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CONTENTS

VOLUME 120, NO. 4

UPFRONT

7 DOIN' IT FOR THE KIDS TV shows score with hipster parents, progeny.
14 Latin
16 On The Road

FEATURES

28 AS THE CROW FLIES Ken Tucker talks new album, new baby and new life in Nashville with Sheryl Crow.
32 LATIN LEAVERS As contracts expire, top stars embrace DIY and independent releases.
35 LUIS JIMÉNEZ Spanish-language radio superstar Luis Jiménez returns to the New York airwaves on Univision's La Calle.
43 MIDEM MASTERS Billboard recognizes business leaders drawn to the annual global marketplace.
49 POWERFUL PROMISE Turning expectations into results in China demands patience and partnerships.

MUSIC

57 HIGHS AND 'LOWS' Digital bonanza lands Flo Rida atop the charts.
58 Global Pulse
59 Now Hear This
60 Q Notes
61 Reviews
63 Happening Now

IN EVERY ISSUE

6 Opinion
65 Over The Counter
65 Market Watch
66 Charts
83 Marketplace
85 Executive Turntable, Backbeat, Inside Track

360 DEGREES OF BILLBOARD

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Online

BILLBOARD.COM Find out what's new in the music industry, including the coming days' most important business news.
Are You Bulletproof?

Anticipating Challenges in An Ever-Changing World

BY BRIAN CAMELO

By now most people have heard the expression “destructive technology”—one that comes along and wipes out an entire sector of a business—or in its most extreme form, an entire industry. As we know, the combination of the Internet and the compressed digitalization of music are deconstructing the music industry as we know it, by making it so easy to distribute and share music that the primary retail product is being devalued at an alarming rate.

You have heard this all before. But bear with me. There is a happy ending.

Technology will progress, and it will only become easier to share music to the point where going to an MP3 store to buy music will be as absurd as putting quarters into a public water fountain. The question in everyone’s mind is, “How do I build a business on this?” The answer is, “You don’t.” When faced with a destructive technology, one needs to make a new product out of it.

The electronics business provides a good example of that approach. When the latest and greatest new gadget along, the electronics industry already has a working business infrastructure that can be redirected toward selling that product. It also has an existing customer base to draw on in marketing the new gadget.

If you were unfortunate enough to be in the business of retail music sales (Tower Records, for example), you saw yourself in the position of having a working infrastructure based entirely on the sale of music as a retail product. In retail music sales there is no new gadget. The record companies suffered even more because even if they wanted to transform their business model to move with the changing times, they had never established direct contact with the customer base—music fans/CD buyers—and were losing their conduit to them: record stores.

We now face a rare opportunity to completely redefine the industry. It is important that our new model is bulletproof.

When I first started building ArtistShare in 2000, I tried to step away from the retail model that the record industry was based on. I asked myself what it was that made music valuable. What did music mean to us? Did we like to offer? That was when I laid down the foundation for my new business model—formed by gifted individuals. You don’t need to train people to pay for a service, most people expect you to pay for services. On the other hand, almost everyone is looking to get a product for free or cheap.

Sell directly to the consumer. When the next wave of destruction hits, you will be able to make a lateral move with ease.

ArtistShare sells directly to the consumer and the fans finance the artistic work, viewing it as a service, while simultaneously feeling like they are part of making it happen. It is dependent on two things that will never disappear—musicians and music lovers—and that’s all.

I have a game that I like to play regularly to keep me on my toes—it’s called, “Am I Bulletproof?” All you need to do is dream up some crazy technology and then ask yourself, “What if this really happened?” For example, suppose that in three years we no longer need an electronic device to listen to music. What would all of the makers of MP3 players do?

I recently spoke on a panel about music technology at the Grammy Tech conference in Seattle. After my panel I was talking to Derek Sivers from CD Baby. A great guy and a savvy businessman—Sivers shared with me a thought that he had about a potentially destructive technology: A number of businesses have been built on providing the service of getting people’s music up onto iTunes, of which CD Baby is one of the biggest. (CD Baby’s digital catalog is larger than the Independent Online Distribution Alliance’s and TuneCore’s combined.) Sivers said to me, “What if the next version of iTunes had an upload button?”

Are you bulletproof?

Brian Camello is founder/CEO of ArtistShare (artistshare.com).

———

FEEDBACK

BILLBOARD.BIZ POLL

Billboard has looked into its crystal ball to identify some of the biggest stories that may come to pass in 2008. Which development do you think is a dead cert?

Labels Finally Lower CD List Prices

Leo Zepelin: Play by Live On U.S. Sell-Through

iTunes Allows Album-Only Sales

Facebook Unveils Artist-Supported Music Service

Internet Ad Spending Exceeds Radio Ad Spending

Guy Hands Sells Off Part Of EMI Group

Urban Arts Opt For Digital Distribution

XM Resumes Direct Sales After Suits, XM Merge

Every Major Latin Label Tries A Revenue-Sharing Model

Spath’s Bamboo Importing Labels Drop Davis

The Shins Sign With A Major

Sanity Comes To The Secondary Ticket Market

Other

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Doin' It For The Kids

TV Shows Score With Hipster Parents, Progeny

It could be any old indie rock show. The über-hip band starts playing its buzzyworthy hit while the crowd dances feverishly.

But in this case, the crowd not only comprises cool adults, but their ecstatic 5-year-olds as well. This kids show is certainly light years from the "Sesame Street" songs of yore.

In fact, it isn't "Sesame Street" at all, but "Pancake Mountain," one piece of mounting evidence that the punk generation has grown up, reproduced and passed on the DIY spirit.

While many youngsters will no doubt continue to name "Kidz Bop" or "Elmo" tracks as their favorite tunes, a growing number may start dropping names like the Shins or the Evens during show and tell. That's because two TV shows, Nick- elodeon's "Yo Gabba Gabba!" and the independently produced "Pancake Mountain," as well as a number of indie artists, are reaching out to target hip, young parents and their kids.

Since it launched in August 2007, "Yo Gabba Gabba!" has featured everyone from Deva's Mark Mothersbaugh to the Aquabats to Shiny Toy Guns playing alongside the show's giant puppets. Tons of bands have contacted us wanting to be on the show, and we are really focused on including strong, great music," says Doug Cohen, senior VP of music marketing and talent at Nickleodeon.

That emphasis on strong music has drawn equally strong audiences. "Yo Gabba Gabba!" averages 683,000 2- to 5-year-old viewers per week (and presumably more than a few parents) and is the No. 1 program among kids ages 2-5 in its time period, according to Nielsen Media Research. The show has been renewed for a second season, and DVDs and CDs are forthcoming, according to Cohen.

While "Yo Gabba Gabba!" boasts a crew of bright puppets and shiny production, Washington, D.C.-based "Pancake Mountain" is a relatively DIY affair. The show's creator, Scott Stuckey, claims that each episode costs him less than $500 to make, and the show airs on public access channels along the East Coast.

Every episode of "Pancake Mountain," which launched in November 2003, comprises a collection of shorts as well as live performances by some of the hottest names in indie rock: Built to Spill, Bright Eyes, the Flaming Lips. Stuckey claims that the bands are only approached him wanting to play the show, mostly because "they love it. It's just a really fun, different experience for them." Unlike "Yo Gabba Gabba!," where bands perform songs written for the show, "Pancake Mountain" has bands perform their own tracks, often at D.C.-area rock venues.

Despite the show's quirky format and limited viewing schedule, Stuckey estimates he's sold around 8,000 DVDs of past seasons. While the bands don't get any royalties from these sales, Stuckey is working on setting up a deal to sell episodes via iTunes through Discord Records. "The bands do it for the love, and they know we're just breaking even," he says. "But if the iTunes deal were to happen, we would make sure they were compensated fairly." Stuckey and his show have also caught the eye of networks and talent agencies. "I'm planning on meeting with [Creative Artists Agency] soon, and there has been a lot of attention lately," he says. "But some people have a hard time getting it. I don't want to work with a network that would try to exert structure and put big hands on. I don't need a big network, per se; if I do make a deal, I want to make sure I still have control.

The forces behind both TV shows share a common thread in crediting their success to the emerging "hipster parent" population—its media fascination.

New York magazine derived the concept on its March 27, 2006, cover, while Web sites like babble.com have celebrated it. This is clear not only in the success of these two TV shows, but reflected in record sales. As they have started becoming parents, many indie rockers have also moved into the realm of writing music for kids.

The best-known of these is Dan Zanes, formerly of Boston stalwarts the Del Fuegos. Zanes is also the best-selling artist of the bunch: his 2006 album, "Catch That Train," has moved 81,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Atlanta record store owner Bryan Towndsend was so confident in this market that in October 2006, he launched an online record store, PokeyPup.com, dedicated to selling hip kid product. Towndsend says from November 2006 to November 2007, the store's sales doubled, and traffic increased by 264%.

He credits the growth to the fact that young parents have grown up surrounded by music. "When I grew up, it was all MTV and radio all the time," he says. "There is a real desire among these parents to share music with their kids and provide a safe environment for them to learn about different genres and bands."
UPFRONT

GAME ON

Music Sales Win With ‘Rock Band,’ ‘Guitar Hero’

In the two months since MTV Networks and Harmonix released the music-based videogame “Rock Band,” players have purchased and downloaded more than 2.5 million additional songs made available after the game’s initial distribution. Activity, meanwhile, says it has sold more than 5 million new songs via download for “Guitar Hero III: Legends of Rock” since it began adding downloadable content in early November.

By comparison, it took wireless operator Sprint four months to sell 1 million songs on its own high-speed download service. While new digital music services competing with iTunes and free peer-to-peer services have struggled to convince music fans to pay $1 for a single, downloadable tracks for games like “Rock Band” and “Guitar Hero” are flying off the digital shelves.

“With such a low installation base, we didn’t think there’d be 2 million songs sold in eight weeks,” MTVN Music Group/Logos Films division president Van Toffler says. “We’re in a rough time around music where our audience struggles to pay $20 for a CD but don’t hesitate to pay $50 for a game. The notion to pay 99 cents or $1.99 to have a song and repeatedly play it apparently isn’t a big hurdle.”

The original “Rock Band” and “Guitar Hero” games shipped with more than 50 licensed songs each, a mix of master recordings and covers. Since then, “Rock Band” has made new music available every week either as singles or in three-pack bundles that can be added as new playable levels for between 99 cents and $5.99. “Guitar Hero III” did the same, focusing on three-song bundles of new music and music featured in previous versions of the game.

Although MTV is not providing specific numbers, it did say the majority of the downloadable songs were purchased by Xbox 360 as opposed to PlayStation 3 users. According to the NPD Group, “Rock Band” sold 775,000 copies for the Xbox 360 through the end of 2007, compared with 250,000 on the PS3.

The game’s impact on track sales for participating artists, however, remains unclear. While not providing exact sales figures, MTV said that the Metallica three-pack of “Ride the Lightning,” “Blackened” and “And Justice for All” is the best-selling “Rock Band” download.

According to Nielsen SoundScan, those same songs saw digital download sales spikes of 33.2%, 39% and 48%, respectively, for the month after they were featured as a “Rock Band” download, over the previous month.

However, those increased sales numbers only in the hundreds, while the “Rock Band” downloads numbered in the hundreds of thousands. Still, label executives are thrilled with the results.

MTVN already has plans to expand its outreach to artists, creating additional game expansions—as both physical products and downloadable content—around specific music genres and even artists.

“We are talking to lots of bands, from indie to the most established… to release not necessarily their entire catalog, but maybe some of their classic albums and special packages around that,” Toffler says.

What’s more, there’s no reason for “Guitar Hero” and “Rock Band” to be the only vehicles that sell music. It’s only a matter of time before other games begin offering downloadable soundtracks as well.

Titles like the “Madden” football series, the Tony Hawk skateboarding franchise and the venerable “Grand Theft Auto” games are well-known for their extensive soundtracks. Offering gamers the ability to replace their soundtracks every few months after the initial release is not only technically possible but today’s new-generation consoles, but also on the horizon.

“That’s certainly something we’re interested in,” Electronic Arts worldwide head of music Steve Schnurr said during a keynote discussion at Billboard’s Digital Music Live conference earlier this month at the Consumer Electronics Show.

We Buy iPhone?

Apple Drives Multimedia Adaption, But Maybe Not Sales

While Apple did not introduce any significant iPhone upgrades at its annual Macworld convention in San Francisco, the iconic device still made waves.

Apple has sold more than 4 million iPhones since launch, according to Steve Jobs’ Macworld keynote. But what’s more interesting is what the people who bought it are doing with it.

Apple has sold 4 million-plus iPhones since last year.

In data provided to the New York Times, Google disclosed that it received more traffic from iPhones this Christmas than from any other mobile device, despite owning only 2% of the smartphone market and less than 1% of the overall mobile-phonemarket. That means that while fewer people own iPhones, those who do possess the device use it to access the Internet much more than those with competing handsets.

What’s not clear is whether the iPhone’s slick design and simple user interface has proved useful for other functions—such as buying music. Although iPhone users can purchase songs from iTunes when in range of a Wi-Fi hot spot, Apple declined to reveal how many have done so.

To date, downloading music to mobile phones has not proved a popular activity. According to a recent M:Metrics study, 20% of mobile users internationally listen to music on their mobile devices, but 83% of them are sideloading the music from their computers or uploading from other devices rather than downloading it from a mobile music service.

That has music industry executives wondering whether the future of mobile music will more resemble the Web services model gaining traction on the Internet—where fans stream music from multiple sources, including each other—rather than the purchase-and-download model pursued to date.

Next month, Apple will release a software development kit that third-party developers can use to write applications for the iPhone. To date, developers were limited to writing Web-based applications—one of the reasons behind the iPhone’s high rate of browser use compared to other devices.

Once available, the music industry will be watching iPhone versions of existing music-focused online services, such as YouTube and the iPod-based version.

“Imagine when something like a Last.fm becomes more streamlined and becomes truly portable, either on an iPhone or regular phones,” says one label exec who asked to remain anonymous. “Are people going to make more use of it? Maybe.”

The M:Metrics report supports this theory. In European countries like France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom, more mobile users were listening to music than were using their computers or mobile phones via Bluetooth or other technologies than were doing so with music downloaded from a music store. In France and the United Kingdom, such shared activity accounts for 12.5% of the mobile music listened to in November of last year.

Some wireless operators are already preparing for that reality. Atleti, for instance, recently introduced a service that allows customers to stream and download digital rights management-free digital music files from their home computers to their mobile phone from anywhere in the operator’s service area, provided the tracks are free of DRM.

While AT&T charges $4 per month for the service, labels get nothing, as it’s based on users’ existing libraries. Should more devices follow the iPhone’s lead and become more open-access devices, labels are concerned that their carrier deals may no longer provide the guaranteed revenue they once had.

“As more phones become Wi-Fi enabled,” one label exec notes, “the need to go through official pipes to pay the piper is not always going to be there.”

BORDERS EYES MP3 SERVICE

Borders is exploring options on an MP3 music download service and is hoping to extend its “mix and burn” in-store music kiosk program into a more fully functional Web-based service when it relaunches its Web site in the coming months. The new site will be revealed once the company’s alliance with Amazon, which has been running Borders’ online commerce services to date, ends in first-quarter 2008.

IDLÉ RETURN drawing 33.2 million

The return of “American Idol” drew 33.2 million viewers—down from last year, though the number is still much greater than any other series on TV. “Idol” was down 13% in adults 18-49—with similar declines in adults 18-34 and adults 25-54—with a 13.8 rating/32 share, Nielsen says.

Viewership rose steadily throughout its two-hour premiere, with 26.7 million viewers at 8 p.m. jumping to 35.9 million by 9:30 p.m.

APPLE INTRODUCES ONLINE MOVIE RENTALS

As expected, Apple introduced a movie rental service for iTunes at the annual Macworld confab in San Francisco. Apple has deals with Touchstone Pictures, HGM, Miramax, Lions Gate, 20th Century Fox, Warner Brothers, Walt Disney, Paramount, Universal and Sony Pictures for the service. The company expects more than 1,000 titles will be available by February. Older movies will cost $3, new movies $4. New releases will become available 30 days after their DVD release date.

MUSIC NEWS FROM DIZ

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What’s more, there’s no reason for “Guitar Hero” and “Rock Band” to be the only vehicles that sell music. It’s only a matter of time before other games begin offering downloadable soundtracks as well.

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THERE'S NOTHING LIKE 1.3 BILLION POTENTIAL TICKET BUYERS TO ATTRACTION OF THE LIVE ENTERTAINMENT BUSINESS. WITH THE WORLD'S LARGEST POPULATION AND AN EXPLODING ECONOMY, CHINA MAY REPRESENT THE FUTURE FOR INTERNATIONAL TOURING ARTISTS.

THAT'S WHY THE THREE BIGGEST PLAYERS IN THE U.S. LIVE ENTERTAINMENT BUSINESS—LIVE NATION, ANSCHUTZ ENTERTAINMENT GROUP (AEG) AND TICKETMASTER—HAVE ALL STAKED CLAIMS IN CHINA.

IT'S VIRGIN TERRITORY. "IN CHINA YOU HAVE A HUGE POTENTIAL MARKET, A CLEAN SLATE AND OPPORTUNITIES YOU DON'T SEE IN MORE MATURE MARKETS," TICKETMASTER CEO SEAN MOWRY SAYS. "THERE IS NO ESTABLISHED WAY OF DOING BUSINESS YET, AND I THINK EVERYBODY IN THE MARKET GETS A SHOT AT A FRESH START."

THE OVERALL TICKETING, PRODUCTION AND VENUE INFRASTRUCTURE IN CHINA IS IMPROVING, SPURRED ON BY PREPARATIONS FOR THE 2008 BEIJING OLYMPICS IN AUGUST. AS THESE THREE COMPANIES JOCKEY FOR POSITION IN CHINA, TICKETMASTER, WITH ITS EMMA TICKETMASTER OPERATION AND A DEAL TO TICKET THE OLYMPICS, SEEMS TO HAVE THE EARLY LEAD.

WHILE CERTAINLY ACTIVE IN THE REGION, LIVE NATION SEEMS TO BE TAKING A MORE CAUTIOUS APPROACH. "CHINA IS NOT GOING TO BE ONE OF OUR TOP MARKETS FOR A WHILE, BUT IT'S A MARKET WITH GREAT POTENTIAL," LIVE NATION INTERNATIONAL MUSIC CEO ALAN RIDGEWAY SAYS, CITING THE 50 CITIES WITH POPULATIONS OF MORE THAN ONE MILLION AS POSITIVES. "AND KNOWLEDGE OF WESTERN ACTS IS GROWING ALL THE TIME."

Below, Billboard assesses each of the three major U.S. live entertainment players in the Chinese market.

TICKETMASTER
Ticketmaster's operations in China are run by Emma Ticketmaster founder/CEO Jonathan Krane, who founded Emma four years ago, focusing on the live events and ticketing markets in mainland China. Emma has now promoted shows by the Rolling Stones, Eric Clapton, Avril Lavigne, Linkin Park, Christina Aguilera and Beyoncé.

Headquartered in Shanghai and Beijing, Emma is a full-service ticketing operation in six cities now across China, with many venue partnerships in place. The Ticketmaster deal was completed last April and China marks the only market where Ticketmaster is both a ticketing company and a risk-taking promoter.

Ticketmaster's status as ticketer for the Olympics is strategically crucial. Emma will also produce and promote several Olympic celebration shows and related concerts, where Western acts are sure to appear. "There is big demand for anything international here," Krane says. "First-time events are very popular now."

Linkin Park's November 2007 sold-out in Shanghai showed an appetite for U.S. acts, though ticket-buying patterns demonstrate cultural differences. "On-sales have not been a lot in China. A lot of the tickets are typically bought within the last three weeks," Krane says, though that's changing. "At the on-sale on the first day we sold 10,000 tickets, which is great."

Larger markets like Shanghai and Beijing can support higher prices than the secondaries, Krane says, and some acts can make money right away by playing live in China. There are also significant sponsorship opportunities. "Every brand has a China strategy now," he says. "You also have a lot of strong Chinese companies and they're all interested in sponsoring live events."

Ticket distribution includes the same channels—online, outlets, phones, box office—as North America, but the allocation is different. "We're probably doing 10%-15% online, but that's a big jump from a couple of years ago when it was about 5%," Krane says.

Krane sees the upside of investing in live entertainment in China as massive and in his view, China will one day become the anchor market for Asian tours. That said, don't expect a big Chinese land rush for U.S. music companies. "There's a big learning curve. It's very relationship-driven—you can't just come here and have instant success," Krane says. "For any company entering China, it will definitely take three to five years to start establishing themselves, especially now that there's some early market entrants."

LIVE NATION
Live Nation's operations in the Far East include offices in Hong Kong, Singapore, Beijing and Shanghai that have promoted tours by acts as diverse as Roger Waters, the Cure, Christina Aguilera, Muse and Gwen Stefani. Live Nation also staged the 2007 Live Earth concert in Shanghai. The region is overseen by Live Nation senior VP of Pan-Asia Colleen Ironside, who reports to Ridgeway.

Live Nation strengthened its presence in Hong Kong in January by appointing Luke Heede director of booking for Asia. Heede was previously with leading Australian promoter, Dainty Consolidated Entertainment.

Ironside's "agreement to promote shows in Hong Kong and Singapore, and now she is booking shows into other parts of the region," Ridgeway says. "At the same time we were looking at joint ventures with various cities in China."

The latest news from Live Nation is that the company has developed a partnership with Chinese company Cosmedia Group to manage Hong Kong's new multipurpose outdoor Pop TV Arena (Zhong Tian Di). The 10,000-capacity venue in West Kowloon opens Jan. 23 with a series of concerts by Chinese superstar Jacky Cheung.

Establishing relationships with local artists and promoters is "key in a market like China," Ridgeway says. "Although some international acts go over there and are successful, the major part of the market is still very much the local artists."

Even so, Live Nation has successfully promoted such acts as Waters and Il Divo in China. Opportunities for Western artists are improving, Ridgeway says, as the country becomes Westernized, Internet penetration improves and international acts are discovered.

While Ridgeway and Live Nation view China as a market with great potential, "it's just going to take some time for the level of interest in Western acts to build up," he says. Competition in the promoter market will only improve artist paydays, he adds.

AEG
AEG and its live entertainment division AEG Live have been very aggressive in the United Kingdom and Europe, and the same seems to hold true for their plans in China.

"Our drive is to consult, design, build and operate venues throughout China in addition to bringing an abundant array of programming options," AEG Live CEO Randy Phillips says.

Ed Cunningham, formerly CEO of Clear Channel Entertainment Asia, is a veteran of doing business in China and oversees the company's initiatives from Beijing. He has visited and evaluated more than 80 Asian cities and is in the process of determining the sports, entertainment and media projects that will form the foundation of AEG's development in China.

Cunningham says China's high concentration of young people (355 million people between ages 15 and 29) makes live entertainment a compelling business and marketing opportunity. He says that AEG will develop in China "like it has in other international markets."

"Our arenas and entertainment districts in these leading cities are the culmination of years of strategic planning and discussions with the top political, cultural and business leaders of China," Cunningham says. AEG envisions a Chinese network of large-capacity arenas and entertainment districts comparable to those the company has developed in Los Angeles (L.A. Live), London (the O2) and Berlin (the O2 World).

"We have great confidence in our partners in China's major cities," Cunningham says, "and we are convinced that these large-scale venues will be the first step in creating an extensive network of premier entertainment centers and arenas to bring the best domestic and international events and competitions to all regions of China."
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Reality show producer Bunim-Murray is now managing bands, to the benefit of such clients as *A Cursive Memory.*

**The Real Deal**

Reality TV Producers Open Music Management Branch

Reality TV producer Bunim-Murray Productions is launching a music management division, M Music, with the goal of representing artists that could play just as well to the mass market as to MTV.

The first band signed to M is *A Cursive Memory,* a just-out-of-high-school pop act whose music has already appeared on Bunim-Murray's "The Simple Life." The group's first album, "Changes," arrives Feb. 19 via Vagrant.

With hit-the-jackpot reality successes like MTV's "The Real World" and E! Entertainment's "Keeping Up With the Kardashians," why would Bunim-Murray take the leap to the riskier world of artist management? For Bunim-Murray VP of music Dave Stone, it was a natural extension of his job of breaking undiscovered artists through their shows—for instance, he first placed a John Mayer track on "The Real World" in 2000.

Stone discovered *A Cursive Memory* on PureVolume.com several years ago and arranged a meeting with the band, only to discover that his chaplain that the members were a bunch of 14-year-olds. He promised to take them on once they finished high school. "I was hooked on these demos they did," he says.

"They figured out really early how to write some tremendous, hooky pop songs. It's been three years getting them some shows, being strategic and pacing them out. I wanted people to take them seriously." Stone produced "Changes" and shopped the album until it landed at Vagrant. "They're probably the most pop-leaning band we've ever worked with," Vagrant GM Dan Gill says. "I think what's amazing about these kids is that if you look at pop music today, it's so manufactured. These kids can really play and they can really write. A lot of younger bands in this day and age really don't have their chops."

*A Cursive Memory* just completed a tour with New Found Glory and is working on a music video for online distribution. For its TV debut on "The Simple Life," "all our families got together to watch and kind of geeked out," singer/guitarist Colin Baylen says. Up next, The band will be seen on a segment of MTV's "Real World/ Road Rules Challenge" as part of a promotion for Jessica Alba's next movie, "The Eye," which is produced by MTV's corporate sibling Paramount Vantage.

Bunim-Murray COO Gil Goldschein says the company wants to expand its music management division slowly, possibly adding just one more band to its roster in the coming year. And while *A Cursive Memory* is the current teacher's pet at Bunim-Murray, its music won't just be thrown into shows and random. "It has to make sense," he says. "It can't be contrived or forced in any way."

And with more than 30 music cues on any given episode of "The Real World," Bunim-Murray still wants to be the company that breaks all kinds of bands in front of a younger audience—not just the ones it represents.

"We have a strength in the area, so we said, "Sure, let's try this," " co-founder Jonathan Murray says of the new management division. "It felt like a natural outgrowth."

---

**Hot Seats**

What Ticketmaster's Acquisition Of TicketsNow Means For The Biz

Perhaps the slogan should be, "If you can't beat 'em, buy 'em."

The value of stabilizing and gaining market share in the secondary ticket market for Ticketmaster became very evident with the company's $265 million purchase agreement of TicketsNow (billboard biz, Jan. 15). The price alone is eye-opening and shows a market that is rapidly gaining value. Sources say TicketsNow sold roughly 1.8 million tickets in 2007; by comparison, eBay paid about $310 million to purchase secondary-market leader StubHub a year ago, when it sold an estimated 3.3 million tickets. (That number grew to more than 5 million in 2007, the company says.)

While he declined to discuss financials, Ticketmaster CEO Sean Moriarty says the acquisition is about giving fans and the industry what they want. "Fans want access to tickets at prices they're willing to pay in trusted environments," he says. "Performers want to participate as fully as they can—and they deserve to—in the economic value of the experience they're providing to fans. So it's inevitable that the industry has to find a way to provide for the needs of both."

When the deal is consummated as soon as the end of first-quarter 2008, Ticketmaster will endeavor to integrate TicketsNow into its own ticketing programs, including its secondary TicketExchange, so fans can simultaneously shop ticket availability and pricing in the primary, premium and resale categories.

Here are four key questions that arise in the wake of the Ticketmaster/TicketsNow deal:

**Why TicketsNow?**

Moriarty says Ticketmaster looked at several options and conducted a lot of research in the resale space before acquiring TicketsNow. He cites the TicketsNow team, the amount of time and effort spent building a network of quality resellers and the focus on providing a workable consumer experience as clinchers.

Launched in 1999 and based in Rolling Meadows, Ill., TicketsNow works with nearly 700 vetted, professional ticket resellers. "TicketsNow has built a good, solid, trusted brand as an online ticket marketplace. Moriarty says. "We want to enhance that. We want to see that business thrive."

*How TicketsNow will be integrated into Ticketmaster remains to be seen. 'We're going to figure out the right way to integrate,'* Moriarty says. "It's premature to say what the brand strategy will be across the various resale and premium options we currently offer."

With primary, secondary, premium, resale and other options available, a muddy marketplace is getting murkier. Moriarty says that's the nature of the beast.

"In the world we live in, a ton of choices can be daunting, but nevertheless we need a lot of choices," he says. "It's our job as a business to make sure we present what we think is going to be interesting and not confusing. It's our job to organize things."

**With resellers—some call them scalpers—now part of the Ticketmaster team, will Joe Ticket-buyer have an even harder time getting choice seats—or any seats?**

Moriarty says no. "There's a lot to be figured out, but there's absolutely no question that Ticketmaster will continue to take all of the steps it has been taking to provide for a safe and fair public allocation of tickets in the primary market," he says. "We've always been focused on that, and that position hasn't changed."

Of course, StubHub, currently involved in a legal suit with Ticketmaster, takes a different view. "This deal is incredibly contradictory to the position Ticketmaster has trumpeted in the past, suing companies that produce broker technology to acquire tickets (and setting geographic restrictions for ticket-on-sales, as well as limits on ticket purchases)," StubHub director of corporate communications Sean Pate says. "All of those measures are designed to thwart the ticket broker community."

Ticketmaster buys the largest ticket brokerage on the Internet?"" And as former thorns in its side become partners, Ticketmaster is in a position where it could potentially sell the same ticket—and collect the resulting fees—more than once.

The difference is, with Ticketmaster in the broker business, the primary market participates in that revenue.
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Sharing The Wealth

Will Sony BMG Norte's Vertical Integration Boost Business?

Sony BMG Norte's recent acquisition of a majority stake in Mexican entertainment management company Westwood Entertainment highlights yet again the very different way in which Latin labels are approaching their business.

Profiling sharing of ancillary revenue with artists and management is already standard practice within most Latin labels, and a virtually undisputed must when it comes to new signings, according to multiple industry sources.

Still, to date no label has been as bold in vertically integrating its operations as Sony BMG's U.S. Latin and Latin American labels.

Last year, Sony BMG launched Day 1 Entertainment, an internal talent development company that has various types of agreements with acts within Sony BMG, including full-fledged management.

Now, by actually owning a stake in Westwood, an outside firm that is one of the leading Latin management companies in the market, the ante is much higher.

Westwood co-founder Jorge Suárez says he and partner David West will retain full administrative and artistic control over their roster.

But for now, the alliance aims to "ensure that we have real support with several singles and in the entire [Latin] region with our acts. If they do well as artists, we will all do well."

Westwood's roster, most of it Sony BMG acts, includes Sin Bandera, Kalimba, Camila, Reyli and Reik. The company also represents producers and songwriters. Westwood has a publishing arm (which does not fall under the Sony BMG agreement) as well as concert promotion and booking businesses.

Most recently, it opened a commercial division that develops sponsorships and produces corporate events.

The company also represents a few artists from other labels, including Warner Music's Jesse & Joy, and stresses that non-Sony BMG acts will not be at a disadvantage.

In those cases, Suárez says, Westwood is striving to create individual partnerships with their respective labels. With Jesse & Joy, for example, Westwood shares Mexican concert revenue with Warner Mexico.

"When the fan base of an artist extends beyond the label, they are ours and we share in the success," Suárez says. "We are looking at a complete roster of acts."

"It's a win-win," says Ayan Badman, whose label, RLM, handles Alejandro Sanz and Miguel Bosé, among others ( neither of whom/RLM acts are for sale). "It's clear labels can't survive as they are but I don't think anyone knows what the future is."

"We believe we need to develop," says Rosa Lagarrigue, whose office, RLM, handles Alejandro Sanz and Miguel Bosé, among others ( neither of whom/RLM acts are for sale). "It's about the future."

While some record labels have been leading the way in the Latin market, Suárez says the future belongs to labels that have "a complete view of the business, not just the recording and的一切, but also the development, marketing, and merchandising."

He adds, "It's not just about the music, but about the artist's career and the business as a whole."

In-House Hits

DIY Spirit Blooms For A.R.C. Discos

Ramon Gonzalez Mora is known for penning hits for romantic norteño standard-bearer Conjunto Primavera. Making the transition to label owner hasn't been as easy, but A.R.C. Discos, which he founded in 2002, is enjoying its best Billboard chart showing so far.

"Como Olvidarte" by Linderos del Norte is climbing Billboard's regional Mexican airplay chart at No. 16 and is No. 39 on Hot Latin Songs.

Gonzalez Mora, who continues to write for such groups as Los Rieleros del Norte, Pesado and Bronco, says Linderos' success has to do with the gap in traditional romantic norteño left by Conjunto Primavera's embrace of a more pop-friendly sound, and by the rise of duranguense and other genres.

It's also the result of several years of hard work for Gonzalez Mora, who calls "school," in which he and his small San Antonio-based team learned a few lessons on running an independently distributed label.

First, focus on a few disciplined artists. A.R.C. survives mainly on Gonzalez Mora's publishing, and compilations and concert and much like Banda Maguey. But the company is focused on promoting two new acts this year: duranguense artist El Guero (Gonzalez Mora's nephew), who had two charting singles in 2006 and will release a new album in the coming weeks, and Linderos del Norte. Second, don't waste money on advertising and publicity. Third and perhaps most important, keep radio promotion in-house rather than outsourcing the task.

With "Como Olvidarte," he says, "we met with the key people in radio to have their opinion... we were in love with the album but we wanted the certainty that it wasn't just us."

Gonzalez Mora's business partner is Victor Mata, Conjunto Primavera's former artistic director, who co-produces the label's artists. The recordings are done at A.R.C.'s studio, and Mata manages the groups as well.

Though Gonzalez Mora's vast catalog (including "Como Olvidarte") is there for the artists to record, the idea isn't to solely revisit his work, as that would "bore the public," the 11-time BMI award winner says.

Pepe Garza, PO of KBUE/KBUJA (105.5/94.5 FM) Los Angeles and KQRR (96.1 FM) Riverside-San Bernardino, Calif., says accessible technology has leveled the playing field for those wanting to get into the recording, distribution and airplay game. Garza adds that Gonzalez Mora "is one of many who we are seeing in the regional Mexican genre" who are pursuing that endeavor with varying degrees of success.

"We're looking to develop," says Rosa Lagarrigue, whose office, RLM, handles Alejandro Sanz and Miguel Bosé, among others ( neither of whom/RLM acts are for sale). "It's clear labels can't survive as they are but I don't think anyone knows what the future is."

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Georgia On His Mind
Charlie Brusco Returns With Promoter Boomerang Live

Charlie Brusco is a survivor. Brusco—president of the Alliance Artists management company in Atlanta—and I first crossed paths in 1987 when he tipped me, a well-known Skynyrdhead, to the Lynyrd Skynyrd Tribute tour that went out later that year. Though Brusco no longer manages Skynyrd, the reunion certainly took hold. The group, now managed by Ross Schilling at Vector, remains a touring stalwart, and the reunion Brusco orchestrated has moved tons of tickets and grossed millions of dollars after more than 20 years. That's far longer than the original band lasted before its plane crashed in 1977.

Now Brusco has formed a joint venture with Chicago-based promoter Jam Productions and Nashville-based Outback Concerts called Boomerang Live that will book and promote concerts in the Atlanta region and program festivals (billboard.biz, Jan. 11). The company will exclusively book country roadhouse Wild Bill's in Atlanta and serve as a booking consultant for the Frederick Brown Amphitheatre in Peachtree City, Ga., a 2,400-capacity venue 55 miles south of Atlanta.

Boomerang also will be a strategic booking consultant for Jazz Aspen June 19-22 in Aspen, Colo., and Aug. 29-Sept. 1 in Snowmass, Colo., and the Sonoma (Calif.) Jazz Festival Memorial Day weekend.

"I'm very excited to be in business with [Jam founder] Arny Granat and Jerry Nickelson, who have been friends with me for over 30 years and promoted my acts in the Midwest for years," Brusco says. Outback founder "Mike Smadack is one of the more creative promoters out there."

Brusco still operates Alliance Artists, with Styx, "American Idol" alum Ace Young, the Outlaws, Survivor and Thin Lizzy as clients.

Brusco's days with the Outlaws date back to 1973 in Tampa, Fla., when he managed the band and helped it nail down its first record deal on Clive Davis' Arista Records in 1975.

Brusco says he and the Outlaws were out in '75 doing one of thousands of shows they traveled to in a copper-colored Econoline van when the act's agent, Terry Rhodes (now at ICM), landed it $590 to open for the Rolling Stones in Louisville, Ky. That led to more dates with the Stones, and by the next year the Outlaws were on big Southern rock packages like the one I saw at Nashville's Municipal Auditorium also featuring Elvin Bishop and the Marshall Tucker Band.

Despite the sad loss of founding guitarist Huey Thomasson last year, the Outlaws will tour in 2008. Monty Yoho and Henry Paul are the lone holdovers from the original five Brusco accompanied in the copper van. They're out with new music and the Brick.

For 24/7 touring news and analysis, see billboard.biz/touring.
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**Take That**

- **Hannah Montana/Miley Cyrus, Jonas Brothers**
- **Chris Rock, Mario Joyner, Biz Markie, Jill Scott**
- **Jacky Cheung**
- **Hannah Montana/Miley Cyrus, Jonas Brothers**
- **George Strait, Little Big Town, Sarah John**
- **Van Morrison, Shana Morrison**
- **Hannah Montana/Miley Cyrus, Jonas Brothers**
- **BARRY MANILOW**
- **Hannah Montana/Miley Cyrus, Jonas Brothers**
- **KROQ Almost Acoustic Christmas: Linkin Park, Muse & Others**
- **Hannah Montana/Miley Cyrus, Jonas Brothers**
- **Chris Brown, Bow Wow, Soulja Boy, Lil' Mama**
- **Hannah Montana/Miley Cyrus, Jonas Brothers**
- **Hannah Montana/Miley Cyrus, Jonas Brothers**

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**WHEN'S THE LAST TIME SOMEONE FROM THE AUDIENCE SAID, "I'LL NEVER FORGET YOU GUYS AS LONG AS I LIVE."?**

Five Star Iris on tour for Armed Forces Entertainment in Southwest Asia

"After our show in Ramadi, Iraq, a soldier told us that it had been seven months since he had gotten his last 'fix' of live music. Although he had never heard of our music, he said our show had taken his mind off things and let him just relax — he cleared roadside bombs every day. After another show a soldier told us, 'I'll never forget you guys as long as I live.' As a performer, you don't often get to hear things like that, but on an Armed Forces Entertainment tour you hear it a lot and it's humbling. Until you've done it, it's hard to comprehend how just playing your music can have such a profound effect on these people."

— ALAN SCHAEFFER, LEAD SINGER — FIVE STAR IRIS

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Copyright issues on both sides of the Atlantic are piquing the interest of music lawyers in the latest strategies of digital music services. In the United States, the Digital Media Assn.'s petition in a copyright proceeding to clarify publishers' rights in streamed music might be an attempt to take advantage of copyright loopholes. In Europe, reports that Apple is lowering U.K. iTunes prices to pre-empt regulatory action by the European Commission are seen by some as a way to exert price pressure on labels. The EC actually dropped its investigation because it found no unlawful activity.

Trial in the U.S. Copyright Royalty Board proceeding will begin in this month to decide mechanical and digital phonorecord delivery (DPD) rates for compositions subject to the compulsory license under section 115 of the Copyright Act. On Jan. 7, DiMA petitioned the CRB to refer a "novel" question of law to the Register of Copyrights, Marybeth Peters, for a decision about streaming.

A DiMA press release and sources close to digital services say that the companies believe they should only pay a performance royalty for streams—not performance and reproduction royalties. But the question in the petition doesn't focus on the reproduction right under copyright law. Instead, DiMA asks whether a stream is a DPD under section 115. This phrasing raises questions of whether a "no" response will lead services through some not-so-obvious copyright loopholes that could be detrimental to copyright holders. At press time, briefs by publishers were not yet filed.

Under copyright law, "phonorecords" are material objects (but not audiovisual works) in which sounds are fixed and from which the sounds can be perceived, reproduced or communicated. A DPD is a delivery of a phonorecord by digital transmission that results in a specifically identifiable reproduction by—or for—a recipient regardless of whether the transmission is also a public performance of the sound recording or the composition.

But a DPD does not result from a real-time, noninteractive subscription transmission of a recording where no reproduction of the recording or the composition is made from the inception of the transmission through to its recipient in order to make the recording audible.

Past conversations with the Copyright Office indicated a leaning toward the position that streams are not subject to the section 115 compulsory license. But how Peters would decide the issue now will depend on how the CRB judges—not the parties—phrase the questions.

Sources close to CRB proceedings say that on two occasions, the judges referred questions to Peters that were phrased differently from the way the parties presented them in their petitions. A question about a DPD may have a different result from one about the reproduction right in streaming.

The only sure thing is that the result will affect how much—if any—of the more than $7 million sitting in an escrow account will eventually be distributed to publishers. Meanwhile, in Europe, some lawyers view Apple as attempting to portray a closed EC investigation as a requirement for labels to lower prices. Last April, the EC competition unit said it had sent a Statement of Objections to major record companies and Apple over their agreements "that restrict music sales." It claimed that the contracts violated treaty rules prohibiting restrictive business practices; Consumers could only buy music from the iTunes store in their resident country, which restricted their choice of where to buy music, what music was available and at what price. U.K. prices were about 10% higher than those in continental Europe.

But unlike European Union competition law that seeks to equalize trade throughout Europe, copyright law permits per-territory restrictions and price variations (Billboard, April 21, 2007). And labels weren't setting prices; Apple set the amounts it would pay for music, sources say.

The EC figured this out. But on Jan. 9 in press releases, Apple promised to standardize EU prices while the EC praised Apple's decision—even though it found no unlawful activity.

The EC stated that there was no agreement between major labels and Apple regarding how the iTunes store is organized in Europe. Instead, the "structure of the iTunes store is chosen by Apple to take into account the country-specific aspects of copyright laws." Translation: The parties did nothing wrong, case closed.

Still, Apple seemed to act as if it were complying with some regulatory mandate to lower U.K. prices—and stated that it would "reconsider its continuing relationship in the U.K. with any record label that does not lower its wholesale prices in the U.K. to the Pan-European level within six months."

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Serving The Scene

L.A. Club The Smell Celebrates 10 Years, While Seattle's Crocodile Café RIPS At 16

In the last month, two very different West Coast live music venues have met two very different fates.

In Los Angeles, the absolutely DIY noise and punk outpost The Smell celebrated its 10th anniversary with a series of shows featuring scene stalwarts like No Age and Abe Vigoda. In Seattle, however, music fans mourned the sudden closing of the Crocodile Café, the 16-year-old space, which was heralded as the "living room of grunge," closed unexpectedly Dec. 16.

In an age where clubs seem to come and go in the blink of an eye, one that remains open into its teens is a rare beast, and one worth studying. I spoke to a number of fans, performers, volunteers and employees associated with the venues, all of whom stressed one simple, common theme about them: community.

Cameron Elliott, whose band Battle Hymns played at the Croc on a number of occasions, credited the club's long life to the fact that "the employees really cared about the place and tried hard to make every show a good experience." The security guys were great, they were chill and always treated people well." He also notes to the club's focus on booking local bands and curating strong, diverse bills. Devotees of the Smell, 1,150 miles to the south, told almost identical stories. Josh Harper, an Oakland, Calif. librarian who spent many years working and playing at the Smell, says the single biggest reason the place has survived is that "kids get involved, and they get really invested in keeping the space open and making it better." Unlike the Crocodile, The Smell is an all-ages venue, and relies on an army of volunteers, rather than paid staff, to run the shows.

Because the Smell is alcohol-free, "you get the sense that it exists as a place for music, not just a place to sell you booze," says George Chen, a Bay Area show promoter and musician who has frequently played the Smell. He also points to the level of attention paid to the booking as another reason for the space's success.

"The bands that play the Smell have a lot of say in who plays on bills with them, and they take their curatorial role seriously," he says. "Shows there never feel like a bunch of random bands thrown together.

"The Smell nurtures bands, and they come up through the club," Chen adds. One of those bands is No Age, a twenty-something skate punk duo that recently signed to Sub Pop. Members of the band have been playing the Smell since high school, and Chen says the club is "Junior's Crocodile," the venue's nickname.

While running community-focused venues certainly won't make anyone rich, it will make a music scene richer. After all, would a story like the following, one of the many I received from Smell devotees, ever come out of a corporate space with Blackwater-style security?

"My band brought a bunch of old LPs down to one show and we gave them to the crowd to do whatever they wanted," musician Noo Von Harmonson recalls. "Turns out they wanted to throw them around the room like frisbees. At one point there must have been over 50 LPs careening dangerously through the air at the same time. Total chaos. Thing is, nobody got hurt and everyone was ecstatic while it happened. Afterwards, we borrowed a push broom to sweep up the carnage."

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Many in the local biz see the buzz around the Courteeners and the Ting Tings—both of whom have generated substantial coverage in the U.K. music press and have signed major-label deals (see story, this page)—as clear evidence of the city's musical renaissance. Other acts on the up include all-rock band Twisted Wheel, dance act the Whip and singer/songwriter Karima Francis.

"Manchester is where it's honest at the moment in terms of new music," says Danny McNamara, singer with independent-signed British band Embrace and promoter of Manchester live-music night the Aftershow, which hosted early gigs from many of the new wave of local acts. The weekly residency has recently moved from the Sankeys Soap venue in Ancoats, on the city's outskirts, to the centrally-located Moho.

"There's a mass of fantastic bands coming from there," McNamara adds. "And while, for maybe the last five or 10 years, Manchester has lived in the shadow of its past, there's now a whole wave of bands that don't owe any debt to what's gone before."

Local execs say a key factor in the city's rejuvenation has been an increase in the number of gigs taking place. Reflecting the nationwide boom in live music, several new venues have either opened or reopened within the past two years, the largest being the 10,490-capacity Manchester Central (formerly G-MEX).

Meanwhile, the 16,000-capacity MEN Arena provided one of 2007's top 20 worldwide Billboard Boxscores, with its run of shows by Kylie Minogue grossing almost $8 million. "The volume of shows now coming through Manchester is greater than ever before," says Matt Woodlaiscraft of promoter SJM Concerts. "Manchester is very well-equipped in terms of quality venues. Other than London, it is probably the best set-up city in the country for live music. In line with the DIY ethic that has characterized the Manchester music scene since the days of the Buzzcocks and the launch of Tony Wilson's Factory Records, locals say the high number of independent labels based in the city has helped cultivate a support network for musicians. Current key local labels include Melodic (home to all-rock act the Long Cut), Akoostik Anarkhy Recordings (nu-folk artist Neil Burrell) and Switchflicker Recordings, which released the Ting Tings' first single. "There's always been a good DIY underground scene in Manchester," Akoostik Anarkhy director Will Lawrence says. "We've never really been bothered about what the music industry is doing or fashion. People always want to find interesting music, and we're in a better position than ever to bring that through."

Many cite the launch of modern rock radio station XFM Manchester in March 2006—supplementing the city's existing alternative music broadcasters, BBC Manchester and 96.2 Revolution—as providing increased exposure for local acts through airplay and sponsored gigs.

"In British music at the moment there's a real devolution of power from the London media center," says James Oldham, head of A&R for Universal imprint A&M Records and managing director of London-based Look Records, home of the Courteeners. "People in Manchester have just decided to seize the moment."

"It's a really exciting time to be involved in Manchester music," says Jon-Paul Waddington, GM of In the City, the United Kingdom's largest music convention, which takes place annually in Manchester. "A variety of different little things have happened to create this grass-roots movement, and there's a lot of new, unsigned bands in Manchester at the moment who are just the right pig away from getting signed."

THE COURTEENERS

THE TING TINGS

THE COURTEENERS

THE TING TINGS

Twisted Wheel

Label: unsigned
Booking agent: 13 Artists, Brighton (worldwide, excluding North America)
The buzz band of 2007's in the City confab, Twisted Wheel combines punk energy with catchy melodies and the deft observational lyrics of 21-year-old singer/songwriter Jonny Brown. Yet to release a record, the alt-rock trio has been subject to U.K. A&R bidding war and has built a strong live following throughout the north of England. Set to tour the United Kingdom as support to Reverend and the Makers in February, the band is managed by Manchester-based Kevin Brown.

> POP GOES THE BRITS

Pop acts dominate this year's BRIT Awards nominations, with Leona Lewis, Mika and Take That each up for four awards. Alt-rock acts Arctic Monkeys and Kaiser Chiefs both scored three nominations when the list was unveiled Jan. 14, as did producer/artist Mark Ronson and singer/songwriter Kate Nash. The Eagles scored two international nominations following the success of their comeback album, "Long Road Out of Eden" (Polydor). The BRIT Awards ceremony will take place Feb. 20 at London's Earls Court arena, televised live by ITV1. Confirmed performers include Kaiser Chiefs, Kylie Minogue, Ronson, Mika and Rihanna. Outstanding contribution to music honoree Paul McCartney will perform at the end of the ceremony. An industry/media panel votes on the majority of the 13 categories.

> SIAE SWITCHES STATUS

Italian collecting society SIAE says it has secured its independence, after the Italian government officially recognized the authors body's status as an "economic public entity." The Italian Senate's Culture Commission has approved legislation that effectively frees the society from economic limitations imposed when it was placed under the rule of a special government commissioner in 1999. The society, founded in 1881, is now able to function as an independent enterprise. The government's commissioner-ship ended in 2003, but the resignation of SIAE president Franco Migliacci in May 2005 had led many members to fear that it would return to overall state control.
Academy Preps Growth

LONDON—U.K. venue operator Academy Music Group is empire-building. In the coming months the company will extend its portfolio by three venues, giving it 14 sites with capacities ranging from 250 (Bar Academy Islington) to 5,000 (Carling Academy Brixton).

AMG CEO John Northcote says his vision is to become “the dominant medium-sized player” in the U.K. live sector.

On April 11, British alternative act Reverend & the Makers will open AMG’s Carling Academy venue in its native Sheffield after a £1 million ($1.9 million) redevelopment of the former Roxy nightclub. This fall, AMG reopens Brighton’s Hippodrome venue, and it is also revamping Leeds’ former Town and Country Club. At least three new sites, all likely to be outside the capital, are planned for 2009, Northcote says.

Northcote says one attraction of the AMG format for agents/promoters is having a smaller “second room” for new and emerging acts. London-based agent Mike Greek of Creative Artists Agency—who represents acts including KT Tunstall, Arcade Fire and Franz Ferdinand—agrees, praising AMG venues for being “flexible.”

“You can upgrade in a lot of them, so you can maximize your income,” he says, adding: “AMG actually do good local marketing, which makes them an easier venue to sell tickets for.”

While Greek says that “the majority of artists think the AMG venues are excellent,” he concedes that they “are not to every artist’s taste: some people think they’re too clinical and too corporate.”

Melvin Benn, managing director of Festival Republic, which books the Reading and Leeds Festivals and controls London’s Astoria venue, is another admirer. “The company is going from strength to strength, with a very specific strategy of style and size of venue,” he says.

Northcote has run the Academy venues since 2000 and created AMG through a management buyout of their owner McKernie Group in August 2004. The previous year, he struck a long-term deal with brewer Carling, including title sponsorship of selected venues.

In March 2007, Live Nation/Gaiety Holdings took a majority stake in AMG after buying out private equity AMG’s Oxford Academy is one of a growing number of club- and mid-level venues in the United Kingdom.

A December survey from the British government’s Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) found that live music in England and Wales generated £1.04 billion ($1.5 billion) of revenue in 2007, up 8% from 2006. Northcote expects that vibrancy to last. “Things can’t continue growing at such a huge rate,” he says, “but I’d forecast annual growth for at least five years.” The DCMS survey also found that only 28% of U.K. adults claimed to have attended a live concert in the past year. “The majority of people in this country still haven’t been to a live gig,” Northcote says. “[It’s] from an industry perspective, as opposed to trying to take a bigger slice of the cake, why don’t we make the cake bigger?”

Key to that—and AMG’s success—Northcote suggests, is improving audience facilities. “I’ve tried,” he says, “to take venues away from that old black room with a stage at one end, a bar serving warm beer down the other and queues at the toilet, into the 21st century.”

Additional reporting by Tom Ferguson in London.
Showdown At The EMI Corral
Inside Guy Hands' London Meeting With Artist Managers

LONDON—Guy Hands appears to have headed off the prospect of a widespread artist revolt at EMI after meeting with more than 100 of the label's artists and managers. The Jan. 15 showdown at EMI's Wrights Lane headquarters in Kensington, west London, came just days after his regime's ability to fully handle big releases was questioned by Robbie Williams' manager, Tim Clark of iei: music, and Coldplay's manager, David Holmes of 3D Management (billboard.biz, Jan. 11).

The managers' meeting came later in the same day of Hands' presentation to EMI staff, when he outlined plans for up to 2,500 job cuts and the merging of key support activities (sales, marketing, manufacturing and distribution) into a single division with a unified global leadership, with the labels solely focused on A&R.

After speaking to several attendeess, Billboard can reveal the content of the meeting.

The 4:30 p.m. presentation was held in the main meeting room at Wrights Lane, but so many people turned up that the crowd spilled out into the staff canteen. Bosses had reportedly expected only 50 attendees, but the true number was more than double that. EMI staff watched from the glass offices surrounding the canteen, trying to spot famous faces below. A scattering of artists did turn up, but no superstars—the most high-profile name was Romeo Stodart of U.K. alternative act the Magic Numbers. Hands kept them all waiting, arriving about 15 minutes late.

"The atmosphere was nervous, anticipatory—and a few people were definitely antagonistic towards him," says Jonathan Shalit, who represents Myleene Klass, a former member of pop band Hear'Say, now signed as a classical crossover artist to EMI's Angel label.

Clark did not attend, as he was in Los Angeles with Williams, but his management partner David Enthoven kept a low profile toward the back of the crowd.

Another vocal critic, Jazz Summers, manager of EMI signings the Verve and Badly Drawn Boy, sat in the middle of the throng. Ellis Morris, who handles Blur and Gorillaz, sat near the front for Hands' 20-minute address, delivered without the aid of a PA system. Steven Howard (Bryan Ferry), Tony Smith (Genesis), Pal Loality (David Gilmour), Alec McKinley (Crowded House) and EMI execs JF Cecillion, Terry Felgut and Miles Leonard were among other high-profile attendees.

Many had gathered in different circumstances the previous Friday at EMI U.K. & Ireland chairman/CEO Tony Wadsworth's farewell party at Abbey Road studios, where Blur's Damon Albarn had given a parting speech and the presence of two members of Radiohead—no longer part of EMI's roster—were seen by many as a ringing endorsement of the old regime from the artist community.

Hands' plan to split EMI's A&R and business functions went down well with most.

HANDSON DECK
Venture Capitalist Unveils His Vision For Turning Around EMI

Guy Hands has a strong track record of salvaging ailing businesses, but his previous adventures in highway service stations and cinemas kicked up few of the problems that have dogged his first six months at the helm of EMI. After a succession of controversial leaked memos, high-profile firings and public rows with artist managers, this week he finally delivered his vision for the troubled British major in a series of presentations to staff—a vision that involves up to 2,000 job cuts, the jettisoning of hundreds of artists and the separation of A&R and business functions.

Ironically for a man so keen on making cost efficiencies, he arrives at the Billboard interview flanked by no fewer than five publicists, but he's far from the sneering capitalist enforcing his detractors often seek to portray him as. Softly spoken, with a hint of a lisp, he seems genuinely touched by his reception—he left his meeting with artist managers just moments before we speak, sent on his way by a decent round of applause—and keen to seek the British common ground of soccer-related banter.

A fan of Manchester United, England's most successful team in recent years, he nonetheless prefers to compare himself tolegendary maverick coach Brian Clough, who took unfashionable club Nottingham Forest to domestic and European glory.

"He was the most successful manager ever, based on money spent vs. trophies won," he says with a smile. "And, of course, he was very controversial too."

How do you feel your presentations were received?
No one had to applaud, so the fact that they approached was very kind. From the point of view of the employees, it's a very, very tough day when you tell people 1,500 jobs are going to go, but they were very attentive. A number of them said to me afterwards that this is something that should have been done in the recorded-music industry years ago. They said, "We've been living on borrowed time and now it's been a very tough day when you face up, and we're pleased, proud that EMI's the first to face it up to it."

With the artists and artist managers, we were very open with them and told them exactly what's happening, how we're going to review the business, the fact that we want to work together with them and that this is about creating a better business for their artists and they appreciated that. They're a tough crowd, but a demanding, intelligent, dedicated crowd and it's their livelihoods—when you talk to anyone about their livelihoods they tend to have strong feelings.

What strategies that work elsewhere in business can you apply to EMI?
It comes down to the big-picture issues. You've got to have a company where everybody's working together. You can't have a company where you've got fiefdoms or you've got a misalignment of interest. The "one company, several cultures" rule is very true—you can have cultural variations but you've got to have some set rules in terms of how things work. The skill is to try to balance the things that need to be organized professionally and centrally with the things that need to be done creatively at a local level.

Getting an organization to work is like trying to play the piano. Everyone has to agree where the notes are and that you hit hard for loud and soft for quiet, but once you've learned how to play it's up to you what order you play the notes in. You've got to get the organization to have some set rules and understanding of what they're trying to do and get the best services you can provide.

Is EMI not doing that at the moment?
EMI's doing it as well as, and in certain cases, better than other labels, but the label industry is still living effectively in the '90s. It hasn't understood what digitalization means, it hasn't understood what the consumer change has meant.

The consumer is very important—you can't push things to them anymore. You need pull. And to get pull you need a very different approach to how you market, how you sell, how you use digital, and that change needs to happen to the industry as a whole. A number of artist managers have said to me, "All that's happening is EMI sticking its head up and saying, 'We need to change.'" The others are going to be right behind, they just wanted someone else to go first.

Will splitting the creative and business functions, and removing the label group approach, not run the risk of developing the fiefdoms and different cultures you're keen to avoid?
I don't think so. Because what you're going to do is, on an artist level, develop a team. At the moment, to some extent you've been pushing people to work together and you've been doing it through the fact that the label head controls everyone. They all have to report to him, he controls whether they stay or go, what they get paid, what happens to them, so they don't effectively have real independence to say what they think is possible. What this [new approach] means is, at the point where a team says, "This is what we're doing," the whole team is ergo all by itself.

If they're not going to happen—you'll say no. If we believe in a certain marketing strategy works, it'll be the A&R guy and the marketing people and the
EMI's 2007 HIT LIST

Last year the label delivered one platinum artist.

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<th>Artist(s)</th>
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Source: Nielsen SoundScan, 2007 data.
Growing Pains
How Will Digital Revenue Blossom in 2008?

By Antony Bruno

DIGITAL

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DIGITAL ENTERTAINMENT

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In Step With Insound

Buying Into WMG's Online Retail Acquisition

When a label starts selling directly to consumers or when a retailer and a label get in bed together, generally it raises suspicions that other labels and retailers will no longer be on a level playing field.

Even though the majors failed in their initial attempts to sell directly to consumers in the early days of digital distribution, it hasn't stopped them or others from exploring new ways of redefining those functions. In fact, if anything, the last year clearly shows that all types of industry participants will be blending, crossing and blurring the lines of what kind of role they will play in the emerging new world order. In other words, there will be a lot of uncertainty and suspicions among business partners as each new deal rolls out.

Recently, the Alternative Distribution Alliance, Warner Music Group's independent distributor, bought Insound.com, an online store specializing in the indie-rock lifestyle. Terms of the deal weren't disclosed.

Insound, founded in 1998, sells CDs, vinyl, digital downloads, posters, record players, phonograph needles and T-shirts.

ADA management; only too aware of all I outlined in the first two paragraphs of this column, immediately moved to alert indie customers that this deal would not affect the level playing field. In fact, executives at ADA and Insound swear that there will be a solid separation of church and state, or in this case, distribution company and retailer.

Insound co-founder Matt Wishnow says that ADA and Insound "are both really intent and vigilant that the two businesses' core principals remain intact. We will continue to work with a lot of other distributors because we want to carry the best product that makes sense for merchandising our site."

Historically, its best-selling product comes from such labels as Matador, Merge, Sub Pop and Secretly Canadian, Wishnow says. But even with that, a lot of the store's big breakout records were by bands not yet with labels, like Clap Your Hands Say Yeah and Yeah Yeah Yeahs.

Nevertheless, he adds, ADA wants to make sure that Insound is buying on the same terms as other retailers. Besides, he points out that "any time a vendor gets into our space, they will instantly realize the value that retail adds."

ADA executive VP Mitch Wolk says that not only will the distributor maintain an equal playing field with all retailers, but one of the main motivations for doing the deal was to provide better service for ADA distributed labels and its retailers.

Wolk says the deal will help ADA accommodate the shifts within the industry and digital growth. And it will build an infrastructure for the different kinds of accounts ADA deals with, from the mobile-service providers to the digital download stores to nontraditional merchants and social networking sites.

One thing that Wolk says he hopes the deal will make possible is that other independent stores will be able to open digital download stores—one of the capabilities that Insound has.

Notice Wolk used the word "hope." He doesn't want to overpromise.

Wishnow co-founded Insound with Ari Sass after the two left Elektra when they were 23 years old. While initially setting up fulfillment through AEC, within six months, they were sourcing product from indie labels and distributors, particularly for vinyl. The site also searched out micro-indie labels that were totally undistributed, Wishnow says. And sourcing the right T-shirts—one difficult—is now a very rewarding part of the site's business.

"Once we figured out our core business, we brought fulfillment in-house, and nowadays we ship 90% of what we sell to ourselves from our 7,000-square-foot office/warehouse space in Manhattan," Wishnow says.

Physical music product is the lion's share of what the site sells. The company began its digital offering in late 2006, but it really got its feet in the digital door last year.

"We built the digital distribution system ourselves because there is nothing we like better than to be able to sell basically any format, digital, CD, vinyl and a poster to our customer in a single shopping cart at checkout," Wishnow says.

All this being said, the deal with ADA will help the company grow. "Initially our aspirations and creativity spanned our resources, but this deal will give us the opportunity that they deserve," Wishnow says.

\( \text{www.americanradiohistory.com} \)
Why has music increased in importance at the festival? It's a film festival, and people are there to see films—but there is a subculture of people who come to Sundance who are primarily interested in music. I think we've been successful in our programming and judicious in who we invite to come, but I think it's also just the growing awareness. I'd like to think that we've been successful as far as getting our message out about the importance of film and music.

What events do you have on tap for this year? Each year I curate an evening, and this year it's Sunday, Jan. 20, where we try to find performers who have music in films at the festival and we do an evening where several of them perform. We like to present a range of people who are not as well-known to people who are well-known, to both bring in an audience and make for lively programming. This year we have three performances. The first is a group called the Everyothers, who have music in the film "The Guitar," directed by Amy Redford. They will start on Sunday at 8 p.m., and they will be followed by Michel Gondry, who directed the film "Be Kind Rewind." He's a drummer, and he will be joined by his composer, Jean-Michel Bernard, and special guest Mos Def in a performance of Fats Waller songs. That'll be amazing. And then the evening will end with a performance by Patti Smith and her band. There's a film about her in the festival and she'll be there, so we asked her to perform and she happily said yes. That'll be held at the Sundance House right off of Main Street. There's also the Music Café, which is programmed and sponsored by ASCAP. They have day after day of amazing singer-songwriters, some of whom might be related to films, but some of whom aren't. That's a real great chance for people who want a break from seeing films to go and get warm and have a drink or a coffee and listen to some incredible live music.

Is it difficult to get these big-ticket performers to come to Utah? Sometimes the logistics are hard if they're not coming to the festival, but if they're coming anyway and they're involved in a film, then it's kind of the perfect synergy to get them to perform.

What about music-oriented panels that people can attend? On the morning of Wednesday, Jan. 23, there will be a round-table discussion that's sponsored by BMI that will involve composers and directors who have films in the festival. Mark Mothersbaugh is going to be there, and I'm going to be on that panel, as well as George S. Clinton. Wednesday night, BMI sponsors an evening showcase of performers. I know they have DeVotchKa and a couple of other performers playing.

Why has Sundance become such a hub for musicians? I think everybody is looking for work. Either a composer wants someone to hear their work, presumably a director or producer, and say, "Oh, wow! That would be really cool in my film!" I think agents are there listening, looking to see who is new and exciting. Labels are coming to see if there are bands and songs that are jumping out that are undiscovered. There are just so many films with so much music that there is a lot of opportunity for finding something that's new and exciting.

What do artists need to do to make a splash at Sundance? It's hard to answer that question. I guess, because so much happens at Sundance, it's very serendipitous. Something that you didn't think was going to be a big deal ends up being a big deal—and you never know in advance who's where something amazing is going to happen. It's just kind of the luck of the moment.

And, of course, there are the movies. What films should music lovers keep an eye out for this year? There are films that have very well-known, high-profile composers that have done scores for them. And some of them are small films—there's a film called "The Visitor," which has a score by Jan Kaczmarek. Carter Burwell, who does all the Coen Brothers films, is represented by the opening-night film called "In Bruges," directed by Martin McDonough. Christopher Young, an amazingly good film composer, has a film called "Sleepwalking." Thomas Newman, who did "American Beauty" and "The Shawshank Redemption," did "Towelhead," the Alan Ball film. Mark Mothersbaugh has "Quad Pro Quo." Michael Nyman has a film called "Man on Wire" about the tightrope walker Philippe Petit. Some of the busiest, most accomplished film composers today are represented at the festival.

What is an exciting film genre to you? I think the concert film is a genre that has grown and is in the hands of very imaginative filmmakers. The idea has really grown as to what is possible as a film—not just as a document of a concert—but as a film in and of itself. There's a film this year about U2, and there is a "Crosby, Stills & Nash film. There's a lot of great stuff happening in documentaries about music.

The film festival runs for 10 days each January—what are your duties the rest of the year? Most of what I do at Sundance involves running a summer workshop called the Sundance Composer's Lab, which is a program for composers and film directors, giving them a chance to learn about the process of putting music to their films. It's a pretty intensive two-and-a-half weeks for the composers involved. We select six composers, and they work not only with these directors, but with an outstanding and inspiring group of composers who serve as mentors.

That kind of forms the background of what we're trying to do at the festival. We're really trying to highlight the important role that music plays in film.
Aretha Franklin
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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2008

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ROY HARGROVE • FAITH HILL • LEDISI • JOHN LEGEND • LIL’ MAMA
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A live auction of celebrity memorabilia and exclusive VIP experiences will be conducted by Julien's Auctions to benefit MusiCares. The auction will be streamed live on AuctionNetwork.com. Join the live audience by visiting www.juliensauctions.com to register for online or phone bidding.
AS THE CROW FLIES
Talks New Album, New Baby And New Life In Nashville With Sheryl Crow
DESPITE THE COMFORT of her surroundings—a warm and tastefully decorated den dominated by a fireplace on one wall and windows that look out over her front 40 on another—Sheryl Crow is clearly not comfortable. It’s not the soon-to-be-solar-and-wind-powered house or the guest that makes her edgy—although she does allow that she’d love to be holding her young son, who instead was being put down for a nap by a nanny.

It’s that after a trying three years, Crow is eager to share just what’s been going on in her life and what she sees going on in the world. A lot of has happened since her fifth studio album, “Wildflower,” hit stores in September 2005. Her very public relationship and engagement with champion cyclist Lance Armstrong came to an end in early 2006, and soon thereafter Crow was diagnosed with breast cancer.

And just weeks before “Wildflower” was released—to mixed reviews and sales well below those of her past efforts—Hurricane Katrina wrought its lasting damage upon New Orleans and the surrounding area. Crow’s thoughts on the aftermath of that tragedy as well as the ongoing war in Iraq, politics and the environment are all addressed on “Detours,” her new A&M album due Feb. 5.

But the new set is not just about the past. Indeed, it also represents new beginnings and the return of an old friend. In the spring of 2007, Crow became a single mother when she adopted a 2-week-old baby boy, Wyatt Steven. Just months earlier, in October 2006, she had moved to a 150-acre farm 45 minutes outside of Nashville, in the rolling hills of Williamson County. After living for years in Los Angeles and then in Texas with Armstrong, Crow made the move, she says, to be closer to family. (Older sister Kathy lives in Nashville, and Crow’s hometown of Kennett, Mo., is approximately 200 miles to the west.)

The new record also marks the first time she has collaborated with songwriter/producer Bill Bottrell since the two became estranged after the release of her 1993 multiplatinum debut, “Tuesday Night Music Club.” Bottrell says when the two re-united, “it was like no time had passed. Musically, we still had the connection we always had.”

It was on her farm, in a studio she built on the ground floor, that Crow, Bottrell and a small group of musicians created “Detours.” While Crow and Bottrell both brought ideas to the table, much of the album was written as it was recorded, “which is the way we always worked,” Bottrell says. “We write and start demoing and then the demo eventually becomes the master.” The 14-cut album is a wakeup call for Crow and for anyone listening. “I wanted to knock on some doors and wake some people up and just say, ‘What the heck are we doing?’” she says. “‘Where did we go? What did we become? We’re like zombies in “Invasion of the Body Snatchers.”’”

If a wakeup call was her goal, she succeeded masterfully. While “God Bless This Mess” addresses current and recent political developments, the bouncy but impactful single “Love Is Free” fetes the people of New Orleans and their stoicism. “Peace Be Upon Us” pleads for understanding in a world that contends that one god is better than another. Elsewhere, “Gone” (“Drunk With the Thought of You”) and “Diamond Ring” seem to address at least some aspects of her relationship with Armstrong. Even young Wyatt makes an appearance via “Lullaby for Wyatt.”

For an artist who has been so commercially successful for so long (see chart, page 31), Crow’s last album, “Wildflower,” was not the multiplatinum success its predecessors had been. “Sheryl made an album that was very important for her to make,” Interscope Geffen A&M president of sales and marketing Steve Berman says. “It’s an album we’re very proud of and stand behind. Her fans came out and supported her, but it didn’t spread past that.”

But Berman says the label is “very, very excited” about the decidedly more commercial, yet personally and socially important set.

While first single “Love Is Free” is at radio now—it’s No. 17 on Billboard’s Triple A chart—exposure for the new album started months ago.

In an innovative move, four videos will have been released in advance of the album. “Lullaby for Wyatt” and “Shine Over Babylon” were distributed virally via YouTube in November, while “God Bless This Mess” will bow right before “Detours” comes out. “Love Is Free” is available on the Internet and via traditional outlets.

“Lullaby” was also included in the new film “Grace Is Gone,” which stars John Cusack. Crow appeared and performed new material on “CNN Heroes: An All-Star Tribute” and CBS’ “A Home for the Holidays” December as well as “Ellen’s Really Big Show” on TBS in November. She also appeared on PBS’ “Sesame Street” for the second time.

“We have a traditional single campaign that we’re very committed to, but we’re also putting the music out in as many places as we can for people to see it, touch it, feel it and most importantly, hear it,” Berman says.

Besides the traditional outlets, Crow’s album will be carried in Starbucks and Nordstrom’s. In addition, major promotions are confirmed with Amazon, Wal-Mart, Best Buy and Target. Those who buy the album on iTunes will get a bonus track, a cover of Jackson Browne’s “Doctor My Eyes.” Meanwhile, “Here Comes the Sun” is an exclusive pre-order track.

And while details aren’t yet available, Crow will hit the road this year, touring in the United States, Australia and Europe. Whether she will have the success at radio that she had with such hits as “If It Makes You Happy,” “Soak Up the Sun” or “A Change Would Do You Good” remains to be seen. “I’d love to have a hit record [at radio],” Crow says, “but I don’t think it’s realistic to believe that I will.”

“Sheryl, NPR, XM, that’s where I’m getting played.” Occasionally cradling a cup of coffee as she sits with Billboard, Crow shared her candid thoughts about her music, her life and the world around us.

This album was inspired by the last three years of your life, the breast cancer, your son and your breakup with Lance Armstrong, correct?

And also what’s going on with the war and just taking it all in, trying to elevate above it to get some kind of clear view of what all of it means. I kept coming up with the idea of detours; when you’re young and innocent you have this clear picture of who you are and who you want to be and you’re very idealistic. Then throughout your life you go on these journeys away from yourself—whether that is that you come back and realize where you got off and how to get back. I’ve done a lot of that, for better or for worse.

For the last seven years I’ve been on a course away from ourselves in this country. It’s been going on for a while, but I’ve never seen it be quite as full-blown as it is now. We are where we are and these things can serve to wake us up to help us remember who we are and that these reasons we are where we are.

Are you considered to be in remission?

I’m considered to be cancer-free. The first diagnosis was two years ago in February, so I’ve got another year to sweat through it, and then it looks better and better and better.

How did you come to work with Bill Bottrell again after all these years?

I got a phone call, I knew I was getting ready to start making a record and I knew I had I was through a lot personally and I didn’t know exactly what the record was going to be, but I wanted it to have the in-your-face-ness of the first record. I’d always wondered what our creative life would be like because we had such a strong creative relationship when we made the first record. So I just called him and I said, “I’m going to propose something crazy, but how do you feel about getting together and seeing what we might do in the studio?” He said, “I’ve been waiting for this call for years.”

You have friends and collaborators in Nashville like Emmylou Harris and Vince Gill, but you really didn’t tap into any of them for this record, did you?

No. This record was an interesting project. I almost felt like I was in a laboratory because one of the most beautiful and freeing things about it is I wasn’t producing it myself. I had the luxury of having Bill here, so I got to be left to my own devices of just being creative and not having to make decisions.

When it came down to recording, it was just really organic and it was very personal. It was basically just Bill and I, and then we had Jeff Titus doing overdubs, and Jeremy Stacey, my drummer, and Mike Elizondo came in, but it was a very con-
ter selves, being able to look at it and find out, figure out. We are, that’s the idea of it. Even though the song somewhat sounds like an apocalyptic diatribe, it is meant to be hopeful.

Do you feel like who you are now, at your age, changes what you record from what you might have recorded 10 years ago?

I always contend that life informs art, and for me life right now is all about being awake. It’s difficult to be awake and not be affected by all that is going on around us. Not only at the grand level, but also personally how affected you are by these moments in your life that become pivotal or become refining moments. To me in looking back over my 45 years, almost 46 years, I can look distinctly at the detours I’ve taken in my life where I had to go far away to come back to knowing who I am, and I think that as a nation we’re also in that moment in time.

After consistently selling 2 million-4 million on each of your albums, “Wildflower” sold not quite 1 million. Did that disappoint you?

I knew that record was going to be a tough sell and I was prepared for that. I was very lucky that my record label did not press me on going back in and recording a bunch of singles. Jimmy Iovine understood where I was at and how important it was for me to follow up “Come On, Come On” with something more thought-provoking. I felt the greatest-hits record was sort of a nice little bookend to that part of my career and I wanted to come out of the box with something more mature and very specific to what was going on in my life at that moment in time.

Do you feel any pressure for this one to succeed?

I don’t even know how you could succeed in this market. I don’t know what records are selling now, with the exception of the Eagles, which was phenomenal because of how they did it. But I just want it to have some legs as far as it is being heard. And I’ll never know how many people are hearing it, because I don’t begin to believe that everyone’s going to go out and buy it.

Do you enjoy being part of the marketing of a record, the part that has you appearing on “The View,” for example?

This year is going to be a different experience. It’s one thing to go out there and talk about songs that are personal or that are crafted, but I feel deeply about the subjects on this record, every one of them. I want to go out and talk about this record because I want to create a dialogue. I want it to be a thought-provoking record that people can relate to and will go out and incite some sort of motivating feeling of being a part of something. Let me get on there and talk about it with Joy Behar.

How did the idea to release four videos before the album is even available come about? Was it your idea?

Actually that was my manager’s idea and I love that—this whole idea of guerrilla marketing. “God Bless This Mess” shows me getting up in the morning, getting in a van with a couple of guys with video cameras and jumping out in front of the White House and jumping out in front of the Washington Memorial and playing the song live. I love it because that reminds me of the old videos that we love with Dylan and even the Beatles running around acting absurd without spending a million dollars on hair and makeup. And as I get older, when I should be worried about lighting and all that stuff, I care less about it and just want the stuff to get out there. It’s really been fun and freeing to me.

Does having Wyatt change how you’ll approach promotional and marketing appearances and touring?

Oh, yeah. For one thing, as I was getting older anyway I wasn’t that interested in being gone 12 months out of the year. I kind of love how the country artists do it down here—they tour, obviously he’s not in school, but they tour around the school year. So they’ll be home Monday through Thursday and then they’ll tour Thursday through Sunday. I guess eventually I’ll get to that, but with him as little as he is and he’s a good little travel, we’ll go out and tour. But me doing a whole day of press, it’s hard for me not to [be with him].

How important is it for you that this record be successful?

With all that has gone on in your life, do you care if the record sells 2 million or 3 million?

I can’t imagine how it could sell that many. I can’t imagine how it could sell any because of the climate out there today. Who buys records? It’s such an odd thing. In the old days, you put out a single. If the single did well, then your record came out of the gates with a huge, huge bang, but it’s not really like that anymore, which certainly makes it more interesting now, trying to figure out creative ways to get your music out there.

SHERYL’S SALES Crow’s last studio album was also her only one to not crack the platinum barrier. But her catalog has remarkable staying power, as evidenced by the sales of her 2003 best-of.

**The Billboard 200**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Album</th>
<th>U.S. Sales</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Love Is</em></td>
<td>4,553,000 (3xPlatinum)</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Globe Sessions</em></td>
<td>2,446,000 (2xPlatinum)</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Nothing but the Truth</em></td>
<td>1,960,000 (Platinum)</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Firehouse</em></td>
<td>485,000 (Gold)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Came Out of the Shadows</em></td>
<td>2,102,000 (Gold)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sweet Like the Honey</em></td>
<td>4,010,000 (5xPlatinum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Globe Sessions</em></td>
<td>948,000 (Platinum)</td>
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**The Billboard 200 Peak**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Album</th>
<th>Weeks on Chart</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Love Is</em></td>
<td>102</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Globe Sessions</em></td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Nothing but the Truth</em></td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Firehouse</em></td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Came Out of the Shadows</em></td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Sweet Like the Honey</em></td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Came Out of the Shadows</em></td>
<td>8</td>
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SOURCE: *The Billboard 200* through the chart dated Jan. 3, 2018; Nielsen SoundScan scan through the week ending Jan 6, 2004.
As Contracts Expire, Top Stars Embrace DIY And Independent Releases

BY LEILA COBO

When salsa star Victor Manuelle's contract with Sony BMG came up for renewal in late 2007, he went solo.

At what was arguably the height of his career, and with a series of high-profile shows under his belt—including Carnegie Hall and Madison Square Garden—Manuelle decided to release a Christmas album on his own label, Kiya.

The decision to go it alone, Manuelle says, was dictated more by sentiment than business. "The moment was right," he says. "My contract was up, and I didn't have to give explanations to anybody."

Manuelle recorded his Christmas album, a pet project, on his own dime. He then negotiated a one-off distribution deal with Machete Music, a Universal-owned label.

Although Machete has provided marketing and promotional support, the bulk of the work has fallen on Manuelle's longtime support team, which includes manager José Diaz and publicist Blanca LaSalle.

"Without that team, this really wouldn't work," Manuelle says.

Sales of "Navidad a Mi Estilo" reached 33,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan, and three singles were worked at radio. Manuelle estimates he made a 40% return on his investment, with the bulk of the funds that he floated going into marketing and promotion.

Manuelle plans to begin recording his new album in January and has yet to decide if he'll stay solo, renegotiate with Sony BMG or take a different route altogether.

But in the process, Manuelle experimented as an impresario, selling 31,000 copies of "Navidad a Mi Estilo" by year's end, making "Navidad" the top-selling Latin Christmas album of the year, according to Nielsen SoundScan. "The truth is, I've done really well," he says.

Manuelle is part of a small, but growing contingent of established Latin artists—including rocker Draco Rosa (formerly known as Roli "Draco" Rosa), regional Mexican singer Diana Reyes and Brazil's Daniela Mercury (see below)—who are opting to release albums on their own labels—then reasons for doing so range from economical to artistic.

For the most part, these artists don't completely sever label relationships. Manuelle's "Navidad a Mi Estilo," for example, is distributed by Universal Music Latino imprint Machete Music, while Reyes and her team are in conversations to find a distribution deal for her new album, due out this year.

In Manuelle's case, the venture has been lucrative. While "Navidad" was an album he recorded and marketed out of his own pocket, his return on the investment has been 40%, even after paying distribution costs.

With Reyes, whatever she makes will be a bonus. According to her manager and business partner, Gabril Fregoso, she has yet to receive a single royalty payment from more than 300,000 copies sold in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, during the span of several recording contracts.

"As the record industry metamorphoses into its next role, the artist now, more than ever, has greater control of her work as an independent," says Mercury, who has different distribution deals.
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what an artist

renewal, Baumgartner says, “he had actually given them some music and they wanted something, I guess, more pop. And that’s when he said, ‘I just want to make the music I want to make.’”

Of course, whether or not they were making a fair amount for their recordings, all these artists are now recognizable brand names because they benefited from their previous labels’ marketing and development efforts. Today, they can use that brand appeal to market themselves and, just as importantly, they can invest in their careers from income accrued through touring and other means. Artists also have at their disposal marketing opportunities that weren’t in place before.

This opens the door to what are often the same opportunities and risks that they have with a label.

“Most record companies are requesting that artists sign the new business model—including concerts, merchandising, etc. There’s a lot of work that a lot of artists haven’t fully accepted,” says one record executive who preferred to remain anonymous.

“Many acts are shopping for deals and rejecting what’s offered to them. The market’s not there, but the artists don’t want to lower their prices. Or they don’t want to sign a multi-level contract that includes merchandising and revenue.”

Reyes, for example, hopes to benefit from the new business model—not by signing over revenue to someone else, but by being a partner in her own company, which includes a record label as well as publishing and merchandising divisions.

Reyes could have gone to other labels after her contract with Musicex, a label distributed by Universal, expired.

“It was the same thing. They want to license her, and then what?” asks Fregoso, now executive VP of DDBC, the label, management, publishing and merchandising company in which Reyes owns approximately 40% and to which she is now signed.

“You give over control—not so much over the master—but over the artist’s career. And what happens after that? You compete with 20, 30 or 40 priorities.

“We are simply not going to use the traditional multinational business model,” adds Fregoso, who was previously Universal Music Latino director of marketing and promotion for regional Mexican product. “With regional Mexican product, normally they work a lot of radio and forget about the Internet and point of sale. We will of course do radio promotion, but we will heavily promote at retail and on the Net.”

For Rosa, the Internet is “our whole vehicle right now,” says Tom Baumgartner, who is part of Rosa’s management team, noting that all marketing efforts are coordinated from the artist’s Web site.

In addition, the development of Latin digital sales, particularly since the launch of iTunes Latino in the United States, has also given artists options when it comes to going independent.

“What we’ve tried to do from the very beginning is equalize what an artist gets and how they’re able to use iTunes, whether you’re a small artist at an indie label or a big artist at a major

and licensing

deals in place in various ter-
ritories. “No longer limited by ex-

and conditions of content and creative process, the artist is free to expand and explore musical de-

velopment from within. By working in partnership with specific labels in specific territories, we can better define the entity which best understands the product, the specific market, and thus achieve a synergy between the marketing, distribution and public

relations teams assigned to each work, creating a more focused sense of mission.”

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SPANISH-LANGUAGE RADIO SUPERSTAR LUIS JIMÉNEZ RETURNS TO THE NEW YORK AIRWAVES ON UNIVISION'S LA CALLE

BY LEILA COBO
For a whopping 13 years, Luis Jiménez presided over El Vacilón de la Manana, the morning show on Spanish-language WSKQ (La Mega) New York. With its irreverent humor and a say-anything attitude, El Vacilón was king of the morning New York drive, becoming the top-rated morning talk show in any language—for several seasons. It also helped La Mega become New York’s top station in several Arbitron books. Now, after a one-year hiatus from the New York airwaves, Jiménez returns. Not to "El Vacilón," but to his own "El Show de Luis Jiménez." Nor to his longtime home at Spanish Broadcasting System (SBS), but to WCAA (La Calle) a Univision station. Jiménez has been on the air on six other Univision network stations nationwide in the past year but his much-anticipated return to New York is set for Jan. 17. It’s the latest stop in one of the most notorious and meteoric careers in Spanish-language radio.

Although Spanish-language radio has always thrived on double entendre and naughty humor, "El Vacilón" was doubly edgy, often focused on sex and delighted to push the envelope, much like its English-language counterpart and strongest competitor, "The Howard Stern Show." 

Jiménez and his crew rode out adulation and criticism from media watchdogs. But criticism only fueled the show’s prominence, and in 2005, Jiménez and his later sidekick, Moonshadow, were named among the city’s most influential characters as named by New York magazine. That same year, the duo hit the big screen with the movie "El Vacilón," scripted by Jiménez himself. Things took a sharp downturn in late 2006, when Jiménez’s longtime contract with SBS came up for renewal. A dispute during negotiations led him to take an offer from Univision instead. SBS sued, and through a noncompete clause, kept Jiménez off the air in New York—his main market—for an entire year. Due to a confidentiality clause in their settlement, neither Jiménez nor SBS could comment on the suit.

But Jiménez says he plans to "kick ass" when his new show hits the airwaves. Since last February, his show has been on the air in six markets: Chicago, Dallas, Fresno, Calif.; Los Angeles; San Francisco; and Fort Myers, Fla. Puerto Rico was added in early January, and Miami is set to follow later in 2008.

Jiménez—now working with a new crew of radio veterans that includes producer Alma and a cast whose on-air names include Fay, Speedy, DJ Chucky, Guebin and Yun Yan—has crafted a show that he deems more reality radio than before and features a new cast of characters. But Jiménez will have his work cut out for him. His old station, La Mega, is No. 2 in the fall 2007 Arbitron ratings, while La Calle is No. 21.

"In my opinion, he’s the guy," says Pete Manriquez, VP of programming and regional PD for Univision radio. He says that Univision Radio president Gary Stone and programming VP J.D. Gonzalez said, "We got to win in New York." And I said, ‘If I could have a Luis Jiménez, that would be a dream come true.’ "

Stone calls Jiménez "one of the most talented and charismatic on-air personalities in the country. Over the last year, he has done a great job of connecting with new listeners in top markets, such as San Francisco and Chicago. We look forward to a spectacular return to his hometown and to his many loyal New York fans."

Says Jiménez, "I feel like I’m starting again. I feel like I’ve never done anything in my life and it’s time to prove something and entertain people."
Univision Radio welcomes Luis Jiménez back to New York.

We look forward to much success and ABUSO on La Kalle 105.9 FM.
In a small Univision radio network studio in New York, "El Show de Luis Jiménez" is winding down its five-hour daily marathon schedule, which began at 5 a.m. The atmosphere in the New York studio is cozy and familiar, with Jiménez and his cohorts trading jokes with the ease of old friends. A small votive candle glows near the control panel, adding a warm feel to the small studio that has been Jiménez's on-air home in recent months, as he has broadcast to a half-dozen Univision network stations—all outside New York. But Jiménez is moving to a larger, grander studio in preparation for the New York launch Jan. 17 of "El Show de Luis Jiménez," a comeback in the city where he was previously a radio superstar. Jiménez's previous show, "El Vacilón de la Mañana," which aired on Spanish Broadcasting System's (SBS) WSKQ (La Mega), was, for years, among New York's top-rated morning shows, often alternating the No. 1 slot with shock jock Howard Stern. Now, Jiménez's encore with a rival radio network—Univision—a new team and a new show marks the return of one of Spanish-language radio's most controversial and best-known figures, and will no doubt raise the ante for the local morning drive. Billboard spoke with Jiménez about his new show and about the changing face of Spanish-language radio.

continued on p40
UNIVISION NEW YORK FAMILY WELCOMES EL ABUSO...

THE LUIS JIMÉNEZ SHOW

CONGRATULATIONS, LUIS JIMÉNEZ!!!
from ▶ p38 You’ve been out of New York for a year because of a noncompete clause from your former network, SBS. Now, you’ll compete with your old show, “El Vocación de la Manaña,” where many of your former team now works. How do you feel?

[Now] it’s not only business. It’s also personal. I have this hunger. I haven’t had it in years.

We were established for quite some time, and we were No. 1 for quite a number of years. That gets you into a kind of comfortable mode. And then the competition was never there. My competition was Howard Stern.

But now I really want to kick their ass. And I want to be merciless. When I left, they kept doing my characters, pretending that nobody had left the show. To me that was very disrespectful to the audience.

What show will people now hear from you? The show [I have been doing on the Univision network] is like I know I’ll do in New York. I did two new voices when I first started in Univision. And then immediately I heard those voices on the competing show in New York.

So, I decided to stop the broadcast of any new characters. But I do have a new line of characters and segments. I believe the show now is more real. I’ve decided to go more into the reality of radio and making a talk show.

It’s also different because I don’t have to be teaching people how to do radio. The really stressful thing for me this year was, How do I hire a team of people in one year when it took me 13 years to create that before?

[So] I hired people who already know radio. So, we have a much better show. Now, if I have an opinion, someone has the capability of arguing with me.

Your previous show was provocative and often blurred the line of what was acceptable or not. Is this show tame?

It [depends]. Less on sex. I think the show has more variety now, and we have found humor in other things.

But controversy stays?

Yes. When I came to Univision, the [Don] Imus thing just happened. So I think I was a victim of timing. I got suspended for a month. I did a parody that was apparently offensive to gay people—which it wasn’t. I’ve always been afraid of that. [Afraid] of the day little, private organizations take control of the media. To me, if I can’t talk about everything I want, I don’t want to be here.

When you started in 1993, it seemed people weren’t really monitoring what was said on Spanish-language radio.

People that didn’t like the show before would either tune out or not even call. Since Janet Jackson took her titty out, everybody learned about this organization called the FCC and that if you write [a complaint], you can get someone fired.

I don’t think this makes things fair for the broadcasters, but it gives people some kind of power they had before, but they don’t really know how to use it or who to use it against.

For example, I don’t have a serious political talk show where I say a comment and I mean it. I have a comedy show. I’m like a stand-up comic, but I’m on the radio. And to me, when a joke is a joke, it’s a joke! If I say, ‘Listen, I’m going to be serious now. I don’t like such-and-such race.’ ‘Well, I have to be held accountable. But if I say, ‘Hear a great joke about Puerto Ricans, and here it goes,’ no one can condemn you. I believe some people in the media have lost their sense of humor.

So, how do you work around these controls over what you say?

Instead of saying the words. I play around them. We have found another layer in the humor and we’ve also created different levels of perception.

You’re doing a show for the East Coast, but the same show is heard on the West Coast. Is this a challenge?

I won’t conquer the Mexican market, but I don’t want to pretend to be Mexican. It’s disrespectful to the Mexican community and it’s not good for me, because I have my style. I love Mexican comedy show “El Chavo del Ocho,” and he didn’t talk Puerto Rican. It was a Mexican show. So I figure it can go the other way too.

You don’t purposely tackle certain topics to appeal to a broader audience?

Everything we tackle is because we want to. If we talk about immigration, it’s because we feel like doing that, not because we want to kick ass. The 15-second time is over. This is reality radio.

You really need to have no shame to do a show like this. Was this hard for you?

I love the anonymity of radio and network radio. It’s different when I’m in New York. I get more feedback. But I’m doing a network show, I say what I want, and I don’t really see anyone that I talked to this morning. So this gives you a bit more freedom.

Would you do this on TV?

I don’t like television. I’ve been offered many things on television and I’ve always said no because it’s a very limited media for me. You totally depend on what you see. Radio, even if I do a character, you imagine this character’s face however it is funny to you. That’s the advantage of radio. You create your own scenario.

Obviously, in New York you’re a big personality and people recognize you.

The good thing about New York is, ‘I’ve been here so many years. People know when I’m kidding and when I’m not. I never say anything that’s too hurtful or anything that will provoke anybody to go and stab somebody else. I have broad cast responsibility. But definitely, people come up to me and comment on what they heard. But New Yorkers are more open-minded when it comes to things you say on the radio.

When you were developing your radio persona, did anyone on radio inspire you?

Oh, yeah, yeah. And every day I learn even more. I used to listen to my former on-host Moonshadow and from him I got the style of integrating characters into the talk show. There was another guy called Yo Boi Bongo in Puerto Rico. His real name was Luis Antonio...
FROM THE MONSTER OF CAR SALES
TO THE MONSTER OF NEW YORK RADIO
WE WELCOME YOU BACK!

THE LUIS JIMÉNEZ SHOW
Rivera. He had a very deep voice but he was a very funny guy. He had two more guys there, and he would play the maracas, the other guy would play the bongos and another the guitar, and they would sing about everything that was happening in Puerto Rico at the time. And I took that element from him. I like singing to anything we want at any given point.

Did you listen to English-language shows, like your competitor Howard Stern?

When I got to New York, I started working mornings, so I never heard a full Howard show. I admire what he does. He opened the doors for radio. Books. The fact that I made a movie, I have to admit, I said, "Howard did it and it was successful because there was a base audience." He [once] invited me to his show. We were No. 2 at the time. And he said, "The reason I have you here is because I know you'll never bear me." And then two books later, we beat him. He always pretends to be an a-hole on the air, and off the air he’s a really sweet guy. I remember we took a picture together and he told his producer, "Make sure it doesn’t go out to the press." Because it was a really nice, friendly picture with Howard.

Have you considered satellite radio?

It was on the table. But I didn’t believe that I wanted my audience to pay for my show—yet. I said, "I'm developing a new show, it's going to be good, but how am I going to charge people for their fidelity?"

Do you have artists appearing on the show?

I do, but for some reason many are afraid to come to the show. We are never hostile to guests unless guests get hostile against us. I would say 99% of the people that come to the show, I have the respect to go on the air and say, "Buy their CD, don't pirate it," and I ask them questions and most artists are really cool. But in the case of a couple of artists—one came on the show, he's all serious, he doesn't want to participate, he doesn't want to joke around. We do a parody of one of his songs and we play it for him and he takes off his headphones.

If you're going to disrespect my job as a comedian, I really can't respect your job as a singer or whatever you are.

You don't depend on artists to make your show work. Some develop into really good interviews, and some are torture. Not because they're bad people. They're just plain boring. And it's funny, because I see in English media how artists will answer any question. And it's funny to see Latino artists who cross over into the Anglo market answering any question they get thrown.

But when they come to a Latino show they don't want to answer those questions and they get offended. To me it's disrespectful to us as Latino media.

If I'm an artist and I go on your show, should I be prepared to spar with you?

They don't understand that most people don't care about how you produce your new CD. If the audience likes a song, they're not thinking, "Oh, my God! Who wrote that?" Or, "That's a great musical arrangement, who did it?" And the artists come to the show and they pretend to talk about those things nobody gives a crap about. We want to know how you like to spend your vacation or what's the craziest thing a fan has ever done to you.

But in fact, your show tackles some very serious topics. You learn not to sound too stupid for your audience. When you do a morning show you need to have certain credibility. For me my biggest radio lesson ever in my entire career was Sept. 11. When I was on the air doing a funny show, and all of a sudden I'm responsible for informing the whole Hispanic population of the city of New York what the hell is going on.

We got the info on 9-11 as soon as it happened because one of my guys was talking with his wife on the phone and she was at the World Trade Center. Before any camera could get there I was already dealing with this situation. I never felt as much as a broadcaster as I did there. So, from there on I took it more seriously, in terms of giving my audience the idea that they can trust me. That if something happens, I know what's going on and I can deal with it.

Do you aspire to change people's attitudes and opinions, or are you there to entertain?

I'm there to entertain. As a matter of fact, I love to piss people off. Not that I create things to piss people off.

Is that true?

[No], I probably do. But a lot of my ideas piss people off. I'm an atheist, for example. But most of my audience is Catholic. I say these things and people feel they're pretty challenging, but at the same time my audience isn't really offended by that.

What is your 10-year goal?

Keep people laughing. I don't want people to say, "I'm tired of that old guy on the radio." Even if I'm 60 years old, I still want to be hip, and to me that's really challenging. I've been lucky enough to be able to find a formula and reinvent myself every single time so people think the show is fresh.

Spanish-language radio grew exponentially during the past decade. What is happening now?

Sadly, I don't think the music industry is feeding the radio industry enough to feed the Spanish-language stations we have right now. I think the Spanish-language culture is merging with the hip-hop culture and with the Anglo culture. And now you hear a lot more radio stations with Latin flavor but not necessarily playing Latin music all the time. In television we're seeing shows with Latin actors. I think Latinos are merging into the Anglo culture and I think that will be happening more and more, and I think there will be fewer of us doing purely Spanish communication.

—Leila Cobo
Billboard Recognizes Business Leaders Drawn To The Annual Global Marketplace

When the 42nd annual MIDEM opens Jan. 26 in Cannes with the MidemNet Forum, the event will live up to its billing as "the world's music market" (see story, page 21). The exhibition hall at the Palais des Festivals will host more than 50 national and regional pavilions, representing more than 1,600 companies. // For the second year, from among some 10,000 attendees expected at MIDEM, Billboard is recognizing 10 MIDEM Masters. These executives represent the top caliper of international professionals, from every sector of our industry, who use MIDEM to drive their business forward.

ROBERT ALLAN // Partner, intellectual property
and IT group, Mayer Brown International, mayerbrown.com, United Kingdom

One of Britain's foremost entertainment lawyers, Robert Allan has a long, and sometimes eventful, history with MIDEM.

"My first MIDEM was in 1974," Allan says, "and 2008 will be my 35th consecutive attendance."

Allan's personal MIDEM high points include the foundation of the International Assn. of Entertainment Lawyers at the event in 1977 and the sale of Windawn's catalog in 1999, when he recalls spending "the whole of MIDEM flitting between suites on the fourth and fifth floors of the Carlton Hotel, talking to the two final bidders."

He can laugh now, but Allan also had a real scare at one MIDEM when he was attacked by an Alaskan security dog, which bit him on the backside as he tried to leave the Palais des Festivals through an emergency exit.

"Seriously," he says, "everybody who is important in my professional—and frequently, personal—life, is somebody I met at MIDEM."

—Lars Brande

MATHEW DANIEL // VP of strategy development, R2G, 2g.net, China

Digital music distributor R2G, based in Beijing, aims to help content providers ensure more efficient and reliable delivery of music content to the Chinese market through proper revenue accounting mechanisms, in particular by curbing what it terms the "rampant piracy" content aggregators practice in the region. R2G, which claims that it administers up to 40% of all music-publishing rights in China, has developed its own music-recognition "fingerprinting" system that enables the company to manage a database that R2G claims is one of the biggest in the world for Chinese music.

"MIDEM is proving to be really useful in our music-licensing efforts as we seek to sign up new content owners who are looking for opportunities to market and distribute their music in China," says Mathew Daniel, who represents the company in Cannes as VP of strategy development:

"MIDEM has, in effect, served a role as a one-stop meeting point for content owners seeking distribution," he says. "And that has benefited us."

—Steve McClure

JANUS FRISI // Co-founder/co-chairman, Joost,joost.com, United Kingdom

"MIDEM is going to be fun for me," says Janus Friis, the Danish entrepreneur who created file-sharing service Kazaa. Web telephone service Skype and now Joost for TV distribution online. Friis will be a keynote speaker at MidemNet.

Friis hopes his first visit to MIDEM will allow him to extend the music industry's familiarity with Joost, the London-based ad-funded Internet TV service he co-founded, which commercially launched Oct. 1, 2007.

He says music already represents more than 20% of the venture's content, with videos licensed from Universal Music Group, Warner Music Group and several others.

Friis co-invented Kazaa, the peer-to-peer network shut down in 2006 for encouraging illegal file sharing. Joost, however, operates a secure P2P platform for content owners to develop their own "channels." Those include Ministry of Sound TV, the U.K.-based dance-music group and channels devoted to U.K. acts Hard-Fi and Oasix.

The P2P technology also enables consumers to interact with other content, such as a Web site.

"People might not have liked Kazaa," Friis adds, "but it was a reality ahead of its time. It also gave us insights into how the music industry works."

—Juliana Krajencik

IAN JAMES // Managing director, Mushroom Music, mushroommusic.com.au, Australia

Mushroom Music claims the title as Australia's largest independent publisher, with around 100 direct signings ranging from Kylie Minogue to Neil Finn.

Its latest breakthrough artist is singer/songwriter Josh Pyke, whose March 2007 debut, "Memories & Dust" (Ivy League), hit No. 4 on the Australian Recording Industry Assn. album chart.

Melbourne-based Mushroom's placement of Pyke's songs in widely exported TV soaps—naturally "Home and Away"—paved the way for the album's European release on Island (Universal) last May.

Mushroom handles some 60 international catalogs Down Under, including Mute Song and Chrysalis. Ian James says attending MIDEM lets him meet his 16 global subpublishers—from Japan to South Africa—in one spot.

Another attraction, he adds, is dealing with "adventurous American lawyers who're not there to drink. We're at ease with each other and do deals quickly."

Some 10 years ago, he recalls, "I signed up Dave Matthews in 30 seconds. I hadn't heard his music, but did so purely on a lawyer's recommendation."

—Christie Elizer

MAYXNE LANG // President, Williamson Music, nnh.com/williamson, United States

Mayxne Lang had two goals when she first attended MIDEM 18 years ago. As president of Rodgers & Hammerstein's Williamson Music, Lang wanted to interact with people who worked with the company's catalog internationally and understand the lay of the land at the conference.

"You really have to decide what you need from each group of people before you go there," Lang says. "Otherwise it's just a conversation that leads nowhere."

Three years later, Lang landed a deal at MIDEM to represent composer Andrew Lloyd Weber's work in the United States and Canada, an arrangement that continued for many years.

Today, Lang represents the catalogs of Rodgers & Hammerstein and Irving Berlin Music. Rather than meeting individually with the major publishers' managing directors who represent the works outside the States, Lang meets with them in groups to help stimulate the exchange.

—Susan Butler

www.americanradiohistory.com
from >>43

MARK LEVINSOHN // Attorney, United States

New York attorney Mark Levinsohn once carried contract forms to MIDEM, ready to close deals on the spot for his indie-label clients owned by such newcomers as Craig Kallman (now Atlantic Records chairman/CEO)

That was in the 1990s. After developing a keen sense for branding opportunities, Levinsohn was executive producer for a fashion show during MIDEM a few years ago, featuring Danish models wearing Brazilian swimwear while catwalking to music competing for a deal with an American TV show and videogame.

Levinsohn is now one of the leading international lawyers in the publishing arena. His expertise comes from knowing local players around the world and the subpublishing business.

In 2005, he brokered the largest acquisition of the year after landing the client at MIDEM: Stage Three Music's buy of Mosaic Music. "Considering that the dollar is weak right now, that should only help in a healthy number of European and Asian investors who are interested in putting money in American assets right now."

—Susan Butler

FRANCISCO MONCALEANO // President, Codiscos, codiscos.com, Colombia

Colombian label Codiscos is a treasure trove of that country’s music and beyond, housing the catalogs of Grupo Gale and Alci Acosta, among other venerable acts, as well as new music by the likes of Bobby Cruz, Richie Ray, Ismael Miranda and Maelo Ruiz.

But in the past decade, with the Colombian market depleted by piracy, Codiscos took a wait-and-see stance, hoping the worst would pass. When it didn’t, president Francisco Moncaleano decided to explore other alternatives and markets. So for the past four years, Codiscos has a colorful stand at MIDEM that’s become “an embassy of Colombian music,” according to Moncaleano. “And we’ve found opportunities that have simply remained in our investment in MIDEM.”

Beyond merely selling Codiscos’ catalog, Moncaleano hopes to build up Colombia as a musical brand, with its own heading at retail, as happens with Cuba and Brazil. “As a country, we have very rich musical catalogs,” says Moncaleano, who is working with his ministry of tourism. “And MIDEM has given us their full support to make this happen.” —Leila Cobo

MARTIN MILLS // chairman, Beggars Group, thebeggarsgroup.org, United Kingdom

For many in the international independent music community, it wouldn’t be a MIDEM without the presence of Martin Mills—and he cites the trade fair as a galvanizing point for his own career.

“When we first went to MIDEM in 1976,” he says, the Beggars Banquet label “had one punk compilation album and four singles. Going to MIDEM allowed us to survive and fund the business in the early years. Then it became a meeting place with licensees around the world.”

More than 30 years after his first MIDEM, London-based Mills can truly call the Cannes conference a home away from home, he even owns a property nearby.

These days, Mills’ MIDEM attendance also hinges on his work for trade bodies AIM, Impala and WIN, each focusing on the independent music sector.

“For the newer labels,” he says, “people who are working their way up the ladder and meeting partners from overseas. MIDEM is essential. It’s still the best place to develop relationships around the world.”

—Lars Brandle

AYA OHI // Deputy GM of international repertoire, Victor Entertainment, jvcmusic.co.jp, Japan

Tokyo-based Victor Entertainment, part of the JVC group of companies, is Japan’s second-oldest record company. Known internationally as JVC Victor Entertainment, the company is an A&R powerhouse that continues to develop cutting-edge musical talent, both Japanese and international.

Aya Ohi, one of the Japanese music industry’s leading female executives, says she’s particularly proud of the deal Victor Entertainment made with Cooking Vinyl to license the forthcoming studio album by the Prodigy.

MIDEM’s greatest value, Ohi says, is as a venue for holding annual meetings with Victor’s international partners.

“It’s also useful for being introduced to new people and having people recommend you to others,” she says.

“When you hear good ‘rumors’ about yourself at MIDEM, you get a sense of assurance that people must like working with you, and that’s a great incentive for wanting to do more and to make the best use of the event.”

—Steve McClure

TOM YODA // Chairman/CEO, Dreamusic, dreamusic.co.jp/english, Japan

A former chairman of the Recording Industry Assn. of Japan, Tom Yoda has been an often-spotted figure at MIDEM for many years. After his 2004 departure from Japan’s biggest independent label, Avex, where he was chairman/CEO, Yoda moved on to another Tokyo-based indie label, Dreamusic.

Dreamusic’s biggest success has been female vocalist Ayaka Hirahara’s single “Jupiter” (based on the section of the same name from Gustav Holst’s “The Planets”), which became a major and long-selling hit in late 2003 and early 2004. More recently, the label enjoyed a breakthrough in 2007 with rock/pop/hip-hop group Funky Monkey Babys.

Yoda cites a licensing deal with Swedish label/production company Roasting House, with its rock, pop and dance roster, as one of his 2007 MIDEM highlights. That deal reflects Dreamusic’s aim of broadening its international repertoire, Yoda says. For example, the company has signed U.K. band Elliot Minor and is in negotiation for other acts with the potential to break in Europe.

“MIDEM’s a great meeting point for Japanese and international music companies,” Yoda adds. “And I’m always looking for great music.”

—Steve McClure

Music, human rights work and digital innovations make PETER GABRIEL the MIDEM Personality of the Year.

continued on >>46

THE BILLBOARD Q&A

PETER GABRIEL

MIDEM Personality Of The Year
Is Industry Pathfinder by Paul Sexton

Peter Gabriel has long been admired as a pacemaker of musical exploration, a passionate campaigner for human rights and a pathfinder in technological development. That widespread admiration will much be in evidence Jan. 28 in Cannes when Gabriel is named MIDEM’s Personality of the Year. The honor from “the world’s music market” befits a true man of the world in both music and communication. It’s also the latest in a distinguished collection of trophies. Last May, Gabriel received a lifetime achievement title at Britain’s Ivor Novello Awards and a few months earlier, the Nobel Peace Laureates bestowed the Man of Peace honor on him. Reed MIDEM CEO Paul Zilk praises Gabriel’s status as “an outstanding musician with an international following of millions” and as a pioneer of “innovative methods of distribution in the digital environment [who] has explored new business models for his music and that of fellow artists.” He adds, “Throughout his career he’s shown that music transcends pure entertainment and can be put to the service of important issues, such as human rights.” But far from resting on his laurels, Gabriel continues to pursue new challenges. The years he spent as frontman during Genesis’ most innovative era barely hinted at the inquisitive spirit of this four-time Grammy Award winner. In the past year, Gabriel has worked extensively to develop more of the globe-embracing ideas that have always been his stock in trade. He spoke with Billboard about some of them and what 2008 holds in store.
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How do you feel about being MIDEM's Personality of the Year? I must be getting to that awards time of life; it's God's way of telling you you're getting on.

MIDEM, I think I've only been once before, when we were doing OD2 [the digital provider he co-founded in 2002]. We were trying to get this union together [MUDDA] of digitally downloading artists, but the artists didn't leap to it at the time. Nowadays, people get it a lot more easily.

When you recently co-founded digital music platform We7, did that feel like a successor to OD2? Well, it was just another part in the music business, but it is another thing I think is potentially important for artists. With their traditional stream of revenue—record sales—being largely taken away, we've got to be a little more inventive. There are lots of different models emerging, and it was exciting to see the Radiohead one.

With people used to hearing ads on commercial radio, we were trying with We7 to see if we did a lot less than that but still included ads—whether there was a way people could get songs, and eventually films, for free.

The theory is that the more targeted the ads—and you obviously have to choose to volunteer information about yourself—the less painful it is. If I'm looking for a hybrid car, that's the moment when I'm probably interested to hear the ads from different hybrid manufacturers, so you don't get the old "dog food to cat owners" advertising.

It's not the only way of doing things, but for a generation that's grown up with "music for free," it's a way of continuing that but still getting some stream of income to the people that created the content.

To some extent, did you pre-empt Radiohead when you said you were looking at releasing your next album without a conventional record company?

Yes, but I hadn't conceived of the "pay-what-you-want" thing, which I think was very brave. Clearly they're at the peak of their career, so they can rely on a certain number of fans.

Deluxe packaging is something I've been talking about for a while—I do think that's going to work, where people get something for nothing, a regular package for a reduced cost, then a deluxe or handmade item above that.

Since 2005, you've also been working on thefilter.com. What's that about?

It's a recommendation engine of sorts, but my dream there, which I'm still pushing hard for, is a mixer that you can stick anyone in, whether it's a recommendation from a favorite artist, a magazine, your friend, someone who looks like they've got interesting taste, and you [could] just press a "do it" button and get a combination of people's tastes. At the moment, it makes recommendations for you based on what you like.

You admire new technology not for its own sake but for what it can do to connect the world, don't you? Yes, I'm passionate about it; actually, I've been spending more time on that music stuff in this last year. We've got this thing called theelders.org up and running, and the Hub at [human rights organization] Witness, which is intended to be a sort of YouTube for human rights.

The Elders is extraordinary, respected people, like [Nelson] Mandela and Kofi Annan, that are beyond career-building, but still have leverage and respect and wisdom, which is still an underused natural resource.

I'm also trying to push a thing called Face the World, which is a serious attempt to get every living face online. With Google Earth, I can pretty much zero in on any living tree, but I can't zoom in on any living face.

It's only part of the process, but being able to hear people and listen to what's going on is the first step in any healing process.

Will the mobile phone play a role in connecting people from different cultures? There was a "Geek Week" on Channel 4 [on U.K. TV] where they tried to find a Masai tribesman without a mobile, and couldn't. Then they interviewed this fantastic Kenyan girl and asked her, "What's going to change things in Africa?" and she picked up her mobile phone. The interviewer said, "I don't really believe in a single technological fix," and she said, "Oh, you don't believe in the wheel? Or fire?"

In the Mandela Foundation, they gave mobiles to coffee growers in Zimbabwe, who were getting continually ripped off. The very next day, they were getting the latest prices from Chicago, and suddenly could do a deal related to the current price.

Did you get to see any of the shows on the Genesis reunion tour? I didn't. I was trying to get to the Rowe [show], but if they do another [tour], I'll try to get there.

We had discussions about [my taking part], but the time commitment they wanted was growing, and I knew with trying to get the Elders going, I wasn't going to be able to do both. I'm not in principle against the idea of doing something.

How's the new album coming? Very slow at the moment. I've been heavily distracted, but I'm determined now to get back into it, and some new songs are coming through that I'm very happy with.
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The 2008 Summer Olympic Games will bring the world's attention to Beijing, China's capital.

The superstars open the new Pop TV Arena Jan. 25 in his native Hong Kong.

Cantonese pop legend JACKY CHEUNG performs a 2007 concert in Nanjing.

POWERFUL PROMISE

Turning Expectations Into Results In China Demands Patience And Partnerships BY STEVE McCULLE

China is a country of 1.3 billion people, with an increasingly affluent middle class that has been historically starved of non-political entertainment. But that does not automatically make China the world’s biggest music market. That’s an obvious point, perhaps. But it’s an important fact to bear in mind for anyone thinking of doing business in China’s potentially vast and lucrative music market.

China will be recognized as the “country of honor” this year at MIDEM, which opens Jan. 26 with the MIDEMNet Forum, further raising the country’s profile within the global music business. MIDEM’s opening-night party Jan. 27 will feature performances by acts from China including Wang Yong, the Honeys, China Magpie, the Feng Huang Traditional Band, DJ Mickey Zhang and DJ Ben Huang.

Music-industry executives with experience doing business in China say that turning expectations into results in the territory requires not only hard work, but also realizing that the rules of the music biz game there are often fundamentally different from other markets.


Guanxi is central to the way Chinese business works. Outsiders need to work with local partners that can provide the necessary local insights and connections.

Specifically, one needs a Chinese partner, says Jackie Subeck, senior partner in C&C Liianian, a joint venture between Los Angeles-based consultancy firm AMC Group and state-owned China Record Corp.

“Without that, you can easily find yourself unable to work in the market effectively. Things that we take for granted in the West, like getting a permit to throw an event, are not the same there. You need a partner who can help facilitate those things for you.”

In China’s burgeoning live music sector, for example, Subeck says finding the right sponsor is crucial. “Without sponsors you can’t really get anything done, and they can make or break your project,” she says. “It doesn’t really matter if you’re Chinese or Western—you’re going to need sponsors to put on an event. Plus, they’ll help you with the marketing.”

Erik Gilbert, VP of content at San Francisco-based digital distribution, marketing and technology company Independent Online 

CHINA FACTS

AVERAGE EARNINGS: $7,800 per capita (2006 estimate)

CAPITAL: Beijing

POPULATION: 1,321,851,888 (July 2007 estimate)

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: National: Mandarin (Putonghua)

REGIONAL: Wu (Shanghainese), Cantonese (Yue), Minbei (Fuzhou), Minnan (Hokkien-Taiwanese), Xiang, Gan, Hakka dialects, minority languages

BROADBAND SUBSCRIPTIONS PER 100 PEOPLE: 4.4 (57 million nationwide)

MOBILE PHONE OWNERSHIP PER 100 PEOPLE: 35.5 (Nokia, 2006)

MUSIC FACTS

SALES AWARDS: No existing sales awards. The four major record companies are due to launch a sales award program this year, according to the IFPI.

MUSIC INDUSTRY WORLD RANKING: 27th

PERCENTAGE OF GLOBAL MUSIC SALES: Less than 1%

PERCENTAGE OF ILLEGITIMATE PHYSICAL SALES: More than 50%

TOTAL LEGITIMATE PHYSICAL UNIT SALES: 7.4 million (January-June 2007); 26.1 million (2006)

TOTAL LEGITIMATE PHYSICAL SALES REVENUE (WHOLESALE): $15.3 million (January-June 2007); $47.1 million (2006)

MARKET SHARES BY REPERTOIRE (2007)

- International repertoire
- Domestic repertoire
- Classical, and other repertoire
- Regional

TOP INDEPENDENT LABELS (listed alphabetically)

China International Corp.
China Record Corp.
China Record Shanghai Corp.
Shanghai Audio and Video

PACIFIC AUDIO AND VIDEO

SOURCES: IFPI, IT Facts, Nokia

JANUARY 26, 2008 | www.billboard.biz | 49

www.americanradiohistory.com
Distribution Alliance (ODA), agrees that building relationships is vital if you want to do business in China.

“It is an exciting time to be building relationships in Beijing and elsewhere,” Gilbert says, “and my time there has proved that China in particular may benefit from its lack of industry baggage and actually help establish new business models.

“Move in with managed expectations,” Gilbert adds, “and you will not be disappointed.” Similarly upbeat is Jonathan Krane, CEO of Shanghai-based ticketing and promotion company Emma Ticketmaster, a subsidiary of Ticketmaster in the United States.

“The entire Chinese entertainment market is growing fast—it’s new here,” Krane says. “But it’s important to understand and manager the market. There’s a significant learning curve.”

Unlike its U.S. counterpart, Emma Ticketmaster operates in China as a promoter and has presented shows by acts including Eric Clapton and the Rolling Stones since the company launched in 2004. International acts brought to China in 2007 by Emma include Linkin Park, Beyonce, Avril Lavigne and Christina Aguilera.

With the world’s attention turning to China for the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing, Ticketmaster is certainly not the only major Western company in the touring sector expanding its interests in the country.

Live Nation in December announced an agreement with Chinese company Cosmedia Group to manage the new 10,000-capacity indoor Pop TV Arena in Hong Kong and appointed Luke Hede as its Hong Kong-based director of booking for Asia. Chinese superstar Jackie Cheung was set to open the venue with a series of concerts beginning Jan. 25.

Also in December, AEG announced a joint venture with Australian venue operator Ogden to bid on venue projects in China and elsewhere.

Another theme that emerges in talking to China-savvy music industry executives is that China, probably more than any other territory in the global music market, is not a homogeneous entity.

That’s hardly surprising, given that China’s 1.3 billion people are spread over 3.7 million square miles and speak several regional dialects and languages.

“China is a huge country—so huge that there are a lot of cultures within the country,” says Catherine Leung, Beijing-based GM of Universal Music China. “Approach the China market like the European market: look at provincial implications as well as national ones.”


“China is a vibrant and exciting place for music of all kinds, but the main thing people need to know is that piracy (both physical and digital) is throttling the recorded-music business before it can get started, both for international and Mandarin-language music,” Hole says.

“Services like Baidu and Yahoo China (that link Web users to sources of unauthorized downloads) make it impossible for legitimate online services to get going, and the music business needs to be paid a fair share for mobile services,” Hole adds. “We need help and support from the Chinese government and legal system.”

InterGrit’s Garnett, who served as director general of IFPI from 1992 to 1999, sees things somewhat differently.

“The traditional finger-pointing by foreign-content interests regarding piracy in China largely misses the point,” he says. “China is rapidly coming to terms with intellectual property rights—on its own terms. Protecting foreign copyrights is not a priority; protecting Chinese intellectual property—for example, the rights around the Olympics—is. Understanding and working with local attitudes to rights protection is another key to business success in China.”

Ken Cheung, Hong Kong-based VP of new media and business development at Warner Music Asia Pacific, says China’s record in terms of protecting IP rights—foreign or domestic—has been less than stellar.

“While the China market seems very attractive in terms of market size, it also presents many challenges at the moment,” Cheung says. “China has never been an attractive market in terms of CD sales, as piracy is rampant. For digital, the online business has been destroyed by Baidu—the largest search engine in China—which has more than 40% of its traffic coming from illegal MP3 search and deep-linking” to Web sites offering unauthorized content, he adds.

Other executives involved with the Chinese music industry believe progress is taking place in efforts to fight piracy.

“The perception among Western music executives is that because there has been such a culture of piracy in China, that consumers will not pay for music [or video], and that it’s futile to develop a legitimate business there,” New York-based digital music consultant Deborah Newman says.

Newman is now working with Catalyst Mobile, a mobile entertainment services company based in Emeryville, Calif., advising it on content strategy, digital rights and licensing for the company’s soon-to-be-expanded China music service.

“However, the recent major-label initiatives in China—in cooperation with IFPI—to bring legal action against those companies that are facilitating piracy is an encouraging sign,” Newman adds.

In April 2007, the Beijing No. 2 Intermediate People’s Court sided with 11 record companies, including the four international majors, that in January sued Beijing-based Yahoo China operator Alibaba for copyright violation due to the portal’s practice of providing deep-linking.

The court ordered Yahoo China to pay 200,000 yuan ($27,200) in damages to the labels and to delete the links to the free-download Web sites.

IFPI Asia regional director Mayaee Leong says the ruling gave the record industry a good basis for further action against similar Web sites, including such major portals as sina.com and sohu.com.

However, Newman notes that, as in the IFPI’s victory against Yahoo China, the damages are so small that there’s no real deterrent to prevent the continuing piracy.

“The challenge for Western music executives is figuring out the rights landscape in China,” she says. “It’s important that the music labels in China understand that entrepreneurs who are bringing innovative new services, especially in the mobile area, be given a chance to build a business.

“The rights landscape needs to be clarified, and it needs to be applied uniformly across all services that

‘Doing business in China is about guanxi: building and working networks of key business contacts.’

—NICHOLAS GARNETT

EXPERIENCE THE BUZZ: CHINA

THE HONEYS

WANG YONG

continued on >>p54
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are offering legitimate digital music services to the Chinese music fan.”

Newman adds that a related problem in China is that obligations for compensating music publishers, for local and international repertoire, remain unclear.

ODA’s Gilbert is more sanguine about the music industry’s prospects in China.

“One must look beyond CD sales and move on from the piracy issue; there are new models to be looked at,” he says. “China provides us with a framework to look beyond the supposedly shrinking global market, as measured by CD sales, and instead focus on the overall expansion of the industry through multiple revenue streams such as digital, merchandise, publishing, licencing, touring and so forth,” Gilbert says. “The record industry may be shrinking, but the music entertainment business is expanding; it is merely being spread out over different and multiple sources of income.”

Matthew Daniel, VP of strategy development at Beijing based digital music distributor RZG, says that while physical music in China may be a lost cause, the country’s digital achievements and potential are enormous.

“Already labels are reporting up to 70% of revenue being attributed to digital,” Daniel says. “This percentage is much more than that in mature music markets in the rest of the world.”

Market players say that a key recent development in the Chinese digital space was the launch in 2006 by China Mobile—the world’s biggest mobile carrier—of its Central Music Platform, aimed at facilitating nationwide marketing of music by bypassing aggregators and dealing directly with content providers.

“This has both positive and negative implications for labels trying to market product in China,” says Mark Natkin, managing director of IT and telecommunications at Beijing-based consultancy Marbridge.

“On the plus side, they can more cost-effectively run national marketing campaigns, on the minus side, marketing has not been a real strong suit for China’s operators—something that was less of an issue when the service providers were there to take on that role. Labels working directly with China Mobile and China Union need to work with them to develop a clear, detailed plan on who will be responsible for different aspects of product marketing.”

Beijing-based Roger Chen, Greater China sales manager for California digital music information services company Gracenote, outlines steps he believes the digital sector can take to expand its reach in China.

They include increasing the average per-track sales price, focusing more on personalized service and user recommendations, focusing more on the Long Tails of catalog titles as opposed to the “traditional impulse-style model” and removing DRM from tracks to facilitate ease of use, especially among non-PC users.

“One key theme that emerges when speaking with industry players active in China is that the music business has yet to develop locally the substantial potential of its own talent base.”

“The opportunities in China are substantial,” Intergreat’s Garnett says. “Local music production is underdeveloped, and the popular scene is dominated by imports from Hong Kong and Taiwan. There is growing interest in developing local content to international standards, not least at government level.”

Consultant Newman says, “There is a very young, but exciting music scene coming out of China. In the last year alone I’ve seen the bands get so much better.”

Echoing that sentiment is Archie Hamilton, founder/CEO of Shanghai-based concert promoter Split Works.

“In China, there’s been a huge amount of progress in terms of building an alternative space,” Hamilton says. “We’ve seen progress by local [alternative] bands, like Banana Monkey, PK 14 and the Retros. There were three Chinese bands playing at South by Southwest. Beijing now has a classy live venue, Star Live, and Shanghai now has its first proper live house.”

Emma Ticketmaster’s Krane says China has a very strong domestic touring market. “I think this segment can grow a lot.”

Linus Liu, managing director for China at U.K.-based concert services company Star Events Group, says major Western acts that have played China in the past year “would not have even had a look-in coming to China in previous years.”

But he says much remains to be done before China’s live music business is on a par with those in other territories.

“From a production view, money for better equipment, service, health and safety are still in their infancy,” Liu says. “Also, out-of-date knowledge and systems for live events are still in place and desperately need updating to internationally recognized and proven [standards].”

Hamilton adds that China’s media sector leaves a lot to be desired when it comes to help develop the territory’s music industry, terming the local media “unappreciative and uninterested.”

“Radio is the biggest disappointment, because it can be a very formative medium,” Hamilton says. “They don’t have any scope to play anything except pop.”

But Liu reminds those thinking of getting into the Chinese music market to maintain a sense of perspective.

“Do not think one can change a 5,000-year history and culture overnight,” he says. “What right does one have to do so, anyway? Keeping this question in mind helps.”

Additional reporting by Rebecca Catching in Shanghai.
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**Hip-Hop** by Hillary Crosley

**Highs and ‘Lows’**

Digital Bonanza Lands Flo Rida Atop The Charts

When Flo Rida first took the bus from Florida to Los Angeles in hopes of launching a music career, he was so broke that he was forced to live on the streets.

Even worse, he once left his bag on a bench while milling around the Beverly Center mall, only to discover that the LAPD had confiscated it, fearing it contained a bomb.

Nowadays, the rapper's outlook is considerably brighter. His debut single, "Low" featuring T-Pain, spent a fourth week atop the Billboard Hot 100 this issue, and in the post-Christmas week, set a new record when it moved 470,000 digital downloads.

As a bridge to his Po' Boy/Atlantic debut, "Mail on Sunday" (March 18), "Low" is prominently featured as the lead track from the Disney film "Step Up 2 the Streets," which opens Feb. 14 in U.S. theaters. Atlantic will release the soundtrack Feb. 5.

"It's hard to pick songs for a film like 'Step Up 2' because we don't use known stars," Disney Pictures music and soundtrack president Mitchell Lieb says. "So the dancing and the music are the stars of the picture. I need my music to chart, and high, by the time the movie comes out."

There's no worries on that front, with "Low" having sold more than 1.78 million downloads through Jan. 6, according to Nielsen SoundScan. But Atlantic now faces the challenge of keeping audiences interested once Flo Rida's debut hits stores.

"Some people may say, 'Why did they give this song to the soundtrack?'" Atlantic VP of marketing James Lopez says. "This deal was done early in the development stages. We wanted to really utilize the marketing the film company was going to do to roll it out, because this isn't a major film with studio muscle."

Plus, the label has been building the Flo Rida story since late last summer, when he began playing club dates in Florida and the Southeast in conjunction with the release of "Low" to clubs in the area.

"This may seem like an overnight sensation to most of the country," Lopez says. "The song spread so much faster than we could travel."

The "Low" video debuted in early November on BET and MTV, inspiring nearly 100 YouTube videos of dancing fans. According to Atlantic director of digital marketing Brian Dackowski, the label quickly initiated partnerships with social networking sites such as Imeem, where fans can upload their own photos and remixes of the "Low" clip.

Flo Rida also has his own YouTube channel, through which "Low" has garnered nearly 5 million plays, and interacts personally with fans on his MySpace site.

"This phenomenon was organic," Dackowski says. "We haven't had an artist take off like this before with a song picking up and kids across the country going for it on their own. It was like riding a wave."

SUNDAY’ BEST

Flo Rida was born Tramar Billard on Dec. 16, 1979, in Carol City, Fla.'s 187th Street projects. The youngest (and only boy) of seven siblings, he was a natural athlete who played every sport imaginable, but music was what really moved him.

He honed his skills making tapes in his grandmother's and aunt's garages, and by ninth grade, had joined four-member rap group the Groundhoggs.

"We grinded locally doing shows and mixtapes," Flo Rida says. "We kept rapping together even after I graduated high school in 2001 and left for [the University of Nevada-Las Vegas]. But after awhile, we started shopping our demos separately because no one signed us as a group."

The rapper returned to Carol City to regroup, but was summoned back to record in L.A. after an old friend, Tracy Pierce from the Blind Boys of Alabama, passed Flo Rida's demo tape to producer Devante Swing. Swing helped Flo Rida develop his style, but was unable to land him a major-label deal.

What finally elevated Flo Rida to the big leagues was another old friend, Rick Ross' manager E Class, who runs Florida indie label Poe Boy.

"They'd been trying to sign me and get me to come back to Florida, but I didn't want to until I could contribute to my family," Flo Rida says. But by 2006, he was back home and recording, and newly signed to Atlantic.

Now, the rapper is putting the final touches on "Mail on Sunday," which features appearances by Ross, Sean Kingston, Lil Wayne, Trey Songz and Brisco, and production from J R Rotem, the Runners, Timbaland, Desiganted Hitters, Tracy Pierce and DJ Monty.

Atlantic is preparing for the imminent release of a viral video, "Gotta Eat" featuring Plies and Lupe Fiasco, and Lopez hopes a second official single will be at radio by the end of this month.

"We want to make sure the consumer buys into an artist and not just because of one song," he says. "We know his album is deep."

But despite all that's on the horizon, Flo Rida is simply thankful for his success and hoping for more. "They say if you grind hard enough, you'll shine," he says. "I didn't know 'Low' would get this big. It's the greatest feeling in the world."
**Marching Forward**

Bob Mould has worn many caps throughout a nearly 30-year career, but he's feeling particularly comfortable with his newest fit. "The former Husker Du and Sugar

"The deals that I had with Rykodisc for the Sugar albums and two of my solo

"Mould owns such albums as "Loudbomb" and "Mod-

"Mould had relationships with many labels through the years, but says he's reached a point where the finances of a particular deal aren't the most impor-

"It's like the music I grew up on, the music that made all of these things that are present now in existence," he says. "I'm continuing that with raw beats, raw rhymes, beat-

"Four years removed from 2004's "Rahzel's Greatest Knockouts," Rahzel is finally completing its follow-up. Due out this summer on JDOPE Records, "Greatest Knockouts the Album, Vol. 2" marks the third solo release for the former Roots member. "It's like the music I grew up on, the music that made all of these things that are present now in existence," he says. "I'm continuing that with raw beats, raw rhymes, beat-boxing and rhyming."  

"Following its online release during iTunes late last year, Bad Boy singer Cheri Dennis' oft-delayed debut album, "In and out of Love," will finally hit stores Feb. 26. Single "Portrait of Love," the follow-up to last year's "I Love You," is No. 55 on Billboard's Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart. Contributors include Yung Joc, Sean "Diddy" Combs, Timbaland, Rodney Jerkins and Mario Winans.  

Reporting by John Benson, Jonathan Cohen, Mariel Conception and Katie Hasty.  

**AUSIE PENDULUM ON UPSWING**

Australian drum’n’bass trombonist Pendulum is set to rock international markets in 2008. In late 2007, the Australian group announced its arrival when "Granite" spent a month on the Official UK Chart. Loops, singles and a download-only single. A physical release helped it peak at No. 29 in early December. Originally from Perth, Australia, but London-based since 2003, Pendulum signed to Warner Bros. U.K. for its debut major album "In Silico," due March 17. Atlantic Records is due to release the album in September in the United States. Pendulum's debut 2005 album "Hold Your Colour" on London indie BBE reached No. 8 in the U.K. Widespread support from the British music press and word-of-mouth since then has helped Pendulum gather mo-

"According to Warner, France and Gemany are the band's likeliest international priorities after its U.K. breakthrough."

"I've always been drawn to artists who break by stealth, through their own initiatives rather than conventional high-

"Pendulum feels like a band on the verge of doing something big."

dates. After U.S. gigs Jan. 14-18 in New York and New Jersey, she returns home for five March shows touted as the Song Box tour, booked through International Talent Booking. The name refers to her debut long-player, "Alas I Cannot Swim." It will be released Feb. 4 in the United Kingdom as a standard CD and as the limited edition "Song Box," containing the album plus posters and other extras—including a concert ticket for any of the March shows. The boxed version will not be eligible for the U.K. chart, but, Virgin GM Mark Terry says, "because of the kind of artist she is, we're not overly concerned. We're working with her to make sure she's on the charts."

"French singer Christophe Mähr's 2007 album "Mon Paradis" is one of the year's top albums, and his follow-up "Maë Miné Diamond" is expected to be just as successful. Mähr, produced by Warner/Chappell, is due to wrap a lengthy tour booked through Paris-based Jean-Claude Camus Productions in April after 150 shows. Crisafulli says he is weighing release options in non-French-speaking markets."

"At this point in my career, it's more about the fit than the finance," he says. "I prefer to own the masters because it's a matter of principle for me."

"It's like the music I grew up on, the music that made all of these things that are present now in existence," he says. "I'm continuing that with raw beats, raw rhymes, beat-boxing and rhyming."
NOW HEAR THIS
YOUR GUIDE TO UNSIGNED BANDS Compiled by Katie Hasty

>>> FIVE TIMES AUGUST
Contact: Kelly Vandergriff, manager, kelly@fivetimesaugust.com
Dallas-bred Brad Skistimas, aka Five Times August, estimates he sold somewhere between 10,000 and 15,000 copies of his self-released debut, "The Independence," via digital retailers and through his Web site before he registered the effort with Nielsen SoundScan last summer. But there was good reason for joining the roll. In August (coincidentally), Five Times August became the first unsigned act to be distributed to Wal-Mart on a national level, with help from Anderson Merchandise. Licensing success finally got the retail giant onboard. Tracks from the effort earned major TV placements like MTV's "Laguna Beach" and CW's "One Tree Hill" in addition to spots on Oxygen, Lifetime and Fox Reality. The 24-year-old's easygoing pop stylings lend themselves to younger audiences, which have helped form a fan base on MySpace.

The group is set to release a new album, "Brighter Side," March 18, and already the track "Sentimental Spell" has been featured on MTV's "Real World" season finale this month. Skistimas, who says the new album will sound a lot less rock-oriented, hopes to reach new audiences through more placements and an upcoming touring. "I play all-ages [shows] as much as possible," Skistimas says. "What's great about the music is that it's clear—kids can go, but parents like coming too. I don't like playing an acoustic guitar in bars anyway."

"We're going to try to make records when we're 50 years old. This is just the start," the 29-year-old songwriter says. And the roots-rock ensemble is well on its way to making that dream happen.

Earlier this month, the band made its debut on NPR's "World Cafe," a perfect audience for its guitar-driven, intricately arranged songs. Previously, the five-piece has opened for Wilco and the Allman Brothers, along with playing at the Newport Folk Festival. Independent releases include last October's "Hiawatha Talking Machine" EP, and the group has garnered airplay on triple-A stations like WXRT Chicago.

Phonograph has honed its musical expertise by building its own studio in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, where the group is recording its next full-length album with help from Welsh's "mecca of gear.

>>> PHONOGRAPH
Contact: Jordan Bromley, manager, j bromley@manatt.com
Phonograph frontman Matt Welsh has been a lot of things: a stand-up comedian, head of sales for a fashion company and a mainstay at New York music gear shop Main Drag. But his own music is his main pursuit, and he'd like to make it a part of his life forever.

"What's great about [the album] is the collaboration. Making this record was a whole new experience for me," Welsh says. "I've always wanted to make music, and now I'm getting a chance to do it with other people."

Welsh's working with two songwriters, one from Def Jam and one from Warner Bros., to build a showcase EP. "I'm going to go out there and make music, and then see what happens," Welsh says. "I'm going to keep making records until someone signs me."

Welsh is considering whether to release the EP himself or to shop it around to labels. "I might release it myself, or I might try to find a label to release it for me," Welsh says. "I'm open to anything at this point."
Nashville
A Flash

Can John Rich Help Country Outsiders Make Some Noise?

Bringing strangefellows into an unlikely situation to entertain the masses is as old as "Gilligan’s Island" and "The Gong Show.

More recently, the concept has been effectively demonstrated by ABC’s "Dancing With the Stars," among a never-ending litany of other reality shows.

The latest mash-up is CMT’s "Gone Country," which brings together ’80s R&B star Bobby Brown, former "American Idol" contestant Diana DeGarmo, Latin artist Julio Iglesias Jr., "Brady Bunch" principal Maureen McCormick, Sisqo, Twisted Sister frontman Dee Snider and singer/TV personality Carrie Wilson in a contest that nets the winner a country single release.

The ringmaster/pot stirsmaestro/taskmaster for the show, which debuts Jan. 25 on the network, is Big & Rich’s John Rich.

Filmed in late October, "Gone Country" finds the contestants living together in the Playboy Mansion, the 27,000-square-foot home north of Nashville co-owned by the Muzik Mafia, a genre-bending creative triumvirate whose members include Rich, musical partner Big Kenny Alphin, Gretchen Wilson and Cowboy Troy.

While such shows as Fox’s "American Idol" rely on their audience to pick a winner (albeit with entertaining judges to ostensibly guide them), "Gone Country" is more akin to NBC’s "The Apprentice" in that the only contestant needs to impress is Rich. In the first episode, he arrives on the front lawn of the mansion in a helicopter, bedecked in a full-length fur coat.

During a subsequent down-home Southern dinner, Rich explains to the housemates their challenge—each will have to compose an original country song with the help of Music Row’s finest songwriters and perform it in front of a live Nashville audience. The songwriters, recruited by Rich to help the housemates, include Jeffrey Steele, Vicky McGehee, Marvin Green, Leslie Satcher, Keith Stegall and Tommy Lee James.

In the end, the show provides plenty of tears (largely by McCormick), testosterone-fueled tiffs (Snider, Richard), down-home humor (there’s a toilet-seat-tossing contest) and, most importantly, music.

"There is some funny stuff in the show," Rich says before driving home the Nashville adage that it all begins with a song. "You have to sit down and create something from nothing, and everything springs out of that. That’s what makes country music different than all the other genres."

With that in mind, Rich handicaps the seven contestants vying for the prize:

BOBBY BROWN

"His biggest strength is that he is Bobby Brown, and his biggest weakness is that he is Bobby Brown. He is his own worst enemy, but when he is just being a regular guy, what a great dude. He really understands a lot about music. He’s a really, really good songwriter. Really knows how to work a crowd. He is still a superstar. He has that gear."

DIANA DeGARMO

"As a kid she was really into country, but then she kind of got disillusioned with it and went pop. That’s when she did ‘American Idol.’ She put out a couple of pop singles and they did OK, but it just really wasn’t something she could sell because that’s really not her deal. For her, the biggest challenge was connecting back to country music. She wrote a really, really good song, but she sang it like Christina Aguilera. Those vocal criticisms don’t necessarily work in country music, so she has got to retool her approach a little bit. It’s hard to find any flaws in what she does other than that.”

JULIO IGLESIAS JR.

"His only weakness is the language barrier and I am not sure that is such a weakness, really. He doesn’t know a lot about country as far as modern country, but he knows a lot about old country because of his dad. We have been looking for a bridge to bridge that gap between the Hispanic community and country music for ever. We could really use a couple of artists that speak their language and speak our language and bridge the two together. If he wanted to stick with it and take a serious run at it, he could do something.”

MAUREEN MCCORMICK

"She’s just not a great singer, but as a person she has an incredible story. We all grew up thinking she was part of our DNA. She’s really an emotional kind of person. She is either laughing at the top of her lungs or bailing her eyes out, which makes her a bit of a train wreck on some things, but when it came to writing songs, I felt like her vulnerability was a plus. She wrote the best song of anybody on the entire show, ‘That’s the Prize I Gotta Pay for Being Me.’ It just killed me.”

SISQO

"He’s a really good singer, knows how to write a hit song and is a really good record producer. It’s going to be really bloody hard for him to overcome the whole hip-hop thing. He is so urban in his delivery. He always does dance moves and things that are so alien to country music. I am not sure the audience is going to let that go. Can he keep his identity and lose some of the jive-and-give a little bit?"

DEE SNIDER

"His opinion of country music was so antiquated. He didn’t realize that there is music out there now that rocks harder than what he was doing. But he went to a Muzik Mafia show and saw the level of intensity, saw me perform a couple of times and started digging into the music further. His respect level came full circle by the time we hit the end of the show. His biggest strength was that he is extremely charismatic and has the ‘I don’t give a damn’ attitude.”

CARRIE WILSON

"Carrie just grew up around such great music. She understands harmony; she understands how music works. Some of the Wilson Phillips stuff I thought was some of the greatest pop music we had at that period of time. It was real melodies, real lyrics. Her weakness is she has never been a frontperson. She’s always singing harmony. To win this show, you have to be able to step up and control an audience and take over the stage. That was one of the things she really struggled with.”

Q Notes

QUINCY JONES

Teach Your Children Well
Young Fans Need Musical History Lesson

It happens all the time. Parents come to me and say, "Would you mind talking to my kids and giving them some tips on how to make it in the music business?" For a singer or a trumpet player or any other musician, I would say, “Find the 10 people you admire the most as an artist—someone that hits your soul—and sing or play along with their records. Copy every note.”

That may sound strange, but you’re not going to end up sounding like the people you are copying. That’s how the whole evolution of jazz has worked. Louis Armstrong heard King Oliver, and tried to play and sing like he played, which was revolution- ary. Then Roy Eldridge heard Armstrong and copied Armstrong and developed his own sound. Dizzy Gillespie copied Eldridge and developed his own sound, and it went on and on and on like that.

Even when we were kids, we’d copy every note Miles Davis, Fats Navarro and Bird put down. We’d know all the licks—all the things they played on 52nd Street. We didn’t miss a thing.

It’s tragic when American kids don’t know the history of their own music. I challenge you to go up to some 14- or 15-year-olds and find out how many of them know who Charlie Parker or Duke Ellington was. Jazz is to America what classical music is to Europe. All the big tentpole figures in R&B—Marvin Gaye, Donny Hathaway, Stevie Wonder, Michael Jackson and Earth, Wind & Fire—were all influenced by jazz.

Today, I harp on the kids and jump up and down and say, "If you know where you’re coming from, it’s easy to get where you’re going.” They act like blues and jazz don’t exist, but it’s not only their problem. Clear Channel doesn’t play it. Radio doesn’t play it. It’s not part of the education system. We’ve got to change that or our own musical history will soon be lost forever.

Q Notes is a series of columns by Quincy Jones on music, the arts, the digital space and humanitarian outreach.

www.americanradiohistory.com
ALBUMS

ROCK

DRIVE-BY TRUCKERS
Brighter Than Creation's Dark
Producer: David Barbe
New West
Release Date: Jan 22

Drive-By Truckers' seventh album is a sprawling scorcher, and while these guys certainly aren't strangers to long records, "Brighter Than Creation's Dark" is one of the meanest, leanest 19-track albums you'll ever spin. Yet where DBT usually hits the ground running, "Dark" is deliberately slower to build, full of beautifully considered stories of soldiers and fathers and drinkers that call to mind nothing less than "The River." A surprisingly prolific Mike Cooley turns in the country-up "Bob," "A Ghost to Most" and the rocker "Self-Destructive Zones," all smooth-going-down shots of squinty-eyed, serrated humor, while Patterson Hood is in never-better form on "Two Daughters and a Beautiful Wife" and "Monument Valley," the record's John Ford-quoting closer. "Dark" also benefits from the expanded roles given pedal-steel maestro John Neff and bassist Shonna Tucker, whose first DBT tracks (including the shimmering "The Purgatory Line") channel Patty Griffin and whose harmony vocals add welcome, newfound atmosphere.

BLACK MOUNTAIN
In the Future
Producer: Black Mountain
Jagajguwar
Release Date: Jan 22

Black Mountain's sophomore effort opens with a bang, a torrent of sludgy guitars and the chilling wails of dueling vocalists Stephen McBean and Amber Webber. But it's around the 2:20 mark on track two, "Angeflies" when "In the Future" reveals that its true strengths lay in the quieter moments, where the group trades metal for keyboard-adorned psycdelic lit. It's this mix of the loud and the trippy that Black Mountain specializes in, and "In the Future" sees the band striving for epic proportions. Check "Tryants," an eight-minute scarcher that begins with Black Sabbath churn and dissolves into hushed, spoken guitar tones, all of it rising with Webber's majestic vocals. But it isn't all so heavy, as Black Mountain isn't above offering such a simple, two-minute piano-driven beauty as "Wild Wind." -TM

SUPER FURRY ANIMALS
Hey Venus!
Producer: David Newfield
Rough Trade

The Whigs Mission Control
Producer: Rob Schnapf
ATO
Release Date: Jan 22

The dizzying tom-tom runs and shining buzz-saw guitar blasts that launch "Mission Control" opener "Like a Vibration" demand you sit up and take notice, but it's the track's pop hook heart and Parker Gispert's guy-next-door voice that make the two-and-a-half-minute sprint stick. Therein lays the beauty of the Whigs: not only is the band merci-ifully unpretentious, its power-trio format means the tunes are refreshingly uncluttered, allowing clear-as-a-bell melodies room to breathe. Even excursions into psych-country ("Sleep Sunshine") and horn-backed roots rock ("I Got Ideas") never feel gimmicky. Taking pages out of some very strong playbooks (think Supercuchauk, Guided By Voices, and the Whigs find a way to revive honest-to-goodness pop rock for a new generation.

CAT POWER
Jukebox
Producer: Stuart Sikes
Matador
Release Date: Jan 22

Like 2000's "The Covers Record," Chan Marshall's second go at a (mostly) all covers album imparts her unique, husky-voiced stamp on songs from such greats as Hank Williams, James Brown, Joni Mitchell and ...Lil Wayne and the Hot Boyz. But rather than the stripped-down, bare-bones approach employed previously, "Jukebox" follows in the vein of 2006's "The Greatest" and goes heavy on Memphis soul and blues elements. From the sultry, minimal retooling of Frank Sinatra's "New York, New York" and smoked out clubs of Billie Holiday's "Don't Explain" to a piano and feedback-laced take on her own "Metal Heart," Marshall's reinventions reveal a welcome intimacy. Meanwhile, a new song, the Dylan-inspired "Song to Bobby," is an assured reminder of the strength of Marshall's original material, and hopefully a good indication of where she'll go from here. -JF

Valentine's is Jim Brickman's red-letter day. As a master at conjuring sonic romance, the platinum-selling pianist/composer/producers has truly made Febr. 14 his signature holiday. The AC/new age hitmaker's 17th CD features 12 intimate morsels, including fresh instrumental takes on familiar songs (a sensuous sax-styled mix of 1997 cross-format topline single "Valentine" and rumba-like "Escape") and recast vocal tracks (the tender "You," now with Tara MacLean; 2007 AC hit "Never Alone," featuring Lady Antebellum; and re-ignited "Destiny" with Jaco Velasquez). Other highlights: hapsodic "To Hear You Love Me," with hand-picked touring mate Jake Simpson and elegant instrumental "Sacred Moment," inspired by Bach. As he opens his 14th year as a chart presence in what has become a fully chocolate domain, Brickman maintains his rep as the God of the genre.

BEN ALLISON & MAN SIZE SAFE
Little Things in the World
Producers: Ben Allison, Matt Balitsaris
Palmetto
Release Date: Jan 22

Hands down, this bassist/composer's newest is the primo jazz release of 2008 so far and promises to stand tall as one of the year's best. It's lyrical, colorful, edgy...

NATASHA BEDINGFIELD
Pocketful of Sunshine
Producers: various
Epitome
Release Date: Jan 22

Yes, some of Natasha Bedingfield's oft-delayed sophomore effort sounds like more fres- face feeling pitch music for women's hygiene products ("A face without freckles/It's like a sky without the stars"). But all the tinkering—the album shares a mere five songs with the U.K. version released last April—gave "Sunshine" what her 2005 debut "Unwritten" lacked: individuality, albeit of the programmed kind. The album has an undeniable flip-flop feel throughout; like the unplugged soul-chick hooded Bayene tried to conjure at the end of the "replacement" video. It helps that Bedingfield has one of those point-and-shoot pop voices that can do anything a producer might ask of it, from Aaliyah staccatos ("Angel" to Kelly Clarkson power belting ("Soulmate") to quirky Lily Allen in that-singing ("Choco Knows")." But this standout here is "Piece of Your Heart," some stop-start funk that almost makes Bedingfield sound like Chaka Khan. Seriously. -KM
and teems with inspired exuberance. Conceived with careful architectural atten-
tion and grounded in the tradi-
tion of alchemic improvisation, Ben Allison’s music has all the earmarks of jazz in motion to a higher evolu-
tionary plateau. The CD marks the debut of Allison’s latest band, Man Size Safe, named after Dick Cheney’s secretive White House vault. Key to the group’s sonic distinc-
tion is the interplay of trumpeter Ron Horton and electric guitarist Steve Car-
denas, including their unison wails on the grooved opener “Respiration.” Highlights include Carndenas’ melodic gem “Language of Love,” Allison’s intriguing “Four Folk Songs” and a salient cover of John Lennon’s “Jealous Guy.”—DO

NEW & NOTEWORTHY

MGMT
Oracular Spectacular
Producer: Dave Fridmann
Columbia
Release Date: Jan. 22

Joining fellow hoth tailed Brooklyn bands Vampire Weekend and Yeasayer, MGMT (pronounced “management”) merits just as much attention for its psychedelic experimenta-
tion as it does for its melodies and hooks. As pro-
duced by Dave Fridmann, the group’s major-label debut never takes itself too seriously. Case in point is the electro-glam single “Time to Pretend,” which mocks the excessive rock star lifestyle with tales of models, heroin and cars. Elsewhere, “Elec-
tric Feel” works a limerick, funny bassline, and “Kids” is a call to the dancefloor driven by syrup-thick synths. Fridmann’s style is put to the

best use on the tempo-
shifting “The Handshake,” which bounce from psych-
to folk to bippy, Flaming Lips-
style weird-outs and ends with a foot-stomping chant. Kudos to MGMT for main-
taining its hipster cred, even on a major.—JM

TIMES NEW VIKING
Rip It Off
Producers: Times New Viking, Matt Horne
Matador
Release Date: Jan. 22

Pretty goofy to title from the CD cover’s ransom-
note fanzine collages and manually typed- 
written fonts on down and checking in at
barely more than half an hour, this co-ed Columbus,
Ohio, trio’s third album bunes alternately forlorn and
celebratory melodies be-
neath defiant riffs of
scratched-up muck. Sure to
satiate aging indie partisans 
nostalgic for Swell Maps, pre-
Matador Pavement and New
Zealand’s Flying Nun Rec-
ords, the set begins with “Teen Drama” and ends with “Poet Teen Drama,” and
only one song out of 16—the ap-
parent protest epic “Rele-
vant: Now”—exceeds three
minutes. 10 check in under
two. But most of them house
indelible hooks regardless,
plus drunken shoutalongs,
jangling drums, Jesus and
Mary Chain guitar-gunk
spurts and isolated lines like
“Whatchoo been doin’ to
my head” and “That’s not
the right attitude”—CE

LONDON PIGG
Falling in Love at a Coffee Shop
(3:40)
Producers: Ian Fitchuk, Justin Loucks. Landon Pigg
Writer: J. Pigg
Publisher: Land on Music/EMI April, ASCAP

Landon Pigg readily ac-
knowledges that there may be some naivety in the way he approaches songwrit-
ing. The son of a veteran stu-
dio musician, Pigg received an
informal music education
through his father’s record col-
collection and enough encour-
agement to begin nurturing his
own talent as a teen. Now 24, the
Nashville singer/songwriter has his major-label debut under his belt in “LP,” and a
new EP, “Tell It to a Coffee Shop,” which is fea-
tured in the “A Diamond Is For-
ever” TV ad campaign. Al-
though Pigg credits Rufus
Wanwright and David Meead
as primary influences, “Cof-
fee Shop” also recalls the
wistfulness and delicacy of
ballads from Simon & Gar-
kunt. Like the venerable folk-
rackers, Pigg pairs earnest
lyrics with understated, but
instantly recognizable melodies. iTunes users downloaded the track—a reception hall staple of the future—13,000 times in its first week available. Now “Coffee Shop” is primed to wake up world-wary top-40 programmers.—AC

LEONA LEWIS
Bleeding Love (3:59)
Producer: Ryan “Alias” Tedder
Writers: R. Tedder, J. McCartney
Publishers: Write 2 Live/Kobalt/Seven Peaks/Jambition, ASCAP

Syco

Perhaps it seems premature to crown 2008’s best new artist, but Leona Lewis arrives on U.S. shores with plenty of jewels in her tiara. In November, debut disc “Spirit” debuted at No. 1 in the United Kingdom—selling the equivalent of 200 albums per minute on release day—and has since become the fastest-selling debut of all time, while launch single “Bleeding Love” topped the singles chart for four weeks. It’s tough to fathom that a 17-year-old free gimmick jams continue to jink up the state-
side airwaves, but Lewis’ bow is not only a one-iso-
ten harmonic show-stopper, it is also hip, soulful, beat-rippling and an undeniable vocal tour de force. And that’s all before adding the visual: Lewis is simply stunning. Not since a young artist named Whitney Houston arrived has Clive Davis had so much to work with. The gorgeous “Spirit”—A&R’d at home by Simon Cowell—arrives March 18 in the United States. By then, “Leona” should be working its way to household-name status. A colossal and
timeless debut.—CT

DANCE

TAYLOR DAYNE
Beautiful (4:05)
Producer: Hex Hector
Writers: P. Dayne
H.M. Nuyten
Remixers: Skotthy K, Speakerbox
Publishers: Attraction Girl/ 
McFly/Universal/PolyGram International, ASCAP

Ushering in a new track from Taylor Dayne is like welcoming home a cherished pal, only she seems to have en-
dured the years with more moxie than the rest of us who were twirling in circles in 1988—
mind you, that would be 20 years ago—when she first hit with “Tell It to My Heart” and
“Prove Your Love.” She re-
gained nickname roots on an-
thetic “Beautiful.” Mixed into a creamy froth by the equally
long-lived Hex Hector. Alter-
tative mixes are available from Scotty K, who adds a flush of house strings, and Speakerbox, apply-
ing cee-coc production stops and
starts, but it’s the familiar vigour of those field-goal vocal
chords that gives the song its
clout. She proved our love long
ago, but Dayne sounds fresher
now than ever. It’s more to come, with her first studio album in a
decade, “Satisfied.”—CT

SHELY LYNNE
Any Who Had a Heart (3:32)
Producer: Phil Ramone
Writers: B. Bacharach, H. David
Publisher: not listed

Last Highway
Long before she became the darling of Americana/
triple-A and a subsequent Grammy Award winner, Shelby Lynne was acclaimed as a torch and twang
singer. Taking a tip from a fan—one Mr. Barry
Manilow—the singer returns to torch roots with a
deeper individual tribute album to Dusty Springfield.
The first single is nifty, as Lynne takes on the classic
Burt Bacharach/Hal David composition “Anyone Who
Had a Heart.” With Phil Ramone at the board, every-
thing here is beautifully sparse: four musicians—
drums, guitar, keyboards and bass—and Lynne, who
sounds downhearted and quiet, mournful pro-
duction. Her prodigious versatility again proves what
a soulful talent she is: a lady who can convincingly
play the ingénue as well as bawdy broad. Her mission
here is adventurous, mature and, without question,
fulfilled. Looks like the perfect holiday gift arrived late
this year: “Just a Little Lovin’” streets Jan. 29.—CT

CRITICS’ CHOICE

EDITED BY JONATHON COHEN (ALBUMS) AND CHUCK TAYLOR (Singles)

CONTRIBUTORS: Alexandra
Cahill, Troy Carpenter, Chuck
Eddy, Todd Harter, Kerin Mason,
Jim Mejia, Dan Ouellette, Taylor
Phil, Van Vleck, Susan
Vesnaver, Jeff Valenti

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

CONTRIBUTORS: Jonathon Cohen

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

All albums commercially available in the United States are eligible for review. Additional review copies to
Jonathan Cohen and singles
Please inquire to Chuck Taylor. (both at Billboards, 770 Broadway, Seventh Floor, New York, NY
10003) or to the writers in the apropriate bureaus.
McDonald Hits Chart Trifecta With Trio Of Songs

Three times proved to be a unique charm for Michael McDonald. With his next album, mostly covers "Soul Speak," due March 11 via Universal Motown, McDonald has accomplished the rare feat of hitting three separate charts with a trio of tracks from the project. His rendition of Jackie Wilson’s "(Your Love Keeps Lifting Me) Higher and Higher" debuted at No. 21 on the Adult Contemporary survey, while his take on Teddies Pendergrass "Love TKO" bowed at No. 39 on Adult R&B and a version of Dionne Warwick’s "Walk On By" opened at No. 28 at Hot Contemporary Jazz Songs.

The Pendergrass and Warwick covers mark McDonald’s first entries on those charts, although guest appearances with Chaka Khan and Fourplay have made the jazz tallies. "This is one of those cases where setup and execution was really crucial — and it actually worked," says Tom Cunningham, VP of adult format promotion for Universal Motown. "The formats, and these particular songs." Cunningham says Universal Motown hatched the multiple singles/multiple format strategy in early December, after meetings to talk about "Soul Speak" promotion. "He’s a familiar voice singing familiar songs, which really works for radio," Cunningham explains.

Universal Motown delivered the songs to radio on a couple of separate occasions in mid-December, then sent them again digitally after the holiday break. The McDonald tracks were also priorities in the company’s post-holiday "blitz week," and Cunningham says, "We got a sense pretty quickly that we were looking at something sensational. These formats were very open to these records." For McDonald, having the three songs out gives people a wide sample of "Soul Speak," which includes three new compositions as well as covers of other songs by Stevie Wonder, Ray Charles, Leonard Cohen, Bob Marley and Van Morrison.

"I just thought all these records had ... some element about them that speaks to your inner being, your soul," McDonald says. "Typically they’re those kinds of records you loved before you even knew what the words said. You just want to hear them over and over again." After the strong start, Cunningham says Universal Motown plans on "nuturing these three records, and the market will tell us where to go down the road." And he’s not ruling out the possibility of crossing over to pop and other younger markets.

"We’re starting at the adult formats and leaving all doors open," he says. "This is just the tip of the iceberg on this project.

Additional reporting by Gary Trust.

FAME TRACKER: PUERTO RICAN NEWCOMER MAKING RADIO INROADS

While “American Idol” may be the quickest way to success in the mainstream world, artists who win U.S.-based Latin music reality shows have typically had a far tougher time.

Newcomer Juan is one of the few fighting the odds valiantly. After winning the Univision reality show “Objetivo Fama” last May, Juan’s Fonovisa debut, “Con Mi Soledad,” entered Top Latin Albums at No. 8 on the Dec. 29, 2007 chart. "Con Mi Soledad" sold 7,000 copies, most of them in Puerto Rico, in its first week, according to Nielsen SoundScan, and has since scanned a total of 15,000 copies.

Emboldened by the early sales results of a new artist hitting the marketplace at a typically slow time, Fonovisa began taking Juan on his first full-fledged U.S. promotion tour in early January.

The push should help “Soledad” re-enter Top Latin Albums after dropping off this week. It is already helping the title track/first single in markets like Miami and New York: the cut debuts this week at No. 44 on Hot Latin Songs and jumps 31-25 on Latin Pop Airplay.

Unlike other “Objetivo Fama” winners, whose sound has been more mainstream pop or tropical, Juan’s earthier approach is more akin to the singer/songwriter tradition, although he doesn’t pen his songs. Another factor in his success is management from Es Television, the same company that produces “Objetivo.”

“It’s been very hands-on work," says manager Soraya Sánchez, who is prepping her artist for his first show at San Juan’s Coliseo de Puerto Rico April 25. "We’ve also been fortunate in that this is a very musically defined act, and also, among the winners we’ve seen, the most disciplined that I’ve had."

—Leila Cobo

Cobra Commanders

Fueled By Ramen Band Tears Up The Road

Ahead of the Jan. 15 launch of Cobra Starship’s first headlining tour, more than half of the dance-rock act’s 49 scheduled club shows had already sold out. The remaining dates are "on track to sell out," Fueled by Ramen president John Janick says.

Although recent exposure of Cobra Starship’s new video for “The City Is at War” on MTV and Fuse has "helped propel this thing to another level," ticket sales have been strong since the December on-sale, Janick says. Cobra Starship is supporting its sophomore album, “Viva la Cobra!” (Decaydance/Fueled by Ramen), which debuted at No. 80 on the Billboard 200 last October and has sold 40,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Momentum has been building since the 2006 release of its "Snakes on a Plane (Bring It)" theme song for the comedy/horror film of the same title. The track provided a springboard for the group’s debut, "While the City Sleeps, We Rule the Streets," which has sold 72,000 units, according to SoundScan. Since then, Cobra Starship has paid its dues on the road by opening tours for labelmates like Fall Out Boy and Panic! At the Disco.

Most recently, since Cobra Starship didn’t have touring plans of its own to support the recent launch of “Viva la Cobra!,” the band created buzz by unexpectedly joining labelmate the Academy Is... on its fall tour. "They just jumped on an announced, played the shows and the kids flipped out over it,” Janick recalls.

Now that Cobra Starship has proved it "can go into these markets and sell them out quickly," Janick and the act’s team of representatives keep "the information going through 2008 with ‘something bigger over the summer,’ details of which are still coming together."
Personal Bests

Hest Scores With Subscription-Based Packages

When singer/songwriter Ari Hest left Columbia last year, he knew he didn't just want to jump to another label. After many hours brainstorming with his brother, Hest decided to undertake an ambitious experiment—release a song a week for an entire year.

In order to cover his costs and make rent money, Hest set up a three-tiered subscription service; fans could pick from three packages, ranging in price from $20 to $75, in exchange for 52 new songs and other assorted goods. Although Hest is only a couple of weeks into the experiment, the risk is already starting to pay off.

"I have 360 subscribers already, and on average, they're each paying $35," he says. "My costs are incredibly low, I paid for a publicist. I'm recording most of the songs at home, and the Web hosting costs are minimal. I'm one song in and I'm already in the black.

At this point, I'm marketing to the fan base that I've already built up," he continues. "I spent a lot of time touring and have a group of supporters because of that. One downside of this project is that it will cut into the time I have to spend on the road, but I am writing songs in batches so I could spend some time on the road." At the end of the year, Hest will have subscribers vote for their 12 favorite tracks, and plans to release remastered versions on CD. He's also chatting with listeners and soliciting feedback through the site, and will write a few songs based on titles suggested by subscribers.

"At this point, I feel really positive about the project," he says. "My worst-case scenario right now is that I end up with a whole bunch of unused tracks." 

'Ghost' Stories

Sub Pop head of radio promotion Sue Busch is the first to admit that Band of Horses is "not a typical modern rock-sounding band."

But the eclectic group, which veers with ease from three-guitar stoner rock to gentle, acoustic ballads, has a number of champions at the format. That, combined with attention from a recent Ford TV commercial, has nudged "Is There a Ghost" onto the Modern Rock chart at No. 35, BOH's first appearance on a Billboard singles chart.

"Ghost" is drawn from the band's sophomore Sub Pop set, "Cease to Begin," which debuted last October at No. 35 on the Billboard 200 and has sold 72,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Sub Pop first began courting programmers outside the scope of college radio with "The Funeral," the emphasis from BOH's 2006 debut, "Everything All the Time," which has sold 106,000 copies.

Busch says, "It definitely was that song that built up their core supporters at stations like KNDD Seattle, WFNX Boston and KDLD Los Angeles. This time around, "we were much more aggressive," Busch says. "The band is open to doing more things with stations," she adds, noting a show sponsored by the late WXRR Atlanta. "On this next round of tour dates, more stations will be involved for sure."

"Is There a Ghost" has also enjoyed a profile boost thanks to the Ford ad. The track has shifted 31,000 downloads, about 3,000 of which came this week.

—Jonathan Cohen

NO 'PROBLEMS'

Sia, Starbucks Celebrate Debut Success

The power of the Starbucks brand was once again in evidence this week in the form of Australian vocalist Sia.

Her first album for the company's Hear Music imprint, "Some People Have Real Problems," is the top debut at No. 26 on the Billboard 200 with a career-best sales week of 20,000, 44% of which were digital.

Sia, who also sings in electro/soul act Zero 7, is best known for the track "Breathe Me," which appeared in the 2005 finale of HBO series "Six Feet Under." The song was included on her Astralwerks debut, "Colour the Small One," which has sold 98,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

The artist, who is managed by Tim Clark and David Enthoven for iMusic, fielded deals by numerous majors before Hear Music but turned them down because, according to Clark, "none of them made any sense. We would have had to tie up a four-album deal. In these uncertain times, why on earth would you do that?"

Instead, the parties inked a one-album agreement with Starbucks and Hear Music, which Clark enthusiastically describes as a "genuine partnership. We talk to them on the level. They don't suddenly go off and do some marketing without agreeing with us first, and nor do we. This is the big thing lacking with new artists and major labels—the labels still tend to call the shots."

With funding for the album from venture capital firm Inception Partners, support on the marketing/PR front from Girlee Action and tour booking by Marty Diamond at Paradigm, there was "the freedom to do things the way Sia wanted," Clark says. "As managers, we broke the first law, which is, 'Don't invest in the artist you work for.' But we never doubted Sia's talent."

Clark credits Sia for being proactive with her fan base and spreading the word about the new album. The artist also agreed to make "Some People" available for streaming on her Web site as early as last September.

"She really is an artist of the digital age," he says. "She does the most extraordinary and amusing blogs and she's constantly available for her fans."

Sia's also making a name for herself on the road, having completed three headlining tours in North America and about to begin a fourth Feb. 14 in San Diego. Clark says, "She's done this on her own, and we're telling out everywhere."
FOO INTO FIVE
"Foo Fighters become only the third act in the history of the Modern Rock chart to have two singles in the top five simultaneously, as "Limp Road to Ruin" rises to No. 4, with "The Pretender" at No. 3. Linkin Park did it last year while Green Day doubled up in 2005.

FIRM RESOLVE
We suspect New Year’s resolutions are why each of the top 14 DVDs on the Health & Fitness chart see gains for the tracking week that ended Jan. 6 (see page 80). Sales at No. 15 are the highest in the Fitness list that has seen since the chart switched from VH1 to DVD in June 2006.

SISTER ACT
Female Sister into Carter’s Chord lands its first chart feat as “Young Love” bows at No. 131_Àf Bronson explains how online. A

CHARTS
Over the Counter
GEOFF MAYFIELD gmayfield@billboard.com

Steady Keys Recaptures Billboard 200 Lead

Alicia Keys makes the most of a soft sales week, with her “As I Am” returning to No. 1 on the Billboard 200 in a tight race that sees a gap of less than 3,000 copies between her and the No. 3 album.

Fueled by a pair of chart-topping singles, Keys bypasses last issue’s chart champ, Radiohead, by posting a smaller decline (37% for her, compared with 44% for the U.K. band).

Heading last with 70,000 units, Keys also wards off a challenge by the plucky soundtrack to indie film gem “Juno,” which garners the Greatest Gainer medal in the album’s first full week of CD sales (8-3). Even so, more than half of the 67,000-plus copies “Juno” posted during the tracking week came from digital downloads. With the film holding its own at the box office, the soundtrack could become a chart champ next week. In the meantime, it has already become the highest-charting album in Rhino history, surpassing the No. 14 peak by Queen’s “Operation: Mindcrime I” in 2006.

I know some industries will gasp about how lean Keys’ sun is at No. 1, but we saw this movie before. The total at No. 1 stood at less than 70,000 during the first three weeks of 2007, and Bruce Springsteen’s “Magic” only sold 7,000 more than this when it clocked its second week at No. 1 in the Nov. 3 issue of that year.

Though, Keys’ set exhibits the continuity that has been the hallmark of her career, placing no lower than No. 3 during the first nine weeks of its chart history. “As I Am” thus becomes the first album to make that claim since 2004, when Usher’s “Confessions” resided in the top three for each of its first 17 chart frames.

Her first album in 2001, “Songs in A Minor,” stayed among the top three rungs for all but one of its first 14 chart weeks, and her latest studio outing, 2003’s "The Diary of Alicia Keys," hung there for each of its first seven.

KATZ SCAN: In February 2006 at the Staples Center in Los Angeles, Paul McCartney rocked the Grammy Awards with a rambunctious rendering of the Beatles’ “Helter Skelter.” The rich sound on the main floor sported a sedate crowd, but I wasn’t surprised to see that the energy in the section who couldn’t resist hopping his head to the beat was Jordon Katz.

After all, a passion for music is what prompted Katz to leave a promising career in the insurance business in 1987 to become an intern for the sales department at Arista Records, a move he made just to get his foot in the industry’s door. Thus began the path that led him to become the label’s senior VP of sales, and later on president of Sony BMG Sales Enterprise.

Along the way, he distinguished himself with the rapport he built with account managers and small, and an approach to business that emphasized forward thinking and integrity.

Labels were already shifting from the old “buy as much as you want, return as much as you want” mentality by the time he arrived at Arista, but utilizing data from accounts and Nielsen SoundScan, Katz helped make music sales more of a science with sharper analysis, better projections and smarter product outlays.

As humble as he is liked, Katz might be the only person in the industry who wasn’t stunned by his Jan. 15 dismissal. I am not alone in thinking that in that move, Sony BMG denies itself the very sort of intellect, leadership, and experience with change that a record company needs to sort out these challenging times.

HOUSEKEEPING: With singles volume continuing to dwindle, we have pulled the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles Sales list from these pages and replaced it with the Hot Rap Songs chart, which is based on audience from R&B and 75 rhythmic stations that Nielsen BDS monitors.

To make room for the new Top Heatseekers layout that bowed last week, the DVD charts and rental lists for home video and video games that were published every other week, have shifted to billboard biz.

In alternate weeks, we are maintaining the printed rendition of the Pop 100, but the entire chart will continue to appear at billboard.biz. Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles also remains on the site but will reduce to 10 titles.

Market Watch
A Weekly National Music Sales Report

Weekly Unit Sales
This Week
7,253,000 12,495,000 23,291,000
Last Week
9,067,000 14,452,000 28,378,000
Change
-20.0% -14.0% -18.1%
The Week Last Year
8,099,000 891,000 17,938,000
Change
-10.4% 39.7% 29.6%

Weekly Album Sales (Million)

Year-To-Date
Albums
17,516,000 16,320,000 -6.8%
Digital tracks
39,456,000 51,679,000 30.9%
Store singles
103,000 62,000 -39.8%
Total
57,075,000 68,011,000 19.2%
Albums w/DVD
21,461,000 21,482,000 0.1%

Sales by Album Format

OD
13,600,000 10,896,000 -20.1%
Digital
1,931,000 2,692,000 39.4%
Cassette
17,000 7,000 -58.8%
Other
1,968,000 2,752,000 39.6%

Digital Tracks Sales (Million)
39.5 million $1.6 million

For week ending Jan. 12, 2008. Figures are rounded. Compiled from a sample of 3 million adult male and female radio listeners (8-34 years) and 82 key retailers counting and reporting sales. See warrants and disclaimers in industry reports. For more information, visit billboard.biz.

To go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data.

www.americanradiohistory.com
| Title                                                                 | Artist                      | Week 1 | Week 2 | Week 3 | Week 4 | Week 5 | Week 6 | Week 7 | Week 8 | Week 9 | Week 10 | Week 11 | Week 12 | Week 13 | Week 14 | Week 15 | Week 16 | Week 17 | Week 18 | Week 19 | Week 20 | Week 21 | Week 22 | Week 23 | Week 24 | Week 25 | Week 26 | Week 27 | Week 28 | Week 29 | Week 30 | Week 31 | Week 32 | Week 33 | Week 34 | Week 35 | Week 36 | Week 37 | Week 38 | Week 39 | Week 40 | Week 41 | Week 42 | Week 43 | Week 44 | Week 45 | Week 46 | Week 47 | Week 48 | Week 49 | Week 50 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
**HOT 100 AIRPLAY**

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**ADULT TOP 40**

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<td>HOW LONG</td>
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**HOT DIGITAL SONGS**

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**MODERN ROCK**

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Data for week of JANUARY 26, 2008 | For chart reprints call 646.545.4653

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data
### Top Recordings

#### POP 100

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<td>OneRepublic</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td><em>No One</em></td>
<td>Alicia Keys</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><em>Clarity</em></td>
<td>Imagine Dragons</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td><em>Take Me There</em></td>
<td>Colbie Caillat</td>
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<td><em>Love</em></td>
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<td><em>Falling</em></td>
<td>OneRepublic</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td><em>Ahl</em></td>
<td>Ellie Goulding</td>
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#### POP 100 AIRPLAY

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### Bestselling Albums

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<td>3</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td><em>Stolen</em></td>
<td>Kelly Clarkson</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td><em>Out of the Game</em></td>
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### Top Music Videos

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<td>Earth, Wind &amp; Fire</td>
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<td><em>I'm Not Dead</em></td>
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<td><em>CRACK</em></td>
<td>Yodel Boy</td>
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<td><em>FREEDOM</em></td>
<td>LeAnn Rimes</td>
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### Video Monitor

- VH1
- Much Music Canada
- MTV
- Video on VH1

### Additional Information

- For complete chart data, check out www.billboard.biz.
### R&B/HIP-HOP ALBUMS

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**BETWEEN THE BULLETS**

Still awaiting the first major debut of the year, Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums remains sluggish as the top five titles hold the same positions as last week. Typical of post-holiday weeks, No. 10 (50-35, up 12%) and Robin Thicke (65-55, up 8%) are the chart's only gainers. The other bullets are awarded to albums with the smallest declines. Keyshia Cole moves 27,000 units to push past the 1 million mark at 16 weeks, less than half the time her debut set needed. Mary J. Blige should hit the 1 million plateau next week; she's now at 986,000. Justin Timberlake nears 4 million, shifting 11,000 as single "Until The End Of Time" spends its 4th week on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs (No. 9). Kanye West is a shade under 2 million with 18,000 sold this week.

—Raphael George
HOT COUNTRY SONGS

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BETWEEN THE BULLETS

Newcomer Taylor Swift caps Hot Country Songs for a sixth week, the chart's longest No. 1 streak since Carrie Underwood began a six-week run with "Jesus, Take the Wheel" in January 2006. In the 18-year-old Nielsen BDS era, Swift is the third solo female to notch six weeks atop the chart. Faith Hill became the first in the Nielsen BDS era to do so when "Breathe" collected a sixth week at No. 1 in the Jan. 9, 2000, issue. Swift is the fifth solo female to claim six weeks or more since Billboard launched the country list in 1944. That first happened when Kitty Wells' "It Wasn't God Who Made Honky Tonk Angels" led for six weeks in 1952, and again when Connie Smith's "Once a Day" logged eight weeks in 1964. The latter remains the all-time record among solo female artists. Swift also posts the Hot Shot Debut at No. 52 with "Picture to Burn," with 648,000 impressions at 16 monitored signals. — Wade Jenkins

SIXTH WEEK PUTS SWIFT IN ELITE COMPANY

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HOT COUNTRY SONGS: A weekly country chart of top 25 country singles based on Nielsen BDS data. Add country radio to your playlist to be listed on the chart. Visit www.americanradiohistory.com for complete chart history.

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### LATIN AIRPLAY

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<td>LA VIDA ES</td>
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<td>ME DELE AMARTE</td>
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<td>SI NOS QUEDARÍA POCO TIEMPO</td>
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<td>NO SE ME HACE FÁCIL</td>
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<td>GO PUELO OLVIDADA</td>
<td>ARROLLADORA BANDA</td>
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### LATIN ALBUMS

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<td>LA ESCENA</td>
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<td>NO QUIERO</td>
<td>ANDREA BOCELLI</td>
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<td>UN RATICO MAS</td>
<td>GRUPO NUEVA VIDA</td>
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<td>TODO CAMBIO</td>
<td>LUIS ENRIQUE</td>
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<td>DERRAMA</td>
<td>NACHO</td>
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<td>NERDOS</td>
<td>JAY-Z &amp; R. KELLY</td>
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<td>MEJOR... COLECCION</td>
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### RHYTHM

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<td>YE QUIERO</td>
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<td>SOY SÚPER QUE TÚ</td>
<td>DADDY YANKEE</td>
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<td>PERFUMAN</td>
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<td>THE ANTHEM</td>
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<td>EL TRA</td>
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<td>ME NECESITABA</td>
<td>MARIACHI FABULOSO</td>
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<td>TE PIDO QUE TE QUES</td>
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<td>LAGRIMAS DEL CORAZON</td>
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### HOT DANCE CLUB PLAY

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<td>DELE G. &amp; THE CRIMINALS</td>
<td>Ultra Music</td>
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<tr>
<td>BABY</td>
<td>DADDY YANKEE</td>
<td>Sony BMG Latin</td>
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<tr>
<td>LOVE LIKE THIS</td>
<td>PETER HAY NEEDS OF THE STATE</td>
<td>Sony BMG Latin</td>
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<tr>
<td>GIVE IT ALL YOU GOT</td>
<td>JIMMY MATTEO</td>
<td>Sony BMG Latin</td>
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<td>BREAKING Dishes</td>
<td>LIONHEARTED</td>
<td>Sony BMG Latin</td>
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<td>THINNI BETTER TO DO</td>
<td>LETHAL CONSPIRACY</td>
<td>Sony BMG Latin</td>
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<tr>
<td>JUST FINE</td>
<td>MARCO ANTONIO SOLIS</td>
<td>Sony BMG Latin</td>
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<td>NO, NO, NO!</td>
<td>TOWNSHIP 7</td>
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<td>THE GIRL YOU LOST</td>
<td>KANYE WEST</td>
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<td>SOMEBODY'S HELL</td>
<td>LUCKY DUB</td>
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<td>WANNABE</td>
<td>BRYAN ADAMS</td>
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<tr>
<td>HOLD ON TO ME</td>
<td>DADDY YANKEE</td>
<td>Sony BMG Latin</td>
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<tr>
<td>DRAMA</td>
<td>TONY BAMI</td>
<td>Sony BMG Latin</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOMEWHERE BEYOND THE STARS</td>
<td>TREVOR SIMPSON</td>
<td>Sony BMG Latin</td>
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<tr>
<td>TEACH THE WORLD TO DANCE</td>
<td>IAN SMITH</td>
<td>Sony BMG Latin</td>
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<tr>
<td>THAT'S THE WAY</td>
<td>DADDY YANKEE</td>
<td>Sony BMG Latin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLY</td>
<td>G IV</td>
<td>Sony BMG Latin</td>
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<tr>
<td>DOING IT IN MY WAY</td>
<td>DADDY YANKEE</td>
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### TOP ELECTRONIC ALBUMS

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<td>V.I.P.</td>
<td>JERK MYWAVE</td>
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<tr>
<td>EARTH SHAKER</td>
<td>KATY B</td>
<td>Sony BMG Latin</td>
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<tr>
<td>WOMEN</td>
<td>JESSIE J</td>
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<tr>
<td>JURGEN LIPPMAN</td>
<td>JURGEN LIPPMAN</td>
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### HOT DANCE AIRPLAY

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<td>CALABRIA</td>
<td>CALABRIA</td>
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<td>ME LIEK IT</td>
<td>DJ KOOL &amp; THE NONSTOP BAND</td>
<td>Sony BMG Latin</td>
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<tr>
<td>IVY ARMS</td>
<td>IVY ARMS</td>
<td>Sony BMG Latin</td>
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<tr>
<td>WIRED</td>
<td>WIRED</td>
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<tr>
<td>DIRT PANTS</td>
<td>DIRT PANTS</td>
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<td>WHAT'S THE MOST</td>
<td>WHAT'S THE MOST</td>
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<tr>
<td>GIRLS DANCE</td>
<td>GIRLS DANCE</td>
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<tr>
<td>I WANT YOUR SOUL</td>
<td>I WANT YOUR SOUL</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHARLEBOIS LIFE</td>
<td>CHARLEBOIS LIFE</td>
<td>Sony BMG Latin</td>
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<tr>
<td>RISE UP</td>
<td>RISE UP</td>
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<td>AMAZING</td>
<td>AMAZING</td>
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<td>I MEANT TO</td>
<td>I MEANT TO</td>
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<td>DEEPAH</td>
<td>DEEPAH</td>
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<tr>
<td>DONT STOP THE MUSIC</td>
<td>DONT STOP THE MUSIC</td>
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<tr>
<td>BABY WHEN THE LIGHT</td>
<td>BABY WHEN THE LIGHT</td>
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<tr>
<td>YOU DON'T KNOW</td>
<td>YOU DON'T KNOW</td>
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<tr>
<td>AGAIN</td>
<td>AGAIN</td>
<td>Sony BMG Latin</td>
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<tr>
<td>LOVE LIKE THIS</td>
<td>LOVE LIKE THIS</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAN'T GET OVER</td>
<td>CAN'T GET OVER</td>
<td>Sony BMG Latin</td>
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<tr>
<td>ROUND &amp; ROUND</td>
<td>ROUND &amp; ROUND</td>
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<td>WITH EVERY HEARTBEAT</td>
<td>WITH EVERY HEARTBEAT</td>
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<td>GIMME MORE</td>
<td>GIMME MORE</td>
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<tr>
<td>WISH YOUR LOVE</td>
<td>WISH YOUR LOVE</td>
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Data for week of JANUARY 26, 2008 | For chart reprints call 646.654.4633
Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data | 77

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### Japan

<table>
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<td>Now You're Gone</td>
<td>Brian McKnight</td>
<td>Sony Music</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Piece of Me</td>
<td>Britney Spears</td>
<td>Jive Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Stuck</td>
<td>Crank That (Soula Boy)</td>
<td>Solva Tellev (C:JAMAICA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Don't Stop The Music</td>
<td>Rihanna</td>
<td>SRP/Def Jam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Baby Let's Play House</td>
<td>Leona Lewis</td>
<td>Warner Bros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Don't Stop the Music</td>
<td>Elton John</td>
<td>Geffen Records</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Apologize</td>
<td>Timbaland ft. Ciara</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Piece of Me</td>
<td>Britney Spears</td>
<td>Jive Records</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>You've Gone</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Britney Spears</td>
<td>Jive Records</td>
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### United Kingdom

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<td>Sony Music</td>
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<td>Piece of Me</td>
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<td>Jive Records</td>
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<td>Stuck</td>
<td>Crank That (Soula Boy)</td>
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<td>You've Gone</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Piece of Me</td>
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### Germany

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<tr>
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<td>Leona Lewis</td>
<td>WARNER BROS</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>You're Gone</td>
<td>Brian McKnight</td>
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<td>Jive Records</td>
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### Euro Digital Tracks

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<td>WARNER BROS</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>You're Gone</td>
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<td>Sony Music</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Piece of Me</td>
<td>Britney Spears</td>
<td>Jive Records</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data for week ending January 17, 2008*
### ALBUMS

**Top 20 Albums**

| Position | Artist (Label) | Title | Sales
|----------|----------------|-------|------
| 1        | KIRK FRANKLIN  (DISTRIBUTING LABEL) | THE RIGHT PATH OF MY LIFE FEAT. SOULFUL ORCHESTRA | 646,654
| 2        | MAVIN HAMMOND  (REPRISE) |設楽 - 設楽 | 455,197
| 3        | JOSÉ JONES  (Zomba) | DESTINATION DESTINATION | 367,321
| 4        | JUANITA KIRK FRANKLIN (VERITY) | GLORY MINISTRY | 316,187
| 5        | KIRK FRANKLIN & ENERGY (❞istributing label) | THE SONG OF THE HEART (feat. Soulful Orchestra) | 290,977
| 6        | JAMES BROWN  (EMI) | THE());//Mozambique,1958 (feat. Soulful Orchestra) | 197,195
| 7        | LEE WILLIAMS & THE SPIRITUAL QC'S  (EMI) | THE SOUL OF THE PROPHET | 196,387
| 8        | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | SOUL | 182,117
| 9        | KIRK FRANKLIN (DISTRIBUTING LABEL) | UNTIL THE DAY COMES | 167,937
| 10       | JOE PACE PRESENTS: JOE PACE (PODIUM) | CROSS MOVEMENT | 159,187
| 11       | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | JUST BORN | 157,588
| 12       | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | I AM YOUR SHEPHERD | 146,797
| 13       | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | WE CAME TO TELL THE WORLD | 140,488
| 14       | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | I AM YOUR SHEPHERD | 138,797
| 15       | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | YOU ARE THE LORD | 137,588
| 16       | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | YOU ARE THE LORD | 136,797
| 17       | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | YOU ARE THE LORD | 135,588
| 18       | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | YOU ARE THE LORD | 134,797
| 19       | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | YOU ARE THE LORD | 133,588
| 20       | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | YOU ARE THE LORD | 132,797

### RADIO AIRPLAY

**Top 20 Songs**

| Position | Artist (Label) | Title | Plays
|----------|----------------|-------|-------
| 1        | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | YOU ARE THE LORD | 7,636,187
| 2        | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | YOU ARE THE LORD | 7,536,187
| 3        | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | YOU ARE THE LORD | 7,436,187
| 4        | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | YOU ARE THE LORD | 7,336,187
| 5        | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | YOU ARE THE LORD | 7,236,187
| 6        | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | YOU ARE THE LORD | 7,136,187
| 7        | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | YOU ARE THE LORD | 7,036,187
| 8        | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | YOU ARE THE LORD | 6,936,187
| 9        | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | YOU ARE THE LORD | 6,836,187
| 10       | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | YOU ARE THE LORD | 6,736,187
| 11       | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | YOU ARE THE LORD | 6,636,187
| 12       | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | YOU ARE THE LORD | 6,536,187
| 13       | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | YOU ARE THE LORD | 6,436,187
| 14       | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | YOU ARE THE LORD | 6,336,187
| 15       | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | YOU ARE THE LORD | 6,236,187
| 16       | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | YOU ARE THE LORD | 6,136,187
| 17       | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | YOU ARE THE LORD | 6,036,187
| 18       | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | YOU ARE THE LORD | 5,936,187
| 19       | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | YOU ARE THE LORD | 5,836,187
| 20       | MAVIN WAIN WARRIOR (ZUMBA) | YOU ARE THE LORD | 5,736,187

**Note:** The rankings are based on airplay data for the week ending January 26, 2008. For more details, including chart methodology and charts for other regions, please visit the Billboard website.
SALES DATA

MIMI

DVD SALES

MUSIC

multiplatinum

consumers. Songs available. Configurations

The Contemporary if they

Adult

CD

Sales

RIAA

/DVD after price

/Cassette

- theatrical titles. Singles

10, multiplies shipments

in
gold certification for

below

or of

Songs

showing

CHARTS

/CONFIGURATION

Indicates album entered

Singles

SALES CHARTS

CHARTS

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**TOP HEATSEEKERS**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 DJ Skribble</td>
<td>Total Dance 2008</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 INGRID MICHAELSON</td>
<td>Girls And Boys</td>
<td>492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 DRAGONFORCE</td>
<td>Inhuman Rampage</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 LEVON HELM</td>
<td>Dirt Farmer</td>
<td>1,627</td>
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<td>5 RHONDA VINCENT</td>
<td>Good Thing Going</td>
<td>1,522</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 NICK SWARSON</td>
<td>Party</td>
<td>634</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 FIVE FINGER DEATH PUNCH</td>
<td>The Way Of The Fist</td>
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<td>8 RIVERS CUZMO</td>
<td>Alone: The Home Recordings Of Rivers Cuomo</td>
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<td>100 Days, 100 Nights</td>
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<td>10 THE MAIN</td>
<td>We The Kings</td>
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<td>11 THE MAINE</td>
<td>Flying Club Cup</td>
<td>1,368</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 THE MAINE</td>
<td>The Way We Talk (EP)</td>
<td>1,368</td>
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<tr>
<td>13 GLEN-HARDY AND MARSHALL-MILLER WITH MARIA TOTHWOOD &amp; SATURN'S GALAXY</td>
<td>The Sweet Season</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 JUSTICE</td>
<td>Cross</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 BRIAN JOHNSON AND JOHN DEACON</td>
<td>Writer's Block</td>
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<td>16 JOHN C. REILLY</td>
<td>Walk Hard: The Dewey Cox Story (Soundtrack)</td>
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<td>17 MARRAH</td>
<td>Angels Of Destruction!</td>
<td>1,187</td>
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<td>Evie Marpoosas</td>
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<tr>
<td>19 MAYDAY PARADE</td>
<td>A Lesson In Romance</td>
<td>1,174</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 MEDESKI MARTIN &amp; WOOD</td>
<td>Let's Go Everywhere</td>
<td>1,188</td>
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<tr>
<td>21 FLIGHT OF THE CONCHORDS</td>
<td>Joyful</td>
<td>1,188</td>
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<td>22 GRUPO NUEVA VIDA</td>
<td>Mojones Canton Reiggos</td>
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<td>23 FH</td>
<td>Hacendita</td>
<td>1,188</td>
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<tr>
<td>24 ROQUE WAVE</td>
<td>Aseek At Heaven's Gate</td>
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**TASTEMAKERS**

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<td>Total Dance 2008</td>
<td>Tastemakers Label</td>
<td>USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 INGRID MICHAELSON</td>
<td>Girls And Boys</td>
<td>Tastemakers Label</td>
<td>USA</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 LEVON HELM</td>
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<td>The Way We Talk (EP)</td>
<td>Tastemakers Label</td>
<td>USA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**REGIONAL HEATSEEKERS #1s**

- **MOUNTAIN**
  - Stingray
  - Good Thing Going
  - Face The Music

- **WEST NORTH CENTRAL**
  - The Last Goodnight
  - Andy Bey
  - The Respect

- **EAST NORTH CENTRAL**
  - DJ Skribble
  - Ingrid Michaelson
  - Total Dance 2008

- **SOUTHWEST**
  - DJ Skribble
  - Ingrid Michaelson
  - Girls And Boys

**NEW ON THE CHARTS**

Dana Parish, "Not My Problem"

The Cherry Hill, N.J., native makes her chart debut, entering the Adult Contemporary list at No. 30. Stations playing the singer/songwriter's once a backup vocalist for Michael Jackson, include KGIS Lafayette, La., and WRSA Huntsville, Ala.
HELP WANTED

SECRETARY GENERAL

Organization: ICMP (location: Brussels or as otherwise agreed with the successful candidate). ICMP (International Confederation of Music Publishers) is the international umbrella trade association representing the interest of the music publishing community globally. The successful applicant will manage the day-to-day administration, financial and membership operations of ICMP. She will also be responsible for coordinating an extensive lobbying and external communications program.

This is a very exciting time to be in the global music business and this is a very challenging job. You will have to have strong interpersonal skills as well as be working for members of a global association and within the international entertainment community. Fluent English is essential, but other language skills would also be beneficial. Knowledge of the music industry is desirable. This is in effect a newly created role upon which you will be expected to stamp your talent as organizer and manager - one of the first tasks will be to establish the ICMP office which will either be in Brussels or as determined by the Board with you. To apply please submit a full detailed CV by email to: kjell-ake.hamren@breqband.net

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Master of Stringed Instruments Wanted

Well known singer songwriter is looking for a world class master of the lute, the archlute and the bandurria for a North American Tour. One year commitment required for world tour. Must have a worldwide reputation and extensive background in the field. Please submit resume by email to: info@corecomgt.com

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EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE
Send submissions to: exec@billboard.com

RECORD COMPANIES: BMG Label Group appoints Claudia Butzky VP of strategic marketing. She was VP of digital sales and retail marketing.

EMI Televisa in Miami names Lyda Bulla marketing manager.

She was in charge of media and public relations at event promotion company/label Raptus.

Razor & Tie Entertainment in New York appoints Heather Weisberg licensing manager. She was executive producer at RMI Music & Lucid Music.

Shanachie Entertainment promotes Rick Rosenberg to senior VP of sales and marketing/digital. He was VP of sales and marketing.

Rhino Entertainment names Lellie Capwell VP of media relations. She was senior director.

Equity Music Group taps Whitney Cheslak as promotions coordinator. She was an administrative assistant at Broken Bow Records.

Universal Music Group Nashville elevates Damon Moberly to VP of promotion for Mercury Records Nashville. He was senior director of regional promotion Southeast.

PUBLISHING: Primary Wave Music Publishing in New York names Adam Lowenberg chief marketing officer. He was senior VP of marketing at Island Def Jam.

Peermusic appoints Magnus Larköyd managing director in Sweden. He was GM of the publisher's Sweden office.

Sony/ATV Music Publishing Mexico names Maru Gomez creative and A&R director. She was in charge of public relations and special projects for Banda Pequeños Musical.

TOURING: Music industry veteran Danny Melnick launches Absolutely Live, a production company for sponsors and other corporate entities interested in presenting live events. He was artistic director/senior producer at Festival Productions.

LEGAL: Greenberg Traurig announces that longtime shareholders Jess Rosen and Bobby Rosenblum will serve as co-chairmen of the law firm’s entertainment practice in Atlanta.

RELATED FIELDS: SESAC promotes Bill Lee to VP of licensing operations. He was VP of licensing.

Universal Music Group division Universal Mastering Studios appoints Vlad Mosle senior mastering engineer for its New York-based facility.

—Edited by Mitchell Peters

BILLBOARD'S DIGITAL MUSIC LIVE! CONFERENCE AT CES

Billboard’s Digital Music Live, held Jan. 9 in Las Vegas, brought the music industry to the Consumer Electronics Show. The one-day event provided an oasis from the cavernous cacophony of the CES floor where the leading minds in the music and technology industries gathered to discuss how technology is affecting all aspects of the music industry, not just distribution. Photos: Courtesy of Caroline Morton/Evening Photographer

1. Billboard group editorial director Tamara Conniff, left, and Billboard VP of integrated sales associate publisher Brian Kennedy, right, joined Gibson Guitar chairman/CEO Henry Juszkiewicz Jan. 8 at the Gibson Guitar booth at CES. (Photo: Courtesy of Sarah Capwell)

2. Wyctef Jean announced a partnership with mobile phone maker Nokia, under which he will provide exclusive content for a variety of the company’s devices. He also discussed how he and other artists approach the digital music business, and even treated the crowd to a few dance moves.

3. Billboard executive director of digital/mobile content and programming Antony Bruno, right, makes a point to Yahoo Music VP of video and media applications Ian Rogers during the “State of the Industry” panel.

4. Artist/producer Don Was got deep into the history of technological innovation and its impact on the music industry during an intimate keynote interview.

5. Syracuse (N.Y.) University freshmen hang with Wyctef Jean at Billboard’s Digital Music Live event. From left are Alisson Murphy, Jean and Michael McNeill-Martinez. The students are enrolled in the Bandier Program for Music and the Entertainment Industries, named after Sony/ATV Music Publishing chairman/CEO and Syracuse alum Martin Bandier.

GOOD WORKS

GREEN OWL TO ISSUE BENEFIT COMP

New York-based independent label Green Owl Records—operated by musicians Ben Brewer (the Exit, the Appletrees), Elliot Abreu (the Appletrees) and Stephen Glicken—will issue its first official release as a two-disc CD/DVD compilation to benefit the North American clean energy movement: “The Green Owl Comp: A Benefit for the Energy Action Coalition,” set for an April 8 release, will feature music from Feist, Muse, Of Montreal, Pete Yorn, Bloc Party, Deerhoof and Juliana Hatfield, among others. Along with bonus tracks and music videos, the second disc will include interviews with Green Owl co-founder and Energy Action co-founder Billy Parish. All profits from the compilation will be given to the Energy Action Coalition, a youth-led movement with more than 40 organizations across the United States and Canada.

INSIDE TRACK

ARE YOU CHELLIN’

The rumor mill has been in overdrive leading up to the lineup announcement early the week of Jan. 21 for the 2008 Coachella Music & Arts Festival. But the bill has been unusually leakproof this year, especially with the three-day event’s headliners. Track can reveal a few bands almost sure to be on hand, and as in years past, they represent the creme de la creme of hipster favorites, including Battles, Kid Sister and Cold War Kids. The requisite obscure/re- united British bands are likely to be there too, including Portishead, the Verve and Spiritualized. But as Billboard.com first revealed in November, the one buzzed-about act that appears to have taken a pass on Coachella is My Bloody Valentine, whose first gigs in more than a decade will be a June 20-24 run at London’s Roundhouse.

BATTLES
COLUMBIA'S VICTORIA MARTIN at Palacio Nariño, the president's official home in Bogota, Colombia, saw from left, Latin Grammy board of directors president Kike Santander, Zambrano, Unite, Billboard executive director of Latin content/programming Leila Cobo and Celedón.

Arista Nashville artist Jason Michael Carroll celebrates with Sony BMG execs backstage at the Sommet Center in Nashville following a performance at the Sprint Sound & Style; Sponsored by SunTrust Field of view from left are Arista Nashville director of radio promotion Bryan Fraser, Carroll co-manager Amel Davis, Arista Nashville VP of national promotion Skip Bishop, Sony BMG Nashville chairman Joe Galante. Carroll, Sony BMG Nashville executive VP of A&R Reece Bell and Sony BMG Nashville executive VP Butch Waugh.

Grammy Award-winning bassist/songwriter/producer Marcus Miller, center, previewed and performed selections from his seventh studio album, "Marcus," for the staffs of Billboard, the Hollywood Reporter and Radio & Records. Released via Miller's own 3 Deuces Records distributed by Concord Music Group, the early-spring 2008 project features guest appearances by Lady \'M\' and Corinne Bailey Rae. Among the attendees are Billboard senior writer/producer Mike McCollough, left, and Radio & Records smooth jazz editor Carol Archer.

SESC song writer Jamie Floyd recently signed an exclusive publishing contract with Cherry Heart Music. Floyd stepped up as SESAC's Nashville Headquarters to join executives from Cherry Heart Music to celebrate their new venture. From left, are SESAC chairman Joe Galante, BMI director of Latin content/programming Leila Cobo and Sebastian Rys, who in 2007 won the Latin Grammy award for producer of the year.

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"Ching-a-Ling" is the top debut on Billboard's Hot RB/Hip-Hop Songs chart this week at No. 57, and sources tell Track the accompanying video, directed by Dave Meyers, is quite a doozy. "It may be the first 3D video ever," an insider reveals. "It's groundbreaking." Also of note: Elliott is hoping to reunite with producer Timbaland, who has been behind some of her biggest hits but wasn't much of a factor on "The Cookbook."

WE MISSED MISSY

Missy Elliott has popped up here and there in the past few years (namely, in a Doritos ad campaign), but there hasn't been much in the way of new music from her since 2005's "The Cookbook." Now the wait is over, in the form of the new songs "Ching-a-Ling" and "Shake Your Pom Pom," which will appear on Atlantic's "Step Up 2 the Streets" soundtrack (Feb. 5) and Elliott's own new album (likely due in May).

John Cavazoo—BMI associate director of legal affairs/other relations for Latin music in Miami—celebrated a record-breaking year in the Latin community's finest colleagues, affiliates and industry insiders. The conference, held at South Beach Maracana, featured performances from Sergio Gómez and Marian & Los del luz. At the party, from left, are Cavazoo, Billboard executive director of Latin content/programming Leila Cobo and Sebastian Rys, who in 2007 won the Latin Grammy award for producer of the year.

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Media, Entertainment & Advertising: Receive custom Nielsen Mobile research and data outlining media consumption trends across all platforms. Find out how mobile media adoption relates to other digital outlets.

The Chain Gang: Behind each piece of mobile entertainment content is a group of companies that make it happen. Explore what the content creator, the copyright holder, the technology enabler and the wireless operator each bring to the value chain.

Where's The Money?: There are many ways to make money in mobile entertainment such as through advertising, subscriptions and pay-per-downloads. Discover what business models make the most sense for different types of content.

CONFIRMED SPEAKERS:

Andy Baker, CEO, Mofilm
Christopher Barry, SVP/Digital Media & Business Strategy, Sundance Channel
J-F Cecillion, President, EMI International
Jeff Herrmann, VP of Mobile Media, Nielsen Mobile
Rob Lewis, CEO, Omninone
Peter Mercier, Head Digital Media Division, BBC

Tero Ojanpera, EVP/Entertainment & Communities, Nokia
Jérôme Paillard, Director, Marché du Film, Festival Du Cannes
Javier Perez Dolset, Founder/CEO, Zed
Simon Protheroe, New Media & IT Director, Eidos
Isabella Rossellini, Actress
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## Top 6 digital tracks of 2007

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<td>INT</td>
<td>SOULJA BOY TELL'EM</td>
<td>CRANK THAT (SOULJA BOY)</td>
<td>2,713,920</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>AAM</td>
<td>FERGIE</td>
<td>BIG GIRLS DON'T CRY</td>
<td>2,439,613</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>INT</td>
<td>STEFANI*Gwen</td>
<td>SWEET ESCAPE</td>
<td>2,167,605</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>INT</td>
<td>TIMBALAND FEAT. ONEREPUBLIC</td>
<td>APOLOGIZE</td>
<td>2,113,219</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>INT</td>
<td>TIMBALAND</td>
<td>WAY I ATE</td>
<td>1,869,785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>OCAM</td>
<td>MAROON 5</td>
<td>MAKES ME WONDER</td>
<td>1,844,908</td>
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Fergie "The Dutchess" is the first album to exceed 10 million digital song downloads.

Soulja Boy Tell 'Em "Crank That (Soulja Boy)" is the first track to exceed 3 million downloads.