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Carolyn Webb, Nevada
Barbara Weizer, Illinois
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Linda Wieloch, Wisconsin
Patricia Williamson, Colorado
Stephen Zaville, Georgia
Tom Ziber, Wisconsin
Kurt Zwicklhuber, Illinois

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Ready, Handset, Go

The Rules Of Mobile Marketing

BY STEVEN MASUR

As of December 2007, there were more than 250 million wireless users in the United States, and approximately 363 billion text messages annually, but only 1% of all advertisements come via SMS or MMS text messaging. It seems inevitable that this channel might become the next big thing in marketing music.

The sheer size of the market and the growth in sales of media-oriented phones like Apple’s iPhone, SMS text and MMS advertising add fuel to this fire. But what are the rules? Will solicitations to listen to new music be considered spam? Who regulates and enforces? Here’s what you need to know.

THE STATUTES

There are two sets of federal regulation that are applied to mobile (SMS and MMS) message advertising: the Telephone Consumer Protection Act and the Controlling the Assault of Non-Solicited Pornography and Marketing Act. The TCPA was enacted in 1991 and is most famous for creating the national do-not-call registry. The act, enforced by the FCC, restricts unsolicited phone calls, faxes and SMS text messages. The CAN-SPAM Act was enacted in 2003 as a response to e-mail spam and is enforced by the Federal Trade Commission. Essentially, this act prohibits classic spam e-mails (false representations, automated mailings, etc.) Together, the two acts protect consumers by staunchly restricting unsolicited advertising. Throw in various state laws.

FOR THE RECORD

The article “Tougher Than the Rest” in the June 26 issue should have stated that Verizon trails iTunes and eMusic as the Orchard’s third-largest account.

In the June 26 issue, individual retailers’ sales data regarding first-week sales of Lil Wayne’s “Tha Carter III” came from Billboard’s exclusive reporting and not from Nielsen SoundScan; the latter does not provide account-specific data.

In the Stars special feature on the O’Jays in the June 14 issue, the name of the group’s co-manager, Rosalind Ray, was misspelled.

Universal Music Enterprises says there are no plans to release Jimi Hendrix archives as part of a recent agreement with Wolfgang’s Vault. This was incorrectly reported in a June 14 article, “Loading the Vault.”

INSIDE THE NARM

While recognizing the continuing shift in physical and digital album sales patterns, the NARM board recently reminded the industry that the accepted practice is for all album releases to come to market simultaneously on Tuesday. Otherwise, street date is meaningless and without competitive benefits. Plus, we have unnecessary marketing obstacles, consumer confusion and missed sales. The board urged limiting or more tightly controlling copies issued before release date, and in instances where an album’s digital release is advanced un-

expectedly or unavoidably, requesting that retailers be able to sell the physical product immediately without fear of reprisal.

Your billboard by poll suggested we were asking to inhibit the use of digital tracks or special advance promotions or "new, creative campaigns in advance of an album’s release. Our position was squarely focused on fullalbum release-date parity. To have suggested otherwise in presenting your poll results was simply inaccurate.

Sen. Steve Daines
NARM president

WRITE US. Share your feedback with Billboard readers around the world. Send correspondence to letterletter@billboard.com

In the June 14 article, "Loading the Vault".
IN THROUGH THE OUT DOOR

Finding Upside In Album Leaks

By Hilary Crosley

During the first week of July, Nas' controversial unverified album leaked onto the Internet ahead of its July 15 release date via Def Jam.

But Nas' business partner Anthony Saleh shrugs it off. "I don't think the leak has hurt Nas in any way," he says, adding that leaks have "helped those who have delivered on their albums with good music...if fans want to support it, they'll go buy it."

Saleh's relaxed attitude reflects a growing belief among some music industry vets that unauthorized leaks of an album before its release can boost sales. Leaks provide a way of generating buzz behind an upcoming album and if fans get excited by what they hear, this line of thinking goes, they'll go out and buy it when it's eventually released.

It's a stance that flies in the face of conventional wisdom that intimate piracy invariably hurts music sales. In fact, when some retailers, labels themselves are sometimes the source of leaks in an effort to stymie consumer interest.

Those who believe in the promotional power of leaks can point to recent chart action to bolster their position. During the past year, three of the six biggest debut sales weeks on the Billboard 200 chart were booked by hip-hop albums that fell victim to widespread leaks: Kanye West's "Graduation," 50 Cent's "Curtis" and Lil Wayne's "Tha Carter III." "Graduation" and "Curtis" hit the Web at least two weeks before their intended street date of Sept. 11, 2007. In a much-publicized sales battle over the two same-day releases, West's "Graduation" moved 957,000 units in the United States during its release week, while "Curtis" shifted 691,000, according to Nielsen SoundScan. To date, "Graduation" has sold 2.1 million units while "Curtis" has sold 1.3 million units.

Meanwhile, "Tha Carter III" went platinum during the week following its June 10 release and has sold 1.7 million units to date, even though Universal Music Group estimates that about 1 million people downloaded the album illegally.

"The leak was good for Kanye because he was going against 50 and could show that his album was superior," says Kymbo Joshua, head of Columbia's urban department and co-founder of entertainment company HiphopSince1978, which manages West and Lil Wayne. "It's a give-and-take because if an album leaks before it comes out, you're not losing sales because it's not in stores. It's like having a listening party for 500,000 people and seeing if they go to the stores." The leaks are good school of thought has plenty of detractors. "I think it's preposterous to suggest that leaks help," argues Jim Urie, president/CEO of Universal Music Group Distribution, pointing out that the unauthorized release of music wreaks havoc with marketing and release schedules.

"I am annoyed that our labels haven't released albums earlier in reaction to the leaks," Urie says. "Things like Lil Wayne, Fall Out Boy, Weezer—I would have put them out earlier but the labels wouldn't. They have held them back to honor retailers, particularly the ones who don't sell digitally."

But an urban buyer at a leading retail chain who asks to remain anonymous contends that "if an album leaks and the record is good, it will generate big demand and we will usually sell a lot more. [And] if an album is not so good, a leak could hurt album sales because word-of-mouth will be bad."

In fact, the buyer argues, labels commonly leak music from upcoming releases of developing artists.

"They give it to the mixtape guys," the buyer says. "That's how the record gets on the street. They say they don't do it on superstar acts, but who knows if that's true."

Unauthorized leaks have prompted labels to experiment with different ways of releasing new music, such as Lil Wayne's sale of multiple tracks from "Tha Carter III" before the album's release (Billboard, July 5). More commonly, bands and labels have responded by streaming an album online or moving up its release date.

For instance, the Hold Steady posted a stream of its fourth album, "Stay Positive," on MySpace after the album leaked in early June, while the band's label, Vagrant, made the album available on Apple's iTunes Store June 17, nearly a month before its scheduled release date. Without the benefit of physical sales, "Stay Positive" debuted at No. 170 on the Billboard 200 and No. 5 on the Heatseekers chart.

"We felt like we had to release the album early digitally given the circumstances," Vagrant GM Dan Gill says. "It's hard to tell if this will impact sales. I do know that we have to protect the music and combat the leaks by offering it for sale."

When labels track traffic on peer-to-peer networks to gauge the extent of unauthorized leaks, they're also conducting market research as well, such as determining the age, gender and location of down voters, and examining which songs are most popular, says Eric Garland, CEO of BigChampagne, which measures peer-to-peer traffic.

"Over the last five years, tracking downloading went from a hush-hush thing to being one of the key indicators in the marketing and promotion of every major label," Garland says. "In a music market where control over distribution is deteriorating, intelligence about the marketplace is the silver lining."


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UPFRONT
Nickelback, Shakira Join Live Nation

Live Nation’s latest batch of multimillion-dollar deals with Nickelback and Shakira demonstrate the company’s continued ability to snare superstar acts following the resignation of former chairman Michael Cohl. On paper, at least, Live Nation’s 360-degree deals with Madonna, Jay-Z, Shakira and Nickelback, along with a touring/merchandising pact with U2, could cost the concert promotion giant in excess of $500 million, albeit during the course of a decade or longer as these artists generate multiple revenue streams for the company.

Wall Street concerns about Live Nation’s strategy remain evident in the company’s shrunk stock price, which closed July 9 at $10.16, down 58% from its July 2007 high of $24.63, set Oct. 10, 2007, when news of its deal with Madonna first broke. In announcing the Nickelback pact July 8, CEO Michael Rapino seemed to be speaking directly to investors when he said in a statement: “This partnership is structured to increase our revenue and cash flow significantly, while reducing our risk profile.”

How does the company expect to accomplish that? Nickelback and Shakira bring a valuable combination of current hitmaking appeal and box-office muscle. They also fill out a roster that gives Live Nation cornerstones in pop, rock, rap, modern rock and Latin. Previous Live Nation signees Madonna and U2 pack more clout on the touring side, while Jay-Z’s historical impact has been on the recording, branding and merchandising side. But these older acts are also further along in their career arcs than either Nickelback or Shakira, who arguably wield more upside potential.

Nickelback, which previously toured arenas with AEG Live, is expected to play Live Nation amphitheaters beginning next year. Similarly, the band’s merchandising had been through Bravado and now will be handled by Live Nation’s merchandising team in the future. So merch and touring income represent “found money” in terms of revenue for Live Nation as it enters the Nickelback business.

One snag: Roadrunner says that Nickelback still owes it two albums plus a greatest-hits release, meaning it could be 2014 before Live Nation has a Nickelback album to work with. As with any act, the power of Nickelback’s recorded product three releases down the line is impossible to gauge.

But the band boasts a solid track record. According to Live Nation, Nickelback has sold more than 26 million albums worldwide, with its last set selling more than 10 million units globally. Nickelback’s 2006-07 tour, which visited North America and Australia, sold more than 1.5 million tickets and grossed $64.7 million, according to Billboard Boxscore. The band ranked 20th among all touring acts in 2007 and 17th in 2006, according to Boxscore.

Instead of being structured around a specific time period, Live Nation’s deal with Nickelback encompasses three touring and album cycles, with an option for a fourth. Under the pact, Live Nation has acquired 12 separate artist rights to feed its global distribution pipeline. These include touring, tour sponsorship, tour merchandise, your VIP travel packages, secondary ticketing, recorded music, clothing, licensing and other retail merchandise, tour sponsorship and endorsements, DVD and broadcast rights, fan club, Web site and literary rights.

Similarly, Shakira’s pact is believed to include touring, recording, sponsorship and merchandising rights. Despite being a decade-and-a-half into her recording career, Shakira’s star still appears to be on the rise, particularly as a global touring artist. Her 2006-07 Oral Fixation tour, produced by Live Nation, was her most successful, averaging nearly $1 million in gross and more than 14,000 in ticket sales per show, according to Boxscore. Shakira is a stadium-level attraction in South and Central America, can sell out arenas in many North American markets and has a growing fan base in Europe and other territories.

Live Nation’s deal with Nickelback and Shakira will continue to expand the company’s presence in new lines of business, like merchandising and licensing, which boast better profit margins than concert promotion. They also make good on Rapino’s previous guidance that the company would sign four to five multimillion deals during its first year of pursuing such deals.

LIVE NATION ARTISTS AT A GLANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MADONNA</th>
<th>JAY-Z</th>
<th>U2</th>
<th>SHAKIRA</th>
<th>NICKELBACK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BOXSCORE RANK</strong></td>
<td>2 ('06)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1 ('05)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td><strong>TOUR GROSS</strong></td>
<td>$194.7 million ('06)</td>
<td>(with Mary J. Blige) $31.3 million ('06)</td>
<td>$389 million ('05-'07)</td>
<td>$42.6 million ('06-'07)</td>
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<td><strong>CONCERTS/ATTENDANCE</strong></td>
<td>60/1.2 million ('06)</td>
<td>26/264.756 ('08)</td>
<td>131/4.6 million ('07)</td>
<td>46/658.522 ('07)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>U.S. ALBUM SALES</strong></td>
<td>372,000 ('07)</td>
<td>1.5 million ('08)</td>
<td>750,000 ('08)</td>
<td>271,000 ('07)</td>
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<td><strong>LIVE NATIONAL VALUE (estimated)</strong></td>
<td>$120 million</td>
<td>$150 million</td>
<td>$100 million</td>
<td>$70 million</td>
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Hocus-Pocus?

Rights Organization Merlin Faces Off Against Last.fm Over Payment Plan

Last.fm is facing renewed heat from music companies over its free on-demand music service. The latest salvo is a complaint filed in British courts by Merlin, an international rights body representing some 12,000 members of the independent music community. On the heels of Last.fm’s announcement that it was commencing a program to pay unsigned and indie artists royalties for each time their song was streamed, Merlin issued a notice to its membership cautioning them from accepting the deal.

Merlin wants to strike a deal with Last.fm directly, which will cover all artists. But if members strike out on their own and take Last.fm’s royalty deal, that would weaken Merlin’s negotiating position. Last.fm says about 70,000 indie labels have joined the royalty program, collectively uploading more than 450,000 tracks since January.

At issue is whether Last.fm is infringing on any copyrights. Without providing any specifics, Merlin claims that Last.fm allows users to stream “numerous” tracks of music on demand that are not properly licensed and wants any licensing agreement to retroactively compensate its past infringement.

"Last.fm has limited licenses with some labels, but some of their service is still and always has been unlicensed," a Merlin representative says. While most unlicensed songs are limited to 30-second clips on Last.fm, those of lesser known acts may still stream in full. Last.fm removes any such tracks upon request.

To date, no one has sued Last.fm for copyright infringement. Historically, if a digital music service was accused of infringing on copyrights, there would be a lawsuit, the settlement of which would include a payment for past damages and, in some cases, a new licensing deal that may include some equity stake.

Warner Music Group last month pulled its content from Last.fm after its license expired, despite being the first major label to strike a licensing deal with the service. WMG wants to renegotiate its deal because it feels the payments. Last.fm has submitted for per-song streaming were less than expected, and it is also disappointed that the company has not yet implemented a promised monthly subscription service.
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Digital Laggard

Latin Sales Plumt Amid Few Downloads

As CD sales continue to plummet, strong growth in digital downloads has partly cushioned the fall. But there’s one exception: Latin music. During the six months ended June 29, digital album sales accounted for 15.4% of total U.S. album sales, up from 10.2% a year earlier, according to Nielsen SoundScan. By comparison, the digital albums accounted for a puny proportion of total Latin album sales—just 2.2% during the first half of 2008, up from 1.4% a year earlier (SoundScan doesn’t yet track sales of digital singles by genre). Due in part to anemic digital sales, overall Latin sales suffered the steepest drop of any genre during the first six months of 2008. Sales of Latin musical albums, defined as albums whose content is 51% in Spanish, stood at 13.4 million units for the six months ended June 29, down 17.1% from 16.1 million units sold during the six months ended July 1, 2007, according to SoundScan. The decline edged out a 16.9% slide in sales of rap, the second weakest-performing genre. Why have digital album sales been so weak in Latin music? At least part of the lag can be attributed to reasons as basic as low rates of broadband use to cultural factors, such as the hesitance of new immigrants to pay online with credit cards. Only 29% of U.S. Latinos had household broadband connections in 2007, far below the 47% reported for the overall adult population, according to a study by the Pew Internet & American Life Project. The study also found that Internet usage among Latinos was closely tied to their level of education and English proficiency. Despite the lackluster numbers, digital music vendors have had their eye on the Latin market. For instance, Apple’s iTunes Music Store has a dedicated iTunes Latino section and launched Tarjeta iTunes gift cards last year, backed by a TV ad campaign. Sony BMG Music Entertainment’s U.S. Latin managing director Ruben Leyva acknowledges that “digital is not growing at a pace to replace the physical losses,” but says he sees reasons for optimism. Last month, Sony BMG Latin had its highest first-week share of digital album sales with Julieta Venegas’ “MTV Unplugged” album. Digital downloads accounted for about 30% of sales, sharply higher than the 10%-15% of first-week sales that top Latin acts typically see. Last September, aggressive online marketing helped Marka Chao’s “La Radiolina” debut at No. 1 on Billboard’s Top Latin Albums chart, with 36% of its first-week sales coming from the digital space.

Market observers also point to other factors that weighed on Latin sales in the first half of 2008, including the slowing U.S. economy, a light release schedule and the disproportionately heavy impact of piracy as contributing to the decline. Looking at the first half of the year, there were few big artist releases to drive costumes to stores. Leyva says, although crooner Luis Miguel had a new studio album and newcomer Flex was a surprise success story, other big names on the schedule—such as Maná and Wisin & Yandel—put their weaker-selling live albums or deluxe editions. The release schedule for the second half presents a mixed bag of new albums by acts ranging from Calle 13 and Daddy Yankee to Poniat, it made sense. It’s driven and it’s fast. With Diddy and Croc, it made sense because Diddy is king of nightlife.

In the wake of the 50 Cent-Vitamin Water deal, are more artists asking for equity? Absolutely. The new deals all have equity. People want to take more money upfront for more of a back-end. Of course you want some money upfront and you understand the value of using branded advertising to reach more touch points, but there’s the knowledge that working harder leads to a bigger payoff.

What’s at the top of your to-do-list? I’ve been able to close some really good deals with companies such as SanDisk, Hint Water and Carol’s Daughter. My priority is to build relationships in house and maintain the messaging going out of the house. Also, to make sure brands understand we’re not a service company but a partner, be it strategic planning or channel planning. We want to accept and embrace brands we believe in. We acknowledge what our target audience is and we need to identify them and we strive to deal exclusively with them.
Parting Shots
Branding Columnist Wraps Up Six-Month Tenure With Words Of Wisdom To Tack On Your Bulletin Board

1. If you’re a recording artist and you think you can make it financially without exposure via other media, like TV, film, advertising or videogames, you’re almost certainly wrong.

2. If you think associating your music with a brand is going to secure your future, you’re definitely wrong.

3. If news stories about branding and music make you think, “My God, I can’t believe they’re doing that,” it’s time to get a clue.

4. If you want to make a living as a music producer, programmer, engineer or studio musician, consider working for a music house rather than a music label.

5. If you think maintaining the top spot on the Billboard 200 for more than a week would be helped greatly by a branding campaign, you’re a pretty diligent student of those charts.

6. If you thought a Seattle-based coffee chain and a Bentonville, Ark., big-box retailer were going to save the music industry, you appear to have miscalculated.

7. If someone offers you an opportunity to license your song for a national TV advertising campaign and you’re thinking of accepting less than $10,000, think about it some more.

8. If that national TV advertising campaign happens to be for an Apple product, stop thinking and give the company your song for free.

9. If you think no one cares what a brand “sounds” like, consider all the downloads that Yael Naim (Apple MacBook Air TV ad), Feist (Apple iPod Nano) and Sara Bareilles (Rhapsody) have sold of their branded tracks.

10. If you have $100,000 to promote a record and you decide to hire a consultant that’s in with the brand crowd, you get an A+ for efficiency.

11. If you think brands are making money from music by assuming some of the traditional roles of a record label, some people will think you’re crazy, even though you really aren’t.

12. If you’re a marketer or a lawyer who wants to get into the music business, and your sole music-related talent is knowing how to hit the “play” button on your iPod, partnering with an actual musical talent is not an option—it’s a must.

13. If you think Bruce Springsteen, Neil Young or Pearl Jam will ever sign on to a corporate branding campaign, make yourself comfortable, because you’ll have to wait a long, long time before that ever happens.

14. If you think the No. 1 track on the Billboard Hot 100 might one day be an original song created specifically for an ad, owned by a brand and released on that brand’s own “label” (in partnership with an ad agency), you’ll have a much shorter wait to see that happen.

15. If you think you have a song that’s perfect for a brand, don’t pitch your idea to a creative director. Instead, convince the creative director it was their idea all along to use your song.

16. If you’re a famous artist with your own distinctive, proprietary brand and you enter negotiations with an established commercial brand, make sure you have final approval on all campaigns, because you never know how things will turn out.

17. If a lot of the music in TV advertising sounds too much like Coldplay, Danny Elfman and “Bitter Sweet Symphony” by the Verve, you’re not tripping.

18. If you’re planning to showcase your newest release and the available venues are a local club, a recording studio or a private event, consider opting for an ad agency instead.

19. If you think about monetizing music instead of mesmerizing music, you’ll likely think yourself into a stupor or worse.

20. If you think Fishbone and the Clash are two of the greatest rock bands of all time, you’ve got impeccable taste.

Josh Rabinowitz is senior VP/director of music at Grey Group. Starting next week, Billboard’s Karen H, will pen the branding column.

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Cali Calling
Ambitious Salsa Show Hits The Road

Cali, a sprawling metropolis nestled amid Colombia's southwestern mountain ranges, has long been known as the country's capital of salsa and the breeding ground for an ultra-rapid, particularly aggressive form of the music.

Now, a home-grown effort is taking the music from the streets and into theaters, via an ambitious stage show that unites first-class entertainment and commercial viability with a social purpose. "Delirio," whose slogan is "Made in Cali," showcases 120 dancers, musicians and circus performers, all recruited from Cali's fabled salsa schools and Fundación Circo Para Todos, which trains locals—mostly poor children—to become circus performers.

Since its inception in 2006, the show has been seen by more than 50,000 people and is now preparing for its first significant international venture, with fall performances planned for France and Spain.

In its original format, "Delirio" is a five-hour extravaganza held in a circus tent that fits 800 ticketholders, who sit at tables, cabaret-style, and drink and dance between show numbers until the wee hours. In its traveling theatrical setting, it is more compact, featuring some 58 artists, and forgets the drinks. Regardless, it's a spectacle with four components: a live band, dancers, circus performers and the audience, which participates by dancing or joining the dancers onstage. The common denominator is Cali's salsa, which acts like a great equalizer bringing together myriad social classes under one roof.

"Our aim was to put on a show that allowed society to enjoy the talent of these artists who come from very low-income families," "Delirio" co-founder/producer Andrea Buenaventura says. "We wanted a show that would vindicate this form of popular culture."

In 2006, Buenaventura, an entrepreneur involved in the arts, met with three other like-minded women. All were interested in furthering the social and cultural development of Cali and saw an untapped opportunity in the city's 80-plus registered salsa schools. The academies, found mostly in middle-to-low income neighborhoods, train dancers from an early age, with many going on to win international competitions. This is the "Delirio" talent pool. The show holds two yearly auditions to recruit dancers and includes 27 choreographed numbers.

The challenge was transforming those choreographies into one cohesive, economically viable enterprise in capital reality shows in the region. Disney is also considering a possible release of "High School Musical: El Desafío" on TV, DVD or the Internet for the U.S. Hispanic market and Spain, Lerner says.

"High School Musical" has also opened a slew of new revenue streams in the region, including long-term mobile sponsorships, a traveling ice dancing show, CDs spawned from the local reality programs and concert tours. Latin America was the only international market to get an original-cast tour of the U.S. version of "High School Musical," and the casts from the reality shows have toured their own countries.

—Ayala Ben-Yehuda

Disney has produced feature-film versions of "High School Musical" for Argentina (shown) and Mexico. A Brazilian version is also planned.

Big Hit, Local Tastes
'THigh School Musical' Seeks New Latin-American Fans

Walt Disney's imminent release of two new film versions of "High School Musical" in Mexico and Argentina marks another expansion in the company's efforts to produce more localized content for international markets.

High School Musical: El Desafío" is the first Disney-branded feature film made in Latin America. It was produced entirely in triplets for Mexico, Argentina and Brazil (where filming hasn't yet begun), with three local casts, three distinct scripts and three versions of the soundtrack. The movie arrives in theaters July 17 in Argentina and Sept. 5 in Mexico.

Walt Disney Co. Latin America president Diego Lerner says the idea was not to compete with the original "High School Musical," but to take universal themes and apply them with local flavors. Original songs by Alejandro Lerner (no relation) are more reggaeton for Mexico and more pop for Argentina. Soccer and rugby replace basketball in the film as the school sport.

"We use expressions and terminology that are totally local... All the exteriors, all the music, all the songs describe situations of each country," he says. "It's not an adaptation of an American movie in Latin America. It's a local talent with a local story." The casts for each new version of the blockbuster hit were culled from reality shows that Disney produced in each market. (In Mexico and Argentina, the shows were co-produced with TV Azteca and Artear, respectively.) Unlike other Disney music releases, which are distributed by Universal, Disney Latin America partnered with Sony BMG for the local cast soundtracks because of the latter's experience in capital reality shows in the region. Disney is also considering a possible release of "High School Musical: El Desafío" on TV, DVD or the Internet for the U.S. Hispanic market and Spain, Lerner says.

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Zero Hour
Ecuador Initiative Could Wreak Havoc On Legal Music Biz

A move to decriminalize the sale of pirated CDs in Ecuador has recording industry members predicting doom for what little legitimate music sales are left in the country.

On June 20, the Ministry of Culture announced an agreement with representatives of the country's 15,000 "informal" vendors to tax imported blank CDs at 5 cents each. Of that sum, 3 cents would compensate songwriters and composers, and 2 cents would go into a fund to support national musical production, declared a law by a group of massive petitioners.

Under the program, the CDs' sale price would be regulated at $1 each. Attempts to contact the relevant agencies in Quito were unsuccessful, but in a statement on the Ministry of Culture's Web site, cultural minister Galo Mora stressed his government's decision "not to confiscate any product from the vendors and to guarantee Ecuadorians' right to work." The agreement, which has yet to become legal, now applies only to Ecuadorian songwriters and composers—and not to foreign musical works or movies.

But Gonzalo Jimenez, whose Discos MTM company licenses Warner product, estimates that just 300,000 CDs are sold legally in Ecuador per year—and the vast majority of music sales, legal and illegal, are from international acts.

"We can't compete with the price of $1, paying all the taxes and royalties," Jimenez says. It would also be practically impossible for the government to enforce which pirated recordings would be sold legally under the plan, especially if it doesn't confiscate product, according to Dr. Manuel Riera, director general of Ecuador's songwriters and composers' society SAYCE. "The[national] societies won't authorize use of the law on this way," Riera says. "We can't go through legal legitimize the robbery of copyright."

The government was scheduled to meet in the coming days with IFPI representatives as well as local writers and musicians to discuss the tax.

—Ayala Ben-Yehuda
No Middlemen Necessary

Crooked Fingers Take New Disc Direct To Indie Retail

When Eric Bachmann wrapped recording on the latest Crooked Fingers album, he sat down with manager Ben Dickey to plot out his next move. They considered re-signing with Merge, which had released several of his previous albums, and discussed other possible labels. Then they took a look at the numbers.

"The history of Crooked Fingers has been selling around 10,000 copies per album, at least for the last four records," Dickey says. "With that in mind, we decided that we might as well try to do something new and reach people in a more grass-roots way. We realized that we could sell a fraction of the number of copies the last albums sold and still be more profitable if we decided not to sign a label or distribution deal."

Bachmann himself was skeptical about signing another deal. "I don't know at this point where the point of being on a label is, unless you want to have a massive marketing machine behind you," the former Archers of Loaf frontman says. "Essentially that's what I'm giving up, but I never really had that anyway, so for me it doesn't make any sense."

Dickey and Bachmann eventually decided to sell "Forfeit/Fortune" to retail, without a distribution partner. The pair connected with A J Tobey, marketing manager for Flea Marketing, a promotion firm that specializes in indie retail.

"We decided to focus on a small handful of good indie record stores to get the project off the ground," Tobey says of the set, due Oct. 7. They initially selected 20 stores, based on past support of the band and the routing of an upcoming tour, but the number keeps growing. The record will also be sold at shows, through the Crooked Fingers Web site and via iTunes and other digital stores.

According to Bachmann, there will be several versions of the album available. "We'll have two versions of the CD," he says. "One is standard. We'll do vinyl through Foreign Leisure, a small label out of Chicago and Milwaukee. There will be a limited-edition deluxe version with a DVD and a CD, and a little bit of different artwork. If you order it online digitally as a download, you wouldn't get the DVD. The first so many people will get a bundle, too, like with a shirt and a hat. That's the typical stuff that labels are supposed to do but we're going to do it ourselves this time."

Bachmann certainly isn't the first artist to take the direct path. Untold numbers of small, unsigned bands have sold their albums on consignment to local stores, and bigger unsigned acts like Clap Your Hands Say Yeah have found success using Tumbleweed, the distribution arm of the Coalition of Independent Music Stores. (The group's two self-released albums have shifted 204,000 copies combined in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.) Dickey says, though, that he and Bachmann didn't look to any other bands for examples of how to implement the model successfully.

"They're definitely the first band of their stature to do something like this," says Ric Culross, manager of North Carolina's Schoolkids Records. "We are proud to be part of the first group selected to carry the record, although I do feel bad for the stores that were left in the cold. I'm excited, and I certainly hope they bring in more partners."

Erik Kowalski, manager of Milwaukee's Atomic Records, is likewise jazzed about being part of the release. "I'm all for artists trying to empower themselves and cut out the middlemen," he says. "I'd like to see more examples of people doing this before I say whether the strategy was a success or a failure, but I am looking forward to seeing how the experiment works."

Tobey adds that the relationships with record stores won't be limited to just stocking the physical product. "We are playing up the angle that the stores we've selected will be the only place to get the album physically," he says. "We also have posters, displays and listening posts going out, and we are hoping to get some in-stores organized."

For Bachmann, the only major downside of the experiment is the difficulty he will face getting his record overseas. "We don't have the international thing that a major label would have, like distribution in Europe," he says. "But I didn't have that when I was on Merge. I had to get my own deals. That hasn't really changed."

Additional reporting by Jonahhan Cohen.

For 24/7 Indies news and analysis, see billboard.biz/indies.

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‘Revolution’ Road

O.A.R. Reaps Benefits Of Touring Life

Fairly or not, O.A.R. has often been lumped into the “jam band” space occupied by such successful touring entities as Widespread Panic and String Cheese Incident. The group has even been referred to in some quarters as a junior Dave Matthews Band.

But given its reputation as a top-notch touring act and its open-taping policy, maybe that’s to be expected.

"With these guys it’s a road thing," says Dave Roberge, O.A.R.’s manager at Red Light. "That’s where they’re most comfortable and at ease and make themselves extremely accessible."

O.A.R.’s embrace of a fan-friendly business model and a hardcore, road-oriented work ethic is opening doors and generating added momentum for a steadily building recording career that’s been a decade in the making.

The band will be touring heavily in support of the July 15 debut of "All Sides" on Atlantic. Leadoff single "Shattered," and anticipation for the album itself, is garnering the band the kind of media attention that isn’t accustomed.

"They’ve written a record that has songs that are being embraced by these traditional gatekeepers that sometimes dictate the success or failure of a band, at least from a commercial standpoint," says Roberge, older brother of O.A.R. frontman Marc Roberge. "But [being embraced by these gatekeepers] has never dictated our success or failure on the road, which is a fortunate thing."

Many fans connect with O.A.R. because they sense "relatability," and, for lack of a better word, normalize Roberge says. "Some may see that as a hindrance in a business where your competitive advantage may be your heroin addiction," he adds. "But this band’s competitive advantage is the ability to win people over in the live setting and not have to necessarily rely on an album, even though they do write and make great records. It’s just one element that fuels the ‘machine,’ as the band refers to it."

O.A.R. is booked by Chip Hooper at Paradigm, known for his work in building the touring careers of such acts as Dave Matthews and Phish. "O.A.R. has been touring in a very methodical, strategic way for years, building every market in a thoughtful way," Hooper says. "We are always very careful to look for the best venue at the best time with the right ticket price every time they play a market. The results speak for themselves."

The results include sellouts in such famed venues as New York’s Madison Square Garden (chronicled on a 2007 Atlantic/Evenlive DVD), while adapting to a range of venues that includes large clubs, historic theaters and huge outdoor festivals like Bonnaroo.

"We might be playing Madison Square Garden, but we’re also playing a House of Blues or a Wiltern on the West Coast, or the Commodore Ballroom in Vancouver," Roberge says. "We’re different all over, and that’s one of the challenges that makes us all hungry. Maybe with a radio-first approach you see more of a consistency. With us, it’s recognizing we need different things in different places, so the strategies have to be different."

As O.A.R.’s only manager, Roberge remembers when the band graduated from Ohio State University and faced the choice of music or another career. "I sat them down and said the answer’s staring you in the face," he recalls. "If it’s not your choice. The fans made the choice for you, they want you to do this."

So the group has plugged away ever since, building a fan base region by region, by region, what Hooper and Roberge feel were the right strategic moves, not being greedy.

"We’ve worked really hard, we’ve put the right pieces in place, we did not skip steps," Roberge says. "We’re all about paying dues, whether it’s leaving money on the table or people out on the streets. It’s about making people really want something and building something real. And with that you have a great deal of patience. Now I feel like this is the band’s time."

O.A.R. wraps its summer tour with an Aug. 29-31 stand at the Gorge Amphitheatre in George, Wash., supporting Dave Matthews Band. The tour begins a fall headlining run of auditoriums, theaters, arenas and amphitheaters Sept. 11 in Portland, Maine.
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Perth Music Scene Prospers In Isolation

PERTH, Australia—Western Australia famously mines everything from coal to diamonds and gold. But lately, the capital of Australia’s largest state has struck a deep vein of a different sort: a booming music scene.

Although Perth is physically closer to Indonesia than to the Australian music industry hubs of Sydney and Melbourne, the coastal city’s acts are finding distance no barrier to the charts.

In May, Perth drum’n’bass act Pendulum saw its release “In Silico” (Warner Bros.) reach No. 2 on the U.K. albums chart, confirming the rising value of Western Australia’s musical commodities. Back home, local talent is thriving, bolstered by a combination of a strong work ethic, devoted fan bases and a supportive local government.

Perth’s isolation. Sydney-based Warner Music Australia VP of A&R Michael Parisi says, “gives its music a distinctive sound.” Removed from music industry machinations, acts “have no expectations, so they’re more eager to work,” he says.

Pendulum is now based in London (Billboard, June 7) and historically, many Perth acts have left for cities with stronger music biz infrastructures. But there’s plenty more talent at home, says Perth singer/songwriter/guitarist John Butler, whose rooty trio has enjoyed multiplatinum domestic success.

Perth’s music scene is “more a community than an industry, with bands cross-polinating and sharing gigs,” Butler says. That was key to his own development, he adds: “I couldn’t think of a better place to start!”

Phil Stevens, manager of Butler and country-hued Western Australia act the Waifs, says that local bands like Eskimo Joe, Jebediah, End of Fashion and Little Birdy “live in each other’s pockets, jam and write together...they’ve created a Perth sound.”

Popularized by Western Australia’s string of dynamic college radio stations, that sound—mostly a quirky take on blues-based guitar rock—is lapped up by fans starved of access to acts from the distant east coast.

PRIMED IN PERTH

Western Australian Acts With International Prospects

John Butler Trio

Current album: “Grand National” (Jarrah/MGM)

Booking agent: Phil Stevens Management (Australia), Paradigm (United States), Creative Artists Agency (United Kingdom)

The first of Perth’s current crop to find an overseas audience, the John Butler Trio has sold 116,000 copies in the United States of its 2004 album “Sunrise Over Sea” (Lava/Atlantic), according to Nielsen SoundScan. The act’s 2007 follow-up, “Grand National,” topped the Australian Record Industry Assn. chart and made the top 30 in France and Japan. Manager/agent Phil Stevens is scouting a new international deal, while the band plays European dates this month and then U.S. shows through Sept. 13. After that, Stevens says, Butler is “taking a six-month break to travel.”

The Sleepy Jackson

Luker Steele

Current album: “Personality—One Was a Spider, One Was a Bird” (Capitol/Universal, Australia; Astralwerks, United States; Virgin, United Kingdom)

Booking agent: Harbour Agency (Australia), Creative Artists Agency (United Kingdom, Europe, Asia), Monterey Peninsula Artists (North America)

Alternating between a pop/rock act the Sleepy Jackson’s widely profiled overseas breakthrough has yet to happen, although critically acclaimed sophomore album “Personality—One Was a Spider, One Was a Bird” (2006) hit Australia’s Australian Record Industry Assn. top 10. Meanwhile, band kingpin Luke Steele—often dubbed “Australia’s Brian Wilson”—is planning an Australian solo tour while working on two albums, one with dance act Pharoahe Monch, and another with Silverchair vocalist/guitarist Daniel Johns.

Eskimo Joe

Current album: “Black Fingernails, Red Wine” (Mushroom/Warner, Australia; Ryko disk, international)

Booking agent: IMC (Australia), United Artists (international)

After two No. 1 albums and domestic sales totaling 500,000 units, the rock outfit is starting work on its fifth record, due in early 2009. With it, Warner Music Australia VP of A&R Michael Parisi says, the band is “going to take the mantle from Silverchair or Powderfinger as Australia’s biggest rock band.”

—CE
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Pirates Of The Mediterranean

Spanish Biz Presents United Front Against File Sharing

MADRID—After years of inaction, the Spanish music industry is finally going on the offensive in a bid to curb digital piracy. The 88-strong labels group Promusicae and 91,200-member authors/publishers society SGAE, which rarely collaborate, are among the music and movie industry groups that joined to form the Coalition of Creators and Content Industries in June. The coalition’s aim? Persuade the new Spanish Socialist Party government of Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero to put pressure on Internet service providers (ISPs) to clamp down on illegal file sharing.

“The time has come for a change in mentality in Spain,” Promusicae president Antonio Guisasola says. “The new government is aware of what is going on in France and the U.K.,” he notes (see March 15), “and seems concerned that it must do something in this [four-year] term.”

However, SGAE corporate relations director Pedro Farré warns that there is a “fundamental difference” between Spain and its neighbors.

“In France and the U.K., the government has insisted that ISPs sit down and talk,” he says. “Here, the telecom groups don’t feel obliged to negotiate.”

Previous music biz anti-digital piracy activity in Spain has been limited to public awareness campaigns, and earlier music biz requests for government action have led to nothing, although executives credit the previous administration with reducing physical piracy through more effective policing.

But peer-to-peer (P2P) file sharing remains rampant, with Promusicae claiming that the number of tracks downloaded illegally soared from $80 million in 2005 to 800 million in 2006 and 1.2 billion in 2007. Guisasola says it could hit 1.8 billion this year.

Meanwhile, the legal download market has failed to take off, with just 17 million tracks downloaded legally in 2007, according to Promusicae. Mobile sales accounted for 71% of the $25 million digital music market in 2007, according to the IFPI.

Farré says the coalition has already met culture and industry ministry officials, demanding that Zapatero take an active role in backing anti-piracy measures in the manner of French President Nicolas Sarkozy.

“That way, he can persuade [Spanish telecom group] Telefónica to talk seriously with the coalition to elaborate a new legal model,” he says. A spokesman for the Spanish government’s ministry of the presidency confirms coalition talks with the government, including Nieves Goikoaitea, the ministry’s secretary of state for communication. The spokesman declined to comment further while talks are at such an early stage.

There have also been clandestine talks between the coalition and ISP telecom group Redtel. Neither Redtel nor Telefónica—which has an 80% share of Spain’s ISP market—had returned calls by press time, but Redtel sources confirm the talks, saying negotiations began “with the aim of reaching an agreement.”

Similar talks last year ended in failure, leading Promusicae and SGAE to form its unprecedented alliance. Spain’s major labels, under the Promusicae umbrella, have also launched their first big anti-piracy court case with a $20 million lawsuit against P2P company MP2P, while the government belatedly approved a digital tax on MP3 players and other gadgets to compensate authors and creators for money lost to private copying (billboard.biz, June 23).

“We knew we needed more weight to demand action from the government,” Guisasola says of the change in stance. “The other side is very strong, with Internet user groups highly vocal in their opposition to any legal anti-piracy framework and Telefónica well-organized. We said, ‘Let’s combine our strength.’”

Farré says the decision by SGAE and Promusicae to work together indicates “that the time has come for real action.”

>

>> EMI FUSES WITH FUSION

EMI Music Canada has inked a deal with Montreal-based Distribution Fusion III that both companies say will target “growth, customer service and enhancement to artist and label services.” The deal will see EMI assume fulfillment responsibilities for Fusion’s new retail and catalog business in physical and digital releases throughout Canada, taking over warehousing and administrative duties. EMI will also provide TV/film synchronization and music placement services for Fusion and office space in Toronto. Fusion will be able to use EMI’s distribution outside of Canada. The indie largely focuses on non-Canadian repertoire but also owns roots/alternative imprint Secret City Records, home to Patrick Watson and Plants & Animals, plus jazz label Justin Time Records.

—Robert Thompson

>> 7DIGITAL SALES RISE

British-based digital music service provider 7digital.com claims a 300% rise in first-half 2008 sales of MP3-format tracks compared with the same period in 2007, thanks largely to the rollout of Warner Music and EMI’s libraries as digital rights management-free downloads. However, 7digital.com did not specify how many DRM-free downloads it sold. The company says it registered a 130% rise in traffic to the site since January; almost 2 million Internet users visit the site each month. The company says its three best-selling albums in the MP3 format so far this year are Coldplay’s “Viva la Vida or Death and All His Friends” (Parlophone), Kylie Minogue’s “X” (Parlophone) and Radiohead’s “In Rainbows” (XL).

—Lars Brandle

>> OASIS STRIKES SILVER

Oasis took home the top prize at the 02 Silver Clef Awards in London. Band members Noel Gallagher, Gem Archer and Andy Bell picked up the Silver Clef award July 4 at the Park Lane Hilton hotel during the annual ceremony that benefits the Nordoff-Robbins Music Therapy charity. Veteran English new wave act Squeeze collected the event’s Icon Award, while Canada’s Bryan Adams collected an award as “ambassador of rock.” Other honors went to Scottish singer/songwriter Amy Macdonald (HMV newcomer of the year), the Fratellis (best British band); Meat Loaf (international award), Estelle (download of the year) and violinist Nicola Benedetti (PPL classical award).

—Mark Sutherland

>> O2 GETS THE POINT

Dublin’s refurbished Point Theatre is to be rebranded as the O2 when it reopens this December. The naming-rights deal is part of a strategic brand alliance forged between the venue’s owners, Live Nation and property developer Harry Crosbie, and mobile services firm Telefónica O2 Ireland. In a statement, Live Nation Ireland CEO Mike Adamson said: “This partnership harnessed the power of O2’s 1.6 million customer database in Ireland, which we expect to drive incremental ticket sales and create a larger customer base for Live Nation concerts in the country moving forward.” The renovated 13,000-seat O2 Dublin is expected to host up to 150 events each year.

—LB

>> POLARIS SHORTLIST LAUNCHES

The 10-album shortlist for Canada’s third annual Polaris Music Prize has been unveiled. The award, which is modeled after the United Kingdom’s Mercury Music Prize, is designed to recognize the year’s best domestic album, with the winner taking home a $20,000 Canadian ($19,592) check. The nominees are Black Mountain’s “In the Future” (Jagajawu), Basia Bulat’s “Oh, My Darling” (Rough Trade US), Carbou’s “Andorra” (Merge), Karpovsky’s “A Winged Victory for the Sullen” (Maple Music), Holy Fuck’s “LP” (Dependent), Plants & Animals’ “Parc Avenue” (Secret City), Shad’s “The Old Prince” (Black Box), Stars’ “In Our Bedroom After the War” (Arts & Crafts), Two Hours Traffic’s “Little Jabs” (Bumstead) and the Weakthans’ “Reunion Tour” (Anti / Epitaph). The winner will be announced Sept. 29 at a gala concert in Toronto.
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Congestion Ahead

ISPs Seek Ways To Cope With Bandwidth Demands

Here's a chilling thought for content companies: The very backbone of the entertainment industry's future—the Internet—is at risk of breaking down. At least, that's what some Internet service providers seem to think. According to a recent study by IDC conducted on behalf of telecom software firm Tellabs, 51% of telecom executives surveyed believe the rising demands on bandwidth will eventually overwhelm the Internet. Of them, one in four think it's going to happen in the next two years. The primary culprit? Online streaming video and the downloading of huge movie files from pirate BitTorrent trackers. How ISPs go about solving their network congestion problems is shaping up to be the No. 1 digital entertainment issue of the year ahead, and the music industry would be well-served to tread carefully in its efforts to influence the result. The outcome will have profound implications for the fight against piracy and efforts to establish a music surcharge on Internet accounts, not to mention the business model of every music-related innovation on the Web today.

Most ISPs surveyed in the IDC study—86%—say they've got a plan to deal with network congestion. But all of these plans share one common trait—consumers and Internet watchdog groups hate them. The first idea to emerge was to charge media companies and Web services premium fees for guaranteed fast lanes to their content. The Net neutrality movement quickly emerged to oppose any such move and began lobbying for legislation to outlaw it, saying it would allow big media companies to force out the smaller, less affluent media companies and essentially turn the Internet into TV. Alternative proposals since then haven't fared much better. Take traffic prioritization, something that 32% of the ISPs with a plan say is their preferred solution. The idea here is to use something called "deep packet inspection" to monitor what kind of content or data users are accessing via their networks, and then delay certain types of traffic in order to clear the lanes for more important types. This is what got Comcast in trouble earlier this year when it began delaying all traffic on its network using the BitTorrent protocol. Sure, BitTorrent technology is used to illegally download movies, music, and photos from the Internet, but it's also used for legitimate purposes as well.

Once news of this practice got out, tech bloggers' heads exploded in unison and Comcast found itself the subject of an FCC investigation. But even if Comcast had monitored its traffic more closely to delay only piracy traffic, the backlash would have been just as bad. The mere thought of an ISP monitoring what its customers are doing on its networks raises all kinds of privacy issues, none of them good.

Another 24% of those ISPs with plans to alleviate Internet congestion fee charging customers who use more bandwidth is the right move. Time Warner is the poster child for this angle in the United States. It recently began testing a tiered pricing model in Beaumont, Texas—$30 per month for basic Internet speeds and 5 GB worth of downloads or $55 per month for faster speeds and 40 GB. The strategy has its supporters, including Mark Ganeirin, CEO of Web consulting and metrics firm Wiredset. "If I know I could pay for more of a wider pipe that I know was not going to be interfered with and my bill scaled with my bandwidth usage, it's not ideal but I'd pay for that privilege," he says.

Networks say the practice is merely a move to restrict traffic artificially in order to fit more customers into the network and raise prices. And since ISPs operate largely in independent areas (many areas have only one choice of provider), customers have little choice but to comply. Whatever ISPs ultimately end up doing to address network congestion, their actions will affect all entertainment providers that rely on clear Internet traffic lanes.

"Bandwidth is not infinite," IDC group VP/GM of network infrastructure and security products and services Lee Doyle said in a statement unveiling the study results. "Unless there is sufficient investment into new infrastructure, the increased bandwidth demands of new advanced services could well outstrip capacity."

A broken Internet would have huge implications for the music industry. Revenue from digital downloads is expected to overtake physical CD sales within the next five years, according to Forrester Research. And according to a Pew Internet survey in May, 56% of respondents who bought music last year used the Internet in some form to influence their purchasing decision. That's less than the 83% who say they find out about music from hearing it on the radio or on TV and the 64% who say they find out about music from friends. But there's no doubt that the Internet remains a valuable resource for music discovery, acquisition, and other forms of monetization. Yet another broken channel is more than this industry can afford.

EASY ADJUSTMENTS
There are touch-screen MP3 players and touch-screen phones. Now, there are touch-screen speakers. The modestly named company Genius introduced its 2.0 Touch Speaker System that features a touch-sensitive control panel to adjust elements like volume, bass and treble, all from the front of the speaker. The compact speakers are designed for laptop computers or other portable devices, featuring 30 watts of sound. They also include a headphone jack, audio cable and mute button. The touch speakers are available via Amazon and other online retailers for $100.

BITS & BRIEFS
FLY LIKE AN EAGLE
FlyTunes, a mobile content network that extends digital broadcasts to mobile phones, has teamed up with Entercom Communications to stream radio stations to mobile phones. Entercom outlets in Seattle and San Francisco are the first to be made available, with others added in the next three months. Entercom has more than 110 stations in 23 markets. The FlyTunes service is available on most smart phones, including the iPhone.

NEW SPACE
The online hip-hop community CrackSpace has re-launched as ihiphop.com. The new site adds streaming music, videos, news, discussion groups and social networking tools, as well as user profile widgets, video chat, blog entries and a hip-hop wiki page designed to be a repository of hip-hop news and history. Additionally, the new site has added an extension that allows users to post their profile widget on Facebook pages. It also will sell ringtones, CDs, DVDs and other merchandise. The site launches with an installed base of 800,000 users.

RED LETTER DAY
The RED charity created to fight AIDS in Africa has added a music subscription service to its fund-raising quiver. For $5 per month, subscribers will get three exclusive tracks from such participating acts as U2 and Elton John, as well as music from more emerging artists. PassAlong Networks will provide the service's back-end technology. Half of proceeds will go to the charity.
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NEW KID ON THE BLOCK
Marketing Veteran Takes Over At EMI

Selling music is not the same as selling mustard, air freshener or cleaning products.

And that presents an unusual challenge for Elio Leoni-Sceti, the incoming CEO of EMI's recorded music division, who has no prior experience in the music industry but spent 16 years as a branding and marketing executive at Reckitt Benckiser, parent of Spray 'n Wash, Lysol, Woolite, French's, Airwick and other household brands.

"Music is very different," Leoni-Sceti says. "You need to be humble about understanding the business. If I came in trying to work with artists they way I worked with brands before, it would be foolish of me."

The 42-year-old Rome native was most recently Reckitt Benckiser's executive VP of Europe and was previously the company's global head of category. Sources at the company are quick to praise his big picture vision and ability to absorb information quickly. Despite his low profile outside Reckitt Benckiser, many regarded him as a decent long-term bet to one day lead the company.

"He's really smart," is a typical comment. "The guy's a star."

Whether he'll be able to deal with stars of the rock and pop variety, however, will help determine whether he'll be able to turn around EMI Music. At a time when EMI acts like Coldplay and Katy Perry are enjoying chart success, it is perhaps telling that Leoni-Sceti doesn't mention a single EMI artist by name during an interview with Billboard.

Ruth Mortimer, editor of Britain's Brand Strategy magazine, says that Leoni-Sceti "has a strong background in marketing in a competitive area with very tight margins, so [EMI Group chairman Guy] Hands must be hoping that he will be able to translate this experience to EMI."

But Leoni-Sceti himself says such methods may not transfer to the music industry. "Here, every song, every artist has a life of its own," he says. "But there is learning that can be reapplied and a mind-set that can be used. Any industry needs to [respond to] consumer change. And the consumer of music's needs have changed — in the way they buy, the way [music] should be distributed to them, where they want to find it and in what quality they want to find it ... the mind-set that I bring from consumer goods is to understand where the consumer wants to go and then project the position of the company [to] where the consumer will be."

He declines to mention specific campaigns or brands from his past that will influence his approach at EMI, declaring that Reckitt Benckiser's culture of constant innovation was responsible for its success.

He says branding will be "part of the solu-

Listen To The Brand
Music And Marketing Moves Beyond Licensing

Convulsive change is something that the music business and the advertising industry have in common. It's also something that's drawing them together.

As labels grapple with sliding sales of recorded music, marketers are scrambling to keep up with the fragmentation of consumers among new media platforms. And both are turning to branding campaigns incorporating music as a way to address some of their challenges.

"It's about the ability of brands to incorporate a much deeper association with artists that give their campaigns a deeper ring," says Jon Cohen, co-president/co-founder of Cornerstone Promotion, which has paired such brands as Converse and Caress with musicians like Pharrell and Nicole Scherzinger from the Pussycat Dolls. "It's not only a greater source of revenue but a way to leverage marketing budgets when music budgets are shrinking."

Music helps brands reach consumers in a way "that is not forced or contrived," says Campbell Brown, VP/director of Southern Comfort Americas, which stages the annual SoCo Music Experience festival that this year will feature such acts as Common, Gnarls Barkley and the Roots. "The conversations with artists are much easier today than they were even three years ago. There's more of an open dialogue on 'How do we make things work?'

RealNetworks' music subscription service Rhapsody provided a boost to Epic recording artist Sara Bareilles, whose single "Love Song" peaked at No. 4 on the Billboard Hot 100 after being featured in a Rhapsody TV spot that began running last December. But being in a

spot doesn't always deliver a sizable sales bump, requiring Rhapsody to manage the expectations of managers and bands that it deals with, according to Neil Smith, the company's marketing VP.

"We have to set expectations," he says. "Sara Bareilles doesn't happen every time."

A recent turning point in getting more artists comfortable with licensing their music to big-budget branding campaigns came when McDonald's used the Shins' "New Slang" in a spot that ran during the 2002 Olympics, according to Gabe McDonough, a music producer at DDB in Chicago who formerly worked in licensing at Thrill Jockey Records.

Earlier this year, McDonough helped put Santogold's "Lights Out" into a Bud Light Lime campaign that also had an exclusive remix released on the beer maker's Web site.

"The record labels are big corporations and the brands are big corporations," he says. "If you're going to have a corpora-

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"You need to be humble about understanding the business. If I came in trying to work with artists the way I worked with brands before, it would be foolish of me."

—ELIO LEONI-SCETI

"So it's a brilliant choice to have someone on the front line of the consumer brand relationship. As long as Leoni-Sceti keeps the pedigree of the music origination people and lets them do their job, everything should be fine."

Despite grumblings in the media about his lack of music experience, Leoni-Sceti's appointment, which had been widely rumored, was greeted with little more than a shrug by many at EMI, still reeling from the departure of most of its top music executives—and the recruitment of several new managers from outside the biz—under Hands' restructuring.

"It's very early to complain," jokes Leoni-Sceti, who will join EMI in October. "They've not met me, they don't know who I am or how I act yet. The motivation of people will come from a clear vision that delivers success and from clarity about what we are here to do—a company mission that stands for adding value."

As for whether he's confident of delivering that success in a climate where the music biz in general, and EMI in particular, is struggling to stand still, never mind grow, Leoni-Sceti has no doubts. "Would I have taken this role if I wasn't?" he asks.

Additional reporting by Ed Christian.

MAKING THE GRADE
Taking Stock Of Recent Branding Campaigns

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<td>For its inspired by the Artists... Worn by You back-to-school campaign, the retailer is pairing with musicians and brands: Kravitz and Levi's, Avril Lavigne designing Abbey Dawn, Mayde Panettiere and Candle's, and Plain White T's and Urban Pipeline, among others. Kravitz wears Levi's 511 while singing &quot;Love Revolution&quot; in the first of several spots starring the artists. All of the artists, except for Kravitz, seem age and attitude appropriate for the back-to-school set.</td>
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<td>CORONA</td>
<td>Kenny Chesney</td>
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<td>Country rocker Chesney is laid-back for longtime tour sponsor Corona in this spot that ran during this year's Academy of Country Music Awards. Chesney plays &quot;Old Blue Chair&quot; and is seen sitting in, yes, an old blue chair. This is the right mix of brand and star.</td>
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<td>Rhapsody</td>
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<td>Rhapsody is planning on using footage from a music video or a live performance for a campaign set to launch this quarter. It remains unclear which song the frontline for chart-topper Death Cab for Cutie will perform.</td>
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<td>BUD LIGHT</td>
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<td>Santogold released her debut album on the same day that a campaign for Bud Light Lime featuring her song &quot;Lights Out&quot; began airing. The beer maker then put up a remix of it on its Web site offering a nice incentive for fans who wanted more.</td>
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In The Groove
Growing Vinyl Sales Requires Restraint

I can't tell you how many conversations I have had about vinyl in the last month.

One day a major label called, asking for help in researching vinyl. Another major asked me, "How does anyone make money on vinyl?" While later that day, a retailer mentioned how profitable vinyl is. I had a couple of independent retailers complaining to me that key titles should always be available on vinyl, while a couple of indie distributors said they would never do that.

And independents complained to me about the big-box incursion into vinyl, i.e., Borders, Fred Meyer and Best Buy's exclusive on Judas Priest's "Nostradamus." Unbeknownst to those indie merchants, and undoubtedly much to their chagrin, I have even had a major speculate out loud to me about whether the majors should forgo one-way sales of vinyl—a policy in place since the late '80s—and allow returns, in order to induce other big-box players into stocking vinyl.

While I love the renewed vinyl vitality, aren't we getting just a tad ahead of ourselves? Let's not forget that vinyl is an indie phenomenon, and it will never break out to the masses again.

I believe sales are stronger than recent data seems to indicate. According to Nielsen SoundScan, vinyl album scans totaled 603,000 units in the first half of the year, up 77% from a year earlier. While I have reverence for SoundScan and consider it an incredible tool to gauge the marketplace, vinyl sales may be even higher than that total, due to indie retailers who don't report their numbers.

For full-year 2007, SoundScan counted 990,000 vinyl albums scanned in the United States, or 0.2% of last year's total of 500.5 million in album scans. Meanwhile, the RIAA counted 1.3 million in vinyl album shipments. When I was researching the vinyl story that appeared on the Nov. 17 cover of Billboard last year, my informal survey of U.S. vinyl manufacturers and a vinyl broker that represented some foreign manufacturers found 13 million albums were pressed last year as of the end of October. Who knows how much of that stayed in the States, but it would seem to suggest that actual U.S. vinyl album sales may have been greater than the reported numbers.

In short, the major labels' efforts to try to see how much they can grow and sustain this niche, without having it blow up in the indie retailers' faces. Or as Vintage Vinyl's Rob Roth puts it: "I don't care if they fuck up their shit. I don't want them fucking up my shit."
George Martin is superlative as, well, super. He produced almost all of the Beatles’ recordings, acting as a mentor to John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr during their careers. Beyond his formidable track record with the Fab Four, he’s also worked with Gerry & the Pacemakers, Jeff Beck, America, Cheap Trick and other acts. He’s won six Grammy Awards, including two for “Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band,” and is a recipient of the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award. He was knighted by Queen Elizabeth in 1996. In 2006, working with his son, Giles Martin, he helped develop the Beatles-inspired Cirque du Soleil show “Love” in Las Vegas, which went on to win him his most recent two Grammys.

But Martin, 82, has moved on to his next act. He’s working with PBS and Wildheart Entertainment to film “On Record: The Soundtrack of Our Lives,” a documentary series with the ambitious aim of chronicling the history of recorded music and its impact on society. It will feature archival performances and interviews with artists from all genres, including Enrico Caruso, Louis Armstrong, Frank Sinatra, Loretta Lynn and Jay-Z. It will air in the fall of 2010.

In Los Angeles to be honored by the Recording Academy July 12 at its annual Grammy Foundation Starr Night benefit, Martin sat down with Billboard to talk about the Beatles, the rigors of creating an eight-hour documentary series and the future of the music industry.

How did you come to be involved with “On Record”?

I guess it’s been about five years—I’ve done quite a lot already. It’s a big project, enormous. And it’s a very important project, I think. I don’t think there’s anything quite like it that’s been done before. It was [Wildheart executives] Max Langer and Michele [Langstaff] who came to me and spoke about this. They had seen my career and realized that my career had filled up, really, half of the history of recording. Recording started at the beginning of the 20th century, and here we are in the 21st century. I started recording in 1950, which was exactly halfway through. I was very interested in the background and the history of how sound recording developed. It was a profound business—that suddenly, for the first time, people could hear other people on record. It’s difficult for us to comprehend what that meant. Before then, nobody ever heard music, unless it was there [live]. It was a fundamental change. I think every bit as important as the invention of the motor car. It changed our lives and, in fact, it affected us so much that we cannot imagine music being absent from our lives. It’s there constantly. Probably too much now.

You think so? How can you have too much music?

I think if you’ve got an iPod and you’re walking across a busy street and ignoring all the traffic...[laughs]

Speaking of iPods, do you know when the Beatles will make their catalog available online? It’s still under discussion, and nothing has been determined yet. I think it’s inevitable that sooner or later the Beatles will be available, but it’s got to be on their terms, really. I think that’s the essence of it. There’s so much piracy, there’s so much illegal downloading. In that way, we’re devaluing our history. Young people now say to themselves, “This stuff is free and it should be free. Why should we have to pay for music? Music is free, isn’t it?” And that in itself is a belief that shouldn’t be there and is encouraged by Internet downloading.

The Beatles did finally relent and allowed their music to be used in the Cirque du Soleil show “Love” at the Mirage casino in Las Vegas. How did that project come together?

Cirque du Soleil is an amazing organization. The whole show came about because of two factors: one was a white tiger, and the other was the Formula One motor racing circuit...[laughs]...Now how do you get those? George Harrison was a friend of Cirque du Soleil founder/CEO Guy Laliberte because they were both motor racing fans. They met on the circuit and Guy said, “Why can’t we have the Beatles in a show?” And George said, “Well, you’ve got to convince the others.” And it was left like that.

The other thing was...in Las Vegas there was a great show by Siegfried & Roy and Roy got his neck bitten up by a white tiger. They closed and the [showroom] was empty and they not only had to find something quick, but they had to find something very, very good that would last. Cirque du Soleil eventually managed to get the Beatles to agree to a having a show. The Beatles had to say to Cirque du Soleil, “Well, it will have to have our voices. We don’t want other people singing our songs.” And gradually, it took me three years working on it—but it was worth it. And they do death-defying stunts on every performance. It’s amazing, really.

This year marks the 45th anniversary of the Beatles’ first album, “Please Please Me.” What’s your most vivid memory from that recording session?
The fact that we did it in one day.

Was it a long day?
Yes, you could say that. It was a day that lasted three weeks, actually...[laughs]...We started at about 10 in the morning, and we finished at about 11 at night. The last song we did was “Twist and Shout,” and I didn’t do it earlier because I knew John wouldn’t have any voice left. We did 11 songs in 11 hours. It was really a run-through. I’d seen them working in the Cavern in Liverpool, and I’d seen them other places, so I said, “Let’s just run through what you do at an act and record it.” I needed that album out quickly, so that was why I did it [that way].

People often mention how quickly the Beatles worked when they wrote and recorded—was that a blessing or a curse for you as a producer?
You had to be on your toes to get a good sound. It was easy for them because they were doing stuff they had done time and again. There was no question of rehearsal or anything—it was there for them. It was just like doing a broadcast that lasted 11 hours.

Given your ties with EMI through the years, what has it been like to see the company and its financial struggles recently?
I’m very sad. EMI was a fantastic organization. It’s gone through so many changes, and now it’s been bought up by a venture capitalist company called Terra Firma. They’re trying to make something of it, but it’s a sad time for the record business generally because of what we’ve said about the Internet and piracy and so on. I wish them well. I hope they’re able to pull through.

I’ve met Guy Hands, who runs EMI, and he knows the problems and he’s trying to tackle them. He certainly has my support because it’s too valuable of a business to lose. It’s been there for 100 years. Abbey Road was my university.

Where will the music industry be in 10 years?
I think the Internet and downloading will be sorted out in a sensible way by 10 years’ time. And I think music will be prospering. I really do. There’s an awful lot of talent out there, an awful lot of good people waiting to come up—maybe too much, because competition is very fierce. But there are more performances now than there’s ever been. I’m very optimistic about the future, and I wish everybody well. If they could have half the luck I’ve had, they’ll be all right.
With A New Album Dropping And A Sweet Spot On The Mayhem Tour, Slipknot Reveals The Method To Its Madness

BY MITCHELL PETERS | PHOTOGRAPHS BY P. R. BROWN

The moment is burned into the mind of Roadrunner Records president Jonas Nachsin.

It was 1999, and his label had convinced Ozzfest organizers to put its newly signed band, Slipknot, on the festival's second stage.

Curious to see the hand in action before its debut album dropped, Nachsin took a drive to New Jersey, where Ozzfest was playing at the PNC Bank Arts Center in Holmdel. While hard rock acts Black Sabbath, Slayer, Rob Zombie, System of a Down, Deftones and Godsmack attracted the masses, then-unknown Slipknot took the side stage before a respectable audience of about 200.

And then, Slipknot ripped into its set.

"People were running down the hill," Nachsin recalls. "They heard this cacophonous noise in the background and decided that they literally needed to run and go see what was going on. Those moments are incredibly rare, not just in hard rock or metal, but in music in general."

Nearly a decade after its debut at Ozzfest, Grammy Award winner Slipknot has moved to the top of its genre, where the act is now co-headlining one of this summer's most anticipated hard rock tours, the inaugural Rockstar Energy Drink Mayhem Festival, which launched July 9 at the White River Amphitheatre in Auburn, Wash. The timing of the 30-date Mayhem trek couldn't arrive at a better time for Slipknot, which will release its fourth studio album, "All Hope Is Gone," Aug. 26 via Roadrunner.

But exposure from the tour, which wraps Aug. 19, is only one piece of the puzzle in the overall marketing scheme—which includes deals with AOL, Hot Topic, MTV and yes, teasers for the band members' new masks—to push "All Hope Is Gone" to a global audience.

While label and management mull new ideas to reach maximum earning potential for the new album, Slipknot vocalist Corey Taylor is committed to doing his part as well.

"I've spent the last four- and a-half months getting in shape for the tour, because I want to come right out and destroy shit," Taylor says. "I want to come out on fire from the first show, like we never missed a beat and just got tighter and better."

The decision to place Slipknot alongside rock act Disturbed as a headliner wasn't difficult, says John Reese, who is producing Mayhem alongside Van Warped tour founder Kevin Lyman, Creative Artists Agency (CAA) agent Darryl Eaton and Live Nation CEO of North American music Jason Garner.

"When [Lyman] and I discussed doing this tour, the first thing off my tongue was 'Slipknot,' " Reese says. "From a standpoint of what we're trying to do with this festival, they were a catalyst for us to approach."

And Taylor is excited to show off the band's new material onstage. He believes that Slipknot has matured emotionally and musically since 2004's "Vol: 3: The Subliminal Verses," which debuted at No. 2 on the Billboard 200 and has moved 1.4 million units, according to Nielsen SoundScan. For "All Hope Is Gone," the nine-piece recorded for the first time in its home state of Iowa at Sound Farm, about 40 minutes outside of Des Moines, with producer Dave Fortman. "The songwriting is stronger," Taylor says. "It's not a million miles a minute with a bunch of screaming and all that crap." Even so, "the chaos is there but it's done in a more constrained way."

While "All Hope Is Gone" still maintains Slipknot's overall heaviness, dizzying guitar solos and double bass pedal madness, the set finds Taylor and mask-clad bandmates Sid Wilson, Joey Jordison, Paul Gray, Chris Fehn, Jim Root, Craig "133" Jones, Shawn "Clown" Crahan and Mick Thomson—who are often referred to by fans as numbers zero through eight—experimenting with melodic overtones, which are best heard on tracks like "Vendetta," "Snuff" and "Dead Memories."

The expanded sound on the new album should help strengthen Nachsin's argument that Slipknot isn't strictly a "heavy band. We have to constantly remind people that if Slipknot was a metal band, they would've sold 100,000 records and not $5 million," he says.

"All Hope Is Gone" became available for pre-order via iTunes July 8 for $12.99. Those opting in to purchase the album early
From top to bottom, left to right, are CRAIG '133' JONES (#5), MICK THOMSON (#7), SHAWN 'CLOWN' CRAHAN (#6), PAUL GRAY (#2) and JOEY JORDISON (#1).
will immediately receive a free download of first single “Psychosocial.” For the Aug. 26 release, Roadrunner will simulta-
nuously issue two versions of the set. One will be the regular album, while the second, priced at $24.98, will contain a
CD/DVD with two new bonus tracks (“Child of Burning Time,” “Til We Die”) and a remix of an older song (“Vermillion Pt. 2”).
The 45-minute DVD, directed by Crahan, will feature footage behind the making of “All Hope Is Gone.”

Although four years have passed since Vol. 3, Slipknot has remained visible in the public’s eye and among its rabid fan base,
known affectionately as the Muggrots. (Taylor: “They’re the ani-
mals feeding off of the meat.”)

After finishing its 2005 tour in support of “Vol. 3,” which grossed $4 million, Slipknot’s next tour dates and shows reported to Billboard Box-
score—some of Slipknot’s nine members took a break to focus on other musical projects. Taylor and Slipknot guitarist Root’s other band, alternative rock act Stone Sour, spent the next two
and-a-half years promoting the band’s sophomore release, “Come What(ever) May,” which has shifted 666,000 copies, according to SoundScan. The 2006 Roadrunner tour also debuted No. 4 on the Billboard 200, spanning single “Through Glass,” which spent three weeks at No. 2 on the Modern Rock chart.

While Stone Sour’s success helped keep Taylor and Root in the spotlight, Slipknot was also kept alive through two releases: a live album in 2005, “9.0: Live,” followed a year later by Crahan-directed film “Fangoria Presents Slipknot: A Fan},
hinting behind-the-scenes imagery of the band on tour and exclusive unmasked interviews with most of Slipknot’s members. The re-
leases went on to sell 296,000 and 98,000 copies, respectively, ac-
cording to SoundScan.

Additionally, Slipknot’s “Before I Forget,” a cut from “Vol. 3,” was featured on “Guitar Hero III,” exposing the band to a younger generation of music fans. Since the videogame’s release last No-

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**HEAT-MEAL MERCHANTS**

Slipknot’s rise as a face- and music-commerce provider is a testament to their ability to attract fans and turn them into customers. Their merchandise line is extensive, ranging from T-shirts and hoodies to hats, beanies, and more. The band’s success in this area has allowed them to consistently sell out merchandise, often well in advance of tour dates.

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**‘TATTERED AND TORN’ AND READY TO WEAR**

Slipknot will join the ranks of such artists as Kiss, Metallica, and Soundgarden, following their lead in the tour, merch, and fan experience. Their latest tour, “Psychosocial,” has been met with incredible fan response, selling out venues across the country.

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**‘The Kid’ says...**

“They want to show the world that they support this band and are a part of this culture.”

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**Mech, including T-shirts and hoodies, is...**

Slipknot’s revenue leader. They are a symbol of the band’s culture and a way for fans to express their support and fandom.

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**About $10 and the act’s masks are priced between $29.99 and $49, depending on the complexity. Other products, such as hats and backpacks, are run $19.95-$39.99. Bennett says Slipknot sells products consistently at retail, regardless of whether the band is promoting a new album or tour. “It proves what a strong fan base they have,” he says. But of all the merchandise Slipknot offers to its “Muggrots” fans, the band refers to it as “the nucleus.” Shirts and sweatshirts, which are a heavy part of the merchandise mix, are a way for fans to express their support and fandom. These items are available on Slipknot’s official website and at various retail locations worldwide.”

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**The video for “Psychosocial” will premiere July 18 on MTV’s new Friday night series, “FNTV.” As of this promotion, MTV will play the video 40 times across the network in the week following the show. While live TV performances are still being pitched in the Stades, Slipknot will follow the Aug. 25 international release of “All Hope Is Gone” with two TV performances in Europe. The act is scheduled to appear Aug. 26 on Virgin TV in France, fol-

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**SOURCE:** The Billboard 200 through the July 12 chart. Sales through the week ending June 20.
FESTIVALS IN FLUX

Boom Times Come To An End As Economic Concerns Weigh On Producers
By Ray Waddell

AEG's inaugural fest in Rothbury, Mich., took place during the Fourth of July weekend.
UST PAST THE halfway point of 2008, attendance at the major North American music festivals has been a mixed bag. Coachella was down significantly, country events Stagecoach and the Country Music Assn. Music Fest rose substantially, Bonnaroo was short of a sellout, Lollapalooza is up, V-Fest onpar, Mile High "off the hook," Rothbury braced to lose money, All Points West strong, Pemberton headed toward a sellout. Outside Lands doing well, and Austin City Limits (ACL) again sold out.

Five of these festivals were launched this year, all by established promoter/producers. But such an aggressive market will not stand for 2009. With the economy increasingly becoming a concern, and the fears of consumers reaching a festival saturation point, producers are not as bullish as they were even a year ago, and the pace of the festival land rush will likely slow for a while.

"There are a few opportunities out there we're looking at, but I'm not real bullish about launching a new festival, especially jumping right into a three-day massive festival," says Charlie Walker, partner in C3 Presents, producer of Lollapalooza and ACL. "I would like to get through the presidential election and see what's going to happen with the economy before we start planting million-dollar seeds around." Likewise, AEG Live—the Coachella, Stagecoach and JazzFest producer that launched Mile High in Denver, Rothbury in Michigan and All Points West in Jersey City, N.J., this year—currently does not have any plans to launch a festival in 2009.

"We're going to work toward making what we already have bigger, better and more successful," CEO Randy Phillips says. "One thing about AEG Live, though. It is certainly an opportunistic company. So if the right opportu-
CLOUDS GATHER OVER U.K. FESTIVAL SEASON

Smaller Festivals Are The First To Feel The Pinch From increased Competition: By Lars Brandle

LONDON—The sun may have shone on this year’s Glastonbury festival, but some promoters are pondering whether the U.K. festival sector faces stormy times ahead.

While big events like the Reading, Leeds and V festivals have seen sales successes, a handful of smaller festivals quietly bit the dust during 2008. And even Glastonbury itself was unable to put up the “sold out” signs until its opening day, whereas it usually sells out in hours.

Festival promoters blame increased competition, coupled with the economic downturn and rising fuel prices.

“There’s no question it has been a tough time,” says Melvin Benn, managing director of Festival Republic, which has the Glastonbury, Reading, Leeds and Latitude festivals on its roster. “Ticket sales have been a problem for a number of festivals, as they have been in the U.S.”

Veteran promoter Vince Power concurs.

“There’s going to be a big fallout over the next couple of years,” says the entrepreneur, who launched the 30,000-capacity Day at the Hop farm festival July 6. “It’s very hard to make a festival work at a capacity of 10,000-15,000 unless you’re trying to build it organically and you don’t rely on the big acts. I don’t know if people have the time to build it organically now.”

Meanwhile, U.K. festivals disappearing from this year’s calendar include Scotland’s eclectic Isle of Skye Festival; dance gatherings Sunrise, Wax:On Live and Blissfields, and rock/pop event Escot Sounds. Dance festival Wild in the Country, set for July 5, also was canceled.

“Howing been told by most of the big players, ‘Wow, that’s a great lineup—you’ll easily sell out,’ just that didn’t happen last year,” says of Skye organizer John Gilbertson says, who pulled the plug this year. “We wanted 8,000 a day and got 4,000. In hindsight, you look back and say, ‘Crickey, there were so many festivals.’

“It’s an oversaturated market,” says Simon Moran, managing director of SJM Concerts, co-promoter of the V Festival, “and with tough economic times, you have two factors which don’t help.”

The European circuit isn’t immune to these pressures, either. Norway’s 40,000-capacity Rock ’n’ Coke festival has been canceled due to poor ticket sales, with Turkey’s 26,000-capacity Rock ’n’ Coke festival also shelved.

“There’s a lot of good quality festivals and only so many pounds to go around,” says RoI Da Bank, organizer of the Bestival and Camp Bestival events. “Last year and the year before, there were people going to two or three shows. Now they are only going to one or two.”

Da Bank has now established the Assn. of Independent Festivals, which, in tandem with the Assn. of Independent Music, with various objectives—one of which is to create a forum to help members through difficult times.

“There’s still loads of smaller festivals setting up,” he notes.

“If you have fresh ideas, and do something which people want to sample, there are definitely gaps in the market.”

Additional reporting by Tom Ferguson.

BONNAROO/OUTSIDE LANDS

The top-grossing North American festival since it launched in 2002 has been Bonnaroo in Manchester, Tenn., produced by A.C. Entertainment and Superfly Presents.

This year, Bonnaroo’s June 12-15 event was short a sellout of 80,000, and Mayers thinks economic factors are likely the reason why. He doesn’t think the talent lineup—which included Metallica, Pearl Jam, Widespread Panic and My Morning Jacket—played a role in attendance, which still topped 70,000.

“As a brand, an event, we’re as strong as we’ve ever been, we were financially successful, we continue to broaden ourselves with our programming and the reach of our audience,” says Mayers.

All revenue streams were up, he says, including sponsorships and per capita spending on-site.

Superfly is partnering with San Francisco promoter Another Planet Entertainment in launching Outside Lands in San Francisco. The sales pattern is different for a “local” event, but Mayers believes it will be successful artistically and financially. Headliners include Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers, Jack Johnson and Railroad Earth.

Outside land capacity at Golden Gate Park is about 60,000 per day. “I don’t think we’re going to sell out but I think we’ll have strong numbers,” Mayers says.

Back in Manchester, Mayers says he and the Bonnaroo team are “definitely bullish” on producing other events on the Bonnaroo property, which they purchased last year.

“We have a really special site in a community that partners with us, wants other events and supports what we do,” he says. “With owning the land and spreading out costs and infrastructure, we can do different events on different scales. It can be different genres of music, a stand-alone curated festival for an artist or even a nonmusic event.”

Ifa mega-fest is new to Pemberton, the festival also serves as a bit of a guinea pig for Live Nation.

The fest’s Web site was developed with Live Nation U.K., and ticketing and merchandising is through Live Nation divisions MusicToday and Signatures, respectively. “We’ve had incredible support on the regional side and from the finance side in Los Angeles. It’s been a great coordinated effort,” Bourownais says.
WHAT TEENS WANT

JUNE 25-26, 2008
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WWW.WHATTEENSWANT.COM
Twenty years ago, it’s likely nobody in the music industry even noticed the introduction of a new videogame called “John Madden Football.” Times certainly have changed. On Aug. 12, videogame publisher Electronic Arts will release “Madden NFL 09”—a milestone you can bet few in the industry will ignore. The “Madden” series is the most popular videogame franchise in history, with more than 70 million units sold, according to EA. The last four installments rank among the top 10 best-selling games of all time, with 27 million units sold among them. What’s particularly notable about this feat is that a new version of the game arrives annually, unlike other popular titles that take two or three years to develop.

With this kind of consistency and exposure, it’s little wonder that the “Madden” series has evolved into an important channel for promoting new music and artists. Such acts as Good Charlotte, the All-American Rejects and Disturbed credit placement in the game as a large part of their subsequent success.

For the 20th-anniversary edition, the game’s music supervisors received more than 5,000 songs from labels, managers and artists hoping to secure a spot on the soundtrack. Only 26 made the cut (see story, page 40).

To be sure, several other games have raised the bar of late for how the music and videogame industries work together, most notably the “Grand Theft Auto” series, the “Guitar Hero” franchise and newcomers “Rock Band.” But “Madden” is the game that brought the music industry to the videogame table, paving the way for the convergence that exists today.

Much of the credit belongs to a small group of EA staffers tucked away in a corner of the company’s Playa Vista campus just a few miles north of Los Angeles International Airport. The space is filled with gold records, concert posters and personal mementos from grateful bands—not to mention a mountain of CDs.

This is the nerve center of EA’s music operations, led by worldwide executive of music and marketing Steve Schnur. When EA created the division seven years ago, neither the “Madden” franchise nor any other EA game contained soundtracks of any great interest, if they had one at all.

EA Trax was created to fix that, starting with “FIFA Soccer,” “NBA Live,” the “Need for Speed” car racing game and “Madden.” Almost immediately, “Madden” became the flagship franchise for the new music division, largely due to its popularity among touring artists playing the game between gigs.

“It could’ve gone a bunch of different ways,” Schnur says, “but we really saw the impact with ‘Madden’ because of all the artists who played it on tour and wanted to be part of the game.”

Scoring a slot on the soundtrack exposes bands to a much wider audience than just those who ultimately play it. The “Madden” marketing team licenses the music in

AFTER 20 YEARS, ‘JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL’ LEADS THE FIELD AS A GAMING AND MUSIC JUGGernaut

BY ANTONY BRUNO

The realism of the action and graphics in “Madden NFL 09” (above and right) is state-of-the-art.
CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL SOUNDTRACK IN VIDEOGAME HISTORY
THE GAME THAT SET THE STANDARDS.
THE SOUNDTTRACK THAT MAKES CAREERS.
MILLIONS CALL IT 'MADDEN MUSIC'
...AND THIS IS THE 2009 TEAM:

Airbourne - Stand Up For Rock 'N Roll
Busta Rhymes feat. Linkin Park - We Made It
Disturbed - Inside The Fire
Franz Ferdinand - Lucid Dreams
From First To Last - Worlds Away
Gym Class Heroes - I'm Home
Hollywood Undead - Undead
In Flames - The Mirror's Truth
Izza Kizza - Millionaire
Innerpartysystem - Don't Stop
K'NAAN - ABC's
Kardinal Offishall feat. Lindo P - Burnt
Kidz In The Hall - Blackout
KOVAS - Wax On, Wax Off
Mindless Self Indulgence - Never Wanted To Dance
Rev Theory - Hey Yeah
Senses Fail - Wolves At The Door
Shinedown - Devour
The All-American Rejects - The Real World (Demo)
The Fashion - Like Knives
The Offspring - Hammerhead
Trivium - Into The Mouth Of...We March
Tyga - Diamond Life
Underoath - Desperate Times, Desperate Measures
Wale feat. Southeast Slim - Breakdown
Young Dre The Truth feat. Good Charlotte - Workin'
Some 5,000 songs were submitted for the ‘Madden NFL 09’ soundtrack. Only 26 made the cut.

Songs Music Publishing congratulates EA on 20 years of success with Madden

From Your Friends at Chrysalis

Chrysalis
Music Group USA
Dale Jackson, executive producer for the "Madden" franchise, says the series' popular soundtracks are real morale boosters for the many developers toiling hours on end creating the best-selling game. "It's almost an endorsement as well as it is getting kick-ass music," he says. "We all think it's cool as hell that bands who can do anything want to spend their time on 'Madden' or make a special cut for us. It's a proud moment for those of us who put our hearts and souls into the game." But it is those same developers and producers who make the game popular enough to have the clout it does. When Electronic Arts (EA) introduced the original "John Madden Football" in 1989 for the Apple II (later ported to the Commodore 64/128 and Sega Genesis platforms), it didn't include any NFL team names or players, and the graphics could only support six players per team. Even then, it was the first sports game to emphasize realism over classic arcade-style game play.

The graphics and artificial intelligence slightly improved in "John Madden Football II," which came out in 1991, but it wasn't until "John Madden Football '92" was released for the Sega Genesis that the franchise truly took shape. This was the beginning of the franchise's yearly release schedule, timed to the start of the NFL season. It added players, teams, stadiums and touchdown celebrations, as well as improved graphics, sound and AI.

In 1997, developers spurred the next big evolution in the series-franchise management, allowing gamers to play multiple virtual seasons and make off-season moves like trades and select draft picks. "Madden 03" was a great leap forward: online play, which was expanded in "Madden 04." That, according to Jackson, changed the course of the franchise forever.

"It really changed the face of how we do things," he says. "We really focus a lot of time on that." In December 2004, EA negotiated the exclusive rights to all images, logos, team names and other assets from the NFL—including players and coaches unions—for five years, securing the franchise's dominance of the genre.

For the 20th anniversary, "Madden 09" will feature the introduction of Online Dynasty mode, allowing gamers to create online leagues of 32 players competing in games, trades and drafts in the most realistic depiction of both the game and business of football yet.

Jackson is understandably mum on what may be in the cards for the years ahead, but assures that some new features are on the way.

"We have a lot more ideas than we can ever get to...but we don't start working on any of them unless we know we can get them into that year's version," he says. "Our goal every year is to make the previous year's game obsolete."

—Antony Bruno

With the "Madden" football game franchise nearing its 20th anniversary, publisher Electronic Arts is pulling out all the stops to celebrate the occasion.

Most notable for the music industry is a tie-in between the game's soundtrack and the "Rock Band" videogame. (EA serves as the game's distributor, which is actually published by MTV.)

Under the deal, "Rock Band" will feature music from the "Madden 09" soundtrack in its weekly downloadable songs update, a handful at a time, during the course of several weeks, with each song carrying the "Madden" brand. Additionally, each soundtrack song will be available for sale via iTunes as part of a special "Madden" playlist.

EA is also offering fans who pre-order the game from Target an iTunes gift card worth $10 free downloads once they pick up the title.

But the marketing support hardly ends there. EA is offering a special 20th-anniversary collector's edition of "Madden 09" that will include a version of the new "NFL Head Coach" game, which won't be available to gamers until three weeks after the "Madden 09" launch. The collector's edition will also bundle the classic "John Madden Football '92" game (see story, above) and exclusive video content that includes footage of cover athlete Brett Favre.

On Aug. 12, EA will host Maddenpalooza, a one-day "Madden 09" game tournament and concert featuring such bands from the soundtrack as Good Charlotte, Airbourne and from First to Last.

—AB
Acts heard on the 'Madden NFL 09' soundtrack include, from top, KARDINAL OFFISHALL, AIRBOURNE and TRIVIUM.

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Featuring Links P

Source: Billboard.com
Co-writers on the album include Bobby Pinson, who was responsible for “Want To,” and Tim Owens, who co-wrote “Settlin’.” Kenny Chesney guitarist Clayton Mitchell co-wrote the sultry “What I’d Give,” and Anderson collaborated on the teen angst tune “Joey.” There’s also a witty ode to oft-married singer/songwriter Steve Earle.

First single “All I Want To Do,” which is No. 7 on Billboard’s Hot Country Songs chart, is the duo’s fastest climbing yet. Response was immediate after the pair debuted the song in May at the Academy of Country Music Awards, according to country KMLE Phoenix music director Gwen Foster. “Listeners called with requests the next day and they haven’t stopped. This song is connecting with country fans.”

There’s another reason for the song’s rapid climb, according to Foster. “Sugarland has fast become a superstar act,” she says. “Whatever Sugarland releases, country fans want it—and they want lots of it.”

But rather than offer an expanded set six months or a year after the original release, Sugarland’s label opted to release the fan pack before the new set. The expanded set includes “Life in a Northern Town,” the Dream Academy hit that Sugarland, Little Big Town and Jake Owen performed on last year’s CMT tour, and Matt Nathanson’s “Come on Get Higher.”

“We’ve gotten comfortable doing deluxe editions and fan editions after the fact,” Universal Music Group Nashville executive VP of sales, marketing and new media Ben Kline says. “That really punishes the uber fan that comes out week one to buy the album because they ultimately have to go back and buy it again.”

After opening for the likes of Chesney and headlining the CMT trek last fall, Sugarland will take labelmates Ashton Shepherd and rising star Kellee Pickler out this fall for a 25-city eastern U.S. tour.

Nettles says that her and Kristian Bush’s prowess as singer/songwriters doesn’t preclude them from being entertainers as well. “We really do try to explore the different elements of entertainment, of how you set a mood and capture an emotion with other elements besides the music, be it the exact lighting element for a song or taking a hard left and doing something ridiculous and crazy, like getting in a ball and crowd surfing,” she says. “Why should you not be able to? I like to be able to add theater to the show.”
**MUSIC**

**AROUND THE BLOCK**
Bloc Party premiered its new single, “Mercury,” July 7 on Zane Lowe’s BBC Radio 1 show. The track is a big departure from the band’s skittish Brit pop, incorporating cacophonous horns and disorienting sound effects. According to a representative, the song may or may not appear on Bloc Party’s third album, due before the end of the year via Atlantic. “Mercury” will be released as a single Aug. 11 in the United Kingdom, with a U.S. release to follow.

**WIND IT UP**
Former reality TV subject Cartel has parted ways with Epic and inked a new multimillion dollar deal with Wind-up. The band will release its future albums through Wind-up, and the sale of all Cartel merchandise at online, retail and touring points of sale will be handled by Wind-up Entertainment’s Pronto Merch. Cartel’s 2007 self-titled Epic album has sold 85,000 units in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

**BAD TO THE BONE**
Rapper Xzibit has joined Val Kilmer, Forest Whitaker, Jennifer Coolidge, Vondie Curtis Hall, Shawn Hatosy and Denzel Whitaker alongside Nicolas Cage and Eva Mendes in Werner Herzog’s cop drama “Bad Lieutenant.” Shea Whigham, Katie Chonacas (“Righteous Kill”) and Brad Dourif also are among those who will appear in the update of Abel Ferrara’s cult classic. The original followed the depraved adventures of a corrupt policeman (Harvey Keitel) investigating the rape of a nun.

**KEEP IT LIKE A SECRET**
Following two albums for Reprise, rock act the Secret Machines have teamed with World’s Fair Label Group to self-release their next project. The as-yet-untitled set is due in the fall and follows 2006’s “Ten Silver Drops,” which has sold 35,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan. It is expected to feature tracks like “The Fire Is Waiting,” “Atomic Hell” and “Have I Run Out.”

Reporting by Jonathan Cohen, Gregg Goldstein and Courtney Harding.

**COUNTRY**

**NO PAIN, NO GAIN**

Jayme Johnson Starts Fresh With Mercurcy Nashville

In classic country fashion, once-bitten, twice-shy Jayme Johnson owes at least part of his new deal with Mercury Nashville to not one, but two breakups. In short order, he was dropped from Sony BMG Nashville and went through a divorce in 2006. “At first you go through all of the usual things,” he says now. “I was a little stunned and a little mad, a little frustrated and a little hurt. I’ve never been fired from anything in my life.”

Johnson’s debut single, “The Dollar,” reached No. 14 on Billboard’s Hot Country Songs chart in March 2006. His BNA album of the same name peaked at No. 20 on Top Country Albums and has sold 77,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

After the aforementioned incidents, the artist turned into a recluse. “I wouldn’t talk to anyone, proached by other labels, was skeptical but took a meeting anyway. He was pleasantly surprised when Universal Music Group Nashville chairman Luke Lewis promised not to interfere with the creative process. “He looked at me and said, ‘I don’t know what y’all are doing in that studio and I don’t even care, but don’t mess with that sound.’” Johnson recalls. “I was shocked.”

“It was clear this album was some pretty inspired stuff,” Lewis says.

And while ex-Marine Johnson had a reputation for hard drinking and getting into trouble, “All the bad stuff was actually attractive to me,” Lewis, a Waylon Jennings fan, says with a laugh. “One of the reasons I wanted to sign him was because he did have that bad-ass reputation. I’m tired of that soccer mom shit.”

Ecstatic, Johnson quickly signed. “I’d be mis-

**GLOBAL PULSE**

**STRAIGHT TO THE POCKET**
Belgian singer Kate Ryan has been enjoying success across Europe this summer with pop/dance hit “Ella Elle L’a” (ARS/Universal), and the United Kingdom is next on her list. The single has reached the top 10 in seven European markets since late May, setting up the release of Ryan’s fourth studio album, “Free,” which began rolling out June 2 in Continental European territories.

U.K. album and single releases are now planned, says Kate Maher, international marketing manager for Universal Music Group International. “It’s very probable that she’ll be on [the] UMV (Imprint),” Maher says. “We firmly believe she appeals to a broad enough demographic for ‘Ella Elle L’a’ to become a major crossover hit.”

Ryan’s career has included a string of European successes since taking off in 2001 with Belgium hit “Scream for More.” Her 2002 dance cover of French singer/songwriter Mylene Farmer’s “Désenchantée” brought a wider audience, reaching the top 10 of Billboard’s European Hot 100 chart, and Ryan’s 2003 debut album, “Different” (Antin/Subway/EMI), has sold more than 250,000 copies across Europe, according to the label.

Ryan’s own material is published by Belkevoort, Belgium-based Z Brains; live work is booked through TTT Artists in Ransit, Belgium.

— Gary Smith

**MASSIVE MASSIMO**
Neapolitan singer Massimo Ranieri has been in all-conquering mood in his native Italy of late.

His October 2007 two-CD career compilation “Canto Perché Non Si Nuotare...da 40 Anni” on his own Edel-distributed Rama International label was recently certified gold (35,000), while its companion DVD compilation topped the FIMI DVD chart in January. Now, his “Canto Perché” stage musical has passed 200 sold-out performances since it opened in February 2007, with bookings planned until January 2009. The album’s executive producer Mario Limongelli says,

www.americanradiohistory.com
Professionals and amateurs alike will have the chance to remix the third single from Mariah Carey's platinum-plus-selling “El-MC2” (Island), via a contest hosted on a startup social network Web site for musicians, Billboard has learned.

Starting July 15, the complete steps of “I’ll Be Lovin’ U Long Time” will be made available to the members of Indaba Music, an online community for aspiring and established producers and artists.

“Mariah is the queen of the remix,” manager Mark Sudack says, citing the diva's famous work with dance producers like David Morales—for whom she rehashed the vocals of 1993's “Dreamlover”—and Junior Vasquez, as well as hip-hop greats like Sean “Diddy” Combs, DJ Clue, Ol’ Dirty Bastard and the Lox. “She’s been really groundbreaking in this area, and this contest is a way for her to continue being a pioneer in the remix world; potentially finding a new sound, a new power, a new energy in the online space, as opposed to just the go-to producers of the moment.”

The contest involves elements of fan voting, user-generated content and social networking. Entrants must join Indaba by creating a profile and can then download the song stems, work on their mix and submit it via the site by Aug. 26. The Indaba community will pick its 10 favorite mixes via online voting. Three judges—including Sudack, who co-executive-produced “El-MC2”—will then select the winner. The producer of the winning mix will receive $5,000, be designated as Carey's No. 1 MySpace friend for four weeks and possibly have his or her work released.

The contest is more than just a unique way to promote the single, according to Sudack. “It's a marketing tool as much as it is a contest,” he says. “But nowadays all you need is a laptop and a drum machine, and you have all the equipment that you need to go and make something that's hot and sounds special. There's so much potential talent out there that's untapped. You could have the next Jermaine Dupri sitting in a room somewhere, and he's got all the talent and all this genius with just no options to connect the dots.”

Carey's management and Island were introduced to Indaba by UltraStar, a Live Nation subsidiary that manages online fan outreach for major artists. Launched in 2007, the site has more than 60,000 members and is growing at a rate of 25% per month. It’s built around an online sessions platform, which allows musicians in different locations to collaborate in real time.

“In general, it's a smaller part of what we do, but [the contest] is a great way for us to make people aware of the types of tools that we have,” co-founder Dan Zaccagnino says. “The Indaba community is really about creating original music with other musicians all around the world.”

“The stage show was only originally planned for four months.”

Ranieri debuted on the then-independent CGD label in the ’60s and moved with the label when it was subsequently bought by Warner Music. He later switched labels to BMG, but Limongelli says Ranieri has now fully “returned to the indie world where he began his career.”

The album includes new versions of Ranieri’s hits plus his takes on contemporary songs by other Italian artists through the years.

Like the stage show—in which he stars—and DVD, it reconstructs his career, beginning as a child in Naples who couldn’t swim and was forced to sing by playmates to avoid being thrown in the water. Ranieri is published by Rama International; his touring is handled by Rome-based Marco D'Antoni.

—Mark Worden

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LADYTRON LIFTED

Having released three albums on three different labels, U.K. alternative dance band Ladytron has now found the “perfect home” at Nettwerk Music Group with its new set “Velocifero,” according to the label's U.K. manager Gary Ledermore.

The band's 31-date U.S. tour, booked by Chicago-based Windish Agency and set to wrap July 4 in Toronto, is followed by a string of summer European festival appearances. A tour of U.K. theaters is planned for the fall, booked by London-based Primary Talent.

The seeds of the Nettwerk partnership were sown when it handled the U.S. campaign for Ladytron's third album, “Witching Hour” (2005), released by Island in other international territories. For "Velocifero," the band signed worldwide to Nettwerk, which dropped the album June 2 in the United Kingdom and June 3 in the United States. It peaked at No. 3 on Billboard's Top Electronic Albums and Top Heatseekers charts dated June 21, when it also entered the Billboard 200 at No. 131.

"Everybody is in agreement that this is their strongest record," Ledermore says. "There's a lot of potential singles."

Ladytron is published by Artwork Music. —Richard Smirke

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Domenico Modugno's “Volare” may have won the first Grammy Award in 1958, but since then very few Italian pop singers have managed to break the U.S. market.

Italian indie label Sugar, however, is optimistic that pop singer Elisa's domestic super-stardom will translate stateside with the release of her career highlights compilation, “Dancing.” July 15, licensed to Universal Music Group International and distributed in the States by Fontana.

Sugar president Filippo Sugar accepts that the United States is a tough market for Italian pop, but says the label decided to push Elisa after her song “Dancing” was featured on Fox's “So You Think You Can Dance?” in June 2007.

“Elisa's catalog was already on iTunes and that track suddenly shot up to No. 16 on their chart,” he says.

Adam Katz, managing director of Tsunami Label Group at Los Angeles-based marketing company Tsunami Entertainment, which is helping promote the album, adds, “An amazing groundswell was created, even though the artist didn’t yet have a [U.S.] label.”

The track has sold more than 67,000 downloads and has shifted more than 1,000 units per week since the week ending May 18, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The song was again featured in two early episodes of the 2008 “So You Think You Can Dance?” season.

Elisa—full name Elisa Toffoli—was discovered at age 16 by Sugar’s mother Caterina Caselli, an Italian star in her own right in the 1960s who also discovered Andrea Bocelli.

Elisa has released five studio albums in Italy, her most successful being a best-of, “Soundtrack,” which has sold 700,000 units and was the best-selling Italian album of 2006. In 2001, she won the country’s flagship San Remo festival one of the rare occasions she sang in Italian and also picked up the best Italian artist trophy at the MTV Europe Awards.

Another track, “Rainbow,” will be serviced to radio in July and Katz plans a 15-20-date fall tour, which has Elisa—who grew up listening to her parents’ and older sister’s Doors albums—excited. "Touring in the States would be a dream come true for me," she says, "regardless of how well the album actually does."

Sugar stresses the project is not about instant success. “We're trying to create awareness for a long-term career,” he says. “This is not an 'American Idol' situation.”

Katz says the marketing strategy for the new album is “to help early adopters and evangelizers” and will target the Italian and gay communities, where Elisa has strong support. “Elisa’s fans are very passionate and we just want to give them the ammunition so they can spread the word.”

Katz says the groundswell of interest will “help create a story by the time we get that radio,” where Elisa’s English-language vocals should help her acceptance.

“I have always written in English, even when I didn’t know the language that well and the results were horrendous,” she says with a laugh. “I hardly listened to any Italian music when I was young and English has always been natural for me. It's the natural language of music.”
BEAR HANDS

Contact: Veronica Hetton, manager, vhshn@boid.com

About this same time last year, Bear Hands released its first EP, “Golden,” after 11 months together as a band. The four-song set was produced by Andrew Schneider (Pelican, Cave In), it was, and still is, spectacular. The group’s five shows set indie-rock blog land abuzz, and the foursome was picked up by manager Veronica Hetton (Ambulance Ltd.). Fast forward and the group now has Flower Booking on its side, South by Southwest performances under its belt and, more recently, had “Golden” picked up by Rough Trade stores in the United Kingdom. Bear Hands has already been written up by NME, despite not having a label or a publishing deal in place.

The band is taking the next steps this summer, recording a full-length effort on New York’s Lower East Side and then hitting the road.

“We know it’s not the best climate right now to be selling records,” wild-haired frontman Dylan Rau says. “But . . . we have a lot of back catalog. We’re in surplus. And I’m impatient.”

Rounded out by guitarist Ted Feldman, bassist Val Loper and drummer TJ Orscher, Bear Hands has locally supported acts like MGMT, Vampire Weekend and Ted Leo, and toured (naturally) with Ambulance Ltd. On July 26, the group will open for Glasser at Observatory in Brooklyn. On July 30, it will share the stage with Earhart in Baltimore.

The group’s roots are in the Northeast, particularly Wesleyan University, where Rau met Feldman. They picked up Loper and Orscher after meeting through their former bands, centered on the local hardcore punk scene.

That formative influence can still be heard in the group, whose melodic chemistry starts with a perfectly synched rhythm section and Rau’s charismatic pipes trading off with distorted guitar lines. Listen closer and Rau’s lyrics really shine, particularly his clever rhyming schemes and catchy one-liners.

According to Rau, Bear Hands was offered a label deal early on (the band turned it down) and has considered a number of other potential signees. But much depends on what comes out of the upcoming self-produced sessions.

“It’s harder and harder and more expensive to try and make a successful record, but we’re just going to work hard to see what happens,” Rau says. “I just want my rent paid and room to write songs and not get fucked by whoever wants to do business with us.”

LITTLE VIC

Contact: Michelle McDevitt, mmcddevitt@gmail.com

Little Vic may have been affiliated with big names in music in the past, but the 27-year-old MC is just getting started.

Raised in Long Island, N.Y., Little Vic (born Victor Orena III) released an EP in April, “Each Dawn I Die,” via his own independent label, Orena Records, and distributed by Fat Beats. The album featured the likes of DJ Premier, Kool G Rap and Buckwild. He’s also appeared on mixtapes by G-Unit’s DJ Whoo Kid, DJ Woogie and DJ Eclipse, among others.

Now, Little Vic, who still runs Orena and heads his own street and production teams, is prepping the release of his as-yet-untilled upcoming album, slated to drop by year’s end.

So far he’s worked with Buckwild and his in-house team on the set, which features such tracks as “Fugitive” and “War Kills Us.” “I’m still considering the direction I want to go in with this album, but I do have over 200 songs sitting in my computer right now. So, we have lots of options,” he says. Consequently, a mixtape consisting of some of the leftover tracks will be released ahead of the album.

Later this year, Little Vic hopes to join a college tour, preferably one starting right after the summer. He’s also shopping for a major-label and distribution deal and looks forward to signing artists to his label. In addition, Little Vic plans on delving into movie scoring sometime down the line.

“I definitely want to be recognized as a producer and as an MC, separately,” he adds. “I’m a strong believer in releasing what I feel and not for other people. I don’t make music to conform and fit in, I make it because I think it’s hot and I identify with it.”

—Mariel Conception

SOLID GOLD

Contact: solid_gold_band@yahoo.com

Solid Gold likes to apply personality to everything it touches. Whether it’s hand-making album art or crafting press releases for its live show, the group embraces the do-it-yourself ethic to an extreme degree, debt be damned, the “traditional model” bucked, competition well, look out.

Solid Gold entered the WeSC/vice Let’s Get Physical online contest last year, in which voters could either cast ballots for or against bands. Instead of spending time drumming up peer votes against other acts, the members pooled their fans, “some computer-savvy friends,” and rigging the votes in their favor. More than anything, they just wanted to grab the attention of the judging panel, which selected Solid Gold from the other finalists to fly to London and perform at the WeSC/vice party at Old Blue Last.

“Artists are required to hustle, schmooze, sacrifice and sometimes exaggerate to gain attention among the masses, but in the end the music needs to speak for itself and is what will be remembered,” vocalist Zach Coulter says.

The electronic/dance troupe has spent six years selling out venues in cities like its native Minneapolis, Chicago, New York and Madison, Wis. It has also released three EPs, the most recent—“You Gonna Run Too?”—in February. It was one of the few American bands selected to play last year’s Icewine Airwaves music festival in Reykjavik and has garnered airplay at such stations as noncommercial WBAI New York, nonprofit KEXP Seattle, alternative KDLQ/ROLE Los Angeles and triple A WXRT Chicago, as well as Bitty Zero’s podcast at XM Satellite Radio.

When finances for an upcoming full-length didn’t allow Solid Gold to yet again record at Butch Vig’s Smart Studios in Madison or Master Mix in Minneapolis, the band set up shop in “apartments, cabins, farmhouses and basements” to cut its synth- and guitar-based tunes. The band has sold or given away more than 1,000 hand-screened, self-designed, one-of-a-kind T-shirts, which have also sold at clothing boutiques like Oak in New York. Solid Gold—which comprises core members Coulter, Matt Locher and Adam Hurbrunt, all of whom can play guitar, bass, keys and program beats—crafts its records in limited-edition runs, with handmade or design-intensive packaging.

With the full-length due late this summer and tracks on par with acts like Junior Boys and the Knife, Solid Gold is seeking a creative way to roll out its sale and dissemination.

“We’ll likely release the record through digital download for an affordable price and offer a premium copy that we hand-make ourselves for an appropriate price. This is the direction that we see music distribution heading, and we’re going to ride it,” Locher says. “The way we’re looking at it is, like, ‘Fuck it, we have no money, nothing to lose and a killer record . . . if anyone out there has a better idea, we’re open to suggestions’.”

—KH

QNotes

Quincy Jones

Change Through Participation

I recently announced that I have no intention of canceling my plans to participate in the 2008 summer Olympic Games in Beijing as a culture and art consultant. I care too much about Darfur and China—especially in the wake of the devastating earthquake in Southwest China—to pull out. I can stay in the games with others like us. I feel we can make a difference. I don’t pretend to be a politician. I’m just a musician who cares.

I recently met with Chinese Ambassador Liu Guijin to discuss the ongoing crisis in Darfur and China’s role in the region. It was the second time that I met with a Chinese official to discuss the situation in recent months. I was encouraged by his promise to personally discuss my concerns for the people of Darfur with his superiors in Beijing, as well as my deep sympathies for the victims of the devastating earthquake in China’s Sichuan province. I remain hopeful that the government of China will take a lead role in helping to bring an end to the carnage taking place in Darfur as soon as possible.

I feel that the whole world has got to start taking responsibility for each other. With today’s lightning-fast global communication, we can no longer afford the luxury of thinking about only national kinds of issues. Everything that’s done anywhere is a world issue, and together there are lost of things we can do that nobody can do alone. No one country is perfect enough to throw stones at anybody. Not one, especially not us.

There are huge issues that shouldn’t be taken lightly. They’re something that I’ve given considerable thought to and have researched thoroughly. As musicians and entertainment executives, you may find yourself in a situation in which you can affect change by either choosing to participate or boycott an event. Taking a stand is never a bad thing if it’s something you truly believe in. All I ask is that you take the time and do your homework. As the great Canadian physician William Osler once said, “We are here to add what we can to life, not to get what we can from it.”

—Quincy Jones
ROCK

JOHN MELLENCAMP
Life Death Love and Freedom
Producer: T Bone Burnett
Release Date: July 15

Searching for a ray of lyrical light in John Mellencamp’s latest treatise on the state of the world proves consuming—but largely fruitless. That, however, makes the album all the more compelling. Its unrelentingly bleak landscape, populated by plain-spoken narrators and richly detailed characters and settings, leans more on the death part of the title equation, with pointed side trips into the political climate (“Young Without Lovers,” “Troubled Land,” “Without a Shot” and the particularly specific “Jena”) and philosophical essays like “John Dockers” and “For the Children,” in which Mellencamp not only projects his own capacity for the continuing struggle. T Bone Burnett’s austere and atmospheric production brings a fresh kind of texture to the performance aspects of Mellencamp’s songs, and his bonus DVD mix in the new HD CODE format lives up to its promise for richer and more articulated sound quality.—GG

O.A.R.
All Sides
Producer: Matt Wallace
Atlantic
Release Date: July 15

With 2005’s “Stories of a Stranger,” the members of O.A.R. made the shift from poker-playing college kids to mature musicians, parlaying the playful roots-rock vibe of their earlier releases into a sound more suitable for the AC market. “All Sides” continues down this path, with songs that are even bigger and more thematic and production front and lighter on the good-time party energy. There’s the Goo Goo Dolls-esque “The Fallout”; rocker “War Songs,” inspired by the group’s visit overseas; and the soaring “Shattered,” the most radio-friendly of the bunch. The island-flavored pop of “Something Coming Over” and reggae-tinged “What Is Mine” prove the band still has some bounce in its step, and “This Town” was tailor-made for a live setting, with an infectious spirit sure to please longtime fans and newcomers alike.—JM

WIRE

Object 47
Producer: Wire
Pink Flag
Release Date: July 8

It’s been said before, but Wire’s music has never sounded dated. More than 30 years on from the release of the seminal post-punk band’s debut, “Object 47” is at once warmly familiar as Wire yet not a “return” to any particular sonic period in the group’s convoluted history. Upbeat opener “One of Us” is as catchy a pop song as Wire’s ever committed, seemingly marking a left turn from 2003’s more eso- teric, explosive album “Send.” The pulsating “Mekon Headman” and entrancehead capacitor “Perspex Icon” keep the mood going, lacing sugary chorus hooks into propulsive rock rhythms. There’s some hard stuff here too—menacing closer “All Fours,” for example—but certainly nothing that makes the band sound out of touch, unoriginal or old. It’s vital, quintessential Wire. In 2008, no less.—TC

JAZZ

WILLIE NELSON & WYNTON MARASILIS
Two Men With the Blues
Producer: Mark Rothbaum
Blue Note
Release Date: June 8

At first blush, this odd-couple billing would seem like a bizarre musical gumbo indeed, until one re- members that Willie Nelson knocked out a full-on pot-themed reggae album a few years ago. As it is, “Two Men With the Blues” is the recorded evidence of a two-night jazz at Lincoln Center summit in January 2007 and an album whose enviously assured vibe pretty much drips out of the speakers. “Blues” is more of a relaxed, jaunty toss-off of well-attended numbers (“Georgia on My Mind,” “Stardust,” “Basin Street Blues”) than anything terribly revelatory, but given the names on the marquee that’s more than enough. When Nelson settles into “Ain’t Nobody’s Business” and Wynt on Marsalis powers a mighty brass section through “My Bucket’s Got a Hole in It,” all you really need to do is sit back and dig it.—JW

THE HOLD STEADY
Stay Positive
Producer: John Agnello
Vagrant
Release Date: July 15

Just in time for summer—the perfect season for its classic rock-inspired songs of young love, townies, house parties and part-time jobs—the Hold Steady makes good on the promise of 2006’s acclaimed “Boys and Girls in America” with “Stay Positive.” This time, Brooklyn’s working class heroes have stepped up their musicality (harpischord is featured on “One for the Cutters”) and melodic ballad “(Lord, I’m Discouraged)” is an aching prayer), while still providing their signature cacophonous anthems with songs like the barn-burning “Navy Sheets,” with backing vocals from Drive-BY Truckers’ Patterson Hood. Elsewhere, frontman Craig Finn longs for 7 Seconds and Youth of Today (the title cut), sets religious metaphors to a woozy acoustic backdrop (“Both Crosses”) and nods to Jersey Shore-era Springsteen (“Yeah Sapphire”). As usual, it’s sweet, intelligent and thoroughly rockin’.—LJW

THE BILLBOARD REVIEWS

ALBUMS

DIESEL GOODREEM

Delta
Producers: various
Decca
Release Date: July 15

Five years after establishing herself as Australian chart topper as a 23-year-old singer/songwriter Delta Goodrem at last earns a concerted effort to launch stateside, thanks to resuscitated Mercury imprint Decca. Overseas, this is actually Goodrem’s third album, a vi- aucious 12-song showcase of versatility and melodic mastery led by celebratory piano rorn “In This Life,” already top 35 at adult contemporary stateside. Equally affecting are sweet, redemptive midtempo ballad “Believe Again,” fol- ricking reggae finger-snapper “You Will Only Break My Heart,” somber confessional “God Laughs” and a remar- tenered encore of “Born to Try.” The stunning ballad that first propelled Goodrem to the top in 2003. With successes from Leona Lewis, Katy Perry and Natasha Bedingfield proving that the public hungers for quality female

COUNTRY

RANDY TRAVIS
Another Man’s Game
Producer: Kyle Lehning
Word
Release Date: July 15

Randy Travis’ 1986 emergence as the leader of a fresh crop of country music “youngerst” came with a deeply reveren- tial nod to the makers of what was once long-considered authentic, unvarnished, old-country country. Now after an early-millennium shift into no-doubt-about-it Christian country, Travis re- turns here with a somewhat more mainstream country re- lease, in a career that long- ago rendered such delineations superficial. “You Didn’t Have a Good Time” is a gut-wrenching “ballad of the bottle” that holds out hope for redemption, while “Every Head Bowed” is a ri- otously funny look at bless- ings that heat up as dinner cools down. The title song is a bluesy, country reflection on life and death, with a stinging Telecaster solo seal- ing its place in tradition and modernity. As if almost ef- fortlessly, Travis proves track after track the difference be- tween bravado and stone- cold brilliance.—GE

WORLD

BAJOCONDO

Mar Dulce
Producers: Gustavo Salamanca, Juan Campodonico
Surco/Decca
Release Date: July 15

This Argentine-Uruguayan crew originally used the band name Bajo- fondo Tango Club. It recently reduced the name to Bajo- fondo, in recognition of the fact that the music the band is creating nowadays is reach- ing beyond simply tango. That’s evident with opener “Grand Guignol,” which blends a heavy drum’n’bass bottom end with the sweep- ing flourishes of tango. It’s an unexpected pairing of visceral heat and florist romanticism, but it works awfully well. Tango remains the constant for Bajofondo, but the 17 tracks offer quite a few vari- ations on a theme. Elvis Costello delivers a guest vocal

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**SINGLES**

**R&B/HIP HOP**

**LIL WAYNE FEATURING JAY-Z**

*Wavin’ On a Woman* (5:58)

*Producer: Frank Rogers
Writers: David Samson, W. Valley
Publishers: BMI

*After selling 1 million copies of *The Carters* in its first week of release, Lil Wayne is unquestionably the most popular rapper around today. However, his self-proclamation of “best rapper alive” is up for question following a double whammy of star power, with the former rapper now capable of living up to the hype alongside the former Def Jam president reminding everyone of his own legacy. It’s actually refreshing to hear the two hugely successful, credible artists still sounding as hungry as unknown rappers trying to get their big break.*

**VITAL REISSUES**

**JULIE DOIRON**

*Loneliest in the Morning*

*Producer: Dave Shouse
Release Date: July 22*

This Canadian singer/songwriter has for years doubled as a visual artist, and it shows in her music. Originally released via Sub Pop in 1997, this reissue (with three bonus tracks) is cinematically sparse, each track spinning a new tale and nuanced mood. Doiron’s longing and simple voice is placed front and center, paired with her raw acoustic riffs. Hints of mellotron, pedal steel and piano were contributed by Shouse (of the Grifters) and Howe Gelb, as Doiron holds down the fort with most of the rest of the arrangements. *Opener “So Fast”* perversely captures the ear while tracks like “Love to Annoy” have their own little tricks to keep the album running like one, long continuous thought. —*KH*

**CRITICS’ CHOICE**

*A new release, regardless of chart potential, highly recommended for musical merit.*

**Legends & Credits**

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

**CONTRIBUTORS:** Troy Carpenter, Helen Cosley, Gordon Eyly, Gary Graf, Katie Hasty, Kamau J. High, Michael Hernandez, All Men, Deborah Evans Price, Shad Reed, Chuck Taylor, Philip Van Vleck, Jim Wolsack, Michael Wood, Lavinia Jones Wright

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

**COUNTRY**

**BRAD PAISLEY**

*Wavin’ On a Woman* (5:58)

*Producer: Frank Rogers
Writers: David Samson, W. Valley
Publishers: BMI

*It’s great to see an artist buck conventional business practices to shine a spotlight on a song he loves. “Wavin’ On a Woman” was originally recorded for Brad Paisley’s 2005 album “Time Well Wasted,” but four other hits preceded it on radio, then he was on to next album “5th Gear” in 2007. But he has always believed in the “Woman” — so here it is, and already top 30 at radio after three weeks. The beautiful story is set on a bench at the mall, as an elderly gent asks a younger man if he’s “wavin’ on a woman.” The bracingly sentimental experiences that began with a date in 1952. The well-crafted, conversational lyric should resonate with both sexes, and many couples will likely see themselves in every line. Paisley delivers with his usual charm. It’s great to see this gorgeous number finally get a shot at radio.*

**ROCK**

**PARAMORE**

*That’s What You Get* (3:40)

*Producer: David Bendeth
Writers: H. Williams, J. Farro, T. York
Publishers: WB/But Father, I Just Want to Sing

*Music/Josh’s Music/Hunterdora, ASCAP Fueled by Ramen

*A year after the success of its Grammy Award-nominated smash debut, “Riot!,” Franklin, Tenn., quintet Paramore continues to churn out potential hits. Third single “That’s What You Get” slams into pop/rock perfection with a infectious guitar hook and danceable beat. The stunning vocal on “That’s What You Get” is a perfect fit for lead singer Hayley Williams—and for radio, as a stop-and-start instrumental hook solidifies what could be the power-pop band’s tour de force signature anthem.*

**DANCE**

**SOLANGE**

*I Decided* (4:16)

*Producers: The Neptunes
Writers: S. Knowles, P. Williams
Publisher: not listed

*Remixer: Freemasons
Music/World/Geffen

*It’s a millennial custom: Propel your kid to fame and cash in on younger siblings. Britney begat Jamie Lynn Spears, Jessica Simpson introduced Ashlee ... and Beyoncé’s long-waiting-in-the-wings sis Solange, whose 2003 misnomer debut “Solo Star” endured three Billboard Hot 100 flips. “I Decided” attempts to build cachet via Neptunes’ production, and while stock pop original is another no-go, the Freemasons remix offers tempo and re-sourceful production to ignite dancefloors—and a career. Soph solo album “SoL-Angel, and the Hadley St. Dreams,” due in August, may find her heading in a different direction than intended, but at least this time it’s up the charts.*

**JONAS BROTHERS**

*Burnin’ Up* (2:54)

*Producer: John Fields
Writers: N. Jonas, J. Jonas, P. Jonas
Publisher: not listed

*Hollywood

*The greatest gift of boy bands is that they potentially fuel a life-long love of music for the generation they serve. Jonas Brothers are crucial for today’s 12-plus set, once top 40 radio finally got with the program last year with first hit “SOX.” Six successful singles later, “Burnin’ Up”—the launch from upcoming third studio album “A Little Bit Longer” (destined to catal-pult to No. 1 following Aug. 12 release)—is already torching the Billboard Hot 100 with a No. 5 entry, thanks to meaty, guitar-grueling production, finger-snapping hook and identifiable youth-infused vocal. Adding mirthful edge is a rap from the brotherly trio’s bodyguard Robert “Big Rob” Feggans, accompanied by an amiable group shout-out. (The promo single also offers a “no rap” version.) Jonas Brothers have worked hard for props as a true teenie-weenie band and credible live act. Heroes are few and far between; this is cause for multi-generational celebration.*

**LEONA LEWIS**

*Better in Time* (3:55)

*Producer: J.R. Rotem
Writers: J. Rotem, A. Martin
Publisher: versus

*Sony BMG

*Five months ago we loyally predicted that Leona Lewis was destined to become the top newcomer of the year. But who could have seen the overwhelming force field of “Bleeding Love,” striking through playlist records at top 40, adult top 40, AC, rhythmic, even Latin? Now it’s time to let go before the song burns to a crisp—and rest assured, there are plenty more high achievers on No. 1 CD “Spirit.” “Better in Time” is of equal caliber to its predecessor, with a one-listen hook, elegant chug-along melody, a lyric about healing (“Thought I couldn’t live without you/it’s gonna hurt when it heals too”) and Lewis’ unquestionably emotive vocal versatility. “Better” is as good as “Bleeding” and an equal bid for No. 1. Girl, start clearing room for a 2009 Grammy sweep.—*CT*

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**THE BILLBOARD**

**JULY 19, 2008**
Pick To Click

Robust G-Unit Site Drives Interest For New Album

While some in the biz bemoan the Internet’s negative effects on album sales, G-Unit turned the Web into its biggest marketing tool. The 50 Cent-led group’s latest album, “T.O.S. (Terminate on Sight),” debuted at No. 4 on the Billboard 200 this week after selling 102,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

That performance is considerably better than the two lead singles they enjoyed. “I Like the Way She Do It” and “Rider Pt. 2” were No. 70 and No. 83, respectively, this week on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart.

G-Unit Records launched thisis50.com last September to promote its third album, “Curse.” Now the site is a promotional platform, blog and consumer source to acquire all things G-Unit. And, its videos, exclusive content and free mixtapes have helped raise awareness for “T.O.S.” and maintain G-Unit’s brand in hip-hop’s cluttered marketplace.

“The content on thisis50.com was both planned and organic,” G-Unit new media director Chris “Broadway” Romero says. In addition to a consistent stream of live video, 50 Cent, Tony Yayo and Lloyd Banks uploaded two or three videos per day while doing U.S. radio promotion during the last week of June. “It was like a traveling variety show,” Romero says.

In the past six months, G-Unit has released three free digital mixtapes via the site to test early “T.O.S.” singles. “Elephant in the Sand” dropped in March and contained “Rider Pt. 2,” while “Return of the Body Snatchers” appeared in April and featured the album cut “I Don’t Want to Talk About It.” The final mixtape, “Sincerely Yours,” hit the Web in June and features 50 Cent rhyming over classic R&B songs like Frankie Beverly & Maze’s “Before I Let Go.” According to Romero, the mixtapes have collectively amassed more than 600,000 downloads.

“The real effective part of my mixtapes is the viral campaign I create by shooting a visual,” 50 Cent says. “Return of the Body Snatchers’ and ‘Elephant’ had a music video for every song on the tape, and they’ve been viewed more than 1 million times.”

Last month, G-Unit also debuted short “T.O.S.” webisodes featuring the MCs playing on the commercials depicting a split screen with the faces of NBA superstars. Fans were also able to submit their own video treatments for “I Like the Way She Do It,” with the winning clip due to premiere this month on thisis50.com. According to Romero, thisis50.com has 15 million page views and 1 million unique users per month, and approximately 25,000 consumers jumped from the site to iTunes to purchase “T.O.S.”

The bottom line is to get people to comment and feel like they’re a part of the project,” he says.

EUROPEAN LOVE

After breaking onto the European charts with disco-influenced beats and androgynous vocals, Hercules and Love Affair has quickly translated that success to the States. Led by keyboardist/vocalist Andy Butler and featuring Antony Hegarty of Antony & the Johnsons on several tracks, the Brooklyn-based group’s self-titled Mute debut hit No. 7 on the July 12 Top Heatseekers chart and No. 191 on the Billboard 200.

The album, produced by Butler and DFA Records’ Tim Goldsworthy, was released overseas in late March through DFA/EMI. “Dance music is really integrated into the mainstream (in Europe), and it just felt like there would be a potentially positive response to it all,” Butler says of the decision to start in Europe and the United Kingdom. “Also, Antony’s presence is pretty significant overseas.”

The band played its first live show (and only U.S. performance to date) May 17 at Brooklyn’s Studio B, then took the crew to Europe. Butler knew going into the project that it would be tough to plan a tour with Hegarty in tow because of his solo work and other projects. “There is that sort of fingers-crossed hope for a sort of a guest spot or schedules coordinat- ing,” he says. But even without Hegarty on stage, Butler says the response to the live shows has been “at times, overwhelmingly enthusiastic.”

Manager Marc Ticken says the European tour was planned in part by economics, since the band has eight touring members plus crew. “Pretty much as soon as people got the record we were getting offers for the band to play. We didn’t need tons of tour support from the label.” Ticken says. “For a band of that size, in terms of sales base, to be able to go on tour with essentially 12 people on the road is pretty remarkable. I’m not sure we’re quite ready to be able to do that in America.”

Brands have taken notice as well.

Chanel utilized the song “Blind” in its fall/winter 2008 fashion show, and the band will take part in a Chanel exhibition in New York’s Central Park in October. Beforehand, the group is touring Europe through July 19, returns to the United States for a few headlining West Coast shows and a couple of slots opening for Grizzly Bear, and then goes back to Europe in mid-August.

—Laura Leebove

HERCULES AND LOVE AFFAIR
‘Dark’ As Night

Zimmer, Howard Revel In Intense ‘Batman’ Soundtrack

It’s quite simple, actually, Hans Zimmer and James Newton Howard want to drive you insane. For their score for Warner Bros.’ July 18 film “The Dark Knight,” the composers used as their inspiration the oppressive gloom of Gotham and the entirely unhinged character of the Joker. The result is an intense orchestral bombast, replete with cellos tittering on the edge of human hearing and crashing percussive outbursts.

“I just wanted to come up with things that nobody had ever heard before in a very psychological way,” Zimmer says. “How can you get from ‘This is slightly worrying’ to ‘terrifying’ to ‘shitting bricks’?”

“It was about getting the basses to play something way just at the top of the highest place the instruments were capable of,” Newton adds. “To the point where they would come in the control room and say, ‘You don’t want us to play that; you want us actually to play this down lower, don’t you?’ I was like, ‘No, not really. You feel their struggle in the performance because it was a struggle.’ It’s the second time Zimmer and Howard have teamed with director Christopher Nolan on a score; the first was for 2005’s ‘Batman Begins.’”

“Chris has what we call a ‘phonographic memory,’” Zimmer says. “I have put him through unbelievable torture, like when he was flying to Hong Kong to finish the movie. I gave him my first draft of ‘The Joker Suite.’ We filled the iPod with something like 8,000 bars ... and he can say things to you like, ‘There was a thing at bar 7,694 that was really cool.’”

The soundtrack to “Batman Begins” sold 79,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan, but this time out, the release of the “Dark Knight” score is getting a much bigger push than its run-of- the-mill soundtrack release.

Zimmer and Howard will perform live together for the first time prior to the movie’s New York premiere July 14; they will then sign copies of the soundtrack at Virgin Megastores in New York and Los Angeles.

The soundtrack itself also is getting a fancy rollout starting July 15, three days in advance of the film’s release. It will be available in a standard jewel case CD, a two-LP set made out of 180-gram vinyl, a special-edition Digipak and a collector’s edition with bonus artwork. Snippets of three of the score’s tracks, “Why So Serious?”, “Aggressive Expansion” and “I’m Not a Hero,” can be heard at thedarkknightscore.com.

For Zimmer and Howard, however, the rollout of the score is just a continuation of the obsessive passion for the movie by its contributors.

“There’s been an intensity from day one about this project—and we’re not even going to go into the death of Heath Ledger,” Zimmer says. “The surprising thing is, everybody is very gentle and very kind and very respectful—but the movie itself has an intensity that we all live in. We live in this world and it’s very hard to shake that off when you go home.”

“You carry around the whole thing inside of you for months,” Howard says. ...
Old-School Methods Pay Off In Kid Rock’s Streak

Most commentary you've read about the music business in the last year or so on blogs or in the business and consumer press suggests that traditional radio and the CD have become irrelevant. Those assumptions are boldly refuted by a dozen consecutive weeks of sales gains for Kid Rock's "Rock N Roll Jesus," which re-enters the Billboard 200's top 10 for the first time since November in that title's third week on the chart.

The album's latest growth spurt yields a 12.7-move with this issue's Greatest Gainer medal (45,000 for the week, up 27%). Just 14 weeks ago, it fell to No. 82, but since then has posted increases in all but one frame.

And the Kid is going old school on this murch, because in an era when TV and the internet are the new radio and digital distribution owns the obvious focus of so many major-label executives, "Rock N Roll" cuts across the grain.

This long patch of sales growth is owed to nothing fancier than a good old radio hit, and not even a single unit of the album's 1.1 million sales are owed to digital downloads during the course of its 19 chart weeks, because the artist has withheld his entire Atlantic-distributed output from iTunes and its competitors.

The radio fare is "All Summer Long," a perfect summertime confection that samples two '70s classics: Warren Zevon's "Werewolves of London" and Lynyrd Skynyrd's "Sweet Home Alabama." The track draws support from multiple formats, bulleting on Adult Top 40 (18.13), Mainstream Top 40 (21.17), Adult Contemporary (28.27) and even Hot Country Songs (33.44).

With 27.7 million in audience this week, "All Summer" sprouts 60-45 on the all-Format Hot 100 Airplay and bows at No. 80 on the Billboard Hot 100, his first entry on the latter in five years.

Among traditional radio stations, the song pulled the most plays for this tracking week from mainstream top 40 outlets WGGG Raleigh, N.C., with 96 spins and WIOG Saginaw, Mich., with 90. The latter has contributed the most plays to date, with 1,087 since March, according to Nielsen BDS.

This old-fashioned artist who disdains digital sales gets support from new technology, as the song's largest spin count for the frame comes from Sirius' Hits 1, with 105. That satellite station has played it 1,043 times since February.

Atlantic is confident "Rock N Roll" will post another sales gain next week: "I don't know where the ceiling for this will be," senior VP of sales Jack McMorrow says.

SECOND GLANCE: That Josh Groban's Christmas set, "Noel," could become the best-selling album of 2007 in just three months' time said as much about how fast the title sold as it did about how much the album market has slowed in recent years.

An even more striking illustration in contrasts emerged from Nielsen SoundScan's midyear numbers, reported in Billboard last issue. To wit, Lil Wayne's "Tha Carter III"—which returns to No. 1 this week with 156,000 sold (down 25%)—only needed three weeks to become the best-selling album of the first six months.

Then again, it only took two weeks for Coldplay's "Viva la Vida or Death and All His Friends" to be the best-selling digital album of the year's first half, even though downloads of full-lengths and EPs are up 34.5% over 2007.

That speaks to being a market leader in a fast lane, and suggests the band's unique setup and launch for the album paid digital dividends (Billboard, May 17). Of the 1.1 million "Viva" has sold to date, a whopping 35.2% are by way of digital, with 288,000 of those downloads registered in the first week alone.

Of course, we've known for a while that modern rock sold well in the download market. Indeed, half of this year's top 10 digital albums belong to alternative fare, but the love isn't confined to that market niche.

For each of the nine genres tracked weekly by SoundScan's marketing reports, digital's share of album sales grew in the second quarter over where those shares stood at the end of the first quarter. The largest such growth occurred in Electronic albums (from 23.7% to 26.1%), the smallest in Latin (1.9% to 2.2%).

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### Market Watch

A Weekly National Music Sales Report

**Weekly Unit Sales**

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<th>Digital Albums</th>
<th>Social Tracks</th>
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**Sales by Album Format**

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**Year-To-Date**

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**Charts**

**Chart Beat**

**Just Push Play**

Following the June 29 release of the videogame "Guitar Hero Aerosmith," the band's catalog of albums sees a 46% sales increase this week, its biggest seller is its "20th Century Masters" set—a debut at No. 45 on Pop Catalog (up 7%).

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**Distributors' Market Share:**

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<td>UMG</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sony BMG</td>
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<td>Warner Music Group</td>
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<td>Capitol</td>
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<td>Island</td>
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Go to www.billboard.com for complete chart data | 49

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www.americanradiohistory.com
## HOT 100 AIRPLAY

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## RADIO AIRPLAY SONG CHARTS

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**Hot Country Songs**

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## HOT DIGITAL SONGS

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<td>LULLABY</td>
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<td>2008-Jul-19</td>
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## AWARD CERT. LEVELS

**ALBUM CHARTS**

- **Gold**
- **Platinum**
- **Multi-Platinum**
- **Diamond**

**SINGLES CHARTS**

- **Gold**
- **Platinum**
- **Multi-Platinum**
- **Diamond**

**MUSIC VIDEO SALES CHARTS**

- **Gold**
- **Platinum**
- **Multi-Platinum**
- **Diamond**

**DVD SALES/VIDEO RENTALS**

- **Gold**
- **Platinum**
- **Multi-Platinum**
- **Diamond**

---

Data for week of JULY 19, 2008 | Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data | 55

Go to www.americanradiohistory.com for more information about the artists and songs featured in this chart.
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<td>Daft Punk</td>
<td>Robot Love</td>
<td>Roc Nation</td>
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<td>Madonna</td>
<td>All For Love</td>
<td>Epic</td>
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<td>Epic</td>
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<td>Stay With Me</td>
<td>Timbaland</td>
<td>I'm Not Over</td>
<td>Mosley/UA</td>
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<td>Love</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
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<td>Don't Walk Away</td>
<td>Mariah Carey</td>
<td>All For Love</td>
<td>Epic</td>
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<td>Epic</td>
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<td>Shut Up And Say It</td>
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**HOT COUNTRY SONGS**

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<tr>
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<td>Come On Over</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Back When I Knew It All</td>
<td>Universal / MCA NASHVILLE</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Blake Shelton</td>
<td>Good Time</td>
<td>Universal / MCA NASHVILLE</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Blake Shelton</td>
<td>Anything Goes</td>
<td>Universal / MCA NASHVILLE</td>
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<td>I Still Miss You</td>
<td>Universal / MCA NASHVILLE</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Blake Shelton</td>
<td>Look Good To Me</td>
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<td>You Look Good In My Shirt</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>Ill Never Love Again</td>
<td>Universal / MCA NASHVILLE</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<td>She Never Cries</td>
<td>Universal / MCA NASHVILLE</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Blake Shelton</td>
<td>All I Want To Do</td>
<td>Universal / MCA NASHVILLE</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Blake Shelton</td>
<td>Everything Is Fine</td>
<td>Universal / MCA NASHVILLE</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Blake Shelton</td>
<td>You Know How To Love Me</td>
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<td>13</td>
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<td>I’m Still A Guy</td>
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<td>Through Every Storm</td>
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<td>Every Other Weekend</td>
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<td>New Moon On A Weekend</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Blake Shelton</td>
<td>House On The Hill</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>She’s A Navy Man</td>
<td>Universal / MCA NASHVILLE</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Blake Shelton</td>
<td>A Guy You Never Forget</td>
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<td>20</td>
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**TOP COUNTRY ALBUMS**

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<th>Number</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Taylor Swift</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Toby Keith</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Carrie Underwood</td>
<td>Carnival Ride</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Sugarland</td>
<td>Enjoy The Ride</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Kenny Chesney</td>
<td>Just Who I Am: Poohs &amp; Pirates</td>
<td>Universal / MCA NASHVILLE</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Alan Jackson</td>
<td>Good Time</td>
<td>Universal / MCA NASHVILLE</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Reba McEntire</td>
<td>Perfect Clear</td>
<td>Universal / MCA NASHVILLE</td>
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<td>Garth Brook</td>
<td>The Ultimate Hits</td>
<td>Universal / MCA NASHVILLE</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>George Strait</td>
<td>Troubadour</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Miranda Lambert</td>
<td>Crazy Ex-Girfriend</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Brad Paisley</td>
<td>5th Gear</td>
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<td>Jason Aldean</td>
<td>Raising Sand</td>
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<td>American Man: Greatest Hits Volume II</td>
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<td>Back When I Knew It All</td>
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<td>James Otto</td>
<td>Sunset Man</td>
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<td>All I Meant To Be</td>
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<td>Montgomery Gentry</td>
<td>Back When I Knew It All</td>
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<td>Julianne Hough</td>
<td>Universal / MCA NASHVILLE</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Rascal Flatts</td>
<td>What Do You Want Me To Do</td>
<td>Universal / MCA NASHVILLE</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>Dierks Bentley</td>
<td>GREATEST HITS / EVERY LITTLE MEMORY 2003-2008</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>Blake Shelton</td>
<td>Pure BS</td>
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<td>Eagles</td>
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<td>If You’re Going Through Hell</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>Josh Turner</td>
<td>Everything Is Fine</td>
<td>Universal / MCA NASHVILLE</td>
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**ADDITIONAL NOTES**

- Cover of Michael Buble hit is Sherrer’s fourth No. 1, first since “Save The Last Dance” spent four weeks at the summit starting in December 2004.
- Up 1.1 million impressions, Rascal Flatts single was Greatest Gain and leap 35-28 in third chart week.
- A former Navy man himself, Stoffer’s military salute draws 170,000 impressions at 15 Mediaboard stations during the July 4th tracking week.
The rapper enjoys his highest-charting album on this tally and the Billboard 200. He also holds his best overall sales week, with 36,000.

**Under house arrest while he awaits retrial in the 2003 murder of a teen, the rapper lends his eighth charting album.**

---

**RHYTHMIC**

**TOP R&B/CREATIVE ALBUMS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Sales</th>
<th>Certification</th>
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<td>LIL WAYNE</td>
<td>Carter III</td>
<td>Cash Money Records</td>
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<td>Usher</td>
<td>T.I.O.S. (Remix Vol. 1 &amp; 2)</td>
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<td>Gold</td>
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<td>Plies</td>
<td>Definition Of Real</td>
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<td>17,000</td>
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<td>Three 6 Mafia</td>
<td>Last 2 Walk</td>
<td>South Coast</td>
<td>15,000</td>
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<td>Jim Jones</td>
<td>M.O.B. - The Album</td>
<td>Young Money Cash Money</td>
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<td>Daro</td>
<td>Good Girl Gone Bad</td>
<td>Blackbird</td>
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<td>There Goes The Neighborhood</td>
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<td>Gold</td>
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<td>Tyrese</td>
<td>Thirsty</td>
<td>Elevenfold</td>
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<td>Rick Ross</td>
<td>TheDeclaration</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>Gold</td>
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<td>Plies</td>
<td>Just Like You</td>
<td>Jiv Records</td>
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<td>Gold</td>
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<td>Keyshia Cole</td>
<td>Just Like You</td>
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<td>Da Brat</td>
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<td>The Declaration</td>
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**ADULT R&B**

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<td>Come On</td>
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<td>I Will Always Love You</td>
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<tr>
<td>I'm Yours</td>
<td>Jive Records</td>
<td>900</td>
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<tr>
<td>Your Love</td>
<td>Jive Records</td>
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<td>You're So Fine</td>
<td>Jive Records</td>
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<td>I Can't Help Myself</td>
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**HOT RAP SONGS**

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<td>T.I.</td>
<td>Jive Records</td>
<td>6,000</td>
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For complete chart data, visit [www.billboard.biz](http://www.billboard.biz).
### Top Dance Club Play

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Summary</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Friday Night Funkin'</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Virgin</td>
<td>Made a great return to the top of the charts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Saturday Night Funkin'</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Virgin</td>
<td>Reached a new height.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sunday Morning Funkin'</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Virgin</td>
<td>Enjoyed widespread popularity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Monday Blues Funkin'</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Virgin</td>
<td>Achieved significant recognition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tuesday Evening Funkin'</td>
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<td>Virgin</td>
<td>Gained considerable traction.</td>
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### Top Jazz Albums

<table>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Easy Listening</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Enjoyed a strong reception.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Instrumental Soul</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
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<td>Gained significant attention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Bossa Nova Classics</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Blue Note</td>
<td>Achieved notable success.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Latin Jazz Gems</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
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<td>Won critical acclaim.</td>
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### Top Electronic Albums

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<td>Achieved groundbreaking success.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Synthwave Renaissance</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Ultra Music</td>
<td>Enjoyed widespread popularity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Vaporwave Paradigm</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Ultra Music</td>
<td>Gained significant traction.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Future Bass Frontier</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Ultra Music</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Techno Revolution</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
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### Hot Dance Airplay

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<tbody>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>Gained considerable traction.</td>
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### Top Contemporary Jazz Albums

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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Received high praise from critics.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Blue Note</td>
<td>Enjoyed a strong reception.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bossa Nova Classics</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Blue Note</td>
<td>Gained significant attention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Latin Jazz Gems</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Blue Note</td>
<td>Achieved notable success.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Classic Jazz Anthems</td>
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<td>Blue Note</td>
<td>Won critical acclaim.</td>
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### Smooth Jazz Songs

<table>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Virgin</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>5</td>
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### Top World Albums

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Various Artists</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bossa Nova Classics</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Blue Note</td>
<td>Gained significant attention.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Latin Jazz Gems</td>
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<td>Achieved notable success.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
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**JAPAN**

**SINGLES**

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<th>Sales</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>ONE LOVE</td>
<td>TAMASU Records</td>
<td>12/15/2008</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>NAKANA</td>
<td>ONE LOVE</td>
<td>ELA Records</td>
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**UNITED KINGDOM**

**SINGLES**

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<th>Peak</th>
<th>Sales</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>ENRIQUE IGLESIAS</td>
<td>THIS IS WHAT YOU Came FOR</td>
<td>ABM/INTERSCOPE</td>
<td>7/19/2008</td>
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**GERMANY**

**SINGLES**

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<th>Sales</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>NEVER TOO LATE</td>
<td>DESK/GERMADE</td>
<td>7/19/2008</td>
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**EURO DIGITAL SONGS**

**PORTUGAL**

<table>
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<th>Song</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Peak</th>
<th>Sales</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>RICHARD CLAYDERMAN</td>
<td>NEVER TOO LATE</td>
<td>DOCEMANIA</td>
<td>7/19/2008</td>
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**EURO DIGITAL SONGS SPOTLIGHT**

**PORTUGAL**

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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>NEVER TOO LATE</td>
<td>DOCEMANIA</td>
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**EURO SINGLES SALES**

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>JASON MRAZ</td>
<td>WAITING FOR THE DAY</td>
<td>ELEKTRA</td>
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**EURO RADIO AIRPLAY**

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<th>Peak</th>
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<tbody>
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**DENMARK**

**SINGLES**

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<td>ISLAND</td>
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**EURO DIGITAL SONGS**

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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
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<th>Song</th>
<th>Label</th>
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<th>Peak</th>
<th>Sales</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>ISLAND</td>
<td>7/19/2008</td>
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**EURO DIGITAL SONGS SPOTLIGHT**

**DENMARK**

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<th>Title</th>
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<th>Sales</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>ESTELLE</td>
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</table>

Data for week of July 19, 2008 | CHARTS LEGEND on Page 55
EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE

Send submissions to: exec@billboard.com

RECORD COMPANIES: Sony BMG Nashville promotes Jim Catino to VP of A&R. He was senior director. Country Thunder and new sister label Permian Records tap Bobby Young as senior VP of promotion and artist development. He was Southeast regional promoter at Big Machine Records.

PUBLISHING: Sony/ATV Music Publishing promotes Janice Brock to senior VP of U.K. operations. She retains her current role as VP, office of the chairman. The National Music Publishers’ Assn. names Jay Rosen-thai senior VP/general counsel. He was an attorney at law firm Berliner, Corcoran & Rowe.

Spirit Music Group names Robert Vasquez creative director. He was manager of film and TV at EMI Music. EMI Music Publishing names Amanda Berman senior director of West Coast creative. She was an A&R coordinator at Warner Bros. Records.

Cherry Lane Music Publishing ups Paul Morgan to VP of creative services marketing. He was senior director.

BMI in Nashville names Clay Owen Bradley assistant VP of writer/publisher relations. He was senior director of A&R at Sony BMG Nashville.

DISTRIBUTION: The Alternative Distribution Alliance elevates Mitch Wolf to president. He was executive VP.

TOURING: Sports and entertainment firm Comcast-Spectacor elevates Jay Halbert to executive VP of finance and CFO. He was VP of finance.

Web entertainment marketing company Echo (formerly known as echomusic) names Keith Gibson senior sales executive. He was director of national accounts at Mercury-Sports.

RELATED FIELDS: Raquel Bruno has launched talent booking and management firm Drive Entertainment Group. She was talent executive at Central Talent Booking.

—Edited by Mitchell Peters

GOODWORKS

RAPPER PILES HELPS SEND KIDS TO COLLEGE

After recently debuting at No. 2 on the Billboard 200 with his sophomore album, “Definition of Real,” rapper Piles has decided to give back to the loyal fans who helped put him there.

Through his Big Gates and Piles Power of Visions Foundation, the Fort Myers, Fla.-bred artist will give a $5,000 scholarship to one male and female college student. Those who wish to apply for the Somebody Love You Scholarship Fund 2008 must have at least one parent who is currently incarcerated.

“I know it’s hard to mentally and financially prepare yourself to go out to school when you have a mother or father who’s incarcerated,” Piles says. “We’re just trying to bridge that gap.”

In recent weeks, the rapper has spent free time on his tour bus reading letters from applicants. “Just to know that this $5,000 to a male and a female will help them carry out their dreams means the world to me,” he says.

In addition to scholarships, the rapper says that his non-profit organization (which he runs in conjunction with Atlantic Records product manager Dionee Harper) plans to financially aid churches on a national level, including 13 within the Dunbar Community of Fort Meyers. —MP

INSIDE TRACK

HOME SWEET HOME

Building a studio behind the Jacksonville, Fla., home he shares with wife Susan Tedeschi and their two children has allowed Derek Trucks to make “the first album I’ve ever been a part of that feels epic.”

“Usually with a major label we were under the gun, we had 10 days to get in, cut everything, finish it … and you hear things that you always feel like you would completely rerecord if I had the chance,” the Allman Brothers Band guitarist and Eric Clapton sideman tells Track. “Having our own studio in a building in our backyard, we had two months to record. We were able to go back to stuff, and if there was a guitar solo that wasn’t knocking me out, two weeks later I could go back and hit it. Or if the whole track wasn’t knocking us out, we’d go back and retrack it.”

Trucks describes the album, due in February, as “much more song-centered” than his previous releases. He worked on several songs with Clapton bandmate Doyle Bramhall, while Allmans guitarist partner Warren Haynes co-wrote the track “Back Where I Started,” which Tedeschi sings. Trucks is currently touring with Tedeschi and their Soul Stew Revival, but he hits the road with the Allmans Aug. 12 for a 15-show run. The guitarist says that Gregg Allman, who had to cancel the group’s Beacon Theater stand in New York this year due to treatment for hepatitis C, is feeling better and that the group is anxious to hit the road again.

BACKBEAT

Call and e-mail backseats@billboard.com for picture captions and back issues of BACKBEAT. Send access inquiries to access@billboard.com. For more information, visit Billboard's website at www.billboard.com or call 212-586-1040.

Eric Clapton, right, performed at London’s two-day Hard Rock Calling Festival June 28 in Hyde Park to launch Hard Rock International’s 2008 Ambassadors of Rock tour. Hard Rock International CEO Hamish Dodds caught up with Clapton back stage before the show to present him with a framed plaque commemorating his bestselling Hand Rock Signature Series T-shirt. Photo: COURTESY OF HARD ROCK/CHEERY UMACK

Venezuelan VP Jorge A. Pino, who presides over Venezuela’s BMI-affiliated copper plagues commemorating the sales of “Enamorado de Ti,” which has sold more than 5,000 units (Latin gold certification) and 100,000 units (Latin platinum certification) in the United States and Puerto Rico. The presentation took place back stage during a recent event celebrating the second anniversary of VM2Z (La Raza), the Spanish Broadcasting System regional Mexican radio station that serves South Florida. Standing, from left, are Tierra Cali’s Efraín Plancarte, Pino, Tierra Cali’s Raúl Plancarte, Cu Bau Mexican City PD Laurentino Escamilla, Tierra Cali’s Humberto Plancarte & Ralpli, and Toa Cali’s Jose Cruz Plancarte. Kneeling are Toa Cali’s Rafael Plancarte, left, and Armando Farfan.

From left: Stone Rose LA promoter Adam Franklin, DJ-producer Eric the Artist Talib and Stone Rose LA promoter Brett Gursky at R&B singer-turned-artist Talib Kweli’s Wednesday Night Live Music Wednesdays party, where Talib performed. Photo: COURTESY OF MICHAEL ANTINOY

Photographer Nancy Lee Andrews, left, former fiancé of Ringo Starr, celebrates with feng shui designer May Pang, former girlfriend of John Lennon, at the opening of their photo exhibition at the June KellyGallery in New York’s Soho neighborhood.

Jimmy Page with journey back stage at the Hammond/ Apollo in London, minutes before Journey took the stage in support of its newly released “Revelation” album. From left are Journey’s Dean Castronovo and Armando Pluendo, and former Journey’s Neal Schon, Ross Valory and Jonathan Cain.

www.americanradiohistory.com
URBAN ALTERNATIVE:
A GLOBAL MOVEMENT

On June 30, the Los Angeles chapter of the Recording Academy hosted "Urban Alternative: A Global Movement," presented at the Standard Hotel in downtown L.A. It was the third in a series of programs that centered on topics of special interest to the urban music community. The L.A. chapter invited Grammy Award-nominated Walter Dupl Cly to perform, and afterward panelists engaged in a discussion of the evolution of urban alternative music, video, groups, and the Recording Academy's A&R Subcommittee.

ABOVE: From left are Urban Network magazine editor/music industry consultant David Mitchell; Los Angeles chapter president and Universal Music Publishing executive VP of creative affairs Tom Sturgess; Los Angeles chapter governor and recording artist Sy Smith; KCRW DJ/music supervisor and event promoter Garth Trinidad; Recording Academy VP of membership services Angella Bibb-Sanders; Dexter Story; talent buyer/concert promoter for Temple Bar, Zanzibar and Little Temple, and Los Angeles chapter governor and Hidden Beach Recordings founder Steve Mckeever. RIGHT: SESAC senior director James Leach, left, and Recording Academy member Leon Ware.
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The conference will feature main stage keynote interviews with industry experts as well as a full afternoon program dedicated to in-depth tracks on each of the major content areas:

MUSIC: Deep-dive sessions on the future of music content on mobile phones.

VIDEO: Focused sessions on all mobile video-related content.

ADVERTISING: An examination of the various ways that mobile entertainment is drawing advertisers to mobile content.

COMMUNITY: A look into the highly anticipated world of mobile social networking and user-generated content.

Each track will include: A series of product demonstrations, presentations, interviews, feedback sessions and structured networking opportunities!

CONFIRMED SPEAKERS INCLUDE:

KEYNOTE
BRANDON LUCAS
Sr. Director of Mobile Business Development, MySpace

PLUS...
CHRISTIAN JORG
SVP New Media & Commerce, Island Def Jam

ROB LEWIS
CEO, Omnifone

MICHAEL MANZO
Chief Marketing Officer, Openet

SEAN ROSENBERG
Director, Mobile Marketing, RCA Music Group

JOHN SMELZER
SVP & GM, Mobile, Fox Interactive Media

SCOTT WILLIAMS
VP Business Development, Time Inc. Interactive

LIZ JONES, VP, Entertainment & Media, The Hyperfactory

PAUL KULTGEN, Dir. Mobile Advertising, Nielsen

JOHN ORLANDO, VP of Marketing, LiveWire

RAJ RAY, Director, Qualcomm

STEVE STANFORD, President, Agency 3.0

ROGER WOOD, SVP & GM, Amobee

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