DOLLY DELIVERS
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NE-YO

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EXCLUSIVE
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HOT ON THE CHARTS
Trace Adkins, Maná, Ray J >P.50
4 drummers. 3 labels. 2 gold records. And 1 bank.

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Underclass

When was the last time you asked your intern for advice on how to run your company? If the interns are music business majors, it’s time to take them seriously. These savvy young members of your team belong in the boardroom, not the mailroom. Yes, they’re idealistic. But remember, they’re music business majors. They have the knowledge and energy to create a vibrant new industry, and they’re doing it on their own terms. Here’s what New York University music business majors told me over dinner recently.

1. **Music is only valuable when you don’t have it.** Today you can hear music anywhere, anytime. That has devalued it. People expect to get music for free because they are expecting it for free on TV shows, in ads and on their computers. Instead of fighting this, we need to figure out how to charge people for music but make it feel like they’re getting it for free.

2. **The entire music industry isn’t dying—this is just evolution at work in a major way.** We need lean, efficient companies run by people under 40 who are innovative and think ahead of the world’s fast-paced changes.

3. **Young people are taking down the traditional gatekeepers who block the way to new music.** We're fighting this battle with technology, and we’re going to win. Here’s how:

   Everyone favored the Creative Common’s “some rights reserved” approach to allowing a creator control over his or her intellectual property. One of the students quoted from Michael Perelman’s book, “Steal This Idea: Intellectual Property Rights and the Corporate Construction of Creativity”: “Even in the arts, intellectual property rights grant enormous powers to corporations that distribute music or run music studios. These corporations typically wield power to the disadvantage of the artists, as well as society at large.”

   This student is writing a paper proposing radical change to copyright protection for creators. In his “Tiered Sliding Scale of Copyright Protection,” each of the exclusive rights will have a different length of protection based upon the specific use.

4. **Next up: Music delivery systems.** Satellite radio, with its advent some programming and DJs who act as musical curators instead of gatekeepers, will become a major way for people to find and purchase digital music. For satellite radio to get to this place, it has to have crystal-clear reception, be playable on a portable device with a “buy this song now” button and be bundled with other services. Young people won’t subscribe to it and they’re not into listening to it in their cars.

   So bundle cable, Internet and satellite radio services into one bill. And throw in the cell phone, too. These services are all connected to each other in our lives, and bundling them will make satellite radio feel free.

5. **Finally, in the “Science fiction becomes reality” category:** If your chip implanted in our brains will be the main way of finding and sharing new music, it’ll be like Pan- doronic on steroids. The sensors in our brain will match songs to the mood we’re in. For example, if you’re taking an exam after pulling all nighter, that chip will even pull up “Kickstart My Heart” by Motley Crue.

   Artists will be paid based on how responsive the listener’s brain is to their song. A “strong listener reaction” will mean more money to the artist. This will be an incentive for artists to write music great.

   Health care and auto insurance companies will want to sponsor artists because they know music can calm, heal or wake you up if you’re falling asleep at the wheel. Doctors will prescribe certain songs to help cure their patients’ symptoms.

   Have we got your attention? Find your music business interns and listen to their vision for our industry’s future. You need their advice or be crushed under foot in this revolution. The choice is yours to make.

Professor Catherine Fitterman is director of the Undergraduate Music Business Program at New York University’s School of the Arts, School of Culture and Human Development. The NYU music business majors interviewed for this article were Alexa Colletin, Kevin Dallas, Laura Donkerbroek, Matt Hayon and Joe Fuglia.

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**FEEDBACK**

On the surface, being green means well by causing less waste. But look at the economic damage it has already caused by putting such record stores as Tower Records out of business, not to mention many local independent companies as well. So we conserve at all costs and worsen our economy? How many jobs will be lost in this crusade to be green? When will we see that just because we have the technology to do something, that it doesn’t necessarily mean it works for the good of all? Let’s find a happy medium.

Mark DeFazio
Lawman Music VP
Pasadena, Calif.
STATION BREAK
Will Satellite Consolidation Hurt Label Promotion Efforts?

There's only one Howard Stern, but music formats offered by satellite radio broadcasters Sirius and XM frequently overlap. So a merger of the two companies—expected to be approved by the FCC in the next few weeks—would initially mean duplication of content. But radio industry insiders anticipate that much of that redundancy will be eliminated once the consolidation is finalized.

Some have speculated that reducing redundant formats could enable record labels to better target their promotion resources toward one station. But in general, most of the label promotion reps polled by Billboard—especially those specializing in niche formats—think fewer stations means fewer promotion opportunities.

"It's great that these combined channels will have a larger audience but it's also the expense," Virgin Records VP of promotion Dave Reynolds says. "It takes away 50% of my chance of being exposed correctly."

Brad Paul, senior VP of promotion at Rounder Records—a label whose bluegrass releases benefit from the 24/7 national exposure they get from Sirius and XM—doesn't like the idea of one less national outlet. "If the argument were being made that it's a good thing because I could economize on my efforts, I'm about having opportunities to get these artists' music exposed to as many listeners as possible.

"Both networks offer different ways to feature and launch new projects," Paul says. "I feel good about having both those options to go to.

Sirius and XM, with a potential combined audience of more than 17 million subscribers, have downplayed consolidation of channels, instead focusing on a la carte plans and packages that will allow subscribers to maintain their subscriptions with one service while choosing from the best of the other. But in any such consolidation, duplication of services is often the first thing to go when companies are looking to cut costs.

Sirius aside, the most listened to streams on both XM and Sirius are music channels, according to Arbitron. The top premiering channel on Sirius after Stern, who draws 1.2 million listeners, is Sirius Hits 1 with 653,000 listeners, while the top station on XM is Top 20 on 20 with 1 million. Both streams focus on today's hits.

"It's very rare to find a station like Sirius Hits 1 or XM 20 on 20 that will put in a new song and play it 21, 28, 35 times a week right off the bat," Virgin's Reynolds says. "That's really exposing a record."

While few executives that Billboard talked to could cite a specific case of Sirius or XM breaking an act, several cited satellite as a significant promotional platform. "Satellite radio definitely had a lot to do with Sean Kingston's career," Koch Entertainment VP of urban promotion Shadow Stokes says.

Rap stations XM Raw and Sirius' Shady 45 have helped break a number of hip-hop acts; he adds, citing Sleek Louch, AZ and Young Borg.

Stokes says it's losing one of satellite's primary urban channels—XM has the City and Sirius has Hot Jamz—would be like losing a local station, albeit with national reach. Both channels' playlists are factored into Billboard's R&B+ Hip/Hop chart. "You're talking about losing 10-20 spins," he says. "If you lose an audience, that's always bad whether you're talking about a terrestrial station or a satellite station."

Koch Records VP of radio and video promotion Chuck Oliner says such niche acts as metal bands will suffer. "Constriction is never a good thing, especially in our industry and in today's marketplace," he says, citing Otep and In Flames as bands that have benefited from satellite radio.

"Those are bands that don't get a lot of commercial radio play," Oliner says. "They don't fit into the active rock format [and] they're on the harder edge of the metal format. For bands like that, Sirius Octane and XM Squiz are important stations for us."

After recently losing smooth jazz stations in New York, Houston, Denver and Washington, D.C., Oliner, who also works with that genre, says he's not looking forward to fewer choices on satellite too. "This is another niche format where the audience is going to find another place to hear their music and the satellite offers us that kind of exposure," he says. "Ideally you'd love to have that outlet, besides the Internet, where fans can go to hear their music."

But Kevin Herring, VP of promotion for Nashville-based Lyric Street Records, says losing XM's Highway 16 channel or Sirius' New Country channel wouldn't have much of an effect on his label's promotion efforts. "Anytime there's less content, outlets, it affects us, but I don't see it having an overbearing effect on what we do or how we do it," he says.

Sony BMG Nashville VP of marketing Tom Balderica says his label group has long supported both satellite services and is not pleased with the possibility of consolidation. "One of those stations goes and it's like losing a major-market radio station," he says. "And it's a major-market radio station that's speaking to the people that value and love the music more than most. I'm not happy about that at all."

www.americanradiohistory.com
TIGERS BURNING BRRIGHT

Music Supervisor Alexandra Patsavas' Label Debut First Album

Ryan Pinkston has a tale of woe.

Pinkston is the guitarist for the Republic Tigers, the first band signed to music supervisor Alexandra Patsavas' Chop Shop Records, an imprint on Atlantic.

Last December, the Tigers scored a position on VH1's "Gossip Girl," one of the shows Patsavas supervises. They did a version of "Deck the Halls" for the teen soap's Christmas episode.

But Pinkston couldn't watch the show. The band had a gig that night at Spaceland in Los Angeles. "I wasn't really at the time, so I couldn't even go in and try to find a TV," he recalls. "They're like, 'Stand outside until you play.'" But his parents DVR'd it so he could check it out.

Such are the rigors of teaming up with Patsavas, music supervisor extraordinaire.

For Patsavas, after acting as a music supervisor for more than 10 years for shows including The OC and Grey's Anatomy, adding the duties of running her own label was intuitive. Slightly more than a year ago, she teamed up with Atlantic for Chop Shop, which she wants to keep as a boutique label that focuses on a maximum of four acts. In addition to the Republic Tigers, she has signed singer/songwriter Jade McNels.

"My first goal is artistic—I want to put out in the marketplace bands people enjoy and that will have really long careers," Patsavas says. "Some of the labels I admire, they have beautiful art and a signature sound that gets them a lot of trust from their fans."

The kicker is that all the acts she signs will be top of the list for music placements in the TV shows and films she and her team supervise. This year, however, the placement process has been slowed by the aftermath of the Writers Guild of America's three-month strike.

"We're just now spotting and mixing our first episodes," Patsavas says. Looking for placements "is just my sensibility anyway—that's how I listen to music."

It was that ability, in fact, that appealed to Atlantic Records GM/executive VP of new media Livia Tortella when discussions began about creating an imprint for Patsavas.

"We realized really quickly that how she picks music for shows is very intuitive," Tortella says. "She really gets into the psyche of her characters—she has an innate A&R ability. She has ears."

For Chop Shop Records, Patsavas hired John Robell, previously VP of A&R at Atlantic, to act as label manager, and the staff of music coordinators from Chop Shop Music Supervision also pitch in as needed.

Last summer Patsavas took a trip to Kansas City, Mo., to see the Tigers perform live in their hometown. They seemed like the perfect first band for the label, she says. "They have inventive songwriting, interesting production and an amalgam of electronic and acoustic instruments that I find really fascinating."

For the Tigers, meeting up with Patsavas closed the perfect pop culture circle. "I actually didn't get into TV shows until 'The OC,'" lead singer Kenn Jankowski says. "[A friend] got the DVD and we watched the special features and it was like, 'Wow, this show picks good music.'"

Earlier this year, Chop Shop released an EP from the Tigers, which encompassed the attention to detail Patsavas wants to bring to her releases. Each CD contained tiny limited-edition, handpressed artwork created by Ty Carpeter, a friend of the band's from Kansas City. Carpenter also designed the art for the full-length album, as well as for the Republic Tigers' upcoming single, "I Don't Know Why It Feels Like That.""
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★★★ 1/2” US Weekly

“One to watch in 2008.” Entertainment Weekly

“SPIRIT showcases a titanium-caliber voice. On ‘BLEEDING LOVE’ Ms. Lewis brings straightforward drama to the notion of a heart torn open. And she shows that she isn’t afraid to invoke the sound of her predecessors.” The New York Times

“This 22 year old British sensation has a supersize voice.” Blender

“BLEEDING LOVE’ is a one-listen harmonic show-stopper, it’s also a hip, soulful, beat-rippling and an undeniable vocal tour de force. And that’s all before adding the visual: Leona is simply stunning. A colossal and timeless debut.” Billboard

“Artist On The Verge.” Vibe

“Lewis, like her incredibly accomplished debut, is a rarity in the music industry.” Her vocals can stand up against powerhouses like Mariah Carey and Celine Dion, but she has a vulnerability that makes people feel they can relate to her.” Newsday
**UPFRONT**

**WELCOME WAGON**

Eclectic Guests Drive CMT Awards Ratings

Snoop Dogg was there and so was Bobby Brown. Snoop was in the house and Ryan Seacrest appeared in the show's opening skit. The MTV Video Music Awards? Nope, it was the 2008 CMT Music Awards.

Really show stars were omnipresent at the April 14 show, which was held at Nashville's Curb Event Center at Belmont University. The broadcast on CMT and cmt.com. In fact, the night's big winner, Kelly Pickler, who took home home performance, and Turnerake - Video awards, it itself the product of a reality show, having been a finalist on the fifth season of "American Idol."

She wasn't alone. Fellow North Carolinian and "A.1." season-five finalist Bucky Covington performed and was also a nominee in the breakthrough category. Season-four winner Carrie Underwood performed on the show and was a double-nominee. Diana DeGarmo, who starred on "A.1." in season three and was recently part of the cast of CMT's "Gone Country," was on hand. Even "A.1." judge Paula Abdul, who introduced a performance by Faith Hill and Tim McGraw, made the connection. "There are so many 'American Idol' alumni here, I feel like this is a reunion and I'm their mom," she said from the stage.

Meanwhile, "Gone Country" alumni Brown, Maureen McCormick and Snoop, and hit John Rich were on hand to introduce Kenny Chesney and two-time "Dancing With The Stars" champion Julianne Hough, who has a single at country radio and an album out May 20, helped introduce Brad Paisley.

And country star Trace Adkins, who picks "Cowbuck," as the awards are known, for top male video, admitted his recent run on NBC's "Celebrity Apprentice" may have factored into his win. "I would think that didn't hurt at all," he told reporters backstage.

Adkins was the centerpiece of an opening video skit that found him seeking tickets for the show. The bit included cameo by presidential candidates Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama and John McCain as well as Donald Trump. "I hope once people say that, they realize the show was going to be different," says John Hamlins, one of the show's executive producers and CMT senior VP of production and development. Hamilins appears by reality show stars and other pop culture icons like co-hosts Billy Ray Cyrus and Miley Cyrus, the Eagles, Timothy B. Schmit and Joe Walsh, and actor Tom Arnold (who hosts the network's "My Big Redneck Wedding") were designed to draw in today's channel surfing audience. "You want to have unpredictable performers and performances on the show," he says.

"We're always interested in finding that 'Bing/Bowie' moment, that incongruous pairing that makes people's heads spin a little bit," he says. "I'm looking for the pairing of Bing Crosby and David Bowie on a 1977 Crosby Christman special. Obviously Snoop Dogg with anybody in the country genre is going to get people's attention."

Jay Frank, another of the show's executive producers and CMT senior VP of music strategy, suggested the inclusion of Snoop. "I said, 'Absolutely. Are you kidding?' And everyone on the production team agreed," Hamilins recalls.

Snoop announced on the show that his new single, "My Medicine," was inspired by the late Johnny Cash. "That's why I'm wearing all black tonight," he said backstage. "It's a dedication to my main man J.C. I love country music." In the case of Abdul, Hamilins says, "We're looking for stars and Paula Abdul is on the biggest show in television.

But the awards were not just about out-of-genre artists. Superstars Chesney, McGraw, Hill, Keith Urban, Alan Jackson, Brooks & Dunn and Martina McBride all participated. "The only ones missing were George Strait and Garth Brooks," Hamilins says.

More than 9.1 million viewers tuned in for the premiere and repeat televets of the show April 14, according to Nielsen Media Research. The two-and-a-half-hour show scored a 1.27 rating among persons 18-49, which was more than 35% from last year, and averaged 2.8 million impressions, with 1.1 million of those falling in key 18-49 demo. It was CMT's most-watched telecast since the 2007 premiere of "Dale," a show about legendary NASCAR driver Dale Earnhardt Jr.

Meanwhile, the network says fans cast a record 5 million votes at cmt.com to determine the night's big winners.

**DIGITAL**

**Building Buzz**

Buzznet Expands Its Online Portfolio

Not content to let MySpace, iLike and Facebook take all the online music share, Buzznet is roaring into the Music 2.0 market with a vengeance.

In the last few weeks the company has acquired music-focused blogs Stereogum and Idolator, and brought on Universal Music Group's (UMG) as a content partner and equity holder. Additional moves are expected in the weeks to come. According to GM of music Scott Boyd, this flurry of activity is all focused on a single goal: create an online music destination for the fan, by the fan and of the fan.

"There's a void out there," he says. "You see music fans jumping from site to site to piece all the information they want together. . . Our goal is to put all that together into one place and have an experience that is largely programmed by the users of the community. Not just user-generated content, but really creating the whole experience."

That goal stems from the service's roots as a site to upload camera-phone pictures. Users would post and comment on photos that were from concerts that members attended. Buzznet soon evolved into a very music-focused site and began enlisting artists to create their own profiles and tour blogs. For the past three years, it has served as the official online community for the Coachella music festival and has created similar services for the Vans Warped tour.

Just don't call it a social network. The company prefers "social media site." It combines social networking components like member profiles and "friend" lists with a growing roster of content that members can organize however they like. Boyd says the newly acquired blogs will remain as stand-alone entities, but will integrate posts from each into the main Buzznet site in order to provide context around individual artist searches and profiles.

"So if you're looking into a particular band, there's a review from Stereogum and a news story from Idolator and there's a photo gallery created by a kid who was at the concert last night," Boyd says. "We can add value by bringing that content into our bigger community and spreading it around."

Buzznet's deal with UMG adds full-song streaming and music video to that mix of manageable content. And expect more soon. The company won't comment on it, but Buzznet is believed to be the recipient of $25 million in recent venture funding. During the course of last year, it also brought on a stable of Internet veterans that includes Boyd, who joined last October from AOL Music, as well as several former Yahoo sales executives, and named former Feedster president Tyler Goldman CEO.

It's also been aggressively reaching out to artists, many of whom host contests on the network, participating in some sort of media sharing. April Lavigne, for instance, launched a model search for her clothing line via the site, while 30 Seconds to Mars invited fans to upload pro-environmental videos and make donations to environmental charities.

It's this kind of hands-on programming and production that Buzznet hopes will set it apart from the MySpaces of the world.

"I don't think it's that interesting to just do an audio streaming service," Boyd says. "That's incredibly important, but our users want the editorial around that. They want to create their own programming around that. So that's just one piece of the piece, not the end-all, be-all."

Despite the recent activity, Boyd says the company now offers only 50% of what it ultimately hopes to make available, in terms of services and content. Some of the remaining 50% will come from a yet-to-be announced work needed to integrate its recent acquisitions, but expect more label deals and possible acquisitions in the near future.

"The overall strategy is having the best and deepest experience," Boyd says. "If other sites offer that from an editorial or product end, we'd absolutely consider it."
de lo tonto que te amo

Anamor

La nueva reina de la Música Pop-Latina es italiana de raíces cubanas.

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News of Barry Weiss' ascension to chairman/CEO of BMG Label Group—replacing Clive Davis, who has been named chief creative officer for Sony BMG Worldwide (billboard.biz, April 17)—sent ripples through the industry. In addition, Davis' No. 2, BMG Label Group president/COO Charles Goldstuck, and Sony BMG COO Tim Bowen are exiting the company.

Weiss, who was previously president/CEO of Zomba Label Group, will now oversee all the BMG labels—Jive, LaFace, Volcano, Epic, GospoCentric, Fo Yo Sounds, and Arista. There may be further consolidation between RCA Label Group (which includes RCA, J and Arista) and Zomba. Already, the two labels each have their own heads of sales, but share a field sales staff.

With Bowen leaving the company, the void his departure creates is partially filled with the announcement that Zomba, Weiss either signed or developed talent including Justin Timberlake, Britney Spears, R. Kelly, Backstreet Boys, Chris Brown, T-Pain, and Three Days Grace.

Davis' relationship with BMG began in 1979 when RCA acquired Arista, which he led from 1975. He led Arista until 2000, when he exited to launch J Records with Goldstuck, which was backed by Bertelsmann investment of $177 million. In 2002, following the ouster of RCA Music Group chairman/CEO Bob Jamieson, Davis was named to lead the new RCA Music Group, which combined the J and RCA labels. Davis was later named chairman of BMG Label Group in February 2004.

Goldstuck joined Davis at Arista in 1998, becoming executive VP/GM before assuming the role of president. Before Arista, he was executive VP of finance at Capitol Records. Bowen was named COO in 2006. He previously served as Sony BMG's chairman of the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. He joined BMG in 2002 as COO. Richard Sanders was previously executive VP/GM of RCA Records.

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EMI's Challenge

Contrasts, Deadlines, New Hires On The Road To Restructuring

When EMI announced its restructuring in January that would tear down label walls and international boundaries, it said its new sleek, trim 21st-century music company would be able to operate with 2,000 fewer employees.

But sources say that the restructuring has faced some unexpected challenges for several reasons: issues concerning "key man" clauses in artists' contracts; clauses in executive contracts that allow top staffers to leave if their responsibilities change or the company comes under new ownership or management; and challenges meeting deadlines by certain sectors of the company.

An EMI representative called all three assessments "wrong," and noted that "as announced on Jan. 15, EMI's reorganization is on plan."

EMI is clearly making strides to complete its restructuring. An April 16 internal memo announced the appointment of a chairman's board, an operating board and a restructuring board, according to internal EMI memos. The company also made its first moves in presenting a new face with the hiring of Nick Gatfield as president of A&R for North America and the United Kingdom, following on the heels of the appointment of Douglas Merrill as president of digital business. Until Gatfield joins the labels, Ashley Unwin will be the interim president of A&R for those territories, with label heads in those countries reporting to him.

Roger Ames, who had been in charge of A&R for North America and the United Kingdom, will leave the operational side of EMI's business and work with Terra Firma on strategic acquisitions. Former Terra Firma partner Chris Roling, who has served as CFO of EMI Music and COO of international labels since January, has been promoted to president/COO of EMI Music, according to the April 16 memo, obtained by Billboard. Roling will be responsible for managing the business on a global basis and on leading the company's operating board.

Chris Kennedy, who has been with EMI since 1993, will replace Rosing as CFO.

Earlier this month, EMI began the rollout process when the Nashville-based EMI Christian Music Group cut an unspecified number of jobs.

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'BEMI' is flux is coming to an end. There is a structure in place... and some seriously talented executives to execute the new vision.'—NICK GATFIELD, EMI employees (billboard.biz, April 2).

As for the overall restructuring, it is "slow because some people are missing their deadlines," an EMI executive says. "So the people on the restructuring board have to oversee the process."

Pat O'Driscoll will serve as chairman of the restructuring board; each member will have responsibilities for particular segments of EMI. O'Driscoll will also oversee the restructuring of EMI's program leadership, legal and business affairs, human resources and facilities, and communications. Merrill will oversee the reorganization of North American and U.K. new music/A&R labels, marketing, licensing and sync, business development, and digital and global technology. Mike Clasper will oversee the restructuring of the Christian Music Group, Capitol Nashville, Classics, catalog, sales, procurement and logistics. Roling will oversee the restructuring of international, finance and back-office services.

But two other issues affecting the restructuring still need to be resolved, sources say. In the case of key man clauses—provisions that allow superstar artists to leave a label if a "key man" such as a label president or A&R exec who signed the act leaves or is fired—sources say Terra Firma may not have realized the extent to which they existed within EMI.

Meanwhile, sources say that a number of top current EMI executives want to leave, claiming breach of contract due to impending changes in title or responsibilities, but that EMI is fighting executives in instances where it believes it is in the right, senior executives at the company say.

The newly appointed Gatfield is looking beyond the restructuring. He says he has the right boss to make things happen.

"I've read a lot about him and his many successes... [There's been] some of the emotional reporting being made of an acquisition of a British institute by a private equity firm. When you sit down and talk with [EMI executive chairman] Guy [Hands] about all the issues, he's very artist-centric. He believes that quality music is absolutely the key. He just believes that fundamental mistakes have been made to the business. It's about embracing customers and giving them what they want and also being able to find a business model which allows all artists of all genres various degrees of sales success to have long, happy careers."

Gatfield calls his opportunity at EMI unique: "There's no other job like it, embracing both the North American market and the U.K. It's a very music-centric role, in a company going through a transformation." Gatfield complimented the new structure at the company, noting that the "flux" EMI has been in even prior to Terra Firma's acquisition "is coming to an end. There is a structure in place, people who absolutely believe in the structure, and some seriously talented executives in there to execute the new vision."

Now it is Gatfield's job to create "repertoire, which is capable of being exploited worldwide. What is exciting for me about the structure is the clear open flow, channel of communication between the U.S. and the U.K. companies. You have a shared vision of what it is you want to build."

But he says he has a solid base to build on with "some amazing superstar artists."

"The key thing for us," Gatfield says, "is to get up and running extremely quickly, deliver some artists really quickly, and just prove that the model works—the staff, and to the artists we want to embrace and work for."
We mourn the loss of a Devoted Husband, Cherished Father and Grandfather, and Esteemed Colleague

ROBERT WARNES LEACH
DECEMBER 16, 1914 – MARCH 30, 2008

Robert Warnes Leach, journalist and screenwriter, who started out on night rewrite at United Press International and later wrote for such classic television shows as "Perry Mason" and "Men Into Space" and worked on films such as "Pat and Mike" and "Adam's Rib," died in Laguna Beach March 30 after a long illness. He was 93. Bob, whose stepson, Dr. Henry T. Nicholas III, was the co-founder of Broadcom Corp., was also known for his work on behalf of homicide victims in recent years. He had lived in Malibu with his wife, Marcella Nicholas Leach, until respiratory ailments left him hospitalized in 2005.

Born Dec. 16, 1914 in Dupree, S.D., Bob was the grandson of a prairie homesteader and the son of an entrepreneur. As a teenager he came to Los Angeles to see the summer Olympics; the following year he returned just in time for the Long Beach earthquake – to stay with his older sister. In June 1933, he graduated from Los Angeles High School. After earning a bachelor's degree in journalism at the University of Missouri, he returned to Southern California where, failing at first to find newspaper work, he initially took a job pumping gas in North Hollywood. Eventually, however, he was hired by UPJ as an assistant rewrite man on the overnight shift, earning less, he would later joke, than his salary as a gas jockey. Deployed to Pearl Harbor in the aftermath of the attack there, he served for four and a half years in the South Pacific, was made flag lieutenant to Vice Admiral Elliott Buckmaster, then promoted to lieutenant commander. He served on the USS South Dakota at Guadalcanal and in the Battle of the Santa Cruz Islands, among others.

Bob met a young sailor who, upon learning he had been a reporter, asked if he knew any war stories that might make good screenplays. Bob shared a submarine story and the sailor – who in his civilian life was actually the soon-to-be-famous agent Ray Stark – told Bob that if he wrote it as a treatment, he could sell it. When the tale fetched $5,000 from a studio in 1946, Stark helped Bob get his first peacetime job, as a junior writer at 20th Century Fox.

He spent the next 17 years in Hollywood. At MGM, he worked on the production of such feature films before moving to CBS, where he wrote scripts for "The Adventures of Jim Bowie", "Perry Mason", "The Case of the Dangerous Robin", "Ripcord", "Everglades" and "The Little Hobo" among others. He also worked as a story editor and writer for the series "Men Into Space."

Later Bob switched to teaching, and eventually became an instructor in screenwriting and journalism at UCLA. There he got to know a journalism student, Marcella Nicholas - a single mother with two small children, Henry (Nick) Nicholas, then age 6, and Marsalee (Marsy) Nicholas, age 3. Bob and Marcella married and moved to Point Dume, and Bob dedicated himself to the task of raising Nick and Marsy. In his spare time, Bob was an active officer of the English horse shows program at Trancas Riders and Ropers. Marcella Nicholas Leach was director of school and community relations for Santa Monica College and Unified School District for 14 years.

Marsy pursued her education at UC Santa Barbara with the goal of teaching mentally challenged individuals. Nick led the founding of two publicly traded technology companies, PairGain Technologies and Broadcom, and is ranked 195th on the Forbes 400. Both children cited Bob as the single greatest motivator and moral influence in their lives.

In 1983, Marsy, then a senior at UCSB, was brutally murdered by her ex-boyfriend Kerry Conley. After that, Bob and his wife dedicated themselves to the cause of victims' rights, helping to build the non-profit organization, Justice for Homicide Victims, Inc. Over the years, JHV has succeeded in raising awareness and increasing the rights of crime victims, as well as providing support and services to families of victims.

Bob is survived by his wife, a resident of Malibu, and his stepson of Newport Coast, along with three grandchildren-- Brett, Matthew and Shelby Nicholas. Services will be held April 12 at 4 PM at Westwood Hills Christian Church, 10808 Le Conte Avenue, Los Angeles, 90024. Internment will take place April 13 at 3:30 PM at Rose Hill Memorial Park (Gate 19) in Whittier. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be sent to Justice for Homicide Victims, Inc., P.O. Box 2845, Malibu, CA. 90265.
CARLY CAN DO
Nickelodeon Star Steps In Front Of The Mic

Look out, Hannah Montana. 14-year-old Miranda Cosgrove, who stars in the top-rated Nickelodeon show "iCarly," is preparing to release an album called "The iCarly Playlist" June 16 via Columbia. Billboard has learned. And Cosgrove, along with Nickelodeon and Sony BMG, are not shy about gunning for their share of the tween market.

Unlike the Hannah Montana records, "The iCarly Playlist" will only feature four songs sung by Cosgrove. The remaining 10, all by teen-friendly bands like Good Charlotte and Boys Like Girls, were chosen to represent songs that would appear on Carly's iPod, according to Columbia president Rob Stringer.

The songs that would appear on Carly's iPod are all songs by Sony artists. Sony and Nickelodeon are releasing "The iCarly Playlist" as part of a joint venture created in June 2007. At the time, the partnership was supposed to last for four years; now, according to Stringer, "it's a multiyear deal. We want to be able to have the freedom to keep building artists without having any timelines."

The pact will include 12 records to be released in 2008 alone, including "iCarly" and the soundtrack to a TV movie called "Spectacular." Previous titles released under the venture include the original soundtrack to Nickelodeon show "The Naked Brothers Band," which was released in October 2007 and has sold 246,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Under the terms of the joint venture, Sony and Nickelodeon will split the revenue of records produced under the deal, according to Gynna Zarghami, president of Nickelodeon Music and MTVN Kids and Family Group. Stringer adds that while established personalities like Cosgrove will not be signed to 360 deals, there is a possibility that previously unknown and developing stars would link them.

Sony retains the music rights, and will work with Nickelodeon to create a TV show that Stringer describes as "Entourage" meets a boy band." The label and network are hoping to launch a band from the TV show, which is tentatively titled "All for One."

No matter what types of deals are signed, all the artists will have access to the combined Sony BMG and Nickelodeon marketing machines. In the case of "The iCarly Playlist," Zarghami says, "the show already has a huge audience, and our expectation is that the kids who love the show will also love the record."

"Kids want music-related media and entertainment," Stringer says. "There is an audience for projects like this. These kids know how to use the computer and they know how to access digital platforms."

Those digital platforms will be integral to the marketing of the "iCarly" record, especially given that the TV show is based on a teenaged girl's webcam series. "We're doing a huge amount of Web marketing, as well as having Nickelodeon run ads, and all the traditional pop marketing," Stringer says. Cosgrove adds that Nickelodeon will run music videos for the songs on the record and that the show's producers are considering writing an episode in which Carly becomes a musician.

No one involved in the project is concerned with the fact that, unlike Hannah Montana, Cosgrove is not well-known as a singer. "She does sing the theme song for the show, and when we put that up on iTunes, it sold 140,000 downloads," Stringer says. The show's popularity should also give her name recognition a boost, according to Nielsen Media Ratings. "iCarly" has ranked No. 1 consistently among the top five series with tweens and is the highest-rated program in its time slot for kids ages 6-11 and 9-14. It is also the No. 3-ranked live action program on broadcast and cable TV for the 9-14 demographic.

The joint venture is also happening at a key time of growth in the tween industry. Young teen faces like the soundtracks to "Hannah Montana 2" and "High School Musical 2" have sold 1 million and 1.2 million copies, respectively, in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, and the overall market share for kid audio has grown from 2% in 2006 to 3.4% in 2007. As for Cosgrove, when asked about her potential rival, she just giggles nervously. "I like Hannah Montana," the young actress says. "I have her CDs."
Jazzing Up The Caribbean
Promoters Shelling Out Big Bucks For Major Names

The notion of a Caribbean “jazz festival” has always been somewhat misleading, as the lineups for the annual events are typically more crowded with R&B and pop acts than actual jazz artists.

And if the bookings for two of this year’s highest-profile events won’t change that perception, organizers are hoping they will further establish their brands while giving a platform to some of the biggest names in the biz.

Indeed, there aren’t any jazz festivals scheduled for the fourth annual Plymouth Jazz Festival Tobago (April 25-27), but promoters expect to attract upwards of 30,000 patrons with headliners Shakira, Rod Stewart, Diana Ross and a much anticipated performance by Whitney Houston.

The Plymouth event has quickly become a pre-eminent affair on the Caribbean concert calendar, largely by outspending its competitors and presenting such luminaries as Stevie Wonder, Elton John, Sting and Sean “Diddy” Combs. The festival also boasts “American Idol” musical director Rickey Minor, its producer, with Minor’s 24-piece band backing several of the performers.

“arbitage had it all on the streets,” says executive producer Tony Maharaj, who is also CEO of CL Financial, one of the Caribbean’s largest privately held corporations. Maharaj estimates his annual costs at $10 million but views the asset-unprofitable expenditure tures as an investment in a wider vision. “We are trying to establish a brand and develop Tobago (the smaller island of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago) as the Caribbean’s tourism capital,” he says.

Houston’s performance, reported as the first since Dec. 1, 2007, appearance at the Live and Loud Music Festival in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, will undoubtedly elevate the profile of the Tobago event, which in 2007 was ranked among the land during the low season, the festival steadily integrated R&B and pop acts into its jazz roster, was marketed in key U.S. and European territories and grew in international stature; soon other islands adopted its model.

Walter Elmore, whose Turnkey Productions produces the Air Jamaica Jazz and Blues Festival (which drew approximately 40,000 guests and showcased artists from around the world, including the likes of Wynton Marsalis and Herbie Hancock), says the abundance of Caribbean jazz events has forced promoters to become more creative in their bookings.

“The big acts are very expensive, so eclecticism has become the norm,” Elmore says. Indeed, Elmore has staged elaborate tributes to Johnny Cash and soca icon Byron Lee and in recent years has delivered such artists as Air Supply, Kenny Rogers and Michael Bolton.

Air Supply and Bolton headlined the St. Kitts Festival, respectively, in 2006 and 2007; both acts performed at the 2007 Turks and Caicos event and will be the star attractions at the St. Lucia Jazz Festival (May 2-11), which underscores many promoters’ concerns that repetitive bills will inhibit the proliferating festivals’ collective appeal.

“Why would anyone want to book artists that just performed at one festival at another event within a couple hundred miles radius?” asks Mortimer Baptiste, president of the Trinidad and Tobago Steel Pan and Jazz Festival (Oct. 25-31), which highlights authentic jazz and Trinidad and Tobago’s national instrument, the steel pan. “It doesn’t make sense, if these events are supposed to attract tourists to boost the islands’ economy.”

LaRoda, however, says the success of any event, including the Plymouth Festival, transcends its lineup. “The beauty of Tobago already attracts a diverse audience, and with our top tier band, sound, lighting and artists, we make them feel like they have had an ‘once-in-a-lifetime experience,” he says.

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"Me parece tremendo, porque ahora hay más espacio para reseñar los discos latinos, más espacio para entrevistas de lo que pasa en el mercado latino. Yo todas las mañanas prender la computadora y me meto en Billboard para ver lo que está pasando y, antes, muchas cosas que pasaban en el mercado latino no se les daba el espacio que se merecían."
~Fido, cantante del dúo Alexis & Fido

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"It's about time! The power of Billboard and the power of the Internet are the perfect combination."
~Luis Fonsi

"I think it's tremendous because now we have more space to review Latin albums, more space for interviews on what happens in the Latin market. Every morning I turn on the computer and go to Billboard to see what's going on. And before, much of what happened in the Latin market didn't get the space it deserved."
~Fido, of Alexis & Fido

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Inside The Planning For The Pope Benedict Youth Rally

In a convergence of religious experience and rock festival, some of the top acts in Christian music were tapped to perform at an April 19 youth rally that is part of Pope Benedict XVI’s U.S. visit. Third Day, Matt Maher, Salvador and tobyMac were slated to perform in Yonkers, N.Y., at St. Joseph Seminary.

Kelly Clarkson was also scheduled to perform prior to the pope addressing the outdoor crowd. "St. Joseph is a beautiful, historic seminary campus—one of the most important seminaries in the country," says event producer Chris Wangro, president of New York-based Zara- gander. "We’ve been building here for over a week. It’s a giant setup—it’s a reconfigured stage once used for the Rolling Stones. The site is about 50 acres, and we’ve covered every inch of it with production needs. We’re calling it ‘Papalpalooza.’"

Wangro says “miles and miles” of temporary fencing have been put up. “We’ve put up an entire food operation. We have over 600 people working,” he says. “We expect 25,000-30,000 people to be coming. We’ve set up temporary chapel tents. We’ve set up confessional areas, emergency medical, and the whole nine yards. It’s a real festival. That’s what makes this different from the other papal events.”

Wangro was previously director of special events for the city of New York and handled events for its parks department. “When Pope John Paul II visited New York City in 1995, the folks from the archdiocese brought me to run operations for the Central Park mass,” he says. “And now with Pope Benedict coming, they asked me to produce this portion of the pope’s visit in Yonkers.”

According to Wangro, the New York Archdiocese is paying the production costs—which he declines to specify—and all acts are performing gratis. “Not only are people volunteering to perform, people are paying their own expenses to come to town.”

Wangro says, “It is the pope, after all.” Obviously the pope is the primary draw, but the artists also are happy to be performing at an event that targets youth. “It’s an opportunity for the country to see there is a young Catholic Church and they are passionate about what they believe,” says Essential Records artist Maher, who is Catholic. “It’s a chance for them to look around and say, ‘I’m not alone in my convictions. I’m not alone in my beliefs.’

We have everything from great children’s choirs and dance troupes to some of the greatest acts in Christian rock,” Wangro says. “It’s all about the spirit of the day that can be shared whether you’re a kid in a garage band or a Grammy-winning artist like Third Day. We are bringing together a wide spectrum of people united by their faith.”

 Maher has prior experience with papal events, including performances during the pope’s 1999 visit to St. Louis. Maher also works regularly with two national Catholic ministries: Life Teen, a worldwide Catholic youth ministry, and Louisiana-based Adore Ministries. He is scheduled to perform at World Youth Day in July in Sydney, and says the St. Joseph event has special meaning for him.

“There are people coming from different denominational backgrounds,” says Maher, whose label debut, “Empty & Beautiful,” sawed April 8. “To me it affirms the work the pope is trying to do for the gospel around the world.”

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‘Papalpalooza’

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BEN’S BIG MOVE

Ex-Sony A&R Goldman Launches Own Blackledge Label

A&R vet Ben Goldman, who made his name during a 17-year stint with Sony, is heading out on his own. The former Epic and Columbia senior VP of A&R is launching Blackledge Records, an independent label that will be distributed by Atlantic.

Founder/CEO Goldman says that Atlantic is not an investor in Blackledge, though it has given the new company “money on a credit basis to help us out.”

The distribution agreement between the two, which has a three-year term, includes an upstream clause, which Goldman says is a “very fair deal. When I was at Sony I saw some really shitty upstream deals. Let’s just say indie labels can get taken advantage of. We negotiated a deal with a much bigger sales threshold than I think is typical for upstream arrangements.”

Goldman, who’s launching Blackledge with three acts, adds that “the way we negotiated, our artists get a bigger piece than just sales, anyway.”

When Atlantic co-chairman Craig Kallman heard Goldman was leaving Sony to start his own label, he says he “immediately reached out to him to explore how we could partner. We have such a rich history here of developing and building new labels and brands. Look at the success of Fueled by Ramen, Downtown, Bad Boy and so many others. This was an opportunity to partner with another great label run by another great music man.”

All initial Blackledge signees—soul/pop singer Josh Hoge, alt-rock singer/pianist Tim Brantley and rock outfit These Green Eyes—have 360-degree deals with the label, comprising touring, merchandising and licensing components. Two of the three are also signed to publishing deals with Blackledge.

But Goldman says he has “no mandate” to do every deal in this manner, primarily because he’s not answering to anyone but himself.

“I worked for amazing people at Sony who taught me everything I know,” he says. “But I came to a point where I didn’t want to answer to anyone anymore.”

Goldman, who signed such successful acts as Ben Folds Five, Chevelle and Fuel during his time at Sony, says he concentrated on securing “lots of investments from lots of people in stead of big investments from two or three people.” He also chose not to go to banks or venture capitalists to raise financing. “I only went to people I knew, people who are now letting me do what I need to,” he says. “I don’t get calls, I don’t have to give quarterly reports or talk about my cash flow.

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I got the money I needed without giving up big ownership of my company.”

Goldman currently has one employee, which he admits is a different scenario from what he first imagined. “I dove into this with delusions of grandeur,” he says. “I thought I would raise $15 million and have this big indie with 20 people working at it. But as time went on and I was digging into what it would take to do this and still live the life I was used to living while at Sony, it kind of evolved.”

For now, Goldman is outsourcing marketing, promotion and publicity to “people I’ve met along the way. I can call upon the right people for the right projects. It’s a very effective way to do things and keep overhead down.”

Atlantic is providing assistance “only on the sales side,” Goldman says. “For now I think the upstream and the association with Atlantic is great, but we’ll see as time goes on where the company is at and where we can go. Long term, I of course want to see the company grow and also I want it to branch out beyond being a music company. But for now the focus is the artists.”
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Whither The Widget?
As Social Networks Prep Their Music Services, Mini-Apps Could Fall By The Wayside

One of the biggest new-media sensations to emerge from last year were music-related widgets—mini-applications that allowed members of social-networking services like MySpace or Facebook to customize their profiles with such music features as streamed playlists and tour calendars with links to ticket sales.

What helped the widget trade to boom in the first place was that MySpace and Facebook didn’t offer such services to artists and fans directly. But now that MySpace is reaping a full-featured music service of its own, and Facebook is rumored to be working on something similar, what happens to all these widgets that filled that void?

It’s hard to imagine that MySpace will block these applications once the music service rolls out. The company faced a harsh member backlash last year after it started blocking widgets, and it joined Google’s OpenSocial initiative specifically to give developers the tools needed to write applications for MySpace that can also work on competing social networks.

So if MySpace doesn’t block overlapping services, what happens then? Here’s a quick snapshot of the main services MySpace Music plans to offer, the existing providers of the same and how this might shake out in the months to come.

STREAMING/PLAYLISTS
Artists on MySpace can already stream songs in full, sometimes even entire albums in advance of their release, as long as their label gives the OK. However, MySpace members haven’t had the ability to construct and stream their own playlists from their profile without outside help. The leading widgets that enable MySpace users to do so are iLike and Last.fm.

Both are social networks in their own right that have capitalized on MySpace’s musical-foot-dragging to lead the way in online free streaming, and both are targeting MySpace’s audience. It’s unlikely that MySpace will rely on either to power its internal playlist/streaming features, particularly as it’s not that difficult a service for MySpace to build on its own.

DOWNLOADS
To date, Snocap’s MyStores widget is the only official downloadable-to-myprofile application on MySpace. The site has blocked other third-party applications in the past. (Most notably Inde111’s Hooka app, linking MySpace celeb Tila Tequila when she tried to use it to sell her debut release.)

But the MyStores widget proved a flop. Slightly more than 100,000 of MySpace’s 5 million artists embedded the store on their profile, and few sales followed. What’s more, rival iLike has since acquired Snocap—likely to add its own downloadable-to-myprofile service as well. Expect MySpace to either terminate its Snocap deal outright or simply wait for new music artists to dump the app on their own.

MySpace is keeping a tight lid on exactly how it plans to deliver full songs, so any discussion of potential partners is pure speculation. One option would be a MySpace-branded download service that uses technology from a third party like MusicNet. Another would be to partner with an exiting service, in which case Amazon would be the most obvious contender given MySpace’s well-established disgust for digital rights management.

TICKETS
Any concert ticketing service will almost certainly have to include Ticketmaster, but the wild card is iLike—on which Ticketmaster owns a stake. The No. 1 music application on Facebook has little exposure on MySpace, and as such has little to fear from an overlapping service.

But iLike has grown far beyond its tour-date roots. The company is making a point at getting directly into MySpace’s knickers by hosting artist profiles where participating acts can stream music, post videos and more. R.E.M. made headlines by streaming its new album “Accelerate” on iLike rather than MySpace, generating 1.5 million streams in the six days prior to its release.

What’s more, iLike syndicates artist pages across a host of participating social networks—including Facebook, Bebo and Hi5—and its recommendation engine makes it easier for artists to add friends to their profiles. (iLike has 10 times more friends on iLike than MySpace.) “We always used MySpace as our inspiration and tried to innovate beyond it,” iLike CEO Ali Parvari says. “They now seem to be duplicating things that we’ve created.”

Expect a level of “co-option” here. Using some form of iLike’s “Thump plug-in and viral touring promotion—not to mention integration with Ticketmaster—would only elevate whatever native ticketing application MySpace develops.

MERCH
MySpace will very likely team up with one of the bigger providers like Live Nation and Musicoday to facilitate standard merch sales. But it also has a relationship with online retailer Zazzle, which lets fans customize their T-shirts, posters and other gear on-demand.

“We’re not competitive with the merchandisers, the music companies or MySpace,” Zazzle chief strategy officer Jim Heckman says. “We’re just adding additional monetization, so we don’t see any reason why we wouldn’t expand our strategic deal with these partners.”

As this track holds the pole position on the Rhythmic chart for a second week, the Los Angeles native’s fourth album, “All I Feel,” opens at No. 1 on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Albums.

HD music video service that includes licensed content from Universal Music Group, Sony BMG and EMI Music Group. More than 10,000 music videos and live concert clips are included, which fans can search for by name or browse via individual artist profiles. Artist management firm Overbrooke Entertainment is a major investor.

WANT MY IPTV
Verizon’s FiOS IPTV service has added a new music channel called “Blastro Music” to its video-on-demand roster. The channel has two subcategories—“Rockwell” for rock, metal, indie and alternative genres—and “Yalla” for country, bluegrass and Christian music. A third channel will be added for hip-hop, pop, R&B and Latin. Programming includes live performances, interviews and original shows.

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That’s the Way I Want You
3,396,419
2. LEONA LEWIS
Bleeding Love
1,687,001
3. RHIANNA
Don’t Stop the Music
1,672,043
4. ALICIA KEYS
The Way You Move
1,601,002
5. JORDIN SPARKS & CHRIS BROWN
This is My Life
1,554,281
6. JORDIN SPARKS
RightThere
1,554,797
7. CHRIS BROWN
Easy
1,525,281
8. BRITNEY SPEARS
Toxic
1,472,917
9. SARA NELLEN
 bachelor’s Day
1,545,032
10. TAYLOR SWIFT
The Singing Man
1,525,993
11. BUCKCHERRY
Buck & Sile E.S.O.
1,655,980
12. COLBY CALLAT
Heying and Angel
1,641,747
13. UESHER
Slab (Love
1,684,113
14. MADONNA
Human Nature
1,594,576
15. TIMBALAND
Vibe Nation (The Heat Stret)
1,570,457
16. RAG N BONE
All I Feel
1,543,636
17. NATASHA BEDINGFIELD
Love Like There’s
152,615
18. BRITNEY SPEARS
Baby One More Time
980,317
19. RAY J & YUNG BERG
Baby Daddy
986,534
20. JORDIN SPARKS
This is My Life
986,534

This week’s Billboard Hot 100 champ comes from the British sirens’ “Spirit” collection, which debuts atop the Billboard 200.

The top 20 audio and video streams licensed by the source shown ending April 12, Source: Yahoo! Music.
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Digital Dilemma

Online Sales Remain Inconsistent For Latin Market

The digital arena was a recurring topic at the recent 19th annual Billboard Latin Music Conference—the subject of conjecture, possibility and speculation. But as far as Musik Factory, it came down to numbers and cell collected lists.

And, according to Billboard senior analyst/director of charts Geoff Mayfield—who surveyed the U.S. digital market—and to Music Ally digital strategy consultant Juan Paz—who scrutinized the Latin-American market—those sales numbers still aren’t pretty. But they’re slowly moving in the right direction and are expected to gain momentum throughout the year.

Let’s look at the domestic market first. Here, digital sales of Latin albums haven’t taken off nearly as quickly as expected. According to Nielsen SoundScan numbers, for example, Latin music accounted for 6.4% of all albums sold in 2007. Compare that with the 3.5% total that Latin represented in 2002, and there is proof of solid year, despite last year’s downturn.

But in the digital arena, Latin albums sales accounted for 1.6% of the total in 2007. For first-quarter 2008, that percentage grew even more slowly to 1.9%.

And this is where we should take heart: All told, sales of digital Latin music albums rose by 28.8% for first-quarter 2008—from 104,000 units sold last year in the digital arena. Latin consumers aren’t just looking for the hits online but for other material, much as they do in the mainstream music world (see graph, left).

But why aren’t they buying more? There isn’t any data to provide an answer, although domestic studies indicate that Latin Americans have less access to broadband at home than other groups.

What also may be happening here is a reflection of what happens in Latin America, where, according to Paz, factors like low broadband penetration coupled with low credit card usage and distrust of Internet purchasing have conspired to keep digital online sales at a minimum.

But mobile digital sales have been strong enough that overall digital sales tripled from first-quarter 2006 to first-quarter 2007, according to the most recent IPFI numbers.

Looking at individual markets, in Brazil—the most advanced digital marketplace in Latin America—digital sales now account for 8% of the total market, up from 2% in 2006. Of those sales, 76% are mobile and 24% are online.

In the rest of the region, however, online digital sales remain negligible. One factor, Paz said, could be the high price of an online track, ranging from $2.35 in Brazil to $3 in Colombia.

In the meantime, physical piracy—and now online piracy—are rampant in the region. In Mexico, Paz said, $2.6 billion songs were downloaded illegally in 2007.

For the time being, then, piracy outpaces digital growth by far. But the market is maturing and expected to continue growing, thanks to the development of flat-rate mobile plans, online subscription services and a plethora of new technology, online stores and mobile services (see story, below).

This coupled with the IFPI’s strong anti-piracy initiatives in the digital realm, points toward a future that is far from rosy, but still holds promise amid the challenges.

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MUCHO’ MOBIL

Babasonicos Releases Album Via Motorola, Personal

BUENOS AIRES—In a groundbreaking move in Argentina and Latin America, Universal Music rock group Babasonicos released its new album “Mucho” exclusively in mobile format via an alliance with Motorola and cell phone carrier Personal.

For a month beginning April 7, the 10 songs on “Mucho,” plus a bonus track, will be available exclusively for personal clients through a preloaded special model of Motorola’s Rockr W5 phone. One track also can be downloaded for free via a selected list of Motorola/Personal phones equipped with WAP.

This marks the first time that an Argentine act makes its new material available exclusively on a mobile format. According to Universal and Motorola executives, this is also the first time in Latin America that an entire album is being sold in this preloaded fashion as an exclusive.

The Babasonicos campaign also stands out for groundbreaking technology promoted via an aggressive campaign on prime-time national TV. The first ad asks fans to have their Motorola mobile phones’ Motorola application ready—the MotoID function ready—the MotoID application allows users to identify a track and artist. A moment later, a second ad instructs users to point their device toward the TV set for 30 seconds while the first song is downloaded for free.

“This ‘Star Trek‘-like technology links to a MotoID database to facilitate the download.”

“Thanks to the synergy obtained with Motorola and Personal, we can have a monster campaign to announce the release of this album,” Universal Music Argentina commercial director Alejandro Domínguez says. “We are also sure that this will not be detrimental to sales in retail.”

The cost of the campaign, including promotion and marketing, is estimated at $1 million and includes 20,000 preloaded phones. Each phone is retailing for approximately $150.

Band manager Eduardo Rocca says selling the whole album was key in securing the deal. “We were not interested in selling individual tracks only,” he says. “But we are always keen on finding new channels of production and distribution.”

“Mucho” will reach brick-and-mortar retail May 8. Universal already has orders for 20,000 units and the album will also hit newstand—also a popular music distribution outlet in Argentina—with another 20,000 units, the amount needed to be certified gold in Argentina.

—Marcelo Fernandez Bitar

For news and developments relating to the Billboard Latin Music Awards, see billboardevents.com.
Feelin' INgroovy

Indie Digital Distributor, Major Label Unite To Conquer

One interesting industry move that seems to have gone largely unnoticed within the last month was Universal Music Group Distribution's acquisition of a significant undisclosed stake in INgrooves, a digital distribution company. Of course, the press release didn't devote a line to the deal that way, saying that Universal Music Group had made a strategic investment in — and formed a strategic alliance with — the company.

Some executives at the other majors see the move as a warning shot for UMG to provide the labels it distributes through its two distribution companies — major UMGD and indie Fontana — with a more efficient delivery of digital data and music to online merchants. And indeed, one of the reasons UMG made the acquisition was because of INgrooves' "killer app," as one UMG insider puts it, in reference to the digital distributor's application software.

Another reason for the acquisition is to provide another level of digital marketing for Fontana's labels, if they wish to avail themselves of those services. Those services include digital retail sales and marketing, sales reporting, film and video distribution, and mobile.

"Fontana and INgrooves will fuel each other's business," one executive familiar with the deal says. The implication, of course, is that labels signed to INgrooves that have records that are making noise — but are distributed physically by boutique distributors — will now have a way to get them into the larger accounts, via Fontana.

"If INgrooves has any labels with a credible physical business, it gives Fontana a leg up" over other indie distributors in scoring that business, one indie digital executive says.

Also, just by putting Fontana's music through INgrooves, a tremendous amount of volume will be added to the digital distributor.

But from the other end, INgrooves provides a turnkey international solution for Fontana's labels, something that Fontana had yet to get a mechanism to building.

INgrooves' software presents a more efficient way of interfacing with the Fontana labels, another executive familiar with the deal says. It also provides detailed digital sales reporting in real time, on a monthly, weekly and in some cases daily basis, which Fontana did not yet offer to labels.

Finally, Fontana's labels benefit just by having their music serviced to digital merchants through the digital aggregator. "Fontana has a number of labels that are ready for digital when their physical distributors weren't," one executive at an indie label says. "So it's an interesting way to provide digital distribution rights too, something that they still have the clout to do while physical is still the dominant format. But that tactic might not work if a label is digitally distributed by an aggregator affiliated with a major."

Kevin Arnold, IODA

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POLES APART
Population Shifts Help Polish Music Score In The U.K.

LONDON—When "The Best Polish Songs...Ever" appeared on EMI U.K.’s March release schedule, the four-CD compilation stood out like a sore thumb, with its lineup of unfamiliar names like Kult, Goya, Myslovitz and Wilki. But the release reflects how, in the four years since Poland became a member of the European Union, the United Kingdom has become home to up to 2 million Poles—mainly young people, hungry for the music of their homeland.

"This music is underground in the U.K.—it generally falls outside of the media’s radar," says EMI Gold label assistant Helen Owens, who worked on the "Best Polish Songs" project. "Yet it’s hugely popular here, due to the large Polish community."

EMI did not break out U.K. sales figures for the album. However, U.K.-based Poles largely acquire their recordings from Poland through visits home or online operators like merlin.pl and stereo.pl. A Merlin representative says sales of CDs to the United Kingdom have increased 210% in the last five years.

But the real growth has been on the live scene, where established acts like Kult, Budka Suflera or Perfect can play to 2,000-strong audiences in London.

There are generally eight to 10 U.K. shows by Polish acts monthly, London-based Pole Szymon Piatek says. Previously, only "one in 10 of the major Polish bands might have played London. Now even small bands include London, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Dublin in tours."

Piatek is co-founder of Polish-language Polskie Radio Londyn, launched in October 2007 on digital radio platform DAB in Greater London. With a 30% talk/70% pop/rock music format—including 40% Polish music—he says PRL has 40,000 weekly listeners on DAB, plus 20,000 online.

PRL and its parent, Polish-language magazine Coolura, have organized "about 10 events over the past four years," Piatek says—next up is rock band Budka Suflera May 4 at 1,500-capacity Koko.

While a handful of U.K.-based Polish promoters, including Mega Yoga, Soundo Collectivo and X-Side Music, are active, the highest-profile belongs to London-based Buch International Promoters.

Since launching in 2003, Buch has organized 60 concerts, mainly in London. Buch project manager David Rygiebcki cites the first show by rock band Kult—signed to Polish indie SP Records—in 2003 at London’s 2,000-capacity Astoria as a major steppingstone for the company.

"It sold out days before, but 500 people turned up and wanted to buy tickets at the door," he recalls. "Police shut the street because they didn’t know what this crowd of Poles meant."

"This October we will do two concerts," Kult’s manager Piotr Wierejska says. "First, the Astoria 2 venue with 1,000 capacity, then the main one with 2,000."

Another regular U.K. visitor is leading new wave/metal-influenced Hey (QL Music), which formed in 1992. The band will play a Buch-organized show in November at London’s 1,145-capacity Scala, but manager Krzysztof Dominik sees increasing scope for shows outside the capital.

"There are several Polish organizing concerts in London, Dublin and Edinburgh," he says. "Last August, we played in a club in Edinburgh for some 700 [people]."

A fixture on Poland’s rock scene since the early ‘90s, punk/metal-influenced band Proletariat (signed to Metal Mind Productions) played eight U.K. club shows in October 2007.

"The fees were similar to those in Poland," manager Marcin Jacobson says, "but CD and merchandise sales were better." Jacobson adds that the Polish media in the United Kingdom played a key role in publicizing the tour. Those players include Coolura/PRL, west London-based Radio Orla FM and Polish expatriate Web site gonioc.com.

"There are more than 100 Web sites targeting the U.K. Polish community," Piatek adds. "In London alone, you’ve got seven or eight magazines."

While recent government statistics suggest Polish immigration has begun to slow down, the live scene is gathering momentum—and even attracting new converts.

"Three or four years ago, audiences were 99.9% Polish," Piatek says. "But now, you’ve got more British males coming along—reflecting the fact that quite a few Polish women have married British guys in the past four years."

GLOBAL NEWSLINE

TESCO GOES DIGITAL
British supermarket giant Tesco will launch a revamped digital download store in May. The service, Tesco Digital, will initially offer 3.3 million music tracks, half of which will be in the iPod-compatible MP3 format. Tesco plans to offer its entire catalog as MP3 files by year’s end. Further down the line, the service will ramp up its offering to include downloadable films, TV programs and games. Pricing has yet to be disclosed. Tesco became one of the first major British supermarkets to enter the music download business when it launched a service in November 2004 offering more than 500,000 titles in the Windows Media format. The company, which is a member of a trade body the Entertainment Retail Assn., launched tesco.com in 2000.

JONES COMES AWAY WITH PLATINUM
Norah Jones’ "Come Away With Me" (Blue Note/Parlophone) has been awarded a seventh IFPI Platinum Europe Award. Also in first-quarter 2006, Amy Winehouse earned a fifth award for her European sophomore set "Back to Black" (Universal Island) and her first for October 2003 debut "Frank" (Universal Island). Take That’s comeback "Beautiful World" (Polydor) and U2’s "The Best of 1990-2000" (Universal Island) each attained a third IFPI Award in the first quarter. Albums certified for 1 million Pan-European shipments were Alicia Keys’ "As I Am" (J/Sony BMG), Diana Krall’s "The Girl in the Other Room" (Verve), "The Best of James" (Mercury), "Linkin Park Live in Texas" (Machine Shop/Warner Bros), the Scorpions’ "Best!" (EMI), Sheryl Crow’s "The Very Best Of" (Polydor) and late French singer Gregory Lemarchal’s "La Voix d’Un Ange" (Universal).

BAIDU RESPONDS TO LAWSUIT
Beijing-based search engine Baidu has responded to a copyright-infringement lawsuit filed against it Feb. 4 by Universal Music, Sony BMG Music Entertainment, Hong Kong and Warner Music Hong Kong. The Beijing No. 1 Intermediate People’s Court agreed earlier in April to hear the suit. "As the leader in Chinese-language search, Baidu has always been an advocate of improving the protection of copyrights on the Internet," the company said in a statement released April 10. "Baidu is committed to working with record and media companies to develop new digital entertainment business models and explore ways to promote licensed content...The labels are seeking damages totaling $9 million for infringing copyright on 127 tracks. Baidu says it “has cooperated with a number of record companies, including such labels as EMI and Rock Music Group and nearly half of the domestic record companies.” —Berwin Song
**GLOBAL BY CHRISTIE ELIEZER**

They Sweat The Small Stuff

Australian Biz Travel Firms Spread Their Wings

MELBOURNE—Two Australian entertain ment/travel logistics firms are looking to capitalize on the burgeoning sector by expanding into North America, Europe and Asia.

Sydney-based Stage and Screen and Moves Travel Group (MTC) are ranked No. 2 and No. 3 in the Australian entertainment travel and freight sector, with estimated market shares of 30% and 20%, respectively. No official figures exist for the sector, but industry sources estimate annual revenue at $250 million Australian ($323 million), up from $200 million Australian ($164.4 million) two years ago. Sydney-based Showbiz Group is the market leader, with an estimated 50% market share.

Stage and Screen, set up in 1995, counts U2, Red Hot Chili Peppers and Pearl Jam, as well as record labels and MTV, among its Australian clients. A $100 million Australian ($92.7 million) annual revenue operated, according to its Los Angeles-based global GM Gregory Lording, it opened its L.A. office last October. By July, it will operate in Tokyo and Mumbai, India, with New York and London set for 2009.

MTC is the result of an April merger between veteran promoter Michael Jacobson’s Travel & Entertainment (ATE) and Stage and Screen founder Ken O’Brien’s Multimove Travel. Jacobson set up ATE in 2006, moving musicals including “Miss Saigon,” “The Phantom of the Opera” and “Billy Elliot.” Jacobson declines to provide figures but newspaper reports estimate it grossed $45 million Australian ($41.7 million) in its first year. MTC will open London, L.A., Auckland, New Zealand, offices by July, and Cape Town, South Africa, and Singapore by year’s end. O’Brien says, “They want to let you handle the headaches so they can concentrate on the creative side.”

As their rivalry expands to the international stage, Stage and Screen and MTC decline to name their new global clients, citing confidentiality. But their strategy for expansion is similar: focusing on word-of-mouth recommendation and a heavy presence at trade fairs and business conferences. Stage and Screen has the additional leverage of its parent company, travel agency Flight Centre, while MTC plans to also market aggressively to sporting associations.

For the moment, market leader Showbiz is not joining in, preferring to maintain its global presence through joint ventures with local partners.

“Spending money on infrastructure and real estate is not the way,” Showbiz GM Graham Fear says.

But MTC and Stage and Screen believe the range of services they offer could be trump cards when entering markets where existing companies have longstanding clients. “Boutique companies are often more successful than large travel companies, which do everything,” Stage and Screen’s Lording says. “It’s not just moving people and freight. It’s as much sourcing the right vehicles as going on location and knocking on people’s doors to find homes for the crew. Our clients are thrilled we understand the market and deliver what they need in their jargon.”

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**GLOBAL BY STEVE McCLURE**

LIFE TAKES VISA

Japan Tightens Immigration Regulations For Touring Acts

TOKYO—Japanese live biz insiders say immigration authorities are taking a tougher stance on international touring acts.

Japan remains a key touring market—such acts as the Police, Kanye West and Rihanna have already played there in 2008—but BMG Japan senior VP of international labels Hiro Tanaka warns that it is getting harder to bring in foreign artists.

Many cite last November’s decision to deny Velvet Revolver members’ request for visas as a watershed moment. The group—which toured Japan in 2005 without incident—was forced to cancel shows in four Japanese cities.

Execs including Shiro Kawaguchi, manager of PR, marketing and visa support at the international department of Tokyo-based promotion company Create, confirm that there have been many similar—if lower-profile incidents—although, due to their confidential nature, he and other sources decline to name specific examples.

With this in mind, Billboard presents four things every touring artist and manager should know about playing Japan.

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**APPLY WELL IN ADVANCE**

Standard procedure when applying for entertainers’ visas—which are valid for three months and cost 3,000 yen ($30) for single entry and 6,000 yen ($60) for multiple entry—is for promoters to submit applications with the immigration bureau in Japan, which issues certificates of eligibility. These certificates are then submitted abroad to consulates/embassies, and then the actual visas are issued.

“If the person is doing any professional work at a concert, onstage or backstage, they need a working visa,” one Tokyo-based promoter says. And the November 2007 introduction of biometric screening for all foreign nationals entering Japan means it’s increasingly important to do advance background checks on all members of a tour group.

“I strongly recommend preparing visa documents two to three months in advance,” says Carolin Sackmann, press officer for the Tokyo Summer Festival concert series, a favorite stopover for international acts.

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**CHECK OUT YOUR PROMOTER**

A Justice Ministry ordinance states that for international performers to obtain entertainers’ visas, the operator or manager of the inviting organization should have at least three years’ experience in show business involving foreign nationals.

Despite this, Many Hayashi, president of Tokyo-based promoter H.I.P., notes that no organization exists to help vet promoters—although the All Japan Concert Tour Promoter’s Conference Web site, app.co.jp, provides contact information for major players.

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**KEEP CLEAN**

Many of Japan’s hardline anti-drugs stance has been relaxed, but now “it’s really immigration authorities are taking drugs” more seriously, Tanaka says.

Industry sources say the members of British alternative band the View were refused visas in late 2007 because of one member’s drugs conviction. However, some high-profile acts, including the Rolling Stones and Paul McCartney, have been allowed into Japan despite previous drug-related brushes with the law.

“Japan’s immigration-control law bans foreigners who violate drug laws from entering Japan permanently,” a Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau representative says. “But some people whose cases are recognized as special by overseas Japanese diplomatic establishments have been permitted to enter Japan.”

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**THINK SMALL**

For new bands, the “live-house” route is a good option that cuts out pricy of the red tape. If bands don’t pay upfront, they can enter Japan as tourist visas, rent one of thousands of small (50-500 capacity) “live-house” venues, do promotion and sell tickets. One act to take this route...

Authorities are taking drugs more seriously.

—HIRO TANAKA, BMG

recently is Israeli heavy metal band Guidance, which toured Japan March 25-April 9. “It’s important for the band to have someone in Japan who is bilingual,” says Keitaro Kamo, associate GM in EMI Music Japan’s domestic administration department, “to act as a coordinator with the live house so everything is clear before they fly to Japan.”

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APRIL 26, 2008 | www.billboard.biz
Another day, another letter from an indie digital distributor leaked to the Web. This time around, it was the Orchard president Greg Scholl taking MySpace Music to task; he raised concerns over widely stated but-as yet-unchallenged reports that the new service will offer equity only to major labels and not to indies.

The situation raises broader questions about the way indies are perceived in the digital space and why they often seem to find themselves at the losing end of such deals. Part of the problem, according to Scholl, seems to be one of perception. "In the minds of many retailers, brands and agencies," he says, "independent designates garage bands and unsigned artists pinning away in their basements."

As of yet, no indies have deals in place with MySpace Music. But talks are under way, and Scholl worries that, to his understanding, indies have not been offered any equity. Historically, he goes on to say, digital retail has been "fairer than physical brick-and-mortar retail ever was." iTunes led by example and helped to shift music industry dynamics towards a more level playing field for all industry participants. In that light, if reports are true, the apparent MySpace licensing approach is troubling. It hearkens back to a time none of us wants to revisit."

The letter shares many of the same types of concerns Independent Online Distribution Alliance head Kevin Arnold raised in a letter concerning imeem and lala that surfaced a few months ago. But though Arnold says he agrees with much of Scholl's letter, he still remains "optimistic and excited" about MySpace Music and its offerings. "We haven't discussed anything with them in terms of terms," he says.

Bryn Boughot, chief marketing officer at digital distribution service IRIS, also suggests that Scholl's concerns might be premature. "Consumers have demonstrated that one of their top criteria for digital stores is variety," he says. "We expect MySpace to come to the table with fair and equitable terms, and until they've demonstrated otherwise, it's early to be too concerned."

Arnold says that the more he deals with people who do not directly involved in the music industry, the more he runs into the perception of indies as second-class citizens. "Even to this day, the majors are seen as the prize," Arnold says. "The indies are taken for granted." Not even indies affiliated with major labels are exempt from this treatment: Scholl's letter also raised concerns about the lack of clarity surrounding how any major-label equity would be shared with artists and whether the independent labels they distribute would be included in those agreements. According to a representative from one of the four major-owned indie distributors, they would not get a cut of any equity for their labels.

Boughton and Scholl took pains to point out that not all digital music sales sites treat indies the same and that the digital space has been good for indies overall. "The online world has given us opportunities to have a fighting chance, and we've mostly been able to negotiate fair deals," Boughton says.

So how can indies make sure that they never return to the same level and change perceptions about the strength and legitimacy of their business? They do, after all, make up almost 20% of the digital music market, according to Nielsen SoundScan. One source suggests that indies use their collective bargaining ability to negotiate higher rates and fairer treatment, but another source points out that "everyone in the end represents their own interests, and coming up with a collective point of view is very difficult," American Assn. of Independent Music president Rich Bengloff says that while Antitrust rules do not allow his organization to negotiate rates, he can communicate with his member organizations and help administer whatever is allocated.

Others take a harder line and suggest that indies should pull their catalogs from sites that do not offer fair deals. "It would do damage to a site if indies all pulled their catalogs," a major-owned indie distro rep says. "But it would also do damage to our artists. It's a double-edged sword and a tricky situation."

In response to the letter, a MySpace representative told me that the company is "committed to making sure indie and uninsured bands are part of the service." A source close to the site also reveals that MySpace plans to include leaders from the independent music community on the venture's management team.

For 24/7 publishing news and analysis, see billboard.biz/indies.
Vince Power's new mantra, "Back to basics," should be enough to make the touring biz sit up and take notice.

Power after all, is the man who built the U.K. live music empire Mean Fiddler Music Group (MFMG), which began in 1982 with a single club and ended up controlling a huge swath of festivals and live music venues.

Born into a rural family in 1947 in County Waterford, Ireland, Power moved to London at age 6. He ventured into the secondhand furniture business, but his love of music led him to invest in a derelict former drinking club in Harlesden, north London. He renamed it the Mean Fiddler and it launched him into the music promotion world.

Power effectively refashioned the British festival business in 1989, when he transformed Reading Festival from an ailing heavy metal event into an alternative rock powerhouse, incorporating a twin site in Leeds in 1999. Power's portfolio also included the Filead and Phoenix festivals, with MFMG becoming operational manager of Glastonbury in 2002.

Having sold his stake in MFMG in 2005, Power is now back in the U.K. festival business, with the July 6 30,000-capacity Day at The Hop Farm festival, headlined by Neil Young. He also has a controlling interest in Spain’s Benicassim festival and a string of small venues and bars.

As he settles down to talk in his unassuming offices off the Kilburn High Road, it's evident that the back-to-basics approach applies to more than the no-sponsorship/no premium ticket stance of his festival, and Power is reveling in his refund status as an independent operator.

After three years away, you're back on the festival scene. Why now?
I just love organizing festivals. It's a challenge again—and I'm not ready to keel over just yet. With the Mean Fiddler [Music Group], we had a huge amount of stuff which we did—live music festivals, dance festivals, tours—and when I sold it out three years ago, it had got to the stage that it was huge. It was a [public limited company], it [had] £80 millions [$158 million] in revenue, and I lost the sort of touch that I have now, the hands-on touch. I looked at retiring for about two weeks. [laughs] That didn't really work for me.

What's behind the "back-to-basics" approach?
I was thinking about what festivals will look like in five years' time. In my opinion, the festival market will change completely. A few of the bigger bands this year have already decided that they want to do their own stuff. That's purely because of the difference for a big band like Radiohead or the Foo Fighters is that if they can organize their own "festival," the money is so much better for them.

At the moment, the typical format for festivals is that you pay a band a fixed fee. As a band, you don't get a percentage whether we get £50,000 or 70,000, there you get whatever fee we agree [on]. That format will go out the window. I'm happy to come up with a new format of sharing the revenues with the acts. That means putting everything on a clean slate, saying: "This is how much beer we sell. This is what the site comes up with, this is what it costs me." Bands should get a percentage of that.

Why no VIP backstage area?
The punters are frustrated because they're the last person you talk to; you can buy a £150 [$236] ticket, but if you want to get into a special tent on the site, you have to be upgraded. The festival next year—I hope—will be to do it a bit with this year's won't have a "backstage" as such.

We want to create a site where everyone can go all the way around it and there isn't any mystery about it. When I ran Glastonbury with Mean Fiddler, I resisted the ticket registration thing. I thought all this bar-coding wasn't in the spirit of festivals. It's a load of rubbish. You need a birth certificate, photo ID— you almost need your grandmother's birth certificate to get a ticket. And then you didn't know whether you'd got it because you were in a lottery.

You don't have anxieties about the resale of tickets?
It wouldn't bother me in the least as long as it's not a fraudulent ticket. There'll always be touts [scalpers], but this secondary ticketing thing is completely blown out of all proportion. It's completely hypocritical, saying that it doesn't matter if [a ticketing agency] adds a bit of price to a bacon and a sausage and gives you a glass of champagne then doubles the price of the ticket—that seems to be acceptable—but it's wrong if you get some scribbled bloke with two genuine tickets that he'd managed to queue up for: then wants to double his money because it's sold out. I see that as being an entrepreneur; I don't see a problem with that.

What do you think of what's happened with MFMG, now renamed Festival Republic, since you left?
When Live Nation and Denis Desmond took over, it became much more bottom line. They extracted the festivals from the venues. Festivals were obviously a good money-earner and they sold off the venues. I had a different attitude towards the Mean Fiddler and the stuff we did. There were always hard venues in there—like the [Kentish Town] Forum was a great place, but very hard to make money out of. The [Clapham] Grand cost me a fortune: it's up there with my biggest blunders like the Filead Mor in Ireland—that was a disaster. And Jazz on a Summer's Day in Alexandra Park, that was another disaster: [laughs]

How do you view the massive consolidation on the live scene in recent years?
Money talks; what can you do? Of course, it's going to get harder, because AEG, Live Nation are buying up loads of smaller companies. But there'll always be an independent niche of people that will get on and do stuff, then sell it up to the bigger promoter somewhere down the line.

It's much more of a money business now. When you're booking, say a 1/2 tour worldwide, for $500 million dollars, you don't really need a [traditional] promoter. All you need is a good set of lawyers and a good set of accountants. There's so promoting in that as such, no innovation—the innovation in those kind of things is with the people that design the stage sets. I'd rather be at the bottom end of it, where you're creating things yourself.

You've been in the live business for more than a quarter-century. Did you ever consider launching a label?
No. I don't like the personal involvement with artists: very sensitive, they are: [laughs] I prefer to be at a distance, to enjoy putting them on and listening to the music, rather than getting phone calls from them at two in the morning. There are certain people for that kind of job, and I'm certainly not one of them.

What do you think the industry perception is of Vince Power?
"Tough but fair." I'd like to think I'm seen as somebody who'll stick to their word. Someone who people say they may not like, but feel it's good to have in the business. Then again, now [that] I'm back rocking again with this new festival, they're probably thinking, "Oh, it was so peaceful when he wasn't around."
INSIDE A BUSTLING soundstage near Southern California's Six Flags Magic Mountain, Ne-Yo is giving makeup advice to his long-legged co-star in the video for "Closer," the lead single from the flirty R&B artist's "Year of the Gentleman," due June 24 from Def Jam. The young woman doesn't really need Ne-Yo's help. For one thing, she's gorgeous, and for another, there appears to be at least a half-dozen people on the set who get paid to supply the kind of assistance Ne-Yo is volunteering. But if anything defines this multitalented 28-year-old, it's a willingness—a determination, really—to wear more than one hat at any given time. "It's not just music for me," Ne-Yo says in his trailer during a break from the "Closer" shoot. "I'm expanding." The musical component of that expansion is a familiar story by now. Born Shaffer Smith in small-town Arkansas, Ne-Yo first made a name for himself as an R&B songwriter, penning tunes for artists including Marques Houston, Mario and Christina Milian. (The Houston track "That Girl" was actually a leftover from an unreleased album a teenage Ne-Yo made for Columbia.)

'YEAR' OF LIVING DANGEROUSLY

He's Written Hits For The Biggest Names In Pop. Now, Bored With R&B, Ne-Yo's Making His Boldest Artistic Stand

BY MIKAEL WOOD
PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRIS STANFORD
That behind-the-scenes success led to a solo deal with Def Jam, which released Ne-Yo’s debut as an artist, “In My Own Words,” in 2006. The album has sold more than 1.5 million copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, while its single “So Sick”—a song that idly predicted its own irresistibility on the radio—reached No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100.

Ne-Yo’s speedy sophomore set, “Because of You,” confirmed the singer’s rise—it has sold 955,000 copies since its release last May—as did higher-profile songwriting gigs for Beyoncé, Rihanna, Celine Dion and others. (In 2006, Beyoncé’s “Irreplaceable” was Ne-Yo’s biggest hit so far, spent 10 weeks atop the Hot 100.)

The third album he’s released in three years, “Year of the Gentleman,” reflects the listening public’s appetite for all things Ne-Yo. “The idea was to keep the momentum going,” Def Jam VP of marketing Ashanna Ayars says of the decision to release the new album barely a year after “Because of You.” “Ne-Yo claims he didn’t necessarily plan to rush the CD into release. “I wanted the third album to be a little different from the first and second as far as the essence and the sound of what I was doing,” he says. “So I was going to chill for a minute and really take some time to figure out what I wanted that to be. Fortunately, it didn’t take me that long, which is why the album’s coming out now.”

Judging by the handful of tracks previewed by Billboard, “Year of the Gentleman” does indeed offer something a little different from traditional R&B. “Closer” is a Stargate-produced club track with pulsing strobe lights and a high-energy house beat that calls to mind Rihanah’s “Don’t Stop the Music.” “So You Can Cry” sports a mellow, easy-listening vibe, with Ne-Yo making a priceless rhyming of “private party” and “calamari.” Guitars and cymbals figure prominently in “What’s the Matter,” which Ne-Yo likens to a Beatles-style rock record.

In addition to Stargate collaborators on the set include members of Ne-Yo’s Atlanta-based Compound Entertainment crew (the Heavyweights, Shay Taylor, Chuck Harmony), as well as Christopher “Tricky” Stewart and J.R. Rotem, who struck radio gold last year with his protege Sean Kingston.

“People are definitely open to hearing him head into new areas,” Rotem says, explaining that Ne-Yo’s work as a songwriter has broadened his audience’s perception of what kind of artist he is. “He can cover all the bases but he still always sounds like himself.”

“Ne-Yo is keeping up with the times,” adds DJ Buck, PD at urban station WZMX (Hot 93.7) Hartford, Conn. “He’s paying attention to what’s happening musically, with everything going down to that house beat. The thing about ‘Closer,’ though, is that the lyrical content of the song almost makes you forget about the new direction. The words take you right back to typical Ne-Yo.”

According to Ayars, Def Jam’s plan for “Year of the Gentleman” is to grow Ne-Yo’s audience beyond its core of 16- to 24-year-old females. “The records he’s written don’t just speak to young black girls,” Ayars says. “We’re trying to build an adult audience that appreciates his music as well.” To that end, the label is expanding its efforts at radio to include AC stations and is seeking performance opportunities “that aren’t just BET-driven.”

Ne-Yo’s opening slot on Alicia Keys’ two-month North American tour (which began April 19 in Hampton, Va.) will also play a major part in Def Jam’s setup. “That partnership gets him in front of the more mature fan base we’re after,” Ayars says.

As far as Ne-Yo is concerned, it’s all part of a 2008 campaign that also includes at least two forays into movies and TV. a script in development at Fox Atomic that Ne-Yo says “is going to be in the vein of ‘Purple Rain’” and an animated series about which he’s in talks with Cartoon Network. “For me it’s all always,” Ne-Yo says as he prepares to head back to the video shoot. “What’s the next thing going to be?”

“We can’t wait. For a performer like Ne-Yo, nothing is ever static. And the excitement is going to be there,” Ayars says. “Everyone loves him, his fans are growing. And we’ve got more great music to release.”

“Year of the Gentleman” switches up your sound a bit. The sound of the album is not exactly urban, but it’s not exactly pop. It’s more worldly—there’s something on there for everybody. There’s some stuff on there that sounds like something the Beatles might’ve done; there’s some stuff on there that sounds like something Billy Joel might’ve done. I can’t say just straight urban music no more, because you’re completely honest with you. I’m a little bored with it. I’m just moving with what music excites me now.

You’ve never released anything as club-friendly as “Closer.”

PRETTY RICKY was the beneficiary of early Ne-Yo-penned hits.

Meanwhile, guest turns with Rihanna and P!nk have kept Ne-Yo on the charts while he finished up his next album.
I've touched on it here and there, but with this one I went straight there. The song was inspired by all the time that we spent in Europe over the last year. Before the first album, I had never left America, and the second album took me all over the world. The whole London nighttime is what inspired the song. The clubs are kind of dark and mysterious, and that pulsing house beat is anywhere and everywhere you go; any song you can think of has got that beat over it. I just wanted to try to capture that energy and see what it would sound like with Ne-Yo over it.

Are there any clubs in particular that stick in your memory?
I don't remember the names of the clubs. I remember faces and characters in the places. There was one place that had this bartender with an eye patch. I thought, "OK, is he making a fashion statement or does he really need that?" He pulled it up and he really didn't have an eye. People like that won't forget. The names of the clubs get kind of blurry, mainly because you can drink on the streets there. I took advantage once or twice.

How do you think your fans will react to the stylistic experimentation?
My prayer is that my fans know me well enough to know that I'm an artist in the truest form, meaning that I cannot do the same thing over and over again. My worry is that I'll do something that's so far left of what I've already done that it's going to go over my fans' heads. I pray that my fans are smarter than that, that they'll understand that for me to just keep doing "So Sick" or "Sexy Love" or "Because of You" is going to get boring to me. And eventually it's going to get boring to them, too.

We're in a good moment for that, right? People's listening habits seem to be more varied than they have been in some time. The consumer is a lot smarter than a lot of us give them credit for. At one point you turned on the radio and every song sounded the same, and it's because the people making the music and marketing the music were under the assumption that, "OK, if they like this, they're not going to like anything but this, so let me do something that sounds like this." But if everybody thinks like that, then all the music sounds exactly alike, and then you get tired of listening to the damn radio.

What led you to work with J.R. Rotem and Tricky?
J.R. is a ninja on the piano. He sounds like he was born with a piano attached to his hands. It's ridiculous. He definitely understands melody, and that's always been my most important thing, be it a pop song, an R&B song, a country song, whatever—the melody has to make sense and it has to stand out and it has to be something that you hear once or twice and can sing back.

And he has that all day long. Tricky is another one who definitely understand melody and character; his tracks have a lot of character to them.

Tricky contributed to the recent artist debut by-the-Dream, another songwriter-turned-singer. And Sean Garrett has an album due later this year as well. Did you open the door for these guys to cross over to the artist side?
I'd like to think so. I'm guessing somebody was looking at me like, "Well, hell, if he can do it, I know I can do it." I think that for a long time, the songwriter was the guy in the background that nobody cared about. Nobody spoke about. Half the time you'd assume that the artist singing the song was the same person that wrote the song. Nowadays, songwriters can sing or do have some talent other than just writing are looking at it as, "Why not put me out there? It's working for this artist that I wrote for, so why not try it myself?" Sometimes they have had success; some of them not so much.

Is the average listener interested in songwriting credits? Does he or she read liner notes?
I think they do more now than before, with my emergence or whatever it is you want to call it. I think now it's something they pay a little more attention to. Especially my fans—my fans are always fascinated to find out that type of stuff. "I love the new Rihanna song. Oh, Ne-Yo wrote that? Cool!"

Are you concerned with defining your own music as something separate from the songs you write for other acts?
I am, but then again I'm not, because at the end of the day, my music—be it a song I put out myself or a song I put out with Beyoncé, Rihanna, Mary J. Blige, whoever—it's all still my vision. One thing I am hearing a lot lately is that "Ne-Yo is at his best when writing for someone else," which is strange. I don't mind it. Honestly, as long as your head is nodding to the music. I'm cool. It doesn't matter who's singing it.

With record sales as unsure as they are right now, holding down a separate songwriting career makes a lot of financial sense, too. Oh, yeah, absolutely. The way the business is today, if you're just a singer or just a rapper or just a producer, you're not making as much money as you used to. You're almost not making any. With an artist that's just a singer, the way that they're conducting deals now, with this whole 360 deal, they're taking a piece of not only your album sales, but your marketing, your tour, your merchandise. They got their hands in all of it. So if all you do is sing and you're into the label for $2 million and you ain't recouped yet, you ain't seen a thin dime. It's kind of sad.

Also, age doesn't affect a songwriter's career the way it does an artist's. I'm aware of the fact that at some point it is a possibility that people will not want to hear Ne-Yo sing a song. And to be completely honest with you, I'm cool with that. I understand that the business is very fickle and that one day you're hot, one day you're not. But the beauty of songwriting is that I can be 90 and write a song for somebody, and it wouldn't matter. I feel that I'll always be here in some way, shape, form or fashion. I'm going to do this artist thing as long as they'll allow me to, but as a songwriter, I'll never die.

How do you manage your time with respect to the various facets of your work? I owe a lot of that to my team. I have a bunch of people around me who have mastered the art of scheduling. I'm the worst with it—I'll forget to go to the bathroom if somebody don't tell me half the time. There's so much stuff going on throughout the day that I need somebody to go, "Hey, you eat?"

Do you have any idea what you're doing next Tuesday?
Nope.

Tomorrow?
No clue.

What do you think about Jay-Z's vacant post at Def Jam and forming a deal with Live Nation?
Jay-Z is definitely a businessman, and in business it's all about growth and expansion and the next newest thing. He's also an artist, which is also about growth and expansion and doing something new. I think he came to Def Jam, did what he did over there, and now he's moved on to a new thing. I don't think it was anything negative—it was just him being the innovator that he is. You stop somewhere, you do something and then you move on and do something else. I think he's going to do that until he leaves this earth.

Does his leaving make you feel any less secure about your place at the label?
My label has always been a huge supporter of me in every aspect of my career. Def Jam has always made sure that I was well taken care of, be it Jay-Z personally doing it or L.A. Reid or the team of people that they have there spearheading my projects. And that hasn't changed. Honestly, I've received even more support lately. They want to prove, "We wasn't riding with you just because of Jay-Z. We ride with you because we dig you."
‘THE MAJORS ARE GOING DOWN THE TUBES. THEY’RE HAS-BEENS LIKE THEY THOUGHT I WAS. SO WHY NOT RELEASE MY OWN ALBUM? NOTHING VENTURED, NOTHING GAINED.’

—DOLLY PARTON ON LAUNCHING DOLLY RECORDS
THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING DOLLY

PARTON CONNECTS WITH NEW FANS AND KEEPS THE OLD ON HER NEW ALBUM AND TOUR

It's only 8 a.m. at Camp Dolly, the expansive, well-appointed Spanish villa-styled compound just off Music Row in Nashville, but Dolly Parton is most definitely put together. And on the cusp of an ambitious world tour, her team has a game plan set up to ultimately take her to the box-office heights realized by her peers in the one-name iconic diva class. At the same time, the Parton brain trust endeavors to familiarize this iconic artist to a new generation of fans, an effort vitalized by a recent appearance on "American Idol." Clearly invigorated by her new album, "Backwoods Barbie" on her own Dolly Records, Parton's enthusiasm outshines even her bigger-than-life persona on this early spring morning. The back problems that delayed the start of the tour are behind her. Her voice is slightly hoarse due to exhaustive tour rehearsals, but Parton is quick with a laugh or a joke, and doesn't hesitate to break into song to make her point.

It's apparent that being Dolly Parton, even curled up on a sofa sipping a bottle of water, doing maybe her 10,000th career interview, is a full-time gig and one she happily embraces. "I'm a very professional Dolly Parton," she says without a trace of sarcasm. "I can't tell anybody else how to run their life or their business, but I really believe I've got a good head on my own. I know who I am, I know what I can and can't do, I know what I will and won't do, I know what I'm capable of."

What she is very capable of is putting out yet another fine album and sustaining a multifaceted 40-year career. Parton is living proof that it is possible to be a "backwoods Barbie" (to use her term), as well as a respected singer/songwriter, a multimedia icon and a savvy businesswoman.

Amid these talents, her priorities are clear. "I am a songwriter first, and a singer second, and an entertainer," she says. "I enjoy all of that and I take it all so seriously."

That's not to say the message can't sometimes be overwhelmed by the presentation. "I've often been misunderstood, and it has taken 40 years for people to realize how serious I am about the music," Parton says. "But this is also serious, the way I look. This is how I'm comfortable."

The way she looks, sings and performs has made her a worldwide brand, and one that some feel has underachieved at the box office. "If I say to you, 'Barbra Streisand, Bette Midler, Cher and Dolly Parton,' who's the odd one out?" Neil Warnock, CEO at her worldwide booking firm the Agency Group, asks rhetorically. "Dolly is, because she doesn't do the box office that the others do. And she should. She's as iconic as any one of those artists."

But an icon more familiar to an older demographic, as demonstrated by her "American Idol" appearance. "One thing we found out from 'American Idol,'" Parton says. "Most people don't know that Dolly Parton wrote 'I Will Always Love You,' most people don't know she has sold 110 million units, that she has 25 No. 1 singles, that she has 79 albums out, published 3,000 songs," says Danny Nozell, Parton's manager and GM of Dolly Records. "We're not reinventing Dolly. We're just introducing her to a younger generation."

RISING FROM THE SMOKIES

If Parton is the queen of being "Dolly," that confidence and self-realization must have come in handy when she first came to Nashville at 18, fresh out of the Smoky Mountains. Already a veteran songwriter and pure-as-springsong water singer, she was untainted by popular culture.

"My style was just the way I sang. I would have been more influenced by my aunts, or my mother, who was a great singer, than anybody else," Parton says. "We didn't have TV back in the early, early days, my most impressionable years, or even radio to a great extent. When I was little we didn't have electricity, so we had an old battery radio that you had to pour water on the ground to get it to stop whistling long enough to hear the Grand Ole Opry now and then when Daddy would try to get that."

Parton says she started writing songs at about 7 years old. "I had a gift of rhyme that ran in the family as well," she recalls. Her first exposure to the world outside her mountain home came via Cas Walker, a Knoxville, Tenn.-based businessman who showcased the wealth of regional talent on local TV broadcasts to grocery store chains.

Parton first appeared on Walker's show at age 12, and her talent and charisma made her an immediate favorite in the region. Trouble was, nobody much outside of East Tennessee recognized the talent, so Parton headed to Nashville in 1964 the day after high school graduation.

Asked if the music business took her seriously when she first came to Music City, Parton responds, "Well, no, I don't think they did. When I first came here I really was the backwoods Barbie: too much makeup, too much hair, the big books, country girl straight out of the mountains. It's hard to take somebody looking like that serious, I guess. So, I had to work doubly hard to try to prove myself."

But key players in the Nashville music community, including influential publisher Buddy Killen and producer: Fred Foster, thankfully did recognize the talent, with the former inking her to a publishing deal and the latter signing her to Monument Records in 1965.

HEY, PORTER

Recording success did not come quickly, but Parton did crack the top 25 with "Dumb Blonde" in 1967. Her biggest break came when she was booked on "The Porter Wagoner Show" in the fall of that year (the first performance on which has found its way to YouTube), beginning a relationship that would forever link the pair. More hits followed, often collaborations with Wagoner, and by the mid-'70s, Parton had transcended the show and was a star in her own right. The eventual split from Wagoner was protracted and messy, professionally and personally.

"Porter and I were always like family, or a husband and wife in a way," Parton says of Wagoner, who died last year. "We fought all the time but we loved each other deeply and truly. We were both so stubborn and so much alike that we couldn't get along. We had our differences, but there was always that bond, and the last several years we had become really close again."

Parton admits she felt threatened and afraid when she branched out on her own, hovering on the brink of crossover success. "A lot of people thought I was making a big mistake and that I was being a fool, that I would not be accepted outside of [country], that I was running my career," she says. "'Here You Come Again' [in 1977], that was my first single after I went out on my own, and it was my first million-selling record. I'd never even been anywhere close to selling that kind of records before."
Along the way, Parton learned to trust her instincts and never lost her core country audience. “I kept saying, ‘I’m not leaving country. How could I not be country with a mouth like mine and this backwoods Barbie look?’ A sensible city girl wouldn’t look like me,” she says. “My instincts are like answers to prayers. My whole life I’ve asked God to guide me and lead me, I live by that code and I strive close.”

Parton’s multimedia career took flight in the ’80s with crossover hits, a TV show and starring roles in major motion pictures, beginning with “9 to 5” in 1980. “I didn’t leave home thinking, ‘I’m going to be in the movies.’ I left home thinking, ‘I want to be a singer and a songwriter,’” she says. “I just knew that if my career went the way I hoped it would that all things were possible. And it would all fall into place.”

If she were an 18-year-old in 2008, living in the shadows of the Smoky Mountains, she’d head to Nashville again. “I still be saving my money as a waitress to come to Nashville and cut a demo, trying to get somebody to record my songs. I am that kind of a singer, that kind of a writer,” she says. “I’m grateful, thankful that I have had some good investments and decisions. But my heart is in my music. I write every day. I will do that till I die, whether anybody buys them or hears those songs till after I’m dead. I’m dead serious about the music, so just know that.”

Parton says she has no regrets at this point in her life. “I don’t regret anything I’ve done; I regret that I got caught down in some of the games,” she says with a laugh. “If it hadn’t seemed like the thing to be doing at the time, I wouldn’t have done it. But you say you’d like to change it all, to change one thing might change the whole picture and then the whole thing might fall apart.”

**BACK TO BACKWOODS**

Even with her numerous successful business concerns, including the popular Dollywood theme park in Pigeon Forge, Tenn., that she opened in 1986 (which will host a Wagoner tribute this year), Parton has also been prolific in the studio. She has released seven albums in the past decade, including a trilogy of bluegrass CDs on Rounder that has sold a combined 653,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Parton says she had one major goal in mind in recording the new project, released in February. “The same thing I’ve wanted to accomplish for years: to get some play on the radio and let people know I’m dead serious about my music,” she says.

She knows what she’s up against. “People my age lost their contracts with major labels several years ago, so since then I’ve been doing whatever I could, including doing my bluegrass thing, which I’m very proud of,” she says. “But I really felt like that even though I’m the 1 age, if I ever was any good I’m as good as I ever was.”

The leadoff single, “Better Get to Livin’,” peaked at No. 48 on Billboard’s Country Songs chart, her highest-charting song since “Country Road” reached No. 46 in 1992. Hopes are even higher for the second single, “Jesus & Gravity,” and “American Idol” provided some serious juice.

“The single downloads of ‘Jesus & Gravity’ jumped up 600% on iTunes after Parton performed the single on the show,” Nossel says. “We did in the month of almost 3.5 million downloads of ‘Jesus & Gravity,’ and the full album downloads were up 150%. I was pretty amazed by it.”

Country WUSY Chattanooga, Tenn., music director Bill Pion Dexter says his station didn’t jump on “Better Get to Livin’,” but “Jesus & Gravity” was an immediate add. “‘Jesus & Gravity’ is a song that we loved from the very first listen,” Pion Dexter says. “I was that listener, and I called in after just a few plays. The listeners love the song, they have always loved Dolly. We think Dolly has a big hit with this song.”

Parton says that for this record she wrote specifically for radio. “I thought, ‘I’ll try to tailor-make it.’ I’ll go back and do some of those things I did in my early career when I did have success,” like “Coat of Many Colors,” she says.

She used veteran studio A-listers like Hargus ‘ Pig’ Robbins and Lloyd Green, with whom she had worked on her earlier hits.

On the Top Country Albums chart, “Backwoods Barbie” debuted at No. 3, her highest-charting set since “Eagle When She Flies” reached No. 1 in 1991. The album’s start of 27,000 copies is Parton’s best sales week since her collaborations album “Honytonk Angels” (with Loretta Lynn and Tammy Wynette) did 40,000 during Christmas week in 1993. Released Feb. 26, the new album has moved 81.000 copies, according to SoundScan.

**DOLLY RECORDS**

Parton has for several years enjoyed her own imprint with Blue Eye Records, but launched Dolly Records and the current project with renewed vigor. “I own all my masters, but I just wanted a fresh, clean start—just go ahead and hire independent record people, hire somebody to run the label and really sink some money into it, invest in myself,” she says. “The majors are all going down the tubes. They’re all has-beens like they all thought I was. So why not just do it? If it does well, then I make all the money, and if it don’t, nothing ventured, nothing gained.”

Her North American tour begins April 22 in Pittsburgh, to be followed in June by an overseas trek. She says the overwhelmingly positive response she received from last year’s European tour surprised even her.

“I knew that I had a lot of fans in Europe, especially of the old stuff,” she says. “It was funny when we were doing the shows over there, people would hold up signs for ‘Joshua’ [from 1971] or ‘Mule Skinner Blues’ [1970]. ‘Jeannie’s Afraid of the Dark’ [1968], I knew I had fans but I didn’t realize I had that many there that had lasted this long.’

With that in mind, Parton and her band are only working up five songs off the new CD for the live show that will include the old warhorse hits and a decade-spanning medley of covers bound to be entertaining.

And—ever with Parton’s career longevity, Warnock sees plenty of artist development opportunities for her, particularly on the live front, in the United States and abroad.

Parton’s 2007 European tour was booked aggressively and ended up her biggest in the market. She played 12,000-capacity venues all over the United Kingdom; substantial venues in Scandinavia and Holland; and “of course Ireland, where she is an absolute goddess,” Warnock says. Nossel says the tour was also Parton’s most financially successful outing.

“I’ve never seen so many pink Stetson hats in one venue from just the merch that she sold,” Warnock says. “It proved the point that she had been totally under marketed in Europe, and I think it’s the same in America.”

The 2008 European tour will take Parton to large outdoor venues in the same markets, including two plays at London’s massive O2 Arena. Warnock says she’ll gross a third more in Europe than last year.

America is also selling extremely well, with 96% of North American seats sold and 85% sold for Europe. Warnock says that in the past Parton has been booked “in isolation” as opposed to building markets with a comprehensive game plan.

“We’re collectively working to increase her box-office appeal and at the same time sell albums so that it’s coordinated in a way that has not been coordinated before,” Warnock says, “so that ultimately we end up in a situation for Dolly so that when she wants to tour it’s an arena attraction, playing comfortably to 12,000-18,000 people instead of daddling around with 4,000-5,000 people in every market.”

Nossel’s current strategy for Parton seems to be taking hold.

“When I started with Dolly, her demographic was 80% 55 and older, and [age] 18-55 was 20%,” he says. “We gauge that off Echo, our Web company, and what we’ve done in the last 11 months is we’ve changed that demographic. Now it’s 80% 18-55-year-olds, and 55 and older [is] 20%.” He also notes that 31% of her audience is 25 to 35 years old, and that overall it breaks down 60% women and 40% men.

**MORE TO DO**

Those in the Dolly business know they have to compete for Parton’s time, and it’s obvious she has plenty more that she wants to accomplish. “I wake up with new dreams everyday,” she says.

She penned the score for a Broadway musical version of “9 to 5,” and says an autobiographical musical is in the works.

She’s also developing a weekly children’s TV show, as well as children’s music and books. She owns publishing, film and TV production assets. Her entertainment businesses, including Dollywood, Splash Country and Dixie Stampede, employ some 3,000 people. The Dollywood Foundation funds the Dolly Parton Imagination Library.

Nossel says he and Parton tackle one project at a time, even if they’re juggling. “It’s about focusing on one thing at a time. And when you’re done on one project, you move to the next,” he says. “That’s how we work, because we have six or eight different things going.”

The list goes on. “I want my own cosmetic line, and I want to still produce myself and a few other artists I believe in,” Parton says. “I’m still interested in TV specials, possibly a few more movies if the right things come along. I’m up for grabs, but I’ve got plenty to do and I never intend to retire.”

**O FOR a complete transcript of the Dolly Parton Q&A, go to billboard.com**

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DANNY NOZELL, PARTON’S MANAGER

‘WE’RE NOT REINVENTING DOLLY. WE’RE JUST REINTRODUCING HER TO A YOUNGER GENERATION.’

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Security, travel and transportation companies smooth the way for touring artists such as DIERKS BENTLEY, below.
Touring Prevails Despite Rising Costs

BY RAY WADDELL

TRAVEL TIME

It's simple math. Fuel prices are at record levels. Touring is a necessity and a moneymaker. It takes an ocean of fuel to move a tour. Hence, touring is more expensive than ever.

So it would seem the touring industry's travel professionals would change the way they do business so travel costs don't eat into revenue. Whether that's the case depends on whom you talk to. Music industry accountant Bill Zysblat—partner in RZO Productions, whose clients include such acts as the Police, David Bowie and the Rolling Stones—says gas prices have affected touring: "It's pretty much every way."

Moving a production via semi is an obvious extra cost, Zysblat says. "Crew and hand hauling costs have risen considerably, and for private planes the numbers are at record levels."

Costs are definitely higher, "but not enough to stop touring," says business manager Jamie Cheek, partner in Flood, Bumstead, McCoy & McCarthy, whose clients include the Black Keys, Dierks Bentley and Pearl Jam. "Over the last couple years, gas costs have maybe gone from 60 cents to 70 cents a mile, and if we hit $4 a gallon, that could still hit 80 cents a mile," Cheek says. "But still, that's 15-20 cents a mile more, and on a 20-date tour, that might be an extra $2,000-$3,000 per vehicle. That's a lot of money, but something a big tour can sustain."

For smaller tours, "acts that do 100-plus dates a year, that cost could be an extra $15,000-$20,000, even if they just have one bus with a trailer," Cheek says. "That level of act would feel the most impact. But again, they still tour."

Other parts of the tour travel business are feeling less of an impact from fuel prices. "I don't see any major changes in the trend on how we are booking tours," says Nick Gold, president of Entertainment Travel, a leading travel coordinator for the touring business, whose clients include Kiss, John Fogerty, the Charlie Daniels Band and Cheap Trick.

"But that may change if the prices continue to rise," he adds. "But no, I do not see any cutbacks based on fuel prices yet."

"Zysblat says he has not seen tour managers try to offset high costs by trying to route shorter jumps with fewer overnight stops on cheaper hotels. "Those factors should already be baked into any tour," he says. "A long run only pays if the revenue outweighs the expense of getting there. This has been a rule of thumb forever." That said, Gold says his services are likely more important than ever. "We are always in demand. We find a lot of bands and management don't know what we do and other companies like mine exist and either book their own or struggle with a corporate agency."

Business managers "have always looked at travel costs as a major portion of the touring expense and continue to look for ways to save where they can," Gold says, and others agree. Tour accountants and business managers "are definitely looking more closely," Pioneer Coach president Doug Rountree says. "We see business managers and others looking at all areas of the business to shave costs."

Sometimes, an ultra-luxurious coach can be economical for a tour, even for a superstar artist. "Over the past decade or so we have developed a 'star bus' design and we have seen this type of bus being utilized more, not only for travel purposes but to allow the artist to stay on the bus instead of getting a hotel room," Zysblat says.

Coach president/CEO Trent Hemphill says. "Hemphill says another trend is that an increasing number of tours have one or more of their buses wrapped by a sponsor for the tour, or simply advertising the tour itself. "One way some of our clients are making up for [fuel costs] is by leasing trailers from us that are pulled by our buses," Hemphill says. "This allows them to cut down on the number of trucks."

Music business accountants say they examine travel expenses just like all other expenses. "The trend is that over the past several years accountants and managers have looked at the books more closely," Hemphill says. "They do realize that they get what they pay for and by being too tight and just going for the cheapest bid, the tour could ultimately suffer through missed shows, late arrivals and added flight expenses due to breakdowns."

"It's a trend we are seeing more frequently," Zysblat says. "One of the areas is that the entourage shrinks and some people might not make the trip."

"We are finding that certain people can do their jobs from home," Zysblat says. "PR, for example, which, for a high-profile tour would normally travel with the band entourage, is often done from home. We then find a local to escort the press in and out."

That said, touring requires that people, well, tour. "We are constantly looking to bring people off the road to save on expenses, but for most jobs we have not yet found a 'home solution.'" Zysblat says.

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Most security professionals agree that concerts are safer than they were a decade ago.

But that trend could change if promoters and venue managers try to cut costs by slashing security expenses.

And if event security veteran Bart Butler, president of Rock Solid Security, could tell event planners and producers one thing, it would be: "Please listen more.

Asking if promoters and producers were more open to allocating what he feels are adequate budgets for security, Butler replies, "No. But I think that [they] are listening more and involving us more in the preplanning of events, which is the smart thing to do.

Butler says the security industry has adapted to its often secondary place in event budgeting. "We've learned how to CTA [cover your ass], so to speak," he says. "When a promoter suggests we use 25 people and where, we respond back to them that we think we need 30 people and why. We add wording to our documentation that says, 'We'll do what you want, but we advise this.'"

StaffPro CEO Coty Meredith adds, "I work with some very professional promoters and I think in general they want to staff correctly and safely."

Damon Zumwalt, president of international crowd management firm Contemporary Services, says, "In the areas where the promoters are most experienced and rely on professionalism, I believe they are more open to allocating adequate resources to security, if the case for staffing and other resources are presented professionally and supported with facts and history."

While he thinks safety at concerts and events has improved in recent years, Zumwalt urges event producers not to get complacent. "We have yet a long way to go, and it is critical to strive to continue to improve," he says. "Always look at the big picture and the long term. Taking short cuts for immediate savings and short-term results can be very costly and damaging in the long haul."

Another pressing issue, according to Butler, is state regulation of event security at the same level as industrial armed security that guards government buildings and high-security sites like nuclear facilities. "Anytime there is an issue with an industrial security company, the state tries to regulate that business to make it stronger or stricter, but it ends up affecting all crowd managers," Butler says. "We're all linked together under this macro of security."

Such regulation can increase mandated training time from four hours to 100 hours—a bit of overkill for someone checking backstage passes or directing patrons to restrooms.

"Now [the International Assn. of Assembly Managers] has a great program about what we need to know, guide lines about what should be taught to deal with access issues and problems with guests, the things that we do," Butler says. "I believe in training in guest services, problem solving, methods of crowd management and why we do things the way we do."

Meredith agrees. "The big problem with this issue is the training and the curriculum for security guards is really not conducive to audience management," he says.

Along with increased hours of training comes a greatly increased cost.

"Actually, to get a part-time security guard as very difficult, and you end up with a less-qualified employee," Meredith says. "We're hiring someone who has invested significant time and money into security guard training will ultimately seek out a higher-paying job than what's traditionally paid for event security.

"We end up being a training ground for other businesses because the entertainment industry does not pay that much for event security."

Despite these issues, most security professionals firmly believe concerts are safer today than a decade ago, influenced by high-profile accidents at shows and the fallout of Sept. 11, 2001, and other terrorist incidents. Insurance is also a factor, Butler says.

"People are looking at the liability side of it and new methods and new ways to do things," Butler says. "As crowd control professionals, we're keeping an eye out, we're educated and versed in what to look for to hopefully stop something before it happens."

But Butler would still like to see security pros involved in the earliest stages of planning. He says that things are improving in that regard. "A lot of people come to me now and say, 'What do you think?' versus there's what I want you to do," he says, noting the value of experience. "We're not sitting behind a desk."
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When it comes to touring, buses remain the preferred means of transportation, gas prices be damned. “We are still seeing a high demand for touring that doesn’t appear to have slowed down from the same periods last year,” says Pioneer Coach president Doug Rountree, who works with such acts as Prince, Nickel Creek and Pearl Jam. “We have not seen fuel prices slow down touring yet, but they are clearly increasing the cost of the tour.”

Hemphill Brothers Coach president/CEO Trent Hemphill says escalating fuel prices have had a minimal impact on his business. Hemphill’s clients include Tim McGraw and Faith Hill, Justin Timberlake, Madonna, Jennifer Lopez, the Police and Van Halen.

“Bands have continued to tour as a way to support themselves and as a way to promote their albums,” he says.

That’s not to say patterns have not changed. “We are seeing more tours go with an ‘all in’ tour that allows them to pay one price that includes most of their coach expenses, including fuel,” Hemphill says. “If anything, we have seen touring level up more over the year, rather than following the season model that was so cyclical.”

Rountree continues, “For example, touring over the winter has increased from previous years.”

And the way bands get from point A to point B is constantly being tweaked. “We have noticed some decision-makers watching the routing more closely so that shorter jumps are used to reduce transportation costs,” Rountree says. “A smarter routing clearly benefits all the parties involved.”

For some artists, being environmentally friendly is a key factor, even if it comes at a cost. “A lot of artists are using the biofuel stuff, even though the delivery process in some cases can be more expensive than regular diesel,” says business manager Jamie Cheek, partner in Flood, Burnstead, McCready & McCarthy. “The cost of refueling on site is about $6.5 per gallon, according to Kevin Lyman, founder/producer of the Van’s Warped tour.”

“Biofuel is probably an area that has gotten some focus, just in trying to understand the economics and get through a couple tours to see how much more or less cost than regular fuel it might be,” Cheek continues. “Of course, cost savings is not the reason our clients use biofuel.”

Even so, cost has become an increasing factor—the price of biofuel fluctuates more than regular diesel simply based on supply and demand. When it comes to biodiesel, the most aggressive blend that can run without voiding most engine warranties, prices have ranged from $3.70 to $4.25 per gallon, according to Sheryl Crow production manager Chris Fussell.

Warped tour green adviser Tim Allyn’s data says per-gallon costs are up sharply this year, from $2.36 on average in February 2007 in the United States to $3.49 on average in February 2008. Regular diesel went from $2.59 on average to $3.44 during the same period.

And if an artist wants to go green, the bus company has to pony up as well, if it wants to stay competitive. “Fuel filters have to be changed every 5,000 miles or sooner, depending on the percentage of bio-mix, versus 10,000 miles for regular diesel,” Rountree says. “We have also had more frequent injector problems on the buses that have been running biodiesel, although we are not positive that it is directly related. We’re watching closely.”

Even with the increased costs on narrow profit margins, the touring industry has in many ways embraced biodiesel at a much higher rate than the overall transportation industry has.

Biodiesel on tours “is on the rise and has been over the past several years,” MusicMatters president and green touring consultant Michael Martin says. “I would estimate that close to 20% of this summer’s tours are planning or elevating the use of biodiesel.”

This compares with the 2% of the overall transportation industry that Martin estimates currently uses biodiesel. “The music industry sector is the most public-facing component of the transportation industry and therefore offers one of the greatest opportunities to be a catalyst for massive change.”

Fussell very much believes that the pluses of biodiesel outweigh the minuses. “It’s simple math,” he says. “Just using a 20% blend of biodiesel reduces 3.22 pounds of carbon emissions per gallon.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROSS/Attendance/Concesses/Promoter</th>
<th>ARTIST(S)</th>
<th>Venue, Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>$1,985,770/18,229/10,809/Live Nation</td>
<td>BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN &amp; THE E STREET BAND</td>
<td>Oshawa, Dec. 30</td>
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<td>JAY-Z, MARY J. BLIGE</td>
<td>TD Banknorth Garden, Boston, March 31</td>
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<td>RASCAL FLATTS, TAYLOR SWIFT</td>
<td>NRG Arena, Tacoma, Wash., April 5</td>
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<td>RASCAL FLATTS, TAYLOR SWIFT</td>
<td>General Motors Place, Vancouver, April 2</td>
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<td>$961,855/12,847/Live Nation</td>
<td>JERRY SEINFELD, TOM PAPA</td>
<td>Chicago, March 4-6</td>
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<td>$865,458/10,427/Live Nation</td>
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<td>Scotiabank Arena, Toronto, March 11</td>
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<td>IRON MAIDEN, LAUREN HARRIS</td>
<td>Air Canada Centre, Toronto, March 19</td>
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<td>Joe Louis Arena, Auburn Hills, Mich., April 15</td>
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<td>Air Canada Centre, Toronto, March 22</td>
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<td>ARCO Arena, Sacramento, Calif., March 31</td>
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<td>Rose Garden, Portland, Ore., April 4</td>
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<td>John Paul Jones Arena, Charlottesville, Va., April 10</td>
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<td>$614,548/8,366/Beaver Productions</td>
<td>MICHAEL BUBLÉ, NATURALLY</td>
<td>Dunkin' Donuts Center, Providence, R.I., April 10</td>
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<td>Hershey Arena, Buffalo, N.Y., April 14</td>
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<td>$620,683/9,981/Outback Concerts</td>
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<td>Scotiabank Place, Ottawa, March 28</td>
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<td>$604,483/12,656/Ken E Mac Presents</td>
<td>RON WHITE, ALEX REYMUNDO</td>
<td>Fox Theatre, Atlanta, April 5-6</td>
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<td>Jones Beach Theater, Wantagh, N.Y., April 12</td>
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<td>AYRI LAVIGNE, BOYS LIKE GIRLS</td>
<td>John Labatt Centre, London, Ontario, April 6</td>
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<td>$436,980/11,791/Live Nation</td>
<td>THREE DAYS GRACE, BREAKING BENJAMIN, SEETHER, NEVERSET</td>
<td>Palace of Auburn Hills, Auburn Hills, Mich., March 21</td>
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<td>$435,295/8,658/Live Nation</td>
<td>THE POGUES, OLLIN, WILLIAM ELLIOTT WHITMORE &amp; OTHERS</td>
<td>Roseland Ballroom, New York, NY, March 15-17</td>
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<td>$427,000/9,181/Live Nation</td>
<td>DEF LEPPARD, REO SPEEDWAGON, STYX</td>
<td>Sovereign Center, Reading, Pa., April 13</td>
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<td>$412,752/8,815/Live Nation</td>
<td>FOO FIGHTERS, AGAINST ME!, HIFI</td>
<td>Shawinigan Centennial, Shawinigan, March 27</td>
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<td>$412,187/8,939/Bob Marley Inc.</td>
<td>BOB HARLEY MOVEMENT FESTIVAL</td>
<td>Dayton Park Amphitheater, Herrin, March 28</td>
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<td>$418,000/7,067/Live Nation</td>
<td>JONAS BROTHERS, ROONEY</td>
<td>Frank Erwin Center, Austin, Tex., March 7</td>
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<td>$407,500/6,489/Live Nation</td>
<td>THE TRAGICALLY HIP</td>
<td>Molson Amphitheatre, Maple Ridge, B.C., Sept. 24-25</td>
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<td>$405,366/6,608/Live Nation</td>
<td>BILLY JOEL</td>
<td>Arrowhead Stadium, Kansas City, Mo., April 15</td>
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<td>$402,194/6,634/EXPOSPORTS</td>
<td>MARTINA McBride, EMERSON DRIVE, JOHNNY REID</td>
<td>John Labatt Centre, London, Ontario, March 30</td>
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<td>$401,659/7,410/Live Nation</td>
<td>MARTINA McBride, EMERSON DRIVE, JOHNNY REID</td>
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<td>JILL SCOTT, RAHEEM DEAUVANNH</td>
<td>Chicago Theatre, Chicago, March 2-3</td>
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<td>Bell Centre, Montreal, March 17</td>
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<td>$391,768/6,633/Live Nation, in-house</td>
<td>MICHAEL BUBLÉ, NATURALLY</td>
<td>Brentwood Civic Center, Nashville, Tenn., March 9-10</td>
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<td>$385,189/5,690/Live Nation</td>
<td>DEF LEPPARD, REO SPEEDWAGON, STYX</td>
<td>Sovereign Center, Reading, Pa., April 13</td>
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Reminiscing about the Replacements reissues

In the Club
BellaTrax gets its groove on

Gold Standard
Can Newcomer Santogold Transcend Hipster Acclaim?

By Courtney Harding

Take a stroll down Broadway in New York near the Billboard offices or wander down an alley in Austin, and you’re likely to see some fresh graffiti. Spray-painted in gold letter on sidewalks and alleyways doors is a simple declaration: “I believe in Santogold.”

Street team kids with paint and stencils aren’t the only ones who believe in her, either. During the last several months, Santigold, who records under the name Santogold, has charmed music fans, the press and fashionistas alike. “Creator,” the first single from new album ‘I Believe in Santogold’ (April 29, Downtown Records), has been played on rap, alternative, college and top 40 dance stations. And in the space of one week in March, she played packed houses at South by Southwest and then jetted to a Stella McCartney fashion show and party in Paris.

While this might sound like an overnight-sensation Cinderella story, Santogold has been working hard for years to get her music heard. She began her career as a drummer for Spank Rock, and has since collaborated with The Sounds, The Rapture, and The Strokes. She has also worked on several record samplers and compilations, including “5,700,” which she released in late March.

Downtown head Josh Deutsch says the label will keep pushing “Creator” at urban and modern rock radio; “because we see it as a truly genre-defying track. We want to introduce her as a unique mix, and we’re also working on more licensing opportunities for the track. I think she is someone with a great ability to reach a broad range of people.”

MTV will also feature her as part of its 52/52 promotion. Santogold has just started filming the segments, and the airdate has not yet been set.

To capitalize on new fans who might want to buy product before the record is officially released, Downtown has released the “Creator” maxi-single and made the track available on iTunes in late March. It has sold 5,800 copies digitally, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Second single “LES Aristes” has moved 5,700 downloads.

Overseas, where Atlantic will release the album in the United Kingdom and Lizard King will handle it everywhere else, “we plan to ramp up her profile and drive wider awareness by taking to the streets with strong visual imagery and a team of ‘street preachers’ using the strap line ‘I Believe in Santogold,’” Atlantic U.K. marketing manager Stacey Tang says. “Her upcoming live dates and summer festival shows will be the perfect opportunity for fans to experience her star quality firsthand.”

For Santogold, being a darling courted by the press and industry is certainly preferable to her previous situation. As frontwoman of Stiffed, a dub-inflected punk band, she found herself running up against a number of barriers. “There was a lot of interest in Stiffed, but in the end, everybody got scared,” she says. “They didn’t want to take risks.”

Still, selling a 30-something, Wesleyan-educated, African-American woman to a pop market that seems to favor teenage blondes will not be an easy task. Part of what might help Santogold crack the mainstream is that her sound is a mix of Blondie and the Police, a throwback to the early ‘80s when pop had a brain as well as a beat.

“I am the biggest Devo fan in the world,” Santogold says. “My goal with this record is to get the art back to pop, to make radio good again.”

Santogold is also hoping that her reputation as budding fashion icon will help her reach a broader audience. “I’ve always been really into fashion, just matching different stuff and creating new styles,” she says. “It’s very similar to the way I approach music—I want to work with people who break down boundaries, who have fresh ideas and are bold.”

“Look, we’re at a point in the industry now where your record is really just your business card,” she continues. “This notion of ‘selling out’ if your music is in ads and branding is totally over.”
Proffit Maximizer

DMI Breaks Singer/Songwriter’s Music In Untraditional Places

If you listen to radio in St. Louis, New Orleans or Santa Fe, N.M., you’ve probably heard Kristen Proffit’s song “Redemption Day,” which is being worked to triple A stations.

If you’ve stayed at a Wyndham Hotel, you’ve heard Proffit in the hotel chain’s common rooms and as part of the music preloaded into the room’s digital alarm clock.

If you watch TV, you’ve heard Proffit on “Friday Night Lights.” “One Life to Live” and “Smallville.”

And if you go to movies, you’ve heard several of Proffit’s songs as part of the music that’s piped into the theater before the film starts.

This blend of traditional and unexpected outlets for the singer/songwriter’s music comes thanks to DMI, a multidimensional music branding company based in Pasadena, Calif.

Headed by industry veteran Tena Clark, DMI consists of a music branding group, an interactive design company, Private Label Radio, which does in-store programming; digital recording studios; and 5 Alarm Music, a library with 85,000 tracks online. For an up-and-coming artist like Proffit, it’s the perfect place to put down roots and break her debut album, “Lucky Girl.”

“I’m pretty dang sure there is no other company like us,” Clark says. “We compete in so many different areas. Unless you’re one of the very, very few that are at the very, very top of the food chain at the labels, you’re not going to get the promotion you need. What so many clients say is that, with us, they can go to one place and all of their needs are met.”

Proffit’s lyrics are more erudite than those typically churned out by lovelorn singer/songwriters. Her mother is a poet and routinely challenges her to include buck-fifty-words in her songs.

Consider “Redemption Day.” “My mom said to me, ‘You need to write a song about redemption.’” Proffit says with a laugh. “‘Oh, and Kirsten? Put the word ‘indelible’ in it. It’s a great word.’”

DMI’s strategy to use a diversity of outlets appeals to Proffit, who has a pragmatic approach to getting her music distributed. “There’s no single way to do this anymore,” she says. “I think they are so creative with all of the stuff they have their tentacles in. I love when they come up with their wacky ideas.”

And, despite DMI’s best efforts, if you still haven’t heard Proffit? You can see her singing the national anthem May 29 at Dodger Stadium.

GLOBALPULSE
EDITED BY TOM FERGUSON

PROFFIT

DIFFORD

CHRISS AMIGHTY
A late 2007 U.K. reunion tour by Squeeze offered a reminder of founder member Chris Difford’s ability to bring details of his London upbringing to life, in lyrics at once personal and universal.

Now Difford has rechanneled that skill into his parallel solo career, with the April 7 U.K. release of “The Last Temptation of Chris,” his first album in a worldwide deal with recently relaunched U.K. independent Stiff. The label is distributed locally by Pinnacle, with various international licensing deals.

Chris had started work on the album early in 2007 when we were introduced by producer John Wood,” Stiff GM Pete Gardner says. “I loved his previous album ‘1 Didn’t Get Where I Am’ (Adventure, 2002), and this seemed a perfect fit between him and Stiff.”

Difford, booked by the Agency, is touring in Britain during April with his co-writer on the project, Boo Hewerdine. U.S. dates follow in May, with the album planned for release there under license to indie Fuel.

Difford, who is published by EMI, says Squeeze may record again next year, but meantime he’s enjoying this different challenge. “The best thing about making a record is that you can wear your heart on your sleeve and talk about your life,” he says. “It’s like writing a biography.”

—Paul Sexton

RED HOT

Proffit Maximizer

GlobalPulse

GRAND PLANS

EMI Music Denmark rock quartet Grand Avenue is looking to come in from the cold this year with Caroline Records’ U.S. release of its third album “The Outside.”

The set was released in Denmark in April 2007, with Germany, Switzerland and Austria following six months later. Caroline now plans a late summer/early fall U.S. release. U.S. audiences got a taste of the album last September when the track “Ordinary” was featured in ABC Family TV series “Kyle XY.”

Grand Avenue released its self-titled debut album in 2003, followed in 2005 by the New York-recorded “She.” EMI says “The Outside” has sold 20,000 copies; it entered the top 20 of the IFPI Denmark/Nielsen Music Control chart one week after release. EMI began rolling out the album in several international markets in February.

The band has toured extensively in continental Europe through Copenhagen-based Scandinavian Booking, and played 10 shows in August 2007 in China. “Things are going well for them in the Netherlands, Germany and Switzerland, where we’re putting the main focus,” EMI Music Denmark marketing/product manager Toke Holt says. “Their live shows are going better and better.” Grand Avenue, published by EMI Music Publishing Germany, makes its U.S. live debut April 29 at Los Angeles’ House of Blues during the MUSEXPO event.

—Charles Ferro

Proffit Maximizer

GlobalPulse

GRAND PLANS

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—Charles Ferro
Classic Combo
Green, ?uestlove Go Back To Basics On 'Lay It Down'

With his first new release in three years, soul great Al Green can again say "Here I Am"—and, of course, "Come and Take Me."

On May 27, Green releases "Lay It Down," his third album for Blue Note and his follow-up to 2005's "Everything's OK," which reached No. 5 on the Billboard 200 and No. 19 on the Top R&B/Hi-Hop Albums chart. The 11-track album, produced by the Roots' Ahmir "?uestlove" Thompson and James Poyser, features a friendly collision of new and old sensibilities; it's as vintage-sounding as anything Green released during his Hi Records heyday of the '70s but also finds him dueting with John Legend, Corinne Bailey Rae and Anthony Hamilton, with the Dap Kings horn section playing behind them.

"I thought today's music would have to be played, because that's where we are in time," the 61-year-old Green says. "I think the concept of retaining some of the sound of '75 and '76 and '72, that was real good, and I think they did a great job with it. They mixed it up quite well and still came up with a good product, I thought."

Thompson says he and Poyser definitely had vintage Green in mind when they began working on "Lay It Down" in 2005 at Electric Lady studios in New York.

"I told Blue Note that if they truly want a follow-up to 'The Belle Album'—Green's 1977 "farewell!" to secular music—"come and see me," Thompson recalls. "I just said that, 'I'm going to create a record that will absolutely be the 30-year follow-up to 'The Belle Album.'"

"That's not to negate the last 30 years of his work, but there is a very specific reason why most people consider 'The Belle Album' to be the official last Al Green record, and I really wanted to recapture that sound," he continues.

Thompson says he had early reservations about populating "Lay It Down" with high-profile guests, fearing that "oversaturating" the album with cameos could eclipse Green. The mix proved to be right, however, even though Green notes that "there were five or six more [possible guests] but we can't work with everybody at one time."

The Legend duet, "Stay With Me (By the Sea)"—which features Bailey Rae on backing vocals—has "Lay It Down" off to a strong start. The single was the most-added track at urban AC when it was released to stations in early April. Blue Note GM Zach Hochkeppel says the label will follow with the Bailey Rae duet "Take Your Time," which was recently serviced to triple A and smooth jazz outlets.

"Al's always been a heritage artist at smooth jazz, even though he's obviously not a smooth jazz artist," Hochkeppel says. "And at triple A Al's one of the flavors that kind of is a foundation of the format, even though they're very much singer/songwriter-oriented. The artists they play all count Al Green as an influence."

Hochkeppel says that overall Blue Note is taking "a very new, 21st-century look" at marketing "Lay It Down." The album will be worked to college radio, while a mini-EPK with behind-the-scenes footage from studio sessions will be seeded to a variety of Internet outlets, including Thompson's own okplayer.com. Blue Note is also in discussions with iTunes about special pricing and packages that will include "Lay It Down" and Green's older material, plus a podcast interview.

"We're coming back and then really trying to bridge all the gaps because Al is kind of a common denominator," Hochkeppel says. "Everybody has an Al Green record in their collection at some point or another. We want to reintroduce Al to everybody who still loves him and wants desperately to have a reason to talk about him."

Green will be touring to support the album, including a performance April 27 at the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival and his first appearance at New York's Carnegie Hall on June 27. Green will also perform May 21 on "The Tonight Show With Jay Leno" and receive a Lifetime Achievement Award from BET on June 24.

"We're just ready to try and bridge all the gaps because Al is kind of a common denominator," Hochkeppel says. "Everybody has an Al Green record in their collection at some point or another. We want to reintroduce Al to everybody who still loves him and wants desperately to have a reason to talk about him."

Gospel
Soweto Go!
Choir Traces Ladysmith Route To Success
South Africa's Grammy Award-winning Soweto Gospel Choir is aiming to emulate Ladysmith Black Mambazo by touring its way to global success.

Like the isicathamiya (a cappella) Zulu traditionalists, Soweto Gospel Choir can now lay claim to two Grammys, having added the 2008 best traditional world music award for "African Spirit" to last year's triumph in the same category with "Blessed." Both albums are released in the United States through Shanachie.

"When the choir received their first Grammy, they were in the middle of their second U.S. tour, and that announcement certainly boosted sales and interest," choir co-director Beverly Bryer says. "A second Grammy will bring in even more people."

Bryer founded the choir with David Mulovhedzi in 2002. Its members are drawn from churches and communities in Soweto, a township outside Johannesburg, and its repertoire is based on interpretations of traditional and contemporary South African music.

The 26-member choir's "African Spirit" shows include a 48-date U.S. trek that begins in early October, takes in a date at New York's Carnegie Hall and ends Dec. 23 with a concert in the new Disney Hall in Los Angeles. May/June shows in Australia, New Zealand and Fiji, and dates in Europe later this year, are also lined up.

Katya McDermott, manager-assistant at IMG Artists—which handles the choir's U.S. dates—reports that the average performance gross has steadily increased each year the choir has toured, with more than $1 million in sales from 39 dates last year.

Album sales currently lag some way behind the choir's live popularity: "African Spirit" has sold 12,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan, its top selling CD is 2004's "Voices From Heaven," with 25,000.

Ladysmith's top-selling album is 1987's "Shaka Zulu" (Warner Bros), which has sold 162,000 copies, although its re-release, as with many Ladysmith albums, predates the SoundScan era.

Ladysmith rose to global prominence from its work on Paul Simon's "Graceland" and Soweto Gospel Choir has also reached some high-profile collaborations. It appeared with Celine Dion Feb. 14 in Johannesburg.

"They have such beautifully soulful voices and gorgeous harmonies, and they sing with such a natural rhythm," Dion says. "I can't wait to work with them again."

Robert Plant also worked with the choir on "Go! Home: A Tribute to Fats Domino" (Vanguard), when it joined him on a version of "Valley of Tears," which he describes as "mesmerizing, beautiful and phenomenally resonant."

Plant adds, "Working with the choir, with their energy and positivity, has been one of the major events of my recent years."

Bryer describes international touring as "essential" for keeping the choir's high profile.

"This is a choir that thrills its audiences the most through its live shows," she says. "The more successful they are, the more is expected of them, but they've risen to the challenge and are ready to show U.S. audiences why they've received two Grammy Awards."
With 1982’s “Sorry Ma, Forgot to Take Out the Trash,” Minneapolis’ famously ragtag band of misfits, the Replacements, began an inspiring, influential and ultimately anti-climactic journey that has come to embody the very spirit of rock’n’roll. Or, at least, the romantic notion of an American rock’n’roll band: four kids in a van making a play for fortune and fame. If they never really achieved either, the band’s legend lives on, and has become bigger than ever. Stoking that flame are Rhino’s new, outtake-laden reissues of the Replacements’ first four albums (“Sorry Ma,” “Stink,” “Hootenanny” and “Let It Be”), to be followed by reissues of the band’s four major-label successors later this year. In rare interviews, frontman Paul Westerberg and bassist Tommy Stinson look back and forward.

When you listen to these reissues as a block, what do they say about you guys as a band and as four young guys?

Tommy Stinson: We weren’t afraid to do anything in particular, and that was the beauty of it. And I think the outtakes kind of show that. Even though they’re going to kind of bum Paul out, having his solo cassette demos out there. I think they really tell a part of the story, too. It really shows where he comes from and what he might have been thinking on his own, but was too scared to try with us as the band, because it was too naked, or whatever.

Of these four, is there one album that maybe means a little bit more to you than the others?

Paul Westerberg: To me, they were all just one big long song. I guess “Hootenanny” is the one where we came to the decision—or I did, at least—that this loud/fast stuff is not going to get us anywhere, because that was the height of the hardcore movement, and we were on tour, and we were not the loudest and the fastest. I figured, “Well, we can’t win that way, so we’ve got to go the other direction and tap the other vein of our influences.” Not that “Hootenanny” is my favorite record. But “Hootenanny” was probably the one where we first started to become unafraid to do things.

Since the band’s breakup, the Replacements have become sort of mythical to some fans. Do you ever get lost sometimes in that myth?

Westerberg: I’ve distanced myself from it a great deal, and I’ve been sort of forced to embrace or re-evaluate it [with these reissues]. I’ll tell you this—I did surprise myself when I listened to some of them. I thought, “Damnit, it was good. I was real. I know what I was saying, and this was real.” Me and [late guitarist] Bob [Stinson] were 18, 19; [drummer] Chris [Marsi] 17, Tommy 13. Bob and I at least understood that this was the only road up and out. We had no skill—he was a cook, I was a janitor—and it was like, “We make it in rock’n’roll or we die trying.”

Stinson: Here’s my whole problem with the whole mythology of it all. When I get people coming up to me now and saying, “I saw this show way back when, and you guys were so fucking up. You didn’t even play any of your songs. It was the greatest show I ever saw.” [laughs] It’s like, “Well, dude, that just sounds bleak. How could that possibly have been the greatest show you ever saw?” When somebody comes up and says, “I really liked a certain record or song, they mean something to me”—that, to me, that’s the mythology that we actually lived up to. I think we actually were a really good band at times. I think the songwriting speaks for itself.

People remember those shows as either drunken train wrecks or a thing of magic, without much middle ground.

Westerberg: Some nights, yeah, we never gave 100%—that would be giving yourself to the audience. That would be on a level of someone like Elvis. We wanted [fans] to know that we were there for us, and you could like us or not.

Many fans dismiss the latter records and point to these early discs as capturing the band’s true essence.

Stinson: To each his own. Some of the people who like the latter stuff can’t even stand the earlier stuff, because it just didn’t sound very good. And that’s the beauty of the whole catalog: We grew and changed, and for all intents and purposes, we were actually able to grow and change and go through all that shit without getting our legs cut off, like happens now. We didn’t get very far, but we did our thing. I think we had a good little run.

You’ve reunited twice in the studio in recent years. You’ve surely received a sizable offer or two from the producers of Coachella, so...

Stinson: We actually talked about it again this year, and I think there was a consensus that, you know, maybe it wasn’t the right time [to reunite], or maybe it is the right time. Paul and I were kind of in cahoots talking to them, talking to [manager] Darren [Hall]. There were some things thrown out, and there were other festivals that wanted it, too, if we were going to do it. At the last minute, it just didn’t seem like the right thing to do, so we didn’t do it. But I think Paul and I have something to offer each other still. I think that’s pretty obvious when we get together.

Westerberg: I’m very hesitant about dragging the name out there and what damage we could do to the legend. Whatever we did, someone would want something else. If I went up there straight, they’d want us. If we were fucked up, they’d want us to be this or that. But, I don’t know. The records hold the key to the whole thing. So if I ever was going to play, I’d like to play once the whole shooting match is out, because I don’t think I could physically get up there and bellow these 18 songs from that first record. That’s just sheer youth there. I can’t find that in a bottle or a pill. I’m just too uneasy for that.

Q Notes

How To Save The Album

Ever since Shawn Fanning launched the original Napster—and even more so now that legitimate downloading has taken off via iTunes—I’ve been hearing lots of talk about the death of the album. It’s getting louder and louder, and it has our industry running scared. As you all know, single tracks—whether they’re purchased legitimately or downloaded illegally—are cutting into the sales of albums, which are far more profitable. The big question is, What, as an industry, should we do about this? Do we deny consumers the freedom of choice of buying single tracks, as Jay-Z did with his “American Gangster” album? That’s one way of preserving the art form known as the album, but I think there’s an even better solution.

Artists, producers, songwriters and A&R folks: Rise up to the challenge and make your album so good that fans will want to buy the whole thing. I realize every album can’t have six or seven top 10 singles, like Michael Jackson and I were blessed with on “Thriller” and “Bad,” but you’ve got to try. If it’s good enough, the fans will buy it. Maybe they’ll want to whet their appetite by only buying a track or two at first, but if you keep coming out with good tracks and pique their interest, they’ll be back.

There’s actually an opportunity here to sell more than just the album. Release a digital track early. That’s an easy sell, but make sure the rest of the album delivers that same kind of quality and excitement, and they’ll be back to buy additional tracks and/or hopefully the entire album as you conceived it. And don’t forget special packaging for the physical product. If you and your team deliver quality goods, the fans will want to buy it. Can you imagine a world in which people only bought a single download of Miles Davis’ "So What" instead of the greatest jazz album of all time, "Kind of Blue"? Or “Mercy Mercy Me (The Ecology)” instead of Marvin Gaye’s complete masterpiece “What’s Going On?” Or even a single track from Herbie Hancock’s Grammy Award-winning “River: The Joni Letters” instead of the whole collection?

We need to stop complaining about single-song downloads and instead focus on making better music that’ll make fans want more than just one song.

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

BILLY BRAGG
Mr. Love & Justice
Producer: Grant Showbiz
Anti-Release Date: April 22
On his 11th album, England’s most famous left-winger embraces the right-wing mantra of choice. Buy this double-disc set and you get to choose between full-service band versions or raw solo interpretations of its 12 tracks. But then, Billy Bragg has always done a fine job of being all things to all men. As the title suggests, “Mr. Love & Justice” sees equal measure placed upon affairs of state (“Sing Their Souls Back Home,” “Of Freedom”) and the heart (“I’m for Me,” “Something Happened”), resulting in its most satisfying original collection since 1991’s “Don’t Try This Home.” And whether you prefer him shouting vitriol on the picket line or whispering sweet nothings in the bedroom, you’ll find plenty to enjoy here.—MS

THE NIGHT MARCHERS
See You in Magic
Producer: John Reis
Swami/Vagrant
Release Date: Apr. 22
This new San Diego-based quartet is led by singer/guitarist John “Speedo” Reis, long a familiar figure in punk circles thanks to his work with Drive Like Jehu, Hot Snakes and Rocket From the Crypt, whose live CD/DVD package from earlier this year closed the book on one of America’s most enduring rock acts. On their debut, the Night Marchers cook at a lower temperature than did RFTC, with slower tempos and fewer punkability guitar freakouts; perhaps this is the sound of a black-leather lifer mellowing with age. But even if it’s easy to miss the full-tilt pyrotechnics of yore, Reis’ new approach allows you to appreciate his wily-tongue turner like never before. Dig the soul-punk shuffle of “You’ve Got Nerve,” for proof of his continued vitality.—MW

BLIND MELON
For My Friends
Producer: Blind Melon
Adrenaline Music Group
Release Date: April 22
Blind Melon’s new album comprises the band’s first new songs since the death of former lead singer Shannon Hoon in 1995. With new singer Travis Warren on board, the group has tried to recreate the magic that made it a pop/rock darling in the early ’90s. The effort is not a failure by any means, but while the rest of the band remains intact, “For My Friends” doesn’t sound much like the Blind Melon Hoon left 13 years ago. Warren, though a very capable replacement; he sings in an upper register that fits well with the group’s jammy country-rock sound, and occasionally sounds eerily like Hoon. And at times, it clicks, like on “Sometimes,” a funky, organ-driven rocker. But there’s nothing here that quite approaches the peaks of first-era Blind Melon.—JC

WHITE LION
Return of the Pride
Producers: Mike Tramp, Claus Langeskov
Airline
Release Date: April 29
In the late ’80s, theIncludes cracking clarinet line on toy piano of singer Mike Tramp—born in Denmark and brashening a bland-mane worthy of his band’s name—set. White Lion apart from the hair-metal pack. Back now with a new keyboard-equipped lineup, Tramp’s best when he’s most ambitious— “Battle of Little Big Horn” and the eight-minute “Sangre De Cristo” are complex compositions, exuding a spooky history-book buzz. “Live Your Life” and “Finally See the Light” are pristinely hard pop, made anemic with Thin Lizzy changes and choruses hooked like the Who or Bay City Rollers. Jamie Law’s power chords trash loud enough to compensate for intermittent moments of mush. And while live takes of a pair of 20-year-old hits feel extraneous, the Bad Company riff opening “When the Children Cry” is a neat touch.—CE

HIP-HOP

LYRICS BORN
Everywhere at Once
Producer: Lyrics Born
Anti-Release Date: April 22
For his second solo studio record, the Quanum Projects godfather left his sample-centric background and into something that should be highly pleasing to anyone who enjoyed hip-hop in 1988. “Everywhere at Once” isn’t the map-jumping free-for-all inferred by its title; rather, this is a focused and thoughtfully crafted project that finds Lyrics Born employing a live band to work up his new-found love of shimmering, shining pop-funk, even as he expands his hoop-jumping, rat-a-tat rhymes. There’s much to dig into here, especially the ready-made singles “I Like It, I Love It” and “’Ott 2 Deff,” which sounds like something left over from the “Off the Wall” sessions. Meanwhile, “Do U Buy It” channels, uh, Gary Numan, and “Differences” and “Cakewalk” venture smartly into relationship territory.—JW

PHIL VASSAR
Producer: Phil Vassar, Mark Wright
Universal South
Release Date: April 22
You know the country-in-trouble when a guy like Phil Vassar—who gets songwriting royalties for penning hits for Tim McGraw, Alan Jackson, Jo Dee Messina and others—declares that “They can kiss my price of gas/It’s time to speak my mind.” Country music’s not in trouble for having a new Vassar album, though. The Virginia native and Nashville veteran’s delayed fourth studio set was well worth the wait, with some of his most evocative songs brought to life by even richer arrangements and production. A piano man in a twangy guitar world, Vassar’s instrument of choice gives each of these dozen songs a full-bodied foundation. There are rowdy rockers (“What the Hell’s a Somewhere,” “Baby Rocks”) and more reflective pieces (“My Chevrolet,” “Crazy Life”), but the bulk of the songs muse about relationships, cars, late fathers and rockin’ girlfriends (or wives).—GG

BLUES

JEFF HEALEY
Moss of Blues
Producers: Jeff Healey, Alec Fraser
Ruf
Release Date: April 22
Before his untimely death in March, Canadian guitarist Jeff Healey had been quite involved in jazz via band the Jazz Wizards (he played trumpet and clarinet). But he tracked this blues-rock CD, which it’s an outstanding farewell. The disc opens with a furious cover of “I’m Torn Down,” followed by an equally formidable run through “How Blue Can You Go.” It’s a genuine pleasure to hear Healey’s fluid, incisive lead guitar again, and his bandmates are rock solid. Outside the lines, Healey also works a sturdy cover of the Band’s “The Weight” and a new version of Hank Williams’ “Jambalaya.”—PVV

JAZZ

BENNIE MAUPIN QUARTET
Early Reflections
Producer: Bennie Maupin
Cryptogramophone
Release Date: April 22
While veteran multi-reeds player Bennie Maupin has enjoyed a rich history performing in bands led by Miles Davis and Herbie Hancock, he’s also a potent leader in his own right, as evidenced on “Early Reflections.” A passionate outpouring of rumination and whimsy in the company of an all-Polish trio, the album serves up melodic gems by Maupin on tenor and soprano sax and alto flute, half of which develop fully in the two- to four-minute range. He’s playful on “Inside the Shadows,” soulful on the happy-go-lucky “Prophet’s Motifs,” swinging on the sprightly “Black Ice” and rushed on the gentle “Within Reach.” Best of the bunch: the slow dance “Escondido,” which Maupin delivers with earthy bass clarinet clarity, and turns, featuring Hana Chowaneck-Rybska improving wordless vocals in the mix.—DO

ROBERT WALTER
Cure All
Producer: not listed
Paisley Records
Release Date: April 15
Robert Walter plays the Hammond organ the way it was meant to be played—bold and free-swinging. Though he also plays other keyboards on “Cure All,” the Hammond is definitely the right tool for this trio album’s juiced-up soul-jazz. Walter’s vigorous attack is matched by the frisky, adept rhythm section of New Orleans mainstay James Singleton (bass)

FLIGHT OF THE CONCHORDS
Flight of the Conchords
Flight of the Conchords
Sub Pop
Release Date: April 22
This self-titled debut album by HBO’s kiwi wunderkinds is an intelligently playful parody romp through about 10 genres in 15 tracks. Jemaine Clement and Bret McKenzie set themselves apart from trashy pop-culture comics with lyrics that employ childlike humor rather than childish humor. Album highlights “Hiphopopotamus vs. Rhymenoceros” (with the signature line “Ain’t no parties like my nana’s tea parties”) and “Ladies of the World” (which rhymes “cuterlies” with “knees”) lean on goofiness rather than offensive in a way that is refreshing. There’s something slightly missing for the listener who’s seen them live or watched the show, as part of their charm is definitively in the visual delivery (and the spontaneous key-tar solos). But the lyrics hold their own as comedy poetry, and the album as a whole is stuffed with feel-good laughs.—LJW
and Johnny Vidacovich (drums). Like Wailer, they refuse to be restrained by boundaries, so this energetic set owes as much to the Meters as to Jimmy Smith. With the exception of an elastic cover of Boney M’s “Rivers of Babylon,” the 15 tracks are all originals, highlighted by the title track, a funky New Orleans march with attitude. The expansive “Parts and Holes” offers room for smaller soloists, but mostly, these guys are locked in a three-way conversation that is almost always loud, colorful and illuminating.—WR

NICOLAS PAYTON
Into the Blue
Producer: Bob Belden
Noneuch
Release Date: April 22

The most appealing thing about Nicholas Payton’s pianistic debut, “Into the Blue,” is that it’s simply an unfailingly sweet listening experience. The album is groove-rich, and Payton’s trumpet sound has a feel and a shape that will seduce your ears. Of the seven originals, the chilled groove of “Let It Ride” and the delightful rumination between piano and trumpet that dominates “The Crimson Touch” deliver some of the best moments. The final track, “The Charleston Hop,” is a terrific ensemble performance that light the fuse on a Payton solo that’s a masterful blending of funk and substance.—PVV

CHRISTIAN
MARTHA MUNIZZI
Change the World
Producer: Adam Lindsey, Israel Houghton
Martha Munizzi Music
Release Date: April 1

There are a few artists who have the facility to transport the listener into the heart of a live worship experience more effectively than Martha Munizzi, and she does that again on her newest project. Recorded live at Gathering Place Wor -ship Camp Adventure ‘09, this disc effectively captures the spirit and passion that make Munizzi’s live events so powerful. Openen “Invisible God” is a potent anthem that speaks directly to the listener of life and love. “Go On Girl,” the fourth song from second set, “Because of You,” he sings about moving on after losing love, atop an ideally suited Stevie-Style track. The graceful music gives Ne-Yo room to demonstrate his prowess as a singer, while the drum track and subtle instrumental transitions amplify emotional intensity. It all results in music that listeners not only believe, but are moved by. Score—SR

RHYTHM
Japan
House of Cards
Producer: Nigel Godrich
Writer: Radiohead
Publisher: Warner/Chappell
Radiohead’s “In Rainbows” continues to captivate not only musically, but via its wildly innovative marketing. Radio release “House of Cards” features Thom Yorke’s elegant bowing cry, as he invites the object of his desire to forget “her house of cards” — a defense built on shaky ground — and become his lover. Yorke’s reverberating inflections are propelled by a crescendo of swift guitar riffs and a steady jazz feel of the rhythm section. This en -chanting “House” demonstrates why Radiohead’s foundation has remained at the throne of underground music for 15 years.—KW

MOTLEY CRÜE
Saints of Los Angeles
(3:28)
Producer: James Michael, Tommy Sier, DJ Ashba
Songwriters: N. Sier, J. Michael, DJ Ashba, M. Fredeniksen
Publisher: various
Mötley Crüe Records

The cardinal rule of late-’80s Motley Crüe was to push anything in its path to the extreme; the four misfits of mayhem still haven’t learned their lesson—when it comes to music, anyway. Praise the rock gods for that. It’s therefore fitting that on the imminent 21st anniver-sary of “Shout Club—inspired “Girls, Girls, Girls,” new single “Saints of Los Angeles” melds the motorcycle—revved, come—get-it— boys gusto of that album’s title track with the attitude of gang-banger “Wild Side.” The guitar squeal and grit of Mick Mars burns so much rubber that the track leaves skid marks, as Vince Neil sings, “If you think it’s crazy/ You ain’t seen a thing” — and that’s saying something, coming from this Crue. Upcoming album with the first—new material from the original quartet in more than a decade seems ripe with filthy promise.—CLT

RHIANNA
Take a Bow (3:51)
Producer: Stargate, Ne-Yo
Writers: S. Smith, M.S. Eriksen, T.E. Hermansen
Publisher: various
Def Jam

The fifth single from upcoming relaunched version of Rihanna’s runaway third album “Good Girl Gone Bad” may sound on the surface like a sweet ode, but the teen singer is actually ridiculing her man’s unconvincing apology after he’s nabbed cheating. She offers, “Don’t tell me you’re sorry cuz you’re not! You’re only sorry you got caught!” That was quite a show, very entertaining, but it’s over now/Go on and take a bow.” With superstars Stargate and Ne-Yo at the helm, the velvety ballad tracks along with well-played piano and strings, as the instantly recognizable singer delivers a convincingly bemed vocal, complete with haughtily laugh. Rihanna has been an unstoppable presence since she burst to the top with “Pon De Replay” in 2005; 10 singles (and an armload of Grammy Awards) later, she’s still gaining speed and worth-ty of a “Bow” —CT

CELINE DION
Alone (4:03)
Producer: Ben Moody
Writers: B. Steinberg, T. Kelly
Publisher: Sony/ATV
Columbia

This is “Taking Chances”? With an adventurous, even daring array of triumphant tracks on Celine Dion’s new album, Sony couldn’t play it safer than sec ond single choice of a cover of Heart’s “Alone.” Dion’s performance is ever—exceptional — she delivers formidable drama sans bombast — but radio hardly needs a new version of a consummate song that still plays well as catalog (45 AC outlets recently gave it spins). More important, how does this song the singer has spread her wings stylistically — the calling card of the project? Dion’s most dedicated followers were pooled on celinefans.com and 20% agreed that “Fade Away” cast the ideal mix of re— invention and commercial appeal they’re right. “Alone.” came in, and if those most invested in Dion’s success believe the choice off—base, then what’s the potential to kindle “Alone” beyond the disappointing No. 6 peak of previous No. 1 “Taking Chances”? —CT

THE RACONTEURS
Salute Your Solution (3:00)
Producers: Jack White III, Brendan Benson
Writers: J. White, B. Benson
Publishers: Chrysalis/Clayhold, ASCAP, Third String, BMI
Third Man/Warner Bros.

The Raconteurs’ second album, “Consoler of the Lonely,” was forged during time on the road supporting debut release “Broken Boy Soldiers,” and showcases the group’s ability to take eclectic influences and create accessibility on the rock. First single “Salute Your Solution” is a gritty, fast—paced contemplation featuring pop lords Brendan Benson and Jack White exchanging streams of consciousness, before joining as a tag team litany, resolving, “There’s only one I’m taking.” Effectively chaotic, the song finds the Raconteurs further exploring their niche with seasoned excellence. As “Salute” fills up the Modern Rock chart, the band is wrapping up a lengthy trans—coastal tour that ends with a bang at home in Nashville at the storied Bonnaroo festival. By then, they’ll be headliners.—KW


diagram
Mraz’s EP Extravaganza

Staggered Releases Lead Into New Album Rollout

Jason Mraz is nothing if not a man of his word. "I promised a lot of people I’d do an acoustic album, but then my new record turned out to be my funkiest project yet," the laid-back San Diego singer says. Rather than simply hope his loyal fan base would adapt, Mraz took the unusual step of releasing acoustic versions of every song on his new album throughout the course of three EPs, the second of which was released April 15.

The first EP in the series, "We Sing," came out March 18 and has sold 18,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The full-length album, "We Sing, We Dance, We Seel Things," will be released May 13 via Atlantic. Both EPs are available at indie retail stores and online. The final EP, "We Seel Things," will be released as a digital bundle with the new album.

"I think fans will want both versions of the album," Mraz says. "I like being able to give them options, and they really wanted to hear different versions of the tracks."

Atlantic senior VP of marketing Dane Venable says the label isn’t worried about it cutting into album sales, because Jason is an agile enough performer to be able to perform a song solo and with a band and make it sound very different. The EPs are for the fans, while the album will be driven by more traditional means.

Mraz’s fans drove the album’s first single in another way. Since he released a demo version of the track "I’m Yours" on an EP that came with his last album, more than 300 people have posted versions of themselves covering the track on YouTube. "I never instigated any of the covers," Mraz says. "But I can see why people are drawn to the song, and because it is about generosity, I wanted to share it."

"There was a groundswell of support, and that has helped us at radio," Venable says. The song is No. 4 on Billboard sister publication R&R’s Triple A chart and No. 32 on the Hot AC tally. In addition to hitting the airwaves, Atlantic also has an ambitious digital strategy for the releases. MySpace and mobile company kaDoink will allow fans to send texts and receive phone calls with 30-second clips of different tracks before being directed to listen to full tracks online. Mraz has also partnered with iTunes to allow fans to buy a different new track off the record for four weeks leading up to the album’s release.

"What he’s doing is a very smart strategy, because he’s keeping fans excited," Criminal Records owner Eric Levin says. "His audience tends to be people who want it all, and all the releases fulfill a customer need."

For Mraz, making sure the crowd that supports him is happy is oh one. "I’m just giving the people what they want, man," he says, laughing.

GO WITH THE FLO

To put it in the parlance of the SAT, what Rage Against the Machine was to 1992, Universal Republic hopes the Flobots will be to 2006. The political rap-rock band is rising up Billboard’s Heatseekers chart, coming in at No. 20 this week, driven largely by the strength of first single “Handlebars.” The track, which won modern rock KTCL Denver’s Hometown for the Holidays contest and was subsequently added into rotation in January, has gained momentum at radio, coming in at No. 15 on the Modern Rock chart.

The Flobots’ album, “Fight With Tools,” is only available digitally, as the band has sold out its initial run of physical copies. The Universal reissue, which will be out May 20, is the same as the original version.

"We have a true partnership with the band, and I want to make sure we have a positive give-and-take relationship," Universal Republic president/CEO Monte Lipman says. "I see the fact that they are political and civic-minded as being a very positive thing."

Flobots bassist Jess Walker admits he was skeptical of the major’s attention at first. "I don’t think we ever saw ourselves on a big label," he says. "But we would not have signed with them if we hadn’t gotten the freedom and support that we had wanted."

That support extends to helping the Flobots with their nonprofit organization, flobots.org, which helps facilitate community involvement among its fans. "We’ve always wanted to turn people on and connect them to action," Walker says. "We are rooted in nonviolence and civic engagement, and we are using the tools the major label gives us to help even more people get involved."

Lipman adds, "This is a band that really uses their music as a platform to create social change."

IN THE DRIVER’S SEAT

Aaron Watson, who at 30 years old has already released eight albums, is building his career one step at a time. "We’re taking the stairs," he says. "That way you don’t ever have to worry about the elevator breaking down."

His latest set, "Angels & Outlaws," released on his own Big Label Records and distributed by Thirty Tigers through Sony/RED at No. 28 on Billboard’s Top Country Albums chart in the April 19 issue, selling more than 4,000 copies. It also came in at No. 4 on Heatseekers that week and placed No. 1 in the South Central region. Watson’s 2006 release, "San Angelo," reached No. 60 on Top Country Albums and went on to move 18,000 units, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

The new set, which was produced by Ray Benson, Watson and Benson’s son, Sam Seifert, includes appearances by Benson, Jack Ingram, Kevin Fowler, Billy Joe Shaver and Roger Creager.

The album’s opening cut is a revamped version of Waylon Jennings’ "Tulsa," with an updated cover of John Mayer’s "The Heart of Life." "Despite the fact that I’m a slow talking West Texas boy, I do appreciate other kinds of music besides country," Watson says.

The album’s title cut was hatched after Watson watched a documentary about Johnny Cash and June Carter Cash. "I was amazed how much his life changed over a 10-year span," he says. "‘Between June Carter and Jesus, he really straightened up.’"

Watson, who once lived in a gas station for four months, says that while he’s received interest from major labels, he’s "very content" with his current situation. "You can make a much better living staying independent," he says. "I am the publishing company, the record company, the whole thing. I’d rather be rich than famous," he adds.

First single "Hearts Are Breaking Across Texas" is receiving minimal airplay on Nielsen BDS-monitored stations in Texas. But the hardworking Watson continues to play clubs and festivals across Texas, and he’s expanding his reach by performing this year in the Midwest and on the West Coast.

"I’m definitely in the driver’s seat," he says. "I’m not sure what kind of car it is yet, but I’m definitely driving."
Beautiful View
10 Years Hits Big From The Brink Of Despair

The title of 10 Years' new album, "Division" (May 13, Universal Republic), wasn't chosen lightly. According to drummer Brian Vodinh, the Tennessee alternative band nearly broke up while recording its latest effort in Seattle. "It got to the point where Jesse [Hasek], our singer, was literally online looking at flights to come home," Vodinh recalls. "He was done. I was right there with him. We all had just kind of had enough.

What led a young band off to a promising start—selling 302,000 copies of its 2005 major-label debut, "The Autumn Effect," according to Nielsen SoundScan, and landing a No. 1 Modern Rock hit with "Wasteland"—to almost bail out when the stars were aligned for a well-received follow-up? Vodinh attributes it to pressure to perform, both internal (among the band) and external (from its advisors and label).

"We've crossed the line between doing it for fun before we had a record deal and now all of a sudden it's our profession, it's our career and it's our living," he says. "We do want songs on the radio and we do want to produce things that are commercially viable... But we don't want to be that Fall Out Boy band and we don't want to be that Panic at the Discos. We want to do it on our terms.

Once the bandmates began listening to and respecting each other's opinions again, the meddling began—with "Beautiful" results. The lead single from "Division" was released far ahead of the album, according to Universal Republic senior director of marketing Frank Argo, because the label "thought we had a great song, and the reaction at radio pretty much confirmed that for us." The cut entered the Mainstream Rock chart in February, and this week soared to No. 11. It debuted on Modern Rock in March, reaching No. 15; it is No. 16 this week.

Among the key points of the promotion plan for "Division" are the impending release of the video for "Beautiful" and a TV spot campaign at MTV2 and Fuse. The label is also excited about 10 Years joining Linkin Park's Projekt Revolution tour, which includes Chris Cornell, Ashes Divide and Areyu. Universal Republic co-president Avery Lipman, who signed the band, agrees with the observation that 10 Years hits a sweet spot between rock and metal. "They've evolved and stylistically they've matured. It's all just been a natural progression, but they are that band," Lipman says.

Argo sees 10 Years' appeal as going a step further. "Linkin Park does it kind of straddle alternative rock and even get into the pop crowd too. It's going to be a great opportunity for these guys to get in front of a whole new audience.

HELP-ING HAND
Bellatrax Locks Down The Dance Chart

After three weeks at No. 1 on Billboard's Hot Dance Airplay chart, "Can't Help Myself" (Nervous) by Bellatrax featuring Sophia May appears set to develop into a major crossover hit on both sides of the Atlantic. The track's journey to its current position is, however, a story in itself.

"I originally licensed the track to Portuguese indie Pure Funk for the world," says Bristol-based Bellatrax, aka Chris Dececio. "They then licensed it to Italian label Oxxyd about a year ago, and since then, Oxxyd managing director Stefano Mazzacani has been working hard to get the remixes done.

It was also Mazzacani who licensed the track to New York indie Nervous. "As soon as I heard the track I knew I had to get it out there, because it has huge potential," Nervous managing director Michael Weiss says. "And when I took it to XM [Satellite Radio], they agreed. It was a rare instance of a unanimous thumbs-up from the playlist panel."

Weiss says the track also received instant approval from XM listeners and is now "on maximum rotation [52 plays per week] and being played on both coasts."

Other stations including rhythmic AC KNKY San Francisco and dance outlets WIOQ Philadelphia and KNRG Phoenix are all supporting the track. XM dance channel BPM PD Sky says "Can't Help Myself" is "made for radio.

"It has a perfect blend of dancefloor energy and pop sensibility, plus [a] perfectly measured vocal performance," he says. "Where a lot of pop/dance tracks tend to bury the vocal, her voice really leaps out at you."

May believes her R&B background was significant in the track's success. "I came to the project not knowing much about dance music, which gave it something fresh," she says. "In fact, 'I Won't Change,' the follow-up single, started out as an R&B tune.

UK momentum for "Can't Help Myself" is now growing, with regular plays from Radio 1 DJs Pete Tong and Judge Jules, Kiss FM's Steve Smart and Ant Nicols, Hed Kandi's Duncan Wallace and Radio 1's 583's DJ Devious. In Europe, Bob Sinclar, Tom Novy, Graham Gold and Matt Darey are all big club supporters.

London-based Mission Control handles live bookings for the world.

—Gary Smith

DALLAS RAPPER LIL WIL MAKES HIS MARK

Twenty-one-year-old Lil Wil didn't take rapping seriously until the murder of a childhood friend six years ago put things into perspective.

Now, Wil, born Wil Martin, is prepping the release of his debut album, "Dollas, Tx.," May 27 via RudeBwoy Ent—the indie label he started with partner Rude in 2005—and Asylum Records. The set's first single, "My Dougie," which was released a year ago, has been on Billboard's Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart for 19 weeks, and is currently No. 40. The track is also No. 18 on Hot Rap Tracks after entering the tally 11 weeks ago.

"My Dougie" is your whole personality, your whole swag, what makes you fresh," Wil says. Other songs on the album include the brash "Grown Man"; the reflective "My Lil Homie"; "Take a Look Through My Mind," which touches on political issues; and second single "Bust It Open." Tum Tum, Yo Gotti and DJ Toomp are among those working on "Dollas, Tx."

In addition, Soulja Boy was tapped for the remix of "My Dougie," although that track won't appear on the album. Aside from traditional marketing, the promotional team behind Lil Wil plans to work the album locally first, and then take it national, according to Rude. A high school tour that is set to take off by the end of the month is in the works, with planned stops in Louisiana, Texas and Oklahoma.

In addition, a promotional DVD with exclusive webisodes will be available with the purchase of every CD.

—Mariel Concepcion

BELLATRAX
Brit Leona Lewis Tops Big Chart; Paying Respects

We're accustomed to seeing U.S. TV shows like ratings juggernaut "American Idol" and even USA Network's "Nashville Star" affect Billboard's charts. This week, a single discovered on a show that's never been seen on American screens except on YouTube — makes Billboard 200 history with her debut album.

Leona Lewis, found on Simon Cowell's U.K. talent show "The X-Factor," becomes the first new British solo artist to start at No. 1 on the Billboard 200. While she was discovered on a British series, she is no stranger to American viewers by now, having made pre-release visits to "The Oprah Winfrey Show" and "Good Morning America" and release-week stops on "Live With Regis and Kelly," "The Ellen DeGeneres Show" and "Jimmy Kimmel Live.

This exposure, plus a bonus file radio hit in "Bleeding Love," leads her "Spirit" to a handsome start of 260,000 copies, the third-largest album sales week of the year. With the album's release unloading an 11% gain in download sales for "Love," it returns to No. 1 on Hot Digital Songs and the Billboard Hot 100. Its new sum of 223,000 units marks its best sales week yet. The song also bulges 9-8 on the all-format Hot 100 Airplay.

Leona Lewis becomes the first British solo artist to lead the U.S. albums roll since Rod Stewart's "Still the Same...Great Rock Classics of Our Time" in the Oct. 28, 2006, issue. More significantly, hers is the first by any solo Brit female to bow at No. 1 and the first to lead the page since Sade's "Promise" reached the top in 1996.

TWO FRIENDS: To take a cool job that I really needed, had just moved to the smallest city in which I'd ever lived, staying the first couple of nights at a Red Roof Inn. On my second day in the office, one of the most impressive executives I've ever known asked me if I wanted to stay at his house until my apartment opened up, only minutes after we met.

With such a personable and approachable demeanor, it was sometimes difficult to remember that Jim Bonk was the executive VP/CEO of one of the most respected chains in the history of music retailing, Camelot Music. Bonk succumbed to a years-long bout with a brain tumor April 5, and were it not for obligations to Billboard's Latin Music Conference & Awards in Hollywood, Fla., I would have been among the throng at his funeral, where well-wishers spilled beyond the walls of a Canton, Ohio, church.

Although he never earned a college degree, Bonk developed an amiable business acumen that matched any MBA I've met. He was the embodiment of leadership, a man who knew when to be firm, but also understood which occasions were better served by a bigger brother's touch.

Bonk continued to look out for me after I left Camelot. I'd be tempted to call him a mentor, except that sounds like more of a compliment to me than to him. The universal respect he commanded was obvious in the tributes from music executives quoted in the obituary on billboard.biz. Before Trans World Entertainment absorbed the chain, Camelot's competitors held him in equal regard.

Founder/president Paul David absolutely represented Camelot's heart, but Bonk was certainly its soul.

He does not leave alone. As if cut from a script of "The Twilight Zone," his lifelong friend Larry "JJ" Hodgson, who had been Camelot's Northern regional VP and one of my rocks when I worked for the chain, was felled by bone marrow cancer the day of Bonk's funeral.

Neighbors as boys, fellow Marines during the Vietnam War and colleagues at Camelot, they died within days of each other, each at the too-young age of 60.

For longer than I've been alive, medical science has poured millions of dollars and countless hours of research to chase down the demon that is cancer. Losing two dear friends who both deserved to have a lot more time on the clock underlines the significance of three charities that the music industry vigorously supports — City of Hope, the TJ Martell Foundation and the Neil Bogart Memorial Fund — each engaged in that fight against cancer...
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Sister act returns with first album in six years and due's third to chart, "Last Splash" reached No. 39 in 1994, while "Title II" hit No. 33 in 1990.

More information at www.americanradiohistory.com
### HOT 100 AIRPLAY

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<td><strong>7</strong> Just for You</td>
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<td><strong>8</strong> When the Lights Go Out</td>
<td>Maroon 5</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
<td>33</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>9</strong> Never Let Me Go</td>
<td>JLS</td>
<td>Atlantic</td>
<td>34</td>
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### ADULT TOP 40

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<td><strong>2</strong> How Sweet It Is</td>
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<td><strong>3</strong> Falling Slowly</td>
<td>Kenny G</td>
<td>Warner Bros</td>
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<td>Maroon 5</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
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<td>14</td>
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### ADULT CONTEMPORARY

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### MODERN ROCK

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<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong> How Sweet It Is</td>
<td>Natalie Cole</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong> Falling Slowly</td>
<td>Kenny G</td>
<td>Warner Bros</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong> When the Lights Go Out</td>
<td>Maroon 5</td>
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<td>14</td>
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### HOT DIGITAL SONGS

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<td>The Script</td>
<td>Atlantic</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong> Love Song</td>
<td>Natasha Bedingfield</td>
<td>Atlantic</td>
<td>52</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong> Bleeding Love</td>
<td>Natasha Bedingfield</td>
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<td>53</td>
<td>37</td>
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<td><strong>4</strong> Say You Love Me</td>
<td>Soundgarden</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>37</td>
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<td><strong>5</strong> Never Let Me Go</td>
<td>JLS</td>
<td>Atlantic</td>
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Data for week of APRIL 26, 2008. For chart reprint call 646.654.4633. Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data.
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<th>TITLE (ARTIST / PRODUCTION LABEL)</th>
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<th>POP 100 AIRPLAY</th>
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<tr>
<td>4 MINUTES (EDMONTON GROUP)</td>
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<tr>
<td>WHAT HURTS THE MOST (reviewed by The Verge)</td>
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<tr>
<td>BREATHE (reviewed by Vulture)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOUCH MY BODY (reviewed by Rolling Stone)</td>
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</tr>
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<td>LOVE SONG (reviewed by Rolling Stone)</td>
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<td>WITH YOU (reviewed by Rolling Stone)</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>SEXY CAN I FLIP A HAT (reviewed by Rolling Stone)</td>
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<td>LOW (reviewed by Rolling Stone)</td>
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**Chart Legend for rules and explanations.**
### TOP R&B/HIP-HOP ALBUMS

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<th>Artist/Label</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Price</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>JRAY J</td>
<td>All I Feel</td>
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<tr>
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<td>RAY J &amp; SVSMG</td>
<td>Just Like You</td>
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<tr>
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<td>DAY26</td>
<td>Day26</td>
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<td>DANNY KANE</td>
<td>Welcome To The Dollhouse</td>
<td>(18.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>SNIPPY DOGG</td>
<td>Ego Tripping</td>
<td>(12.98)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>MARY J. BLIGE</td>
<td>Growing Pains</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>KEISHA COLE</td>
<td>Just Like You</td>
<td>(13.98)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>ROC-A-FELLA/DEF JAM</td>
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<td>DEF FO YO</td>
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### TOP REGGAE ALBUMS

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>ELEPHANT MAN</td>
<td>Let's Get Physical</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>BOB MARLEY</td>
<td>Redemption</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>COLIN BUDD</td>
<td>All About Bob</td>
<td>(13.98)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>REBEL SOULJAH</td>
<td>Nothing To Hide</td>
<td>(13.98)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>SCRIBA &amp; RUBBLE</td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>(13.98)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>KY&amp;MEY MARLEY</td>
<td>Roots Music</td>
<td>(13.98)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>RICHARD CLAYTON</td>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>(13.98)</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>Reggae Gold 2007: Treasure Of The Caribbean</td>
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<td>SMAGGY</td>
<td>Introversion</td>
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<td>Bob Ray</td>
<td>(13.98)</td>
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<td>(13.98)</td>
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<td>Strictly The Best Vol. 37</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>LUCIANO</td>
<td>Jah Is My Navigator</td>
<td>(13.98)</td>
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RHYTHMIC Airplay

Ray J earns his first No. 1 on Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums and his first top 10 on the Billboard 200 as his fourth album, "All I Feel," bows at No. 7 on 39,000 units. That tops his last set, "Raylution," which entered R&B & Hip-Hop at No. 13 and was a distant No. 48 on the big chart with a start of 21,000 in 2005. Ray J's new album is carried by "Sexy Can I," with Yung Berg, which presides over Rhythmic Airplay for a second week. Elsewhere on R&B Albums, Ruben DeVaugn (13-9) earns the Greatest Gainer, up 4% from last week. Elephant Man's first album for Bad Boy enters at No. 38, Houston rapper Big Gemmii makes his maiden R&B Albums voyage at No. 60, and algebra earns Paclesetter applause at No. 64 (up 61%).
### Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist/Producer</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>#1</strong> Love in This Club</td>
<td>Love Jones</td>
<td>Jive/Atlantic</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#2</strong> Sensual Seduction</td>
<td>Lloyd Banks</td>
<td>Atlantic/RCA</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#3</strong> Immortal</td>
<td>Missy Elliott</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#4</strong> Remember Me</td>
<td>The Game</td>
<td>Interscope/RCA</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#5</strong> Stay Down</td>
<td>Jeezy</td>
<td>Def Jam/IDJMG</td>
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### Hot Rap Songs

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<tr>
<td><strong>#1</strong> Lollipop</td>
<td>Flo Rida</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>#2</strong> Stay</td>
<td>Plies</td>
<td>Cash Money/Def Jam</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#3</strong> Baby</td>
<td>Mariah Carey</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#4</strong> I Need a Girl</td>
<td>Lil Wayne</td>
<td>Cash Money/Def Jam</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#5</strong> I Don't Love You</td>
<td>Lloyd Banks</td>
<td>Atlantic/RCA</td>
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### Adult R&B

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<td><strong>#1</strong> Never</td>
<td>Ne-Yo</td>
<td>Def Jam/Jive</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#2</strong> I Love You</td>
<td>Keyshia Coley</td>
<td>Interscope/Atlantic</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#3</strong> I Just Want to Make You</td>
<td>Fugees</td>
<td>Interscope/Atlantic</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#4</strong> I'll Be Alright</td>
<td>Lloyd Banks</td>
<td>Interscope/RCA</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#5</strong> It Wasn't Me</td>
<td>Lloyd Banks</td>
<td>Interscope/RCA</td>
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### Rhythmic Airplay

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<th>Week</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>#1</strong> Sexy Can I</td>
<td>Flo Rida</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#2</strong> I Need a Girl</td>
<td>Missy Elliott</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#3</strong> I'm Not a Girl</td>
<td>Lloyd Banks</td>
<td>Interscope/RCA</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#4</strong> I Don't Love You</td>
<td>Lloyd Banks</td>
<td>Interscope/RCA</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#5</strong> I'll Be Alright</td>
<td>Lloyd Banks</td>
<td>Interscope/RCA</td>
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### HitPredictor

<table>
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<td>Interscope/Atlantic</td>
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<td><strong>#3</strong> I Just Want to Make You</td>
<td>Fugees</td>
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### Hot Country Songs

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<td>You're Gonna Miss This</td>
<td>Trace Adkins</td>
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<tr>
<td>I Saw God Today</td>
<td>George Strait</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Just Got Started Lovin' You</td>
<td>James Otto</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love Is A Beautiful Thing</td>
<td>Phil Vassar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laughed Until We Cried</td>
<td>Jason Aldean</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Picture Perfect</td>
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<td>Love Don't Live Here</td>
<td>Lady Antebellum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last Name</td>
<td>Carnie Snider</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jack When I Knew It All</td>
<td>Joe Nichols</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Home</td>
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<tr>
<td>She's A Hottie</td>
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<tr>
<td>Takin' Off This Pain</td>
<td>Josh Turner Featuring Trisha Yearwood</td>
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<td>Gunpowder &amp; Lead</td>
<td>Randy Lambeth</td>
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<td>I Still Miss You</td>
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<td>16</td>
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<td>Kristofferson</td>
<td>Tim McGraw</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Every Other Weekend</td>
<td>Reba McEntire</td>
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<tr>
<td>Some Things Never Change</td>
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### COUNTRY

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<td>James Otto</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philip Vassar</td>
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<td>Jason Aldean</td>
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<td>Chris Cagle</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lady Antebellum</td>
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<td>Carnie Snider</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joe Nichols</td>
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<td>Blake Shelton</td>
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<td>John Rich</td>
<td>She's A Hottie</td>
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<td>Josh Turner Featuring</td>
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<td>Randy Lambeth</td>
<td>Gunpowder &amp; Lead</td>
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<td>Josh Gracin</td>
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<td>Keith Anderson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tim McGraw</td>
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<td>Trina Yearwood</td>
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<td>Reba McEntire</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sara Evans</td>
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### Country Update

Visit www.countryradio.com to sign up for your free daily Country Radio Blast.

### Billboard Country

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<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist/Group</th>
<th>Chart Rank</th>
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<td>IF YOU DON'T LOVE ME</td>
<td>Phil Stacey</td>
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<td>THAT SON IN MY HEAD</td>
<td>Juliana Hough</td>
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<td>I CAN SLEEP WHEN I'M DEAD</td>
<td>Jason Michael Carroll</td>
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<td>LEARNING HOW TO BEND</td>
<td>Gary Allan</td>
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<td>TIL I WAS A DADDY TOO</td>
<td>Tracey Lawrence</td>
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<td>MIDNIGHT SUN</td>
<td>Gary Brooks</td>
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<td>HOLLER BACK</td>
<td>The Lost Trailers</td>
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<td>COUNTRY MAN</td>
<td>Johnny &amp; June</td>
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<td>FALLING INTO ME</td>
<td>Whiskey Falls</td>
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<td>DO YOU BELIEVE IN ME NOW</td>
<td>Bette Midler</td>
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<td>GOOD TIMES</td>
<td>Alan Jackson</td>
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<td>ROCKS IN YOUR SHOES</td>
<td>Lenny Kravitz</td>
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<td>GOOD FRIEND AND A GLASS OF WINE</td>
<td>Lee Roy Jenkins</td>
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<td>LIFE IN A NORTHERN SKY</td>
<td>Jo Dee Missina</td>
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<td>I'M GONNA LOVE YOU</td>
<td>Garth Brooks</td>
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<td>BUSY BEING FABULOUS</td>
<td>clay walker</td>
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<tr>
<td>YOU CAN LET GO</td>
<td>Crystal Shawanda</td>
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<td>WORKIN' FOR A LIVIN'</td>
<td>Garth Brooks &amp; Mary Louis</td>
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<td>IN COLOR</td>
<td>Jamey Johnson</td>
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<td>THE ROAD HAMMERS</td>
<td>The Road Hammers</td>
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<td>Eli Young</td>
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<td>Point Of Grace</td>
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<td>JESUS &amp; GRAVITY</td>
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<td>THINGS A MAMA DON'T KNOW</td>
<td>MCA Roberts Featuring Toby Keith</td>
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<td>CRY LONELY</td>
<td>Cross Canadian Ragweed</td>
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### R&R Country Daily Update

Don't miss another important R&R Country Daily UPDATE at RadioInfo.com for Total Radio Impact Data. Check out RadioInfo.com for the latest in country music news and charts.

### Adkins Stretches Chart-Topping Reign

Up 994,000 audience impressions in its 10th chart week on Hot Country Songs, Trace Adkins' "You're Gonna Miss This" claims a third week at No. 1. His longest chart-topping stretch. He spent one week at the summit with "(This Ain't) Nothin' Thing" in 1997, and "Ladies Love Country Boys" logged two weeks at No. 1 last year. The new song outpaces this issue's No. 2 title, George Strait's "I Saw God Today," by 765,000 impressions.

Kenny Chesney rises 21-15 with "Better As A Memory," which gains the Greatest Gainer (up 6 million impressions) in its fourth week. The fourth single from "Just Who I Am: Poets & Pilots" finishes the April 7-13 tracking week with 11.7 million impressions and leaps over the Airpower hurdle. Nielsen BDS reports spins at all but two of the 112 stations monitored for this chart. Alan Jackson scores The Hot Shot Debut at No. 42 with "Good Time," the second single and title track from his new album, amassing 1.7 million impressions at 34 monitored signals.

---

**HITSPREDICTOR**

- Based on information provided by Nielsen NextRadio, Inc., the hit song list is generated using a proprietary algorithm that factors in radio airplay data, listener feedback, and other relevant variables.

**HOT COUNTRY SONGS**

1. You're Gonna Miss This - Trace Adkins
2. I Saw God Today - George Strait
3. Just Got Started Lovin' You - James Otto
4. Love Is A Beautiful Thing - Phil Vassar
5. Laughed Until We Cried - Jason Aldean
6. Picture Perfect - Taylor Swift
7. Picture Perfect - Chris Cagle
8. Love Don't Live Here - Lady Antebellum
9. Last Name - Carnie Snider
10. Jack When I Knew It All - Joe Nichols
11. Home - Blake Shelton
12. She's A Hottie - John Rich
13. Takin' Off This Pain - Josh Turner Featuring Trisha Yearwood
14. Gunpowder & Lead - Randy Lambeth
15. We Aren't Crazy - Josh Gracin
16. I Still Miss You - Keith Anderson
17. Kristofferson - Tim McGraw
18. This Is Me You're Talking To - Trina Yearwood
19. Every Other Weekend - Reba McEntire
20. Some Things Never Change - Sara Evans

**COUNTRY**

- See chart legend for notes and explanations. The ratings are based on audience drawings by Nielsen Business Media.

**Adkins Stretches Chart-Topping Reign**

Up 994,000 audience impressions in its 10th chart week on Hot Country Songs, Trace Adkins' "You're Gonna Miss This" claims a third week at No. 1. His longest chart-topping stretch. He spent one week at the summit with "(This Ain't) Nothin' Thing" in 1997, and "Ladies Love Country Boys" logged two weeks at No. 1 last year. The new song outpaces this issue's No. 2 title, George Strait's "I Saw God Today," by 765,000 impressions.

---

Source: Billboard, Apr 26, 2008

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data.
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<thead>
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<th>Country</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sí No Te Hubieras Ido</td>
<td>Maria Mquique</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
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<td>Té Quiero</td>
<td>Flex</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Sony BMG Norte</td>
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<td>Enrique Iglesias</td>
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<td>Conquista</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
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<td>Me Enamorar</td>
<td>Rubén Blades</td>
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<td>La Romantica Banda El Limon</td>
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<td>USA</td>
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<td>Banda El Recodo</td>
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<td>Se Te Agarraron Las Cunas (Cierra Los Ojos)</td>
<td>El Chapo De Sinaloa</td>
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<td>Por Quién Me Dejas</td>
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<td>Sin Tu Amor</td>
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<td>Soy Igual Que Tú</td>
<td>Alex &amp; Flo</td>
<td>USA</td>
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**Artists**

- Enrique Iglesias
- Flex
- Víctor Manuel
- Jenny Rivera
- Banda El Recodo
- Aventura
- Los Diablos De La Sierra
- Natalia Elizondo
- German Montero
- Kumbia Boy
- K-Paz W Franco de la Zev
- Banda El Recodo
- Arocena y compañ
- Alex & Flo

**Hot Latin Songs**

- **Top 10**
  - Sí No Te Hubieras Ido
  - Té Quiero
  - Donde Están Corazón
  - Gatas de Agua Dulce
  - Te Lloro
  - Estos Celos
  - Conteo Regresivo
  - Cada Que
  - Un Buen Perdedor
  - Tomate De Jamón

- **New**
  - Tomate De Jamón
  - Cada Que
  - Un Buen Perdedor

**New Artists**

- Arocena y compañ
- Alex & Flo

**Debut**

- Te Lloro

**Genre**

- Latin Pop
- Regional Mexican
- Latin Urban
- Latin Rock

**Charts Legend**

- Billboard Latin Songs: A combination of airplay, sales, and streaming data for Latin music
- Latin Digital Songs: Airplay data
- Latin Airplay Songs: Streaming data
- Latin Recurrent Songs: Streaming data

**Latin Artist of the Year**

- ** Salem Media Group - Distributing Label** (Price): $24.98
### Latin Airplay

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<tr>
<td>Si No Te Hubieras Ido</td>
<td>Enrique Iglesias (Latina)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donde Estan Los Amigos</td>
<td>Marc Anthony (A&amp;M)</td>
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<tr>
<td>El Dia de Tu Suerte (Hoy)</td>
<td>Aventura (Sony, Live Norte)</td>
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<tr>
<td>El Perdón</td>
<td>Pablo mena (LATINA)</td>
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<td>Quiero Decirte Que Te Amo</td>
<td>巡逻乐团 (Sony, BMG)</td>
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<td>Yandel (Mega)</td>
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### Latin Albums

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<td>4 Non Blondes Featuring Paris and Sabrina (Sony, BMG)</td>
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<td>LOVERS LEAVING HOME</td>
<td>David Byrnes Featuring drones (Sony, BMG)</td>
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<td>Fool If You Think Its Over</td>
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<td>This Is Not Real Love</td>
<td>Gigi Hernandez Featuring Alphaville (Atlantic)</td>
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### Tropical Pop

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<td>Vicente Fernandez Featuring El Tri (Sony,BMG)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Por Quien Me Dejas</td>
<td>El Tri (Sony,BMG)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Peito De Tu Mama</td>
<td>Beto Perez Featuring La Bambolea (Sony,BMG)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Dia Del Dia de las Brujas</td>
<td>Vanilla Ice Featuring Rana (Sony,BMG)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esta Noche</td>
<td>Vicente Fernandez Featuring Juan Gabriel (Sony,BMG)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Tigres Del Norte</td>
<td>Los Tigres Del Norte (Sony,BMG)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-Paz De La Sierra</td>
<td>K-Paz De La Sierra (Sony,BMG)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Chavo</td>
<td>El Chavo (Sony,BMG)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olga Tanon</td>
<td>Olga Tanon Featuring Romulo (Sony,BMG)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hector Lavoe</td>
<td>Hector Lavoe Featuring Los Bravos De La Sierra (Sony,BMG)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amo A Dios Y Te Quiero</td>
<td>Tomatillo Featuring Los Bravos De La Sierra (Sony,BMG)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Top Electronic Albums

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist (Imprint / Distributing Label)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nine Inch Nails</td>
<td>Nine Inch Nails (Reprise)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOBY</td>
<td>Moby (Virgin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HANNAH MONTANA</td>
<td>Hannah Montana (RCA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JASON NEVINS</td>
<td>Jason Nevins (RCA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MYLE MINOGUE</td>
<td>Myle Minogue (EMI)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Billboard Dance Club Play

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist (Imprint / Distributing Label)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Break You</td>
<td>Enrique Iglesias Featuring Flo Rida (Sony BMG)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run the Show</td>
<td>T.I. Featuring Jermaine Dupri (US Airways Entertainment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Touch Me, I'm A Feeling</td>
<td>Justin Timberlake Featuring Timbaland (Rouge Entertainment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pocketful of Sunshine</td>
<td>Liquid Blue Featuring Mithrandir (Ultra)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everybody Needs Love</td>
<td>Whitney Houston Featuring Babyface (Epic)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Top Dance Airplay

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist (Imprint / Distributing Label)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>med applying</td>
<td>DJ Skrill</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Japan

**Singles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chart</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hot 100</td>
<td>APR 15, 2008</td>
<td>Last Night</td>
<td>The Rolling Stones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot 100</td>
<td>APR 15, 2008</td>
<td>Baby don't Cry</td>
<td>The Rolling Stones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot 100</td>
<td>APR 15, 2008</td>
<td>Let's Get It on</td>
<td>The Rolling Stones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot 100</td>
<td>APR 15, 2008</td>
<td>Angie</td>
<td>The Rolling Stones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot 100</td>
<td>APR 15, 2008</td>
<td>Jumpin' Jack Flash</td>
<td>The Rolling Stones</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### United Kingdom

**Singles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chart</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Official UK Chart</td>
<td>APR 12, 2008</td>
<td>The One</td>
<td>The Rolling Stones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official UK Chart</td>
<td>APR 12, 2008</td>
<td>Hot Rocks</td>
<td>The Rolling Stones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official UK Chart</td>
<td>APR 12, 2008</td>
<td>Jumpin' Jack Flash</td>
<td>The Rolling Stones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official UK Chart</td>
<td>APR 12, 2008</td>
<td>Angie</td>
<td>The Rolling Stones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official UK Chart</td>
<td>APR 12, 2008</td>
<td>Let's Get It on</td>
<td>The Rolling Stones</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Germany

**Singles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chart</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Media Control</td>
<td>APR 15, 2008</td>
<td>Mercy</td>
<td>Duffy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Control</td>
<td>APR 15, 2008</td>
<td>Mercy</td>
<td>Duffy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Control</td>
<td>APR 15, 2008</td>
<td>Mercy</td>
<td>Duffy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### France

**Digital Songs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chart</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hitparade (LIAG)</td>
<td>APR 12, 2008</td>
<td>La Bouche</td>
<td>La Bouche</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hitparade (LIAG)</td>
<td>APR 12, 2008</td>
<td>Oui Oui</td>
<td>La Bouche</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hitparade (LIAG)</td>
<td>APR 12, 2008</td>
<td>Oui Oui</td>
<td>La Bouche</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Australia

**Billboard Canadian Hot 100**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chart</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chart</td>
<td>APR 15, 2008</td>
<td>Sweet About Me</td>
<td>Duffy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chart</td>
<td>APR 15, 2008</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Duffy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chart</td>
<td>APR 15, 2008</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Duffy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Spain

**Digital Songs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chart</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hot Digital Songs</td>
<td>APR 12, 2008</td>
<td>Europa</td>
<td>Europa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot Digital Songs</td>
<td>APR 12, 2008</td>
<td>Europa</td>
<td>Europa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot Digital Songs</td>
<td>APR 12, 2008</td>
<td>Europa</td>
<td>Europa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### The Netherlands

**Singles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chart</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mega Charts (Netherlands)</td>
<td>APR 12, 2008</td>
<td>Amy Winehouse</td>
<td>Amy Winehouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mega Charts (Netherlands)</td>
<td>APR 12, 2008</td>
<td>Amy Winehouse</td>
<td>Amy Winehouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mega Charts (Netherlands)</td>
<td>APR 12, 2008</td>
<td>Amy Winehouse</td>
<td>Amy Winehouse</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Portugal

**Singles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chart</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Official UK Chart</td>
<td>APR 12, 2008</td>
<td>Pelo Vidro</td>
<td>Hermetica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official UK Chart</td>
<td>APR 12, 2008</td>
<td>Pelo Vidro</td>
<td>Hermetica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official UK Chart</td>
<td>APR 12, 2008</td>
<td>Pelo Vidro</td>
<td>Hermetica</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Austria

**Singles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chart</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chart</td>
<td>APR 13, 2008</td>
<td>Christina Sturermer</td>
<td>Christina Sturermer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chart</td>
<td>APR 13, 2008</td>
<td>Amy Winehouse</td>
<td>Amy Winehouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chart</td>
<td>APR 13, 2008</td>
<td>Amy Winehouse</td>
<td>Amy Winehouse</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Euro Digital Songs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chart</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Media Control</td>
<td>APR 12, 2008</td>
<td>4 Minutes</td>
<td>Kuschel Sorg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Control</td>
<td>APR 12, 2008</td>
<td>4 Minutes</td>
<td>Kuschel Sorg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Control</td>
<td>APR 12, 2008</td>
<td>4 Minutes</td>
<td>Kuschel Sorg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Euro Digital Spotlight**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chart</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Media Control</td>
<td>APR 14, 2008</td>
<td>I Want You</td>
<td>Amy Winehouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Control</td>
<td>APR 14, 2008</td>
<td>I Want You</td>
<td>Amy Winehouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Control</td>
<td>APR 14, 2008</td>
<td>I Want You</td>
<td>Amy Winehouse</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Data for week of April 26, 2008 | Charts Legend on page 64

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

ALBUMS

Sales data compiled from a comprehensive pool of U.S. music merchants by Nielsen SoundScan. Sales data for R&B/Hip-Hop retail charts is compiled by Nielsen SoundScan from a national subset of core stores that specialize in those genres.

Albums with the greatest sales gain this week:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title/Artist</th>
<th>Sales Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;American High&quot; by Maroon 5</td>
<td>124,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;The Greatest Hits&quot; by Maroon 5</td>
<td>80,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Love&quot; by The Weeknd</td>
<td>67,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Where included, this award indicates the title with the chart's largest unit increase.

PRICE/AVAILABILITY

CD/DVD prices are suggested list or equivalent prices, which are projected from store checks. All underlined titles are available only on DoubleDisc/DVD, unless otherwise noted.

TOP INTERNET

Radio Airplay Singles Charts

Compiled from a national sample of data supplied by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems. Charts are ranked by number of contacts airtime impressions, compiled by cross-referencing each station's content list with Arbitron Listener Data. The exceptions are the Rhythmic, Adult Top 40, Adult Contemporary, Modern Rock and Adult R&B charts, which are revised by total detections.

SALES CHARTS

The top selling singles compiled from a national sample of retail store, mass merchandiser, and internet sales reports compiled and compiled by Nielsen SoundScan. For R&B/Hip-Hop Singles sales, data is compiled from a national subset of core retail stores for R&B/Hip-Hop sales by Nielsen SoundScan.

Singles with the greatest sales gains:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title/Artist</th>
<th>Sales Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Read Between the Lines&quot; by Dido</td>
<td>11,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Shape of You&quot; by Ed Sheeran</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Lemon&quot; by Coldplay</td>
<td>9,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dance Club Play

Club Dance Play tracks are drawn from a national sample of data from club DJs.

Singles with the greatest club play increase over the previous week:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title/Artist</th>
<th>Club Dance Play Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Can't Feel My Face&quot; by The Weeknd</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Let Me Love You&quot; by DJ Snake feat. Justin Bieber</td>
<td>11,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;No. 1&quot; by N.E.R.D. feat. Rihanna</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ALBUM CHARTS

Recording Industry's: Of America (RIAA) certification for retail shipment of 500,000 albums divided ▲ RIAA certification for retail shipment of 500,000 albums (Platinum) ▲ RIAA certification for retail shipment of 1 million albums (Diamond) ▲ RIAA - platinum singles certification for a single of 100,000 units (Platinum) ▲ RIAA certification for retail shipment of 500,000 singles (Gold).

Music Video Sales Charts

Music video sales certification not calculated for video singles. ▲ RIAA platinum certification for retail shipment of 500,000 copies (Platinum) ▲ RIAA gold certification for retail shipment of 100,000 copies (Gold) ▲ RIAA certification for retail shipment of 10,000 copies (Silver) ▲ RIAA certified for retail shipment of 500,000 albums (Diamond) ▲ RIAA certification for retail shipment of 500,000 singles (Gold).

DVDs/Video Sales/Rental Charts

DVD sales certification for retail shipment of 50,000 units or $1 million in sales at suggested retail price ▲ RIAA platinum certification for sales of 100,000 units or $2 million in sales at suggested retail price ▲ RIAA gold certification for a minimum sale of 50,000 units or $500,000 in sales at suggested retail price ▲ RIAA certification for retail shipment of 10,000 units or $1 million in sales at suggested retail price.
**TOP HEATSEEKERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. THE SWORD</td>
<td>Walk It Off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. MGMT</td>
<td>Gods Of The Earth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. NEW ORDER</td>
<td>Oracular Spectacular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. MAN MAN</td>
<td>Empty &amp; Beautiful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. TEDDY BRENT</td>
<td>Rabbit Habits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. FIVE FINGER DEATH PUNCH</td>
<td>The Way Of The Fist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. SUN KIL MOON</td>
<td>April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. DRAGON-ORCE</td>
<td>Inhuman Rampage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. LIVING LEGENDS</td>
<td>The Gathering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. BIG GEMINI</td>
<td>History In The Making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. HAYES CARLL</td>
<td>Trouble In Mind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. SAVING ABEL</td>
<td>Saving Abel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. SHRINE STATION</td>
<td>West Of The Sun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. LOS CUATES DE SINALOA</td>
<td>Puritos Exitos Chicas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. LOS TAPES 'N TAPES</td>
<td>Feel Good Ghosts (Tea-Party Through Tomados)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. MELODY GARROT</td>
<td>Worrisome Heart</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TASTEMAKERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. A R E M</td>
<td>Walk It Off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. THE BLACK KEYS</td>
<td>Tapes 'n Tapes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. NINE INCH NAILS</td>
<td>Mountain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. THE RACCONTIERS</td>
<td>Fashionable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. THE BREDERS</td>
<td>History In The Making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. LEONA LEWIS</td>
<td>Big Gemini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. VAN MORRISON</td>
<td>Trouble In Mind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. GNARLS BARKLEY</td>
<td>Tarde O Temprano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. RICK ROSS</td>
<td>Thrivexx Presents: Dance Anthems 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. THE ROLLING STONES</td>
<td>Sunshine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. TAM MAN</td>
<td>London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. SUN KIL MOON</td>
<td>Thrivexx Presents: Dance Anthems 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. VAMPIRE WEEKEND</td>
<td>Spice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**REGIONAL HEATSEEKER #1s**

**WEST NORTH CENTRAL**
- Tapes 'n Tapes: Walk It Off
- Cloud Cult
- The Black Keys
- Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds
- Nine Inch Nails
- The Raconteurs
- The Breeders
- Leon Lewis
- Van Morrison
- Gnars Barkley
- Rick Ross
- The Rolling Stones
- Tap In
- Sun Kil Moon
- Vampire Weekend

**MID ATLANTIC**
- Thrivexx Presents: Dance Anthems 2
- The Grouch
- Jackie Greene
- Cut Copy
- Crystal Castles

**SOUTH CENTRAL**
- Trouble In Mind
- Hayes Carll

**SOUTH ATLANTIC**
- Tarde O Temprano
- Tommy Torres

**EAST NORTH CENTRAL**
- Fashionable
- Teddy Brent

**NORTHEAST**
- History In The Making
- Big Gemini

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**BREAKING & ENTERING**

Young durangense group Ponzoña Musical has scored a hit right out of the gate with its first charting single, "Tal Vez." The song rides 43-39 in its seventh week on Billboard's Hot Latin Songs chart while also climbing 22-20 on Regional. Go to billboard.com/breaking to discover developing artists making their inaugural chart runs each week.

**PROGRESS REPORT**

**SINGLES & TRACKS**

**SONG INDEX**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **A** | AVENUE EXTEND  
(11  7/10)  
BMV  
ASCAP  
Music Publishing, ASCAP | DO YOU BELIEVE IN ME  
(9  7/10)  
BMV  
ASCAP  
Music Publishing, ASCAP |
| **B** | BACK WHERE I HAD IT ALL  
(11  7/10)  
BMV  
ASCAP  
Music Publishing, ASCAP | GET A NEW LIFE  
(8  7/10)  
BMV  
ASCAP  
Music Publishing, ASCAP |
| **C** | CAYA DEE  
(10  7/10)  
BMV  
ASCAP  
Music Publishing, ASCAP | GONE  
(7  7/10)  
BMV  
ASCAP  
Music Publishing, ASCAP |
| **D** | DANGEROUS  
(9  7/10)  
BMV  
ASCAP  
Music Publishing, ASCAP | House On The Hill  
(6  7/10)  
BMV  
ASCAP  
Music Publishing, ASCAP |
| **E** | ELEVATION  
(8  7/10)  
BMV  
ASCAP  
Music Publishing, ASCAP | LOVE  
(5  7/10)  
BMV  
ASCAP  
Music Publishing, ASCAP |
| **F** | FACE IT  
(7  7/10)  
BMV  
ASCAP  
Music Publishing, ASCAP | LOVE YOU  
(4  7/10)  
BMV  
ASCAP  
Music Publishing, ASCAP |
| **G** | GET BACK IN HERE  
(6  7/10)  
BMV  
ASCAP  
Music Publishing, ASCAP | LOVE WINS  
(3  7/10)  
BMV  
ASCAP  
Music Publishing, ASCAP |
| **H** | HAIR BRAKER  
(5  7/10)  
BMV  
ASCAP  
Music Publishing, ASCAP | LOVE YOURSELF  
(2  7/10)  
BMV  
ASCAP  
Music Publishing, ASCAP |
| **I** | I CAN'T STOP  
(4  7/10)  
BMV  
ASCAP  
Music Publishing, ASCAP | LOVE YOURSELF AND ME  
(1  7/10)  
BMV  
ASCAP  
Music Publishing, ASCAP |

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**Data for week of APRIL 26, 2008**

**CHARTS LEGEND on Page 64**

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data.
BILLBOARD LATIN MUSIC CONFERENCE & AWARDS

It was a mix of glamour and business at the 19th annual Billboard Latin Music Conference & Awards, which took place April 7-10 at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Hollywood, Fla. The event, presented by Heineken in association with Target and SanDisk, attracted nearly 1,000 attendees. The awards show aired live April 10 on the Telemundo network and featured performances by Juanes, Fanny Lu and Juan Luis Guerra. Average viewers topped 2.2 million, a 13% increase over 2007, according to Nielsen Television Index, and reached 5.5 million unique viewers, according to Nielsen Media Research. Conference highlights included the inaugural Radio Day, which drew programmers and network heads from around the nation; an exploration of Wisin & Yandel's breakthrough business model; and an Enrique Iglesias Q&A, which packed the house.

ABOVE: Debate over cultural identity was lively during the “Urban Moves” panel, sponsored by MTV 19s.

ABOVE: The members of Univision Music Group’s act Kinto Sol, who won the Latin rap/hip hop album of the year award, celebrate at the official after-party, held by Verzuz.

"If the 2010 census is anything like the 2000 census, more and more advertisers will come to the Hispanic space."

—Univision Radio COO Gary Stone

BELOW: Sony/ATV Discos Music Publishing VP for U.S. Latin/Latin America Jorge Mejia accepts the award for publisher of the year at the Billboard Bash.

ABOVE: Target’s bullseye dog celebrated the Billboard Latin Music Awards.

PHOTOS: ARNOLD TURNER/ATURNRARCHIVES UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

ABOVE: Billboard Latin Music Awards finalist/presenter Kat Deluna shows off her necklace courtesy of the Natural Color Diamond Atlan and Block, Star & Foss prior to the awards show.

ABOVE: Online distribution and opportunities were the focus of the “Digital Arena” panel. Standing, from left, are Time Networks executive director of programming Angel Sepulveda, Balanga president of live and publishing David Chilton. Universal Music Group Distribution senior director of marketing/growth Angela Sanchez and MySpace VP/managing director for Latin America/U.S. Hispanic Victor Kong. Seated are Sony/ATV senior director of global retail/amazon marketing/mobile consumer solutions Michael Romero of Billboardres.com managing editor and moderator Judy Cantor-Noss.

BELOW: Billboard Latin Music Awards finalist/presenter Kat Deluna shows off her necklace courtesy of the Natural Color Diamond Atlan and Block, Star & Foss prior to the awards show.

ABOVE: Univision Music Group won the Billboard Latin Music Award for Top Latin Albums label of the year, while its Fonovisa Records won regional Mexican recording label of the year. Fonovisa Records VP of A&R and East Coast operations Carlos Mahatiz, center, and label manager Jasmin Solis, right, accepted the awards at the Billboard Bash from Billboard executive director of Latin content and programming Leila Cobo.

RIGHT: Billboard and Telemundo executives celebrate backstage at the Heineken Lounge prior to the Billboard Awards. From left, the Billboard Entertainment Group senior VP Gerry Byrne, Billboard publisher/VP of licensing Howard Appelbaum, Telemundo Communications Group President Dan Browne and Browne’s wife, Maria Jungera-Browne.

ABOVE: Debate over cultural identity was lively during the “Urban Moves” panel, sponsored by MTV 19s.

ABOVE: The members of Univision Music Group’s act Kinto Sol, who won the Latin rap/hip hop album of the year award, celebrate at the official after-party, held by Verzuz.

"If the 2010 census is anything like the 2000 census, more and more advertisers will come to the Hispanic space."

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The natural color Diamond Azul arrives at the Billboard Latin Music Awards on Executive Jet Management’s Gulfstream V.

LEFT: BMI songwriters discussed their creative process and performed award-winning material at BMI’s “How I Wrote That Song” panel. From left are BMI associate director Jake Cavasos, songwriter Pablo Castro, songwriter/Universal artist Gustavo Laureano, songwriter Luigi Giraldo, BMI assistant VP Delia Orjuela, BMI director Perzacho Pilla, songwriter Ramon Gonzalez Mora, songwriter/artist Espinoza Paz and BMI director Jose Mercado. In front is songwriter Bruno Danziga.

ABOVE: Local programming strategies were discussed by programmers from around the nation during Radio Day. From left are WRQK-FM West Palm Beach, Fla., programming/promotions director Raymond Hernandez, WIXY-FM Raleigh, N.C., Program personality Julie Garza, KBBQ-FM Minneapolis PD Eddie “Mozkito” Cruz, and Radio & Records Latin format editor and moderator Jackie Madrigal.

Below: Reggaetón stars and Machete artists Wisin & Yandel joined brands and sponsors to give insight into their new business model. From left are Zune senior model, From left are Zune senior manager of culture marketing Nestor Farfan, Billboard executive director of Latin content and programming and moderator Leila Cobo, Wisin & Yandel manager Edgar Andreet, SunCom corporate communications manager Frances Rodriguez, Wisin & Yandel, PepsiCo International regional marketing platforms manager Shanna Parra and Mymobile president/owner Nestor Ponce de Leon.

Below: The members of Puerto Rican rock act and Billboard Latin Music Awards finalist Black: Guayaba relax at the Heineken lounge before performing at the Billboard Bash. Sony BMG Norte/Day 1 managing director Ruben Leyva on new business deals.

Above: Multiple business models and alternatives were discussed at the Billboard Latin Music Awards on Executive Jet Management’s Gulfstream V. Sony BMG Norte/Day 1 managing director Ruben Leyva on new business deals.

Below: Multiple business models and alternatives were discussed at the "Distribution Connection" panel. From left are Alliance Entertainment Corp. senior VP of sales Michael Donohue, Musichitz senior VP of content John Jones, Universal Music Distribution VP of Latin sales Nydia Lanier, Amazon content manager for music Craig Pape, Select-O-Hits VP Johnny Phillips, Univision Music Group VP of sales Jeff Young and Billboard director of charts/senior analyst and moderator Geoff Mayfield.

Above: The members of Puerto Rican rock act and Billboard Latin Music Awards finalist Black: Guayaba relax at the Heineken lounge before performing at the Billboard Bash.

"It may be about touring, it may be about management, it may be about record sales or digital. How are we going to build this together? What can we provide you, the artist? We go back to the artist and say, "What are you going to bring to the table?’ It’s just a question of making that fit.'
ABOVE: The nation's top morning show personalities talked about broadcasting at the "Morning Radio in the Post-Imus Era" panel. From left are WFLY New York's "The DeFranco Morning Show" hosts Kathy and Joe DeFranco, WLAV Chicago's "El Chulo de la Man ana con la Bola" host Raul Bernal, WQON Miami's "Zhona Caray" host Javier Cerdán, "El Chulo de la Manana con la Bola" host Joaquín "El Chulo" Garza and WRTG Miami's "Enrique de Donde y Por qué" host Enrique Santos and Joe Ferrero.

LEFT: Billboard executive director of conferences and events Michele Jacangelo poses for a photo with Enrique Iglesias backstage prior to his Q&A session.

ABOVE: The members of Fonovisa act and romantic norteño icon Conjunto Primavera were honored with Billboard's Lifetime Achievement Award, celebrating their three decades of music activism.

ABOVE: Latin pop singer Chayanne donated memorabilia for the Henrique Latin Music Memorabilia Auction during the Latin Music Conference. Hard Rock bought the memorabilia as a permanent addition to its collection. Proceeds collected from the silent auction will benefit the NALAC Fund for the Arts Henrique Green Ribbon Grant. From left are Henrique senior brand director of multicultural markets, Marine Bianco, NALAC board chairman Abel Lopez, Chayanne, NALAC executive director Marie de León, Henrique brand manager of Hispanic markets Paul Smalisko, and Henrique promotions manager Alex Nuñez.

ABOVE: Radio Day kicked off with a panel discussion on Arbitron's Portable People Meter. From left are Arbitron director of multicultural services Mace de Arman, Spanish Broadcasting System/New York VP/marketing manager Frank Flores, Billboard executive director of Latin content and programming Leila Cobo, Clear Channel Communications VP of programming for the Hispanic division and moderator Jim Lawson. Unicson Communications executive VP of corporate research Celini Shagrin and Arbitron VP of research policy and communication Ed Cohen.

ABOVE: Picking with performing artist Josie Cordoba at the VIP reception. From left, Visual Presence's Flex Herrera, Freeform, and performing artist Jossie Cordoba, Sandisk mobile retail marketing manager David Bultit, creative media's Joel Peralta and ASCAP senior VP of marketing Jay Lotz.

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