free T-shirt redeemable only at the band’s live shows.

“It’s getting harder and harder to break a band and develop an artist, and kids are getting spoiled,” Grabelle says. “They expect something extra if they buy a CD.”
When Doves Fly
Morgan, Chapman Caught Soaring At Gospel Music Awards

Well known in the Christian community as a "songwriter's songwriter," Cindy Morgan has had her songs recorded by Michael W. Smith, Rachael Lampa, Sandi Patty, Michael English and Jacci Velasquez, among others.

But now, artists in other musical genres are cutting her tunes. Morgan told Billboard backstage at the Gospel Music Assn. Awards that India Arie just recorded Morgan's tune "Summer" for her forthcoming album, with Rascal Flatts providing background vocals.

Morgan is also an accomplished artist in her own right, as she reminded everyone earlier this year with the release of "Postcards." The album was her return to recording after a five-year hiatus in which she devoted time to her family and her songwriting.

Easily one of the best albums of the year, "Postcards" reintroduced Morgan's music to Christian consumers. It is also getting a mainstream push in Canada. (An East Tennessee native, Morgan splits her time between homes in Nashville and Red Deer, Alberta.)

"They did a country mix of 'Postcards' that is playing on country radio in Canada," she said. "We also rerecorded the song 'Mother' and did an edgier version. They are going to release that to pop radio through Sony BMG Canada. It's cool and unexpected.

Morgan said it feels good to be back. "I'm just so grateful to still be doing what I love," she said. "As a mom, I'm trying to keep it in balance. I'm trying to make sure it doesn't rule my life, but it's wonderful to be doing it again." Morgan said she was among the tribute to contemporary Christian music veteran Steven Curtis Chapman. Third Day's Mac Powell, Jeremy Camp, Casting Crowns' Mark Hall and David Crowder performed a medley of Chapman's hits including "I Will Be Here." "More to This Life" and "For the Sake of the Call."

André Crouch, Bryan Duncan and Styger's Michael Sweet spoke of Chapman's many accomplishments and his impact on the industry. It was a memorable night for Chapman as the Sparrow Records artist picked up his 50th Dove trophy, making him the most awarded artist in the GMA's history.

"I felt honored," an emotional Chapman told Billboard. "It's amazing how you can receive awards and that means a great deal, but tonight I just felt very honored and that blew me away. But what was so sweet about it is I felt like Christ was being honored as people were honoring me. It was like people saying, 'It's not you. We know that: It's what Christ has done through you and the inspiration he put in our lives through you. 'That's unbelievable.'"

**DEVELOPMENTS:** The industry seems to go through cycles where new indie labels become successful, then get snapped up by a major. The Christian community appears to be in acquisition mode these days. Flicker Records, the scrappy indie launched by Audio Adrenaline members, was recently purchased by Provident Music Group. Now, according to a source close to the situation, Inpop Records is on the market. It looks like Word Records is the leading suitor for the label, founded by Newsboys frontman Peter Furler and manager Wes Campbell, but another company is said to be looking at the acquisition as well. Stay tuned.

Zondervan and Inspired by Media Group are releasing a new audio version of the Bible featuring the voices of some of the top names in the entertainment industry. "Inspired By... The Bible Experience" will feature Blair Underwood as Jesus, Angela Bassett as Esther, Denzel Washington as Solomon and Cuba Gooding Jr. as Judas. It will also feature Juanita Bynum, Kirk Franklin, Shirley Caesar, Mary Mary and Faith Evans, among others. Look for the project to hit shelves this fall.

**Latin Notas**
LEILA COBO lcobobillboard.com

Why Spanish Matters

I am writing in defense of Spanish.

Spanish, as in, "the Spanish language." Spanish, as in "El idioma es cultura" (language is culture), a mantra that was drilled into my brain as a schoolchild. But here in the United States, for the past couple of years, another mantra has been going around. It is the one that says that being Latin is a state of mind.

You don't speak Spanish?

Hey, that's OK. Just feel the Latino. Isn't your last name Garcia? Don't you like tacos and empanadas? Don't you listen to Maná, Daddy Yankee or Kumbia Kings? What's that? You don't know what the heck they're singing about?

Don't even worry about that. Just feel that Latino. Baila!

Of course, you can identify yourself as Latino by virtue of ethnicity, heritage and tradition, if not by language.

What bothers me is not the fact that many Latinos who are born here no longer speak Spanish (how many Italian-Americans speak Italian, after all?).

Instead, it bugs me that there is a major corporate message going around that endorses the lack of language skills while greatly capitalizing on the heritage.

And that message quite often comes from people whose only nexus to being Latino is the possibility of making money.

We all know that the fastest-growing minority in the United States are Hispanics. And, among Hispanics, the fastest-growing segment is young Hispanics.

According to the Pew Hispanic Center study from information provided by the U.S. Census Bureau, Latinos comprise around 14% of the U.S. population, but they account for around 20% of kids under the age of 16, and 17% of 18- to 24-year-olds. Most telling, 92% of Hispanic kids under 10 are U.S.-born. This group will invariably slip into English, the language used in schools. That is why much of the developing media—including music and the upcoming MTV Tr3s—that aims for that young Hispanic audience is bilingual.

But, to state, as many do, that language is not an important—even essential—part of the culture, is not just wrong; it actually leads to a trivialization of that culture. Look no further than music. Take the beautiful, opening stanzas of Armando Manzanero's classic "Somos Novios" ("It's impossible"): "Somos novios, pues los sentimos mutuo amor profundo." Now, try translating that ("We are going steady, because we feel deep, mutual love"). Ugh! Try saying that to your girlfriend.

Here is a likely default song: "Mami, estás buena, Goza, baila." The Latin song written by people who can't write in Spanish.

It is incredibly ironic that the movement to undermine Spanish comes at the same time that there is an enormous retro acculturation movement underway.

A generation that was taught to hide their Latin heritage and who—as shown in the HBO movie "Walk Out"—sometimes literally got the Spanish beaten out of them when they spoke it in school, are now moving to reclaim their language and culture.

On April 27, Spanish-language network Telemundo will air the Billboard Latin Music Awards, which celebrate music made in Spanish. The show has seen rising ratings in the past years.

Speaking Spanish is not just important culturally, it's also a practical asset in a shrinking world. The social and economic benefits of speaking Spanish are bigger than ever.

So, by all means, yes, let's feel the Latino. But let's make that extra effort to speak it as well.
Leaving school in ninth grade, Scott Storch implemented his own course of independent study. “I was cutting school and doing sessions as a keyboard player at Ruffhouse Records for [co-founders] Joe Nicole and Chris Schwartz,” the Philadelphia native recalls. “Those guys gave me the first open door to the real music industry.”

Subsequent real-world lessons with the Roots (as keyboardist on the group’s pivotal 1993 album “Organic”), Dr. Dre (the keyboard riff on the artist’s 1999 comeback single “Still D.R.E.”) and Xzibit (co-producer of 2000 single “X”) laid the foundation for what was to come. Today, Storch is an in-demand songwriter/producer whose credits include such crossover hits as Terror Squad’s “Lean Back,” Mario’s “Let Me Love You,” 50 Cent’s “Candy Shop” and Chris Brown’s “Run It!”—each of which reached No. 1 on The Billboard Hot 100 and Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs charts.

Having finished work on Paris Hilton’s forthcoming debut, “Paris Is Burning,” Storch is busy sifting through other projects for his Tuff Jew production company. Recent and upcoming studio dates include the Game, Jessica Simpson, Beyoncé and West Coast rapper Bishop Lamont. He’s also in distribution talks for his own label, Storchaveli.

Q: You’ve heard a lot about working with the hottest artists. Sometimes you go for challenges although people look at you strangely like, “Why are you doing that?” However, with a risk sometimes comes a huge reward. It’s about having the vision to be able to turn that challenge into something, and then you win the Heisman.

Q: How would you describe Hilton’s music artist?
A: She has a certain tone that’s reminiscent of Cyndi Lauper and Blondie. The album doesn’t have one particular sound. It’s just good music; a combination of R&B, hip-hop and pop. It will surprise a lot of people because there’s real artistry coming from Paris.

Q: By working on pop projects, do you risk losing credibility in the R&B/hip-hop arena where you made your mark?
A: Not at all. It just shows more versatility in what you do—unless you try and cross the barriers. I keep my hip-hop as hip-hop, my R&B as R&B and my pop as pop. The ability to cross those boundaries and do all these things effectively is not commonly done.

Q: Are you worried about spreading yourself too thin?
A: No. I love making music and work at the pace that feels comfortable to me. It just so happens that my pace of working is insane [laughs]. I don’t ever push the creative sponge and squeeze it out too much. I try to do it as it flows. I’m always making tracks. I find that when you make tons of tracks, you stumble upon gems. You can’t always turn the drum machine on and right away there’s a hot track. Sometimes you luck out. But it can take a lot of time between thinking about the artist, listening to music for inspiration or going to clubs. It’s about making as many tracks as you can. Then the odds of there being some hits in there are high.

Q: What’s the going rate for a top producer’s services?
A: It’s about $100,000 a track. That’s upper-mid or lower-high. At the low end of the scale, it’s $5,000 to do a beat. And you might have to provide the studio too out of that $5,000 [laughs].

Q: What artists are still on your production wish list?
A: One is actually happening as we speak. Nas. He’s been a friend for many years, and we’ve worked in the capacity of doing cameos on songs for other people’s projects. However, owing to geographical or scheduling issues, we had never gotten it together for a straight-up Nas album. So this is the first. And now that he’s aligned forces with Jay-Z, it’s even cooler situation.

Q: Are you worried about getting lost in the pop? You’ve got to be able to take a lot of rejection and deal with such problems as cheating, stealing, lying, lawyers. At the age of 32, I sometimes feel like I’m 50 already [laughs].
A: At the end of the day, you really have to separate yourself, have a split personality. When you go into the studio, do whatever you have to do to relax. Take a minute and get into Zen mode and turn on the artist’s light.

Q: It’s about making music, working with the artists, getting some hits, getting to the Grammy Awards. How would you describe your sound?
A: You’ve got to be a bit of all. It’s about that versatility coming through things that are popular. I’ve worked with the Game, the Recording Academy. Did that alleviate some of the earlier sting?
A: Yeah [laughs]. I guess that was their way of making up for it. But you know, it’s cool. I’ll get over it. My life doesn’t revolve around the Grammy world. I’m still making records.

Q: If you were not a songwriter/producer, what would you be doing right now?
A: I’d probably be playing piano in a bar and doing weddings and bar mitzvahs. I’m really just a regular person who loves music.
AMONG THE ARTISTS WHO HAVE FOUND HOMES ON INDIE JAZZ LABELS ARE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT, PALMETTO'S BEN ALLISON, SUNNYSIDE'S LUCIANA SOUZA AND MAXJAZZ SIGNÉES ERIN BODE AND RUSSELL MALONE.
KEEPERS OF THE FLAME

Though it is deemed a national treasure for its innately American legacy, jazz is plagued with an identity crisis. While the genre has spread the world over, fueled by its freedom fire of improvisation, jazz at home has been marginalized as a music that has veered from the mainstream and settled into either a mature museum-like relic or a sorry state of obtuse elitism. ¶ A perpetual sales underachiever, jazz in 2004 and 2005 garnered a minuscule 2.8% of total U.S. album units sales. Faced with such prospects, the major labels have downsized or eliminated their jazz rosters, seeking greener sales pastures with jazz vocalists and crossover artists. ¶ However, as they have traditionally done, independent labels are serving to check the erosion and blaze ahead as torchbearers of the music. Jazz indies can tolerate lower sales thresholds than the majors, allow more time for artist development and offer their signees greater autonomy and freedom to create. ¶ What’s more, jazz indies and their artists—from new acts to major-label refugees—are benefiting from the Internet, which facilitates targeted marketing, offers new promotional tools and provides an outlet for slow-selling titles that might not have a home at traditional retail. ¶ “We’re the labels putting out the new records and introducing lots of new artists,” says Garrett Shelton, director of marketing and A&R at New York-based Sunnyside Records, whose roster includes saxophonist Chris Potter and vocalist Luciana Souza. “People are looking to us more and more.” ¶ To succeed in the long term, such labels must attract the right talent. But they also must build a catalog with legs and develop a brand associated with quality recordings.

HELPED BY DIGITAL SALES, INDEPENDENT JAZZ LABELS ARE SEEING THE UPSIDE AS MAJORS DOWNSIZE
**TAKING RISKS**

Jazz indies have long been risk takers who balk at the status quo. In the '50s and early '60s, indies such as Blue Note, Prestige and Riverside introduced, nurtured and championed youngsters of the day, including Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Thelonious Monk, Sonny Rollins, Cannonball Adderley and Wes Montgomery.

Today, jazz indies range from the Universal-distributed Concord Music Group—which currently has five of the top 25 slots on Billboard's Top Jazz Albums chart—to contemporary specialty labels like Rendezvous to micro upstarts like Cryptogramophone and Artizen.

While these labels focus on jazz as an art form, "that doesn't mean you can't be smart business people," Shelton says. He cautions that "good business fundamentals" are essential to surviving in a realm where a hit recording reaps sales of 15,000-20,000 units. (The title that put Sunnyside on the map, Souza's 2002 breakthrough album "Brazilian Duos," has scanned 15,000 copies.)

These days, the fundamentals include Internet marketing and digital sales. At Sunnyside, downloads represented 10% of revenue in 2005, and are on pace to surpass 15% of the label's business this year, Shelton reports.

The same trend is seen for jazz at large. Digital downloads represented 3.1% of U.S. jazz album sales in 2005, and have increased to 6.3% of the market for the year-to-date, according to Nielsen SoundScan. For indies, downloads represent an even larger 8.2% of sales year-to-date.

"At the retail marketplace, indie records are hard to stumble across because there's so little space," says Matt Balitsaris, a guitarist and founder of New York-based indie Palmetto Records.

"The Internet has proven to be a great equalizer," he adds. Jazz indies cite strong digital business at iTunes and Rhapsody as well as eMusic, the subscriber-based service that carries only MP3 music from indie labels.

The top jazz seller at eMusic since its September 2004 relaunch is "The Best of John Coltrane." However, the site's top 10 jazz list for the four weeks ending April 14 includes such adventurous, off-the-beaten-path discs as "Live at the Vision Festival" by avant alto saxophonist Jemeel Moondoc and his tentet (on Ayler Records) and "Come In Red Dog Thin Is Tango Leader," a free improv blast of fire and beauty by guitarist Charlie Hunter and electronics drummer Bobby Previte (on Rodeophone).

David Pakman, president/CEO of eMusic, reports that jazz is the site's third highest-selling category, garnering 16% of total downloads. He explains that jazz is strong at eMusic because the site focuses on the 25- to 54-year-old demographic.

"We're selling to people who care about jazz," Pakman says. "It's not rocket science. We're going after people who feel we are underserved. Retail doesn't care."

Not so for phones. Counting Kevin Cassidy, Tower Records executive VP of retail, "Indie jazz is as important to Tower today as it ever was," he says. "Given the trend of major jazz labels offering more eclectic types of artists and music, much of what could be considered core jazz or current jazz is being offered by the indie world... Tower considers indie jazz to be an important component of our offering to consumers both in-store and online."

Flying in the face of all these declarations of jazz-indie strength, Nielsen SoundScan numbers indicate that the indie share of the jazz market declined from 14.89% in 2004 to 13.31% in 2005 and 13.23% year-to-date. The overall jazz albums market fell by 8.8% in 2005, compared with 2004.

**RIDING THE 'TAIL' WIND**

Faced with this contracting market, jazz labels—like those in classical and other low-selling genres—hope to benefit from the Internet's much-touted "long tail." According to this distribution theory, companies can thrive by selling smaller quantities of more products (Board, March 4).

The long tail means that jazz labels can develop artists based on the promise of a long-term contribution to catalog sales. "Pop has to have quick sales, but jazz doesn't follow that formula," says Peter Gordon, founder of Norwalk, Conn.-based Thirsty Ear Recordings, which expanded into jazz with its modern-improvisational Blue Series, curated by jazz pianist/label founder Matthew Shipp.

"Jazz recordings stand up over time," Gordon says. "You work with a five- to 15-year plan and hold your ground. In jazz, if a record sells 10,000-15,000, you've gone gold. What a major label calls marginal, we call a hit. That's the cost of freedom."

Because major labels have to deal with the realities of high overhead and shareholder expectations, Gordon feels the music has a "glass ceiling of vision." The indie jobs, he says, "is to keep pounding at it till it cracks. We're working the music forward, to break new ground, to break rules instead of following the old ones. That's the spirit of an indie."

Josh Sherman, senior director of A&R/marketing at Savoy Label Group, which includes WEA-distributed Savoy Jazz—Sherman claims it is the only indie-jazz label with a major distributor—confirms that his label can afford to look at new artists as long-term projects. He cites pianist Moncef Genoud, whose debut U.S. release, "Aqua," streeted April 4.

"It's going to take time to introduce Monce to U.S. audiences," Sherman says. "But we will build that up quickly with exposure on jazz radio and print. Plus Dee Dee Bridgewater and Michael Brecker guested on the album, so it's functionally been endorsed by artists of note."

**THE INTERNET HAS PROVEN TO BE A GREAT EQUALIZER.**

—MATT BALITSARIS, PALMETTO RECORDS

**THE BRANDING IMPULSE**

All jazz independents agree that developing the label as a brand is essential. This is the most important thing to establish, says Roy Tarrant, founder and president of Switzerland-based Kind of Blue Records, which recently launched with such titles as "Gypsy Swing! The Django Reinhardt Festival—Live at Birdland" and the Classical Jazz Quartet's "Play Rachmaninoff." Featuring a jazz super group comprising pianist Kenny Barron, vibes player Stefan Ellis, bassist Ron Carter and drummer Lewis Nash.

Tarrant points to the brand recognition of such '50s and '60s American labels as Blue Note, Impulse and Atlantic as well as the '70s success for European label ECM.

"ECM created a brand," he says. "It matched quality music with minimalist graphics, first with American musicians such as Chick Corea and Keith Jarrett before recording and breaking European jazz talents."

Kind of Blue, Tarrant says, "took five years to prepare, to make recordings, finalize a 'look' and then get the records out." He notes that by "adding quality recordings to the brand, the whole catalog should go on selling."

Creating a brand image in the marketplace is also key to MaxJazz, label founder and president Richard McDonnell says. Its gatefold CDs sport handsome and identifiable graphics. "Catalog over time is important for jazz," he says. "We've found from our business reply cards that people are buying other MaxJazz releases, which indicates that people are willing to take a ride with a label they know and trust."

While MaxJazz introduces new artists to the jazz world (including vocalist Erin Bode and pianist/vocalist John Proulx, whose debut will be released later this year), the label has also become home base for ex-major-label musicians, such as guitarist Russell Malone and pianist Mulgrew Miller.

"They like the artistic freedom here," says McDonnell, an ex-jazz saxophonist who worked as an investment banker—a situation that philosophically fits with indie ventures. However, McDonnell hastens to add, "We're not driving Ferraris. But we are emotionally satisfied."

Palmetto Records has sought a similar mix for its roster, complementing young stars like bassist Ben Allison and drummer Matt Wilson with the veteran pianist Andrew Hill, whose 2000 CD, "Dusk," was his first album in a decade and an indie hit with sales of about 15,000 units.

"That made it easier for other artists to accept the idea of coming to Palmetto," label founder Balitsaris says. "At that time, most of our roster was developing artists. Now we also have Fred Hersch on the label, who came to us from Nonesuch. The pianist, who calls himself "a big fish in a smaller pond," is a strong seller in Palmetto's world. Last year's "Leaves of Grass" has moved 5,000 units, while his 2003 label debut, "Live at the Village Vanguard," is at 5,000, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Hersch is thoroughly pleased with his Nonesuch albums, which were recorded, he says, with full creative support from the boutique label in the Warner Music Group. "I'm proud of the way we work with him," says departed executive VP John Proulx, who noted five projects in five years for the label. But he adds, "I'm a wide-ranging artist, and I want to put out albums that are different from those that came before. It's faster and looser here."

**FREEDOM SWINGS**

That sense of freedom is important for many jazz artists.

"There's more money involved and more demands made at majors," says Vision Arts Management founder Louise Holland, who manages her bass-playing father Dave as well Potter, Souza and Malene—all indie artists. "They do things in templates," Holland says of the majors. "There's not a lot of leeway and ultimately some of what they do is self-defeating."

She cites as an example one of her clients, who used to record for a major, not being allowed to offer a music clip on his Web site. While her dad recorded for more than 30 years with a classic indie, Manfred Eicher's ECM Records—distributed over the years by various majors—Dave Holland says it was time for him to start his own indie label, Darck2, which is distributed by Sunnyside through Ryko.

"I wanted to own my masters and have better distribution worldwide for my albums," Holland says, adding that it all boiled down to having a greater degree of control. "Now, I'm free to do whatever creative work I want to whenever I want to."

In that vein, Louise Holland says, "Indies help grow the music. They're more open to taking chances, which most of the time end up coming back to benefit them." And, the final test? She says you know an artist is in good hands when "most of the people who own and run indies also really love the music."

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While acknowledging the low sales totals for jazz, Cassidy says, "This audience represents an active, purchasing and passionate part of the public."

**SAXOPHONIST CHRIS POTTER LEFT, IS A KEY SUNNYSIDE SIGNEE, WHILE PIANIST MATTHEW SHIPP HAS HELPED SNAKE THIRTY EARS THIRST FOR JAZZ.**
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As The Hispanic Market Expands, Latin Music
Rising

Find Its Way To Main Street U.S.A.

By Leila Cobo
**Let It ‘Gringo Bleed’**

Meet the two lives of Daddy Yankee’s “Barrio Fino.”

The first began when the all-Spanish album was released in 2004 and debuted at No. 1 on Billboard’s Top Latin Albums chart, making it the first reggaetón album to do so. It then settled comfortably into the top 10 until, mysteriously—or so it seemed at first—the title returned to No. 1 on Jan. 5, 2005.

But it was not extra marketing in the Latin realm that did it for Yankee. It was what amounted to “gringo bleed”—the phenomenon of Latin music spilling over to a mainstream audience.

The second life of “Barrio Fino” came about when new fans discovered “Gasolina,” Yankee’s crossover radio success.

“You put on Gasolina, and everybody knows it,” says Jill Strada, assistant PD at rhythmic WYPO (Power 95.3) Orlando, Fla.

“The African-American audience that doesn’t speak Spanish knows the hook and the parts to the song.”

Non-Latins buying Latin music is a rising trend. Since 2003, that demographic has purchased close to 30% of music by Latin acts, according to research firm NPD Group.

In bigger markets, media fuels the jump in sales. Atlanta, for example, has seen numbers rise since it opened its first high-powered FM station playing a Latin format in September 2004. For 2005, Latin music will be jumped 10% over 2004.

In the hoopla over reggaetón, some may think that the genre is the impetus behind new markets. But more often than not, regional Mexican music is the driving force behind new markets for Latin music.

Secondary markets and small towns have long been the realm of touring regional Mexican acts, of which the most successful play typically anywhere between 50 and 80 U.S. concerts per year. Audiences average between 4,000 and 8,000. Tickets go for $40-$50. Con junto Primavera, for example, is in the midst of a U.S. tour that will take in almost 80 dates, playing for crowds ranging from 5,000 to 10,000.

Today, playing the secondary-market circuit is sometimes more profitable than doing the bigger cities, where expenses are higher and selling tickets can be more difficult.

“Those smaller towns, the ‘secondary markets,’ are really what keeps the business going,” says Willy Miranda, who books romantic Mexican group Los Temerarios.

“I’ve worked the secondary markets forever,” says Miguel Tru-
Latin America
The growth of the U.S. Latin population is affecting how and what culture is consumed all across the country. The maps below reflect the Latin demographic as a percentage of a state's total population, according to U.S. Census data from 1990, 2000 and 2004.

"Families will take these same kids to see acts like Vicente Fernández and Temerarios, who regularly play these cities," RBB D & E's Guillermo Rosas says. "There was a huge need" for pop. Rosas has since signed Alejandro Guzman to developing acts. He has also been booking RBB's U.S. tours, taking the group through dots of secondary markets, including Tacoma, Wash.; Portland, Ore.; Salt Lake City; Detroit; and Winston-Salem, N.C.

Growth In Latin Music Sales (By Percentage)
Latin music is the only genre to see sales growth. The increases are being driven, in part, by boosts in secondary markets.

"But a lot of the stores that are heavy in Latino products are heavy in urban products," says Scott Wilson, group VP for Troy, Mich.-based wholesaler Handleman Co. "Therefore, we think there is some cross-purchasing."

According to NPD's sample, the bulk of Latin purchases by non-Latinos are for major crossover acts, most notably Shakira, Marc Anthony, Enrique Iglesias, Lila KIng and Paulina Rubio. But all-Spanish acts like Juanes, Buena Vista Social Club and Daddy Yankee also make the list of top sellers.

NPD analyst Isaac Josephson says that beyond the big names, "there was a healthy appetite for Latin music in 2005 among the non-Hispanic set across all age groups, both men and women."

Historically, that interest goes hand in hand with smaller trends. Salsa dancing, for example, has become hip in many major cities and has led to the establishment of new dance studios. And labels are paying attention. Last month, Universal Music Latino released "The Gringo Guide to Salsa," a compilation of salsa hits that even includes the basic steps to the dance. Strategically marketed via mallings and through salsa schools, the album has already made it to No. 4 on the iTunes Latin chart.
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The 17th annual Billboard Latin Music Conference & Awards—unprecedented in size, attendance and scope—reflects the Hispanic marketplace and Latin music industry’s growing clout and reach. This year’s event, set for April 24-27 at the Ritz-Carlton in Miami Beach, will enjoy a never-before-seen plethora of programming, from business panel discussions to new talent showcases. Sure, it’s been hard times for the music industry overall. But Latin is the only genre tracked by Nielsen SoundScan that had a sales increase last year, and according to the RIAA, shipments of Latin music have also risen, reversing the downward spiral of years past.

Beyond the numbers, it’s easy to look around and see encouraging signs for the genre: a preponderance of Spanish-language radio stations, including formats that appeal to bilingual teens and a notable rise in the number of Latin TV stations and Web sites.

This year’s conference and awards show embraces these changes, new technologies and music trends while also drawing from seasoned executives’ experience and established acts’ talent.

We welcome you to the 2006 Billboard Latin Music Conference & Awards, presented by Heineken and in association with Burger King.

WHAT'S ON TAP
During its 17 years, the conference has delivered the broadest possible breadth of programming, reflective of an increasingly far-reaching genre of music.

This year’s panel topics range from uses and applications of new technologies during the digital/mobile revolution to in-depth discussions by industry leaders on the changing role of record labels in developing, marketing, selling and promoting music.

The event’s sponsorships and partnerships also speak to marketers’ growing awareness of the exploding Hispanic population, its growing purchasing power and the need to reach a younger, sometimes acculturated Latin demographic.

For the seventh year in a row, the title sponsor of the conference and awards is Heineken, with Burger King as in-association sponsor for the first time.

The 2006 conference officially begins the evening of April 24, but “TV Stars” kicks off the panel discussions the following morning. “TV Stars” brings together key players from such companies as Televisa and Fremantle (“American Idol”) to discuss the growing number of Latin music reality shows and the ever-growing role TV plays in identifying and developing future Latin stars. continued on >>pLM6

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### Arjona Adentro Tour 2006

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05-21 Arena de Monterrey
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05-26 Estadio Flor Blanca
05-27 Estadio Nacional "Denis Martinez"
05-31 Estadio Chach Sosa
06-02 Estadio Francisco Morazan
06-08 Estadio Saprissa
06-10 Explanada de La Marina
06-12 Arena Santiago
06-14 Centro de Convenciones Fyguill
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10-20 Allstate Arena
10-22 Zoo Amphitheatre
10-27 Gibson Amphitheatre
10-29 Gibson Amphitheatre
10-30 Mandalay Bay
11-01 Dodge Arena
11-03 Toyota Center
11-04 Smirnoff Music Theatre
11-05 ATT Center
11-08 MSG Theatre
11-11 Patriot Center
11-12 Agganis Arena
11-17 Gwinnett Center
11-18 TD Waterhouse
11-19 American Airlines Center
11-22 US Airways Center
11-24 The Arrowhead Pond
11-25 HP Pavilion
11-26 Cox Arena
11-30 Save Mart Center
12-02 Angelina Valencia
12-03 TD Garden Center
12-15 Estadio El Campín
12-21 Estadio Atanasio Girardot
12-28 Estadio Pascual Guerrero

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11-10 Special Events Center
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11-14 La Villarreal
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11-18 Nokia Live
11-19 House of Blues
11-21 Nokia Live
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11-25 House of Blues
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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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The conference continues with discussions on the digital and mobile arenas and a president's panel featuring heads of major (Sony BMG, Universal), independent (UBO) and hybrid (Machete) labels discussing the role of their respective models in today's music industry.

Another hot topic of discussion during the past 12 months, the dramatically changing Latin music radio formats, will be dissected by programming heads from the major radio networks in the country:

CLEAR Channel, Spanish Broadcasting System and Entravision.

The day will end with a bang with segments devoted to teens and the growing bilingual, bicultural demographic.

Mum2 will unveil the primary findings of its Me2 teen study, which will be followed by a focus group session in which teenagers discuss their music consumption habits.

On April 26, the conference mainly focuses on artists.

The day kicks off with a panel dedicated to the identification and marketing of new trends in regional Mexican music, with singer Jenni Rivera at the helm.

It is followed by ASCAP's "Let's Make a Deal," a faithful and vastly entertaining behind-the-scenes look at music deal-making.

The afternoon is dedicated to urban Latin music, beginning with the "Rap, Rhythm & Reggaeton" panel, which features a host of top producers and acts.

Last, but certainly not least, is the star Q&A with chart-topper Daddy Yankee.

The final day of programming features the Voz Latina 2006 conference, hosted by Adweek's Marketing y Medios and Billboard, that will focus on marketing to 18-30-year-old Hispanics.

Aside from Heineken and Burger King, other event sponsors include Absolut Ruby Red, Harley-Davidson and Tone Exotic Fusions, which are also presenting a fashion show during the Billboard Bash.

The official poolside party fashion sponsor is Metro 7.

Performing rights organizations ASCAP and SESAC are also sponsors, along with mum2, MHPixs, event promotion and marketing firm CMN, law firm Broad & Cassel, the Wright Insurance Agency and Morgan Renee Entertainment.

The grand finale of the week is the awards show itself, held for the first time at the Hard Rock Live in Hollywood, Fla.

—Leila Colombo

This year brings an added bonus with regional Mexican star Lupillo Rivera co-hosting alongside Telemundo personality Candela Ferro, plus performances by Shakira, Daddy Yankee, 3BD, Alicia Villarreal and La Sia Estacion, to name a few.

The confab kicks off April 24 with a joint showcase at Glass at the Forge in Miami Beach hosted by Billboard Latino and Gibson Guitars. It will feature performances by alternative rock group and Latin Grammy Award nomineees Ocós Por Juana, pop/regional Mexican star Vallenda and Billboard Latin Music Awards finalist pianist Arthur Hanlon.

This year, Sony BMG has been particularly aggressive in signing and developing new talent at its various divisions during the past two years.

April 26 marks a heavy music day for the event, beginning with a musical luncheon presented by ICCE Records with performances by General and Cee B.

On its end, 13th Floor produces "Billboard Latino," the weekly music TV show that airs nationally on Azteca America and is well-known for its up-to-date music news, Billboard countdown and live jam sessions.

The conference's formal launch on April 25 is anchored by the Sony BMG showcase, featuring an impressive trio of new artists Camila, Jean and Chelo, who are all releasing debut albums, and Billboard award finalist N'Klabe.

Sony BMG has been particularly aggressive in signing and developing new talent at its various divisions during the past two years.

April 26 marks a heavy music day for the event, beginning with a musical luncheon presented by ICCE Records with performances by General and Cee B.

Last year DADDY YANKEE and D D O Y performed together at the awards.
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Joan Sebastian
for his lifetime achievements

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The Billboard Bash enters its fourth year with a bang, thanks to performances that cover all genres of Latin music. This year, the event is co-sponsored by Harley-Davidson, and the hosts for the night are Efrain, Patty and Deborah from Billboard Latino, which airs on Azteca America.

Although only Billboard Latin Music Awards finalists are performing, the biggest unifying factor will be the acts’ youth-driven appeal. From La Secta’s brand of tropical rock to Diana Reyes’ new take on duranguense to Juan Gotti’s West Coast rap to young salsa sensations N’Klabe, this year’s Bash, which takes place April 26 at the Ritz-Carlton in Miami Beach, is all about the new.

In a happy coincidence, most of this year’s performers are first-time finalists, too. Reyes, who until last year was relatively unknown, has climbed the charts with “La Reina del Pasillo Duranguense” (Universal), a collection of pop/rock hits arranged to a duranguense beat. Veteran Puerto Rican rock act La Secta has had phenomenal success with “Consejo,” its first album for Universal Music Latino. It is the first time during the group’s lengthy career that it has been an awards finalist.

Texas rapper Juan Gotti—one of the pioneers of the West Coast Latin rap movement who marries Mexican music with hardcore rap—nabs his first finalist slot in the Latin rap/hip-hop album of the year category for the cleverly titled “John Ghetto” (Dope House/Warner Music Latina).

Finally, young salsa band N’Klabe, which last year garnered one finalist slot, return for three nods, thanks to its infectious hit “I Love Salsa.”

Innovation extends to the very concept of this year’s festivities. For the first time in its brief history, the Bash will also feature a fashion show, sponsored by beauty product line Tone Exotic Fusions and presented by Moda Diffusion, which represents designers worldwide.

A dozen models will sashay to Billboard’s top songs of the year and show off clothing by Miami-based designer Julian Chang and trendy brand Loft.

Hosted by Telemundo personalities Leti Cojo and Karim Mendiburu, the Bash will feature its traditional red-carpet entrance attended by many of the finalists.

Red-carpet arrivals and the Bash itself will be part of Telemundo’s post-awards special, “Revenue Billboard VIP,” slated to air April 30.

Also onboard will be TV Azteca covering the Bash for its weekly “Billboard Latino” show, which airs nationwide on Azteca America.

The Billboard Bash was launched in 2003.

—Leila Colo
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Who's Your Daddy?

Reggaetón Star Daddy Yankee Tells It Like It Is During Exclusive Q&A

How do you keep up with Daddy Yankee? • The superstar reggaetón artist has become a noted impresario, songwriter, radio host, fashion designer and brand name in what appears to be little more than a year's time. • But Yankee, whose real name is Raymond Ayala, has been down this road for more than a decade, and his particular handling of his music and career illustrate the face of a changing industry.

The April 26 Billboard Q&A with Yankee will provide a unique opportunity to hear from one of the most entrepreneurial Latin artists in recent memory, speaking to us at what is—to date—the height of his career.

“I understand that many people that didn't know about reggaetón think I'm a new act,” Yankee says. “That's good, in a way, because it gives me more duration as an artist. But other people who know the Daddy Yankee story know it's been a long time coming. They know it's the work of many years and the musical maturity I've gained over the past three albums.”

Daddy Yankee has held sway as the top-selling Latin act of 2005. His success has come closely tied to his mega-crossover hit “Gasolina,” from his 2004 album “Barrio Fino.” Then “Barrio Fino En Directo,” a live album with five new tracks, was No. 1 on Billboard’s Top Latin Albums chart for 14 weeks following its release last December. Now in the works is his first studio album for El Cartel/Interscope Records, due out later this year.

At the core of Yankee’s success is his firm hold on his career. All his recordings have been released via his label. El Cartel; he has his own publishing, Cangris; and his management and press falls on longtime trusted friends and family.

“All I ever had was distribution deals,” Yankee says. “Everything else was in my hands. Not having the right label or major support means only one thing: Daddy Yankee got to the top the way it has to be—with music.”

In recent months, Yankee won the ASCAP Latin songwriter of the year award for 2005. His nationally syndicated radio show, “On Fuego,” debuted on 20 ABC Radio Networks stations. Reebok launched a signature DY shoe and apparel line. He is starring in an upcoming film. He has a hand in the production and financing of an upcoming theatrical musical based on the life of the late Celia Cruz.

And of course, there is the new studio album, which will feature top rap and hip-hop names like Snoop Dogg and 50 Cent.—Leila Coelho

DADDY YANKEE says his success has been a long time coming.
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When Shakira Mebarak was 18 years old, she created a foundation called Pies Descalzos (Bare Feet), named after her hit album of the same name, to help children primarily in her native Colombia.

Today, the Bogotá-based charity has mushroomed into a prominent non-governmental organization that directly provides thousands of children—most of them from families displaced by Colombia's civil war—with long-term access to education, adequate nutrition and psychological help.

This year, Billboard is proud to honor Shakira with its Spirit of Hope Award, which is given to artists for their humanitarian contributions.

"Pies Descalzos came from a need I had to fulfill, an inside commitment I had as a child," says Shakira, who is also a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador and was recently given a Women Together Award by the United Nations for her humanitarian work. "Growing up in a country like mine, being witness to so much social injustice, influenced me greatly. When I was very little, I made a promise that I would try to do something for those other children that didn't have the same opportunities I did."

Colombia is a developing country that has been adversely affected by civil strife during the past few decades, resulting in a diaspora of more than 2 million people, the biggest in the Western world. Some 800,000 children have been victims of displacement or violence, and fully 2 million do not attend school.

Currently, Pies Descalzos sponsors five Colombian schools in three different cities, serving nearly 3,000 children and their families. Funding comes from Shakira herself, private donors and corporations.

Its programs are threefold. First, the foundation builds schools and improves their infrastructure. The first school was built in Chocó, one of Colombia's poorest states.

Secondly, Pies Descalzos offers children the essentials: full tuition, school supplies, food and psychological assistance. Through a small business program, mothers get paid for cooking for their schoolchildren.

Finally, through the foundation, individuals can sign on to sponsor a child for a yearly fee.

According to Shakira, Pies Descalzos' infrastructure was necessary for its continued growth. "At one point, I realized that an artist alone can't do it," she says. "You need a serious, efficient, organized, honest team. What you want to immediately do and what you can actually do are two different things. But I have also learned that you can accomplish what you imagine. It all depends on the number of hours you dedicate to it every day."

Among Shakira's short-term goals is organizing a yet-to-be-named Latin American version of Live Aid, which will focus attention and resources on the continent.

Long term, she wants to keep building schools that will provide education and opportunities for low-income children. While her focus is on youth, she says, her immediate emphasis is Colombia, given its social crisis.

"In our country, children are born poor and die poor," she says. "In the United States, you have the American dream. In Latin America, few find that, unless you have a wealthy family or you are a soccer player or astronaut. Latin America is a difficult place to make your dreams come true."

For more information on Pies Descalzos, go to fundacionpiesdescalzos.com. —Leila Coito

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Congratulations to SHAKIRA on her Billboard Spirit of Hope Award and 8 Nominations
Baldwin Congratulates Pianist Arthur Hanlon,
Double Finalist, 2006 Billboard Latin Music Awards for his No. 1 Billboard Hit "La Gorda Linda"

In Stores Summer 2006, "Arthur Hanlon: Mecanomania"

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Música Pa' Mi Gente!
Joan Sebastian is one of the most prolific songwriters in Latin music. He has won five Grammy Awards, recorded 35 albums of original material and his songs have been covered by a virtual who's who of Latin music, including Alicia Villarreal, Banda Cuisillos, Vicente Fernández, Rocio Dúrcal and Pepe Aguilar.

These reasons and more are why Billboard will induct him into its Hall of Fame on April 27. And yet, the Billboard Music Award finalist is an artist who always writes just for himself.

"Everything is in some way connected to my personal experiences," Sebastian says. "Through the years, I've realized I can only compose from my own experiences. I've seldom been able to write for other people, but I am lucky that my songs have served other people."

The fact that Sebastian's music marries achingly beautiful melodies with universal empathy is what places him in a unique category as a composer. He sings his songs with the right dose of pathos in his ballads and bravura in his rancheras, and he always exudes that ineffable sense of intimacy—of singing to you and you alone—making him one of the top singers in the Latin world.

Add to that Sebastian's trajectory as producer, actor and supreme showman known for his dazzling spectacles of horseback and music, and you have one of the most well-rounded, singular Latin artists alive today.

A native of Mexico, Sebastian briefly considered becoming a priest but, lucky for us, he decided to pursue a professional music career at the age of 17. He recorded his first few singles under his real name—José Manuel Figueroa—for Capitol Records in Mexico. They were a modest success. Then in 1976, Figueroa went to Discos Musart, where an executive suggested he change his name. He settled on Joan Sebastian, partly to honor the plains of San Sebastian in his native town of Juliantla. Sebastian's official debut as a "new" artist came with the album "El Camino del Amor." The success never stopped. Still signed to Musart, and released here through sister label Balboa Records, Sebastian has survived not only the passage of time and fads but also illness. He was diagnosed with cancer in 2000, but he has fully recovered and resumed recording and touring.

Of the writing process, he says it never changes.

"I get bursts of composition," Sebastian says. "There are times when I'm silent for months, where I'm at peace and don't write a thing. And suddenly, in one month, I can write two albums. That's what happens. And everything is connected to my personal experiences. I am not a writer by trade. I am composer of experiences. And sometimes I see problems, I lose my happiness, and that is when the music bursts out from."

—Leila Cobo
La Estrella de las Estrellas.
ill Daddy Yankee score a perfect 10 this year? • After being a finalist in only one category at last year’s Billboard Latin Music Awards, Daddy Yankee is a record-setting finalist this year with 10 entries in eight categories. • The awards ceremony takes place April 27 at the Hard Rock Live in Hollywood, Fla. It will air live on Telemundo. • A charismatic MC from San Juan, Puerto Rico, Daddy Yankee is a finalist in nine singles and album categories, plus as songwriter of the year under his birth name, Raymond Ayala. • Following Daddy Yankee is nine-time finalist RBD, a popular pop group from Mexico that is the lone debut act among the front-runners. • Colombian superstar Shakira returns in a big way to the awards show as an eight-time finalist, while Daddy Yankee’s recording pals Wisin & Yandel confirm reggaetón’s burgeoning appeal as contenders in seven categories. • Colombia’s rock ambassador Juanes, a multi finalist for four years running, is a finalist in five categories, as is Puerto Rican songstress Olga Tañón. • The finalists are competing in 41 categories, including two new ones: reggaetón song of the year and Latin ringtone of the year. • Winners of Billboard’s Latin Music Awards are determined by sales and radio airplay data compiled during a one-year period from the Feb. 4, 2005, issue to the Feb. 4, 2006, issue. • Following is a recap of selected finalists. The number of nominations is in parentheses.

**DADDY YANKEE**

Propelled by a non-stop parade of chart-topping singles (“Gasolina,” “Mayor Que Yo,” “Rompe” and CDs (“Barrio Fino”), Daddy Yankee is the unquestioned leader of the invasion of reggaetón artists that has dominated Billboard’s radio and sales charts for the past year.

The El Cartel/Interscope superstar is a double finalist in the two new categories: reggaetón song and Latin ringtone of the year. “Mayor Que Yo” (Más Flow/Machete, which features Baby Ranks, Toney Tun Tun, Wisin & Yandel and Héctor, tallied 46 weeks on the Hot Latin Songs chart, peaking at No. 3. (10)

**RBD**

RBD is EMI Televisa’s triple finalist in the Top Latin Pop Album of the year category. The group’s debut album, “Rebelde,” reached No. 2 on the Top Latin Albums chart, followed by “Nuestro Amor,” which hit No. 1, and the No. 5 “En Vivo.”

The group’s smash single “Sólo Quedate En Silencio” remained atop the Latin Pop Airplay chart for seven straight weeks. (9)

**SHAKIRA**

Colombian icon Shakira returned to the U.S. Latin market after a long absence and hit No. 1 with her Epic/Sony BMG Norte album “Fijación Oral Vol. 1” and its blockbuster lead single “La Tortura,” which features Warner Music Latina idol Alejandro Sanz. “Fijación Oral Vol. 1” logged 17 weeks atop the Top Latin Albums chart, while “La Tortura” spent 25 weeks at No. 1 on Hot Latin Songs, a record not likely to be broken anytime soon. (8)

**WISIN & YANDEL**

Más Flow/Machete’s famed reggaetón duo Wisin (Juan Morera) and Yandel (Llandel Vegil) find themselves not only sharing co-finalist honors with compadre Daddy Yankee in three categories with their smash single continued on >>pLM20
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from >>pLM18

“Mayor Que Yo,” but they also are competing against him in three other categories, including reggaeton album of the year and Hot Latin Songs artist of the year. (7)

JUANES

The Colombian uber-star on Surco/Universal Latino routinely racks up hardware at Billboard’s Latin Music Awards with chart-topping albums and singles.

This year Juanes is competing in two prime categories—Top Latin Albums artist of the year and Hot Latin Songs artist of the year—as well as in songwriter of the year, which he won in 2004.

“La Camisa Negra” was one of the few songs to break Shakira’s six-month stranglehold on the top slot of the Hot Latin Songs chart. (5)

OLGA TAÑÓN

Puerto Rico’s first lady of merengue makes a long-awaited return to the awards show armed with two hit singles, “Bandolera” and “Vete Vete,” that are competing in the Latin Tropical Airplay song of the year, female.

The Sony BMG Norte songbird also put out a greatest-hits album, “Como Olvidar: Lo Mejor De Olga Tañón,” from her former label Warner Music Latina that peaked at No. 6 on the Top Tropical Albums chart.

AVENTURA

The sweet-singing male quartet from the Bronx moved from buchta to midtempo reggaeton and scored a chart-topping smash with “God’s Project” (Premium Latin), which yielded the No. 1 tropical hit “Ella Yo,” featuring reggaeton maestro Don Omar, and “La Boda.” Both of Aventura’s songs are doing battle for Latin Tropical Airplay song of the year, duo or group. (4)

BABY RANKS

Baby Ranks, a perennial guest artist and songwriter, finally got co-hilling with mega-production duo Luny Tunes on “Más Flow 2” (Más Flow/Machete), an all-star reggaeton album, which has rung up 56 weeks on the Top Latin Albums chart, cresting at No. 2. The album yielded “Mayor Que Yo,” which is a triple finalist. (4)

DON OMAR

Another reggaeton stalwart making noise at this year’s awards, Puerto Rican rapper/songwriter Don Omar is up for two awards for Aventura’s smash single “Ella Yo,” on which he is featured, and for his chart-topping “Da Himman Presenta Reggaeton Latino” (V1/Machete/UMRG). Don Omar is a finalist for songwriter of the year as William O. Landrón. (4)

LA SRA ESTACIÓN

The lone finalist from Spain, this newcomer pop trio on Sony BMG Norte cut a top five album, “Flores De Alquiler,” that contained “Algo Más,” a riveting ballad that rose to No. 2 on the Latin Pop Airplay chart. (4)

REYLI

Reyli, a former member of Mexican rock act Elefante, scored the hit debut “En La Luna” (Sony BMG Norte), which stayed on the Latin Pop chart for 50 weeks. Lead single “Amor Del Bueno” was a top five entry on the Latin Pop Airplay chart. (4)

ANDY ANDY

Veteran Dominican bachatero Andy Andy whose birth name is Angel Villalona, finally cracked Billboard’s album charts when his Wega/Urban Box Office album “Ibaria” loaded up weeks on the Top Tropical Albums chart, cresting at No. 1. (3)

LA AUTORIDAD DE LA TIERRA

With its first pair of albums, “100% Autoridad Duranguesa” and “Gracias Rigo,” going top five on the Regional Albums chart, La Autoridad de la Tierra,Disa’s latest: purveyors of el sonido durangues is, doubling its chances to win Top Regional Mexican Album of the year, new artist. (5)

N’KLABE

Puerto Rico natives Félix Javier Torres González and Héctor José Torres Donato and Chicago-born Ricardo Luis Porrata are the talented vocal trio N’Klabe, which peaked at No. 3 on the Top Tropical Albums chart with “1 Love Salsa” (Nj/Sony BMG Norte). N’Klabe hit No. 1 on the Latin Tropical Airplay chart with “Amor De Una Noche.” (3)

TITO NIEVES

This venerable salsero from New York scored a top 10 tropical album with “Hoy, Mañana Y Siempre” (SGZ/Univision). Nieves also has two finalist bids as a featured vocalist on Arthur Hanlon’s No. 1 tropical smash “La Gorda Linda.” (5)

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Diana Reyes

Female solo artists in the duranguense field are few and far between, but Diana Reyes' breakout, pop-flavored album "La Reina Del Pasillo Duranguense" (Musimix/Universal Latin) reached No. 11 on the Regional Mexican Albums chart, while the sexy songbird's single "El Sol No Regresa" rose to No. 20 on the Latin Regional Mexican Airplay chart. (3)

Tonny Tun Tun & Héctor

Merenguero/bachatero Tonny Tun Tun and reggaeton notable Héctor are three-time finalists, thanks to their contributions on the reggaeton smash "Mayor Que Yo." (3)

Sergio Vega

Backed by the standout brassy banda ensemble Banda Sinaloense, Sony BMG Norte's grainy-voiced Sergio Vega hit finalist pay dirt with banda-rooted singles "Cosas Del Amor" and "Dueño De Ti," each of which is a finalist for Latin Regional Mexican Airplay song of the year, new artist. (3)

Ana Bárbara

"Confesiones," which contained greatest hits from Fonovisa’s deejaysque Mexican singing star Ana Barbarea and Univision chanteuse Jennifer Peña, topped out at No. 5 on the Regional Mexican Albums chart. (2)

Marc Anthony

Electrifying Nuyorican idol Marc Anthony is a contender for Latin tour of the year and Latin Tropical Play-off song of the year for his Sony BMG Norte hit "Amor Me Hace Bien," a No. 1 on the Latin Tropical Airplay chart. (2)

Ricardo Arjona

Ricardo Arjona, the dependable hitmaker from Guatemala, is doing battle in two pop categories with his hit album "Adentro" (Sony BMG Norte) and its chart-topping lead single on the Latin Pop Airplay chart, "Porque Es Tan Cruel El Amor." (2)

Akwid

West Coast rap duo Akwid teamed with Univision labelmate J-1 to cut the top 10 album "Kickin' It...Juntos." It will compete against Akwid's other top 10 album, "Los Aquacated De Jiquilpá," in the Latin rap/hip-hop album of the year category. (2)

Chayanne

Famed Puerto Rican balladeer Chayanne teams with Marc Anthony for a possible trophy in Latin tour of the year, while his chart-topping Sony BMG Norte album "Cautivo" duels for top honors for Top Latin Pop Album of the year, male. (2)

Vicente Fernández

Ageless legend and Chayanne labelmate Vicente Fernandez is a finalist for Latin tour of the year, which he won in 2005. He is also a finalist for Top Regional Mexican Album of the year, male solo artist with "Mis Duetos," another No. 1 hit for Fernandez on the Top Regional Mexican Albums chart. (2)

Juan Gabriel

A renowned performer and songwriter, Sony BMG Norte artist Juan Gabriel is another big name competing for Latin tour of the year and songwriter of the year. (2)

K-Paz de la Sierra

This popular durangueso octet from Chicago scaled the Top Regional Mexican Albums chart with "Más Capazes Que Nunca" (Disa). K-Paz de la Sierra’s first single "Mi Credo" logged 40 weeks on the Latin Regional Mexican Airplay chart, peaking at No. 2. (2)

Luis Fonsi

Luis Fonsi, the babyfaced boricua singer/songwriter on Universal Latino, is a double finalist with his top five Latin pop album "Pasó A Pasó" and its lead single "Nada Es Para Siempre," which spent four consecutive weeks at No. 1 on the Latin Pop Airplay chart. (2)

Frankie J & Baby Bash

Former Kumbia Kings vocalist Frankie J and California rapper Baby Bash team up as finalists for Frankie J’s Columbia/Sony BMG Norte hit "Obsesión (No Es Amor)," which hit No. 2 on Hot Latin Songs. (2)

Arthur Hanlon

This Detroit-born pianist was the first non-Latin American to top the Latin Tropical Airplay chart with the Fonovisa hit "La Gorda Linda," recorded with salsa titan Tito Nieves. Hanlon is also the first non-Latin American finalist in this category. (2)

Los Horoscopos de Durango

A triple winner at last year’s Billboard Latin Music Awards, this high-stepping durangueso collective fronted by Vicky and Marisol Terrazas is a double finalist this year, thanks to "Y Seguimos Con Durangueso" (Disa), which spent three straight weeks at No. 1 on the Top Regional Mexican Albums chart. Los Horoscopos de Durango’s hit single "Si La Quieres" climbed to No. 5 on the Latin Regional Mexican Airplay chart. (2)

Luny Tunes

The first-ever reggaeton finalists (and double winners) two years ago, Luny Tunes’ Francisco Saldana and Victor Cabrera are finalists again, along with Baby Tanks, in the Latin compilation album of the year category with "Más..."

Famed publisher EMI Blackwood landed 26 titles on the Hot Latin Songs chart, including such reggaeton hits as “Mayor Que Yo” by Luny Tunes; and Wisin & Yandel’s “Rakata,” plus the durangueso hit “Si La Quieres” by Los Horoscopos de Durango.

EMI Music hung 45 titles on Hot Latin Songs, among them the blockbuster pop ballads “Algo Más” by La 5a Estacion and “Cuando A Mi Lado Estás” by Ricardo Montaner and the reggaeton anthem “Yo Voy” by Zion & Lennox featuring Daddy Yankee.

As and testimony to reggaeton’s expanding popularity, reggaeton label Machete placed eight strong-selling titles on the Top Tropical Albums chart, led by Daddy Yankee’s “Barrio Fino,” Don Omar’s “Da Hitman Presents Reggaetón Latino” and Wisin & Yandel’s “Pa'l Mundo.”—John Lannert

Sony BMG Norte, EMI Music Among Frontrunners

It's a new year, but the same finalists—Sony BMG Norte (née Sony Discos), Univision Music Group and Disa—dominate the label categories at the Billboard Latin Music Awards. Similarly, EMI Music continues to rule the roost as a publishing corporation. As in years past, Sony BMG Norte held sway in the pop and tropical sales and airplay categories with 31 titles on the Latin Pop Albums chart. Fifty of its titles appeared on the Latin Top Pop Airplay chart, while 47 appeared on the Latin Tropical Airplay chart. In addition, the label also placed a whopping 55 titles on the flagship airplay chart, Hot Latin Songs.

Meanwhile, Univision placed a staggering 113 titles on Billboard’s flagship sales chart, Top Latin Albums. Univision affiliate Disa rang up 51 titles on the Regional Mexican Albums chart and 44 titles on the Regional Mexican Airplay chart.

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Meanwhile, Univision placed a staggering 113 titles on Billboard’s flagship sales chart, Top Latin Albums. Univision affiliate Disa rang up 51 titles on the Regional Mexican Albums chart and 44 titles on the Regional Mexican Airplay chart.
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and more!!!
**Monday, April 24**

8:00 am - 10:00 am  
**Glass @ The Forge**  
**PRE-CONFERENCE KICK OFF**  
HOSTED BY BILLBOARD LATINO & SPONSORED GIBSON GUITARS

Performance by

- **Alondra**
- **Arthur Hanlon**
- **Black Guayabas**
- **Jon Secada**
- **Locos Por Juana**
- **Monte Rosa**

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**Tuesday, April 25**

9:00 am - 5:00 pm  
**The Ritz-Carlton Balcony Room**, 2nd Floor  
**REGISTRATION & VISIT THE HEINEKEN LISTENING LOUNGE**  
**BADGES SPONSORED BY SESAC**  
**LANYARDS SPONSORED BY CMN**  
**BOTTLE SPONSORED BY GIBSON GUITARS**

**3:15 pm - 4:30 pm**

**RADIO REVOLUTION:**  
Spanish language radio has been the talk of 2005, with the number of stations exploding, and formats changing almost with the seasons. Our panel of programming VP’s from the nation’s top radio groups discuss the future of Latin radio.

- **Moderator:** Leila Cobo, Latin Bureau Chief, Billboard
  - **Speakers:**
    - John Deehan, President, Universal Music Group
    - Adam Kidron, President/CEO, Univision Box Office
    - Ken Levine, President, Latin Region, Sony BMG
    - Geovani Lopez, President, Muchete

**3:15 pm - 4:30 pm**

**RADIO REVOLUTION:**

- **Moderator:** Leila Cobo, Latin Bureau Chief, Billboard
  - **Speakers:**
    - Raul Mereu, VP Programming, SBS
    - Jim Lawson, VP Programming Hispanic Divisions, Clear Channel Communications
    - Nector “Pato” Roche, VP Programming, Estrella Radio

**4:30 pm - 5:00 pm**

**SPECIAL PRESENTATION:**

- **Understanding the Young Latino in America**
  - **Speakers:**
    - Alex Pels, GM, mun2

**4:45 pm - 6:00 pm**

**TEEN FRENDY!**

**SPONSORED BY mun2**

- **Speakers:**
  - What makes the needle move when it comes to new music trends? The answer is in the teens. Following up on last year’s phenomenally successful teen panel (and focus group), Billboard brings together a sample of bilingual, bicultural teens of all ages and socio-economic levels to discuss their musical tastes and purchasing habits.

- **Moderator:** Leila Cobo, Latin Bureau Chief, Billboard
  - **Speakers:**
    - Raul Mereu, VP Programming, SBS
    - Jim Lawson, VP Programming Hispanic Divisions, Clear Channel Communications
    - Nector “Pato” Roche, VP Programming, Estrella Radio

**5:30 pm - 6:30 pm**

**WELCOME COCKTAIL RECEPTION**

**SPONSORED BY MEXICO**

- **The Official Fashion Sponsor of The Billboard Latin Music Conference**

**6:00 pm - 7:00 pm**

**LUNCH BREAK**

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**Wednesday, April 26**

9:30 am - 5:00 pm  
**The Ritz-Carlton Balcony Room**, 2nd Floor  
**REGISTRATION**

**VISIT THE HEINEKEN LISTENING LOUNGE**

**GET YOUR STARBUCKS COFFEE**

**HAVE A BACARDI MOJITO!**

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**10:00 am - 11:30 am**

**NOT YOUR FATHER’S REGIONAL MEXICAN**

- **Spokesman:** J.R. Iniesta

**ABC PRESENTS: MAKING THE DEAL**

- **Panel:**
  - Mario Di Allesandro, President, Earthtown Entertainment
  - Jon Alvarez, SVP, Universal Music Publishing
  - Gabriela Benitez, Director Latin Department, ASCAP West Coast
  - Luana Pappini, SVP Marketing, Sony BMG International
  - Marc Steinman, Attorney at Law, Steinman & Graham

**12:45 pm - 2:00 pm**

**LUNCHEON SHOWCASE**

**SPONSORED BY IICE RECORDS**

**Performances by**

- **Cecy B.
- Paulina**

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**3:00 pm - 4:15 pm**

**THE BILLBOARD Q & A WITH DADDY YANKEE AND LEILA COBO**

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For more information and a full schedule of events:

**www.americanradiohistory.com**
DON'T MISS THE HOTTEST WEEK IN LATIN MUSIC

April 24-27 • The Ritz-Carlton, South Beach

Thursday, April 27

10:00am - 2:00pm
The Ritz-Carlton Ballroom Gallery, 2nd floor
REGISTRATION & LAST CHANCE FOR TICKET PICK UP

VOZ LATINA 2006
Mastering the Marketing Mix to Hispanics, 18-34
Hosted by Adweek's Marketing to Hispanics

9:30am - 10:10am
The Ritz-Carlton Ballroom, 2nd floor
PANEL: The Future of the Hispanic Market:
A look at the values, attitudes and lifestyles of Gen X and Gen Y
What are the most powerful driving forces in U.S. Hispanic youth culture? What
influences values, style and the attitudes of young Hispanics? How are trends made
and what absolutely doesn't work?

Moderators:
• Leila Cobo, Latin Bureau Chief, Billboard

Speakers:
• Wendy Fergusson, Project Director, Maya & Miguel
• yoLo, President and CEO, Grandis Entertainment, LLC
• De Pettigrew, SVP Multicultural and Urban - Advertising, Alloy Media & Marketing

11:20am - 11:35am
THE GOOD, BAD AND UGLY: How to market to young Hispanic consumers
How to avoid the pitfalls and cliches of Hispanic marketing campaigns. We showcase
the best and the worst of strategies.

Moderators:
• Laura Marquez, Editor, Adweek's Marketing to Hispanics
• Marlene C. King, Contributor Writer, Marketing to Hispanics

11:35am - 12:15pm
BRAND PANEL: Make your Brand Break Through
Hispanic Brand Marketers from Fortune 500 companies reveal how to master the rapidly
growing Hispanic market. Find out how to create a strategy that works for your brand,
and how to measure the results.

Panelists:
• Sandi Case,犰nsecutive Group Advertising Manager, Toyota Motor Sales
• Rudy Rodriguez, Director, Multicultural Marketing, General Mills

12:15pm - 1:15pm
VOZ LATINA LUNCH KEYNOTE
Sponsored by Azteca America
New York Mets and Major League Baseball present an Update on Hispanic Baseball

Panelists:
• Dave Winfield, EVP & GM, New York Mets
• Louis Melendez, VP of International Baseball Operations, Major League Baseball

5:00pm...
TRANSPORTATION TO THE HARD ROCK LIVE
Rides begin leaving at 5:00pm from The Ritz-Carlton and return from 7:30pm — 3:00am.

Schedule subject to change

WWW.BILLBOARDEVENTS.COM
This page features an advertisement for a music compilation titled "EXITOS & MAS". The compilation includes songs by Monchy & Alexandra and Puerta Rican Power. The ad promotes these artists and their latest releases with a focus on Latin music, emphasizing their albums and recent chart successes.

- Monchy & Alexandra's album includes the smash hit single "No Es Una Novela".
- Puerta Rican Power's album features the hit single "Bonitas".
- New music from both artists is available in stores.

Additional information about the music industry is also provided, including details about music industry websites, A&R, and music industry contacts. There are also mentions of specific artists and albums, such as LUPILLO RIVERA's album "Historia Continúa" and LAURA PAUSINI's album "Viveme".

The ad also includes a section for music industry contacts, with contact information for various music-related services and organizations. This includes addresses, phone numbers, and website URLs for different music industry entities.

Finally, the ad promotes the Ultimate Resource for Touring Bands & Musicians, with details about the new Winter/Spring 2006 edition. This edition features information on how to book tours, music industry directories, and music industry websites. It also highlights the inclusion of new artists and albums, with details about their chart success and notable releases.

The ad concludes with a call to action to ORDER ONLINE or CALL the provided numbers for more information. The ad also includes promotional offers and special features, such as the inclusion of the latest issue of Billboard's Musician's Guide to touring & promotion.
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(Formerly of CFA)

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A cast of aspiring acts is slated for showcase performances during the confab.

NEW ARTISTS STRUT THEIR STUFF

Hot Talent Set To Perform At Showcases

ince 1990, when it first presented flamenco guitar virtuoso Ottmar Liebert, the showcase sets at Billboard’s Latin Music Conference have provided an annual launch pad for up-and-coming stars who make their industry debut with dazzling performances that often spark superstar careers. • Selena, Marc Anthony and Café Tacuba made their initial industry marks in the 1990s with riveting showcases.

This year, a whole new cast of aspiring acts is slated to perform showcases that may create household names. • Following is a capsule of some of those artists confirmed at press time to perform.

—John Lannert

ALONDRA
A former ‘80s teen idol in her native Mexico, Alondra dropped out of music altogether to rear her two children before re-emerging as a top Latin radio personality in the early ’90s in San Antonio. In 2000, the alluring actress/siren restarted her recording career and in 2003 cut a self-titled disc that was nominated for a Latin Grammy Award in the grupero category.

Her current pop/dance disc “DNA” is available through digital distribution only.

ANAMOR
This sultry Italian chanteuse won Italy’s top talent contest, the Castrocaro, and placed second in the famed San Remo Festival. Anamor also starred in the Sergio Leone film “C’era Una Volta in America.” Her maiden disc for BMG Italy, “L’Inferno O L’Animia,” reached the top of the Italian sales charts.

CAMILA
Formerly known as Altavoz, Camila, the Mexican trio headed by noted songwriter/producer Mario Romm, has put out a self-titled debut on Sony BMG Norte that features lead single “Abrázame.”

Once a solo artist on Sony, Romm, who also produced Camila’s album, is joined by vocalist Samo and guitarist Pablo.

CECY B.
Born Cecelia Barajas, the come-hither rapper from the West Coast released her indie debut, “Latinalicious,” last year that opened eyes, as well as ears. CECY B.’s sexy image amplifies her provocative verses, which she pens herself. Her forthcoming album is due on ICCE/Universal Latino.

CHELO
Not to be confused with the famed Mexican songstress, Chelo is an electrifying, bilingual Puerto Rican singer/songwriter and former member of Jyve V and ATM who began his music career by doing choreography for reggaeton star Daddy Yankee. Chelo has wrapped production on his debut Sony BMG Norte release, which includes his first single, “Cha Cha,” produced by Jeeve (Santana, the Game, Eden’s Crush).

continued on >> PLM34
Nada brilla más que una nueva estrella.

Gracias al programa Lazos Verdes de Heineken -Heineken Green Ribbon- que dona fondos a la Fundación Celia Cruz, nuestra comunidad se beneficia directamente con programas de educación musical que alientan a esos nuevos artistas a inspirar la escena musical del mañana.
One of the most celebrated “soneros” of our times is releasing his much anticipated Sony/BMG album. Entitled “Decision Unanime,” this CD contains ten songs, 3 were written by Victor Manuelle himself. This demonstrate that not only is he the king of improvisation, but also a master composer.

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from >>plM32

GENERALZ
Prostyle (aka Pro) and Tee$ (aka Tee Money) make up Southern California hip-hop duo Generalz. “Luxury Living,” the pair’s debut disc on ICCE/Universal Latino, blends insightful verses and strong, melodic hooks that, according to Pro, “America can listen to over and over.”

JUAN GOTTI
Born Juan Ramos in Eagle Pass, Texas, and reared on the rough urban streets of Houston, this former contributor to South Park Mexican’s music roused the U.S. Latin hip-hop scene last year with his hard-hitting sophomore set, “John Ghetto” (Dope House/ Warner Music Latina). Gotti (who is now a San Antonio resident) is a finalist in the Latin rap/hip-hop album of the year category.

ARTHUR HANLON
Detroit’s best-known contributor to the stateside Latin music scene, spectacular pianist Arthur Hanlon will follow up his chart-topping Latin tropical airplay smash “La Gorda Linda” with an instrumental album produced by Spaniard Francesco Pellicer. The set is due this summer. Hanlon is up for a pair of Billboard Latin Music Awards.

JEAN
The younger brother of showcase alum Luis Fonsi, this smooth singer/songwriter will showcase his winning R&B/rhythmic pop groove with his Sony BMG Norte bow, “On.” The seductively soulful, midtempo ballad “Duele” is the lead track. The album is slated for release May 9.

JEREMIAS
On his ear-catch- ing set “Ese Que Va Por Ahí,” Jeremías, a singer/songwriter of Venezuelan descent, fuses together such multiple musical styles as trova, pop, salsa, swing and rock. Aside from composing and singing each track, he plays the acoustic guitar, which is the album’s musical backbone.

JESSICA MCQUAD
A former Nashville record executive, 24-year-old San Antonio native Jessica McQuad is now a singer/songwriter who is launching a recording career with an English debut disc that will contain four Spanish tracks. The Notre Dame graduate wrote nearly half of the songs.

LA SECTA ALLSTAR
La Secta Allstar puts on a smashing live concert that has helped make the group one of the best-selling Latin rock acts in the United States and Puerto Rico. The trio is expected to embark on a U.S. tour in support of its Universal Latino release “Consejo,” a finalist in the Latin rock/alternative album of the year category.

LENA
Lena is the daughter of famed Cuban singer Malena Burke and granddaughter of the legendary Elena Burke. She has been a backing vocalist for such artists as Alejandro Sanz, Jennifer Lopez and Gloria Estefan, but now steps out on her own with her splendid, self-titled debut. Lena composed all 12 of the album’s songs. Sanz introduced Lena to her label, Warner Music Latina, while she was cutting vocals for Sanz’s hit “No Es Lo Mismo.” The lead single on Lena’s album, “Tu Corazon,” is a duet with Sanz.
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BURGER KING® salutes Reaggaeton and music fans.
LOCOS POR JUANA
This hard-gigging ensemble from Miami delivers a wildly diverse sound, ranging from rock to reggaeton with a generous splash of Latino Caribbean sounds in between. While Locos Por Juana prepares its next set, "La Verdad," it will also be on the road in New Orleans, Tampa, Fla., and the Midwest.

THE MONAS
After scoring a hit in Colombia with their old band Los De Adentro, Juan and Fernando teamed with Pipe and Nando to form a Colombian quartet that plays straight-up Latin rock. The result is the Monas, whose self-titled debut is slated for simultaneous release this year in the United States on Wattsup and in Colombia on Codiscos. The lead single is "Cae La Noche."

N’KLABE
Even with the preponderance of reggaeton artists, this vocal trio on Sony BMG Norte has carved out its own niche—as a salsa act that has hit pay dirt by staying true to the genre's time-honored rhythmic roots. N'Klabe’s solid debut, "1 Love Salsa," boasts two chart-topping tracks on the Latin Tropical Airplay chart, and reached No. 3 on Top Tropical Albums. N’Klabe is dueling for three trophies at this year's Billboard Latin Music Awards.

RAYO
By age 10, Madrid native Rayo not only became the youngest composer signed to Spanish publisher SGAE, but he also had won famed international music contest Bravo Bravissim and recorded a flamenco album for Max Music.

When he turned 14, Rayo relocated to Miami, where he subsequently worked with Luciano Pavarotti, Plácido Domingo, Julio Iglesias, Paulina Rubio and Ricky Martin. (He co-wrote Martin’s hit "Jaleo.") Rayo, now 22, also co-wrote David Bisbal’s fan favorite "Lloraré Las Penas."

DIANA REYES
Perhaps the most popular female artist in the crowded duranguense field, Diana Reyes is living up to the title of her latest Universal CD, "La Reina Del Pasito Duranguense" ("Queen of the Duranguense Step").

A Mexico native who relocated to Chicago to ride the duranguense wave, Reyes’ sexy image and fine vocals have transformed such pop songs as “El Sol No Regresa” into duranguense hits. Reyes is a triple finalist at this year’s awards.

RICAN
An upstart MC from Puerto Rico, Rican bobs and weaves between English and Spanish as he glides through a style that mixes reggae and hip-hop set to West Coast beats, courtesy of Battlecat (Snoop Dogg) and Fingaz (Lo’RoC), producers of Rican’s debut on PuertoRoc Records.

VÍCTOR MANUELLE
Víctor Manuelle is set to preview his forthcoming Sony BMG Norte set "Decision Unánime" during his showcase. The laundry list of guest notables on the disc include Eddie Palmieri, Don Omar, Héctor, Yomo and Bobby Valentin. Ace vocalists Tito Allen, Adalberto Santiago and Cheo Feliciano sing backup on two tracks that feature Palmieri. Domingo Quiñones, Johnny Rivera and Ramón Rodríguez will also provide backing vocals on the rest of the tracks, while José Lugo produced the album. The set will drop May 2.

THE STORY BEHIND THE STAGE
Producers Explain What It Takes To Make A Hit

The quartet of finalists for this year’s coveted producer of the year award spans the rich variety of Latin music. • Reflecting the current popularity of reggaeton, three producers in that genre—Elieel Lind and Luny Tunes’ Franciso Saldana and Víctor Cabrera—are vying for the award, while regional Mexican is represented by Jesús Guillén, who works almost exclusively with Conjunto Primavera, and pop falls under Armando Avila (RBD, La 5a Estación). • The commonality among these producers is their multiple hits. While only two had No. 1 hits on Billboard’s Hot Latin Songs chart—Guillén with Conjunto Primavera’s “Hoy Como Ayer” and Luny Tunes with Wisin & Yandel’s “Llame Pa’ Verte”—all had multiple tracks on the top 10. Here, the finalists share with Billboard how they crafted these charting songs. A selection of their hits appears in parentheses.—Leila Cobo
name: EVA  age: 40  occupation: HOUSEWIFE  hobby: HER ELECTRICIAN

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From >spi.LM36

ARMANDO AVILA
("Algo Más," La Sa Estación: "Sólo Queadete en Silencio," RBD)

"I try to put my signature on every project. In other words, what I do for La Sa Estación is nothing like what I did for RBD or Aleks Syntek, Gloria Trevi or Belinda. For the majority of my projects, I compose, arrange, play all the instruments, record and mix each song.

'I feel very proud of La Sa Estación. I grew up with them and feel like another member of the group.

'As for RBD, although everything has happened very quickly, I'm happy pop music continues to attract an audience. RBD is a very noble project. There are people with vast experience behind the group, and people cannot imagine how hard these kids work.'

JESÚS GUILLÉN
("Hoy Como Ayer," Conjunto Primavera)

"Conjunto Primavera is one of the most manageable groups I have had the good fortune of working with. You suggest something, and they apply it. They have that spirit of being with their audience, and that makes them hugely appreciated.

"I'm not a musician, but I know about sound. I give them ideas, and they execute them. We've tried to take music in the direction of this movement, and I feel there are many people that want change.

"We try to cover everything while obviously preserving the taste of Mexico and the taste of Conjunto Primavera. Today, much of their audience is very young, so we're making music thinking about them."

ELIEL LINDE
("Lo Que Pasó Pasó," Daddy Yankee: "El YaYo.")

"Aventura featuring Don Omar"

"Because I play the piano, I use a lot of melody and rhythmic fusions.

'Don Omar will tell me, 'ElieI, I want a merengue.' He sits next to me, and I begin to create the melodies, and he begins to improvise and write, and that's how we work together.

'With Yankee's 'Lo Que Pasó Pasó,' he wanted a reggaeton with merengue, and basically I did the same thing. He sang the chorus, I inserted the piano and produced the beat.

'El YaYo' is special. I did it in a New York studio in the middle of a snowstorm, as opposed to working in my own studio. We were in the middle of a tour, and we had to turn it around in one day, so I did it impossible to get it done. Thank God it was a hit."

LUNY TUNES
("Gasolina," Daddy Yankee; "Mayor Que Yo.")

Baby Ranks, Daddy Yankee, Teeny Tun Tun, Wisin & Yandel & Hector: "Rakata,

Wisin & Yandel"

"We get into the production at the same time as the song. We not only do the beats.' —LUNY TUNES
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Looking Back

How The Conference & Awards Got So Good

These days, the Billboard Latin Music Conference & Awards is chock-full of people—an estimated 1,000 attendees, artists and panelists—sponsors, programming and glitz, thanks to four nights of showcases, parties and a star-studded awards show that airs live worldwide.

But it wasn’t always like this. It took years for the event to get to the level it is at today. Here is a look at some of the event’s building blocks and most memorable moments during the past 16 years.

1989: Billboard joins forces with the Univision network for the first Premios La Nuestra A La Musica Latina.

1990: The generically named Latin Music Seminar, sponsored by Billboard, starts as a one-day event in Miami. It consists of five industry panels, two artist showcases and an awards show televised from the 4,000-seat James L. Knight Center. About 150 people attend the conference. One of the event’s founders was Gene Smith. Billboard’s current managing director of Latin sales.

1992: The Billboard Latin Music Conference & Awards take place in Las Vegas, the only time in its history that it wasn’t in Miami. Two unknown artists, Jon Secada and Selena, are introduced at the new-artist showcase.

1993: Music mogul Emilio Estefan is the conference’s first keynote speaker. Univision produces the show for the last time.

1994-1998: Billboard self-produces the awards show that features such famed TV stars as Esai Morales and Daisy Fuentes.

1995: Songwriter/producer KC Porter delivers the conference’s keynote speech. Tito Puente receives El Premio Billboard, and Selena is posthumously inducted into the Hall of Fame. The Spirit of Hope award is created in Selena’s honor to be given annually to a Latin artist who participates in humanitarian and civic causes.

1996: Ralph Peer, chairman/CEO of peermusic, delivers the keynote address. Newcomers Shakira, Soraya and DLG perform at conference showcases. José Feliciano receives El Premio Billboard, and Juan Gabriel is inducted into the Hall of Fame. Gloria Estefan receives the Spirit of Hope award.

1997: McHenry Tichenor, president of Tichenor Media Systems and the New Heller, delivers the keynote address, and Daisy Fuentes hosts the awards at the Gusman Center of the Performing Arts. Emmanuel wins the Spirit of Hope award. Herb Alpert receives El Premio Billboard and José José is inducted into Hall of Fame.

1998: Fher and Alex González of Maná keynote the conference, impresario Ralph Mercado receives El Premio Billboard y Vi- cente Fernández is inducted into the Hall of Fame. Salsero Willie Chirino receives the Spirit of Hope award.

1999: The RIAA’s Ricardo Dopic delivers the keynote address. Rocio Dúrcal receives El Pre-

Note of Thanks

Billboard wishes to thank its VIP Advisory Committee for its invaluable assistance in making this conference a success.

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Carlos Mahurbiz
Gabriela Martínez
Mayna Nevarez

Luana Paganí
Jorge Pino
Adrian Posse
Raul Vázquez
Jeff Young
Héctor Zabala

Some of this year’s songwriter award finalists tell us the stories behind their charting tracks. The titles appear in parentheses.

Juanes

- "Nada Valgo Sin Tu Amor," "Volverte a Ver," "La Camisa Negra," "Para Tu Amor," "Lo Que Me Gusta a Mi"
- "Volverte a Ver" is a love song. I wrote it thinking of when I leave home, when I go traveling to work. I think about returning home, and I don’t know what I would do if I didn’t have (my daughter) Luna and my family as my fuel to always keep me breathing. Closing the door and saying goodbye is a difficult image, but at the same time it’s like gasoline. It’s what keeps me alive. I don’t ever want to die before returning home.

Juan Gabriel

- "Adiós Amor Te Vas," "Eres Divina," "Que el Mundo Ruede"
- "Adiós Amor Te Vas" was inspired by a cold. 'Eres Divina' by health. 'Que el Mundo Ruede' by a boy called Reymundo, who I think about returning home, and I don’t know what I would do if I didn’t have (my daughter) Luna and my family as my fuel to always keep me breathing. Closing the door and saying goodbye is a difficult image, but at the same time it’s like gasoline. It’s what keeps me alive. I don’t ever want to die before returning home.

William O. Landron

- "I have to admit that every one of my songs has one of those stories that only happen to me.
- "Pobre Diabla" is a story I put down in two relationships: One happened to me, one didn’t. But it could be the story of any man. Many women say, ‘All men are the same.’ This may be true, but if that’s the case, why continue to suffer for a man that doesn’t value you? I think that mind-set made ‘Pobre Diabla’ a hit.
- “Bandoleros” I wrote two years ago at a time when there was a lot of negative news about me. My only weapon was my music, and I used it in my favor along with my friend [Togo Calderón], the only musician in the genre who stood by my side during the judicial process against me in Puerto Rico.
- "(The song) is the unburdening of a heart hurt by the ungratefulness of the system, of the media, of my friends, of the mistakes I have made as Don Omar, and the guilt I will refuse to carry with me simply by virtue of being who I am.

Raymond Ayala Aka Daddy Yankee

- "Gasolina," "Romep"
- "I don’t put pressure on myself. When I released (the single) ‘Seguro,’ everyone said I couldn’t do better than that. Then came ‘Gasolina.’ And, again, many people told me I would never do anything better than ‘Gasolina.’ That’s what everybody has told me a thousand times over the years. Now, it’s ‘Romep.’ Another completely different thing. I don’t sit down to create by repeating the same formula. I’m not a repetitive artist because that kind of inspiration comes only once.

Leila Cobo


Back  | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10  | 11  | 12  | 13  | 14  | 15  | 16  | 17  | 18  | 19  | 20  | 21  | 22  | 23  | 24  | 25  | 26  | 27  | 28  | 29  | 30  | 31  | 32  | 33  | 34  | 35  | 36  | 37  | 38  | 39  | 40

This Year’s Finalists Discuss Their Hits

*NOTE* Billboard joins forces with the Univision network for the first Premios La Nuestra A La Musica Latina.
The chart recaps in this Latin music special are year-to-date starting with the Dec. 3, 2005, issue, the beginning of the chart year, through the April 1, 2006, issue.

Recaps for Top Latin Albums are based on sales information compiled by Nielsen SoundScan. Recaps for Hot Latin Songs are based on gross audience impressions from airplay monitored by Nielsen BDS. Titles receive credit for sales or audience impressions accumulated during each week they appear on the pertinent chart. …

Recaps compiled by rock charts manager Anthony Colombo with assistance from Latin charts manager Ricardo Companioni.

### Hot Latin Songs Artists

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<td>LA TORTURA (3) — Daddy Yankee</td>
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<td>IVY QUEEN (4) — Grupo Montez</td>
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<td>SHAKIRA (5) — Daddy Yankee</td>
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<td>ROCO DE LAS CALLES (6) — Daddy Yankee</td>
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<td>CUBANTELLE (7) — Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
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- SHAKIRA (5) — Daddy Yankee — LA TORTURA
- IVY QUEEN (4) — Grupo Montez — VIDA
- ROCO DE LAS CALLES (6) — Daddy Yankee — MAYOR QUE YO
- CUBANTELLE (7) — Wisin & Yandel — NA NA NA
- DADDY YANKEE (8) — Daddy Yankee — ESO EMH!
- VIDA (10) — Daddy Yankee — LA KIY Y MARIA
- ROCO DE LAS CALLES (9) — Daddy Yankee — CONTRA EL VIENTO Y MAREA
- SHAKIRA (10) — Daddy Yankee — ESO EMH!

### Hot Latin Songs Imprints

- SONY BMG NORTE (17) — SONY BMG NORTE
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- DISA (9) — DISA
- FONOVISA (10) — FONOVISA
- MAS FLOW (2) — MAS FLOW

### Hot Latin Songs Labels

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### Top Latin Albums

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- DISA (37) — DISA
- FONOVISA (25) — FONOVISA
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Management
NO SLOWDOWN IN SIGHT FOR THE FRAY

For the Fray, timing has been everything. While still unsigned, the Denver-based quartet landed a few tunes on KTCL Denver’s “Locals Only” specialty show, but with stunning regularity, eight of its melodic pop songs were rejected for regular rotation.

Despite feeling it was pointless, the band submitted one more song, “Over My Head (Cable Car),” in September 2004. “[Band guitarist/vocalist] Joe [King] e-mailed me one Sunday afternoon, right after I found out that another local band wasn’t going to deliver a song they had promised,” reca is “Locals Only” host Alf. “Suddenly, I had an open slot on the show and six hours to find something to fill it.” King sent “Cable Car,” as it was then known, and Alf says “I found myself humming and singing the chorus minutes, hours, days after hearing it.” Within a week, the song was in regular rotation at the station, making the Fray the second local band ever added to the station’s playlist. Ultimately, it became one of KTCL’s most-played songs for 2004. The Fray had another round of perfect timing. Around the same period, Epic Records, which has been...

continued on >>p36

FACT FILE

Label: Epic Records
Management: Jason Jenner and Gregg Letterman, A-squared Management

>PARTY TIME
Karl Wallinger and his group World Party will go on their first U.S. tour in seven years, starting May 18 in Birmingham, Ala. Wallinger tested the waters in March at a packed show at South by Southwest. The 13-city first leg of the tour, booked by Monterey Peninsula Artists, coincides with the May 2 rerelease of 2002’s “Dumbing Up” on Wallinger’s own Fontana-distributed Seaview Records. The album contains two new tracks, including “What Does It Mean Now,” which is climbing the Triple-A chart. Wallinger, who is managed by Arma Andon, is already working on material for another album. —Melinda Newman

>SWEDISH DEAL
Razor & Tie has inked 18-year-old singer Kelly Sweet to a worldwide record deal. Sweet, who has also signed with Creative Artists Agency for booking, is working with producer Mark Portmann (Josh Groban, Celine Dion) on her label debut, which will come out later this year. —Melinda Newman

>YOUNG JAM UNEARTHED
The Library of Congress has discovered a jam session with jazz great Lester Young, Gene DeAnna, head of the library’s Recorded Sound Section, says the 16-inch lacquer disc runs about 35 minutes. It was discovered when the engineer of the project and other recordings handed over a box of 150 untitiled discs, including the Young recording, to the library. It was labeled “Jam Session, Dec. 29, 1940.” Guesswork puts the locale as New York’s Village Vanguard. —Tony Sanders

>ROUNDER SIGNS TENG
Rounder Records has signed singer/pianist Vienna Teng to its Zoë imprint. Teng has released two previous albums that have landed her play on NPR, as well as appearances on “Late Night With David Letterman” and “The Saturday Early Show.” “Dreaming Through the Noise,” out July 25, was produced by Teng and Larry Klein. —Melinda Newman
Rocking Harder While Keeping The Faith

MercyMe Rolls Out Record With An Edge

NASHVILLE—Sometimes success can be a double-edged sword. Just ask the guys in MercyMe. The INO Records band scored a multiformat hit with "I Can Only Imagine" and was catapulted from a budding Christian act to major crossover success with a double-platinum debut album. Lead singer Bart Millard says the Texas rockers suddenly found themselves as poster boys for the power ballad. They followed up with "Spoken For" and "Undone." Both albums went gold and spawned several radio hits.

All in all, the band's career has been percolating along quite nicely. However, with the April 25 release of "Coming Up to Breathe," Millard says MercyMe has finally made the record it has wanted to make all along.

"We were very fortunate to have 'I Can Only Imagine' and we were advised to try to duplicate that on the next two records," he says. "There were probably more slow songs than there were fast songs—which worked—but now we are at this point where we are known for these ballads rather than the rock band we've wanted to be." On "Coming Up to Breathe," the band rocks harder than ever before, but not enough to alienate the fans who made it a core act at Christian AC radio. "We really just focused on up-tempo songs," Millard says. "I'm very guilty of saving the really good lyrics for slow songs and I thought that was just a weird way of doing things. I wanted to really write more up-tempo songs, and these songs rock."

KCXR Tulsa, Okla., music director/APD Scott Herrold is eagerly awaiting the band's new release. "MercyMe is definitely a core artist in Christian music.... They are one of the most requested bands and they sell a ton of records."

Though it's sometimes hard for an act to follow up a major hit like "I Can Only Imagine," Herrold says the band has done so. "They've followed with other hits like 'Word of God Speak.'... Once you've had a big hit like 'I Can Only Imagine' in the general market, you attract more fans and you have a bigger fan base of people coming back to hear what you are going to follow up with."

Plans call for the band to tour churches the first two weeks of May, introducing the new songs acoustically and doing Q&A sessions.

Bluegrass Bands Together

Fans of bluegrass music won't be the only beneficiaries of the new Skaggs Family Records release, "Celebration of Life." The live double album will repackage proceeds for Musicians Against Childhood Cancer, which, in turn, will hand those funds over to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis.

MACC was founded by Darrell and Phyllis Adkins after they lost their daughter Mandy, a St. Jude patient, to a brain stem tumor. Six years ago they launched the annual MACC festival at Hoover Y-Park near Columbus, Ohio, to raise money for their charity. The festival has become a successful annual bluegrass event that has raised more than $300,000 to date.

Taking the next logical step, Darrell Adkins began planning an album of live performances culled from the festivals, and he found an eager partner in Skaggs Family. The label, owned by bluegrass superstar Ricky Skaggs, is handling distribution and marketing for the project and not taking any profit from its sales.

Skaggs Family GM Stephen Day says simply that the project seemed "worthwhile. ... The more I learned about Mandy and their story, the more I respected Darrell and Phyllis because they took their grief and channeled it into action," he says.

While the label's staff helped Adkins with such issues as clearances, Day says the festival organizer "did all the heavy lifting" on the CD. "We're just serving as a channel to get it out into the marketplace and sort of counsel him along the way." Released April 18, "Celebration of Life" includes 37 live tracks from such bluegrass stars as Dan Tyminski, Rhonda Vincent & the Rage, the Grascals, Cherryholmes, Tony Rice, Blue Highway, Doyle Lawson & Quicksilver, Alecia Nugent, Larry Cordle and J.D. Crowe & the New South.

In total, 136 musicians are involved in the project. All waived their royalties, as did many of the song publishers.

In terms of marketing the project, Day says, "We're just basically trying to hit all the angles we'd hit with a regular release." But in addition to having the album available at retail outlets, where the two-CD set sells for $17.98, many of the participating artists have also expressed an interest in selling it at their shows.

TRITT TALK: Musician/producer Randy Jackson, who has become better-known as an "American Idol" judge, will co-produce the next album from Travis Tritt with the country star. Early next year, the pair will begin recording a project tenta-
tively due in summer 2007. As previously reported, Tritt signed on earlier this year with Nashville startup Category 5 Records, where he is the indie label’s flagship artist.

Tritt’s manager, Duke Cooper, says the new CD will be more country rock than country, with an Allman Brothers/Stevie Ray Vaughan influence. Meanwhile, Tritt and R&B legend Sam Moore recorded a duet of Ray Charles’ “ Riding Thumb” for Moore’s upcoming duets album on Rhino.

ON THE ROW: Bill Macky, VP of national promotion at Epic Records in Nashville, was let go April 12. He has been replaced by Tom Moran, who was elevated from the director of national promotion post at sister label Columbia Records... ASCAP assistant VP Marc Driskill exits for a job at Craig Wiseman’s publishing company Big Loud Shirt Industries, where he will oversee operations.

The group's last album, "The Best of Billy Ocean," a 15-track retrospective that encompasses such trademark tunes as "Caribbean Queen," "Love Zone," and "Suddenly.

Better yet, the man will embark on his first world tour in more than 10 years. The 25- to 30-date outing starts June 16 in Tacoma, Wash. Additional stops include San Diego (June 25), Kansas City, Mo. (July 7) and New York (July 27).

R&B FORCE FIELD: Patti LaBelle and Smokey Robinson will host the Rhythm & Blues Foundation’s Pioneer Awards. The June 29 ceremony will be the first held in the foundation’s new home in some city, Philadelphia (Billboard, March 26). Honorees include Berry Gordy and Otis Redding.

KUDOS... To everyone’s favorite urban retailer—and step master—George Daniels. The Chicago mainstay (George’s Music Room) will be honored April 28 by the Friars of Beverly Hills. Actor Malcolm Jamal Warner and industry vet Bruce Walker will host, while Wayman Tisdale will perform.
Godsmack’s Erna Digs Deep Into His Pain

Don’t say the M word to Godsmack frontman Sully Erna. “We’re not some metal band,” he says. “I really look at us as hard rock.”

Granted, he may be splitting hairs to the band’s legion of fans, who simply appreciate the Boston-based quartet’s heavy, yet melodic dose of sound. And even he admits Godsmack is caught between a rock and a metal place: “The metal guys go, ‘Fuck them, they’re too wimpy,’ and the rock guys go, ‘They’re too metal.’

Even though it seems Godsmack often flies under the radar compared with its hard rock brethren, the band holds the record for most songs in the top 10 on Billboard’s Active Rock chart, besting such acts as Foo Fighters, Korn, Metallica, Creed, Nickelback and Staind. Its 13th top 10 entry, “Speak,” is in its sixth week at the top of the Active Rock chart this issue, making it the band’s biggest hit since 2002.

The tune is the first track from “Godsmack IV,” out April 25 on Universal Republic. The album represents a shift for the group. While many of the songs still rock, melody is king and confession proves good for the soul. On “The Enemy,” Erna admits his insecurities, and many of the album’s lyrics deal with his past problems.

“2005 was a terrible year for me,” he says. “I allowed so much negativity in my life throughout the year. It became part of my regular lifestyle—negative people and addictions. I got rid of a lot of stuff that was killing me or putting me at a standstill.”

As he walloped in his misery, his bandmates toiled away. “They would have 30 songs, and I didn’t have the word ‘the’ written down yet. I wasn’t inspired,” he says. “One day, I just sat there in my own sorrow. I lived this life of sin. I don’t even know where to begin and I was like, ‘There’s a man from there just poured out.’ In fact, the album’s opener, the driving ‘Livin’ in Sin,’ details his distressed state and ultimate breakthrough.

Fans fear Erna has gone all soft on them, one listen to “Godsmack IV” will prove otherwise. He also feels that the positive reception given the band’s 2004 acoustic EP, “The Otherside,” showed the band’s following is willing to allow the group to explore new textures and a broader range.

Six tracks from “Godsmack IV” will stream on 85 Clear Channel Radio-owned stations’ Web sites for a week before the album’s release. The band will appear April 26 on “The Tonight Show With Jay Leno” and April 28 on “Jimmy Kimmel Live.”

STEPPING OUT: Heart’s Nancy Wilson says she may be ready to step out on her husband Cameron Crowe—musically speaking, that is. Wilson, who has scored a number of Crowe’s movies (including “Almost Famous,” “Elizabethtown” and “Vanilla Sky”), is talking to film folks about scoring other movies. “Cameron is in a writing cycle right now, so I might do another score outside of the family.” She laughs and admits scoring a movie for a director she is not married to “may be in some ways easier.”

Wilson and her sister Ann get paid the respect they more than deserve on “Decades Live: Heart & Friends,” a tribute concert featuring the band that will begin airing May 8 on VH1 Classic.

UPDATE: Artist manager Ron Shapiro and veteran publicist Patti Conte have launched a New York-based public relations company tentatively titled Plan A Media. They are waiting for the name to clear. Initial clients include Blue October and Josh Kelley. Shapiro continues to separately run his management/consulting company. Conte was most recently Virgin Records senior VP of communications. As had been long rumored, Columbia Records publicist Angelica Cob will join Virgin as head of communications later this spring.

A New Kind Of New Music

‘Nuove Musiche’ Injects 21st-CenturyTwists Into 17th-Century Classics

There’s a new name nestled among the superstar artists atop the Classical Chart in recent weeks: Rolli Lislevand. His latest album, “Nuove Musiche” (ECM New Series, March 3), features the Norwegian lutenist/guitarist joined by a host of notable colleagues from the early music community, including percussionists Pedro Estevan and harpist/vocalist Arianna Savall (the daughter of viola da gamba virtuoso Jordi Savall and vocalist Montserrat Figueras).

The album’s title plays with listeners’ expectations. The musicians delve into some very early music—400-year-old works by Girolamo Frescobaldi, Giovanni Girolamo Kapeller and others—that is to say, the composers who flourished in the wake of the 17th-century nuove music (“new music”) movement. However, Lislevand and his colleagues extend new music’s meaning even further by introducing 21st-century twists.

The musicians use the older pieces as launching points for such modern-sounding improvisations as two flamenco-inspired Passacaglias and adagio, a belbo-inflected double bass solo in the Passacaglia canzona and a Passacaglia celtica certain to please any Irish music fan.

Other musicians on the recording include Bjorn Kjellemyr on colascione lute and double bass, organist/clavichord player Guido Morini, Marco Ambrosio on Swedish-stringed instrument the nyckelharpa and Thor-Harald Johnsen on the chitarra battente guitar.

As Lislevand notes, “As far as I’m concerned, reconstruc-
tion is not really interesting at all. Do we really want to act as if we hadn’t heard any music between 1600 and the present day? I think that would be dishonest.”

NOTED: Six-time Grammy Award winner the Philadelphia Orchestra was a recipient of this year’s Recording Academy Honors Award from the Philadelphia chapter.
GGO GOO DOLLS
Let Love In
Producer: Glen Ballard
Warner Bros.
Release Date: April 25
Goo Goo Dolls have been present on the singles charts for more than a decade, with such enduring hits as “Name” and “Iris.” But that was then. In more recent times, melodic music has been barricaded in top 40’s cellar in favor of hip-hop and hard rock, it has been tough for straight-ahead pop/rock bands to shine. “Let Love In,” capably produced by Glen Ballard, has its moments, but it comes across as a baby step forward. That may foster hits at niche radio, but in terms of making Jon Rzeznik and company headliners again, the album seems complacent. New single “Stay With You” is quintessential and recognizable, but with the dice scoring the occasional幸胜aerst at mainstream radio again (James Blunt, Daniel Powter), we had higher hopes. —CH

MARK KNOPFLER & EMMYLOU HARRIS
All the Roadrunning
Producers: Chuck Ainlay, Mark Knopfler
Warner Bros./Nonesuch
Release Date: April 25
After seven years of sporadic recording, Knopfler and Harris have completed “All the Roadrunning,” a mix of “love you” and “leave you” songs accented by mandolin, fiddle and steel guitar. Emmylou’s classic country delivery brings out a rougher edge in Knopfler’s bassy voice, though the product is far from gritty. The album is ripe with reverb and fade-outs, which make the country tunes seem less romantic and more adult contemporary. Regardless, songs like “Right Now” and, despite its name, “Donkey Town,” have strong, likable melodies while remaining laid-back. “If This Is Goodbye” brings the disc home with a tear in its eye, considering it’s based on the last conversations of people calling from the Twin Towers on Sept. 11, 2001. While over-produced and quite sentimental, this is a very sweet record. —KH

Rihanna
Unfaithful (3:50)
Producer: not listed
Writer: Smith, S. (CD promo)
After releasing last tempo party cuts “Pon De Replay” and “SOS,” Barbados-bred Rihanna bares a softer side on her first ballad. “Unfaithful” is an infernal rhyme by labelmates Ne-Yo, the cut is the second single from upcoming sophomore set “A Girl Like Me.” While Ne-Yo flexes his versatility by writing from a woman’s perspective, Rihanna unloads those impression (though occasionally nasally) soprano pipes that have likened her to Beyoncé. Though she has some growing to do vocally, she effectively conveys the struggle of a woman desiring to end her disloyal ways. While listeners used to Rihanna’s peppery Caribbean-flavored tracks may be caught off guard by the serenity of “Unfaithful,” with its simple piano strokes and soft snaps, the song ultimately reveals a promising young vocalist growing into her own. —CH

KT TUNSTALL
Suddenly I See (3:21)
Producer: Steve Osborne
Writer: KT Tunstall
Publisher: Sony/ATV UK & Ireland
Relentless/Virgin (CD track)
America is finally catching up with U.K. folk-popper KT Tunstall. Already an international hit, her fiery debut single, “Black Horse & the Cherry Tree,” keeps galloping ahead on The Billboard Hot 100. Tunstall’s new effort, “Suddenly I See,” contains fewer “whoa-yeahs” and even more melodic music. Over a spare, infectious guitar groove, Tunstall serenades—not without ambiguity—about “a beautiful girl” whose face is “a map of the world.” While it lacks the stomping blues power of “Black Horse,” the track delivers an uplifting, self-affirming pop chorus with the same raw urgency. Again, Tunstall’s vocals are super-fresh and enormously alive, reminding us that a great radio hook can soar and stick without generic studio veneer. —SP

HIP-HOP
THE STREETS
The Hardest Way to Make an Easy Living
Producer: Mike Skinner
Vice
Release Date: April 25
Mike Skinner’s third album as the Streets is a self-conscious, macroscopic view of the U.K. rapper’s fast-earned success and subsequent behavior—ranging from the factional and non-fictional variety. Skinner spends time rapping tabloids, poking fun at America, contemplating drugs and tackling the joys and sorrows of making boatloads of money, all in his English-accented rap/sing—continued on >>>40

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talking style. The smart-ass humor remains intact, especially on "Pranaging Out" and "Hotline Expressionism." The beats are also strong, if not polarpounding, rounding up samples and old-school, videogame noises. But by flanking serious tunes like "Never Went to Church" and "All Goes Out the Window" with silliness, Skinner dishes what sincerity he was trying to convey. "Hardest Way" is good, but perhaps not good enough to win him any new fans. —HN

DANCE

GÜNTHER

Pleasureman

Producers: various

Release Date: April 25

It is not hard to see why DJ Bobo and Aquila, is relentlessly repeated on "Pleasureman." It is unlikely that anyone would ever make it through all 12 overbtown tracks. But "Pleasureman" does feature a diffluent duet with Samantha Fox on a cover of her '80s hit "Touch Me" and the worldwide club hit "Ding Dong Song" (with its confessional hook, "You touched my tra-la-la"). desirable to be tested beyond frat parties. Let's hope "Saturday Night Live" has a call in. —SP

R&B

AMEL LARRIEUX

Morning

Producer: Amel Larrieux

Blessed Records/ADA/Audio Music Group

Release Date: April 25

Larrieux's voice is one of the most distinctive voices in R&B, soul, hip-hop, jazz, and folk, and she has been a mainstay on the top of the charts for over a decade. Her latest album, "Morning," is a beautiful and soulful collection of songs that are sure to please her fans. —JW

FORT MINOR FEATURING MIKE SHINODA

"Made By Myself"

Producer: Mike Shinoda

Font/Shina Records

"Made By Myself" is a track from the upcoming album "Where'd You Go?" and it features the talents of both Mike Shinoda and Fort Minor. The song is a blend of rock and dance, with Shinoda's raspy vocals and Fort Minor's piano and guitar riffs. The result is a catchy and upbeat track that is sure to be a hit. —ME

LEGENDS & CREDITS

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


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

CRITICS' CHOICE »: A new release, regardless of chart potential, highly recommended for music merit.

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

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Mass Takes New Meaning At Easter; ‘Idol’ Power

As Rascal Flatts fends off a challenge by Toby Keith on The Billboard 200, we find that more than any Easter of this decade, the bunny trail is lined with Wal-Mart and Target stores.

Although overall album sales are down 4% from Easter week 2005, which ended March 27, mass merchants’ Easter numbers hop ahead this year, in raw sales (5.6 million, up 6.5%) and market share (47%, compared with 43% last year).

Excluding Christmas shopping seasons, you have to go back to February 2004 to find the last time big-box stores sold more albums. In that ideal stanza when the Grammy Awards telecast and the arrival of Norah Jones’ anticipated “Feels Like Home” coincided with Valentine’s Day shopping, mass merchantes rang 6.4 million units, 37% of the week’s take.

The sector held 40% of albums sold in the Easter weeks of 2004 and 2003, 38% for that holiday period in 2002 and 32% in the Easters of 2001 and 2000. This year, Easter traffic helps Rascal Flatts’ “Me and My Gang” soften the severe second-week erosion that usually follows a blockbuster opener (345,000 copies, down 52%). The holiday also builds a faster start for Keith’s “White Trash With Money,” 330,000, than the 283,000 he clocked when last album “Honky Tonk University” arrived in May 2005.

Those two sets, and the next two on The Billboard 200—“Now 21” (293,000, down 12%) and the “High School Musical” soundtrack (256,000, up 41%)—further illustrate mass merchandise enhanced Easter clout. The sector accounts for at least 77% of current sales in each of the top four slots.

This also marks the first time since Billboard began using SoundScan data in May 1991 that a country album has been No. 1 during Easter week.

Easter’s nomadic nature annually plays havoc with same-week sales comparisons. The spike over the comparative 2005 week on this year’s Market Watch, for example, puts Easter 2006 against a non-holiday week.

More important, Peter Cottontail’s arrival helps fill the hole that was dug in the week ending March 26, which stood against last year’s Easter romp. In that frame, the year-to-date gap in album sales grew from 2.9% to 3.8%.

Now with this year’s Easter in the bank, the gap narrows to 0.8%. Considering there have been only four weeks in 2006 when album sales have beaten those of the same 2005 frames, the tiny gap feels like a win.

QUEEN-SIZED: This just in: TV exposure improves album sales, especially if one can book a series that a) leads all shows in the ratings and b) has a music hook.

That was the topic of “American Idol” related interviews I recently did for reporters from The New York Times, Associated Press and others, but the story is far from new. As early as 2003, the second season for “Idol,” celebrity judging stints heated sales for Bee Gees and Lionel Richie.

More guests have been on this season’s “Idol” than before. To see the benefit, witness this week’s chart action by Queen, which recently paid a visit. “Stone Cold Classics,” the sixth hits compilation to chart in the United States during the British band’s career, enters The Billboard 200 at No. 45 (27,000), while 2004 release “Greatest Hits: We Will Rock You” re-enters at No. 115 (11,000, up 154%). The 1992 compilation “Greatest Hits” rides 15-2 on Top Pop Catalog Albums, while that hit’s Greatest Gainer ribbon (14,000, up 130%).

Overall, the band’s entire body of album swells from 17,000 a week ago to 60,000 for this frame, while Queen’s digital track sales more than tripled, from 35,000 to 115,000.

Earlier this year, the talent show helped visitor Barry Manilow’s “The Greatest Songs of the Fifties” return to The Billboard 200’s top 10, when a 140% lift moved it 24-4.

A week later, “Idol” guest Shakira saw “Oral Fixation Vol. 2” soar 98-6, but much of that frame’s 643% sales blast was simply from including huge radio hit “Hips Don’t Lie” on the album’s new edition.

“Idol” seemed to have limited impact for Kenny Rogers, when “Water & Bridges” slipped seven spots on the big chart, yet its sales were about flat, up by less than 50 copies over the prior week. In its third week out, the album would likely have declined without that exposure.
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**/top sellers:**

- **High School Musical**
- **American Idol**
- **Curious George**
- **Emancipation**
- **Between Dreams**
- **The Greatest Hits**
- **The Breakthrough**
- **The Greatest Songs Of The Fitters**
- **The Trilogy**
- **Educated Horses**
- **Feel's Like Today**
- **Wake the Line**
- **Curtain Call: The Hits**
- **Into the Rush**
- **Your Man**
- **It's Time**
- **The Charm**
- **The Way It Is**
- **Underage Thinking**
- **The Sound of Revenge**
- **Stone Cold Classics**
- **The Capitol Albums Vol. 2**
- **The Best Of Poison: 20 Years Of Rock**
- **Songs About Me**

### Queen

- **Queen's "American Idol" Top 20 Hits**
  - No. 1: "The Show Must Go On" (1997)
  - No. 2: "Bohemian Rhapsody" (1975)
  - No. 3: "We Will Rock You" (1977)
  - No. 4: "Bohemian Rhapsody" (1997)
  - No. 5: "We Will Rock You" (1997)

**Rock hard artists who sold well (20,000 and higher charting hits):**

- **Axl Rose**
- **Linkin Park**
- **Green Day**
- **The Rolling Stones**
- **Metallica**

**Cont'd play of his "Best Day" single on "American Idol" hits charted 89,000 first-week sales.**

**Queen's "A merican Idol" Top 20 Hits that have the chance to top the "Billboard" Hot 100:**

- No. 1: "The Show Must Go On" (1997)
- No. 2: "Bohemian Rhapsody" (1975)
- No. 3: "We Will Rock You" (1977)
- No. 4: "Bohemian Rhapsody" (1997)
- No. 5: "We Will Rock You" (1997)

**Due one of the chart's many leading titles that has the chance to top the "Billboard" Hot 100:**

- No. 1: "The Show Must Go On" (1997)
- No. 2: "Bohemian Rhapsody" (1975)
- No. 3: "We Will Rock You" (1977)
- No. 4: "Bohemian Rhapsody" (1997)
- No. 5: "We Will Rock You" (1997)
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APY = Annual Percentage Yield. Source: Financial institution website and/or phone survey 04/03/06. Rates subject to change without notice. Some rates from other institutions may have additional qualifying requirements. Please check with your financial institution for current rates. Certificates are subject to early withdrawal fees and penalties. First Entertainment deposits insured up to $100,000 by the NCUA. Other institution insured up to $100,000 by the FDIC. Bank of America, Wells Fargo, Washington Mutual, and Citibank are registered trademarks.

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**Top 100 Songs Sales: 2006**

**Week of April 29, 2006**

- **Billboard 200**
  - **Top 10 Songs**
  - **Top 100 Songs Sales**

**Top 10 Songs Sales**

1. BARRY MANILOW - "The Road To Home" (18.98)
2. VARIOUS ARTISTS - "Monster Ballads" (Platinum Edition) (18.98)
3. PASSION WORKSHIP BAND - "Passion: Everything Glorious" (Universal Republic) (18.98)
4. MIKAELA ROMÉN - "The Real Thing" (Motown) (18.98)
5. THE NOTORIOUS B.G. - "Dues." (Death Row) (18.98)
6. ANDREA TOCELLI - "Amor" (Virgin) (18.98)
7. GARY ALLAN - "Touch All Over" (Epic Records) (19.98)
8. NEKO CASE - "From First To Last" (SONY BMG NORTE) (19.98)
9. BO BICE - "The Real Thing" (Motown) (18.98)
10. CEDARMONT KIDS - "Easter Favorites" (Sony) (18.98)

**Additional Information**

- **Soundtrack**
  - "The Road To Home" is the title song from the movie *The Road To Home*. The soundtrack includes songs from various artists.

- **Sales Figures**
  - The combined sales of the top 10 songs total over 12,000 units.
  - Soundtrack sales are estimated at 12,000 units.

**Data for week of April 29, 2006 | CHARTS LEGEND on Page 58**

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**Note:** This document is a snapshot from a Billboard chart and provides sales data for the week ending April 29, 2006. The chart includes various artists and their respective sales figures for songs and albums.
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<td>I Write Sin's Not Tragedies</td>
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<td>What You Don't Know</td>
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<td>Twist &amp; Shout</td>
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<td>She's Mine</td>
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<td>Have a Little Faith</td>
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<td>Heartbreak Hotel</td>
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<td>Greatest (Theme From Backstage Mountain)</td>
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<td>Hold On</td>
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<td>You're Beautiful</td>
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<td>Control Myself</td>
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**Pop 100** The top 100 pop singles & tracks, according to mainstream top 40 radio audience impressions measured by Nielsen SoundScan Data/Trends and sales and streaming compiled by Nielsen SoundScan, Inc. Other Nielsen charts not included in this list. 

Data for week of April 29, 2006 | CHARTS LEGEND on Page 58
### Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Title</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Label</th>
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<tr>
<td>Yolanda Adams</td>
<td>Day By Day</td>
<td>Disc</td>
<td>Atlantic</td>
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<td>Pitbull</td>
<td>Money Is Still A Major Issue</td>
<td>Disc</td>
<td>Epic</td>
<td>4/07</td>
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<tr>
<td>Warren G</td>
<td>In The Mid-Nite Hour</td>
<td>Disc</td>
<td>Elektra</td>
<td>4/26</td>
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<tr>
<td>FLOETRY</td>
<td>Peace/Aaliyah’s Goddess (19.98)</td>
<td>CD</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rihanna</td>
<td>Music Of The Sun</td>
<td>CD</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
<td>5/11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lyfe Jennings</td>
<td>Lyfe 286-192</td>
<td>CD</td>
<td>Jive</td>
<td>5/05</td>
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<tr>
<td>YOUNGBLOOD</td>
<td>Everyday I’m Shufflin’ (18.98)</td>
<td>CD</td>
<td>Atlantic</td>
<td>5/12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scarface Presents... The Product</td>
<td>One Humid</td>
<td>CD</td>
<td>Virgin</td>
<td>5/26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bow Wow</td>
<td>Wanted</td>
<td>CD</td>
<td>Atlantic</td>
<td>5/05</td>
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<td>T-Pain</td>
<td>I Got A Make It</td>
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<td>Snoop Dogg</td>
<td>Take The Lead</td>
<td>CD</td>
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<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Slow Motion</td>
<td>CD</td>
<td>Universal</td>
<td>5/12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purple Ribbon All-Stars</td>
<td>Big Boss Presents... Get Perty Vol. 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scarface</td>
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<td>Mopot</td>
<td>The Massacre</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Unrevealed: The Singles Collection</td>
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<td>Warner Bros.</td>
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<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Power Surge</td>
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<td>Universal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bird the Bricklayer</td>
<td>The Gospel</td>
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### Top Reggae Albums

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<td>Sean Paul</td>
<td>Tha Trinity</td>
<td>5/26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patrice Roberts</td>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>5/26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tash</td>
<td>Welcome To Jamaica</td>
<td>5/26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Africa Unite: The Singles Collection</td>
<td>5/26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>5/26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Dancehall Nice Again 2006</td>
<td>5/26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Who You Fighting For?</td>
<td>5/26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Count Your Blessings</td>
<td>5/26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>20 Best Of Bob Marley</td>
<td>5/26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Strictly The Best 33</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Throw Down Your Arms</td>
<td>5/26</td>
</tr>
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---

BETWEEN THE BULLETS egeorge@billboard.com

LL STAYS IN 100,000-PLUS CLUB

Firing its muscle at No. 2 with the Hot Shot Debut tag on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Albums is...  

LL Cool J's almost self-titled "Todd Smith." While...  

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data.
### R&B/HIP-HOP GREATS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Promotion/Label</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Back Like That</td>
<td>Snoop Dogg</td>
<td>(Def Jam/Interscope)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best Friend</td>
<td>Ja Rule</td>
<td>(J Records/Interscope)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just Came Here to Chill</td>
<td>Tha Dogg Pound</td>
<td>(Tha Dogg Pound/Interscope)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ridin'</td>
<td>Puff Daddy</td>
<td>(Bad Boy/Interscope)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Holla's Theme</td>
<td>Puff Daddy</td>
<td>(Bad Boy/Interscope)</td>
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<tr>
<td>No One</td>
<td>50 Cent</td>
<td>(Shady/Columbia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyrical</td>
<td>Mary J. Blige</td>
<td>(MCA/Interscope)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceived</td>
<td>The Game</td>
<td>(Def Jam/Interscope)</td>
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### R&B/HIP-HOP HOT R&B SINGLES SALES

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<td>(Murder Inc/Def Jam)</td>
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<td>I Trade It</td>
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<td>(RCA)</td>
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<td>Thinkin' Bouctoo</td>
<td>2Pac</td>
<td>(Tha Dogg Pound/Def Jam)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Snap Yo Fingers</td>
<td>Lil Kim</td>
<td>(J Records/Interscope)</td>
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<td>Coot Enuff</td>
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<td>Step Into Love</td>
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<td>Remember</td>
<td>R. Kelly</td>
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<td>May You Know I Ride Wit Her</td>
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<td>Welcome to My Party</td>
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<td>I Refuse</td>
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<td>I Am Not Your Hair</td>
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<td>Never Backed</td>
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<td>Snap Yo Fingers</td>
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<tr>
<td>What You Waiting For</td>
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<td>(RCA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>So Right</td>
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### R&B/HIP-HOP RHYTHMIC AIRPLAY

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<td>Lean Wit It, Rock Wit It</td>
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<td>Miss New Booty</td>
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<td>Be Without You</td>
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<td>What You Know</td>
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<td>So What</td>
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<td>Sow</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do I Love You</td>
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### R&B/HIP-HOP ADULT R&B

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<td>In My Mind</td>
<td>Brandy</td>
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<td>Find Myself In You</td>
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<td>(MCA/Interscope)</td>
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<td>Don't Know When To Go</td>
<td>Brandy</td>
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<td>So Right</td>
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<td>(MCA/Interscope)</td>
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### ADULT R&B

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### HITSPREDICTOR

See chart legend for rules and explanations. Yellow indicates recently listed title, indicates new chart entry.
HOT COUNTRY SONGS

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<td>Toby Keith</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>ALL I WANT TO DO</td>
<td>Rodney Atkins</td>
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<td>JORDANO'S GONE</td>
<td>Brad Paisley</td>
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<td>DOING IT AGAIN</td>
<td>Tim McGraw</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>COMIN' HOME</td>
<td>Kenny Chesney</td>
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<td>Joe Nichols</td>
<td>17</td>
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<td>Keith urban</td>
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<td>TAKE ME OR LEAVE ME</td>
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<td>WHAT A MINUTE</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>WAY UP THERE</td>
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<td>16</td>
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<td>I'M GONNA MISS HER</td>
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HIT PREDICTOR

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<tr>
<td>Rodney Atkins</td>
<td>Top 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brad Paisley</td>
<td>Top 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tim McGraw</td>
<td>Top 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenny Chesney</td>
<td>Top 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe Nichols</td>
<td>Top 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keith Urban</td>
<td>Top 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenny Chesney</td>
<td>Top 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brad Paisley</td>
<td>Top 10</td>
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<td>Kenny Chesney</td>
<td>Top 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brad Paisley</td>
<td>Top 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BETWEEN THE BLUES

www.billboard.com
### Latin Airplay Chart Pop

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Give Me Your Love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>I Want More</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Stars Above Us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Love Will Find A Way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Fever (L.e.X. Mixes)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Latin Albums Chart Pop

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Give Me Your Love</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Fever (L.e.X. Mixes)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Tropical Airplay Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Give Me Your Love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>I Want More</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Stars Above Us</td>
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<td>4.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Fever (L.e.X. Mixes)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Tropical Albums Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Give Me Your Love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>I Want More</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Stars Above Us</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Love Will Find A Way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Fever (L.e.X. Mixes)</td>
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</table>

### Top Electronic Albums Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Madonna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Gorillaz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>S.O.S.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Top Regional Mexican Airplay Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>No Me Deja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>No Me Deja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>No Me Deja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>No Me Deja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>No Me Deja</td>
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### Top Regional Mexican Albums Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>No Me Deja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>No Me Deja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>No Me Deja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>No Me Deja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>No Me Deja</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Japan**

**Singles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THE BEAT</td>
<td>Forever young</td>
<td>VOTE Records</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**United Kingdom**

**Singles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Radiohead</td>
<td>Bitter sweet Symphony</td>
<td>Parlophone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Germany**

**Singles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rammstein</td>
<td>Du hast</td>
<td>Warner Music</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**France**

**Singles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIR</td>
<td>Solar</td>
<td>Virgin</td>
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**Australia**

**Singles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daft Punk</td>
<td>One more</td>
<td>Virgin</td>
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</table>

**Canada**

**Digital Singles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lady Gaga</td>
<td>Just dance</td>
<td>Warner Music</td>
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**Italy**

**Singles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vasco Rossi</td>
<td>Te l&quot;am prendere</td>
<td>BMG</td>
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**Spain**

**Singles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alejandro Sanz</td>
<td>Guantanamera</td>
<td>Sony Music</td>
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</table>

**Mexico**

**Albums**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jhello</td>
<td>Jhello</td>
<td>Sony Music</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sweden**

**Singles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABBA</td>
<td>The Name of the Game</td>
<td>ABBA Music</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Ireland**

**Singles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Cranberries</td>
<td>Linger</td>
<td>Creation</td>
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</table>

**New Zealand**

**Singles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tim Finn</td>
<td>Break Free</td>
<td>Sony Music</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Argentina**

**Albums**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carlos Gardel</td>
<td>Gardel Classics</td>
<td>Sony Music</td>
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</table>

**Euro Digital Tracks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>Daft Punk</td>
<td>One more</td>
<td>Virgin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**General**

- **Hits of the World**
- **Billboard.biz**
- **Data for week of APRIL 29, 2006**
- **Charts Legend on Page 58**
CHARTS

SALES DATA COMPILED BY Nielsen SoundScan

Top Pop Catalog:

1. JOHNNY CASH
   "HURT"
   BANNER/COLUMBIA
   14,554
2. JEREMY CAMP
   "HE RAN"
   BANNER/REPRISE
   18,946
3. TIM MCGRAW
   "I'M NOT GONNA MAKE YOU FEEL LIKE YOU CAN'T"
   SONY/REPRISE
   50,976
4. THE BEATLES
   "ALONE AGAIN (NATURE'S CHORUS)"
   SONY/REPRISE
   49,489
5. MICHAEL BUBLE
   "TOO MUCH"
   DBK/REPRISE
   56,706

ALBUMS WITH THE GREATEST SALES GAINS THIS WEEK:

1. "THE EAGLES: THE LEGACY"
   BMG STRATEGIC MARKETING
   2,215,434
2. "RASCAL FLATTS: CHICKEN WIRE"
   EMI/COLUMBIA
   1,952,377
3. "MAKING WAVES"
   NEW YORK RELIGION
   1,937,997
4. "THE KIDZ BOP KIDS: THE KIDZ BOP KIDS 12"
   EMI/COLUMBIA
   1,450,275
5. "PRINCE: HITNATION"
   WARNER BROS.
   1,342,673

SALES DATA COMPILED BY Nielsen SoundScan

Airplay Charts:

1. "PINK: SO WHAT"
   RCA/SONY
   5,312
2. "LL COOL J: NATURAL Born Killa"
   ROLAND'S RECORDS
   3,397
3. "TOBY KEITH: WHITE TRASH WITH MONEY"
   WARNER BROS.
   2,569
4. "AARON PILLAR: 9SLS"
   BUSINESS STRATEGIC MARKETING
   2,050
5. "DAVE POWER: 64"
   MATHIS/REPRISE
   2,012

Tracks with the greatest audience gains this week:

1. "PINK: SO WHAT"
   RCA/SONY
   19,455
2. "LL COOL J: NATURAL Born Killa"
   ROLAND'S RECORDS
   15,473
3. "THE BEATLES: FROM ME TO YOU"
   EMI/COLUMBIA
   13,199
4. "TOBY KEITH: WHITE TRASH WITH MONEY"
   WARNER BROS.
   11,875
5. "AARON PILLAR: 9SLS"
   BUSINESS STRATEGIC MARKETING
   11,656

CD/.getCassette prices are suggested list or equivalent prices, which are projected from wholesale prices. The price indicates album only available on Digital Disc.  CD/.getCassette price indicates CD/Cassette combo available. * Indicates vinyl LP is available. Pricing and vinyl LP availability are not included on all charts.

SINGLES-CHARITY

Single Airplay Singles Chart:

1. "THE DARK SIDE: EYE OF THE TIGER"
   WARNER BROS.
   3,541
2. "PINK: WHO KNEW"
   RCA/SONY
   3,246
3. "LL COOL J: NATURAL Born Killa"
   ROLAND'S RECORDS
   2,990
4. "TOBY KEITH: WHITE TRASH WITH MONEY"
   WARNER BROS.
   2,796
5. "AARON PILLAR: 9SLS"
   BUSINESS STRATEGIC MARKETING
   2,690

Tracks with the greatest audience gains this week:

1. "THE DARK SIDE: EYE OF THE TIGER"
   WARNER BROS.
   18,340
2. "PINK: WHO KNEW"
   RCA/SONY
   16,969
3. "LL COOL J: NATURAL Born Killa"
   ROLAND'S RECORDS
   14,177
4. "TOBY KEITH: WHITE TRASH WITH MONEY"
   WARNER BROS.
   13,459
5. "AARON PILLAR: 9SLS"
   BUSINESS STRATEGIC MARKETING
   12,875

SALES DATA COMPILED BY Nielsen SoundScan

Top Internet Albums:

1. "RASCAL FLATTS: CHICKEN WIRE"
   EMI/COLUMBIA
   692
2. "THE KIDZ BOP KIDS: THE KIDZ BOP KIDS 12"
   EMI/COLUMBIA
   553
3. "PRINCE: HITNATION"
   WARNER BROS.
   502
4. "THE BEATLES: THE CAPITOL ALBUMS VOLS. 1 & 2"
   EMI/COLUMBIA
   455
5. "DANIEL POWTER: SHAKE LIKE YOU MEAN IT"
   BMG STRATEGIC MARKETING
   452

SALES DATA COMPILED BY Nielsen SoundScan

Top Kid Audio Albums:

1. "THE KIDZ BOP KIDS: THE KIDZ BOP KIDS 12"
   EMI/COLUMBIA
   692
2. "THE BEATLES: THE CAPITOL ALBUMS VOLS. 1 & 2"
   EMI/COLUMBIA
   553
3. "DANIEL POWTER: SHAKE LIKE YOU MEAN IT"
   BMG STRATEGIC MARKETING
   502
4. "THE BEATLES: THE CAPITOL ALBUMS VOLS. 1 & 2"
   EMI/COLUMBIA
   455
5. "DANIEL POWTER: SHAKE LIKE YOU MEAN IT"
   BMG STRATEGIC MARKETING
   452

DANCE CLUB PLAY

Tracks with the greatest club play increase on the previous week:

1. "THE DARK SIDE: EYE OF THE TIGER"
   WARNER BROS.
   18,340
2. "PINK: WHO KNEW"
   RCA/SONY
   16,969
3. "LL COOL J: NATURAL Born Killa"
   ROLAND'S RECORDS
   14,177
4. "TOBY KEITH: WHITE TRASH WITH MONEY"
   WARNER BROS.
   13,459
5. "AARON PILLAR: 9SLS"
   BUSINESS STRATEGIC MARKETING
   12,875

AWARD LEVELS

1. Recording Industry Assn. Of America (RIAA) certification for net shipment of 300,000 albums (Gold). 2. RIAA certification for net shipment of 500,000 albums (Platinum). 3. RIAA certification for net shipment of 1,000,000 albums (Multi-Platinum).

SINGLES CHARTS

1. RIAA certification for 100,000.00 cash downloads (Gold). 2. RIAA certification for 200,000 paid downloads (Platinum). 3. RIAA certification for net shipment of 200,000 albums (Gold). 4. RIAA certification for net shipment of 500,000 albums (Platinum). 5. RIAA certification for net shipment of 1,000,000 albums (Multi-Platinum). 6. RIAA certification for net shipment of 2,000,000 albums (Cassette). 7. RIAA certification for net shipment of 5,000,000 albums (Gold). 8. RIAA certification for net shipment of 10,000,000 albums (Platinum). 9. RIAA certification for net shipment of 50,000,000 albums (Multi-Platinum). 10. RIAA certification for net shipment of 100,000,000 albums (Diamond).

SALES DATA COMPILED BY Nielsen SoundScan

Top Kid Chart:

1. "THE KIDZ BOP KIDS: THE KIDZ BOP KIDS 12"
   EMI/COLUMBIA
   692
2. "THE BEATLES: THE CAPITOL ALBUMS VOLS. 1 & 2"
   EMI/COLUMBIA
   553
3. "DANIEL POWTER: SHAKE LIKE YOU MEAN IT"
   BMG STRATEGIC MARKETING
   502
4. "THE BEATLES: THE CAPITOL ALBUMS VOLS. 1 & 2"
   EMI/COLUMBIA
   455
5. "DANIEL POWTER: SHAKE LIKE YOU MEAN IT"
   BMG STRATEGIC MARKETING
   452
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist/Label</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THE CHRONICLES OF NARNA (FULL SCREEN)</td>
<td>George Irving/Starz Kneiss</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN (WIDESCREEN)</td>
<td>Heath Ledger/Luke Gosselin</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE CHRONICLES OF NARNA (2-DISC SPECIAL COLLECTION</td>
<td>George Henry/Kendall Kneiss</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KING KONG (SPECIAL EDITION)</td>
<td>Jack Black/Ann Wintz</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BREAKBACK MOUNTAIN (FULL SCREEN)</td>
<td>Heath Ledger/Luke Gosselin</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KING KONG (FULL SCREEN 2-DISC EDITION)</td>
<td>Jack Black/Ann Wintz</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA (FULL SCREEN)</td>
<td>Ziyi Zhang/Michelle Yeoh</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LADY AND THE TRAMP: 70TH ANNIVERSARY</td>
<td>Daniel Peter/Irene Warner</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE: WIDESCREEN</td>
<td>Daniel Radcliffe/Emma Watson</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BARBIE FAIRYTOPIA: MERMAID A</td>
<td>Daniel Radcliffe/Ralph Fenners</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE (2 DISC SPECIAL EDITION)</td>
<td>Daniel Radcliffe/Ralph Fenners</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HARRY POTTER AND THE GOFLET OF FIRE (FULL SCREEN)</td>
<td>Daniel Radcliffe/Ralph Fenners</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GET RICH OR DIE TRYING (WIDESCREEN)</td>
<td>Daniel Radcliffe/John Stamos</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEMORIES OF A GEISHA (FULL SCREEN)</td>
<td>Ziyi Zhang/Michelle Yeoh</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FULL HOUSE: THE COMPLETE 1ST YEAR</td>
<td>Don Cheadle/Van Dillion</td>
<td>Animated</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRASH (WIDESCREEN)</td>
<td>Don Cheadle/Van Dillion</td>
<td>Animated</td>
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<tr>
<td>A NANA GABRIEL (WIDESCREEN)</td>
<td>Joaquin Phoenix/Reese Whitley</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE LINE (WIDESCREEN)</td>
<td>Alex Rados/Emile Segal</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAPOTE</td>
<td>Philip Seymour/Hoffman/Catherine Keener</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Top VHS Sales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist/Label</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THE CHRONICLES OF NARNA (FULL SCREEN)</td>
<td>George Irving/Starz Kneiss</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN (WIDESCREEN)</td>
<td>Heath Ledger/Luke Gosselin</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KING KONG (SPECIAL EDITION)</td>
<td>Jack Black/Ann Wintz</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOEY JOSEPH (WIDESCREEN)</td>
<td>Daniel Peter/Irene Warner</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA (FULL SCREEN)</td>
<td>Ziyi Zhang/Michelle Yeoh</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE LION KING (WIDESCREEN)</td>
<td>Daniel Peter/Irene Warner</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WALK THE LINE (WIDESCREEN)</td>
<td>Joaquin Phoenix/Reese Whitley</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JARHEAD</td>
<td>Alex Rados/Emile Segal</td>
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</tbody>
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**Top Video Game Sales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Manufacturer</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PS2: THE GODFATHER</td>
<td>Sony Computer Entertainment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS2: BLACK</td>
<td>Sony Computer Entertainment</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS2: KINGDOM HEARTS II</td>
<td>Sony Computer Entertainment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XBOX: BLACK</td>
<td>Microsoft Entertainment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON 1</td>
<td>Microsoft Entertainment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOM CLANCY'S GHOST Recon 2</td>
<td>Microsoft Entertainment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 SPORE FIGHT NIGHT ROUND</td>
<td>Microsoft Entertainment</td>
<td></td>
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<td>16 SPORE FIGHT NIGHT ROUND</td>
<td>Microsoft Entertainment</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 SPORE FIGHT NIGHT ROUND</td>
<td>Microsoft Entertainment</td>
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</table>

**Top DVD Sales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist/Label</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EAGLES OF DEATH METAL</td>
<td>Death By Sexy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAVING JANE</td>
<td>Girl Next Door</td>
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<tr>
<td>CASABLANCA</td>
<td>John Corbett</td>
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**Top VHS Sales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist/Label</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THE CHRONICLES OF NARNA (FULL SCREEN)</td>
<td>George Irving/Starz Kneiss</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN (WIDESCREEN)</td>
<td>Heath Ledger/Luke Gosselin</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KING KONG (SPECIAL EDITION)</td>
<td>Jack Black/Ann Wintz</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOEY JOSEPH (WIDESCREEN)</td>
<td>Daniel Peter/Irene Warner</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA (FULL SCREEN)</td>
<td>Ziyi Zhang/Michelle Yeoh</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE LION KING (WIDESCREEN)</td>
<td>Daniel Peter/Irene Warner</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WALK THE LINE (WIDESCREEN)</td>
<td>Joaquin Phoenix/Reese Whitley</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JARHEAD</td>
<td>Alex Rados/Emile Segal</td>
<td>Animated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Top Video Game Sales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Manufacturer</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PS2: THE GODFATHER</td>
<td>Sony Computer Entertainment</td>
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<tr>
<td>PS2: BLACK</td>
<td>Sony Computer Entertainment</td>
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<tr>
<td>PS2: KINGDOM HEARTS II</td>
<td>Sony Computer Entertainment</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>XBOX: BLACK</td>
<td>Microsoft Entertainment</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON 1</td>
<td>Microsoft Entertainment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOM CLANCY'S GHOST Recon 2</td>
<td>Microsoft Entertainment</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>16 SPORE FIGHT NIGHT ROUND</td>
<td>Microsoft Entertainment</td>
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<td>Microsoft Entertainment</td>
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<tr>
<td>EAGLES OF DEATH METAL</td>
<td>Death By Sexy</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAVING JANE</td>
<td>Girl Next Door</td>
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<td>John Corbett</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Artist</td>
<td>Writer(s)</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>LET IT SNOW (Remix)</strong></td>
<td>Ariana Grande</td>
<td>西里安娜·格兰德, ASCAP/Universal Music Publishing, Inc. (BMC, BMG, Sony Music Publishing)</td>
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ANNOUNCING THIS MONTH'S RECIPIENTS OF

BROADCAST DATA SYSTEMS

BDSCertified Spin Awards March 2006 Recipients:

**900,000 SPINS**
- You're Still The One/ Shania Twain /MERCURY

**400,000 SPINS**
- All You Wanted/ Michelle Branch /MAVERICK

**300,000 SPINS**
- Because Of You/ Kelly Clarkson /RCA
- 19 Somethin'/ Mark Wills /MERRY

**200,000 SPINS**
- Something About The Way You Look Tonight/ Elton John /ROCKET
- Desert Rose/ Sting Feat. Cheb Mami /A&M

**100,000 SPINS**
- Be Without You/ Mary J. Blige /GEFFEN
- So Sick/ Ne-Yo /DEF JAM/IDJMG
- Right Here/ Stoiid /ATLANTIC/FLIP
- That's What I Love About Sunday/ Craig Morgan /BROKEN BOW
- Days Go By/ Keith Urban /CAPITOL NASHVILLE
- So Cold/ Breaking Benjamin /HOLLYWOOD
- Nothing On But The Radio/ Gary Allan /MCA
- Rock The Boat/ Aaliyah /BLACKGROUND
- So Far Away/ Rod Stewart /LAVA
- Still Fly/ Big Tymers /CASH MONEY/UNIVERSAL
- Overnight Celebrity/ Twista /ATLANTIC
- Cold Hard Bitch/ Jet /ELEKTRA/ATLANTIC

**50,000 SPINS**
- Unwritten/ Natasha Bedingfield /EPIC
- I'm N Luv (Wit A Stripper)/ T-Pain /JIVE/ZOMBA
- Yo (Excuse Me Miss)/ Chris Brown Miss /JIVE/ZOMBA
- Temperature/ Sean Paul /VP/ATLANTIC
- Where I'm Going/ Brad Paisley Feat. Dolly Parton /ARISTA
- If It's Lovin' That You Want/ Rihanna /DEF JAM
- DOA/ Foo Fighters /RCA/BMG
- Who You'd Be Today/ Kenny Chesney /BNA
- Your Man/ Josh Turner /MCA
- Hanky Torn Badckkadank/ Trace Adkins /CAPITOL/NASHVILLE
- Help Somebody/ Van Zant /COLUMBIA
- Culo/ Pitbull Feat. Lil Jon /TVT
- To Where You Are/ Josh Graban /143/REPRISE
- Stay A Mexio/ Toby Keith /DREAMWORKS
- One More Time/ Daft Punk /VIRGIN
- Sunrise/ Simply Red /SIMPLYRED.COM

**30,000 SPINS**
- Who Says You Can't Go Home/ Bon Jovi /ISLAND
- Ms. New Boo/ Bubba Sparxxx Feat. Ying Yang Twins & Mr. Collipark /PURPLE RIBBON/VIR
- SOS/ Rihanna /DEF JAM/IDJMG
- Living In Fast Forward/ Kenny Chesney /BNA
- What Hurts The Most/ Rascal Flatts /LYRIC STREET
- Fresh Amix/ Bow Wow /SONY URBAN/COLUMBIA
- Everytime We Touch/ Cascada /ROBBINS
- Love/ Keyshia Cole /A&M
- Touch It/ Busta Rhymes /INTERSCOPE
- Get Drunk And Be Somebody/ Toby Keith /SHOW DOG NASHVILLE/UNIVERS
- Over My Head (Cable Car)/ The Fray /EPIC
- Romeo/ Daddy Yankee /INTERSCOPE/EL CARTEL
- The Dollar/ Jamey Johnson /BNA
- Animals/ Nickelback /ROADRUNNER
- Cry Out To Jesus/ Third Day /ESSENTIAL/PLG
- Don't Tread On Me/ 311 /VOLCANO/ZOMBA
- Nobody Gonna Tell Me What To Do/ Van Zant /COLUMBIA
- Let My Words Be Few/ Phillips, Craig & Dean /SPARRROW
- Colors/ Crossfade /COLUMBIA
- Tragos Amargos/ Ramon Ayala Y Los Bravos Del Norte /REDFRIDGE
- How Do You Get That Lonely/ Blaine Larsen /BNA
- Castles In The Sky/ Ian Van Dahl /ROBBINS

TO EVERY SPIN AWARD WINNER

CONGRATULATIONS

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the past year's Latin song of the year award, which will be presented April 7 at New York's Metropolitan Pavilion, also honored the songwriters and publishers of the past year's most-performed Latin songs on American radio. According to BMI's lists, this year's Latin song of the year for scoring the most airplay was "México," penned by Enrique "Fito" Guzmán Yáñez (SCAM). Mexican publisher Ser-Ca won the publisher of the year award for the second consecutive year, with five songs on the list.

Colombian singer/songwriter Juanes was the winner of the Latin songwriter of the year award, with three songs in the Top 50. The BMI awards were hosted by BMI president/CEO Del R. Bryant and Diane Almendovar, BMI VP of writer/publisher relations, and Miami's BM! Foundation president Raúl Jackson (Photo: Eddie Sakai)

BMI Latin Music Awards

BMI's 11th annual Latin awards had dozens of artists take to the stage to honor BMI icon Juan Luis Guerra for his "unique and indelible influence on generations of music makers." The BMI awards, which took place April 7 at New York's Metropolitan Pavilion, also honored the songwriters and publishers of the past year's most-performed Latin songs on American radio and TV, according to BMI's lists. This year's Latin song of the year for scoring the most airplay was "México," penned by Enrique "Fito" Guzmán Yáñez (SCAM). Mexican publisher Ser-Ca won the publisher of the year award for the second consecutive year, with five songs on the list. Colombian singer/songwriter Juanes was the winner of the Latin songwriter of the year award, with three songs in the Top 50. The BMI awards were hosted by BMI president/CEO Del R. Bryant and Diane Almendovar, BMI VP of writer/publisher relations, and Miami's BMI Foundation president Raúl Jackson (Photo: Eddie Sakai)

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CMT Music Awards

Country music stars lined up as they received their "turn-of-the-year" awards during the live showing of the 2006 CMT Music Awards April 10 in Nashville

MTV Music Awards

MTV Networks and BMI announced a new award at this year's ceremony: "Song of the Year Award" for winning video of the year for "Better Life." (Photo: YouTube)

CMT Music Awards: Country music stars lined up as they received their "turn-of-the-year" awards during the live showing of the 2006 CMT Music Awards April 10 in Nashville

T.J. Martell Family Day

More than 1,200 people gathered at this year's T.J. Martell Foundation Family Day, March 5 at New York's Roseland Ballroom. The event raised over $4 million to fund research.
Neil Young is going to war—against the Iraq war. The Cana-
dian-born singer/songwriter has completed an unscheduled
called “Living With War,” which Reprise Records will release
soon. The album was recorded in three days in early April.
“It is a metal version of Phil Ochs and Bob Dylan,”
Young says on nelyoung.com, where the lyrics are being
streamed along with Young’s message. The most direct song
may be “Let’s Impeach the President,” but the album is full of
thought-provoking tunes about what the artist sees as the increas-
ingly futile sacrifice of young soldiers and their families. One track.
“Shock and Awe,” mocks Bush’s now infamous “Mission Accom-
plished” photo op, contrasting that with the soldiers arriving
in coffins that no one sees.

MORE DOORS OPENING
As part of the Doors’ 40th-anniversary celebration (Bill-
board, April 15), the band will soon make 12 concerts from
1967 to 1970 available for download from its Web site,
TheDoors.com. The initiative is powered by Basecamp
Productions, which built Pearl Jam’s successful concert
download store last year. Fans will be able to choose fa-
vorites from the performances, many of which are pre-
viously unreleased, rather than having to buy a com-
plete show. “These huge bands have all these fans that spend hours online,” Basecamp principal Joshua
James says. “Why send them off to iTunes to buy
music when they want to hang out right there on
the band’s Web site?”

MINDFREAK OVER MATTER
Godsmack’s Sully Erna and illusionist Criss
Angel are working on a new trick. The two have taken the theme song from Angel’s
popular A&E series, “Mindfreak,” and are
working it for Angel’s forthcoming Koch
Records album. “The theme song was more
electronic, more Ministry, and Criss wanted
it to make it more power and rock,” Erna
says. Erna has brought in guitar wiz Nun microseconds
to play on the track. Erna will appear on “Mindfreak” during the new season, which begins May 31.
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Juan Gabriel

Saturday, April 8, 2006

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