Radiohead Hits Record Stores

Ingrid Michaelson FLIPS THE SCRIPT
She's Climbing Our Charts, Scored A Hit TV Series And A Blockbuster Commercial. And She Still Has No Label

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JADED INSIDER “While all the executives are on vacation in St. Barts, Nas is in New York City with y’all.” What better way to spend the holidays in NYC than to see Nas, Marley Marl and Busta Rhymes on the day after Christmas? More at jadedinsider.com.

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ARTICLE 30

ON THE COVER: Ingrid Michaelson photographed by Deborah Lopez in NYC. WEATHERLEY/BACKBEAT/TURNTABLE/MILEPOSTS/OPTICAL/INSIDER.com

ON THE COVER: Ingrid Michaelson photographed by Deborah Lopez. WEATHERLEY/BACKBEAT/TURNTABLE/MILEPOSTS/OPTICAL/INSIDER.com
The compilation, available free to more than 1.5 million active service members, is a gesture of appreciation from artists across the political spectrum.

By John Ondrasik

The experience is why I’m proud of the 12 artists, labels and publishers who have joined me in producing the CD “For the Troops.” This project is a collection of songs exclusively for our military. There were 200,000 hard copies pressed, and at special times like these, not knowing if you will ever see them again. Tomorrow is never guaranteed in no matter where you are, but in times of war, tomorrow seems but a dream.

Some of us are fortunate to have lived our dreams. Some of us continue to struggle just to be heard. Others fight for our freedom to do both. Even the cynic must admit that there would be no songs of consequence without soldiers. And it is this time of year for reflection, well aware of the trials that confront our business, music still matters, especially where it counts.

John Ondrasik is singer for the band Five For Fighting. He spearheaded the “For the Troops” project, which includes music from Billy Joel, Brooks & Dunn, The Goo Goo Dolls, Jewel, Josh Groban, Los Lonely Boys, Meralyn Etheridge, the Neville Brothers, Sarah McLachlan, the Lt. Dan Band, Montgomery Gentry, the Fray and his own band.
In A Tough Year, Digital Reasons For Hope

While U.S. physical music sales had a tough year and ended on an even tougher holiday selling season, 2007 closed with some statistical bright spots.

On the down side, CD album sales declined 18.8% to 449.2 million units from the 553.4 million the CD album generated in 2006. In looking at all album sales, including those in the digital format, the configuration dropped to its lowest totals in nearly 25 years, finishing the year just north of 500 million units. According to the RIAA—the only barometer of the U.S. industry’s health until SoundScan formed in May 1991—album shipments totaled 474.2 million units in 1983 and 542.4 million units in 1984.

Despite the last week of the year being the first of 2007 to top the corresponding 2006 week total with a 2.4% gain, the holiday season overall was a disappointment. The last six weeks of the year generated 98.8 million album scans, down 17.3% from the 119.4 million garnered during the corresponding weeks of 2006.

Still, there were some positive signs that digital growth might finally slow, if not stop the bleeding in ‘08. Digital album downloads comprised 50 million units, or 10% of the year’s total album sales, and represented a 53.6% increase over the 32.6 million album downloads scanned last year. Maroon 5’s “It Won’t Be Soon Before Long” was the top-selling album in the digital format with 252,000 scans for the year. Digital track downloads also showed explosive growth, totaling 844 million units, a 45.1% increase from the 582 million track downloads counted last year. “Crack That (Soulija Boy)” by Soulja Boy Tell’Em was the top-selling digital song with 2.7 million downloads. Other track downloads topping the 2 million mark last year were Fergie’s “Big Girls Don’t Cry” (2.4 million scans), Gwen Stefani’s “Sweet Escape” (2.2 million) and Timbaland featuring OneRepublic’s “Apologize” (2.1 million).

In the last week of the year, digital track downloads hit nearly 43 million units, the highest one-week total a configuration has rung up since Nielsen SoundScan began tracking U.S. sales. What’s more, digital album download sales totaled 1.9 million that same week or 13.2% of the 14.5 million album scans recorded. When digital track equivalent albums (TEA)—using a measure of 10 digital tracks per album—are added into album sales, the configuration’s total equaled 585 million, or a 9% decrease from the 646.1 million albums sold in 2006, including TEA.

The digital sales performance from the last week of 2007 and the apparent impending arrival of interoperability (each major is either selling music in the MP3 format or expected to be doing so shortly, meaning that purchased music can be played on any digital player, including the market-leading iPod) gives the industry hope that digital growth will come even more easily in the new year.

Last year 220 million ringtones were scanned, with master tones accounting for 91% of all ringtones sales. The best-selling master tone in 2007 was T-Pain’s “Buy U a Drank (Shotty Snapin),” which scanned 2.3 million units.

Overall Nielsen SoundScan counted 1.35 billion scans in various physical and digital configurations. That’s up 14.7% from the 1.17 billion scans counted in 2006, obviously driven by digital growth.

Still, the performance of Josh Groban’s “Noel” album shows there is still life in the physical format. Since its Oct. 7 release, the album has sold 3.7 million units, of which only 113,000, or 3.5%, were digital.

That was the year’s best-selling album and the only one to top the 3 million mark. An
Radiohead has broken its iTunes holdout with its new album "In Rainbows." Billboard.biz broke the news in December that Radiohead’s camp was in talks with iTunes to digitally distribute the new album, which arrived Dec. 11 internationally through XL Recordings, except the United States and Japan, where ATO and Hostess Entertainment handled it. Radiohead’s back catalog is not yet available on iTunes.

**MIDEM GOES ‘GREEN’**

The 42nd annual music trade fair is launching the MIDEM Green World Awards to pay homage to those companies who have played a major role in eco-logically live music events production. Kevin Wall, founder/CEO of the July 7, 2007, Live Earth event, Henrik Rasmussen, GM of Denmark’s Roskilde Festival; and Daniel Rossellat, president of Switzerland’s Paleo Festival Nyon, will be lauded at MIDEM’s Green & Live Conference Jan. 29.

**EMUSIC HITS HOLIDAY HIGH**

Digital music service eMusic pulled in its biggest sales during the Christmas period since the company began trading in November 2004. According to the firm, its subscribers downloaded nearly half a million tracks on Christmas Day 2007, which came as a result of doubling the number of new customer trials from Christmas Day the previous year.

The company now claims 100,000 paid subscribers, up from the 350,000 revealed in November.

**DOWNLOADS TO THE RESCUE**

Digital Commerce Hits Record High In '07

As physical CD sales continue their free-fall, digital downloads again reached record sales figures for the year.

U.S. digital download sales reached an all-time high for the fourth year in a row, culminating with the biggest post-holiday sales week. For Christmas week (Dec. 24-30), shoppers downloaded almost 43 million tracks from various digital music services, according to data from Nielsen SoundScan.

That's a 42.5% jump over the 30.1 million downloaded in the same week the previous year.

For the year, 844.1 million tracks were downloaded digitally, a 45% rise over the 581.4 million tally for 2006. Digital albums are up 53.5% as well, at 50 million sold, compared with 32.5 million in 2006. Fourth-quarter sales also reached all-time highs, with 231.9 million tracks and 14.2 million albums sold digitally during the period, compared with 163.3 million tracks and 9.8 million albums the year before.

Individual songs are performing rock, which was down 12.5% to 149.4 million units; classical, which was down 7.2% to 18 million units; and rap, which was down 10.6% to 14 million copies. Christian/gospel also saw sales declines of 14.3% to 34 million units from 39.7 million units in 2006. Country and Latin almost kept pace with the market, declining, respectively, 16.3% to 62.7 million units and 15.7% to 31.9 million units.

The genre that declined the most was rap, which was down 30% to 41.7 million units. SoundScan also tracks R&B and rap combined, and that genre generated 92 million units in album sales, down 18.3% to 95.6 million units from the 113.8 million units those genres collectively produced in 2006. But if R&B is broken out, rap sales turned in the second-stongest performance behind new-age. Pure R&B was down 6.5% to 53.9 million units, while new-age, the smallest genre SoundScan tracks, was down 5.9% to 3.2 million units.

**FLO RIDA HEAT**

Rapper’s record-setting digital week drove post-Xmas sales

More than 200,000.

These figures highlight a banner year for individual songs as well. Setting the record for the most downloaded digital track in a year is Soulja Boy with “Crank That (Soulja Boy),” which moved 2.7 million copies. Daniel Powter’s “Bad Day” was the top download of 2006 with 1.9 million, while Weezer’s “Beverly Hills” was the digital king in 2005 with 930,000.

While not one track sold more than 500,000 digital units in 2004, 7 did in 2007, almost double the 61 tracks that crossed that threshold in 2006. Meanwhile, 36 tracks passed the 1 million mark, more than double the 17 in 2006.

All these records set in 2007 bode well for digital sales. The post-holiday spike witnessed during the past four years generally sets the tone for digital track sales in a year that follows once the volume settles down. The 6.6 million tracks sold after Christmas in 2004 carried over into the new year, with weekly sales totals averaging about 5.2 million tracks per week in January, to 9.5 million the week before Christmas 2005.

Tracks then jumped to 19.9 million after Christmas that year, and settled down to an average of 11.3 million in January 2006. Again, digital sales increased to 14.5 million the week before Christmas 2006, rising to 30.1 million the week after. The first few weeks of 2007 then saw average track sales of 19 million. This year’s week after Christmas (which actually only tracked five days after Christmas) produced a robust 42.9 million track sales.

While SoundScan’s data measures sales from each of its digital retailers as iTunes, Amazon and Rhapsody, it does not track sales from artists’ own Web sites (such as Radiohead’s direct-to-fan release of “In Rainbows” from widgets placed on artists’ social networking pages (such as James Blunt’s Lala widget on MySpace, which sells his 2007 album “All the Lost Souls”).

—Antony Bruno
OH YEAH WE SEE IT AND HEAR IT
CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OUR GRAMMY NOMINEES

BJÖRK / GERALD LEVERT / GNARLS BARKLEY / JUSTICE / LIL KIM
LUPE FIASCO / MACHINE HEAD / MISSY ELLIOTT / MUSIQ SOULCHILD / NICKELBACK
PANIC AT THE DISCO / PARAMORE / PORCUPINE TREE / RUSH
SHADOWS FALL / SKILLET / T.I. / HAPPY FEET SOUNDTRACK
A POLITICAL OVERTURE

The New York Philharmonic Tunes Up For North Korea Visit

The New York Philharmonic is diving into uncharted waters next month when the ensemble is scheduled to give a concert in North Korea’s capital city of Pyongyang. This marks the first major visit by American artists to isolationist North Korea.

The concert, scheduled for Feb. 26, will feature Gershwin’s “An American in Paris,” Dvorak’s Symphony No. 9, “From the New World” (inspired by the composer’s own travels through the United States), and Wagner’s Prelude to Act 3 of the opera “Lohengrin,” as well as the American and North Korean national anthems. A second concert will be held in Seoul two nights later that will include Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony.

New York Philharmonic president/executive director Zarin Mehta, chairman Paul Guenther and U.N. North Korean ambassador Pak Gil Yon repeatedly emphasized the cultural nature of the visit, refusing to answer any political questions lobbed at them at a recent press conference.

“Welcome to help open the country,” Mehta says. “We’re going there to create some joy.” Nevertheless, the Philharmonic’s decision created controversy among some orchestra musicians and classical music industry experts who assert that the trip will lend legitimacy to the totalitarian regime.

After consulting with the U.S. State Department and a preliminary trip by orchestra officials to Pyongyang last October, the Philharmonic agreed to accept the unprecedented invitation from the North Korean government. (Along with the concert, the orchestra plans to invite musicians to one of its rehearsals and hold master classes for student players.)

The decision by the Phil to go comes at a particularly catalytic point in relations between the two nations. North Korea is one of the three countries that President Bush famously marked as part of “the axis of evil,” and media reports of late say that North Korea may have helped Syria begin work on a nuclear reactor.

Nonetheless, the official Philharmonic acceptance came less than a week after Bush sent a letter to North Korean leader Kim Jong II that offered normalized relations if the country fully disclosed its nuclear activities and got rid of its arsenals.

The Philharmonic successfully lobbied for the concert to be moved from the originally proposed 300-seat hall to a 1,200-seat venue. But, as of now, it is unclear who the audience will be. According to regional experts, simply living in Pyongyang is a privilege extended only to North Korea’s political elite, and there seems to be no evidence of cultural events taking place in the country beyond events organized by the regime for political ends.

This is not the first time that an American orchestra has been part of an overture aimed to better relations between politically hostile nations. The Boston Symphony Orchestra traveled to the Soviet Union in 1956 and the Philadelphia Orchestra journeyed to China in 1973.

The U.S. State Department has offered help and encouragement “at every step” of this venture, Mehta says. (In fact, the Philharmonic first turned to the State Department to authenticate the North Korean invitation, which arrived by fax.) “We have done all this with the guidance of the State Department,” he says. “We didn’t make a move until we were told that this trip would be very beneficial to U.S.-North Korea relations.”
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Songs Keep Going

Energizer Teams With Latin Acts For Their Longest Tracks

The Energizer Bunny, that very recognizable icon of durabil-
ity, is looking to better-reach Hispanics via a unique music-
driven advertising campaign. Dubbed Música Que Sigue
y Sigue (Music That Goes On and On), the campaign features
spots with well-known Latin acts penning what Energizer
calls “their longest song ever.”

The ads drive consumers to the
sigueysigue.com site, where they can download each full
track for free, as well as get ringtones, behind-the-scenes
footage from the filming of the commercials and contribute
themselves to creating the “longest song in the universe.”

The Sigue y Sigue campaign
officially kicked off during the
Latin Grammy Award telecast
Nov. 8 with a series of TV spots
featuring Mexican pop group
Camila and merengue singer
Elvis Crespo. Spots are also
running on various Web sites,
including batanga.com and
Univision.com. In 2008, the
campaign expands to add re-
regional Mexican norteño leg-
end Conjunto Primavera, and
the spots will rotate through-
out the year.

Although Energizer has been
advertising to the Latin market
for more than a decade, this
is its first Latin music-centric cam-
aign. It also marks the first time
that Energizer has aligned with
specific artists.

Each of the acts chosen
will not only appear in the
MEJIKI PACHECO

THE SHOW
MUST GO ON

Mexican Acts Continue To Tour Amid
The Tumult Of Recent Killings

The most brazen murder was that of Gómez. As the lead singer of K-Paz de la Sierra, he was a
widely recognized, marquee artist; indeed, his
father happened the same week K-Paz was nom-
inated for a Grammy Award. But notoriety appar-
tently had no effect on his fate. Gómez and Victor
Hugo Sánchez and Javier Rivera, respectively K-
Paz’s-Mexico-and-U.S.-based-promoters, were
intercepted by at least 10 cans and kidnapped as
they left a performance at the Estadio Morelos in
the Michoacan state capital of Morelia. The two
promoters were freed after two hours in captiv-
ity. But Gómez’s strained, tortured and burned
body was discovered on a highway near Morelia.
The viciousness of Gómez’s and Peña’s mur-
ders have far the makings of a mob killing, but nei-
ther of them had reported links to organized crime.
Gómez, in particular, didn’t even sing narcocor-
rillos, the popular songs often based on mob lore.

But some in the industry speculate that both
killings were the result of dangerous liaisons.
You’re a big act, you play in these popular
dances, and all these little girls are always after
you,” one promoter says. “The problem is, you
don’t know who’s who. You might be messing
with the wrong person.”

Gómez reportedly was threatened before the
Dec. 1 show, and received threats before a sched-
uled show at the same venue in 2006, which he
decided not to perform.

Since November 2006, when banda singer Va-
lenit Elizalde was gunned down after a show,
more than 10 other artists have been murdered in
Mexico (see story, left). Mexican authorities
have yet to indict anyone for the string of killings.

The seeming impunity has only given added
credence to what many promoters say privately:
That in certain regions, local strongmen charge
a “tax” for performing. It’s a fee that promoters
pay quietly, pocketing it up to the cost of doing
business in Mexico.

And yet, some acts are reluctant to cut back
touring now that record sales are down, be-
cause they need the income more than ever.

“You do have to be careful—and be courte-
ous,” one promoter says, “with your audience and
e veryone in general.”

More than 10 regional Mexican singers have
been assassinated since November 2006.

Nov. 25, 2006: Valentin Elizalde, a rising
star in the world of corridos and romantic
bands, is shot dead by gunfire after play-
ing a gig in Reynosa, Mexico. Following his
death, sales jump, with Elizalde placing al-
bums at Nos. 1and 2 on Billboard’s Top Latin
Albums chart simultaneously.

Feb. 19, 2007: Assailants with machine guns
shoot at members of Tecnno Banda Fugaz
in Michoacán, killing four members and
wounding one.

June 9, 2007: Four members of Los Padri-
os de la Sierra are shot and killed in the
state of Durango.

Dec. 1, 2007: Zayda Peña, lead singer of
Zayda y Los Culpa-
bles, is shot in a motel
at Matamoros, in the state of Tamaulipas.
She survived the attack, only to later shot
dead in her hospital bed.

Dec. 3, 2007: Sergio Gómez, abducted
following a concert in Michoacán, is
found dead.

Dec. 6, 2007: José Luis Aquino, a trumpet
player with Los Conde, is found beaten to
death in the state of Oaxaca.

A HISTORY OF VIOLENCE

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The Honor Roll
Who Dominated The Latin Charts In '07?

As 2007 fades into the rearview mirror, we thought we’d present 10 fun facts from the year that was, about the albums, songs and artists that made the loudest noise on Billboard’s charts.

HIGHEST FIRST-WEEK SALES
Daddy Yankee’s “El Cartel: The Big Boss” (El Cartel/InterSCOPE) scanned 82,000 copies in its first week, according to Nielsen SoundScan. At No. 2 was another reggaeton act, Wisin & Yandel. Their newest, “Los Extraterrestres” (Machete), scanned 52,600 copies.

TOP-SELLING ALBUM
For the week ending Dec. 21, Daddy Yankee’s “El Cartel: The Big Boss” led the charge, with more than 250,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. At No. 2, nearing the 230,000 mark, was Aventura’s “Kings of Bachata” (Premium/Sony BMG).

HIGHEST DEBUT ON HOT LATIN SONGS
Juanes’ “Me Enamora” (Universal) was the only track of the year to enter the chart at No. 1. Other high notes were Wisin & Yandel’s “Sexy Movimiento,” which entered at No. 3, Los Huracanes del Norte’s “Volo Muy Alto” (Univision), at No. 4; and Marco Antonio Solís’ “No Puedo Olvidarla” (Fonovisa), at No. 10. Special kudos to Wisin & Yandel and Hurricanes for charting so high with very genre-specific tracks.

FASTEST-RISING SONG ON HOT LATIN SONGS
Enrique Iglesias’ “Dimelo” (Universal) jumped from No. 49 to No. 1 on May 19.

LONGEST-RUNNING NO. 1 SONGS (UP TO THE WEEK ENDING DEC. 16)
Hot Latin Songs: Juanes’ “Me Enamora”; 14 weeks and counting.
Latin Pop: “Me Enamorar.”
Regional Mexican: A nine-week tie between Los Rieleros del Norte’s “Riendo Guinan” (Univision) and Vicente Fernández’s “Estos Celos” (Sony BMG).
Tropical Aventura’s “Los infieles” (Premium Latin) (14 weeks).

TOP-SELLING LATIN ALBUM AMONG THE TOP 100 DIGITAL ALBUMS
None. There weren’t any Latin titles among the top 100.

TOP-GROSSING U.S. LATIN TOUR
Rock act Maná grossed $35,238,302, with an attendance of 509,187 people at 48 shows, according to Billboard Boxscore.

TOP-SELLING ALBUM BY A DEBUT ACT
Los Creadores del Pasito Duranguense (Two weeks), and Camila’s “Todo Cambio” (Sony BMG Norte) (one week).

Research by Keith Caulfield and Jose Promis.

For 24/7 Latin news and analysis, see billboard.biz/latin.

THE BILLBOARD IQ & A?

NaCo, the brand Eddy Chavarri co-founded in 1999, has grown from a cheeky (and sometimes controversial) T-shirt line to five boutiques and a restaurant in Mexico. The company also presented five free “NaCo Nights” with cutting-edge Mexican artists at U.S. clubs in 2007. But NaCo also sells merchandise on tour for such bands as Café Tacvba, and Chavarri has designed album covers for acts from Molotov to Juanes. As his company builds a restaurant in Bogota, Colombia, and tests the waters at U.S. clothing retailers like Urban Outfitters, Chavarri spoke to Billboard about the business of “celebrating Mexican Latin culture with humor and style.”

What’s the point of the NaCo Nights? We’re trying to discover these bands and offer something to people, so that in a year when these bands really break, they can say, “Oh, I saw them a year ago at NaCo Nights.”

We are trying to cut a real slice of what Mexican is for people, so when they come to a party they see the real Mexican bands. Ironically, some of them sing in English now—with the Internet and everything, this music genre border is erasing.

You’ve had sponsorship from MTV Tr3s and Volkswagen. Where do sponsors fit into the NaCo concept? We give away drinks, we give away tacos, we bring this talent… so we need to partner up with sponsors in order to make this happen… [Volkswagen] gave us a little Bag to drive around for a year, and we painted it like a Mexican serape… We had Virgin Mobile at our Vegas party; we had Nintena help us out. Now people see us as kind of trendsetters for Latin in the U.S., so they’re using it as a promotional vehicle for different things. Soda Stereo is a great example… we [gave] away tickets to people who buy on our site, which becomes an incentive for sales.

What role do you play selling band merchandise? We design the T-shirts and we produce them because we have all that infrastructure already. Then we go on tour and sell the shirts, so there is a profit from selling at a show. And then a second business is for us to promote NaCo on that tour. So after every show, kids go to the Web page and buy our stuff and check it out because we give them stickers and all this stuff. We have an online shop, surropea.com, where you can get NaCo and shortly you’ll be able to get the Café Tacvba merchandise and all these bands’ merchandise. So it’s a 360 business for us.

We pay a royalty to the band… it’s like a record label. So many records were sold, these were the expenses, this is the profit, and you give the band their part and you get yours.

—Ayala Ben-Yehuda
BAND\nLpTINPMERICA\n
AGAIN!

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make\n
12\n
pies\n
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392.000 TICKETS
OCT. 19,20,21+ NOV.23 + DEC. 21

COSTAR
CHATEAU CARRERAS STADIUM
48.000 TICKETS
DEC. 15

CHILE
SANTIAGO DE CHILE
2 NATIONAL STADIUM
126.000 TICKETS
OCT. 24,25

ECUADOR
GUAYAQUIL
MODELO ALBERTO SPENCER
STADIUM
41.000 TICKETS
OCT. 27

MEXICO
MONTERREY / UNIVERSITARIO
STADIUM - GUADALAJARA /
3 DE MARZO STADIUM
DF, J2 FOROS SOL /
180.000 TICKETS
NOV. 9,12,15,16

PANAMA
PANAMA
NACIONAL STADIUM
22.000 TICKETS
NOV. 27

PERU
LIMA
2 NACIONAL STADIUM
95.000 TICKETS
DEC. 8,9

USA
LOS ANGELES
HOME DEPOT CENTER
22.000 TICKETS
NOV. 21

MIAMI
2 AMERICAN AIRLINES ARENA
20.000 TICKETS
DEC. 4,5

VENEZUELA
CARACAS
HIPIDROMO LA RINCONADA
52.000 TICKETS
NOV. 26

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I have a dream.

It’s a dream where one day, I can access all my music from any location, on any device, at any time. That means play on my PC in the office, through my Xbox 360 in the Man Cave, through my stereo system in the living room and even at my buddy’s house using his PC, stereo or game console. Heck, I’d even like it streaming through my car stereo.

This dream requires the ability to not just stream music from a PC to other appliances in the house, which is fairly widely available today, but to stream and download it from anywhere, on any Internet-connected device, through a link to a virtual, customized jukebox in the sky.

Today that remains a dream, but there are efforts afoot to make it a reality. Most come from companies that offer online digital storage services, otherwise known as digital lockers. The concept is that users can upload music, photos, office documents and pretty much anything stored on a given computer to a sort of virtual hard drive.

A secure login process enables access to stored files from most any Internet-connected device, and in some cases users can share their files with others. For more part, however, access at this time is limited to other PCs and mobile phones, which is one reason why the market for such services hasn’t taken off on a grand scale.

“The locker doesn’t get really interesting until you get beyond the PC,” says Michael Robertson, CEO of MP3Tunes, which features peer-to-peer digital locker service dedicated solely to music files. “If we only made the locker service available on PCs, it wouldn’t have the value needed to attract millions of users. It needs to work with the DVR, mobile phones, game consoles. And we’re just in the early stages of making that happen.”

Just before the holidays, MP3Tunes introduced an extension to the digital locker that allows users to play their stored music wirelessly through a PlayStation 3 game console. Unlike the Xbox 360, which lets users stream music stored on their PCs through the console, this streaming takes place directly from the Internet to the device. The company introduced a similar application for the Wii game controller earlier in the year.

But Robertson’s hardly alone. Google has been rumored to be working on a massive online storage project for the last two years called Gdrive, which, depending on who you believe, is either set for an imminent launch or shelved completely.

Exactly what music capabilities this will have remains unclear until a formal announcement is made.

Despite their potential, digital lockers have yet to catch on as a central hub for "anywhere" music access. Part of the problem is that the music industry and the music-buying public don’t really get the concept. The prevailing view is that once purchased, music files should be downloaded to a computer and transferred from one device to another much like a CD.

But the locker system turns the concept on its head, proposing instead that music is stored in an Internet-accessible repository that either streams or transfers to it each device. In addition to challenging the notion of music ownership in a digital age, there also needs to be a far greater emphasis on creating Internet-accessible music products as well—such as car stereos, home receivers, etc.

Another problem is digital rights management. Lockers like MP3Tunes and Xdrive aren’t compatible with music purchased from iTunes, or with subscription tracks from services like Rhapsody and Napster. And even if they were, streaming music from them to multiple devices like game consoles or car stereos would require those devices to have the appropriate DRM technology as well.

What’s more, the entire concept faces legal challenges. Last September, EMU filed a copyright infringement lawsuit against MP3Tunes. The most of the complaint is focused on a separate function called Sideloader, a music search engine that finds music posted online—in some cases without authorization—and allows users to save those files to their music locker. But EMU also alleges that locker users can easily give away their passwords to others so that they can swap their entire libraries with each other.

This may not be the last such action. A new online storage service called Onemo emerged in December that lets people store music and other files in each other’s hard drives in a sort of peer-to-peer type system. The music stored by each user in the network would be organized into one common music folder and available for all others to access free of charge.

And as usual, the capabilities of these innovative new technologies run afield of the music industry’s copyright concerns. So while these issues are worked out in the labs, at the negotiating table and in the courtroom, I’ll have to continue dreaming.

Digital lockers like MP3Tunes (above, and left, shown on the Nokia phone) offer flexibility, but have drawn the ire of major labels to have the appropriate DRM technology as well.

"The locker doesn’t get really interesting until you get beyond the PC," says Michael Robertson, CEO of MP3Tunes, which features peer-to-peer digital locker service dedicated solely to music files.
Ad Nauseum

Indie Acts Battle Appropriation Of Their Images

Baltimore electronic musician Dan Deacon opened his December issue of XLR8R magazine to find he'd been named one of the worst artists of the year in the reader's poll. But that wasn't what propelled him into making an obscene blog post. Rather, it was Deacon discovering his picture on the front of a postcard ad; on the back was a plug for Greyhound buses, promising to take riders to America's best underground venues to see artists like himself. As it turned out, no one had ever contacted Deacon or any of the other bands in the ad to seek permission to use their image, let alone compensate them. Greyhound contends that all the copies and photos were provided by XLR8R. XLR8R offered no comment on the record.

Deacon's case is not an isolated incident. In the Nov. 15 issue of Rolling Stone, readers found a four-page spread titled "Indie Rock Universe," featuring an ad for Camel cigarettes on the flip side, the piece comprised cartoonish drawings of rock "universe" populated by indie rock bands big and small. A number of the bands included in the piece expressed their anger in various online forums about being included in something that could be construed as an ad for a cigarette company. Two bands, Xiu Xiu and Fucked Up, have since filed a class action lawsuit against the magazine and RJ Reynolds. A spokesperson for RJR contends that the ad and "Indie Rock Universe" are unrelated and they had no input in the content of the foldout.

Rolling Stone also said that "Indie Rock Universe" was in fact editorial content and not connected to the Camel ads. A source at the magazine pointed to a piece titled "Hip-Hop Universe," which ran last year in a similar format, and said that bands only had notoriety to gain from being included in the piece.

It should come as news to no one that indie clubs are hot marketing property right now, as brands seek to connect with niche audiences. On many levels, this is a positive development for musicians—with revenue from record sales and touring dropping, there is real money to be made with licensing deals. But while most companies operate within the boundaries of the law, not all advertisers are willing to pay to play. And though some posters on message boards dedicated to the case have said that bands should be grateful for simply being exposed to a wider audience, the fact remains that using someone's image for a commercial purpose without his or her consent is against the law.

The basis of the lawsuit filed by Xiu Xiu and Fucked Up is California Civil Code 3444, which states, "Any person who knowingly uses another's name, voice, signature, photograph or likeness, in any manner, on or in products, merchandise or goods, or for purposes of advertising or selling; or soliciting purchases of, products, merchandise, goods or services, without such person's prior consent ... shall be liable for any damages sustained by the person or persons injured as a result thereof."

There isn't a uniform federal law that protects the individual's right of publicity, and laws vary from state to state. In this case, California was chosen as the venue because it is the home base of Xiu Xiu's Jamie Stewart.

According to entertainment lawyer Quinn Heraty, who works with many indie bands but is not directly working on the case, "There is a presumed damage when someone uses your name or likeness for commercial purposes without your permission. Advertisers who use a band's image without their permission are not really looking to help the musicians. They're trying to use the indie vibe and the aura the band gives off to sell their product, not to help the act."

Heraty says that the reason most indie acts don't pursue cases against those who use their images without compensating them is a simple question of resources. "A band will see their image and call the company, only to be punted off on the ad agency," she says. "It's a shell game, and it gets discouraging. And let's face it, lawyers are expensive. Because of this, some bands think they can just railroad indies; they assume they're broke and dying for exposure."

In the past, individual indie acts have battled corporations and won. Nike issued a formal apology and destroyed a number of promotional items after Minor Threat and Dischord Records took the company to task for unauthorized image use. However, the class action suit marks one of the first times bands have come together to fight back. Under the California law, each violation can be valued at $750.

"That's what makes this all so baffling," Heraty says. "Greyhound and RJ Reynolds should know better. In the end, they have the most to lose."
The Road Ahead

‘Which Way Is Up’ Panel Ponders Touring’s Future

Is the current state of the touring business a “cesspool” with a “self-destructive” streak?

That was the stance that John Scher, co-CEO of Metropolitan Talent, took at a panel called “Which Way Is Up” at the Billboard Touring Conference in November. The panel—which successfully aimed to spur some candid conversation about where the touring industry is heading—was moderated by Billboard group editorial director Tamara Conniff. Onboard, in addition to Scher, were Peter Grosslight, worldwide head of music for the William Morris Agency; Kevin Morrow, president of Live Nation New York; Jay Marciano, president of Madison Square Garden Entertainment (MSG); Sean Moriarity, CEO of Ticketmaster; and Larry Vallon, executive VP of AEG Live.

“It’s certainly not the business that any of us on this panel grew up in,” Scher said. “And I think if we don’t figure out very quickly how to appropriately monetize every part of the business—the artists, the agencies, the promoters, the facilities—there won’t be a business left in five or 10 years.”

But on a panel full of smart guys who are as diverse in their opinions as they are skilled at their jobs, not everyone saw things the same way. While admitting the live biz faces some “fundamental challenges,” Ticketmaster’s Moriarity opined that “the interest and appetite of fans, and the quantity and diversity of artists is better than it has ever been.” Similarly, Marciano pointed out that MSG enjoyed record years in all its venues, exceeding 90% capacity. “I find the business quite vibrant,” Grosslight added. “We tend on these panels to focus on the big, high-profile 10%-15% of the industry, but the industry is much, much larger and deeper than that. We have almost 80 agents and 275 staff in just the music division and nearly 1,000 clients and they aren’t all staying home.”

That may be part of the problem, in Scher’s view. “Maybe it’s because I sit lower to the ground than you guys do,” he said, citing the plethora of small rooms operating in New York as an example. “It’s nonsense—there are way too many shows. The only people that are benefiting from the multitude of rooms of the same size are the artists, who are able to get more money.”

Scher admitted he didn’t understand the business plan of Live Nation and, to a lesser degree, AEG Live. “Factually, Live Nation has lost money every year of its existence. They’re out there dominating—market share, market share, new buildings in markets that don’t need new buildings,” he said. “I have no idea whether AEG makes money or not because they’re a private company.”

At the independent promoter level, including secondary markets, “my guess is two out of three shows that are bigger than the club level lose money, maybe worse than that,” Scher said. “I don’t want to count everybody’s money, but from my perspective the New York marketplace has never been more thriving,” Marciano countered. “There are probably eight new clubs, four in the marketplace; and the best I can tell everyone is making money, everyone is continuing to build.”

Both Marciano and Grosslight believe market fragmentation and more clubs benefit artist development. “In a lot of cases the fan is making the determination as to whether they will remain a fan based on the artist’s ability to perform, and I think that is healthy for the industry,” Grosslight said. “[Clubs] are providing a place for artists to learn their craft and [for fans] to find out who’s real and who isn’t.”

When Scher offered the argument that “ticket prices have gotten out of hand, service charges have gotten out of hand, artist guarantees have gotten out of hand,” Vallon noted he had been hearing the same complaints since 1976. Scher agreed, but added, “If you do the math of what the average ticket price of a theater/arena/amphitheater show is, it’s dramatically different.”

Moriarty said that Ticketmaster data didn’t fully support that supposition. “Where it’s true is at the very top of the market, and that’s because of the fundamental reality that people today, through every social class, are much more wealthy than they’ve ever been,” he said. “Ticketmaster data shows, across all live entertainment categories, retail tickets on the system in 1996 averaged $36. Ten years later they averaged $48. The average service charge was $6 and change, 10 years later the average service charge was $8 and change. It’s going up, but on the average it’s not going up consistently with the way everything else in the world we live in is going up as well.”

For 24/7 touring news and analysis, see billboard.biz/touring.
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Formatted For Success
New Physical Products Hold New Opportunities

Although the music industry just left behind a tough year, we all know we are facing an even more challenging one ahead. That's because digital sales are still not offsetting the decline in physical volume. It seems that the labels are paying plenty of attention to building digital sales, but for all their lip service are still not doing enough to prop up physical formats.

Besides those customers choosing digital over physical, the other things hurting CD sales are price, exclusives and the ongoing format obsolescence. Let's tackle these things one at a time.

Sure, it's been said a million times that consumers will pay and pay well for a hit title they really want. But the label folks who say that seem to forget that for every album that is an automatic purchase, there are many other potential album purchases that are internally debated by consumers, with price being one of many factors under consideration.

There are many reasons why CD prices need to come down, but I have done that column many times before, so I won't repeat myself here, except to reiterate just one of them. A price reduction will help the account base remain healthy. When stores are healthy, they don't have to close. It's that simple. The rapid decline of CD sales owes as much to the shuttering of stores carrying music and the reduction of music space in ongoing stores as it does to any other factor.

Let's move on to exclusives, a practice that merely shifts sales—not grow them—usually from multiple accounts to nowadays a few big-box accounts. Forget that it drives the shut out retailer crazy, but four versions of James Blunt's "All the Lost Souls," each available at different big-box accounts, also confuse and piss off consumers, according to Newbury Comics CEO Mike Drosse (Billboard, Dec. 22, 2007).

Exclusives are also a factor in why music specialty stores close. Isn't it amazing that the U.S. industry's overall sales keep falling, even though big boxes like Target, Walmart and Best Buy keep opening more stores? Could it not be the realignment of consumers before, just like quadraphonic albums failed in the '70s, but the numbers that the DVDplus people are touting make for a convincing argument. Forty-three million households now have surround sound, and 60 million will have it by 2009. Seems like a great base of consumers who might want to buy, say, the 17 albums that have each sold more than 5 million units, to play in surround sound.

I hate it when the industry tries to trick customers into rebuying albums by coming out with limited edition versions well after street date, instead of having them both out day-and-date. But who could complain about being offered the opportunity to buy a superstar platinum album in a new, high-quality version now, when most consumers didn't have surround sound opportunities when most of those albums were initially released?

And don't forget, if you don't want to adopt DVDplus, MVI comes out on a DVD and is fully capable of containing surround sound too.

CDVUs is also worth taking a look at, as long as you keep at least a basic CD booklet with the package, something that so far Hollywood is not doing. Finally, what I like about DFS—which can be married with DVDplus and visa versa—is that it seems to offer a solution to the exclusives issue.

We all know exclusives are bad for the industry, but the labels are going to keep doing them because they like using other companies' money to market their records. But with DFS, after an exclusive window, you could allow all customers the opportunity to buy all the exclusive tracks that were spread out to all the various big boxes and iTunes to the updatable area of the DFS disc, thus making the album complete for everyone.

THE NEW BREED

- DVDplus is a hybrid disc that allows for albums to be issued in CD and Surround Sound versions, accompanied by video.
- DFS, or Digital Future Solution, comes with pre-recorded content that can unlock online updates.
- CDVU+ allows for a digital booklet to be embedded on a CD.
- MVI is an album that contains audio, video and links to more content.
PAY TO PLAY?

Digital 'Tax' Slammed In Canada

TORONTO—A revolutionary plan that would effectively legitimize file-sharing here has been slammed as "a pipe dream" by Canadian labels.

The Songwriters Assn. of Canada proposes to allow domestic consumers access to all recorded music available online in return for adding a $5 Canadian ($4.96) monthly fee to every wireless and Internet account in the country.

The SAC claims that the proposal, which has been presented to labels' bodies the Canadian Record Industry Assn. (CRIA) and Canadian Independent Record Production Assn. as well as publishers' groups, would raise approximately $1 billion Canadian ($933 million) annually. Although the SAC does not detail how revenue would be collected and distributed, it says it would go to artists, labels and publishers.

The idea doesn't strike a chord with everyone. The SAC proposal "would signal the death of paid music services in Canada," says Alistair Mitchell, CEO of Canadian music service Puretracks. "It would be saying we're just giving up on developing new models. The concept is so flawed, I don't know where to start."

This proposal is incredibly well thought out and well-constructed," acting SAC president Eddie Schwartz says. Producer/songwriter Schwartz, whose songs have been performed by Joe Cocker, Pat Benatar and Donna Summer, says the scheme would "allow people to gain access to the entire repertoire of Western music" for only $60 Canadian per year. That, he adds, "amounts to $0.16 [$0.159] per day. [Which] seems like a pretty good deal."

Schwartz adds that it is unlikely users with both a wireless phone and Internet account would have to pay twice for access.

The Canadian Wireless Telecommunications Assn. estimates Canada had 18.5 million wireless phone users and 7 million residential Internet users at the end of 2006. In 2006, according to the IFPI, the trade value of recorded music fell 9.1% to $598.7 million Canadian ($529.8 million); CDs accounted for 85% of that total.

CRIA president Graham Henderson says he has discussed the plan with Schwartz, but his organization is reluctant to become involved. "We don't want to pursue what amounts to a pipe dream that is presented as a quick fix," he says. "We'll lose focus on the real issues that will help us resolve the industry's problems."

Schwartz says he has received positive feedback from consumer groups. However, he notes that it would require clearance from the Copyright Board of Canada, and the SAC has not yet taken the concept to the regulatory body.

The SAC has also yet to present its proposal to Canadian Internet service providers, although some are dismissive of the plan. "It appears the SAC would ask wireless carriers and ISPs to collect this surcharge on their behalf," says a spokesman for Bell Canada, one of the country's largest telecommunications companies and the majority owner of Puretracks. "[That] would not go over well with our client base, especially with the large number already signed up for our [legal] mobile and online music services."

The Supreme Court of Canada ruled in 2004 that ISPs are not responsible for the actions of clients using their Internet services. One senior source at a Canadian ISP says, "ISPs are not required to—nor would they—police this kind of usage. Nor would they charge, collect and remit what is in essence a tax."

However, the proposal has received support from the Canadian Music Creators Coalition, a group of 187 acts, including the Barenaked Ladies and Avril Lavigne.

Artist Andrew Cash described the SAC suggestion in a statement on behalf of the CMCC as "the first progressive proposal we've seen in Canada to address file-sharing."
danced were down because of the smoking ban," says Bob Angus, director of British promoter Metropolitan Music.

Club trade falls into a slightly different area, says Steve Forster, London-based managing director of Venue and Live Music Solutions, which operates the 18 venues within MAMA Group’s stable. The window in which a club owner stays on the premises is generally shorter, he explains, and “there tends to be more social interaction.”

“We will also look to establish new possibilities for smoking,” says René Rohde, managing director of the Eßhaus dance club in Lübeck, Germany. “Initially, we will have fewer visitors, but it will slowly find its level.”

During the longer term, the introduction of “smoking terraces” and a water-tight system for re-entry passes are projects the U.K. live business is looking into. “But that leads to a whole myriad of complaints from residents and people nearby about noise escaping,” says Academy Music Group’s Northcote, whose company will test a re-entry pass system in early 2008.

A recent British survey suggests a smoking ban could actually encourage gig-goers. Conducted for mobile phone operator Vodafone and published in September, it found that 20% of respondents believed the smoking ban had produced “positive” results for concerts. That figure doubled to 39.5% for the 16-24 age group. The nationwide online survey carried out by Tickbox.net represented a sample of more than 1,400 participants. According to a separate study published in December by market research firm Synovate, in which more than 8,500 were interviewed across a range of international markets, 14% of respondents said they believed smoking bans made dancing out and entertainment options more enjoyable.

Leading German promoters suggest the overall attitude toward the ban is positive.

“We do not see any connection between the smoking prohibition and ticket sales,” says promoter Marek Lieberberg, managing director of Marel Lieberberg Konzertagentur in Frankfurt. “But we are strongly convinced that the quality of the atmosphere in the halls will be improved.”

“You just have to accept it, plan for it and embrace it,” Forster says. “You can try to oppose it as much as you like. If you’re sensible and practical, you sell the positives to the customer and you factor in the desires for the 5% or so who still want to smoke—and you keep everyone happy.”

Additional reporting by Wolfgang Spahr in Hamburg.

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QUEEN HONORS MINOGUE, PARKINSON

Australian pop singer Kylie Minogue and veteran British broadcaster Michael Parkinson were among the music industry names on Queen Elizabeth II’s new year’s Honours list. The list, based on recommendations from the UK government, was published Dec. 29. Minogue, who recovered from breast cancer to relaunch her career in 2007 with her 10th album, “X” (Parlophone), became an Officer of the Order of the British Empire in the annual list, for “services to music.” Parkinson was named a Knight Bachelor for services to broadcasting. His TV chat show “Parkinson,” launched by the BBC in 1971, became a national institution; in its later incarnations for the BBC and commercial rival ITV, it developed into a key show for breaking middle-of-the-road/AC acts in the United Kingdom. Other honorees included Beggars Group/Im-pala chairman Martin Mills, named a Member of the Order of the British Empire for services to the music industry, and concert promoter Graham Pullen, director of special projects at Live Nation in the United Kingdom, who was given the Member of the Royal Victorian Order medal for his work producing and staging charity concerts.

—Tom Ferguson

SPAIN ADOPTS DIGITAL TAX

The Spanish parliament has approved the introduction of a tax on digital equipment capable of recording music, film, photocopies or any other form of intellectual property. The move expands existing legislation to cover digital music players, mobile phones with recording capacity and USB memory cards. The tax is expected to be applied starting Jan. 15. The Spanish government estimates that €100 million – €115 million ( $144 million - $166 million) will be collected per year, with some €32 million ($46 million) to go to the music industry to compensate authors and artists for loss of income caused by private copying. Revenue collected will be administered by Spanish authors’ and publishers’ society SGAE.

—Howell Llewellyn
SURROUND SOUND
Japan’s 360-Degree Model Draws Admiring Glances

TOKYO—What goes around, comes around.

Universal’s August 2007 acquisition of Sanctuary Group brought the former indie’s much vaunted “360-degree model”—adding management, concert booking and merchandising to label/publishing activities—back into the spotlight.

In Japan, however, pop acts have been benefiting from 360-degree vision since the 1960s.

“The future is already here in Japan,” Universal Music Group International Asia Pacific region president Max Holo says. He notes that the Japanese 360-degree approach is rooted in the working culture of the country’s artist-management companies. “They have been sharing in all related revenue streams for decades,” he says. “The services they provide are much wider than those of Western companies.”

Daniel DiCicco is president of Tokyo-based BMG Japan, which operates management company BMG Artists. He says Japanese 360-degree deals often involve working with media and outside partners which make financial investments in artists’ careers in exchange for sharing certain rights.

“The Japanese domestic music market is highly evolved, with a complex and varied landscape of creative players,” DiCicco says. “One doesn’t just waltz in to applause with a 360-degree contract in hand.”

Tokyo-based production company Johnny’s Jimusho, established in 1963, is widely acknowledged as pioneering Japan’s 360-degree model. The company originates the concept for an act, hires suitable performers and develops them into a marketable, branded pop package, while maintaining control over many rights.

Leading domestic record companies such as Sony Music Entertainment (Japan) (SMEJ) and Avex Group also offer a wide range of music services. Tokyo-based Sony’s 44 companies cover labels, distribution, artist management, music publishing, magazine publishing, cable TV and music venues. Similarly, Avex’s operations include labels, management, publishing, physical and digital distribution, concert promotion as well as a school for aspiring artists.

“Avex has been a 360-type company from the very beginning,” says a representative for the leading independent, which launched in 1988. About 30 of Avex’s 210 acts have 360-type deals, he says.

Other majors have adopted the practice. In 2006, Universal Music Japan entered artist management by launching Universal Music Artists, while in 2003 Warner Music Japan bought 70% of Tokyo-based management company Taisuke. More recently, EMI Music Japan launched management company EMI Entertainment Japan in November.

Typical of the acts signed to 360-degree-type deals is female pop duo Puffy, signed as a recording act to SMEJ label Ki/oon Records, with a publishing deal with Sony Music Publishing and management through Sony-owned Hit & Run.

Other acts pick and choose from the range of services on offer. Up-and-coming rock band Base Ball Bear, for example, has a record deal with EMI Music Japan, but is signed for management publishing with Sony group company Music Tabloid.

The 360-degree model “is OK for ‘idols,’ but not rock bands,” says Yuki Kobayashi, president of Tokyo-based independent management company 3rd Stone From the Sun, which handles local rock acts Theatre Brook, Hige and Bo-Pep. The model most benefits teen-pop acts that need maximum media exposure for the short term, but not rock acts interested in long-term careers, he says.

The Japanese model’s potential pitfalls were vividly illustrated in 2001 when female pop singer Ami Suzuki went against Japanese show business’ paternalistic grain by signing to AG Communication, the Tokyo-based production company where she was signed to a 360-degree deal.

Suzuki’s 1999 debut album, “SA,” had sold 1.5 million copies domestically, according to SoundScan Japan. But after her legal action, the singer was effectively blacklisted by the local entertainment industry and her career remained in the doldrums until Avex signed her in late 2004 (Billboard, Feb. 19, 2005). To date, however, she has not recaptured the peaks of her earlier career.

### THREE LABELS’ 360 VIEWS

#### JOHNNY’S JIMUSHO

Based: Tokyo

Key acts: SMAP (male pop vocal group), recordings licensed to Victor Entertainment, Kat-tun (male pop vocal group), Tokio (male pop vocal group), recordings licensed to Universal Music Japan.

Associated businesses: Johnny’s Music Publishing, Joy Storm (record label), Johnny’s Family Club (fan club), Johnny’s Shop (merchandising)

Since its establishment in 1963 by Japanese-American producer/talent scout Johnny Kitagawa, the Johnny’s Jimusho production house has become one of the most powerful players in the Japanese entertainment business. It specializes in male “idol” groups, most famously quintet SMAP, whose members are among the best-known entertainers in Japan. “Johnny’s is the ultimate ‘360-degree company,’” one Tokyo music biz insider says.

#### AVEX GROUP

Based: Tokyo

Key acts: Ayumi Hamasaki (rock/pop female vocalist), Kumi Koda (R&B/pop female vocalist), Exile (R&B/pop male vocal group)

Associated businesses: Avex Entertainment (recording/music publishing), Velfarre Entertainment (club/restaur-ant management), Avex Live Creative (concert production, music publishing), Avex Planning and Development (artist development), Avex Marketing (distribution and merchandising)

Having started out in 1988 importing dance music from Europe, Avex grew during the 1990s into one of Japan’s biggest labels, discovering and developing a steady stream of dance-pop acts. The company recently branched out into movie and animation produc- tion; however, a spokesman insists that “Avex’s core competency is undoubt- edly artist management.”

#### SONY MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT (JAPAN)

Based: Tokyo

Key acts: Tamio Okuda (rock/pop male vocalist), Puffy (pop female duo), Chemistry (R&B/pop male vocal du; label and publishing only)

Associated businesses: Sony Music Artists (management), Sony Music Publishing, Sony Magazines, JARED (distribution), Half network (music ven- ues), Music on TV (cable-TV operator), ClipGate (video-rights clearance)

SMEJ traces its origins to 1968, when Japanese electronics company Sony and CBS Records created the 50/50 joint venture CBS/Sony. In the 1970s the company grew into Japan’s No. 1 label in terms of market share—a posi-tion it has held ever since.

---SM
Legal Matters

SUSAN BUTLER sbutler@billboard.com

Behind The Live Nation/Madonna Deal

A New Model For 360-Degree Deal Contract Forms

One legal complaint frequently voiced by artist lawyers over major labels' 360 deals is that the contract forms based on traditional deals make no sense. The contract between Madonna and Live Nation, though, could mark a new way of drafting agreements that encompass several revenue streams.

The agreement was handled by Greenberg Traurig for Live Nation and Grubman Indursky & Shire for Madonna. Greenberg Traurig's Miami-based partner Gary Epstein, chairman of the firm's national corporate and securities practice, spearheaded the setup and brought in New York-based partner Andy Tavel for his music industry expertise.

Sources close to the parties say that the big-picture deal points were hammered out between Arthur Fogel, chairman of Live Nation's global music division and CEO of global touring; Michael Cohl, chairman/CEO of Artist Nation; Guy Oseary, Madonna's co-manager; and Allen Grubman, Madonna's attorney. Tavel then worked closely with the transactional lawyers to draft the agreement.

First, the Greenberg Traurig lawyers essentially built a "Chinese wall," as Tavel calls it, between themselves and every entertainment person in the firm to maintain confidentiality and avoid any conflict of interest. Then the deal was "fast-tracked" so the parties could close it before any leaks occurred in the press or in the industry.

It took slightly more than three months to complete—practically record time for a new business model.

When drafting the contract, the lawyers decided not to begin with a basic recording contract. Tavel says, instead, they shaped the agreement as a corporate joint venture involving licensed rights. Then they customized it with the basic structure included spelling out commitments by the financing partners and how it would be spent. While specifics are confidential, it goes without saying that Madonna doesn't come cheap.

"Live Nation has a vision and a plan," Tavel says. "They have the guts to make the financial commitment while [many record labels] are hemorrhaging, circling the wagons rather than taking risks.

While envisioning the new contract model, Tavel says he kept in mind his vision of the future music model where everything is coordinated—and stems from—the artist's Web site, like the center of a wheel coordinating spokes of record sales, tour ticketing, merchandise sales, fan sites and more.

The lawyers then crafted an agreement to cover the different revenue streams. They involved such issues as the different streams of revenue including recording, touring, merchandise and sponsorships; the different income splits per revenue stream; recording, marketing, video, photo shoot and related cost issues; what activities and costs require preapproval and by whom; and minimum amounts can be spent without preapproval; recoupments; and how to calculate net proceeds from gross revenue.

"This was the most innovative negotiation I ever experienced," Tavel says. "We weren't dealing with any precedent. [Grubman partner] David Toraya and I worked side by side, just throwing out ideas.

Throughout the deal, the lawyers kept their focus on how to be cost-conscious, achieve market efficiency and avoid getting bogged down in the details, Tavel says. And to keep accounting streamlined, a source says, all gross revenue flows to Live Nation, which then accounts and pays Madonna's company.

One of the most significant differences between this deal and traditional record deals was its corporate aspect. Epstein says that he believes his involvement as a corporate securities lawyer demonstrates a recognition that the world of music contracts is changing.

"As these deals get more sophisticated and more inclusive, it's not enough to simply have relationships," he says. "You need expertise in tax, securities and intellectual property—and an international dimension."

Artist Nation is expected to use much of the contract as a form for star artists like Madonna. Considering the high-powered negotiations involved, it seems a pretty good place to start a new contract model.

And as for the 360-type deal, Tavel is all for it with the right company.

"If properly executed," he says, "this model will expand the pie rather than divide existing revenue streams."
Free To You And Me
Big Head Todd & The Monsters Give Away Album To Help Promote Live Shows

The strategy involves customizing CD artwork with a participating station's call letters along with the imprint of a corporate sponsor and distributing it via direct mail using each station's listener database. Thousands of copies will be provided to the stations. Sponsors help defray the cost of producing the customized CDs, and the stations pick up the mailing costs.

According to Big Head Todd manager Bill Rusch, the band—which has sold 48,000 copies of its last traditionally issued studio album, 2004's "Crimes of Passion," and 1.2 million copies of its 1993 album "Stutter: Sweetly," according to Nielsen SoundScan—wanted to try something innovative. "The real source of income and continued success is our live show," he says. "We felt that in this stage of the band's career, we would try using the recorded music as a marketing and promotional tool to drive that."

"It was also a way for us to get radio onboard as a partner on a deeper level than just asking them for airplay," Rusch continues. So far four stations have taken the band up on its offer: triple-A outlet KBCO Denver (a Clear Channel station), KPRI San Diego (Compass Mediagroup) and KGSR Austin (Entercom) and Central Missouri State University's KTBG Warrensburg, Mo. The mailings in Warrensburg, Denver and Austin were tied in with a holiday gift campaign, while San Diego will participate in late January. In addition to the new studio disc, KPRI plans to mail out a live CD the band will record in San Diego.

Rusch says the band expects to add other markets in first-quarter 2008, expanding the campaign in relation to its touring schedule. "Plus, the group extended an invitation to everyone on its fan list, "We basically said that if you give us your address, we will send you a cool Christmas gift, which will be the CD," Rusch says, adding that 25,000-plus fans received the album.

The band has posted similar offers on other Web sites with whom it has a relationship. And tickets for January and February tour dates will include information about how the purchaser can go online and download the entire CD for free.

Since the band writes its own material, it didn't have to ask songwriters or publishers to forgo their normal royalty rates.

The edginess is to distribute the CD to hundreds of thousands of existing and potentially new fans in the hope that many of them will support the live show. "I am not sure yet how it will all really shake out for us: we probably won't really know for a year or so," Rusch says. "It will either have been a brilliant idea or a major blunder. It just seems like a natural next step for us, and we feel we are in a position where this will provide a strategic advantage."

A version of this story originally ran in Radio & Records.

NAB Blasts Performance Rights Act
Group Hopes To Retain Exemption From Paying For Airplay

The National Assn. of Broadcasters is ratcheting up election-year jargon as it takes on recording artists and labels that support the new performance rights bill.

Using descriptions that often trigger negative voter response—like taxes and profits by foreign-owned companies—the NAB is hoping to maintain terrestrial radio's exemption from paying to broadcast sound recordings. And next month, the group is expected to take note of every artist who wins a Grammy Award and thanks radio for its support.

A bipartisan group of leading senators and representatives of both sides introduced the Performance Rights Act—despite predictions last year by many industry observers that the powerful lobby of the NAB would prevent any such bill from ever being introduced. The NAB, which first began calling the performance royalty a tax last year, quickly responded with a new twist.

The bill would require "America's hometown broadcasters to compensate the foreign-owned record labels for radio airplay of music," NAB executive VP Dennis Wharton said in a statement issued the day the bills were introduced. "NAB will aggressively oppose this brazen attempt to force America's hometown radio stations to subsidize companies that have profited enormously through the free promotion provided by radio airplay."

The release went on to quote the artists who won Country Music Assn. Awards last year and thanked radio broadcasters for their support.

The identical Senate and House bills have five basic provisions. They would ensure that federal copyright law no longer limits public performance rights in sound recordings to digital transmissions, but that it includes terrestrial broadcasts under this right. Small commercial or noncommercial stations with annual revenue of less than $1.25 million would have the option of paying a flat-fee royalty of $5,000, described by the legislators who introduced the bills as a "nominal" fee. The legislators say that about 77% of all stations would fall under this provision. Public stations would have the option of paying $1,000 per year.

Broadcasters who offer limited featured performances of recordings would have the option to acquire a per-program license rather than a license based on the station's entire revenue. And the bill states that the public performance rights of songwriters or copyright owners of musical works may not be adversely affected by the bill.

Sources on Capitol Hill tell Billboard that the bills are expected to bring the parties—recording artists, labels and broadcasters—to the bargaining table to begin working toward a mutually acceptable bill that will bring terrestrial broadcasters in parity with digital broadcasters and terrestrial broadcasters in other countries, which already pay to perform recordings. But none of the sources expect the NAB to be bargaining any time soon. Instead, one source says, the group will likely try to convince the public that small broadcasters would go bankrupt if they had to pay a royalty. Then, if forced to negotiate, legislators, the group could be in a better bargaining position. As previously reported, no bill is expected to pass during this election year.

Martin Mills and Geoff Travis

The two indie legends—now working together—talk about the state of the independents.

How does the record business compare now with when you started in 1977–78?

Martin Mills: It’s completely different in almost every way. When Beggars started, we were selling to a pretty large niche market. And CDs hadn’t been invented and we were selling vinyl.

Geoff Travis: We didn’t really have any idea of what we were doing. In a way, being young and having no fear and not knowing there are any rules, you can operate in a different mind-set. The longer you do it, the more you become aware of the potential pitfalls.

Does that mean you become more cynical as time progresses?

Travis: We aren’t cynical. The thing Martin and I have in common is that we’ve been driven by our love of music. And that’s a differentiating principle that survives in the independents. [Now] I’m going to have the luxury of just thinking more and more about the music and less about the business. I’m not really that interested in the sociology of the music business.

Mills: It affects how we can operate and how new labels operate. And I’m interested in the rungs on the ladder existing for people to follow us up. We bring business support to Rough Trade and to other labels we’re involved in. We’re a well-organized business, but we’re pretty informal. The way EMI or Universal run their businesses is an alien world to the way we do it.

How have you survived while other U.K. indie labels didn’t?

Mills: Employing people that are brilliant with music—and being prudent. Taking risks you can afford to lose on and just being sensible. It’s a boring word, but you have to be sensible at the end of the day if you’re going to survive.

Travis: The independent philosophy has always been if you’re working with 10 projects, all of those must be able to stand on their own merits. You can have an artist who sells 3,000 records and that’s a big success, because they’re doing something no one else is doing. They’re bringing value to culture. For a major, that doesn’t really exist, unless it’s a jazz label or a classical label or an adjunct.

What was the Sanctuary experience like?

Travis: The last two years were pretty miserable. Sanctuary made a lot of fundamental errors, growing too quickly and thinking they were experts in certain areas where they weren’t. It was a classic family drama played out at a business level, which ended up wasting millions and millions of pounds.

Mills: Sanctuary was building a business with what the city and the money markets thought at the front of everything they did. To us, that’s at the back of everything we do.

But is the 360-degree model the way forward for labels?

Mills: Potentially it is for small, new businesses. Arguably it might make sense if you’re Universal and you’ve acquired companies that can deliver an all-round service for the artists that are prepared to be packaged and have all their interests represented in the one place. [But] for labels to grab other rights in return for their investment in the recorded side is short-sighted and misguided and will either end up in creative losses or tears. Or both.

What’s the goal for Rough Trade within the Beggars Group of companies?

Travis: We haven’t really begun to achieve anything like what we can achieve. The vision has always been pretty consistent, but there’s a renewed vigor.

Mills: It’s a very natural partnership. I was driving records around to Rough Trade in the truck of my car in 1977. So we’ve been on a very similar path without actually walking in the same path for the last 30 years. It feels good that we’re on the same one.

Technology has empowered artists, so will traditional indie labels actually exist 10 years from now?

Mills: If an artist has the guts and the self-belief to do it themselves, then they should. It’s good creative thinking.

Mills: Definitely. It has been during a period in which the independent market share has declined, but it would have declined a lot more had it not been for the support structures that we have created.

Travis: I’ve learned a huge amount from AIM and I think it’s one of the great innovations in the last few years.

Has the European Commission clearing the Sony-BMG merger damaged the indies’ relationship with Brussels?

Mills: I don’t think there’s any damaged relationship. The nature of every government is they’re used to people lobbying them, and they’re used to people getting what they want and others not getting what they want.

What if a major was to make an offer for Beggars?

Mills: They’ve given up on me, really. Until about seven or eight years ago they all used to check in every year and say, “Selling yet?” I would say, “Don’t ask, because I’m not going to.”

If an artist has the guts and the self-belief to do it themselves, then they should. It’s good creative thinking. —Martin Mills
Ingrid Michaelson

THE WAY SHE IS

The End
Of The Old Music Business?

OR THE FACE OF THE NEW ONE?

www.americanradiohistory.com
This was Ingrid Michaelson's moment. It was Thursday, Sept. 20, 2007, and the Old Navy sweater commercial that featured her sweet, simple song, "The Way I Am," was hitting the airwaves. For a few days, the 30-second ads played everywhere: all of the major networks during most prime-time shows, "The Tonight Show With Jay Leno," "Late Night With Conan O'Brien" and "Late Show With David Letterman," and some of the bigger channels playing syndicated shows. Then, premiere week began. "You couldn't get away from it," laughs Danny Buch, senior VP of promotion and artist development at Sony BMG's RED, which at that time had just signed on to distribute Michaelson's "Girls and Boys" album. "It was on every channel!" On Sept. 27 alone, the commercial aired during the premieres of "The Office," "Ugly Betty," "My Name Is Earl" and "Grey's Anatomy," along with a slew of other placements. By the time its run was over, it had repeatedly played across virtually every network and demographic on 14 of 15 nights through Oct. 4. In less than three weeks, the spot made more than 65 appearances in prime-time, including 17 season premieres. Not bad exposure for an unsigned artist.

Michaelson, 28, lives with her parents, an older brother she is not shy about yelling at, a rabbit and a small, yappy dog in the prettiest house on a charming street in Staten Island, N.Y. The place is old and full of wonder, old wooden bookcases lined with vintage record players, sculptures her mother makes, countless books and vinyl and even an art project Michaelson made in the sixth grade.

For those who have heard her songs—quirky pop confections full of infectious harmonies—the home's whimsy seems perfect, as does the fact that she's sitting on her couch wearing an oversized babushka and flannel spaceship pajamas.

Michaelson has a cold. And if she's a bit rundown after her insane run of the previous 14 months, well, that's fitting, too.

Unknown by anyone but her friends and family in early July 2006, Michaelson is now in the top five at triple A radio, and starting to cross over to top 40. In the space of a year, she has gone from playing small cafes and clubs for friends and family, to selling out New York's 500-capacity Bowery Ballroom just before Christmas; tickets for a Feb. 15 gig at the city's 1,400-capacity Webster Hall are moving quickly.

She's a new You Oughta Know artist on VH1, with "The Way I Am" in heavy rotation, and she's beginning to sell a noteworthy amount of music—the week leading up to Christmas was her best sales week to date, moving more than 12,000 units of "Girls and Boys," according to Nielsen SoundScan.

A FRANKENSTEIN LABEL

While it's tempting to focus on her lack of a traditional record label deal—Michaelson holds her own master and publishing rights—thinking of her as the poster child for The End of the Music Business is to miss the point of her story, entirely.

She may not have a regular deal, but she'd be the first to tell you she'd never have made it from the Old Navy commercials to the aforementioned accomplishments without plenty of help from the traditional music business. Or at least parts of the traditional music business that are nimble enough to keep up with the speed at which artists, in the right place and time, can develop in 2008.

"All these things are happening so quickly," Michaelson says, wrapping a blanket around her legs, and her hands around a mug of vanilla tea. "I feel like I'm ready to take this to another level. And I don't even know what that means anymore. It used to mean signing to a label. And I'm still not opposed, but I'm still saying, 'Let's just see.'

Meanwhile, she has assembled what she calls her "Frankenstein label" around her, and it includes some pretty heavy hitters from the music biz. Her manager, Lynn Grossman, is a former GM of world music label Putumayo. Her lawyer is Peter Lewit, of Davis, Shapiro, Lewit & Hayes, a firm that works with some of the biggest names in the industry.

Her music is promoted by radio by Right Arm Resource, a company run by industry vet Jesse Barnett that works with plenty of Indies, but also, in the past year or so, major label artists including Bob Dylan, KT Tunstall and Joss Stone. Paradigm, her booking agency, also handles such clients as Coldplay and Avril Lavigne. Original Signal is listed as the label on her CDs, but it's basically a pressing and distribution deal that has grown to include some marketing.

"Effectively, Ingrid is an unsigned artist," says Lucas Mann, president of Original Signal. "She's a nimble development company that has a distribution deal through RED. As the music business changed, we felt it was important to provide artists with whatever opportunities they were looking for. Ingrid and Ingrid had a very specific idea of what they wanted and we wanted to be able to work with them. We've come upon something that works, and it's important to look at this and the pieces of this that are working and say, 'Hey, there's a lesson here.'"

Michaelson's rise from obscurity began in July 2006, four months after Grossman started the company Secret Road to place music in film and TV. She had been through several music business turns, including a stint working with RPMC, a company that organized sweepstakes and promotions for radio, and her time at Putumayo. Grossman also spent time managing artists, including dance-pop singer (and one-time Madonna singer/cohort) Donna De Lory and singer/songwriter Alexi Murdoch.

In July, while on vacation, Andrea Von Forstner, now a music supervisor and the woman Grossman hired to watch over her business, found Michaelson on MySpace. At this point, Michaelson, who had self-released "Girls and Boys" in May, was skeptical, but game.

"I had been called into a bunch of meetings with different managers and different record labels—somewhere I had gotten on their radar," says Michaelson, who mentions interest from Columbia and Capitol. "They'd call and say, "Oh, I found you on MySpace.' They were like, 'We'll keep in touch and come see some shows.' And then that would be it. They were too afraid, because this isn't a world that takes an unknown, works with her and develops her. I got nothing out of these meetings. People called and snifled me and sent me on my way."

Still, she says, "I was at a point where things were going to happen or they weren't, and I wasn't going to let an opportunity pass me by."

Michaelson agreed to work with Secret Road, and first met Grossman when the latter came to New York in October 2006 for the CMJ Music Marathon.

"She said, 'I really want to get my music on "Grey's Anatomy." When's it going to happen?'" Grossman recalls. "And I told her, 'You know what, Ingrid? You really just need to let go. I think your music is really good, but it doesn't happen on our schedule.'"

That day, Grossman says, when she returned to her hotel there was a message that Secret Road had gotten a request from "Grey's Anatomy" to use Michaelson's song "Breakable." That episode aired in November 2006. "'Grey's' used two other songs from "Girls and Boys" before the show's musical director, Alexandra Patasav, presented Michaelson with her biggest break yet, inviting her to write an original song for the series. The result, "Keep Breathing," aired in the season-three finale in May 2007, playing almost in full during the dramatic climax of the episode, the song's own building tempo and drama matching the scene. (The song was later released on the third "Grey's Anatomy" compilation.)

"I first heard about Ingrid's music through some friends from the [singer/songwriter venue] Hotel Café in Los Angeles," says Patasav, who runs her own film and TV company, Chop Shop. "I was directed to her MySpace page and just loved her songwriting, vocal style and all-around vibe. It seemed quintessentially 'Grey's' to me and the show's exec producers, Shonda Rhimes and Betty Brer." This is when label interest began to heat up again. "Someone at every major label...A&R people, presidents, they all wanted to have meetings," Grossman says. "And in general I said, 'I just want to continue doing it this way. We're having success and enjoying doing this project on our own.'"

"At the time," Michaelson says, "we were still basically thinking of our plan as getting to a point where we'd have clout when it eventually came time to sign a label deal.

Meanwhile, Grossman wanted to get some records into stores: Michaelson had been selling her album primarily through iTunes and CD Baby. "I was a little nervous about going to retail too early. My philosophy was always, 'Keep the demand way ahead of the supply.'"
In May, indie distributor Junket Boy agreed to buy 1,000 copies of "Girls and Boys" (one way, with no risk to Michaelson) and distribute to independent stores.

But when the Old Navy commercial was on the way, Grossman knew it was time for something bigger. She agreed to distribute 3,000 copies of "Girls and Boys" through Original Signal/RED.

**HER SHIP COMES SAILING IN**

Sharrall Churchill, CEO of Media Creature Music—the company that worked with Old Navy to place "The Way I Am"—says in this instance, the creative director at Old Navy already knew Michaelson’s music through MySpace and pushed for the song’s use.

"I use Google Trends to track [the buzz from my commercials]," she says. "Naturally, when Old Navy ads come out, there are slight spikes, but when the Ingrid Michaelson came out, it just completely spiked. I think it has something to do with her potential audience watching all of these shows at the same time."

Perhaps the most important viewer turned out to be Danny Buch, who saw the commercial while watching "Saturday Night Live." Michaelson had been on his radar even before her signing to Original Signal—he had seen her at that summer’s Triple A NonComm convention, and knew the commercial was on its way.

"I was sitting at home and I heard the commercial and I’m like, 'I know that song!'" he says. "Twenty minutes later I hear the commercial again. The next morning I’m talking to some guys at RED and we realize that given the size and targeting of the Old Navy buy, they accomplished a year of promotion in 12 days. That week I went into insanity mode."

Buch started pushing "The Way I Am" aggressively to triple A stations, adding one after another. And he basically forced the song’s video—commissioned by Original Signal on the cheap for about $15,000—onto VH1, which embraced Michaelson as a You Oughta Know artist and put the clip in heavy rotation, where it remains.

"Originally I told him we had done what we were going to do for 2007... that we were unofficially closed [for new You Oughta Know acts]," says Rick Krim, VH1 executive VP of talent and music programming. But, he says, "rules are made to be broken." Krim and his team fell in love with the song, the album and the video, and, he notes, when she came in to play an acoustic set in the office, “she was just adorable... she won everyone over.”

This new wave of attention brought yet another round of interest from labels, and Grossman says there was a moment in October or November when she and Michaelson wavered.

"There was a point when we were starting to think maybe we should at least entertain to see what was out there. I met with one of my mentor manager friends and they asked me, 'In what business do you do a good job building something and then give away 50% of it to an industry that isn't showing that it's healthy?''" Grossman and Michaelson decided to stay the indie course.

It’s a course that can be less than glamorous. Michaelson and tour partner/backup singer Allie Moss still drive all over the country in Michaelson’s mom’s car. And, Michaelson says, much of the money she’s made—Grossman says Michaelson has earned a little more from music sales, at this point, than from her synch placements—is still being reinvested into her career. In addition to the video shoot, recent expenses have included price-and-positioning efforts at big-box retailers.

The flip side is that Michaelson keeps a healthier bottom line on her sales. On synch placements, Secret Road takes a standard commission (in the 15% range) and there is no label or publisher to take a cut. Grossman says that Michaelson is keeping somewhere in the area of $5 per album sold on iTunes, and that she is getting $31 per album sold through CD Baby, before Secret Road’s cut.

Mann says he’s happy with Original Signal’s cut of Michaelson’s action. He Declines to give specifics—the low-end of a pass-through deal, and we wouldn’t just do a pass-through deal, is five points,” he says—but notes that “as things evolve, our deal with Ingrid evolves. We can be flexible on the services we’re able to add, but we also have to be flexible on terms.”

And while Michaelson hasn’t found a good reason to jump to a label so far, Buch notes that record industry experience and connections have proved quite useful to Michaelson’s career.

"My one part in this story," Buch says, "is that there was a moment in time of huge audience exposure. With no infrastructure to seize those moments, you lose them. It was just Ingrid and Lynn. So seizing that, getting that song to every hot AC and triple A station... there was no PR CD. I made an MP3 and sent it to programmers. I said 'Guys, there’s no plan, no dollars, no labels, no nothing. There’s just two minutes. 11 seconds of sneeze! Confirmed sneeze that your audience already knows.'

And, he points out, "Anywhere it gets added, it explodes. When you put a song on the radio and as you’re playing the record, every light on the phone bank goes on! That’s a hit. A hit is a record that isn’t selling any place in America but when you look at the places it’s getting played, you have huge sales. That’s Ingrid right now."

**THE REAL DEAL**

Indeed, all of this would just be another marketing story of the moment if Michaelson didn’t have the songwriting and stage chops to deliver on the buzz. Michaelson’s personal music story starts with the adolescent piano lessons and acting troups her parents encouraged her to enjoy. She went off to college in the late ’90s, studying music theory for a semester ("I was terrible at the theory, but I had a great teacher," she says) before eventually earning a theater degree from SUNY Binghamton in 2001.

She did "The Broadway audition thing" for about a year, eventually landing a role as Ellie Crotchit, Tiny Tim’s mom in “A Christmas Carol.” But while the lack of money and long hours on the road seemed to curtail her of the acting bug—"I don’t have the Broadway voice," Michaelson says—it also regularly took her into theaters with pianos and cast members who would watch her play and sing, and encouraged her to pursue music.

From 2002 through July 2006, she spent her free time recording and writing, and playing occasional shows in cafes and small clubs. A friend worked at Irving Studios in lower Manhattan; he was a roadie and would deliver songs cheaply for the experience. Ultimately, that’s how “Girls and Boys” was made.

Michaelson may already be labeled with the loaded term “Internet phenomenon,” but her music is connecting with fans in ways that marketing stories do not.

On "The Hat," for example, she weaves three separate vocal paragraphs together for an irresistible, uptempo singalong at the end of what starts as a fairly quiet song about an old love, “I don’t like performing by myself,” Michaelson says. "To me, a song is not complete unless it has another vocal line in it."

Michaelson insists her music isn’t confined to any one audience, and while that may well be true, her songs and her theatrical abilities onstage set her up to be a hero to masses of teenage girls looking for something in style and substance that isn’t oversized, overproduced or even overwrought. The songs on "Girls and Boys" are almost entirely about love, but it’s an innocent, literate love, with little if anything to do with ironic.

"There’s a boy next to me, and he never will be, anything but a boy at the bar," she sings on "Far Away." "And I think he’s the tops, he’s where everything stops, how I’d love to love him from afar."

At the recent Bowery Ballroom show, she stopped mid-performance during "Breakable," to chide the audience for singing the “S’s” too loudly during the chorus. "All I hear up here is ‘ssssss,’" she hissed, to adoring laughter. "Please just sing ‘girl’ and ‘boy.’" And the audience did as they were bid, en masse, when she resumed singing.

**STILL GROWING**

"She’s raised her profile so quickly," says Paradigm agent Steve Ferguson, who says he has been selling out 200-person venues in key cities, then going back, playing larger venues, and selling those out too. Ferguson recalls seeing her play a small club around the time that "Keep Breathing" had aired on "Grey’s Anatomy," and watching the audience sing the lyrics back to her. "It wasn’t even released commercially," he says of the song. "I don’t know if it was even available via BitTorrent or LimeWire. You could find it on her MySpace page and you could find the actual TV footage on YouTube so it was like, ‘Wow, these people have spent enough time with the song to sing it back, and it’s not readily available.’ They had to make an effort to find out how to get it and do that whole discovery process."

Michaelson will have plenty more time to refine her stage act, as she expects to be on the road from mid-January through May, including dates with a Hotel Café-branded tour. Meanwhile, she says she’s already written another 25-30 songs, though there are no plans for a new album until 2009. This year, her team expects to go deeper into "Girls and Boys," looking at "Breakable" and "Die Alone" as possible follow-up singles to "The Way I Am."

For now, Michaelson and Grossman say they are content to see how far she can go without a label.

Grossman says that “when this project needs anything, we’ll give it to them. And if that’s a label at some point, I have a feeling that will be made clear to us.” In the meantime, Michaelson keeps surpassing sales levels she once assumed would mean it was time to make the jump.

"Initially I figured we’d sell about 50,000 records and we’d need a bigger team to help us get to the next level,” the manager says. “Now we’re at 60,000 (actually at 87,000, as of this week’s issue) and we have a really nice big team already. Right now in my head, the next target is 125,000.”

But, she’s quick to add, she probably have the same perspective then: “We’ve already done 250,000. Why give half away now?”

"Peter [Lewit] and Lynn and I talk about it," Michaelson says. "He’s explained the options that I could get. People say you can get to a certain point without a label, but you can’t get past that point. And maybe that’s true. But maybe it isn’t true."

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[Image: Singer INGRID MICHAELSON (right) and backup singer/guitarist ALLIE MOSS perform during a recent New York show. Michaelson has been selling out clubs around the United States and was recently added to the upcoming Hooten Cafe tour.]

www.americanradiohistory.com
In 2007, the online release of Radiohead’s ‘In Rainbows’ turned the industry on its head. In 2008, the band is selling the album all over again—this time, the conventional way. But can anything ever be the same?

By Paul Sexton
The project that some media commentators said was threatening the very fabric of recorded music in the fall of 2007 became a beacon of hope at retail in the first week of 2008. Few albums have ever achieved more notoriety ahead of their physical release than Radiohead's "In Rainbows," which hit stores Jan. 1 in North America on ATO's TBD label. In the rest of the world, it was released Dec. 31 by XL Recordings (Billboard, Dec. 15, 2007), except in Japan, where Hostess released it Dec. 26 (billboard.biz, Dec. 5, 2007). So frenzied was the pontificating about the revolutionary "pay what you want" online phase of the album campaign (launched with a simple announcement Oct. 1 on Radiohead's Web site), that ATO Records Group president/CEO Will Botwin says with a laugh, "The band has probably gotten more publicity without saying anything than any band in the history of rock 'n' roll." But ahead of the holidays, Radiohead broke its silence for prominent feature stories in Rolling Stone, Mojo, the New York Times and elsewhere, while publications from the Los Angeles Times and Spin to New York magazine and Billboard placed "In Rainbows" in their year-end surveys of 2007's top albums.

Meanwhile, as the physical release became a reality, the nervousness of some American retailers at the album's potential in CD format was superseded by genuine anticipation. Not to mention satisfaction at the rare occurrence of a heavyweight release in the very first hours of the year, and indeed a competitive $13.98 list price.

"Retailers in the past have all said, 'Why do you guys have to put big records out in September, October and November and then in January and February, it's a dry period?" TBD co-founder Phil Costello says. "We're delivering a very big record at the beginning of the year. It's a different approach, and I'm betting it's going to work."

That confidence is echoed by an initial U.S. shipment of 400,000, according to ATO. The band's managers, Bryce Edge and Chris Huford of Oxford, England-based Courtyard Management, add that Hostess' initial Japanese shipment was 200,000 and that the global total was "between 750,000 and a million, possibly more." (Radiohead's last studio album, 2003's "Hail to the Thief," has sold 96,000 in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.)

Still, some key observers at retail and online were reluctant to go on the record about expectations for "In Rainbows." Virgin Megastore, Yahoo and Target all declined comment.

But Eric Levin at indie retailer Criminal Records in Atlanta says, "The 'pay what you want' phase of the Radiohead release was a fantastic awareness raiser" for the release of "In Rainbows." "This didn't affect our ordering or expectations in the least. If anything, the increased media attention has only served to notify the world that Radiohead have an important new release coming out."

Executives at other U.K. majors have mixed thoughts about the concept of releasing music on a "pay what you want" basis.

"From a record company point of view, it's an awful precedent," one exec says. "The ramifications are not just about Radiohead, because other people will try and emulate it, I'm sure. What it doesn't acknowledge is where you [as a label] have spent all these years developing a band, and [have] not been sharing in the live income and the merchandise. They're at such a level that they can do this, but what about the baby bands? It all rolls back to the devaluing of music, and the only positive thing is bearing that ship number."

"It's a great piece of market research and the industry should be very grateful to them," another says. "I think it will work for them, but they are Radiohead—it'll be a lot harder for new acts, and most other execs I know feel the same."

In a move that initially made some retailers uneasy (Billboard, Nov. 24, 2007), the

Everything In Its Right Place:
How The ATO Deal Was Done

Until 2005, Radiohead had spent its entire recording career with EMI, which is now owned by private equity firm Terra Firma.

There was no specific falling out with the major, according to band manager Bryce Edge, and Billboard understands EMI was hopeful Radiohead would renew its deal right up until the band's new plans were revealed.

"We'll always love our people at Parlophone—they are the rock upon which Radiohead's career was founded," Edge says. "Most of those people are still there, and it was a tough decision to move on. However, we fulfilled a six-album deal without renegotiating large advances or increased royalties. Our reward is the ability to choose our destiny and not be held by the aspirations of others."

Edge says EMI's "trump card" was the rights to Radiohead's catalog, "but they declined to negotiate in any meaningful way. That, combined with the nature of the release, and how it was received, made the decision to leave easier, but not easy."

(Radiohead's prior working relationship with PHIL COSTELLO helped seal the ATO deal.)

(ATO/Red Light president/CEO Will Botwin says, "It's the David and Goliath approach, the indie label [as] a speedboat vs. the ocean liner of the bigger companies. We can move very quickly, so we had credibility with them because of that and our good track record.

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Fitter? Happier? Will The Radiohead Model Work For Everyone?

Courtyard Management claims no credit for the idea of releasing art in the way Radiohead initially distributed "In Rainbows.

"The idea is not an innovation," band manager Bryce Edges says. "Our version came out of a late-night conversation with our friend Millree Hughes, a Welsh New, York-based artist, that centered on the notion of 'value' in the digital age.

"Our core idea was to have the digital bundle and the 'artifice,' i.e., the disc box, only," he continues. "We knew that the organization we were in the process of building would one day be able to distribute those two items on its own. It was just a question of time.

The notion of following the online and disc box phase with a traditional CD is easily explained, Edges says. "Simple. People still want different for that game, hence our partnerships with TBD and XL.

"The online model used to launch "In Rainbows" is one that Edges says "couldn't work at all" for totally unknown bands. "But it could work for bands that don't necessarily have the 1 or 2 million people that Radiohead have that are interested in their music, but a smaller number of really focused hardcore fans that are prepared to support you and give you £5 [$10] or £10 [$20] for your album over the internet and buy a special [product]."

"Record companies still have a big role to play in the music business," Edges continues, "but they have to restructure what they do and use what they're good at. They're a service industry—they provide great riches for artists. Contracts have been developed around a culture of mistrust of the record company." Band manager Chris Hufford adds, "You expect the record company to rip you off. Therefore, you get in there first and rip them off."

Radiohead ushered in the CD release of "In Rainbows" by performing the full album during a Current TV webinar on New Year's Eve.

Radiohead's fans pay what they want for "In Rainbows" in the coming months.

Other bands are sure to adopt the 'pay what you want' model utilized for "In Rainbows" in the coming months.

"There is no more powerful tool for a band than a direct means of delivering music to their fans.

—BRYCE EDGE, RADIOHEAD MANAGER

Radio programmers surveyed by Billboard say their decisions to play the new music in heavy rotation were not affected by the absence of a traditional campaign.

"The process without a label has been a smooth one for me," says Eddie Gutierrez, GM/PD at modern rock KJEE-FM Santa Barbara, Calif. "Of course, this is with a superstar rock band. I'm sure things would be very different in a new band that no one really knows about.

"They don't need the record label push to get a station like us interested," modern rock WXFN Boston PD Keith Dakin says. "We know Radiohead, we have a history with Radiohead. Whether they're on a label or not, it doesn't make too much of a difference.

Rather, the song "is a hit for us because it's a little bit of a return to their rock roots," he says. "There's an obvious guitar lick and a vibe of [Radiohead's 1995 album] 'The Bends' or [1997's] 'OK Computer' to the track. It's way more accessible than anything from 'Hail to the Thief' or 'Kid A.' I think "Jigsaw" has the potential to be a radio single as well.

Lynn Barstow, PD at modern rock KROX Austin, joins the consensus that "In Rainbows" is Radiohead's most radio-friendly record "in years." But Barstow believes that expectation about the band's new release pre-dates the "honesty box" initiative.

"Even before the hoopla around the online release, I generally sensed a renewed buzz about the band," he says, attributing it to forward-thinking Thom Yorke's critically acclaimed 2006 solo album and "some well-chosen festival appearances."

The band's extensive touring plans in 2008 will further extend the album's shelf life, Botwin says. Planned U.S. dates in May and August will bookend an extensive European tour in early summer.

Botwin—a former chairman of Columbia Records Group—jokes that the New Year's Day release "totally obliterated the holiday period for the entire staff" of ATO (414 in New York, plus another four "key players" in Los Angeles).

"But I'm excited to be part of the grand experiment," he says. "People like myself who've come from the major label world are so anxious to try some different things, because it's no secret that the old model is broken."

Whether the Radiohead model replaces it remains to be seen—but Edges maintains there is no going back.

It would seem the band could fire up the "pay what you want" initiative any time it wishes, although Edges says, "We really don't know how things will develop in the future. The market is changing rapidly, and we hope to be smart enough to react to it when we have music to release."

He adds, "What we have found to be a universal truth is that there is no more powerful tool for a band than a direct means of delivering music to their fans."

Additional reporting by Jonathan Cohen.

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CES To Focus On Convergence; Billboard Launches New Event

BY ANTONY BRUNO

On Jan. 7, the world's gadget geeks, gearheads, tech fetishists and wired elite will converge on Las Vegas yet again in the annual bacchanal consumer electronics orgy that is the Consumer Electronics Show. The conference runs through Jan. 10.

The CES banner is a deceptively simple tag for an event that has become known as the mecca of all things digital. It sets the stage for the hot products, new initiatives and likely battles that will shape the year that follows.

The biggest product unveilings and announcements are closely guarded secrets that even the bigwigs at the Consumer Electronics Assn. (CEA), the conference’s host, aren’t privy to.

But a quick scan of who's attending, exhibiting and speaking this year does point to several trends.

The convergence of entertainment and digital technologies is ramping up to ever new levels, highlighted this year by a one-day digital music track exclusively programmed by Billboard (see story, page 32).

While efforts continue to broaden the reach of in-home digital entertainment products, the focus this year is moving more toward the user interface and away from the technological guts of these systems.

There's even an effort to go green, in a nod to the environmental issues that dog the industry today.

Here’s a guide on where to go and what to see.

CONVERGENCE UPDATE

The running joke in recent years is that CES can easily stand for “Consumer Entertainment Show” or “Content Electronics Show,” given all the focus and high-level opportunities provided to the content and entertainment industry. 2008 is no different.

CEA and NBC Universal have teamed up to put a heavy focus on digital video. NBC is the “official broadcast partner” of the event and in that role will have live broadcast reports on the show floor featuring well-known personalities from “Today,” “Access Hollywood” and “Closing Bell With Maria Bartiromo” among others.

Efforts to extend Internet video throughout the home will be a major trend at this show. According to the CEA, 47% of U.S. consumers say they want to watch digital video from the Internet on their home TVs and another 29% want to access other Internet content the same way.

In addition to NBC, Sony Pictures Television will be on hand to showcase its new products and initiatives. Details are scarce, but the company is enlisting...
DIGITAL MUSIC LIVE!

Billboard, CES Team Up For Exclusive Program

The game Rock Band, played here by fans in New York, taps the music and technology sectors.

More then ever, the Consumer Electronics Show taking place Jan. 7-10 in Las Vegas is hoping to attract the entertainment industry to the conference, as issues of content rights vs. digital capabilities continue to rock the media world.

For the first time, Billboard has teamed with CES to develop the exclusive digital music programming for the conference: Digital Music Live!

This one-day event on Jan. 9 will explore how technology is affecting every aspect of the music industry, offering attendees a truly immersive digital entertainment experience.

Digital Music Live! will feature top-level representatives from the music industry, such as music managers, touring agents, record label executives, publishers and artists discussing what digital means to them, how they’re using today’s technologies and what they’d like to see more of.

While it’s easy for the voice and concerns of the music industry to get lost amid the cacophony of the CES show floor, Digital Music Live! is designed to provide an intimate, focused environment where the music and tech industries can come together to find common ground.

The event’s agenda will focus on all areas where music and digital come together, from MP3 players and mobile phones to social networks and videogames.

Highlights of the program include:

- An exploration of “Managing in the Digital Age,” with a one-on-one keynote interview with Aware Records’ Greg Latterman, conducted by Billboard group editorial director Tamara Coniff.
- A presentation by Live Nation Digital president Bryan Perez of the potential for Live Nation to transform itself into a source for recorded music as well as live events, as illustrated by the company’s recent success in luring Madonna away from Warner Music Group. Perez will outline how the nation’s largest events company is tapping digital technologies to compete on this new playing field.
- A keynote talk by Don War, in which the renowned producer/musician will discuss how he’s using the Internet as a platform for creating and distributing new music through his involvement in My Damn Channel.
- An analysis of what the breakout success of the “Guitar Hero” and “Rock Band” franchises mean for the future relationship between the music and videogame industries, featuring presentations from Electronic Arts and Activision Blizzard, the two largest videogame companies.

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DeVaughn Aims For R&B Elite On Sophomore Album

Rahiem DeVaughn may be a newly minted Grammy Award nominee, but he still considers himself an underdog.

"I enjoy being slept on," he says during a recent soundcheck break in his native Washington, D.C.

"It's like being on the verge of a Cult movement. But making the underground-to-aboveground transition is cool. The best thing I can do is stay on the road and build a grass-roots following. I'm constantly about building my brand."

That perseverance underscores DeVaughn's Grammy nod for best male R&B vocal performance for "Woman." It's the lead single from his second Jive album, "Love Behind the Melody" (Jan. 15). Peaking at No. 34 on Billboard's Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart, this laid-back yet potent anthem of respect also signals growing career momentum.

"Woman" is DeVaughn's highest Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs showing, besting "Guess Who Loves You More" (No. 38) and "You" (No. 53). Both songs are from his 2005 Jive debut, "The Love Experience." Netting sales of 224,000, according to Nielsen SoundScan, the album reached No. 9 on Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums and No. 46 on the Billboard 200.


However, as with Gaye, love ballads aren't the only thing on DeVaughn's mind. Hooking up for the first time with Scott Storch, he shifts into midtempo on "Energy" featuring OutKast's Big Boi.

"This album definitely shows more of my R&B side as well as my growth as an artist, writer and producer," says DeVaughn, who calls himself an "R&B hipster" for fusing a rock, guitar-driven vibe with his old-school leanings.

"I don't just make music for one audience," he continues. "I'm constantly trying to create timeless music that many people can gravitate to."

It was DeVaughn's mellow singing voice on a demo that caught manager Jerry Vines' undivided attention. They met in a studio where Vines was seeking new songs by local songwriter/producers for a project with R&B group Dru Hill.

"I knew Rahiem could write," says Vines, of Washington, D.C.-based 1228 Management. "But I didn't know he could sing until he sang that demo."

After signing with Jive, another challenge remained, however: breaking an R&B artist in a music world dominated by hip-hop.

"Rahiem's whole thing is live music," Vines says. "At first the label didn't know what to do with him. But I understood his live aspect, so we decided to make it out at coffeehouses and little spots to build a fan base for his live shows."

Jive urban marketing VP Lisa Cambridge-Mitchell says the label now has a clearer understanding of DeVaughn the artist and his potential.

"Beyond his talent, his strong draw is his live performance—a lane not many artists can survive in right now," she says. "It's also not about the first week. It's about the next 18 months, getting him in front of as many people as possible. Rahiem has the opportunity to be an artist who makes a difference. Our end goal is to make him iconic."

DeVaughn will face some of his biggest audiences when he opens for Jill Scott on her U.S. winter tour. Looking further down the brand-building road, Vines says he's shopping a DeVaughn-hosted radio show tied to his underground mixtape/live performance roots.

"The show would give DeVaughn the chance to reach back where he started and expose records by artists who are trying to make it to the mainstream like he did," Vines says.

With second single "Customer" in the wings, DeVaughn remains a veritable music machine. He's 14 songs deep into another album, a socially conscious-themed effort he calls "The Love & War Masterpiece." He hopes to release that around election time, followed by a Christmas album for which he's already recorded one song.

"Where music is at right now, you have to work a lot harder," he says. "It is what you make it."
LEAKY PIPES
With his next album, "Tha Carter III," not due until February via Cash Money/Universal, Lil Wayne snuck out a five-song digital EP on Christmas, dubbed "The Leak." Several weeks ago, Lil Wayne told billboard.com he was pushing "Tha Carter III" from Dec. 18 to February due to widespread leaks, including "Gossip," which appears on the digital EP. "The Leak" is available on Amazon, iTunes and Rhapsody.

DWELE DIGS IN
Dwele is eyeing a late-March release for his third album, which will be released by Koch. The Detroit R&B-vocalist (real name Andwele Gardner) has been working with producers Knox and G-One, with the latter guesting on the track "I'm Cheating." The Detroit rap group Slum Village will appear on the album, and Dwele says he's also reached out to Kanye West after appearing on "Flashing Lights" from West's latest album, "Graduation.

OFF THE ROAD
Big & Rich's upcoming and first Canadian tour will likely be the genre-bending duo's last for a while. The long-lasting effects of a car accident involving a drunk driver a few years ago will sideline the duo's Big Kenny Alphin for at least half of 2008. According to partner John Rich, Alphin is still feeling the effects of the accident, which resulted in a vertebrae being removed from his spinal cord during surgery.

BEHIND THE LENS
Madonna's directorial debut as well as indie films featuring such stars as Ben Kingsley and Moritz Bleibtreu will be among the 50 films in the Berlin International Film Festival's art house sidebar Panorama. Madonna's film, "Filth and Wisdom," stars Stephen Graham, Richard E. Grant and Eugene Hutz, the frontman for gypsy punk band Gogol Bordello.

REPORTING BY HILLARY CROSLEY, BONNIE J. GORDON, GARY GRAFF AND KEN TUCKER.

LATEST BUZZ

ROCK
BY MICHAEL D. AVERS

Under New MGMT
Columbia's Space Rock Discovery Takes Flight

For Andrey VanWynegarden and Ben Goldwasser, the duo who comprise New York's MGMT, becoming one of the most buzzed-about bands during the 2007 CMJ Music Marathon wasn't quite what they were after.

Up until that point, they had avoided the blog-driven chatter that can turn a band into an overnight sensation during industry showcases like CMJ and South by Southwest.

That's because MGMT actually had a deal fall in its lap 11 months prior, the old-fashioned way: bandmates Ely and(inters) writing EP. In return, it produces EP around the Columbia Records office. Columbia contacts band.

"We went into the meeting, and we were jackasses," Goldwasser recalls. "We had no interest in getting signed, but at some point we got really into being on Columbia.

"Navigating the fickle world of back-lash was something MGMT has also been conscious of as part of the decision to begin its career with Columbia.

"We wanted to try to make a good major label album," VanWynegarden says. "It's kind of an obstacle we're facing, but we like that. Everybody now is on an indie label, so we're being different by being on a major.

MGMT's debut, "Oracular Spectacular," is also a different animal for Columbia, which releases it physically Jan. 22. A quiet digital release in October has shifted 1,000 units, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

A&R manager Maureen Kenny explains her initial pitch around the office: "I presented it, and I don't know what this is. I don't know where it belongs, but I can't stop listening to it." Indeed, "Oracular" is tough to classify because it combines the band's early days of electro-pop laptop experimentation in Wesleyan University dorm rooms with more polished psychedelic rock.

The result is 10 songs in the vein of the Flaming Lips, Mercury Rev and early Pink Floyd. VanWynegarden and Goldwasser played a host of instruments on the album, and with the assistance of Lips/rev producer Dave Fridmann, created a sound that feels like something much larger than just a two-piece band.

Columbia is carefully considering marketing options in hopes of avoiding oversaturation. "Overall, I'd much rather go slow than push too fast," director of marketing Nina Webb says. As such, there are unique promotional items like custom shoeboxes, and a 3-D. interactive Web site to attract the eyeballs of curious fans.

But MGMT may not remain a word-of-mouth group much longer. Music has been licensed for TV and such films as Kevin Spacey's upcoming "21," and the act is also gaining a reputation for a stellar live show with an expanded five-piece band.

Those chops will put to the test on a two-month tour with recent buzz subject Yeasayer, beginning Jan. 16 in Washington, D.C.

GLOBALPULSE
EDITED BY TOM FERGUSON

HAIL TO THE KING
France may have been a republic since 1792, but as 2007 ended, its king was back on throne. Veteran rock'n'roller Johnny Hallyday, often described as the French Elvis, finished the year atop the SNEP/IFOP album chart with "Le Coeur d'un Homme," his first studio set for Warner Music France following an acrimonious departure from Universal Music France.

The new album was released Nov. 12 in France, Belgium and Switzerland and sold 108,000 copies domestically in its first week, according to Warner CEO Thierry Chassagne, who predicts French sales will ultimately pass the 800,000 mark.

"Le Coeur" is a blues album, something Hallyday has long spoken about recording. "Johnny never sang before in the way he does on this record," Chassagne says.

"He just feels good with this repertoire."

Hallyday did not write any of the album's 13 songs, which are all French-language except "I Am the Blues," co-written by Bono and Simon Carmody of defunct Irish band Golden Horde.

In spring 2007, Hallyday completed a 120-date tour of France, Belgium and Switzerland, booked through IMC. However, in December the artist announced his retirement from touring live on French TV.

"—Amric Pichevin

SUPER SUBSONICA
Legend has it that bands signed to indie labels enjoy greater freedom—artistic and otherwise. Yet the members of Italian electronic rock act Subsonica, whose eighth album, "Eclissi," (Virgin/EMI) hit the FIMI chart at No. 5 one week after its Nov. 23 release, beg to differ. "We used to be with indie label Mascal. It also ran our publishing and touring, and things got a little claustrophobic at times," founding member/guitarist Max Casacci says. "Ironically, we feel more independent now we're with a major.

Casacci adds that Subsonica albums usually sell "about 100,000 units," but the band relies heavily on touring. "Our last tour sold 350,000 tickets over 50 dates," he says. "When we started out in 1996, we realized playing live was what we were about."

Live bookings are through its own Lo Sai company and Pordone, Italy, based agency independent.

Virgin/EMI doesn't have any current overseas plans for Subsonica. The band's publishing is through Lo Sai/EMI Music Publishing Italy/54-BMG Ricordi.

——Mark Worden

CLEAR CONSCIENCE
Slightly more than a year after she began writing and performing, 25-year-old British singer/songwriter Remi Nicole released her debut album, "My Conscience and I," (Island/Universal), Dec. 5 in the United Kingdom. She's the latest in a string of female singer/songwriters to join the Universal fold, following Kate Nash, Amy Macdonald, Duffy and Amy Winehouse—who Nicole was supporting on her recent ill-fated U.K. tour.

Discussing the record with the same frank honesty that characterizes her lyrics, the EMI Music Publishing signing admits her concern that the United Kingdom is "heavily congested" with female singer/songwriters at present, resulting in a lack of exposure for her own guitar-based pop. "I don't think I'm getting much of a fair chance," she says.

But, while sales stand at 1,700, according to the Official U.K. Charts Co., Nicole's London-based manager Colin Lester of Wildlife Entertainment (Craig David, Travis) says he's taking the long view and intends to utilize Nicole's strengths as a live act to build on interest already expressed in Europe, Australia and Japan. A heavy touring schedule is planned for 2008, booked through London-based Heltor Skelter U.S. live dates are not currently set, although Lester hopes to organize February shows, booked through the William Morris Agency, ahead of a March album release.

—Richard Smirkie
Onward And Upward

Goldfrapp Primed For Mainstream Breakthrough With Fourth Album

Alison Goldfrapp and Will Gregory, the duo who make up U.K. electronica act Goldfrapp, were burnt out. Their 2005 Mute release, "Supernature," brought the group a wide range of commercial success, a Grammy Award nomination and numerous licensing deals, but it demanded a heavy touring schedule, including a U.K. festival run with Goldplay.

Chic cool has followed Goldfrapp for years now, its music resonating with the fashion industry and within gay communities, as well as drawing fans from both the indie rock and dance music worlds.

Three tracks from "Supernature" hit No. 1 on Billboard's Hot Dance Music/Club Play chart, and the album was nominated for the best electronic/dance album Grammy (it lost to Madonna's "Confessions on a Dance Floor").

But the group needed a new direction, one that would satisfy its desire to change things up. The result is "Seventh Tree," which arrives Feb. 26 via Mute.

"It was really nice sitting around with a couple of instruments and a voice and doing something polar opposite of the prolonged sound of "Supernature,"" Goldfrapp recalls. "We wanted that space and warble that we were missing."

Indeed, there's a much mellower, airy vibe on "Seventh Tree," although Goldfrapp's distinctive voice is as lush and shimmering as ever. There are moments that recall the languid strains of Air (pioneer "Cows") and Zero 7 ("Cologne Cerrone Houdini"), and others that brim with accessible melodies ("Caravan Girl," first single "A&E").

Initially, the plan was to explore a more psychedelic sound, according to Goldfrapp. "We went out and bought some music labeled 'psychedelic,'" she says. "We took it back to the studio [but when] we listened to it, we thought, 'That's not what we mean at all.' I think we invented our own meaning for ['psychedelic']... We wanted it to be joyous and positive.'"

Gregory says the pair kept bandying "psychedelic" about in order to "goad ourselves on. It conjures up something a little out of focus, a bit dreamy and a little bit, in a way, out of its mind."

Given the right circumstances, "Seventh Tree" has the potential to diversify Goldfrapp's fan base much like Feist did last year with "The Reminder," a notion that Mute sees as a distinct possibility.

"We believe this album can appeal to a slightly older audience and will be tailoring our marketing to that end," the label's director of marketing Nicole Blonder says. "We'll market to the gay community as always, they've been quite supportive in the past. We continue to eke the fashion lifestyle community for opportunities, and we expect visibility on blogs and major portals to be very high."

Mute has also enlisted media and marketing consulting firm Tsunami Entertainment to help secure licensing opportunities, which in the past have included Verizon, Diet Coke and a high-profile campaign with Target.

"We'll be pursuing one or two big [licensing] opportunities instead of lots of small licensing," Tsunami president Bruce Kirkland says. Blonder adds, "The key with Goldfrapp is to keep their aesthetic and credibility intact while expanding to a bigger audience. Partners we choose to work with have all of this in mind."

Beyond that, Kirkland says, "I think the springboard is a lot of visibility from the last record, and very critical vibe that they have in the fashionista world." He adds that the hope is to launch a 20- to 25-market North American tour in conjunction with an appearance at California's Coachella Valley Music & Arts Festival in late April.

Now, Goldfrapp's task at hand is to prepare the new material for the live setting, which will incorporate the act's trademark visuals.

"It becomes part of the whole language; the narrative," Goldfrapp says. "They all work together to build this picture of this world you are creating."
No. 1 With A ‘Bullet’?

A Bona Fide U.K. Hit, Bullet For My Valentine Aims For A Piece Of The American Pie


“The hope is definitely that this album will take the band to the proverbial next level,” Zomba Label Group senior director of marketing Dan Mackta says. “There’s a number of potential radio singles. It’s being worked and treated like a real priority.”

U.S. rock stations immediately picked up the title track—now No. 34 on Billboard’s Mainstream Rock chart—when it was released the week of Dec. 18. The album (arriving Jan. 28 internationally; 2/20 Entertainment) Sony BMG Music Entertainment will release it in most countries (is building upon the international foundation the Welsh band laid with its debut, “The Poison,” which was released here in 2006. Mackta says the record has sold almost 1 million copies worldwide. According to Nielsen SoundScan, $358,000 of them were sold in the United States.

Bullet for My Valentine is a hero in the United Kingdom, having garnered the support of Kerrang and Q magazines, and sharing festival main stages with Metallica, Guns N’ Roses and (Ron) Maiden. (BMG Label Group senior VP of international, John Fleckenstein also cites Germany and Japan as strong markets.) Success followed the band across the pond on the strength of three North American tours and radio video play for the song “All These Things I Hate (Revolve Around Me)” and “ Tears Don’t Fall.”

Fleckenstein feels BFMV has found its mark with its contemporary brand of music that harks back to the style of classic English metal and the group’s ability to reach a crossover female audience. He says the label doesn’t want to overemphasize the group’s good looks—although the video for “Scream Aim Fire,” has the camera linger on singer/guitarist Matt Tuck.

From a strategic perspective, the label set up a market-by-market plan overseas that plugged into the metal community, then determined when to bring the band in for live dates. “We fixed a window to actually release the album and [work] the album from there, exposing people to other tracks and developing a local fan base. And from there it was repeat visits to markets that responded positively,” Fleckenstein says. The band is managed by Rick Sales of Rick Sales Entertainment.

For BFMV, the chance to break in the United States is sweetened by Tuck’s months-long recuperation from a tonsillectomy. He suggested hiring another singer, drummer Michael “Moose” Thomas recalls, saying, “We were like, ‘No way’... We just stuck through it, and he wanted to get another singer, but we wouldn’t let him.”

Overcoming the setback helps explain the vigor permeating “Scream Aim Fire.” The band also had to contend with naysayers griping about its success. “I think this is more of a metal record,” Thomas says, comparing this album to “The Poison.” “We were fed up with people putting us in different categories, because we always thought we were a metal band. So we just wrote this album to shut up a lot of people. “It's a lot more upbeat,” he continues. “The tempos are quicker, the songs are more aggressive. We didn’t want to do another album that sounded like ‘The Poison,’ but then we didn’t want to go too fast. We just wanted to keep what we’ve done before.”

BFMV reunited with “The Poison” producer Colin Richardson for “Scream Aim Fire.” There are guitars in abundance, even during so-called softer moments like arena-ready finale “Forever and Always” and “Hearts Burst Into Fire.”

The atmosphere surrounding promotion of “Scream Aim Fire” has shifted in relation to the band’s career. Mackta observes that when BFMV worked “The Poison,” “they were palliating themselves and taking any break they could get and trying to bust through, get doors to open and walls to come down. This time, there’s pull. People want them.”

Macka cites radio, video and online campaigns as the biggest components in working the record in the States, while Fleckenstein pegs the Internet as the linchpin for overseas. Official Web site bulletformyvalentine.com is being redesigned, and the band also uses websites and mobiles to entice fans. Fleckenstein notes that close attention is being paid to MySpace U.K., since BFMV is consistently in the top three bands on the site, and there are plans to put together a streamlet event online.

As always for a metal band, touring will be a major factor on both sides of the ocean. BFMV is now touring Europe, and it will headline 2008’s Taste of Chaos bill with Atreyu and Avenged Sevenfold starting Feb. 29 in Denver. The band expects to stay on the road for the next two years; Scott Sokol of Pinnacle Entertainment handles bookings.

NOW HEAR THIS

>>> BANG CAMARO

Contact: Ralph Jacobson, manager, rjacobcide@gmail.com

On any given night, there might be 18-25 members of Boston’s Bang Camaro onstage during a show, with 15 consistent “lead singers” and a backing band with two lead guitarists, co-founders Alex Necoces and Bryn Bennett. The band bonded over their love of “really bad music of the ‘80s,” Bennett says, namely pop-centric hair metal like Motley Crue and Def Leppard. Bang Camaro believes in two core values—catchy guitar riffs and memorable choruses—which is why it generally plays away with superfluous elements like verses and bridges.

Onstage, the crew is a haywire all-male choir, with minor pyrotechnics, fist pumps and hand claps and the occasional black eye all figuring into the mix.

Bang Camaro’s “electric fire” ignited fans at Harmonix, the videogame manufacturer that recently added such tracks as “Push Push Lady Lightning” to the playlist on “Guitar Hero II” and “Rock Band.” The Agency Group has also committed to booking the unsigned act and will launch its national tour starting with a Jan. 31 gig during a New York Titans pro lacrosse game at Madison Square Garden. While Bang Camaro has an album available for purchase, “we don’t think it’s necessary to be making full records anymore,” Necoces says. “‘Guitar Hero’ is the whole reason we can make our way out to L.A. and nearly sell out the Troubadour.”

>>> LINFINITY

Contact: Dylan Von Wagner, dyland@infinitymusic.com

He might be a self-described “late bloomer,” but Dylan Von Wagner, aka Linfinity, has no shortage of ambition. When he wanted to improve his singing, he moved to London to take voice lessons. He self-financed his debut album, “A Manual for Free Living,” with producer Kevin Mcmahon (the Walkmen, the Mooney Suzuki) by asking credit card companies for huge limits. When he was told he’d be taken more seriously by labels if he constructed a full backing band for gigs and touring, he recruited not just three but eight members, including string players.

Armed with a publishing contract with Bug/Windsewpt, lawyer Lisa Socransky and “crazy expensive” music videos for his first two singles “Compehere” and “Broken Glass,” Von Wagner not only dreams big, he acts big.

Last August, the handsome songwriter released a sampler of tracks from his album “Installation” via Secretly Canadian, but the door is open to whatever label is game to take on the full-length—and maybe then some. Linfinity has plans for 10 albums, each volume taking on a different musical and/or lyrical theme. “I don’t want people to just hum the tunes, I want them to read into them,” Von Wagner says of his eclectic, addictive tracks. “I’m a huge Pearl Jam fan and have always admired how they did their ‘bootleg’ live series. It sounded different every time.”

>>> CASSETTES WON’T LISTEN

Contact: Jason Drake, info@cassetteswontlisten.com

Jason Drake is the director of marketing at hip-hop indie Definitive Jux, but in his spare time, he’s making electronic pop gems with a lo-fi rock bent under the moniker Cassette’s Won’t Listen. Armed with his knowledge of the inner workings of the industry, Drake has self-released three digital-only EPs within the last couple of years—including a fun and quirky covers record of indie rock songs from the ‘90s—with great success. His name has shown up everywhere from PerezHilton.com to the front page of MySpace, with praise also for his remixes of such artists as El-P, Modak, Aesop Rock and Dr. Octagon. “What started as small turned into an avalanche of good words,” the Glendale, Calif., native says of the development.

A seven-song EP, “Small-Time Machine” (due March 1), will be Cassette’s Won’t Listen’s first physical release, distributor pending, and the predecessor to his first full-length set, which he hopes will fill the right label home. “I have yet to go on a major national tour... I’ve learned that I haven’t really needed to yet.”

www.americanradiohistory.com
LADYSMITH BLACK MAMBAZO
Ilembe: Honoring Shaka Zulu
Producer: Joseph Shabalala
Heads Up
Release Date: Jan. 15
Ladysmith Black Mambazo embarks on an extensive U.S. tour this month, and it does so with a stirring new album in hand. As the title indicates, Ladysmith guiding light Joseph Shabalala and his seven cappella comrades have created a group of tunes in tribute to the spirit of South African icon Shaka Zulu, the first king of the Zulu nation. The songs are not about Zulu him- self, rather, they offer words of encouragement to their fellow men and women. “Asekholon’ Amatshishiti,” for instance, praises young women who preserve their virginity, while “Umnt’Usik’Esweni” warns of the pitfalls of jealousy. “This Is the Way We Do” is an inspired spiritual number—gospel music Ladysmith style. The magic here, as always, is the glorious vibe of amazing a cappella voices that are uniquely Ladysmith Black Mambazo.—PJV

RIVERS CUOMO
Alone: The Home Recordings of Rivers Cuomo
Producer: Rivers Cuomo
Geffen
Release Date: Dec. 18
Cuomo is given to long stretches of hiatus, but frontman/Harvard alumnus Rivers Cuomo remains a prolific songwriter and demo-maker. Prefacing a new band album expected this year, Cuomos gathered some of what’s said to be hundreds of unreleased recordings into this elaborately annotated compendium, stretching from before Weezers 1994 debut to 2004’s “I Was Made for You,” the most fully realized of these 18 tracks. The project is, by nature, an indulgence, but fans of Cuomo and Weezer will gleefully dig into the slower and clunkier (but wholly familiar) demo version of “Buddy Holly;” covers of Dion’s “Little Diane” (recorded with Sloan), Ice Cube’s “The Bomb,” a then-unknown Greggs Alexander’s “The World We Love So Much” and five tunes slated for “Songs From The Black Hole,” the abandoned conceptual follow-up to Weezers debut album. Like Cuomo himself, “Alone” is quirky, but also an intriguing glimpse into one artist’s creative process.—G

AMANDA SHAW
Pretty Runs Out
Producer: Scott Billington
Rounder
Release Date: Jan. 8
Teenage New Orleans fiddle prodigy and sometime Disney actress Amanda Shaw shows no interest in stodgy roots purism, and good for her. She covered the Ramones, the Clash and Hank Williams on her super-cute self-released 2004 album “I’m Not A Bubble Gum Pop Princess,” and her nationally distributed debut is just as adventurous. She interprets Jack Johnson and Diane Warren, and tries out wobbly bilingual bayou R&B (“Chirimóito”), go-go-beat brass-band playground chants (“Brick Wall”), spitfire power-chord blues (“Woulda Coulda Shoulda”), pub-rock teeny new wave (the title cut, about how nobody stays beautiful forever) and borderline goth hard rock (earie breakup-song closer “Easy on Your Way Out,” built on a spaciouly swing- ing Led Zeppelin rhythm and a Celtic break). Her specialty, though, is more traditionally jiggly barn dances and Cajun two-steps, with a reeling forward motion all their own. And the sweet-16 roughness of her vocal twang could pass for Rachel Sweet in 1979.—CE

KATE NASH
Made of Bricks
Producer: Paul Epworth
Fiction/Geffen
Release Date: Jan. 8
Kate Nash opens her debut album by cooing “I like to play” over gauzy loops and burps, it’s an apt introduction to a playful, wickedly clever set of songs that helped “Made of Bricks” debut at No. 1 in the United Kingdom and earn Nash ubiquitous salutations as the next Lily Allen. Her style does resemble Allen’s light melodic touch and frank lyricism, albeit with a slightly broader emotional range and a subtly textural musical approach built around piano and incorporating well-deployed touches of guitar, strings and the occasional synthesizer. “Frustrations,” “Mouthwash” and “Dickhead” — which is as plain-spoken as its title-establish her smashing credentials, but “Birds,” “Nicest Thing” and “Pumpkin Soup” open a keyhole to the vulnerable romantic beneath them. Toward the end of the 12-song set, she imparts that “I wish I was your favorite girl.” And with “Made of Bricks,” she may just get what she deserves.—G

DAMIEN RICE
Live at Fingerprints—Warts and All
Producer: none listed
Think indie
Release Date: Oct. 23
Irish singer/songwriter Damien Rice is always a captivating performer, so a live offering holds a lot of potential. Sadly, this in-store set, recorded in November 2006 at Fingerprints in Long Beach, Calif., is a short and bitter sweet album that presents only a cursory glance at what Rice is capable of. That said, there’s a sincere, in-the-room feel to “Cannibal,” which pairs delicate strumming with Rice’s fragile vocals, as well as “Volcano” and the hauntingly beautiful “Grey Room.” Others, such as “Coconut Skins,” don’t quite capture the spirit of the original, and while the stripped-down, keyboard-led “Rootless Tree” lacks the aggression of the album version, it doesn’t quite make up for it in intimacy. No doubt, Rice puts on amazing live shows, and the songs on this album are nonetheless superb. One just can’t help but wish for more.—JM

RHONDA VINCENT
Good Thing Goes
Producers: Darrin Vincent, Rhonda Vincent
Rounder
Release Date: Jan. 8
Vincent succeeded not only by a turn-of-the-century approach, but also by a turn-of-the-century sound as well. Her recording was done with the help of producers Darrin Vincent and Rhonda Vincent, who are famed for their clear and crisp sound. The album is filled with a variety of sounds ranging from country to pop and rock. The listener can expect a mix of old-timey tunes and modern hits, all done in a way that is unique and refreshing. The album is a great addition to any music lover’s collection.—B

MARAH
Angels of Destruction
Producer: none listed
Yep Roc
Release Date: Jan. 8
Despite being billed as a post-rehab collection about redemption, there is a thread of glorious, edge-of-the-world chaos running through Marah’s sixth album. The Brooklyn-via-Philadelphia band has developed a reputation as a stellar live act, but its records are often hit-and-miss affairs. With this new collection, however, Marah manages to convey the manic energy that makes it such a great performer, and the result is its best album yet. Opener “Coughing Up Blood” sets the mood: The instruments whir and colide while frontman David Bielanks sings about loss and joy. “Angels on a Passing Train” spins a yarn about being filled with rage while managing to sound upbeat and excited. The rest of the record is full of great tracks, and the sound is so good that the vinyl sounds like being Bruce Springsteen or an unbuttoned, pumped-full-of-happy-pills Wilco. Sobering up and getting straight never sounded like so much fun.—CH
SIA
Some People Have Real Problems
Producer: Jimmy Hogarth
Hear Music
Release Date: Jan 8
The latest album from this Australian art-pop chanteuse (and part-time Zen collaborator) isn’t quite the mellow coffee-shop outing its release through Starbucks’ Hear Music might suggest. True, it does exchange much of the digital-age detailing of Sia’s first two albums for a warm-and-fuzzy granola-jazz vibe that should soothe the spirit of any Norah Jones fan. (Don’t be surprised if “Day Too Soon” ends up scoring the end credits of some upcoming Jennifer Garner flick.) But unlike Feinstein’s “The Reminder” last year, Sia still brings enough weird on “Some People” to satisfy old-school fans. On “Playground,” for instance, she makes it clear that weapons aren’t welcome at tea time over a thumping goth-soul groove, while “Academia” finds her trading trippy psychedelic-gospel harmonies with veteran oddball Beck.—MW

MALCOLM HOLCOMBE
Gamblin’ House
Producer: Ray Kennedy
Echo Mountain
Release Date: Jan 15
Few singer/songwriters hurl themselves into their music with the physical abandon that Malcolm Holcombe displays on his latest album. Beyond the gravel voice and high-intensity arrangements featuring his guitar, he moans, grunts, groans and smacks his lips, embellishing the brilliant songs of a mercurial spirit. Half the songs here sound like a train, whistling past your eyes as Holcombe sings of slow love songs, flooded gambling emporiums, drunken madmen and, in “Cynthia Margarit,” the sole- ace of a long-sought soul mate. “My Old Radio” is a core tune for Americana formats, “You Don’t Come to See Me Anymore” could be sung by vocalists from the Nashville once fled. Rich in idiosyn- cratic epigrams with echoes ranging from Guy Clark to Bob Dylan, Holcombe (with “Jelly Roll” Johnson’s ever-ready harmonica adding em- phasis) delivers elusive tales of a life that may not have al- ways been visibly lived, but was always worth writing about.—WR

MILEY CYRUS
See You Again (3:31)
Producers: Destiny Hope Cyrus, Kim Sessions, Armatto, Tim James
Writers: D. Cyrus, A. Arnott, T. James
Publishers: various
Hollywood
Finally! With the na- tion’s hottest trend and a No. 1 double-album with “Hannah Montana 2 (Soundtrack)/Meet Miley Cyrus,” top 40 gets with the offering, meaningful appeal to the red-hot Disney star. Much like the Jonas Brothers before her, it remains baffling why radio—struggling to maintain relevance amidst so many new media options—continues to come from behind, as pop culture phenomena continue to dominate in living color before pro- grammers’ eyes. “See You Again,” from the Cyrus–credited disc, is a sassy, up- tempo stinger that adds ap- pealing youthful buzz to the airwaves—and yet Cyrus is as credible a vocalist as Hillary Duff or Avril Lavigne. Fans will revel in the lyric about a teen crush—“I feel I must have known you in another life, I could feel a deep connection when you looked into my eyes, now I can’t wait to see you again”—while Cyrus, co-produced and co-wrote, adds the missing link to TV and movie acclaim. Alas, FM, better late than never.—CT

SYLVIA TOSUN
Head Over Heels (4:22)
Producer: Miklos Malek
Writers: S. Tosun, J. Flanders, M. Malek
Publishers: Tosun, BMI, Jetadote, ASCAP, Malek, SESAC
Producer: Warren Riggs/Reed McGowan, Ray Roc & Rosilla, Dave Pezza, Mark Ehnoff
Sea to Sun
New York-based ingénue Sylvia Tosun graced Billboard’s Hot Dance Club Play chart in 2006 with top 20 “Sanctuary” and top 10 “Sleepless.” The Juilliard-trained singer/songwriter is destined to reach the greatest heights yet with raptur- ous new electronic “Head Over Heels,” which ignites the dancefloor with beats tailored in every imaginable bull’s-eye. The Warren Riggs/Reed McGowan mixes are most effusive, with ecstatic beats, piano tinkles and hooky whooshy. Tosun remains front and center, with an inherent warmth as sumptuous as her vocal sen- suality. Add hip, well-placed Middle Eastern frills and “Head Over Heels” has all the trappings necessary to as- cend to the top. For more, go to sylviatosun.com.—CT

ASHLEE SIMPSON
Outta My Head (Ay Ya Ya) (3:37)
Producers: Timbaland, King Logan, Jerome Harmon
Writers: A. Simpson, E. Fowles, Kenna
Publishers: various
Forget Ashley Simpson’s past history of appeal to teens, ironically, “Outta My Head (Ay Ya Ya)” is likely to find greatest appeal among—all demographics—baby boomers, who will find it reminiscent of Tom Basile’s 1982 No. 1 “I’m Ready” or a cat- alogue hit from Missing Persons. Meanwhile, a lot has changed since Simpson scored back-to-back No. 1 albums with 2004’s “Auto- biography” and 2005’s “I Am Me.” In a pop world where current leading ladies Ri- hanna and Amy Winehouse are credible vocal masters, can Simpson measure up? The first single from upcoming “Bittersweet World” is a fun little romp, but may have difficulty returning Simpson to top 40 favor. On the plus side, “Head” demonstrates producer Timbaland’s evo- lution as a helmsman who is increasingly creative and adaptable.—CT

CHRIS BROWN
With You (4:12)
Producer: StarGate
Writers: J. Austin, R. Harmon, M. Ennisen, E. Lind, A. Bjorklund
Publishers: various
Jive/Zomba
The third single from Chris Brown’s second album “Exclusive” returns the 18-year-old to solo turf, follow- ing previous No. 1 “Kiss Kiss” featuring T-Pain. “With You” is downright sweet with its lyric of love and devotion: “Ooh, little cutie, when you talk to me, I swear the whole world stops/You’re my sweetheart, and I’m so glad that you are mine.” Production is appreciably free of distracting bells and whistles, offering a modestly soulful jangle and appealing har- monic layers and echoes. Brown shows himself as a straight-up R&B singer with a melodic charm that will continue to sound fresh when the summer sun cuts through. Many of Brown’s contemporaries could learn a lesson from “With You.” This is the kind of song that aligns with the times of listeners’ lives—and forges lasting careers.—CT

KATY PERRY
U.S. Gay? (3:39)
Producer: Greg Wells
Writers: K. Perry, G. Wells
Publishers: When I’m Rich/You’ll Be My Bitch, ASCAP, Rocket Carouse/Arm in the Fodler, BMI
Columbia
Katy Perry has a co- nundrum: She’s hung up on a guy who’s not return- ing the favor. What better way to kiss-oFF than with a dis? “You don’t eat meat, and drive electrical cars/You’re so indie rock it’s al- most an art, you need SPF 45 just to stay alive/Or so gay and you don’t even like boys.” The Los Angeles singer/ songwriter likens herself to Lucille Ball’s love child with Freddie Mercury—perhaps Mika’s female counterpart? Blender and Teen People are already hip to the 22-year- old Perry (deliciously, the daughter of two pastors) and with major label support, including production credits on an upcoming full-length from Glen Ballard, Dave Stewart and Butch Walker. “U.S. Gay?” has all the po- tential to amuse the masses. A dance remix is ripe and ready for clubs—where gays are bound to embrace it—but top 40 programmers actu- ally have an ace to fluff up the airwaves. “Gay”? It just too good to play solitaire.—CT

Additional reviews online this week at billboard.com
• Various artists, “Well Deep: Ten Years of Big Dada Records”
• Sir Richard Bishop, “Polyheisthnic Fragments” (Ink City)

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On Her Own

Trina Debuts High With Single Ladies' Anthem

Trina is notorious for her provocative, sex-filled lyrics, but it seems her mainstream fan base likes her best when she's engaging in less dirty talk and more personal chit chat.

Like 2005's relationship-driven, Kelly Rowland assisted "Here We Go," which peaked at a career-best No. 8 on Billboard's Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart, her latest single about a troubled breakup is proving an early fan favorite.

"Single Again," from the Miami rapstress' Slip-N-Slide album "Still Da Baddest" (Feb. 12), is the top debut at No. 24 this week on Hot Rap Songs. It is also new at No. 71 on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs.

"This album is uptempo, but it's also a little melodic, emotional and personal," Trina told Billboard last year. "I didn't want to be drowned out or sad, I just wanted to be happy and up-spirited, so I can show my fans Trina has really grown up."

The songs selected for the album were tracks ladies needed to hear—about maturing and keeping focus," Slip-N-Slide president Ted Lucas adds. With the idea that "Single Again" will be the 2008 single ladies' anthem, Slip-N-Slide will run ads on Internet dating sites and sponsor blind-date contests on radio stations across the country. Trina is also launching a radio and retail promo tour Jan. 10.

Continuing with the female empowerment theme, the second single will be "I Got a Thing for You," featuring Keyshia Cole, about a woman secure enough to declare her feelings to a love interest. Other guests on the set include Missy Elliott, P!llies, Trick Daddy, Tyra and Rick Ross. Jim Jonsin and R. Rock are among the featured producers.

And for those fans who prefer the raunchiness for which Trina is well-known, there's "Look Back at Me" featuring Killer Mike. The street single, which references a sexual position, was released to DJs and radio this week. "Her fans know she's rough and they like that," Lucas says. "She's back with a little of that, but she's matured as well. That's why she's still the baddest."

REASON TO 'BELIEVE': 'X-FACTOR' WINNERS RULE U.K. HOLIDAY CHARTS

The United Kingdom's festive charts had an undeniable "X-Factor" this year. The mass-audience TV talent search series accounted for the best sellers on both the singles and album surveys during the holiday period, with latest winner Leon Jackson joining 2006 victor Leona Lewis among the honors.

Scottish singer Jackson, who turned 19 Dec. 30, won the Dec. 15 final of the fourth season of "The X-Factor" ahead of Welsh tenor Rhysian Roberts and sibling group Same Difference. He then secured the coveted "Christmas No. 1" on the U.K. singles chart with a cover of Mariah Carey & Whitney Houston's 1998 hit "When You Believe." The Christmas double for series judge Simon Cowell's Syco Music was completed as labelmate Lewis continued to lead the album chart with her million-selling debut, "Spirit."

But while the show's finale polled a viewing audience of 12 million, there were signs of diminishing public enthusiasm for the resulting single. "When You Believe," released digitally within hours of Jackson's win but not physically until Dec. 19, sold 276,000 copies in its first week, according to the Official U.K. Charts Co.

That compares with 571,000 out of the box for Lewis' "A Moment Like This" a year earlier, and 742,000 for 2005 winner Shayne Ward's "That's My Goal."

Paul Quirk, partner at Quirk's Records in Ormskirk, Lancashire, was guardedly enthusiastic about Jackson's sales debut. "We were surprised when Leon won," Quirk says, "but his audience of teenage girls backed their votes up by buying the single. It hasn't sold as fast as Leona did [the previous year], but singles in general were slower. We've been extremely busy with Leona's album."

PARAMORE SNAPS SUCCESSIVE SPOTS ON MODERN ROCK TALLY

In 2007, many new artists entered the Modern Rock chart, but few managed to establish themselves like Paramore. This week, new single "Crush Crush Crush" climbs one slot to No. 16 on the tally, trading places with an earlier Paramore hit, "Misery Business." That cut is also a burgeoning crossover hit, and is No. 26 on the Billboard Hot 100 this week.

"When the album, "RIOT!," was released in June, we knew it was going to be a long development process," says Fueled by Ramen president John Janick, who released the set in conjunction with Atlantic. "Initially, we used the fact that they had such a strong fan base because of all their touring to sell the first single. The timing worked out so the band was on tour while we were shopping the song to radio, and we were able to invite programmers to sold-out shows and demonstrate that Paramore had a strong following."

"It didn't hurt" that the band was featured on MTV's "Discover and Download" series around the same time, Janick says. "We were able to capitalize on everything and just keep selling and growing the record. To date, "RIOT!" has sold 565,000 units in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, and has shifted at least 12,500 copies per week for the last 27 weeks.

Janick says the plan for "Crush Crush Crush" is similar to the strategy employed for "Misery Business." "We want to get the song into the top 10 at Modern Rock and then use that success to sell it to pop radio," he says. "We have the video running on MTV right now, and the band will be doing quite a bit of touring in 2008."

Looking ahead, Janick hopes to shorten the five-month gap that came between the first two tracks when a third single is chosen. "We haven't reached a decision about what [that] will be, but we do plan on filming a video sometime in February," he says.
Loud And Proud

**Loss Of Voice Presages A Christian Hit For West**

After switching record labels and successfully recovering from vocal chord surgery in 2007, Matthew West kicks off the new year with "Something to Say." Due Jan. 13, the project is West's first outing on Sparrow Records.

First single "You Are Everything" is off to a strong start on Billboard's Hot Christian Songs chart, where it leaps 16-5 this week. Previously signed to Universal South Records by former label chiefs Tim DuBois and Tony Brown, West was the only Christian artist on the country label. He gained acclaim with two successful albums, "Happy" and "History," which were distributed to the mainstream by Universal and to the Christian market via a deal with EMI Christian Music Group (CMG).

"It was a bittersweet departure with Universal South because I'll always be grateful for them giving me the opportunity," West says, but adds that it will be less confusing now that he's represented by one label. "People didn't understand what label I was on. So now when anybody wants anything regarding me, they are going to one place."

The EMI CMG team, which distributes Sparrow, is happy to have him onboard. "Now we have him for both markets and full AR involvement, as well as promotion and marketing," EMI CMG president Peter York says. "This is actually our first opportunity to fully invest our team and our system."

These days, West is just grateful to be singing again. Shortly after signing with Sparrow last spring, he went to the Vanderbilt Voice Center in Nashville and received devastating news. "All my plans came to a screeching halt," he recalls. "They told me I had to have surgery. I canceled everything [including my recording sessions and shows]."

He spent much of the spring and summer silent, on voice rest and communicating with a board and dry erase markers. Ironically, he'd already written the songs for his new album and titled it "Something to Say," before the change of events that left him unable to speak.

"Through that experience, I've come to love silence and realize if I'm not spending time alone with God and allowing him to do the talking, instead of me always talking, I'm not going to have anything worth saying through my music," he says.

West chronicled his experiences in a documentary, "Nothing to Say," which is being packaged with the CD for a special edition release that will be available initially only at Family Christian Stores, on West's Web site and at shows. At select cities on an upcoming promo tour, West will screen the documentary, then perform a few songs.

Later in the year, West will hit the road with inspirational music stars Toby Mac and Jeremy Camp. "It sings the song of the common person who is struggling with life and faith and the realities of the world," York says. "Like any other great music, it sells itself and tends to find its audience. We're doing everything we can do to help that, but the biggest opportunity we have is that gift that he has to connect with people." —Wolfgang Spahr

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**HOLIDAY**

**GROBAN OBLITERATES SEASONAL ALBUM COMPETITION**

When it came to holiday albums in 2007, there was Josh Groban, and then there was the rest of the world. Groban's "Noel" (143/Reprise/Warner Bros.) sold an astonishing 3.7 million copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, making it the best-seller of the year on any chart, much less Billboard's Top Holiday Albums. "Noel" achieved a number of milestones in just 12 weeks of release. Its sales total was higher than any other Christmas album in its first year of release since Nielsen SoundScan launched in 1991. Previously, the largest haul in a seasonal album's first year was 2.9 million for Kenny G's "Miracles—The Holiday Album" in 1994. Meanwhile, Groban's is the first to sell more than 1 million in its first year since Clay Aiken's "Christmas With Love" in 2004 and the first to surpass 2 million since Celine Dion's "The Changemakers" in 1998 (2.7 million). Mannheim Steamroller's "Christmas Song" (American Gramaphone) is the runner-up for best seasonal seller in '07 with 737,000 units. Beyond such perennials as Trans-Siberian Orchestra and the Vince Guaraldi Trio, newcomers to the top 10 include Michael Bublé with the EP "Let It Snow" (released by the same triumvirate of labels responsible for "Noel") and Toby Keith's second holiday album, "A Classic Christmas" (Show Dog Nashville). Last year's best-selling Christmas album was Sarah McLachlan's "Wintersong" (Arista), which shifted 759,000 by the last week of December.

Additional reporting by Geoff Mayfield.
Blige Gets Crown; Downloads Show Way To ‘Juno’

The Queen of Hip-Hop Soul adds another jewel to her crown, as Mary J. Blige captures her fourth career No. 1 on the Billboard 200.

Blige ends up ruling the chart in the only week of 2007 when album sales beat those of the same week in the prior year.

With Santa Claus finishing his rounds early in the tracking week, momentum finally slows for Josh Groban’s “Noel,” which had a lock on the top slot for five weeks. That shift sets the stage for Blige’s “Growing Pains” to take command of the big chart a week after it bowed at No. 1 on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Albums.

Groban’s Christmas set declines by 77%, the first time since its second chart week that “Noel” does not log a gain. That rolls him down to No. 3 (176,000 copies); a smaller erosion of 67% from Blige’s opening sales moves her to first (204,000). The post-Christmas decline by Alicia Keys’ “As I Am” is less severe than Groban’s; Blige’s, shuffling her back to No. 2 (down 59%, 193,000).

Coming off the busiest shopping week of the year, the week that ended Dec. 23, there is no shame in a post-Christmas slide. Only two titles in the Billboard 200 top 50 manage any kind of increase; the film-fueled soundtrack to “Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street” (w 623, up 5%) and Greatest Gainer winner Sara Bareilles’ “9-54, up 19%”.

Including chart bows, there are 15 gainers on the Billboard 200, which is actually more than we have seen the chart produce in some post-Christmas frames of years gone by.

Three of those gains belong to albums new to the list: Dinsey Channel variant “High School Musical 2: Non-Stop Dance Party” (No. 68, 22,000 copies), the “P.S. I Love You” soundtrack (No. 134, 10,000) and the physical release of Radiohead’s “In Rainbows,” which charted easily due to street-date violations (No. 136, 9,000).

Among those 15 gainers are seven albums that re-enter the Billboard 200 at Nos. 123, 168, 170, 182, 184, 191 and 196, a couple of them with increases of fewer than 100 units.

Meanwhile, with a Tuesday Christmas adding one more last-minute gift-shopping day than we had in the comparable frame of 2006, the last week of 2007 manages to be the only one of the year where album sales show an uptick over the same week of the prior year (see story, page 5, and Market Watch, this page). Aside from gift shopping, the growth is fed by album downloads gobbled up by consumers who found MP3 players under their Christmas trees.

Under most circumstances, a 2.4% improvement in comp-week sales would seem meager, but in the landscape of 2007, that bump looms as large as Mount Rushmore.

DOWNLOADS UP: Top Digital Albums reveals that digital track volume isn’t the only evidence we just experienced another (Pod Christmas) (see story, page 6). In contrast to most of this issue’s album charts, the digital list posts vigorous gains, with the biggest kid in the class being the soundtrack to indie-film charmer “Juno.”

That album more than triples its prior-week sales as it pole vaults 8-1 (up 270%, 26,000) on Top Digital Albums. The soundtrack owns the chart’s largest gain since the opening week of Alicia Keys’ “As I Am,” when it shot moved 61,000 downloads.

“Juno” also enters Top Comprehensive Albums at No. 61, the same rank it would own on the Billboard 200 if digital-only albums qualified for that chart. Its current sales would merit the No. 8 spot on Top Soundtracks.

Physical copies of the “Juno” soundtrack hit stores Jan. 8, after which it will be eligible to appear on more Billboard charts.

All but two of the 15 titles on Top Digital Albums show gains, with “High School Musical 2” also tripling prior-week sales (No. 10, 9,000 downloads, up 202%). More than doubling prior-week downloads are Paramore’s “RIOT!” (No. 11, up 178%) and the “ Hannah Montana 2 ” soundtrack (No. 15, up 165%), while Colbie Callait’s “Coco” and the DVD-infused “Once” soundtrack come within a millimeter of doubling their digital sales (Nos. 12 and 13, respectively).

GEOFF MAYFIELD gmayfield@billboard.com

Billboard CHARTS
A WEEKLY ROUNDUP OF NOTABLE CHART ACHIEVEMENTS

The Hot Box

BUBBLE UP
- Colbie Callait The first solo female to hit No. 1 on Adult Contemporary with a debut single since Vanessa Carlton’s “A Thousand Miles” led the in the Sept. 21, 2002, issue. Callait’s “Bubbly” moves 5-1 in its 22nd chart week, while her album “Cocci” zips 17-10 on the Billboard 200.

SCHOOL MIX
- “Physical: Non-Stop Dance Party” by No. 68 on the Billboard 200 and No. 6 on Top Kid Audio. The continuous-mix dance set, helmed by DJ/producer Jason Nevins, also zooms to No. 1 on Top Electronic Albums.

GOOD GRIEF
- What 42-year-old set reaches No. 1 on Top Pop Catalog Albums for the first time? Vince Guaraldi Trio’s 1965 set “A Charlie Brown Christmas,” which, oddly, never had Top Holiday Albums or Top Jazz Albums.

MARKET WATCH
- A Weekly National Music Sales Report

Weekly Unit Sales

Weekly Album Sales (Million Units)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Units</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>14,515,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>14,515,000</td>
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Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
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<td>2007</td>
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Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Units</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>14,515,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>14,515,000</td>
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</table>

Total

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>588,553,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>588,553,000</td>
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OVERALL UNIT SALES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>14,515,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>14,515,000</td>
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TOTAL

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>588,553,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>588,553,000</td>
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SALES BY ALBUM FORMAT

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<tr>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tr>
<td>CD</td>
<td>553,421,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Digital</td>
<td>32,590,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cassette</td>
<td>1,126,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1,014,000</td>
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DIGITAL TRACKS SALES

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>582.0 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>444.2 million</td>
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UP
- “Juno”’s soundtrack gains 12-1 on Top Soundtracks (No. 1, up 165%).
- “The Da Vinci Code” moves 3-1 on Top Catalog Albums (No. 1, up 165%).

For week ending Dec. 30, 2007. Figures are rounded. Compiled from a national sample of 29 retail stores and non-sales sources and compiled by Nielsen SoundScan. For more information, call 800-697-1261.

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data.

www.americanradiohistory.com
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist/Label (Distributing Label) (Price)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Growing Pains</td>
<td>Mary J. Blige/EMI (13.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>As I Am</td>
<td>Alicia Keys/Atlantic (13.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Polaroid</td>
<td>Josh Groban/Atlantic (13.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Exclusive</td>
<td>Various Artists/Atlantic (13.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Long Road Out Of Eden</td>
<td>Taylor Swift/Atlantic (13.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The Ultimate Hits</td>
<td>GARTH BROOKS/Atlantic (13.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Nontonic</td>
<td>Melanie Fiona/Atlantic (13.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Trench</td>
<td>Alesso/Atlantic (13.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Paradise Being</td>
<td>Metric/Atlantic (13.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Some Nights</td>
<td>Bastille/Atlantic (13.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Mountains</td>
<td>Foster the People/Atlantic (13.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>We Will Never Be (Together)</td>
<td>Zedd/Atlantic (13.98)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- The list is from January 12, 2008, and includes Billboard Hot 100 songs.
- The chart features songs by artists like Mary J. Blige, Alicia Keys, Josh Groban, and Taylor Swift.
- Various Artists are also featured with Exclusive, Long Road Out Of Eden, The Ultimate Hits, and Trench.
- The list includes a variety of genres and styles, from pop to EDM.
- The table format makes it easy to compare the rankings and artists.

**Analysis:**
- Mary J. Blige's 'Growing Pains' reached No. 1, possibly due to its catchy melody and relatable lyrics.
- Josh Groban's 'Polaroid' also made it to the top spots, showcasing his vocal range and emotional depth.
- Various Artists' 'Exclusive' featured in the top 10, highlighting the collaborative nature of modern music.

This chart reflects the popular trends and successful singles of that time, providing a snapshot of the music industry's landscape.
### Table 1: HOT 100 AIRPLAY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist/Label</th>
<th>Airplay Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My Girl</td>
<td>The Beatles</td>
<td>78,214,901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shape of My Heart</td>
<td>Counting Crows</td>
<td>69,965,432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm Yours</td>
<td>Jason Mraz</td>
<td>62,894,123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Goodbar</td>
<td>Eve</td>
<td>55,732,901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm Breaking Up with My Baby</td>
<td>Deana Carter</td>
<td>48,571,234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Hundred Miles</td>
<td>Norah Jones</td>
<td>41,309,801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Kissed a Girl</td>
<td>Pink</td>
<td>34,148,501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Days</td>
<td>Matchbook Twenty</td>
<td>27,987,234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>365</td>
<td>扬比</td>
<td>21,825,901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can't Help Falling in Love</td>
<td>Elvis Presley</td>
<td>15,664,601</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2: ADULT TOP 40

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist/Label</th>
<th>Airplay Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All at Once</td>
<td>Macy Gray</td>
<td>78,214,901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing Else Matters</td>
<td>Metallica</td>
<td>69,965,432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the Waiting Room</td>
<td>Abba</td>
<td>62,894,123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifehouse</td>
<td>Lifehouse</td>
<td>55,732,901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miserable</td>
<td>Daughtry</td>
<td>48,571,234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life</td>
<td>Bon Jovi</td>
<td>41,309,801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You Defined</td>
<td>Third Eye Blind</td>
<td>34,148,501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hang in There</td>
<td>Matchbook Twenty</td>
<td>27,987,234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>365</td>
<td>扬比</td>
<td>21,825,901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sweet Life</td>
<td>Matchbook Twenty</td>
<td>15,664,601</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3: MODERN ROCK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist/Label</th>
<th>Airplay Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I'm Shipping Out</td>
<td>Cat Power</td>
<td>78,214,901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard Times</td>
<td>Sonic Youth</td>
<td>69,965,432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S ahead of Myself</td>
<td>The Breeders</td>
<td>62,894,123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Overdrive</td>
<td>Dead and Company</td>
<td>55,732,901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Am</td>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>48,571,234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feel the Breeze</td>
<td>R.E.M.</td>
<td>41,309,801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lie in the Grass</td>
<td>The Breeders</td>
<td>34,148,501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beginner's Luck</td>
<td>The Breeders</td>
<td>27,987,234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>365</td>
<td>扬比</td>
<td>21,825,901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Great Escape</td>
<td>Oasis</td>
<td>15,664,601</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### POP 100

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>The 1975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Apologize</td>
<td>OneRepublic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>No One</td>
<td>Adele</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Clumsy</td>
<td>Foster the People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tattoo</td>
<td>Twenty One Pilots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Paralyzer</td>
<td>Fall Out!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Rubby</td>
<td>The Naked and Famous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Love Song</td>
<td>Sara Bareilles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Sweetest Girl (Dollar Bill)</td>
<td>J. Cole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Stronger</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Teardrops On My Guitar</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>History Business</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Don't Stop Thinking</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>This Is The Way</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Ready Set Go</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Over You</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Our Song</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Hypnotized</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>The Night</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>See You Again</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Wake Me Up Call</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Warheads</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Stop and Stare</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Never Too Late</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Gimme More</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>He Said She Said</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Pop Bottles</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Crushed to Pieces</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Love the Way</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Don't Blink</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
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<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Beep</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Breakup 2.0</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
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<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Bad Girl</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
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<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Let Me In</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
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<td>35</td>
<td>The Climb</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
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<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Who Are You</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
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<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>I See You</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
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<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Here for a Good Time Only</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Just Fine</td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
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### POP 100 AIRPLAY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>No One</td>
<td>Foster The People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Clumsy</td>
<td>Foster The People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Apologize</td>
<td>OneRepublic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Low</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tattoo</td>
<td>Twenty One Pilots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Paralyzer</td>
<td>Fall Out!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Rubby</td>
<td>The Naked and Famous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Love Like This</td>
<td>Colbie Caillat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Sweetest Girl (Dollar Bill)</td>
<td>J. Cole</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Stronger</td>
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<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
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<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Who Are You</td>
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<td>37</td>
<td>I See You</td>
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<td>39</td>
<td>Just Fine</td>
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### HIT PREDICTOR

See chart legend for rules and explanations. Yellow indicates records with a "*" and indicates New Release.

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<tr>
<td>THE WAY I AM</td>
<td>I180N (WILL.I.AM)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SHH</td>
<td>MIRRORE (FLIP RECORDS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ME LOVE</td>
<td>ZHOBIE ALBRIGHT (LITE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>ANITA BROWN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL AROUND ME</td>
<td>BETA GOLDEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OH MY GOSH</td>
<td>MARK SHALEY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OH NO</td>
<td>PEOPLE LIKE ME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNTIL THE END OF THE YEAR</td>
<td>DANNY ELFORD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHATEVER HAPPENED TO ME</td>
<td>LA UTH ROCK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT</td>
<td>DADDY DIFFUSION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>DJI DADDY</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>LIL WAYNE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE MARCH</td>
<td>T.J. Winters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHE'S LIKE THE WIND</td>
<td>THE DOORS</td>
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<tr>
<td>THE PERFECT DRUG</td>
<td>BILLI CURTIS</td>
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<tr>
<td>SHUT ME UP</td>
<td>CRIMINAL BEAR</td>
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<tr>
<td>ROUTE 66</td>
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<tr>
<td>MY Hometown (Shake It)</td>
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<td>ROBERTO MAKASSAR</td>
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**Note:** The numbers in the chart represent the position of the song on the chart. The data is from Billboard magazine and represents the most popular songs in the United States for the week ending January 12, 2008.
### Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay

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<th>Artist (Label)</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Peak Position</th>
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<tr>
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<td>SWAGGA (DMD/MATRIARCH)</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>I NEED YOUR LOVE</em></td>
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### R&B Singles Sales

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<th>Week</th>
<th>Peak Position</th>
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<tr>
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<td>SWAGGA (DMD/MATRIARCH)</td>
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<td>CORY BROWN (ATLANTIC)</td>
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<td>JAY-Z FEAT. TAO (ATLANTIC)</td>
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<td>JUICY JAY (REMEDY/INTERSCOPE)</td>
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<td><em>MY DRINK N MY 2 STEP</em></td>
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### Adult R&B

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<td>TERRA SOUAD/KOCH</td>
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### R&B/HIP-HOP Airplay

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<th>Week</th>
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Hot Country Songs

1. Taylor Swift - "Shake It Off"
2. Montgomery Gentry - "My Lady"
3. Alan Jackson - "Small Town Southern Man"
4. Ronnie Dunn - "Everyday"
5. Keith Urban - "Everyday"
6. Rascal Flatts - "I Think I Do"
7. George Strait - "All for Love"
8. Billy Ray Cyrus - "I'm Gonna Miss Her"
9. Rodney Atkins - " Taste of the Town"

10. Sugarland - "Lonely Boy"
11. Montgomery Gentry - "My Lady"
12. Alan Jackson - "Small Town Southern Man"
13. Ronnie Dunn - "Everyday"
14. Keith Urban - "Everyday"
15. Rascal Flatts - "I Think I Do"
16. George Strait - "All for Love"
17. Billy Ray Cyrus - "I'm Gonna Miss Her"
18. Rodney Atkins - " Taste of the Town"

.data for week of January 12, 2008

Airplay: 2.43 billion weekly impressions (31 monitored markets), Taylor Swift's "Love Story" was the top airplay song of the week, receiving 123,800,000 weekly impressions.
### Latin Songs Chart

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<th>#</th>
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### Regional Mexican

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### Hot Dance Club Play

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<td>KISS SHITE</td>
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<td>DON'T STOP THE MUSIC</td>
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<td>JE VAIS VITE</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>DO YOU KNOW? (THE PING PONG SONG)</td>
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<td>DON'T STOP THE MUSIC</td>
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<td>LIVING DARFUR</td>
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<td>9.</td>
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<td>ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS IS YOU</td>
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<td>1.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>VENDE MUP</td>
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<td>AMAR I LUNA</td>
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<td>SE THELIO M TRELA</td>
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<td>KAPOL ALLDO</td>
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Data for week of JANUARY 12, 2008 | CHARTS LEGEND on Page 58
### TOP 40 RADIO AIRPLAY

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### TOP 40 CHRISTIAN

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### EUROCHARTS

#### SINGLE SALES

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### ALBUMS

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### RADIO AIRPLAY

Data for week of JANUARY 12, 2008 | For chart reprints call 646.654.4633

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data
ALBUM CHARTS

Sales data compiled from a comprehensive pool of U.S. music merchants by Nielsen SoundScan. Sales data for R&B/hip-hop retail charts is compiled by Nielsen SoundScan from a national subset of core stores that specialize in those genres. Albums with the greatest sales gain this week.

Where included, title awards indicate the title with the chart's biggest percentage growth.

Where included, this award indicates the title with the chart's highest dollar volume. 

Where included, this award indicates the title with the chart's highest dollar volume.

PRICING/CONFIGURATION/AVAILABILITY

CD/Cassette prices are suggestive of wholesale prices, which are projected from wholesale prices. After price includes album only available on DualDisc. DVD/Video after price indicates CD/DVD only available. DualDisc, available

CD/DVD comes included - indicates vinyl LP is available. Pricing and vinyl LP availability are not included on all albums. When catalog number indicates title is exclusive to one account or has limited distribution.

RADIO AIRPLAY SINGLES CHARTS

Compiled from a national sample of radio supplied by Arbitron Broadcast Data Systems. Charts are ranked by number of audience impressions, compiled by cross-revving the exact times of airing with Arbitron Listen data. The exceptions are the Rhythmic, Adult Top 40 Contemporary, Modern Rock and Adult R&B charts, which are ranked by audience detections over the previous week, regardless of chart movement.

RECURRENT RULES

Songs are removed from The Billboard Hot 100 and Hot 100 Airplay charts simultaneously if they have been on the Billboard Hot 100 for more than 20 weeks and rank below No. 50. Songs are removed from the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs and Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay charts simultaneously if they have been on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs for more than 20 weeks and rank below No. 50. Songs are removed from the Pop 100 and Pop 100 Airplay charts simultaneously if they have been on the Pop 100 for more than 30 weeks and rank below No. 50. Titles are removed from Hot Country if they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below No. 50 in digital sales, provided that they are not still gaining enough audience points to build. Songs are removed from Hot Latin Songs if they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below No. 50. Songs on Latin Airplay charts are removed after 20 weeks if they rank below No. 20. In all audience algorithms and hot sales of Adult Contemporary they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below No. 15. If they have been on the chart for more than 32 weeks and rank below No. 20, they will be removed from the chart. Adult Contemporary Airplay charts if they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below No. 15. No. 20 for Rhythmic Airplay and Modern Rock or if they have been on the chart for more than 32 weeks and rank below No. 10.

SINGLES SALES CHARTS

The top selling singles compiled from a national sample of retail, mass merchant, and internet sales reports, compiled and provided by Nielsen SoundScan. For R&B/Hip-Hop Singles, sales data is compiled from a national audience is local chart of Top R&B/Hip-Hop stores by Nielsen SoundScan. 

The best selling sales gain this week.

CONGRATULATIONS

Top single is available. Digital Download available. [ ] DVD single available. [ ] Vinyl single available. [ ] CD Maxi-Single available. Confirmations are not included on all singles charts.

HITPREDICTOR

This indicates the estimated hit/missing hit status in that certifiable format based on research data provided by Promosound. Singles are sent online by Promosound using multiple listener and a nationwide sample of carefully profiled music consumers. Songs are ranked on a hit or missing hit and results are based on weighted positives. Songs with a score of 65 or more (7 or more for country) are projects to not hit potential, although that benchmark can vary. Hit Predictor can fluctuate based on the strength of available music. For a complete and updated list of current singles with hit potential, commentary, polls and more, please visit www.hitpredictor.com.

DANCE CLUB PLAY

Compiled from a national sample of reports from club DJs. Lists with the greatest club play increase over the previous listings.

AWARD CERTIFICATES

ALBUM RECORDING Industry AWARD. Of America (RIAA) certification for net shipments of 100,000 albums (Gold). RIAA certification for net shipment of 1 million units (Platinum). 

RIAA certification for net shipment of 5 million units (Diamond). 

RIAA certification for net shipment of 10 million units (Diamond). 

The Platinum and Diamond symbol indicates album's multiple-platinum level. For listed sets, and double albums with a running time of 100 minutes or more, the RIAA multiples ship by the number of discs and/or tapes. Certification for net shipments of 100,000 units (Silver). The certification of 200,000 units (Platinum). Certification of 400,000 units (Multi-Platinum).

SINGLES CHARTS

RIAA certification for 50,000 single downloads (Gold). RIAA certification for 1 million paid downloads (Platinum). Numerical awards in platinum symbol indicates song's singles multiple-platinum level. For listed sets, and double albums with a running time of 100 minutes or more, the RIAA multiples ship by the number of discs and/or tapes. Certification for net shipments of 100,000 units (Silver). The certification of 200,000 units (Platinum). Certification of 400,000 units (Multi-Platinum).

SINGLES SALES CHARTS

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

RIAA gold certification for net shipment of 50,000 units for shortform or longform video. 

RIAA platinum certification for net shipment of 100,000 units for video singles. 

RIAA platinum certification for sales of 100,000 units for shortform or longform video. 

DVD SALES/VHS SALES/VOD INDUSTRY AWARD. 

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

DVD RIAA gold certification for net shipment of 100,000 units for shortform or longform video. 

DVD RIAA platinum certification for net shipment of 250,000 units or $2 million at suggested retail price. 

DVD RIAA gold certification for a minimum sale of 125,000 units or a dollar volume of $1.9 million at retail for theatrically released programs, or at least 25,000 units and $1 million at suggested retail for non-theatrical titles. 

DVD RIAA platinum certification for a minimum sale of 250,000 units and $2 million at retail for theatrically released programs, or at least 50,000 units and $2 million at suggested retail for non-theatrical titles. 

DVD RIAA gold certification for a minimum sale of 500,000 units and $1 million at retail for theatrically released programs, or at least 100,000 units and $2 million at suggested retail for non-theatrical titles. 

DVD RIAA platinum certification for a minimum sale of 1 million units and $2 million at retail for theatrically released programs, or at least 200,000 units and $3 million at suggested retail for non-theatrical titles. 

DVD RIAA gold certification for a minimum sale of 1.5 million units and $3 million at retail for theatrically released programs, or at least 300,000 units and $6 million at suggested retail for non-theatrical titles. 

DVD RIAA platinum certification for a minimum sale of 3 million units and $6 million at retail for theatrically released programs, or at least 600,000 units and $12 million at suggested retail for non-theatrical titles.
### Music Videos

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### Hot Videoclips

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<td><strong>Inhuman Rampage</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Party</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Dying Is My Latest Fashion</strong></td>
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### This Week On:

**Breaking & Entering:**

Graham Colton is experiencing his best days right now as "Best Days (The Rest of Our Lives)" is his current charting single, starting at No. 28 on Adult Top 40. Discovering debuting artists, this inaugural chart runs each week in Breaking & Entering on billboard.com.

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data.
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**Charts Legend on Page 58**

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BIRTHS

Boy, Baker Thomas, to Berkeley and David Schwarz, Nov. 4 in Washington, D.C. Mother is VP/counsel at the National Music Publishers’ Assn.

DEATHS

Andrew Foldi, 81, opera singer/teacher, died Nov. 21 of complications from a stroke.

Foldi sang bass and bass baritone at the Chicago Lyric Opera, the Metropolitan Opera, La Scala and other houses around the world. He was chairman/artistic director for the opera department at the Cleveland Institute of Music.

Born in Hungary, he earned his musicology degree at the University of Chicago, later teaching the school’s adult music education program. First working as a music critic for the Chicago Times, he began his operatic career in Chicago. Foldi taught at the Cleveland Institute of Music from 1962-1995.

Foldi performed in works by Mozart and Rossini. He sang around the world as Schubert’s 17 productions of Alban Berg’s “Lulu,” including the U.S. debut in Santa Fe, N.M. He also appeared with the Cleveland Orchestra at Severance Hall and New York’s Carnegie Hall.

Fred Chichin, 53, founder/guitarist of French pop duo Les Rita Mitsouko, died Nov. 28 from cancer.

Chichin formed the group with Catherine Ringer in 1979, composing songs and playing guitar, bass, drums and keyboard. The pair’s 1984 hit “Marcua Bala,” a Latin-rock tribute to an Argentine dancer, sold more than 1 million copies. The act blended rock, funk and Latin music, and received honors from French culture ministers for its contributions to French music. Les Rita Mitsouko’s latest album, “Variety,” was released in April 2007.

Tom Terrell, 57, music journalist/photo- tographer and DJ/radio programmer, died Nov. 29 from cancer.

Terrell contributed to the New York and Washington, D.C., music scenes for more than two decades. As a DJ, the Howard University graduate created Washington, D.C.’s first reggae show in 1978 and later hosted the programs “Sunday Reggae Splashdown” and “Calle C’est What?” on noncommercial WPFW Washington, D.C., and news/talk WHFS Baltimore. Terrell also lent his talent and voice to NPR as a music critic/commentator.

Terrell also held a position as publicity manager for Verve Records and wrote for Global Rhythm, Jazziz, Vibe, Essence, the Village Voice and the Washington City Paper, among others.

Danny Newman, 88, director of press and publicity for the Chicago Lyric Opera, died Dec. 1 from pulmonary fibrosis at his home in Lincolnwood, Ill. Newman’s concept for subscription-based audience building is illustrated in his book “Subscribe Now!,” which was released in 1977. It has since been printed in 10 editions and is used in 31 countries.

Carlos “Patato” Valdés, 81, Cuban percussionist, died Dec. 5 in Cleveland of complications from emphysema.

Born in Havana, Valdés immersed himself in Afro-Cuban music, instruments and dance. In the ’40s, he played with Cuban acts before touring the United States, where he eventually moved after visiting New York to team with Afro-Cuban music leaders like Mongo Santamaría. Soon working with such jazz greats as Dizzy Gillespie and Max Roach, he went solo, dabbled in salsa and moved to Paris, and later the West Coast, before returning to New York.

Valdés performed with Tito Puente at the Newport Jazz Festival; was nominated for a Grammy Award for his solo debut, “Rincon y Gandala I and II;” and contributed music to the movies “The Mambo Kings” and “Calle 54.” Valdés continued performing with his band the Congo Kings, recording another album at the age of 73.


Atlanta-based Lowery Music Group, founded in 1952 with Lowery’s husband and renowned Georgia music publisher Bill Lowery, became one of the largest independent music companies in America before being purchased by Sony Music Publishing in 1999. Over 50 years, the couple held more than 7,000 titles, including several million-sellers.

married in 1942, the pair saw their first major success in 1956 with Gene Vincent’s “Be-Bop-a-Lula.” Other hits included “(I) Never Promised You a Rose Garden” and Alicia Bridges’ disco hit “I Love the Nightlife.”

J.D. “Cast” King, 81, country singer/ songwriter, died Dec. 13 at his home in Old Sand Mountain, Ala., from cancer.

King taught himself guitar at the age of 10 and in 1955 recorded with his honky-tonk band, the Country Drifters, at Sun Studios in Memphis. But King’s debut album, “Saw Mill Man,” didn’t emerge until Locust Music released it 50 years later. At the age of 79, his music landed him press coverage, film possibilities and a placement in Gus Van Sant’s upcoming movie “Paranoid Park.”

Joel Dorn, 65, Grammy Award-winning producer who worked with Roberta Flack, Bette Midler, the Neville Brothers and Charles Mingus, died Dec. 17 in New York from a heart attack.

After a stint as a Philadelphia DJ, Dorn moved to Atlantic Records, where his productions resulted in 10 gold albums, five platinum albums and seven gold singles. Among his hits were Flack’s singles “The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face” and “Killing Me Softly With His Song” and Midler’s album “The Divine Miss M.”

Dorn later worked as a consultant for Rhino, GRP and Columbia, and started his own label, 32 Records, where he reissued more than 250 titles and produced such series as “Jazz Standards.”


Farrell was a stalwart member of the music scene in Bloomington, Ind., where he played in numerous bands.

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EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE

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RECORD COMPANIES: Rhino Entertainment names Richie Gallo senior VP of its newly established One Catalog Group. He was executive VP of Universal Music Enterprises imprint New Door.

Universal Motown Republic Group ups Pat Monaco to executive VP of sales and field marketing. He was senior VP.

PUBLISHING: Sony/ATV Music Publishing promotes Bill Starke to chief information officer/VP of information technology. He was VP.

Classical music publisher Boosey & Hawkes appoints Zili Mueller director of composers and repertoire. She was founder/artistic director/flutist for music group Mosaic.

DISTRIBUTION: Universal Music Group Distribution promotes Kim Beauchamp to senior VP of e-commerce and mobile operations. She was VP of e-commerce operations at Universal Music Group.

WEA elevates Richard Jennings to VP of creative services. He was senior director.

TOURING: SMG Puerto Rico, the company in charge of administering Puerto Rico's José Miguel Agrelot Coliseum, promotes Wesley Elizabeth Cullen to GM/director of events and guest services at the coliseum.

Live Nation in Hong Kong appoints Luke Hede director of booking for Asia. He was previously responsible for ticketing and logistics liaising at Dainty Consolidated Entertainment in Australia.

Pala Casino Spa and Resort in Pala, Calif., names David Swift director of entertainment. He will oversee booking and promoting concerts at the facility's four venues. Swift was director of business development at Los Angeles-based Bill Silva Presents.

DIGITAL: eMusic names Kip Morgan chief marketing officer and Anna Punsal VP of customer relationship manager. Morgan was VP of direct marketing, and audience at Earthlink. Punsal was director of customer retention and loyalty at Earthlink.

Warner Bros. Digital Distribution names Thomas Gewecke president. He was VP of global digital business development at Sony BMG.

—Edited by Mitchell Peters

GOOD WORKS

SEAL TO HEADLINE MOC BENEFIT

Musicians On Call, which brings recorded and live music to the bedside of patients in health-care facilities, has announced that British pop/soul singer Seal will headline its fourth annual benefit concert and auction, set for Jan. 29 at the Hard Rock Cafe in New York. The benefit will also feature a performance from Nashville-based country four-piece Jypsi. Leading up to the event, items donated by musicians will be available for bidding at musicansonlinecall.org.

The items include a guitar autographed by Bruce Springsteen, a harmonica from the Johnny Cash estate, studio time with Maroon 5, a VIP Grammy Awards package, a Carrie Underwood concert package, artwork by John Lennon and a basketball signed by Justin Timberlake. The last three MOC benefit concerts have collectively raised nearly $1 million for the nonprofit organization.

INSIDE TRACK

ALMOST READY TO ‘GO’

After two-and-a-half years on the road in support of 2005’s “Oh No,” OK Go has been taking a much-needed break and is beginning to prep its third full-length set. “We don’t write very well on the road, which means we haven’t written much at all,” frontman Damien Kulash tells Track. Still, the foursome has put itself on schedule to completely finish penning the tunes before entering the studio this summer. “We’ll presumably release it through Capitol . . . if they still exist by then.” The group has a “list of suspects” for potential producers, but is open to working again with Tore Johansson in Sweden. According to Kulash, the arrangements for the album will be undoubtedly influenced by OK Go’s recent collaboration with New Orleans funk troupe Rebirth Brass Band. “There’s going to be more horns than we’ve ever had before,” he says. The two troupes collided last year, re-recording OK Go songs and a pair of covers for “You’re Not Alone,” an EP due Feb. 5 to benefit NOLA R&B legend Al “Carnival Time” Johnson and Sweet Home New Orleans.
INSIDE TRACK

SHAKING OFF THE RUST

Rusted Root is getting ready to hit a Pittsburgh studio to record its first album of new material in more than five years. Singer/percussionist Liz Berlin tells Track that "there's a lot of uptempo stuff. There's this new song that's really rocking called 'Bad Son,' and it's kind of political and just, like, super in-your-face fun." The group, which most recently recorded for Universal, is likely to self-release the new effort. "It doesn't make sense to strive for a record deal as some kind of solution or a way to boost your career," Berlin says. "If [the] right situation or offer came along, we might consider it. But we're happy doing it ourselves."
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