FOREIGNER

New single. New album. New lineup. And this is just the beginning...

NO END IN SIGHT: THE VERY BEST OF FOREIGNER

07.15.08

www.ForeignerOnline.com
Gross: $112,471,918
Attendance: 1,164,945
Shows: 70

Gross: $70,122,146
Attendance: 581,066
Shows: 45

Gross: $45,330,705
Attendance: 816,421
Shows: 57

CONGRATULATIONS! Thanks for making this possible...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Company</th>
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<tr>
<td>POOR LITTLE FOOL</td>
<td>Ricky Nelson</td>
<td>Imperial</td>
<td>5528</td>
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<td>PATRICIA</td>
<td>Perez Prado</td>
<td>RCA Victor</td>
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<td>SPLISH SPLASH</td>
<td>Bobby Darin</td>
<td>Aico</td>
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<td>Elvis Presley</td>
<td>RCA Victor</td>
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<td>WHEN</td>
<td>Kate Twins</td>
<td>Decca</td>
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**THE BILLBOARD HOT 100 ANNIVERSARY**

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REGIONAL MEXICAN
Billboard's Regional Mexican Music Summit—the only event dedicated to this Latin music genre—features a superstar Q&A, sessions on industry trends, round-table discussions, and artist showcases. More at billboardevents.com.

MOBILE ENTERTAINMENT LIVE!
The official entertainment event of CTIA offers in-depth tracks on mobile music, video, advertising and social networking. Submit proposals for panels and speakers at mobile-entertainmentlive.com.


Online
FLY DELTA
Australian star Delta Goodrem is back on the U.S. charts with "In My Life," which she performed during an intimate session at Billboard HQ. For this performance and an interview, visit billboard.com.
Worth The Wait

BY KEVIN ARNOLD

What's the problem, indie? Our market share is growing. The barriers to brick-and-mortar retailers that allowed the majors to elbow independent releases off the shelves are mostly thanks to the unlimited shelf space the digital world affords artists and viral buzz now allows artists to break through the noise based purely on the merits of their music and the enthusiasm of their fans.

Yet people kept telling you not to rush into the arms of the latest generation of digital music services like last.fm, Last.fm, Lala.com, and MySpace Music. So, what's all the fuss about?

New online music models pop up every day, many pushing the limits of the "value of music" debates to new levels while amassing audiences of millions of fans. Meanwhile, the majors are shrinking, losing superstar artists, developing fewer new ones and desperately attempting to redefine themselves to stay in the game. So, majors have decided that maybe they should be in the digital business.

The problem is they want to operate in the new digital world the same way they did in the old one—where they control the content, distribution and marketing networks and the money artists earn. Having seen the returns digital content services can reap from attracting millions of users, they are now willing to accept reduced rates for their content on the front end in exchange for equity in the shareholding positions on the back end.

The Independent Online Distribution Alliance (IODA) and its peers in the indie world work differently in a nutshell. We aim to get the most for our labels and artists—the best promotion opportunities, the best access to data and user feedback so they can focus their limited marketing dollars, the biggest exposure to new fans and certainly the best financial terms. We prefer a fair royalty rate generating robust and reliable revenue. If equity is part of the equation, we can make that too.

The opportunities these new digital services open up in the digital world is a huge leveling force, and one that should be embraced, but with patience and appropriate caution. These companies are not philanthropists. They are building businesses and shouldn't be expected to act in the self-interest of labels and artists. The standard deals we've seen offered to the market by most of them usually leave room for improvement on royalty rates and revenue models, length of term and a score of other important details.

I'm not against these companies in principle. I stream. I scribble. I want to sample and discover music as freely as the next guy. IODA like most independents, has been on the cutting edge of working with new digital models, and we gave our clients the ability to choose if they want to participate in each new service. But it's important to remember that these services need music at least as much as the music needs exposure. Regardless of how groundbreaking a business model might be, it's nothing without great music and fans. These companies, along with labels independent and major, are laying the foundation for how the industry is going to function in the future. It's worth the time to think through the blueprints before the bucks are set into place.

Kevin Arnold is founder/CEO of IODA.
Strength In Numbers

Moves Are Afoot To Improve Recording Artists' Collective Leverage

By Antony Bruno

Will the music industry ever get organized?

With digital distribution of entertainment as the focal point, the TV/film and music industries are embroiled in several disputes between those who create the content and those who distribute it. But while those disputes in Hollywood are well-documented—with powerful unions like the Writers Guild of America and the Screen Actors Guild staking high-profile negotiating positions and, in some cases, strikes—the perception in the music industry is that artists are largely left to themselves to fight for whatever they can get on their own.

In fact, there are unions for music artists today, such as AFM and AFTRA. Instrumentalists are covered under AFM, while vocalists, including rap artists, are covered by AFTRA. Artists signed to a major label are automatically enrolled in one or the other, sometimes both.

These unions use collective bargaining to negotiate contracts with recording artists and their labels, which apply to every major label deal. However, union contracts are largely limited to basic provisions covering minimal payments, health insurance and other benefits. Big-ticket items like royalty rates, advances and digital rights are left to separate contracts negotiated individually between artists and label.

To date, the bulk of artist-label disputes have centered on details contained in individual contracts, leaving artists with few options to engage their union for support.

"The only existing recourse for artists is to take on the record company on an individual level," says attorney Mark Passin, who is representing Poison in royalties dispute with EMI. "Artists need to get together as a group, as a joint force, to negotiate for better agreements and fairer treatment.”

"Take the revenue split for digital downloads. The standard practice is that labels pay artists the same cut they get under their contract for CD sales—around 15% after reproducible costs. However, many artists, managers and their lawyers argue digital sales should be treated as a third-party license, in which case they would get 50% of digital revenue.

"Every artist contract is an individual situation, and the labels use that to their advantage," says Perry Resnick, a business manager with RZO who audits labels on behalf of artists. "Labels haven't budged on this issue at all.... I can't think of any way to address it other than through the courts.

"That's exactly what's happening. Sony BMG is facing a class action lawsuit initiated by the Alliance Brothers and Cheap Trick over the issue of digital downloads and ringtone, and Universal Music Group faces a non-class status suit by some artists regarding a similar issue.

According to AFTRA national executive director Kim Roberts Hedgpeth, the unions have stayed out of that particular fight because they wanted to let the legal process take its course. However, she anticipates unions will take a much larger role in the near future.

"The existing AFTRA contract is up for renegotiation in 2010, at which point the union intends to incorporate detailed language historically left to one-on-one negotiations into a standardized individual contract for artists that can be used as a starting point for all artist-label contracts.

"Over time, issues that might never have been appropriate to address on an individual basis become issues that you recognize need to be on the collective basis," she says. "We are at one of those moments in time. This contract we're in now is really a transitional one.

Digital rights are among the key provisions that AFTRA wants to include in a standardized contract. However, artists have yet to agree on exactly what those provisions should be. "That could prove to be a headache for unions intent on increasing the collective leverage of recording artists.

"This period of time between 2008 and 2010 is a window of opportunity for artists to come together through their union to address an issue collectively that heretofore they have looked at as an individual issue,” Hedgpeth says. "It's going to be very complicated and is going to need the input of artists as well as their managers."

And that's where the challenge lies. Sources at various artists groups say they are frustrated by the modest level of artist participation in their programs. Few volunteer to testify at hearings in Washington, D.C., and many are unaware they are even union members. What's more, the fragmented nature of the existing union structure means artists in the same band often find themselves represented by different organizations, causing confusion.

But managers are getting more organized themselves through such groups as the Music Managers Forum and are increasingly encouraging their clients to get more engaged in addressing their shared interests for the mutual good of all.

"Artists don't think in business terms," says Barry Bergman, an artist manager and president of the MMF's U.S. branch. "They want to make music, tour and play and do what artists do... But they have to understand the world as it is today rather than as it used to be. In order for anything to change, they have to start to think as a group or a collective, and not individually, about themselves."

---

EC PROPOSES EXTENDED COPYRIGHT TERM

The European Commission has proposed extending copyright protection for recorded performances from 50 to 95 years, rewarding the tens of thousands of British artists and the trade bodies that have lobbied intensively for the extension. Europe's internal market and services commissioner Charlie McCreevy stepped up as a crusader for artists' rights when he pledged in February to back industry calls for an extension in copyrights. In a joint statement, the IFPI and European independent companies' trade body Impala said they were "gratified that the commission has moved to close this copyright gap.

WMG EXPANDS MOBILE OFFERING

Warner Music Group is licensing its catalog to SendMe Mobile, a direct-to-consumer mobile content distributor. The deal includes ringtones, video ringer and images, as well as exclusive content that is expected to debut in the coming months. The deal also extends to SendMe Mobile's sweepstakes site SoLow.com.

EMI OFFLOADS UK. DISTRO

EMI Music has agreed to outsource CD and DVD distribution in the United Kingdom to European logistics firm CEVA in the spring of 2009. EMI declined to comment on how many employees it will lay off at its 16-year-old distribution operation in Leamington Spa in the Midlands of England.
Outfitting The iPhone

When it was unveiled in June, Apple's new iPhone didn't appear to offer anything new for music fans. But thanks to the subsequent launch of the App Store on iTunes, iPhone users can download a host of applications to add new functions to the device. Many of them are music-oriented and all are made specifically for the iPhone.

The weekend after the new iPhone's release, more than 10 million applications were downloaded through the App Store. Some are free, some carry a fee, and most also work on the Wi-Fi-compatible iPod Touch. Here, Billboard lists some of the more notable music apps available. All are free, unless otherwise noted.

PANDORA
The personalized Internet radio service created an app for the iPhone that allows Pandora users to access and stream all their stations, as well as create new ones. It quickly became the third-most popular free download in the App Store's first week.

AOL RADIO
This app lets users stream any AOL or CBS Radio stations via the iPhone's Wi-Fi connection. CBS stations can also be streamed over the wireless network connection on new models, and the company plans to add additional support for AOL Radio streams soon.

SHAZAM
A pioneer in the music ID market, Shazam allows users to learn the title and artist of virtually any song by simply holding up the iPhone's microphone to a music source. Users can tag songs they like to a saved list of favorites, buy them straight from iTunes, find related music videos on YouTube, and send track details to friends.

LAST.FM
The streaming music site offers an app that provides access to the same catalog of full-song streaming as the Web-based version of the service, as well as links to purchase or listen to songs via their Wi-Fi connection. Shazam's music recognition technology adds an additional layer to the experience.

MOOCOWMUSIC: BAND
This $9.99 app generated a lot of excitement when demonstrated at a recent Apple conference. Users can create their own music using virtual instruments on the iPhone's touch screen, such as guitar strings and piano keys. Final tracks can be mixed and saved for later playback.

INTUNA, GUITARTOOLKIT
InTuna ($4.99) and GuitarToolkit ($9.99) turn the iPhone into a guitar tuner, using the device's built-in microphone to recognize chords and notes. Guitar Toolkit includes a metronome function.

LUMPY MOBILE
This music discovery engine lets fans find songs by singing or humming a few bars, saying or typing the name of a song or artist, or playing a recording through the iPhone's microphone. Once a song is identified, the app allows users to buy it on iTunes, watch the song's video on YouTube or view an artist's bio, photos or other related info.

TAP TAP REVENGE
A sort of "Guitar Hero" for the iPhone. Players must tap keys or shake the device in one direction or another to hit the rhythm of the playing song.

Bertelsmann Nears Exit From Sony BMG

The clock is quickly ticking down on a process that could see German media giant Bertelsmann offload its 50% stake in Sony BMG Music Entertainment in the coming months to its joint-venture partner Sony Corp.

Sources say the Sony Corp. board will meet July 29 to discuss the future of the 4-year-old deal. Bertelsmann's 12-person supervisory board convened in early July to examine the possibility of getting out of the venture, which is due to expire in August 2009. Although the company had originally considered a target sale price of about $1.8 billion ($2.8 billion) for its 50% stake, the difficult economic climate and tough credit conditions mean that a price tag closer to $1 billion ($1.5 billion) is far more likely. That's sharply below the $2.7 billion that Bertelsmann paid in 2002 for the remaining majority stake in Zomba Music Group that it didn't already own.

Since Hartmut Ostrowski assumed the post of Bertelsmann CEO Jan. 1, he has sounded a "go for growth" battle cry. Bertelsmann's move out of recorded music is part of a broader effort to exit businesses that don't fit Ostrowski's high-growth focus. In a related move, the company said July 11 that it agreed to sell its Direct Group North America unit to Najafi Cos., a Phoenix-based private equity firm. Sony appears to be the only serious party inter-

 entail, unpopular decisions."

A Sony Corp. spokesman in New York declined to comment on whether Sony will buy out Bertelsmann's stake. A Bertelsmann spokesman says only that the company continues to mull three possible scenarios: a sale of its BMG stake, the buyout of Sony's stake or maintaining the status quo.

Any spinoff of Bertelsmann's stake would also have to be approved by U.S. and European regulators, who could raise concerns about vertical integration at Sony, given that its hardware business includes a joint venture with handset giant Ericsson for Walkman music-enabled mobile devices. Another potential sticking point: Reinhard Mohn, whose family owns a controlling stake in Bertelsmann, is understood to be keen on retaining German repertoire label Arliao.

Regardless of the outcome, European independent music companies trade group Impala vows it will continue to oppose the merger that led to Sony BMG's formation. On July 10, the European Court of Justice threw out a lower court ruling annulling the European Commission's 2004 approval of the merger of Sony's and Bertelsmann's label operations. Impala's appeal of that decision led to the lower court's annulment of the merger two years ago.

"A change of ownership will not change our position on whether or not the creation of the company in the first place was an issue," Impala's Brussels-based executive chairwoman Helen Smith says. "Certainly we felt it was a step too far in terms of concentration in the market."

Additional reporting by Ed Christman.
After over 10 years
your return was short...
But VERY sweet!

23 May - New York City
Wamu Theater at Madison Square Garden
Sold Out

24 May - Boston
Agganis Arena – Sold Out

25 May - Elizabeth
Ritz Theater – Sold Out

31 May - Miami
American Airlines Arena – Sold Out

07 June - Los Angeles
Gibson Amphitheater - 5,109 tickets Sold

09 June - Mexico City
Auditorio Nacional – Sold Out

10 June - Mexico City
Auditorio Nacional – Sold Out

13 June - Monterrey
Monterrey Arena – Sold Out

14 June - Guadalajara
Auditorio Telmex – Sold Out

Muito Obrigado, Roberto !!!

Special thanks to Dody Sirens @ DC Set Management and the Roberto Carlos Tour Staff,
Jackie Alvarez - WAMU Madison Square Garden, Mauricio Rocha and David Oriola
Oriola Management , Hector Cardona - Patrick Alloco - Allgood Entertainment.
Emily Simonick at Live Nation, Rodolfo Ayala and Carlos Flores - Showtime Mexico,
UNDER THE INFLUENCE

Music Sites Draw Traffic And Buyer Interest

A U.K. consumer survey released in early July by e-commerce consultancy Avail Intelligence found that people who buy music are more likely to be swayed by online recommendations than by professional music critics. It's little wonder that music sites have been attracting both traffic and interest from acquiring media companies. CBS picked off Last.fm last year. Yahoo acquired FoxyTunes in February. And so far this year, Buzznet has snapped up Stereogum, Idolator and Absolute Punk and announced a partnership deal July 9 with heavy metal site the Gauntlet.

What other influential music sites could make for interesting portfolio additions? Here are four possibilities. (Except for SOHH, the sites would not comment on whether they were in talks with potential buyers or partners.)

SOHH
Unique visitors: (in June, as measured by Nielsen Online): 295,000
What it is: Support Online Hip-Hop is a slick site that features news updates, exclusive downloads, columns and lively discussion boards. Founder/president Felicia Palinter confirms that SOHH is in talks with several media companies regarding "strategic investments and joint ventures."
What it offers: The site offers an entry to the hip-hop space and the opportunity for a company like Buzznet to help articulate its vertical strategy, says Drew Lipshier, a partner at GreyCroft in New York. "It would fill a hole in their coverage," he says.

MOG
Unique visitors: 339,000
What it is: MOG allows users to upload and share the contents of their digital music libraries. The site hosts thousands of blogs, some written by stars like Death Cab for Cutie’s Ben Gibbard and Ahmir “Questlove” Thompson of the Roots. MOG also has a streaming music pact with Rhapsody and counts Universal Music among its investors.
What it offers: What all the content of a blog without the hassle of paying the writers? MOG has an army of people who’ll happily provide content for the sheer pleasure of it. But Lipshier thinks the site isn’t well-executed. "It would not be my target," he adds.

BROOKLYN VEGAN
Unique visitors: insufficient sample size
What it is: More a news aggregator than anything else, Brooklyn Vegan features lots of posts about New York concerts and indie rock tour dates and news. The site’s influence is greater than its modest traffic numbers would suggest—it has sponsored live shows at CMJ and South by Southwest and has a radio show on Sirius.
What it offers: "Brooklyn Vegan offers a lot of credibility" for a buyer, Lipshier says, warning that a buyout “might wind up hurting Brooklyn Vegan, because they could lose a certain cachet with their core audience.”

PANDORA
Unique visitors: 3.3 million
What it is: An online radio station that uses the site’s Music Genome Project to program stations based on a user’s favorite artists or songs. The company is staunchly opposed to the Copyright Royalty Board’s new performance royalty rate structure for Internet radio broadcasters, warning that it could spell the end for the service.
What it offers: The Music Genome Project’s technology is widely regarded as being extraordinarily valuable. Even if the online streaming were to disappear, an acquiescer could plug the technology into other ventures. Lipshier adds that Pandora’s massive user base could be an asset, providing there is not too much overlap between the two sites.

QUESTIONS

with DAVID PAKMAN

by ANTONY BRUNO

On July 22, eMusic will begin revamping the look and feel of its indie-focused music subscription service. The overhaul will start with redesigned album entries and eventually include new artist pages, search and browsing functions and a redesigned home page. New features will include links to off-site content like YouTube videos, Wikipedia entries and Flickr photos. Also coming is an eMusic widget that lets members embed links to song clips and eMusic’s editorial content.

eMusic CEO David Pakman discusses this strategy and other topics in an interview with Billboard.

1 Your relaunch is taking a decidedly Web 2.0 approach. Why is that, and what elements of social networking are essential to include versus what elements are not?
The whole Web is changing. Their discovery behavior is changing and sites like Last.fm and MOG are redefining a lot of what people think about music. This is our response to that. Don’t force people to relearn social networks. You want to play nice with what exists. So we’ll let them export anything they find on eMusic into their friend maps and import in as much as those sites will let you.

2 Why roll it out over five months rather than just doing the full relaunch at once?
Just to get stuff out as soon as it’s ready. That’s another way that Web 2.0 has impacted the way you deliver features to your customers. You deliver them when they’re ready, rather than keeping them together and bundle them up. Why should we wait until November?

3 What do you think about the DIY movement among indie artists today, and what tools are you offering them to get their music on eMusic on their own?
We don’t discriminate on eMusic—we’ll take anybody’s music. We have deals with hundreds of distributors, from the Internet Online Distribution Alliance and the Orchard down to TuneCore and CD Baby. I think (DIY) is great, but it’s not a part-time job to manage your relationship with fans and manage a direct-to-consumer career. I’m excited by businesses like Topspin that artists need to go direct. But I would caution all by saying only certain types of artists will be commercially successful by going direct only.

4 What do you think about indie aggregators like IODA or Merlin discouraging members from negotiating with indie sites directly, and rather offering them a deals?
We’re staunch advocates that indie sites should be treated the same way as majors and as any other artist. Our argument is that the indies are more important than the majors because in many ways they define the future. All innovation starts with the indie space, so there’s no reason why indie music should be discriminated against on any terms in a deal. They just traditionally have not been very well-organized.

5 You recently raised rates on your bascillar of service. Why? The stated intention of eMusic to our labels since we bought the company was a continued rise in the pay-ours. We’re more than doubled them in four years. We continue to bring both more revenue and more price-per-download every quarter to labels. One way we do that over time is to raise prices.

6 On that note, an admittedly small but, vocal number of indie labels have complained about their payout from eMusic, with some even pulling content from the service. How does your stated goal address these concerns?
I think the model has shown some great traction. We’re not right for everyone, but we’re right for the overwhelming majority of labels that work with us. It’s more than twice a year [one label] out of 33,000 [leaves us], I’ve been frustrated that that gets blown out of proportion because no one ever reports when they come back. [Editor’s note: Indie labels Silva Screen, Vice Records and Relapse Records have recently renewed licensing deals with eMusic. ATO, New West Records and the Melina Group have all begun restoring albums that they previously had withheld from the service.]
CELEBRATING another great year with the world's best Songwriters, Composers and Music Publishers
Publish Or Perish?

Publishers Look To Branded CDs To Help Expose Their Music

When I was in college I bought a pair of Dr. Martens shoes. This was unremarkable except for the fact that as the cashier clicked passed me my covered shoes part of the package was a CD titled "Dr. Martens Shoe Pie." It featured such acts as Lush, the Breeders and His Name Alive.

The year? 1997. At the time the CD, which was all 4AD artists, represented the cutting edge of electronica and alternative. To this day, while I no longer wear Dr. Martens, I occasionally put the disc in for a listen.

I bring this up because there seems to be a flood of branded CDs hitting the market! The difference? Instead of coming from such labels as 4AD, today's promo CDs are coming from music publishers that are partnering with brands in an effort to expose not only music they control but also their songwriters.

For example, in the next few months Cherry Lane Music Publishing will release "Hello World," a disc of music that revolves around Japanese corporation Sanrio's Hello Kitty character, a mouseless kitten that has been applied to objects ranging from lunchboxes to vibrators. Artists on the disc include actress Keke Palmer—and someone who sounds suspiciously like Gwen Stefani, who is published by her own company, Harajuku Lover Music. Asked about the similarities, a Cherry Lane representative would only say, "I know Gwen is a fan of Hello Kitty, but the only official artist on this album is Keke Palmer." The 11-track disc is the first CD offering from Sanrio. (A musical, "Hello Kitty's Fantastical Adventure," is playing in Japan with music and lyrics administered by Cherry Lane—although whether an album will be released has not yet been determined.)

One question that hangs over the "Hello World" disc is whether it will be released this September or in January 2009. The holdup is Target, a person close to the situation says, as Cherry Lane is negotiating with the big-box retailer over releasing the disc exclusively with the chain for a set period of time. Should Target agree to the terms, the disc will come out in September and be accompanied by a marketing blitz that would include point-of-sale promotions and Hello Kitty-branded areas of Target's toy section.

"The closer you can have kids' music to the more chance of selling you have," Cherry Lane senior VP of creative services and marketing Richard Stumpf says. "It has to do with the parent traffic. They may not go in wanting to buy music, but if it's packaged with a bracelet or a stuffed toy, then they may buy the album."

Cherry Lane is not the only publisher to see a revenue stream in partnering with brands. Earlier this year Primary Wave released a Lancome-branded CD featuring only music it controlled. The disc was given away with purchases at cosmetics counters, and the music video for one of the artists featured, Pacifika, played in Lancome stores equipped with TVs in June and July.

Primary Wave is pursuing several other brands that it hopes will release a branded CD, including a large sports enterprise that it declines to name. However, for Primary Wave the branded CD is merely an entry, what it really wants to do is manage an entire music experience. For example, ideally Primary Wave would convince a large retailer to put out a branded CD featuring only its music, but then also have those artists perform at the retailer. From there, those performances could be packaged with the artist's "official" releases—with the brand name prominently displayed on the packaging, of course. Wal-Mart does something similar with its Soundcheck series, which it began in 2006, where artists perform short sets for the big-box retailer that are then played on TVs in its stores and online. The resulting DVD is later sold as "Wal-Mart Soundcheck [Artist Name]."

"Everyone is looking for a nontraditional opportunity to expose their music, whether it's a label, publishing house or independent," Primary Wave partner/chief marketing officer Adam Lowenberg says. "Brands are finally realizing their true power and how much weight they carry out there."

And it's not just independents like Primary Wave and Cherry Lane looking to maximize their revenue. Earlier this year Sony/ATV France put out a CD sampler featuring only Sony/ATV-controlled music for Ben & Jerry's.

"In an aggressive move to counter declining traditional physical and digital album sales in their market, [we] created a digital sampler of cutting-edge covers of Sony/ATV classics, such as 'Girls Just Want to Have Fun,' performed by Etan, and 'Tutti Frutti,' performed by Les Fils du Dentiste. Sony/ATV Music Publishing senior VP of global marketing Rob Kaplan says. "The [album] is available only online and can be downloaded by up to 100,000 consumers."

Publishers are the driving force behind branded compilations for Lancome and Hello Kitty.

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

2 Live Tunes

EverGreen Acquires Assets Of Lil' Joe Wein Music

EverGreen Copyrights continued its acquisition spree by purchasing the assets of the Lil' Joe Wein Music publishing catalog, which includes the entire output of 2 Live Crew and songs by the Poison Clan and 69 Boys, Billboard has learned.

Terms of the deal were not disclosed but Billboard estimates that EverGreen paid about $3 million for the 700-plus-song catalog. The move bolsters the hip-hop component of the 75,000-song company has purchased through a series of acquisitions since its inception in 2005. The Lil' Joe Wein Music deal marks the 19th acquisition by EverGreen in building a catalog that now throws off $7 million in net publisher's share annually, according to EverGreen co-CEO David Schulhof.

Besides such 2 Live Crew songs like "Me So Horny," "Pop That Pussy," "Hoochie Mama" and songs by the Poison Clan and 69 Boys, Billboard has learned.

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In addition to its New York and Los Angeles marketing offices, EverGreen is calling upon synch agent/music supervisor P.J. Bloom to represent the catalog. Bloom is COO of Hunnypot Unlimited, which joined EverGreen in a publishing, placement and marketing venture earlier this year (Billboard, March 1).

Weinberger said in a statement that he picked EverGreen as the new home for the songs "because they have a keen interest and proper film/TV and marketing resources to continue building upon the legacy of these artists and their amazing songs."

While the Lil' Joe Wein acquisition strengthens EverGreen's presence in hip-hop, Schulhof points out that its catalog is diverse, including works by Todd Rundgren, Nick Drake, Fairport Convention, Bruce Fisher and Bill Monroe. EverGreen is financed by the Lehman Brothers Merchant Banking LIL fund and also has a line of credit from SunTrust Banks.
PUBLISHING GROUP

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**SNAPSHOT**

**A Host Of Options For The Home Server Inclined**

**PC-BASED**
- HP MediaSmart Server ($600): Five hundred GB of storage on a single hard drive; supports up to four additional drives; features a Gigabit Ethernet connection and four USB 2.0 ports.
- Fujitsu Siemens SCALEO Home Server (Europe only): Choice of two 500 GB or two 750 GB of storage; includes a Gigabit local area network and four USB 2.0 ports.

**CONSUMER ELECTRONIC**
- Seagate Mirra ($350): Five hundred GB of storage; provides network file backup to connected PCs; monitors any folders users choose to back up and synch via a LAN; includes remote access.
- Apple Time Capsule ($300/$500): Choice of 500 GB or 1 terabyte of storage; integrated with Mac OS Leopard software for automatic file backup; offers built-in extension to the Airport Extreme Wi-Fi base station.
- LaCie Ethernet Disk Mini Home Edition ($200): Five hundred GB of storage; doubles as a home networking hub; can stream to multiple devices and provide remote access to content via any Web browser; includes USB 2.0 ports and Gigabit Ethernet networking functions.

**COMBO**
- Sony HES-1100D ($5,300): Five hundred GB of storage with 200-disc Blu-ray DVD changer; integrates with Sony PlayStation 3 and Sony TVs that include the CrossMediaBar, a multi-option, onscreen menu that offers access to content from home networked devices and Internet-based sources like online music and movie services.
- Harman Kardon DMC 100 Digital Media Center ($3,500): Two hundred fifty GB of storage; delivers up to four streams of music, video and photos at the same time to up to four devices; automatically rips inserted CDs to hard drive folders; plays songs and plays content from various media cards and USB devices.
- The Wireless Power Drive (sold separately): Allows for wireless streaming of music and video content from a PC to a speaker dock.

**KNOCK ON WOOD**

For the closet rock gods out there who just can’t get their game on with a flimsy plastic controller, Peak Products has introduced the Starper—a full-sized wooden guitar controller for the PlayStation 2 and 3 versions of the "Guitar Hero" and "Rock Band" videogames.

It features all the buttons and controls as the default guitar controller for both games, but also includes a button that launches the "Star Power" overdrive modes for both games, as well as a 10 fret-button design that adds extra buttons along the neck for easier access while playing.

The guitar features wired and wireless connections and is fully customizable. It will be available this month at Circuit City and other retailers for around $180.

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**UPFRONT**

**DIGITAL ENTERTAINMENT**

**DIGITAL BY ANTONY BRUNO**

**A Place For My Stuff**

Home Servers Will Anchor Digital Entertainment Libraries

Converting to a fully digitized entertainment library is a good way to cut down on clutter in the house. So what replaces the CD rack once you do?

The 500 GB hard drive that comes standard on most home computers today? Soon, even that won’t be big enough. Store and organize the massive amount of digital music, video and photography that consumers are accumulating as part of the emerging “terabyte lifestyle.”

That opens the door to a new market, one that for now remains a niche—though to most people home servers are.

Most digital media today is stored on an individual computer and then synched to one device or another or streamed through a home network to an entertainment system or other appliance. The drawback with such a system is that all files will be lost should the hard drive crash, and it’s very difficult to synchronize files across multiple computers, devices and users without overlap.

By contrast, a home server acts as a central storage hub for all the content in the home, and multiple devices can link to it in order to stream or otherwise access music, video or other content. A home server will even automatically backup and reconcile content stored on any connected device. And servers are far less prone to crashes.

The home server market is currently all potential, with only an estimated 400,000 U.S. households employing one today, according to multiple analyst reports. Dominated primarily by tech enthusiasts and IT pros installing them in their homes.

But Forrester Research projects the U.S. market will grow to more than 4.5 million households by 2012, while the Diffusion Group predicts it surging to as high as 21.5 million in all of North America by 2015.

Driving this growth, of course, is digital content. It’s hard to measure just how much content is now stored on home computers, but based on reported activity, it’s certainly on the rise.

A Forrester Research survey shows that the number of people viewing or managing photos on their computers rose from 26% of survey respondents in 2002 to 47% in 2007. The percentage of those owning an MP3 player went from 5% to 36% during the same time frame.

"The digital assets that people have are clearly climbing, and with that comes the potential for a need for a home server," analyst J.P. Gownder says. Diffusion Group senior analyst Ted Theocheung notes that the average computer user will have up to 2 terabytes of content stored by 2010.

But increased storage capacity is not enough to jump-start the market. The real appeal of the home server is in its syncing, streaming and management capabilities. The more devices in the house that need access to the same content, the more need there is for a home server.

According to Forrester, the number of homes with multiple computers increased from 25.8 million in 2002 to 47.8 million last year. These computers are increasingly being connected via a home network, the penetration of which has doubled in the same time period from 12% to 24%. And that’s not even including the proliferation of iPods, mobile phones and other portable devices that need access as well.

“There needs to be something beyond backup to make the home server story come alive for consumers,” Theocheung says. “The server category has to demonstrate application extensibility where it’s projecting things you couldn’t do previously rather than just being a source of backup and storage. It needs to proactively help people with their media.”

Hewlett-Packard’s MediaSmart Server line, for instance, allows users to store their entire iTunes library on a server, from which any computer in the home network can then stream music. French company LaCie offers its Ethernet Disk Mini Home Edition service that does much the same.

Microsoft, and its Windows Home Server software that it launched in January, is expected to rule the home server market for the next five years, during which PC-based servers will be the dominant solution. But Theocheung says the real spike in consumer adoption won’t come until after consumer electronics companies begin building server-like functions into their entertainment system products, which will override the PC as the primary source of such-store-and-synch capabilities.

In particular, he expects cable operators to be leaders in this transition, doing for servers what they did for DVRs by including the functionality in set-top boxes.

“That changes the whole model," Theocheung says. “If you have to buy these yourself, the trend is going to be slower. But when service providers latch onto this and let you just add $5 to your $100 monthly cable bill, it’s not a noticeable impact. Then you’re going to see some action.”

Perhaps when this market begins to expand, music subscription services like Rhapsody and Napster will place support for their technology on these home servers. Rhapsody in particular has been aggressive about making its service compatible with non-PC music appliances. Meanwhile, the move to digital rights management-free downloads for purchased content will also be a key step toward ensuring that digital music takes advantage of the coming media server boom.

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Come Together
Iglesias, Aventura Join For Rare Pop-Tropical Combo

Co-headliners of different genres are no longer an oddity in the U.S. Latin market. Nonetheless, the Kings tour, which kicks off Sept. 4, stands out for its daring pairing of Spanish pop star Enrique Iglesias and urban/bachata group Aventura. Its results will be closely watched by a Latin touring industry where probably fewer than 20 acts can consistently embark on large arena tours.

Iglesias is, well, Iglesias. As for Aventura, the New York-based group plays a romantic, urban version of traditional Dominican bachata, a music most non-Latins haven’t clued into. But today Aventura is one of the top Latin acts in the market, and its album “Kings of Bachata” was the second top-selling Latin album of 2007, according to Nielsen SoundScan. While tropical and pop sounds don’t often intermingle on Latin radio or onstage, the two acts have a common youth appeal that promoters and management hope will translate into a shared audience.

The 15-stop Kings tour, which ends Oct. 5 in Rutherford, N.J., is being produced by Live Nation. The company also produces Marc Anthony’s Juniors en Concierzo tours, which feature a variety of acts from different Latin genres.

While those tours have opened the doors to experimentation, pairing pop with something like urban bachata hadn’t occurred before to Kate Ramos, Live Nation senior VP of touring alliances. But when the artists themselves pitched the idea, it made sense, she says, emphasizing that “Enrique and Aventura are young and sexy and energetic.”

While Iglesias just finished a 30-date arena tour through Europe and Latin America, he hasn’t done a U.S. arena tour in at least two years. His last U.S. show was a sellout at Los Angeles’ 6,700-seat Nokia Theater in December.

“I wanted to do something completely different, that went beyond the typical tour,” Iglesias says. “And I love Aventura musically.”

Aventura has played some 25 dates in the States during the past six months, but not as part of an organized tour. Of four shows reported to Billboard Boxscore, the group sold an average attendance of 23,000 and two sellouts.

By teaming with Iglesias, the group gains a “marquee value” it now lacks, Aventura manager Joe Puentes says. “As popular as we are, we’ve been on an indie label pretty much all our life, and we’ve worked on a smaller scale.”

“Marquee value is one of the reasons we joined forces,” Puentes says. “We’re hoping this opens the industry’s eyes and they say, ‘These guys are bigger than the credit we give them.’”

What Aventura brings Iglesias, in turn, is its current hot status. The group’s single “Mi Corazónito” won Hot Latin Song of the year at the 2008 Billboard Latin Music Awards, in response to airplay in multiple formats across the country.

A Caribbean artist with Aventura’s broad youth appeal hadn’t emerged since Elvis Crespo had a success of hits a decade ago, promoter Lázaro Negret says.

“If you put groups together that aren’t that hot, nothing will happen, no matter how good they are,” Negret says. “In this case, they both have a track record.”

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

On Their Own
Latin Alternative Bands Pursue New Strategies

Though Latin alternative artists have been able to push creative boundaries with label support, this year’s Latin Alternative Music Conference in New York showed that many of the acts’ business strategies are catching up to their art.

Attendees at the conference, held July 8-12 at New York’s Roosevelt Hotel, heard from artists who are deploying a wider range of tactics to get their music heard.

Folks-pop/funk artist Alexis Puentes, who performs under the name Alex “Cuba,” told the gathering that he had written about “a million songs” while looking to get signed. The British Columbia-based Puentes initially licensed his music in other countries and then signed to an indie that tried to steer him in a more tropical-sounding direction. “They completely missed the point,” he recalled. So Puentes formed his own label, Caracol, and with an artist’s grant from the Canadian government, he recorded his album “Agua del Pozo” and hired a publicist. He secured independent physical distribution in a few big Canadian cities. And with digital aggregator Indie Pool, he put his music on iTunes stores around the world, where he scored several “single of the week” features. He has won two Juno Awards and for a second run of the album got a pressing and distribution deal with EMI Canada.

Puentes was considering a label offer from Blue Note that suddenly went into limbo as parent company EMI went through yet another round of restructuring. “I don’t think it’s safe for any artist in the world” to count on a label deal, said an unflazed Puentes, who is touring festivals due to a fall tour. “To me, that’s history.”

Most artists interviewed by Billboard were resigned to the necessity of having to pursue a DIY career strategy. But singer-songwriter Bea Coen of Nema New York group Bea Ba acknowledged that her band is looking to get signed by a label. “We’ve been pushing ourselves for 10 years as independent artists,” she said, adding that gigs still don’t cover the cost of living to them and that “no musician really wants to spend his day in an office.”

Los Ángeles Involved with the label associated with Chilean retail chain Feria del Disco (the company also has a booking agency). Today in Chile, “the multinationals have fewer staff than my label,” Yañez said.

As Pistolera lead singer Sandra Velasquez put it, “All you need is a great manager, publicist, booking agent and distribution. We have everything.”

—Ayala Ben-Yehuda
Ill Mpumi Mcata 
South and the band "storm situation," the story of this band added up before they Fader, with decided on other Diplo me for meeting Robinson and the an 
ing break with US before last Not time 
sers and tastemakers, and But and more traditional sounds in 
teresting music that channels the Mars Volta and people started telling him about the band," BLK JKS manager, Knox Robinson says. "He wound up meeting with them at the airport for half an hour and initially wanted to sign them to his label. He called me from Kenya and told me I had to check them out. While Diplo wound up moving on to other projects, I decided to come on as their manager."

Rather than seek a traditional label deal, Robinson and the band decided to chart their own course and connect with influential media outlets, including the Fader, where Robinson was once an editor: "Those outlets are predicated on calling things before they happen, and all the elements in the story of this band added up to a perfect-storm situation," Robinson says. The Fader put BLK JKS on the cover of its March issue, and the band flew to New York to play an in-store release party before proceeding to Austin for South by Southwest.

Robinson says these shows were crucial not only for exposing the band to brands, but making the group comfortable with the concept of branding. The approach has paid off, guitarist Mopumi Mcata says. "Branding has been and is ace, especially if they understand the band on a personal level," Mcata says. "It's mutually beneficial because people can feel the sincerity or lack thereof, which is important to us. So support from such folks like Edun, Converse, Fader and certain private investors whom we've met on the road, especially in the U.S., are invaluable."

Leveraging the Fader cover and the blog hype, Robinson and the band next hooked up with Edun, a clothing company created by Bono and his wife, Ali Hewson. "A mutual friend introduced us to BLK JKS, and the timing was perfect, because we were rebranding the Edun Live component of the business," Edun global marketing director Bridget Russo says. "We gave the band blank shirts to silkscreen, and we've been talking about co-designing shirts. We see them as a band whose star is rising, and they are perfect for our brand. Africa is sexy and modern, and these guys have such a good look."

Robinson says the band has also attracted attention from Converse, and while the shoe company didn't confirm anything on the record, a source says that BLK JKS is on the radar for a future project. "I think it's cool that they're not signed," he adds. "It's great that they do it their way."

Robinson says the band would consider joining forces with a label, "if they bankrolled everything, which is pretty unlikely." Mcata adds, "I guess thus far we've remained unsigned because we haven't heard from a record label that shares our views, and seeing as we're not willing to compromise as much as people who are putting in more money. If they paid and energy we have us, we've decided to swim our way."

When it came time to get the band's music in stores, Robinson connected with a tastemaker to get things rolling. He played the songs for Josh Madell, co-owner of New York's Other Music, and Madell liked what he heard. "We were the first to have the download and we featured them in the download store," he says. "They're doing well saleswise, especially for a nonlocal band. It looks like there are good things to come."
HD Radio is Finding Mass-Market Adoption Elusive

Digital high-definition radio is hitting some key milestones in terms of pricing and features, but building enough momentum to spur broad consumer adoption remains a fall order. Prices on some radio models have tumbled below $100. More automakers are offering HD radio as a factory or dealer-installed option. And the rollout of a feature enabling consumers to "tag" a song they like for purchase at Apple's iTunes store provides a level of interactivity that traditional analog radio can't match.

But four years after the first HD radio receivers hit the U.S. market and two years after RadioShack became the first retailer to start rolling them out nationwide, sales are still minuscule compared with the broader terrestrial radio market. In addition, consumer awareness continues to lag and such competitive options as satellite and Internet radio are complicating efforts to make the digital radio standard a mass-market phenomenon.

To date, nearly 1,750 AM/FM stations (out of a total of about 13,000 stations) covering 83% of the United States are broadcasting digitally, while about 800 offer original formats and content on HD side channels, according to iBiquity Digital, the developer and licensor of HD radio technology. U.S. HD radio sales totaled about 300,000 units in 2007, with about 1 million units expected to be sold this year, iBiquity says.

HD Radio is not yet "there.

"But that's still only a tiny fraction of estimated annual radio sales of about 70 million. And according to a consumer survey conducted in January by Arbitron and Edison Media Research, only 24% of respondents said they had "heard/read anything recently about HD radio," down slightly from 26% a year earlier.

About 60 HD receivers are now available in the States, including table-top units and car radios from such leading consumer and audio-phile brands as Panasonic, Yamaha, Denon, Polk and Harman Kardon. Among the manufacturersbreaking through the $100 price point is North Sioux City, S.D.-based Radiosophy, which specializes in HD radio receivers. The company's portable HD100 radio, which includes a clock radio and an input jack for an MP3 player, costs $49.95 after a $5 rebate.

"Ibiquity president/CEO Bob Struble remains optimistic that falling prices will finally jump-start the HD market. "It's not a great mystery that a higher volume of radios will sell at a lower price," Struble says. "We've seen this movie before with consumer electronics. Think of the first DV players for $2,000. We are following a similar path to make it happen as quickly as we can. The price point is fundamentally important."

But Edison VP Tom Webster counters that new technologies and lower prices won't be enough to drive mass consumer adoption of HD radio. Instead, he argues, the industry needs to invest more in quality content.

"Programming is a regional crapshoot of varying quality," Webster says. "The industry has to create value through the creation of strong, passionate brands that may be augmented by music, but stand for more than 'one great song after another'... Building brands takes the time, resources and energy of radio's talented programmer and creative staff—but many are already programming three to five broadcast stations, so often the HD2 channel gets relegated to the back burner."

Robert Unmacht, a media consultant and radio expert with N3 Partners in Nashville, believes that broadcasters haven't been aggressive enough in their launch of HD radio. "The problem is that it is being rolled out as if it's a new radio invention, like FM," he says. "If there were no competition from new-media, it would be fine for this to gradually phase in and replace analog radio. But with so much competition, we don't have that time to wait."

The auto market has the potential to be a key sales channel for HD radio, as it has been for satellite radio. Automakers ranging from Ford and Volvo to BMW and Mercedes-Benz offer or plan to offer HD radio receivers in their vehicles. But HD radio is facing constraints in making further inroads.

WHAT'S NEW IN HD RADIO

There's A Flurry Of Activity To Expand Digital Radio's Reach

AUTO MARKET

Ford Motor, which began offering HD radio as a dealer-installed option last year, plans to make it available as factory-installed standard or optional equipment in Ford, Lincoln and Mercury models beginning in calendar 2009. "Moving forward, a radio will no longer be considered competitive if it doesn't include digital technology," Ford director of electrical system engineering Jim Buczkwoski says.

Meanwhile, Volvo will make HD radio a standard feature on all its models except one, beginning early next year. Yamaha plans to roll out HD radio as part of a $4,000 entertainment package on its new Genesis sedan this month; and Mercedes-Benz is adding HD as an option on three of its models this fall. Toyota's Scion will also include HD radio "in the near future," according to the HD Digital Radio Alliance, joining dealer-installed options offered by BMW, Cooper Mini and Jaguar.

iTUNES TAGGING

This feature, which was announced last fall and began appearing in select models in the spring, allows listeners to "tag" songs heard on HD radio with the touch of a button. The tags are stored in an iPod that's cradled in an HD radio receiver. The next time the iPod is synced to iTunes, marked songs appear as a list, and they can be previewed, purchased and downloaded.

Polk Audio's S491-Sonic Entertainment System 2, Jensen's JS-525s table-top unit and two Alpine aftermarket auto-devices—the IA-X100 digital media receiver and IVA-W505 2-DIN mobile media station—are so equipped. As of June 27, all 700 of Clear Channel's HD and HD2 stations were tag-compatible.

REDUCING STATION COSTS

Equipment manufacturers unveiled new products earlier this year that lower the costs for radio stations interested in upgrading to HD radio. The new products were the result of an initiative that began in 2006 by the National Association of Broadcasters and iBiquity Digital, developer of the HD radio standard, under which the NAB provided financial support to accelerate the development of lower-cost "embedded exporter" technology that enables stations to prepare multiple audio channels for HD radio transmission. NAB-member stations are eligible for an additional discount.

MARKETING CAMPAIGN

The HD Digital Radio Alliance launched a 13-week, $57 million marketing campaign June 30 that includes radio ads in 100 markets and a mobile marketing campaign under which consumers can text message "upgrade" to 54343 for information about HD radio, retailers, vehicles and $50 mail-in rebate when they purchase certain units.

As satellite broadcasters XM and Sirius await FCC approval of their proposed merger, some members of Congress have voiced support for iBiquity's request that the FCC require all new satellite receivers to include HD radio capability. But GM and Toyota, the world's two largest automakers, have come out against the proposal, arguing in a joint filing to the FCC that "any mandate will inherently distort the normal incentives to (reduce costs) and further improve the HD product offering.

Of greater long-term concern is competition from Internet radio. Unmacht believes that automakers' interest in HD radio will fade in favor of the promise of wireless connectivity. He foresees a day when vehicles offer a roster of interactive services, including a global positioning system, car monitoring (a la LoJack), baby monitoring and thousands of channels of audio online, all for one price. "There will come a time when broadband will be like electricity, where you don't even think of it anymore," he says. "It will be used for any number of devices in houses and cars."

iBiquity's Struble downplays the competitive threat from Web radio. "If you take the 3 million or 4 million listeners of radio drive time that would shut down a broadband network," he says, "it simply doesn't have the capacity. And if at some point the consumer is charged for the access, that spectrum is no longer free. Radio has an economically efficient pipe to distribute to a broad audience— the airwaves.

In the near term, car-based Internet access is likely to remain available only at a premium, which will limit online radio's reach, according to Edison's Webster. And that, he says, offers a window of opportunity. "If HD is free and just comes with my car, then its potential exceeds the near- and mid-term potential for online radio in vehicles," Webster says. "It's easy to fall into the trap of the 'futurist' and assume free, ubiquitous Internet access will be available to all. Someday maybe, but in the intervening years, radio does have a gap—through an ever-closing window—to establish new, great digital brands that consumers will be loyal to wherever they are and whatever they are doing."

END
Tapes ’N Tapes

Need ‘Tha Carter III’ On Cassette? Meet Pack Central

Music sales at the Pack Central mail-order operation are just fine, thank you very much. But it would be doing even better if only owner Bob Paris could get his hands on more cassettes.

I know this because I phoned Paris—who founded the North Hollywood, Calif., operation 28 years ago—and after identifying myself asked, “What are you doing right now?” Without missing a beat, he responded, “Describing 150 cassettes.”

In case you weren’t paying attention back in the day, some cassettes, in particular those by WEA, were held together by screws while others were assembled through ultrasonic welding, which uses energy from high-frequency acoustic vibrations to melt the contact point between parts to create a join.

Why is all of this important? Pack Central’s customer base is almost entirely composed of prisoners—that’s jailed prisoners, as in incarcerated in institutional correctional facilities. Turns out a lot of joints don’t allow cassettes with screws to reach their inmates.

Since I have never been a prisoner, I’m not sure what inmates can do with cassette screws, but I have no doubt that prison guards could sell you of some nefarious uses that they have come across.

And if you aren’t picking up what I am putting down, then this next point is going to elude you entirely, but I’ll give it to you straight anyway. Many prisons won’t even allow inmates to receive CDs because the hard plastic can be used as—well, you get the point. And that’s why Paris is on the hunt for cassettes.

“I sell 50,000 cassettes a year,” he says. Cassettes still outsell CDs, 1,100 per week to 750, or 60% to 40%. “I started stocking cassettes five years ago. People thought I was nuts when I invested tons of money in analog pre-recorded music on tape.”

But he had to make that investment. Sony BMG deleted cassette in May 2006, while the other majors have stopped making cassettes and are in sell-down mode, he reports.

Pack Central plans to propose a special order to some of its trading partners to manufacture small runs in cassettes of its best-selling catalog titles, although some new titles would also sell well in the format. Paris adds. Best-selling titles currently include Lil Wayne’s “Tha Carter III,” Mariah Carey’s “E=MC2,” Usher’s “Here I Stand,” Rihanna’s “Good Girl Gone Bad,”


Although Pack Central buys direct from everyone, it gets fill-in product from one-stop so it can offer any new product in its catalog, without stocking it. But Pack Central stocks about 10,000 CDs and 5,000 cassette titles, with most orders going out within 24 hours, says Paris, who began the business after a short stint overseeing mail order for the now-defunct Moby Disc chain in the late 70s.

In addition to selling music to prisoners, the company operates on the Amazon Marketplace as “Pack 1000,” selling some deleted merchandise. But other than that, Paris says he has no intentions of expanding his business to the Web, noting, “I don’t want to deal with the cockamamie pricing on the Internet.”

Pack Central has a mailing list of 50,000 customers and sends out its catalog twice a year, with monthly mailers featuring new titles. Prisoners pay for product through money orders or checks drawn on a spendable trust account set up by their family members. But Pack Central has to be careful even here. “If someone, due to a math error, shorted us $1, we used to fulfill the order and ask them send us a buck extra the next time,” Paris says. “But that is extending prisoners’ credit, which felonies are not allowed to have, since they don’t have the capacity to enter into a contract. So we got into trouble for that and now have to top off an item and refund them the difference.”

When Paris says business is fine, he is speaking relatively. “Our business has been flat for the last five years, which to me is fantastic, considering what’s going on in the music business,” he says. The operation does the equivalent of a decent record store, with its volume hitting more than $1 million annually.

As for the future, things are still looking good for Pack Central. “I have 24 lodged every conventional bullet that has hit most music retailers,” Paris says. “I don’t have to worry about downloading, legal or illegal. The beauty of it is that prisoners don’t have Internet access and never will.”

Need further proof of the company’s success?

For 24/7 retail news and analysis, see billboard.biz/retail.
GLOBAL

BY WOLFGANG SPANHR

GOLDEN YEARS

Older Consumers Lead German Download Growth

HAMBURG—The German music industry is banking on the older generation, as “silver surfers” emerge as an increasingly important demographic for its fledgling digital music business.

Germany has a burgeoning mature population, with 40% of its citizens now older than 50. That’s projected to rise to 46% by 2018, according to the independent Institute Center for demographic Change.

“Anyone who continues to ignore the older generation of music buyers is digging his own grave and will be commercially dead faster than this ignored target group dies,” says Thomas M. Stein, CEO of Munich-based independent label TSMusic JWP AG. The label specializes in schlager, the sentimental ballad-dominated pop genre that’s one of the main beneficiaries of the digital boom among older consumers.

The German digital music market has struggled to take off. According to the IFPI, digital sales were worth $86.5 million in 2007, up just 13.5% from the previous year. That was a far smaller rate of growth than the 34.9% increase posted in the United States and the 28.2% gain recorded in the United Kingdom. This is despite Germany’s success in almost halving online piracy levels between 2003 and 2007 (Billboard, April 12).

But according to a report from Berlin-based association of hardware manufacturers BITKOM, digital media sales during first-quarter 2008 showed signs that the market might be finally stirring to life. Germans purchased 12 million legal downloads of music, games, audiobooks and video worth €52 million in the first quarter, representing a 34% jump in unit volume and a 30% increase in retail value from the same period a year earlier. BITKOM says music downloads account for 45% of all first-quarter downloads in terms of retail value, an improvement from 35% of total sales during the year-earlier period.

The BITKOM research also showed that 29% of all download purchases in the first quarter were made by consumers older than 40, up from 24% for full-year 2007. Spending by consumers ages 50-59 totaled 30% of download purchases in the quarter, compared with 27% last year, while spending by consumers younger than 30 fell to 41% of purchases, from 49% during the whole of 2007.

The increasing spending by older consumers has been vital for the development of Germany’s digital music business because younger Germans have been slow to embrace legal online services.

That’s due in part to the popularity of file sharing among the younger-than-20 set, which isn’t accustomed to paying for music, as well as more market-specific factors, such as relatively low rates of credit card usage.

Some niche German labels say careful targeting of older consumers is now paying off. Jörg Hellwig, head of Munich-based Sony BMG imprint Ariola, says his label deliberately focuses on fans previously considered too old for regular music purchasing.

“We reach the older target groups on suitable portals like [online music magazine] Smago,” he says, “but also by using traditional tools such as posters, TV and print.”

Hellwig declines to reveal sales figures, but says such methods have boosted Ariola’s online schlager sales, with veteran singer Andrea Berg emerging as its No. 1 digital artist.

Sascha Lazinbat, managing director of Berlin-based digital music distribution company Zebralution, says the increase in digital demand for such schlager artists as Udo Jürgens could be surpassed by classical music if releases were made more digital-friendly. “The likes of violinist Andrei Rieu are already selling well, with digital accounting for 10%-15% of a typical 100,000-plus-selling album. Older music fans remain avid consumers of CDs. The German Phonographic Assn. reports that while CD album sales slipped 4.2% to 178.4 million in 2007 from 186.3 million units in 2006, the 50-plus consumers accounted for 24.2% of sales, up from 23% in 2006.

And Berlin-based concert promoter Peter Schwenkow, CEO of DEAG, says the 50-plus users’ high disposable income makes them the highest net-worth target group of all. He estimates the German live entertainment industry generates up to 45% of its revenues from the 50-plus demographic.

Michael Kernstedt, European chairman of Hamburg-based international music publisher peermusic, concludes that older Germans “can become the backbone of a healthy music market in the future.”

“They are honest, legal downloaders,” he says, “and extremely loyal to the artists.”

29%

Percentage of downloads that 40-year-old-plus consumers bought in the first quarter.

From left, UDO JÜRGENS, ANDRE RIEU and ANDREA BERG are among the German artists scoring online with 40-year-old-plus consumers.

QUEBEC FILE-SHARE SHUT DOWN

The Quebec Superior Court has issued an injunction ordering the shutdown of QuebecTorrent.com, one of the most prominent file-sharing services operating in the Canadian province. QuebecTorrent reportedly had upwards of 50,000 regular users. The lawsuit was led by the Association Québécoise de l’Industrie du Disque, du Spectacle et de la Video, an organization that represents the music industry in the province.—Robert Thompson

EMI, BOOSEY IN SYNCH

Classical music publisher Boosey & Hawkes has struck a worldwide deal to represent EMI Classics’ master recordings for synchronization. Through the new arrangement, Boosey & Hawkes is in a position to offer an “all-in-one” synch deal that will cover publishing clearances and access to the label’s masters; the company already represents the publishing copyrights for many EMI Classics recordings. Boosey & Hawkes owns the copyright to major 20th-century music works, including material by Benjamin Britten, Leonard Bernstein and Sergei Prokofiev, and publishes such prominent contemporary composers as Michael Nyman and Harrison Birtwistle.—Lars Brandle

UNIVERSAL STUDIES SIGNS OF ZODIAC

Universal Music Publishing and Stockholm-based TV production company Zodiak Television have struck a deal over rights to music composed for the latter’s programs. Universal Music Publishing will provide strategic advice on deal-making, revenue collecting and exploitation for Zodiak, which operates 22 production companies in 14 countries. The partnership aims to ensure that part of the rights to originally composed music used in Zodiac productions will stay with the production company in question.—Andre Painé

TIIXDAQ OFFERS PRICE COMPARISONS

U.K. independent ticketing research consultancy Tiixdaq has launch a price-comparison service that enables concertgoers to find the lowest-priced tickets sold online. London-based Tiixdaq describes its new offering as an “ethical” price checker, which it hopes will help reduce the risks of the secondary ticketing market. The firm has pledged to share 50% of its commissions on ticket resales over face value with the relevant performer and will pay the cash to the Resale Rights Society, launched last December by the Music Managers Forum in an effort to create order in the secondary market for live music tickets.—LB

McFLY STRIKES ABSOLUTE DEAL

British boy band McFly has inked a deal with label management specialist Absolute for its new imprint, Super Records. Absolute will help launch the act’s releases into the market, handling sales; retail, online and mobile marketing; manufacturing, and physical and digital distribution solutions. McFly will give away its new CD, “RadioACTIVE,” in the July 20 edition of U.K. newspaper the Mail on Sunday. A more conventional release will deliver a deluxe retail edition of the album in September with distribution via Universal Music Group/Ananta. Launched as an independent one-stop label management specialist in 1998, Absolute’s clients include All Around the World Records and Kitchenware.—LB
Know Your Rights

Japan Mulls Fair-Use Law For Digital Content

TOKYO — Battle lines are being drawn in Japan following demands from a new lobbying group to relax licensing structures for entertainment content on the Internet.

Japanese music execs claim the Digital Contents Law Intellectual Property Office’s proposals for revamped licensing could reduce copyrighted content’s value—and weaken its protection. Bridging the gap between the two sides, one Tokyo publisher says, will be critical “for the future of Japan’s entertainment business and creative culture.”

Launched in January, the 10-member forum contains academics plus representatives of the media, legal and electronic technologies sectors and one from the creative businesses. Takashige Ichise — producer of Japanese horror movies “The Grudge” and “The Ring.”

In order to increase the amount of content available on the Internet, ‘it may be necessary to limit the rights of copyright holders.’

—YUJI ARAKAWA, JAPAN RIGHTS CLEARANCE
ROCK THE CASBAH

Spain’s SGAE Eyes More Sales To African Immigrants

MADRID—Music born under African skies is hitting Spanish streets, thanks to authors’ and publishers’ rights society SGAE. The Madrid-based, 91,200-member SGAE is targeting Spain’s growing African community in an attempt to expand beyond its own traditional reliance on Latin repertoire.

Paco Galindo, secretary general of SGAE’s promotions/events division Fundación Autor, says Africa is now a business priority for SGAE.

“We have long concentrated on Europe and Latin America,” he says, “but have largely ignored Africa. Now a music market is being created around Spain’s African communities. We want to help foster their music biz.”

That news is “great for the African community,” says Justin Tchatchoua, a West African musician who lives in Spain. “There’s nobody who lives abroad who doesn’t want to hear music from their own culture.”

SGAE declines to divulge budget figures and Galindo admits that it has only 100 African members. But he maintains the association’s decision to encourage African writers/artists is based on hard facts.

Spain is host to about 1 million African immigrants, with about 600,000 of them hailing from Morocco, according to SGAE estimates. The rest come from other North African countries and sub-Saharan states like Senegal, Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea.

However, legitimate sales of African repertoire remain low in Spain, says Luis Francisco García, director of SGAE’s nonprofit labels Sello Autor (mainly classical) and Factoría Autor (pop/rock).

“The community is growing, but until now there has been little evidence through record releases,” he says.

SGAE’s research shows most existing sales are at live shows by the estimated 200 African acts working in Spain, with about 20,000 albums of African repertoire sold annually.

To increase sales, SGAE has launched a new label for African and world music, Música de Autors del Mundo (MAM), headed by García and distributed through Fundación Autor’s own distribution arm.

Tchatchoua was one of MAM’s two initial signings. Originally from Cameroon, he spent several years in Nigeria—enjoying a major local hit single with 1982’s “Love Me The Way I Do” (Rogers All Stars)—before moving to Spain in 1983.

In Spain, Tchatchoua played regularly with hands including Way Out and Afro Brass, but his recorded output was largely restricted to the 1994 airplay hit “Olyly” (EMI-Odeon) and 2002’s self-released album “Vuela.”

In his experience, Tchatchoua says, Spanish labels “don’t often fulfill their promises” to African musicians. However, he adds: “SGAE is serious—they are giving us an opportunity. I have played in Las Palmas and Cuba in recent weeks thanks to them and have a new record on the street.”

MAM in May released Tchatchoua’s “Lali—El Sueño Africano” and “Olyly” by Simao Felix, an artist from Guinea Bissau living in Spain. Both were officially launched at May’s Cubadisco music festival/trade event in Havana, where this year’s theme was Africa. Tchatchoua, Felix and unsigned Spain-based Senegalese group Aboury Dabo all performed at Cubadisco.

The association has also recently organized promotional shows for Spanish acts and those of African origin in the Canary Islands, Equatorial Guinea and Morocco.

García says MAM will release four more African albums this year, then 10 annually.

Sergio García, head of communication for Madrid-based Fnac Spain, says reaching African immigrant consumers in Spain poses challenges. He notes that such immigrants usually buy music at shows or through nontraditional outlets, ranging from market stalls to local grocers in the “barrios” where immigrants congregate.

Fnac’s flagship Madrid store already features “an African section within the world music section that sells steadily to college kids and the like,” he says. But, he adds, “if we noted increased sales, we might well stock more.”
Mike Dreese

Widely credited as one of the smartest executives in music retailing, the head of Newbury Comics explains why he's opening two new stores.

At a time when others are closing stores, what possessed Newbury Comics to open more? We have been challenged by the same forces of all our competitors that already closed their doors. But the fact is, we are the last man standing in our region, so we are putting money back into brick and mortar in the biggest way possible for us.

The 12,000-square-foot store opening in August will be our first store selling coffee and beverages and it will have Wi-Fi to attract the mobile road-warrior types. We have an arcade permit, and it will also have a portable, movable stage, with all the bins on casters so we can reconfigure the store.

How will you stock the store? We expect to be category killers in vinyl, action figures and sports merchandise. Red Sox merch—we must have 500 different items—is the No. 1 brand profit generator for our company. Being a New Yorker, it's probably hard for you to understand, but up here we have people who take pride in our teams who tend to win championships. Beyond those categories, we don't anticipate a wider assortment than we generally have. Most of our stores are cramped because as we get into T-shirts and fashion more, it takes up more space than CDs and DVDs. So here the merchandising will be better.

What about the other store? That will be 6,500 square feet on two levels, opening in Fanueil Hall, which is a shopping center built around an historic meeting hall. It gets more visitors in a year than Disney World. As a tourist area, this presents a big challenge and big opportunity in that we can front pop culture merchandise—something we do very well—so a different crowd every day. If this store works, there could be opportunities for us around the country in similar locations.

Did you just imply Newbury Comics would move out of New England? Mario Andretti says, "If everything seems under control, you are just not going fast enough." I think that is a parable for the whole music industry. The industry has been managing assets to incrementally grow and improve them instead of going for the fences. About a year ago, I realized Newbury got too big for our own good, administratively and bureaucratically, so now we have to take on more risk.

The other main gripe I have is all of these brands who are now doing exclusives with Wal-Mart. There is no doubt in my mind that Wal-Mart's ability to capture these exclusives crosses the bounds on what is acceptable under oligarchic practices, and it will wind up being examined by U.S. regulatory agencies.

How is your Web operation doing? Will you ever sell digital downloads? Our Web site now has a $9 million-a-year run rate so it is a very significant part of our company. Even more important, it is fully profitable. We might one day do digital downloads—never say never—but show me how you make money at it.

Beyond Newbury Comics, what's going on out there in the music industry that concerns you? In all too many cases, music is being developed as a branding experience for a corporate entity than for a personal cultural experience. Now, instead of thinking about the music, the artist is focused on "How do we exploit the brand?"

The main thing I would say is we need a greater understanding of the music. Newbury's business is based on a very simple idea: "Give the consumer what they want." That is a lot easier said than done, and the great part of this business is the challenge of making that happen.

How are the majors handling their digital future? I have a copy of a magazine called Horseless Age from 1902, and in it there must be 50 auto manufacturers, and that is where the music industry is right now. How many of those manufacturers lasted five or 10 years? Everyone bitches that the majors can't do digital properly, but we are at the dawn of a new period. For every one of those auto manufacturers, I'll bet 19 failed. So for all the screaming voices, technology will take care of the issues and its evolution will take time, so we need to be patient.

But the problem is that so much is going on digitally that the majors are distracted and not looking at how brick and mortar can fit in and add value to the equation. Brick and mortar is being ignored because we don't represent the future, but we still represent a healthy and even a majority of the present. Stores still represent a place where people discover music and it will have an important role to play in that space for another three to five years.

I realized Newbury got too big for our own good, administratively and bureaucratically, so now we have to take on more risk.
SHIRTS. HATS. KEY CHAINS.

ARE THESE THE SAVIORS OF MUSIC?

BY RAY WADDELL
The mainstream music business is now finding out what many hard-touring bands have known for years: Merchandise is in many cases a far more reliable source of income than record sales. It’s a new world order, where record labels desperately seek new revenue streams and client services to offer, and newly empowered promoters like Live Nation make merch a key component of multirights deals with such acts as Madonna, Jay-Z, U2, Shakira and Nickelback. At the same time, boutique merchandisers like Cinder Block and newly launched Cut Merch offer distinctly different business models and DIY ideology.

As everyone jockeys for position, merchandising has acquired a new status. Beyond tour merch, there is increased focus on retail deals and the lucrative direct-to-fan online business pioneered by MusicToday (now under the Live Nation fold). “Merchandising is playing a much bigger role than it ever did before, there is no question about that,” says Dell Furano, founder of industry leader Signatures Network, whom last year sold his company to Live Nation. And with that role comes newfound respect for merch veterans. “We get a soda now when we go to the shows; we never got anything before,” says Tom Bennett, CEO of Bravado, the merchandising arm of Universal Music Group. Bravado became a division of UMG last year when the music giant paid around $90 million to acquire the merchandiser’s parent, Sanctuary Group.

But from labels to promoters to the DIY guys, what defines a successful business model for merch is still largely up to the merchandiser. “For the record companies that think merchandising is going to get them across this huge chasm of their business model, I think they’ll find it challenging,” Furano says. “It is comforting to realize all these years later that the ability to design really great product, print it, get it approved, get it distributed to the road, sell it, collect the money, pay the royalties and do every stop of that process with experienced, qualified people at the right price is a hard skill to duplicate.”

“The record companies have the most difficult decisions to make as they see their core business evaporating,” says Steve Gerstman, whose SGS handles merch for such acts as the Stray Cats and Eric Clapton, and who recently launched the more DIY-oriented Cut Merch. “Maybe they’re in a little bit of a panic mode in that regard.”

And when it comes to turning merch into cold hard cash, there’s no number of intricate details that can affect the deal. Royalty percentages paid to artists vary according to the product and the outlet. “Also, you have to consider the quality of the artwork, and the online presence, and the cross-promotion with promoters and retailers, and ticketing that can be brought to the table,” says Ross Schilling, a manager with Vortex whose clients include Kid Rock, Lynyrd Skynyrd and Hank Williams Jr. “There can be many options and ideas to be considered.”

For some, merchandising remains simply “a necessary part of touring,” according to Bruce Springsteen manager Jon Landau, who doesn’t put merch on the level of publishing, recording and touring. “My philosophy is for us to come up with the best possible quality and to keep the prices as reasonable as possible,” he says.

Here, Billboard profiles the merch movers and shakers—and their strategies.>
I.

Universal and the helps us and not seem Sanctuary, which a scope, Bravado are challenges, Bischoff around the derground ethics, while doing business in the underground as well as the mainstream around the world.

Being independent has advantages and challenges, Bischoff says. "The biggest challenge is competing against the deep pockets of the big guys. Upfront advances are still very attractive to many established, Cinder Block's indie ethos has resulted in merch partnerships with genre stalwarts like Green Day, The Pogues and AFI, as well as up-and-coming artists."

When 360 deals "tie up artists for 10 years or more, the pool of big artists is shrinking," Bischoff says. "The good news for Cinder Block is that there are still many artists who value service and better royalty earnings over an advance that they have to pay back anyway."

Many artists would be better served to not take the bait on a hefty advance, Bischoff believes. "Obviously there is a cost to being prepaid and in many cases it is only a matter of months before the advance is earned anyway," he says. "Some would rather enjoy the better service and get higher royalties on the back end."

Bischoff describes the Cinder Block business model as more of a partnership when it comes to tour merch. "Having built a solid reputation for our low-cost, streamlined operation and the total transparency of our settlements, many artists would rather work together with us to maximize customer satisfaction as well as earnings," he says.

For retail and online, Bischoff says his company is one of the few that still offers in-house distribution. "Here again, being nimble and hands-on allows us to react quickly to opportunities," he says. "Many artists have rather short windows to get product out, be it music or performing, and being on top of the demand is critical."

Bischoff believes there will always be a place for independents in the merch business. "I believe many artists will re-challenge the deal. "The more we can do a better job and won't be happy with the execution from the big guys after the upfront payment," he says. "This may take some time, but as long as we stay true to our core strengths we will be ready for the fallout."

Cinder Block's role as Universal Music Group's merchandising division hasn't limited the company's reach; more than 75% of its business is non-UMG acts.

Bravado's role as Universal Music Group's merchandising division hasn't limited the company's reach; more than 75% of its business is non-UMG acts.

 WITH ITS NEW IDENTITY as UMG's global merchandising division, Bravado is Live Nation's closest merch competitor in terms of size, geographic scope, experience and deep pockets. CEO Bennett has been associated with Bravado since its inception and also has a label background after a stint with PolyGram in the '90s. Given the history of Sanctuary, which in many ways pioneered the 360-degree model, the joining of label and merch company does not seem a stretch to Bennett.

"I thought we were pretty good before, and now that we're part of Universal it helps us get into different places and do different things that we never could before, just because of the sheer size of Universal and the level of professionalism it brings with it," he says. "The fact that we can now do what we do and have done well in the U.S. and the U.K. for a number of years ... into a lot of other countries—up to 40 odd, very quickly—is huge. This is something not a lot of other people can replicate."

Like most modern merch companies, Bravado represents artists on the road, at retail through third-party agreements and online. "The whole social networking side of it has changed things dramatically for all of us," Bennett says. "We have to find new and different ways to continually improve the offering. I don't think anyone's got it right yet."

Bennett believes the online business in general could do a better job of "connecting the dots between the fan and the act in a smart way, where everybody's getting what they want at the right time and feeling that it's an exclusive experience," he says.

Some bands understand the importance of this "constant managing of the fan base" better than others, Bennett adds. "It's an awful lot of work, and depending on the size of the management team and the band's attention and our attention, there's a lot of work to be done in that arena," he says.

Bennett has seen Bravado evolve from being an independent to being part of a corporate parent to a bigger corporate parent. "The constant is whoever you work for you have to do a really good job; it doesn't matter if you're an independent or by a large corporation," he says. "Ultimately the band's going to look at the job you do."

Today, 75% of the Bravado roster comprises non-Universal acts. "I'd like to see our business grow in all ways. I'd like to think we could do 100% of 100%, but that's not realistic," Bennett says. "As long as we can keep winning more than we lose and keep getting a fair share, we'll be happy."

And new contracts are, more than before, longer term than the traditional one per deal. "The more we can do a better job for these acts outside of the touring arena ... we're finding more and more acts wanting to extend the length of term we would have traditionally signed," Bennett says.

More cross-promotions between label and merchandiser strengthen these relationships. "For us, someone like Kanye West, whom we work with, is like a prime example of someone who has put an enormous amount of thought into merchandising," he says. "He's not realistic because what we're selling on his behalf is a true reflection of his show and himself," Bennett says.

LIVE NATION ARTIST MERCHANDISING

LIVE NATION HAS BEEN highly aggressive in the merchandising game, acquiring all or part of each merch companies as Trunk, Anthill Trading and Signatures Network, along with fulfillment/direct-to-fan leaders MusicToday and UltraStar.

All of these businesses—and merchandising/licensing in general—are a crucial component of Live Nation Artists, the live entertainment division that has cut long-term multimillion deals with Madonna, ZZ Top, Shakira and Nickelback. Increasingly, merchandising, branding, licensing and ticketing are orchestrated through the rapidly expanding music Web portal Livetraction.com.

"The model's real simple: How do we make the artist more money from sources and cross-promote the franchise better than our competitors?" Vlasic says. "When your concert tickets, your songwriting, your merchandise and your Web site all work in unison, they create value, draw new fans and draw repeat fans."

While these various operations currently operate under individual company names, all fall under Live Nation Artist Merchandising, with the original names of the divisions eventually to be phased out. Purposely, Signatures, MusicToday, Trunk, Anthill and Ultragold are highly integrated and collaborate very, very closely now," he says.

Merchandising's role in Live Nation Artists will come to fruition on this fall's global Madonna tour, then even more...
fully on the proposed U2 tour next year. But Furano says merchandising has very much come into play with such Live Nation North American tours by Janet Jackson, Coldplay, Def Leppard and Yes.

Given Live Nation’s long list of promoters around the world, Signatures and the other merchandisers are now aligned with promoters they for years enjoyed—or endured—separate if parallel, he says.

“Everybody on this side comes from the world where when you’re working for artists, you have to perform, not like the record companies who have these long, multyear contracts where they own the intellectual property,” Furano says. “Our model—the model of concert promoters, agents, managers, merchandisers—has always been different. In the past we have had short-term agreements. We have to be smarter, better and work harder all the time to bring value to the clients.”

Through its acquisitions, Live Nation’s merch roots are now deep and widespread, dating back to the infancy of the business. “The other thing that is different is no other merchandising company offers Web site, fan clubs, ticket packages and merchandising all with one company organization,” Furano says. “When we make a deal with George Michael, we’re doing his Web site, his VIP ticketing, his fan club and presales, tour merchandise, and retail, and we do it very, very quickly.”

MerchDirect still operates independently outside the Thread Shop association. “As our business is growing, we’re becoming one of their biggest partners, but we’re not really a client,” Vlasic says. “We could have cut a deal with them where they pay us a royalty and we filter it down to the artist, but that’s not the deal we cut. We cut a very particular production deal on behalf of their company but within the Sony BMG arena.”

Thread Shop is the face to the artist, retail and on the road, and MerchDirect provides back-end fulfillment, Vlasic says. “They do our printing, they fulfill our stores, but we go after the artists, we are the people the artists talk to, and we oversee the creative and production,” he says. It also seeks out cross-promotional opportunities. “One of the things we’ve tried to focus on is bundling the merchandise with the recorded music we’re already partnered with the band in,” says Vlasic, who says the strategy has been implemented on the road and at retail. “The band sells T-shirts and CDs, why not bundle them together?”

With Epic’s Sean Kingston, every T-shirt comes with a free download as a hang-tag of his song “Beautiful Girl.” “It wasn’t like we charged more for it, it was a way to combine what we’re doing with what the artists are doing and selling the merchandising,” Vlasic says.

Vlasic says Thread Shop would like to expand cross-promotions between the music and the merch, including at traditional retail music stores. So when bundling a T-shirt with a CD, what’s the ancillary? “It’s an equal scenario,” Vlasic says. “We’re trying to get the fan and the band the best bang for the buck.”

A deal with Thread Shop is open to any artist, not just an Epic or Sony act. The structure of the deal “depends on what the artist needs and wants and how it’s going to work best for both parties,” Vlasic says. “Sometimes there’s no term, sometimes there’s a term.”

On today’s playing field, it’s clear that record labels have to be more than just, well, record labels. “We’re now in the brand-building business,” Vlasic says. “We’re no longer just a record company.”

BANDMERCH WAS ALREADY well-established when it was acquired by sports and entertainment giant Anschutz Entertainment Group a year ago to service AIC Live touring clients and events. “We’ve benefited greatly from the synergies created in the union and have maintained our ability to operate independently with the same passion and commitment to artist advocacy and fan satisfaction,” BandMerch president Donn Delson says.

“We do a lot of cross-channel marketing, encouraging fans to shop through multiple channels with value-adds, coupon redemptions, exclusives, etc., that move between Web, the tour and retail, and that increase sales opportunities and heighten fan satisfaction,” Delson says.

While BandMerch gets a percentage of online direct-to-fan sales, “at the same time they’re warehousing, printing and designing for us,” says Ryan Kienle, bassist for BandMerch client Matchbook Romance. “Most of their profit is from us paying them to design and paying them the up-charge on the T-shirt. It’s an artist-friendly merch company that’s not trying to take advantage of musicians but offer quality products.”

In terms of synergies with its parent company, BandMerch has created the event merch for AEG-produced festivals Coachella, Stagecoach, Rock on the Range, Riotfest, Mile High and All Points West. “The per heads for the [first] three completed festivals were far better than they have ever been previously,” Delson says.

In Delson’s view, the current merchandising marketplace is “undergoing monumental change, with groups from all sides of the business vying for an artist’s merch rights,” he says. “The pity of it is that while well-intentioned, many of these groups are not well-equipped to know what to do with those rights for the long-term strategic development or integrity of the artist’s brand.”

Delson adds, “I believe in the adage, ‘Do what you do best and don’t do what you don’t do best.’ We’re the best at what we do, and our... growth and success over the past seven years is a direct reflection of that approach to business.”

INDUSTRY VETERAN STEVE Gerstman’s SGS handles large-scale merch business for such acts as Eric Clapton, the Stray Cats and Queen, but Gerstman took the DIY approach to a new level in launching Cut Merch this year.

To put it simply, Cut Merch is a merch company for bands not yet on the large company radar—or more developed bands that simply want to control their own merch destiny. Gerstman has no illusions about his ability to compete head-to-head with the big corporate merch companies. “I’ve got political connections, they’ve got political connections, and oftentimes their connections can beat up mine,” he says.

Gerstman says that, at the most, big companies are interested in a pool of a few hundred bands “because they play the big events, they do the bigger per caps. Every merchandiser wants to be representing the higher-grossing bands. That’s why there’s a lot of competition at the top of the food chain in terms of bands.”

That leaves several hundred bands without access to a merch deal, “and they’re certainly not going to be approached for a 360 deal,” Gerstman says.

Even a large company doesn’t have the resources to service thousands of bands. “If I’m putting together a small tour or a big tour, the work it takes is just about the same,” Gerstman says. “Whether it’s 15 dates in clubs or 50 dates in theaters, the total gross would be very different but it’s pretty much the same amount of work.”

In a traditional arrangement, the merchandiser gets the rights, gets the product lined up and going, puts a person or people on the road at their expense, then “the money is collected and at the end of the tour there is some kind of deal, where it’s either a royalty or a split of the net,” Gerstman says.

Another type of deal is the so-called “supply business,” where merch companies print up a limited run of product to give to bands on the road to sell themselves and pay back the merch company. “Up until now, the supply business has been a ‘stepchild’ of the merch business because [merch companies] prefer to do their main business—full-service tour operations,” Gerstman says.

Cut Merch is supply deals only, allowing bands to buy, order and ship merchandise wherever we need it. “They can do online wherever they can get access to the Internet, log into their merch page and see what they’ve sold, what they’ve ordered, their history, click a button and reorder or reroute,” Gerstman says.

“We’re holding goods for them in our warehouse. If they run out of larges, for example, they can click a button and we ship it where they need it.”

Personnel is available when more hands-on service is required. “While you can never completely automate this business, we’re putting the tools of merchandising into the hands of the bands, so as much as they want to do themselves, they can, with the convenience of a Web site,” Gerstman says.

One manager with multiple clients now can deal with one Web site and manage the merge. Gerstman says, citing Chad Jensen at Fitzgerald-Hartley as an example. Jensen’s clients Big Bad Voodoo Daddy, Colbie Caillat and Robert Crey are all Cut Merch clients. “They do make it easy. From design to manufacturing they take care of everything, and the service has proven to be very cost-effective for my clients,” Jensen says.

“Many managers have a mix of A’ and B’ acts, so to speak,” Gerstman says, “and Cut Merch is being viewed as a great solution to the merch needs at the ‘B’ act level.”

Cut Merch focuses on the supply business, allowing bands to order a limited run of product on the road.
How Razor & Tie Took Children's Musician Laurie Berkner From A Cult Fave To Wal-Mart's Aisles

By Cortney Harding
Photograph By Michelle Pedone
The first clue as to why it took Laurie Berkner six years to release her latest record comes early in her interview. After a few minutes of chatting, Berkner is interrupted by her young daughter, and the conversation is put on hold while Berkner attends to her needs. This isn't to imply that Berkner, an acclaimed children's musician whose album "Rocketship Run" will street Aug. 5, doesn't take her work seriously. But she relishes her independence and ability to focus on her family first and has fought to craft all her business relationships with that ethic in mind. One of those relationships is with Razor & Tie, an eclectic label with a large children's music division. Berkner joined forces with the label in 2004, after releasing four albums on her own. Under the deal, she retains control of her masters, with Razor & Tie handling the distribution and marketing of her albums and DVDs. Berkner's first release under her agreement with Razor & Tie, the 2006 DVD "We Are ... The Laurie Berkner Band," has sold 377,000 copies and been certified quadruple-platinum by the RIAA.

"We're very happy to be associated with Laurie, because she's one of the premier kids' artists performing right now," Razor & Tie co-founder Craig Balsam says. "She makes all her own decisions and controls her own career, and that's fine by us. She delivers to us what she wants, and we make sure the distribution and marketing are the best they can be."

Razor & Tie is certainly in a good position to make that happen. The label also puts out the wildly successful Kidz Bop series, which features children performing family-friendly versions of hit songs and has sold 8.8 million copies according to Nielsen SoundScan. With that track record, Razor & Tie has been able to forge relationships with such power players at Starbucks and Wal-Mart to benefit its artists.

But for Berkner's new album, its distribution and marketing will go beyond the typical channels. "Let's face it: Laurie is not an artist you can put on MTV or on the radio," Razor & Tie co-founder Cliff Chenfeld says, since Berkner's music aims squarely at preschoolers. In addition to being sold at record stores, "Rocketship Run" will be available at Nordstrom, Learning Express, Toys "R" Us, HEB and other supermarket chains, as well as independent children's outlets. Razor & Tie has also arranged to have her new CD tucked not only in the children's section, but also in the regular music section along with all the biggest and most current releases. And for the first time, Wal-Mart has tapped a preschool singer for its prestigious "Soundcheck" program, which airs on Wal-Mart TV in all stores around the country and is also featured prominently on walmart.com.

"Luckily, at Razor & Tie we do the most successful direct-response media buying in the business," Chenfeld says. "We have ads running on all the kids' outlets, which has proven to be a cheap and effective strategy. Because the ads have an 800 number and Web address to order the music, we can gauge the response pretty immediately."

As for Berkner, it's been a long journey to starting roles in TV ads. After getting her start as a music specialist working with preschool-age children, Berkner began to perform at birthday parties and put out a cassette of her own kids' songs to help get gigs. "There were a lot of entrepreneurial parents around, and they kept encouraging me to release my songs more widely," she says.

Berkner started her own label, Two Tomatoes; her 1997 album "Whuddayas Think of That?" has sold 122,000 copies, 1998's "Buzz Buzz" 197,000, 1999's "Victor Vito" 203,000 and 2002's "Under a Shady Tree" 143,000, according to Nielsen SoundScan. After "Victor Vito," she began to attract a national audience, with reviews in People magazine and an appearance on FX's "American Baby Show."

It was in 2001 that Berkner says everything really took off, with an appearance on NBC's "Today." "Up until that point, I was selling everything out of my apartment," she says. "I had a mutual friend who helped me connect with Razor & Tie, and I felt like they could really offer me great things. The demand for my albums was so great, but I didn't have the resources to put upfront to have all these CDs manufactured and I couldn't afford to make enough to service the larger stores. Razor & Tie took care of all of this."

The label has also helped Berkner strike partnerships with Starbucks and Fisher-Price toys. In the case of Starbucks, the store carried her 2006 DVD, marking the first time Hear Music and the store co-released a family title. And Berkner is part of a Fisher-Price called Learn Through Music Plus, where children place cartridges preloaded with music into an interactive player. It also helps that Berkner isn't afraid to take the initiative and make some deals on her own. Her appearance on "Jack's Big Music Show," which ran on children's network Noggin, came about because the network's creative director still had a copy of one of Berkner's first cassettes. "They originally wanted me to record interstitials, but the response was explosive, and I ended up being in every single episode of "Jack's." " Berkner says. "Even now that "Jack's" has been canceled, it still airs all the time (in reruns)."

With the new record, Berkner and Razor & Tie are planning on making a full promotional push. "I'll be doing the usual interviews and playing some shows and taping segments for Barnes & Noble's Web site and [satellite radio broadcaster] Sirius," Berkner says. She is also playing a handful of shows in the New York area, but further dates haven't been announced.

LABEL STRATEGY
But putting out Berkner's new record isn't Razor & Tie's only effort in the children's music arena, where the label is developing a roster of established and up-and-coming properties. Besides releases from "Alvin and the Chipmunks" (see story, page 30) and the soundtrack to tween movie "Another Cinderella Story," scheduled for release in September, Razor & Tie is also focusing on expanding its Kidz Bop empire. While not in competition with the megabrand efforts from Disney or Nickelodeon, Kidz Bop is Razor & Tie's big-ticket franchise, which features children singing popular hits like "Apologize" by OneRepublic and "No One" by Alicia Keys.

Trying to counteract the overall decline in record sales, Razor & Tie is growing the brand to include a tour and an online and TV presence. The label launched an on-demand channel with Comcast in April and is running ads on networks like Nick-
elodeon and Disney.
This expansion, however, does not mean the basic Kidz Bop formula of having semi-anonymous kids sing all the tracks will be radically altered. This is a sharp contrast to other kids’ music behemoths like Disney and Nickelodeon, which focus on turning youngsters into household names. “When we started [Kidz Bop] in 2001, we consciously decided not to have stars, because we wanted the kids who were listening to be able to relate,” Chenfeld says. “We will continue to not be based around stars or personalities, but that doesn’t mean we won’t introduce people that are famous into the brand.

“Because we have so many platforms, it allows us to launch talented kids without making the brand all about that one person,” Chenfeld continues. “For instance, we could find a great young performer and build a series of webisodes around them or feature them on the tour or a record. You will never see an album that says ‘Kidz Bop: Featuring Steve Smith,’ but you might very well see ‘Kidz Bop: Featuring Steve Smith.’

In addition to featuring up-and-coming children, Kidz Bop is teaming with established pop stars. Sean Kingston, who has had seven hits on the Billboard Hot 100 and has sold 492,000 records, according to Nielsen SoundScan, appears on the latest album, and Chenfeld says the response has been positive. “He was a perfect candidate, because he’s someone that appeals to kids without being a ‘kid’s artist.’ He’s in the commercials for the series, and that has helped elevate Kidz Bop a little. We definitely want to continue to work with bigger artists.”

Kingston’s label, Epic, is also pleased with the relationship. “Kidz Bop is a very powerful brand and a wonderful vehicle for us to build the Sean Kingston brand,” Epic Records senior VP of marketing Lee Stimmel says. “Sean’s material is youth-friendly and lends itself to that demographic, and it’s also a great way for us to reach the parents of these kids. We would be interested in doing this again and are talking to Razor & Tie about opportunities for other acts.”

Some of those future opportunities just might include live performances. Kidz Bop is hitting the road for the first time this summer, with tour dates in 23 cities in the United States and Canada. “We’re playing mostly theater-size venues, with a few one-offs at amusement parks,” Chenfeld says. “We have a full band and eight performers, six of whom are kids and two of whom are in their early 20s and act as MCs. We’ve done five shows so far, and they have all gone well.”

One challenge facing the tour has been figuring out the marketing for the shows. “Kidz Bop isn’t a visual project or affiliated with a TV show,” Chenfeld says. “We’ve focused on national TV ad buys for a lot of the education about the concerts. But I have to say, establishing a new tour with a brand is quite a lot of work.” The ads will feature children singing songs from the album—again, re-emphasizing the tracks instead of who sings them. And while the kids’ division accounts for about half of the label’s business (see story, right), the innovation for Kidz Bop and the push for Berkner show that Razor & Tie is willing to think outside the toy box when it comes to marketing children’s fare.

“The size of the children’s division doesn’t limit us as a label. We pride ourselves on being eclectic.”
—CLIFF CHENFELD, RAZOR & TIE

The soundtrack to the “Alvin and the Chipmunks” movie turned out to be a big hit in 2007, selling 803,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan, and proving that there was still life in the old brand. After reaching a deal with Fox, which produced the movie, to release the soundtrack on its label, Razor & Tie hopes to replicate the success it had by dropping a new Chipmunks album, which is slated to hit stores in late fall.

According to R&T co-founder Craig Balsam, the new album will feature a mix of covers of hits old and new, as well as some original tracks. Balsam also says that there will be a yet-to-be-revealed “guest or two” on the album.

“Kids love the Chipmunks,” Balsam says. “We continue to move a lot of units of the soundtrack and to sell a lot of digital tracks from the record.” Co-founder Cliff Chenfeld adds, “The success of this drives home the fact that this is an enduring brand, and this album will do a lot to help revive the franchise.”

And look for the movies to continue as well. Twentieth Century Fox has announced that a sequel to the “Alvin” movie will be released in 2010. —CH
August 2008 Show Schedule

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<th></th>
<th>Tokyo</th>
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<td>Jul 29-30</td>
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<td>Joyce Cooling</td>
<td>Aug. 4</td>
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<td>&quot;New Orleans All Stars&quot;</td>
<td>Aug. 10-12</td>
<td>Aug. 13-14</td>
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<td>Carl Hancock, George Porter Jr., Henry Butler, Kermit Carion</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>Courtenev Pine</td>
<td>Aug. 18-19</td>
<td>Aug. 22-24</td>
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<td>Aug. 31</td>
<td>Aug. 24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Norman Brown</td>
<td>Aug. 31-31(2Off)</td>
<td>Aug. 27</td>
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<td>Elliot Yamin</td>
<td>Aug. 28-31(2Off)</td>
<td>Aug. 27</td>
<td>Aug. 24</td>
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Two music scene leaders -- Omarion & Marques Houston rocked sold out house with their dazzling performance. 
(June 30, 2008 at Billboard Live Tokyo)
we simply put more of these

on these downunder

A U S T R A L I A ' S  # 1 V E N U E • # 3 I N T H E W O R L D *

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Owned by:

*Source: Billboard Venue Bioscores 2008
www.americanradiohistory.com
By all accounts, the going is treacherous on the touring landscape this summer, but Billboard Boxscore’s midyear numbers illustrate that some tours and venues have enjoyed significant success. And, with major tours under way after the cutoff dates for our midyear charts, more help is on the way. The timeframe for our midyear charts runs from Nov. 14, 2007, until May 13 of this year, and during that period Bon Jovi ruled the roost. The New Jersey rockers sold out arenas and stadiums in North America and the Pacific Rim. The tour is promoted worldwide by AEG Live. “Bon Jovi—what is left to be said about one of the greatest touring bands in the world?” AEG Live CEO Randy Phillips asks rhetorically. “The fact is that they are still current musically and have consistently delivered a live show that has very few equals in terms of musicianship, spectacle and gigantic hits,” Phillips says. “Whatever concerns I had initially that they might have chosen to go back on the road too soon after the last equally successful tour were quickly dispelled by the early public on-salls.” Demand for Bon Jovi is clearly still high worldwide. “The adage of ‘Give the consumer what they want and they will come back’ certainly applies here and, for AEG Live, Bon Jovi is the gift that keeps on giving,” Phillips says.

continued on >>p34
The SPICE GIRLS perform during their reunion tour Dec. 15, 2007, at the O2 Arena in London, their first U.K. appearance as a group in nine years.

AEG Live also produced the second-highest-grossing tour of the period, the Spice Girls reunion, which took in more than $70 million from 45 shows. AEG Live helped facilitate what Phillips calls "a brilliantly conceived reunion," including the press conference at the O2 in London that announced the tour. "What started out as a modest reunion tour mushroomed into a commercial behemoth," Phillips says.

The Spice Girls tour also owns the top boxscore for the period: 17 sellouts at the O2 last December that grossed $13.8 million and drew 256,647. "After Prince's 21 nights at the O2, we never thought that lighting could strike again so soon in the same venue," Phillips says.

"The demand for the Spice Girls was unprecedented," he says, adding in typically understated fashion: "It only proves that London is the greatest concert market in the world, the O2 is the greatest arena ever built, and the Spice Girls are still the reigning Queens of Pop."

Coming in third for this time period is the Police reunion tour, which topped all touring charts in 2007 and likely will again before 2008 is done.

Produced by Arthur Fogel at Live Nation and Bill Zysblat at RZO Productions, the Police will follow up a summer amphitheater run (the band's first) with a final gig Aug. 7 at Madison Square Garden in New York. At that point, the Police will have played 146 shows (not including festivals), moved 3.3 million tickets and grossed $355 million, enough to make this the third-highest-grossing tour of all time.

In fourth was the mania-inspiring Hannah Montana/Miley Cyrus tour, which took in $43.3 million, followed by Trans Siberian Orchestra ($44.8 million), Bruce Springsteen & The E Street Band ($42 million) and the Van Halen reunion tour ($40.2 million).

In total, the Van Halen tour posted a career-best $93 million in gross and attendance of close to 1 million from 74 shows. The tour was produced by Live Nation.

In his first appearance in the upper reaches of the Billboard Boxscore charts, Michael Bublé clocks in at No. 8, reporting $36.6 million in grosses from 67 shows that drew more than half a million people.

Another rarity among the top echelon of tours is a hip-hop trek, but the inspired double billing of Jay-Z and Mary J. Blige pulled it off with $30.3 million and 273,495 in attendance to just 24 shows for the period.

As always, the top tour rankings will change substantially by year's end, though the Police, Bon Jovi and Springsteen will still be near the top. But with tour just getting under way by Coldplay, Celine Dion, Kenny Chesney, Rascal Flatts, the Jonas Brothers and Tim McGraw, and upcoming tours by Tina Turner, Madonna and Neil Diamond, some different names will grace the list. There will also be some unexpected appearances in the rankings, like the surging New Kids on the Block reunion tour.

**VEHICLES**

It's extremely rare that any tour other than Madison Square Garden tops any of the large arena charts, but the O2 managed the feat for this time period, reporting $50.7 million in grosses and 475,914 in attendance from 34 shows reported.

Of the O2, Phillips says, "This arena defies description, from its nearly impeccable acoustics, 28 million-seat capacity and exhibition space, to its neighboring museums of architecture and art. And it's not surprising that audiences would be drawn to it, given the venue's proximity to the Colosseum."

**VENUES**

"For AEG Live, Bon Jovi is the gift that keeps on giving." —Randy Phillips, AEG Live

"Other MSG-owned and operated venues also make a typi-
cally strong showings. For buildings of 5,001-10,000 capacity, Radio City Music Hall in New York is tops, with slightly less than $90 million in grosses to 251 shows."

The Garden's WaMu Theater is second in that size category, with slightly less than $40 million in grosses to 146 shows.

"Additionally, the WaMu Theater has had a great first half of the year with multiple-nights sellouts by Bruce Springsteen, Bob Dylan, and Elton John.

For buildings of capacities of less than $5,000, the Colosseum at Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas takes its usual place atop the chart, reporting $28.8 million in grosses, selling out a remarkable 43 of 46 shows."

"As expected, Live Nation remains the top promoter in gross, attendance and events. "The world is simply a growing business, so there is no limit to the number of shows we can do. We have not experienced one ounce of soft sales or on-site ancillary sales affecting our business. We're very optimistic that we're still completely on plan and will have a very good summer."
Global Spectrum would like to thank the artists, promoters, agents and industry professionals that contributed to make the inaugural season at the new UCF Arena a huge success. Despite only three months of operation in 2007, the arena achieved the #1 ranking in ticket sales for all Florida venues with 5,001-10,000 seats.

As we approach our first anniversary, we look forward to more sell-outs, high grosses and terrific shows!

For Booking Information Call Lexie Boone at 407.823.3070 or email at l Boone@mail.ucf.edu

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www.ucfarena.com
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Our Morsani Hall is ranked #1 in the world (for 5,000 seats and under)
**TOP 10 VENUES**

**CAPACITIES 15,001 OR MORE**

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<th>TOTAL GROSS</th>
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<th>Total Capacity</th>
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**TOTAL GROSS 10,001 TO 15,000**

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WINNING TICKETS

Industry Players Navigate A Growing Organizing Secondary Market

If the secondary ticket market isn't quite the "wild, wild West" of a year ago, it remains a volatile and still-evolving market, and one where the primary industry, resellers and consumers are still coming to terms with each other. As ticketing industry executives gather for the INTIX summer conference and trade show July 21-22 in New York, many dynamics are at work shaping the secondary ticketing business. All of them point to a more stable and "legitimate" marketplace if less a competitive one. Vernon, Conn.-based TicketNetwork.com, which sold the primary ticket facet in the secondary ticketing business earlier this year by acquiring TicketsNow for about $265 million, meanwhile, has become the leader in the secondary market, and one where the primary market brings more stability and transparency to the marketplace," says Don Vaccaro, CEO of TicketNetwork.com, who adds that there is still a way to go in terms of growth.

"There's clearly a very thriving online resale marketplace," he says. "It's still a bit remote from mainstream America, meaning the number of consumers who have ever participated in the resale process. We hope and expect, as we work with our partners and really put together the best product out there, that more and more people will participate and feel good about the process."

Korman does not go as far as to say Ticketmaster's plunge into the secondary market brings legitimacy to the resale business, "I do know that very much our goal over time is to bring as much safety, convenience and transparency to the market for both the industry and consumers," he says. "Over the past five years with TicketExchange, we've been hard at work trying to change the image of the marketplace and work in various jurisdictions where there were laws on the books that we didn't necessarily agree with in terms of enabling a fan to resell a ticket to make it a viable option."

Sports preceded...continued on >>p42
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music into the secondary market by several years, most would agree. "They didn't get the negative consumer backlash that many thought they would, so now the door is open to concerts, and I think that will be a growing trend," Vaccaro says.

StubHub confirms that music is its fastest-growing segment. "As we move further into the music space, which is absolutely a priority for us, I think that people are starting to understand how to make some money with us and how to do business with us," LaVallee says.

StubHub makes a small percentage of the sell and the buy fee on that transaction and that's where our revenues come from," StubHub head of communications Sean Pate says. "So much rancor has been directed at our company for taking money out of the pocket of the artist, but we haven't created anything different from what was happening 20 years ago with the local ticket broker or the guy on the street.

"We've streamlined and optimized it and now it's proliferated," Pate says. "But the industry has had that resistance because they believe they should recoup all dollars for any ticket sold whatsoever, and we don't quite agree with that.

Still, Pate says, "We're working hard to get those entities to find a way to partner with us and benefit some way financially from this dynamic that's happening with or without their inclusion.

When asked if artists should share in the hundreds of millions generated on the secondary market, Vaccaro says, "I would think that unfortunately the artist's sharing in this is more a problem of the artist's relationships with the primary ticketer. I've spoken to many people connected with the artists who would love to put their tickets on the secondary market through alternate channels other than the primary ticketer, but are either contractually prohibited by the primary ticketer from doing it or are afraid that if they did it the primary ticketer wouldn't treat that tour as favorably as other tours."

Vaccaro believes the music business is unfairly singled out in this regard. "It's up to the artist to say to the primary ticketers or the government representatives that this isn't fair, that these venues have signed contracts disallowing [artists] to do business with other people based solely on the fact that it's a concert or performing artist," he says. "A lot of those exclusive contracts only deal with musical artists, they don't deal with sporting events or family shows. They're specifically discriminating against music artists on that and I don't think the music community has stood up for that, or at least agents and managers really haven't."

Ticketmaster's stance against automated "bots" that strive to circumvent the system and "jump to the front of the line" has been well- documented. "Since they bought TicketsNow, to the best of my knowledge, they've made no attempt to try to ascertain whether anybody who lists tickets on their exchange uses automated software products," Vaccaro says. "The faster the tickets sell on Ticketmaster, the more money they make, because those tickets are unavailable for box-office sale where there's no service charge. [And] if consumers buy tickets through automated processes and they resell them through TicketsNow, they still make money on it.

Korman says Ticketmaster and TicketsNow "do the best job we can in terms of vetting the resellers that are listed on its site" and adds that bots don't come into play. "They can't use our system to jump to the front of the line," he says. "If they're posting inventory they've obtained through nefarious means, so to speak, we do everything in our power to prevent that."

Vaccaro believes that some of what Ticketmaster offers as secondary is in fact unavailable to the general public in a realistic sense. "I don't know if technically they're botting their own system," Vaccaro says.
I feel so used.
A scalper grabbed me and seat 17 during the pre-sale, then sold us for eight times face value. Which means you have no idea that Kim came with her husband, Derek. All you know is that now some scalper is naming his yacht after us. Maybe it's time we take a stand.

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"WE'VE TAKEN A BACK-ALLEY BUSINESS AND LEGITIMIZED IT."
—CHUCK LAVALLEE, STUBHUB

from p.42

"but if they're using any automated device to hold tickets and resell them, it's considered a bot." He adds that he is hoping for legislation that forces promoters and artists to disclose to the public how many tickets are actually available for sale to the public through primary means.

"The secondary market would love this, you'd have to ask the primary market how they feel about it," Vaccaro says. "If an artist or venue is holding, as in the Hannah Montana case, more than 50% of the house, they have to disclose that to consumers. The PR effect of that might be that they don't hold back that many, or consumers might be upset at the primary sellers or the artists in general."

According to Korman, it would be a misconception to think that Ticketmaster had any control as to how many tickets are held back. "We're in the products and services business and we're constantly looking to create new products and services that meet the needs of our various constituencies, which can be in one instance an artist or a promoter, it could be a venue client, or in the case of TicketsNow a professional reseller," Korman says. "Depending on the constituency we're working with and the services we're offering, we always try to create the right balance to get them what they need in the marketplace, but we're not dictating how an event gets built or marketed."

Ticketmaster is a "huge believer" in transparency, Korman says, not just for the secondary market, but for the industry at large. "On behalf of the industry, the more transparent resale is, we believe, the stronger the marketplace will be and ultimately the greater value that will be generated for the industry and related participants and the most enjoyment consumers will have in terms of being able to find opportunities to attend the events they want to go to," he says.

"We want to ensure there is a tremendous amount of transparency in the retail market so consumers feel like they're making informed choices," Korman continues. "At the same time, we're clearly in the business of servicing our clients and creating new revenue opportunities for them. That's why Ticket Exchange was launched in 2002, to provide a safer legitimate resale marketplace for consumers, which also enabled our venue clients, and by extension other parts of the value chain connected with that venue for the event, to economically participate in the resale of tickets. I don't think those two elements are contradictory by nature, it has to do with how the execution takes place, and if it takes place in a transparent and consistent manner, I don't think it's contradictory at all.

What Ticketmaster's TicketsNow has in common with a company like TicketNetwork.com is they both provide inventory management software to help a reseller run its business better. Korman says Ticketmaster is integrating with TicketsNow software to "tie it into our own system so that in essence the resellers who use our software will have automatic validation authentication as well as ticket fulfillment if they're posting through our channels."

Which begs the question: Isn't Ticketmaster now working with and facilitating businesses that it banned heads with in the past? "We've always believed in the right of someone to resell a ticket," Korman says. "Like many different categories, there is a large legitimate marketplace of resellers, professionals who go out every day and look to take risk on inventory and try to make a profit. I think there is a small proportion of folks within that community who have done things in the past or try to continue to do things which are not consistent with either the law or our own policies. Those folks who fall into that distinct second camp, obviously we take real issue with what they're doing and will do everything within our power to make sure the initial on-sale is as fair and open as can be."

However tickets are obtained, the secondary market has thousands of them, often going on sale almost simultaneously with the initial on-sale. More important, many fans have chosen to forge the mad rush of an on-sale for a hot tour and perhaps pay more for a ticket at the time of their choosing.

"I think the urgency has gone away a lot," LaVallee says. "There continued on p.46
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BUYING SECONDARY TICKETS IN A MATERIAL WORLD

StubHub Rides Madonna’s Tour

Madonna’s alignment with the secondary market is a huge boost for StubHub which, along with Europe’s Viagogo, has been designated by Live Nation, the tour’s producer, as “official” resellers for the dates.

“She has always been considered a very savvy businesswoman, she’s a trendsetter, and a lot of people follow what she does,” says StubHub head of business development Chuck LaVallee, who adds that at its heart the Madonna/StubHub alignment is a marketing deal.

“Obviously there are financial benefits for Madonna, and that really is a two-way street,” LaVallee says. “But we’re pushing traffic, they’re pushing traffic.”

While Madonna “is making money” off the deal, LaVallee stresses that she doesn’t share in any profits made from tickets that sell on StubHub for more than face value.

“She’s not putting inventory up on the site, she’s endorsing StubHub as her official fan-to-fan marketplace for North America,” he says. “But we’re a fee-based company. If Joe Blow sells a ticket on the site, she’s not sharing in any of that lift, just as we’re not sharing in it. We make our money off fees; we don’t ever share in the revenue that is earned between the face value of the ticket and what it sells for.”

That might not be the perception that many within and outside the industry have when a Madonna ticket is posted on StubHub for thousands of dollars.

“The message we always try to send, and we market it very clearly, is these are tickets that are sold by a third party, by the fans, who have invested in the original ticket and for whatever reason, whether it’s for profit or a change in plans, have decided to put the ticket up for sale,” StubHub head of communications Sean Pate says.

“The financial benefit is going to the seller. If Joe Blow has a Madonna ticket that he bought for $350 and is able to sell for $500 to another fan desperate to see Madonna, then we’ve always argued, ‘More power to ‘em’. It’s a free market, and that’s what StubHub is all about.”

—RW
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>ARTIST(S)</th>
<th>GROSS SALES/ %</th>
<th>VENUE LOCATION</th>
<th>DATE(S)</th>
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<td>April 25-27</td>
<td>151,666</td>
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<td>Apr. 25-26, 30-31</td>
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<td>Acer Arena, Sydney</td>
<td>Apr. 5-6</td>
<td>97,000</td>
<td>Michael Copello Presents</td>
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<td>8. <strong>BON JOVI, OOH LA LA</strong></td>
<td>$3,838,641</td>
<td>Acer Arena, Sydney</td>
<td>Jan. 21-22</td>
<td>95,612</td>
<td>Dainty Consolidated Entertainment</td>
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NEW IAAM PRESIDENT TAKES A WIDE VIEW

Williams Draws On Member Suggestions For Multiple Themes In Coming Year

Maybe not having a theme is the new theme. "I decided not to center the theme for the Performing Arts executive director Robyn Williams assumes the presidency of the International Assn. of Assembly Managers at the IAAM's 83rd annual conference July 25-29 in Anaheim, Calif. She's president without a theme. Which could be the theme itself.

Or, many themes. Abandoning the tradition of the incoming IAAM president creating a theme for his or her year atop this association, the 2008-09 president will roll out several themes, all suggested to her by the membership as she ascended through the chairs.

"That's sort of the unnamed theme, if you will," Williams says.

Williams has worked in the field of public assembly facility management for more than 25 years. Among her various gigs are stops at the Lollapalooza, Texas Memorial Convention Center, a stint as director of the George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston and a run at the Blumenthal Performing Arts Center in Charlotte, N.C. She has been a member of IAAM since 1987, and has served on a wide range of committees and boards. Williams says her initial take on the IAAM, coming from a small market in Lubbock, Texas, was a new perspective on how many people out there actually did what she did. "In our industry, you're looking to people in another city or state for advice, and IAAM was the vehicle for that," she says.

Soon Williams began volunteering for IAAM committees, initially in reaction to a lack of specific initiatives for performing arts centers (PAC). "I had incentive to want to do things with performing arts people, so I raised my hand. 'Yeah, I'll help with that.' You start on something small, then you're on a committee, then chairing a committee, then you're on the board," she says.

Then Williams found she was developing new skills by pushing agendas and expanding her network. "I loved not only getting to know performing arts folks, but hanging out with the arena people, seeing what the stadium folks are doing, and certainly the convention centers, because I started in convention centers," she says. As she began her ascension through the ranks that lead to the presidency, Williams' perspective changed again. "Something that has really become apparent to me is it is less about what one person wants to do for the association than what the membership wants from the association," Williams says, adding that preparation for this role required several years. "I can't imagine how it could possibly function if you were just out of the blue, bam, president. It's really wonderful to get in on the ground floor of some things before you're in it and have the opportunity to move them forward."

Even without a single theme, Williams, who follows Ven/Works president Steve Peters as IAAM president, does have some areas she wants to focus on, with education and information primary among them. "When we did a membership survey in the past year, one of the things we heard was, 'We need data, we need information,'" she says. "So Steve Peters looked at what it would entail for us to start gathering a lot of benchmarking and economic impact information, and I'm going to keep moving that initiative forward."

Williams is becoming IAAM president in healthy times for the association. "We're in good shape financially; membership is strong, we have a lot of diversity in our membership," she says. "I'm so pleased to see the initiatives growing in Europe. I find our partnership with Venue Management Assn. in the Australia/ New Zealand/Asia Pacific world to be incredibly positive for us. What a great time to be coming in. I couldn't have it any better."

In terms of her specific area of the business, Williams says "things are pretty good" for PACs these days. "In a down economy, traditionally people still go to shows, so that bodes well for us," she says. "I think where we may start seeing problems is in fundraising. People are not as willing to put money into venues and I think venues are having a harder time giving to the arts may pull back."

But in the overall scheme of touring, PACs' size and aesthetics are in tune with certain market conditions that favor downsizing tours and concerts. "I anticipate more groups looking at smaller venues and not caring as much about relying on coming into a performing arts center that has all the lighting and production they might need right now," Williams says. "We're feeling pretty confident in our venue size."
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Kids Don’t Follow
Florida Rock Outfit Transcends Blog Buzz With Quick U.K. Success

The first chapter of the Black Kids’ story reads like an indie rock fairy tale. Plucked from Jacksonville, Fla., after their demo impressed Pitchfork and the blogosphere, the band found itself the toast of the 2007 CMJ Music Marathon after only a handful of shows under their white belts.

Even the New York Times weighed in on the band’s prospects, and blog chatter increased 900% in a matter of days, according to Nielsen Buzz Metrics.

“We were literally just plucked from Jacksonville and thrown in front of a crowd,” drummer Kevin Snow says. “And it just kept going. At this point, we haven’t been home in nearly a year.”

A management deal with Quest Management was inked the week of CMJ, and record deals with Almost Gold in the United Kingdom and Columbia in the United States followed. The band then decamped to London to record with former Suede guitarist Bernard Butler.

The result is “Partie Traumatic,” which arrives July 22 in the States; it was released July 7 in the United Kingdom and debuted at No. 5 there after selling 14,000 copies, according to the Official U.K. Charts Co. The singles “I’m Not Gonna Teach Your Boyfriend How to Dance With You” and “Hurricane Jane” reached Nos. 11 and 36, respectively, on the U.K. Singles chart. BBC Radio 1 has helped drive the U.K. campaign, with “Hurricane Jane” scoring enough airplay to rank in the top 20 the week of July 14.

Despite the immediate success in the United Kingdom, the band’s team was focusing there first before the States was no easy decision. “It was difficult to prioritize where to send them,” says the band’s manager, Kara Mowlawi of Quest. “But a lot of the buzz started in the U.K., and the response to their shows in December was fantastic.”

“Starting in the U.K. happened really naturally,” Snow says. “The U.K. has a tremendous appetite for new music, and we were also influenced by a lot of English bands, so it was a good fit.”

Both band and label dealt with the hype by trying to play it down. “There are still lots of people just discovering the band,” says the group’s marketing manager at Columbia, Jason Hradil. “They will certainly be able to develop an audience beyond bloggers.”

Two other bands that started in a similar position have gone on to do quite well. Vampire Weekend’s self-titled XL album debuted at No. 17 with 28,000 copies sold in January and has shifted 266,000 to date, and Fleet Foxes’ self-titled Sub Pop debut landed at No. 83 with 8,000 in June and is at 38,000 in less than a month.

Building a long-lasting career out of a Web phenomenon won’t be easy, but Columbia plans to put significant muscle behind the record. Black Kids will be highly visible around street teams, including appearances on Late Night With David Letterman (July 24), Jimmy Kimmel Live! (July 30) and noncommercial KCRW Santa Monica, Calif.’s Morning Becomes Eclectic (July 28).

The video for “Boyfriend” has been added at mtvU and has amassed 770,000 views on YouTube. Digital sales of the song are at 8,600 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. And while Hradil couldn’t confirm any specific synch deals just yet, he says Black Kids “love licensing. They have lots of offers and a great look.”

The band also has a solid record to back it all up. “Partie Traumatic” bounces along poppy, driven by keyboards and singalong choruses. Lead singer Reggie Youngblood lets his wordplay run free on the witty “I’ve Underestimated My Charm (Again)” and lets his unabashed love for the ’80s shine through on “Listen to Your Body Tonight.”

“We had the record pretty much written before CMJ,” Snow says. “That was really helpful, because we were able to go straight to the studio and start laying down tracks. Those tracks include rerecorded versions of the band’s four original demo songs, along with six new cuts.

Now the focus is on developing the Black Kids’ live show. Snow admits that “CMJ was a train wreck,” but says, “We’ve worked hard on becoming a much tighter live act, and we’ve gotten over our nervousness.”

Through the end of August, the band has scattered international and North American shows on tap, including a host of European festival appearances and a stop at Lollapalooza in Chicago. A proper fall North American tour, booked by the Windish Agency and featuring fellow buzz band the Virgins, gets under way Sept. 19 in Jacksonville.

“I feel like we’re still on an upward slope,” Snow says. “I’m excited to be able to play now that the new record is out, because people will be able to sing along with all the songs.”
PERFECT FIT

Songwriter Shocked At Michael Jackson Cameo

Claude Kelly penned his first song in 2002, but he never predicted it would end up on an album. The track, which he wrote when he was fresh out of college, was included in a Bathing Ape compilation that was released in Japan that same year.

"I had never written a song in my life. I started writing out of necessity," the 27-year-old singer/songwriter says. "I would have melodies in my head and wanted to see what they'd sound like with lyrics."

While Kelly was impressed with his work, "I was gassed, thinking I was about to take over the game," he says, things didn’t quite take off right away. In fact, he didn’t land any work for the next four years.

Finally in 2006, after plenty of networking and traveling between his native New York and Los Angeles, he scored a placement for his "Daddy’s Little Girl" on Frankie J’s "Priceless" album. "It was the first time I heard the song on the radio, saw it on an album and saw a video," Kelly says. The track reached No. 18 on the Rhythmic Top 40 chart.

But Kelly’s career is now moving to an entirely new level thanks to "Hold My Hand," which will be included on Akon’s new album, due later this year, and is in contention to be its first single. The twist: The cut features a guest appearance by Michael Jackson.

"I wrote the song and gave it to Akon with the intention of it going to maybe Whitney Houston, but Akon said he wanted to cut it himself. I thought, ‘It doesn’t get any bigger than this,’" says Kelly, who has been working closely with Akon for the past nine months. "A few months after, Akon, plays the song for me and all of a sudden I hear Michael Jackson’s voice. It was literally shaking by the time the song was over."

The song recently leaked but Akon’s label, SRC/Universal, quickly pulled it off the Net. As for when an actual Jackson album will be released, Kelly says a date hasn’t yet been set. What has been confirmed, according to Kelly’s manager Michael "Make" Mentore from Star Power Media/Make Moves Management, is that "Hold My Hand" will appear on Akon’s and Jackson’s albums.

Since penning the collaborative track, Kelly, who does not yet have a publishing deal, has been tapped to work not only with Akon and Houston but also with Jennifer Hudson, Brandy, New Kids on the Block, Toni Braxton, recent Def Jam signee Unique, Shwayze and Leona Lewis, including Lewis’ upcoming single, "Forgive Me." He also wrote the entire debut solo album for Corbin Bleu from “High School Musical” fame.

In the future, Kelly hopes to release his own body of work and to collaborate with the likes of Beyoncé, Rihanna, Usher, Chris Brown and Kelly Clarkson, among others. He also plans on branching out into country and rock music. "I’m a workaholic, but I stop myself from time to time and tell myself I’m doing good," Kelly says about his recent success. "In a matter of six months to a year, I’ve worked with a gang of artists I grew up listening to like MJ and Whitney, and I don’t take it for granted."
Building The Band

System Of A Down Duo Starts Anew On Interscope

During a recent European tour to promote its self-titled debut, due July 29 via Interscope, Scars on Broadway guitarist/vocalist Daron Malakian was pleasantly surprised by the reaction he saw fromconcertgoers. “These fans are singing every song for word for word, and the album isn’t even out yet,” Malakian says. “They’re going off of the little things they’re seeing on YouTube and stuff like that. It’s a great reaction.”

The positive response from overseas audi ences should come as no surprise. Scars on Broadway, which features System of a Down (SOAD) members Malakian and drummer John Dolmayan, has already laid the groundwork in recent months with a handful of high-profile live performances, including the Coachella festival, an intimate benefit concert with Metallica at Los Angeles’ Wiltern Theatre.

The live shows were successful in launching Scars on Broadway into the mainstream. “There were three important cornerstones where people would be able to see them and where they’d be attached to bigger brands,” says David Benveniste, of Velvet Hammer, who manages the band.

The first radio single from the album is “They Say,” which has climbed to No. 20 on Billboard’s Modern Rock chart after debuting at No. 35 in early June. Leading up to the March 28 release of the single, buzz was created by dispersing small pamphlets with lyrics and the date of the song’s debut on scars4broadway.com. That’s one of many grass-roots marketing efforts that will be implemented before the release of the 14-song album, according toInterscope head of marketing Robbie Snow.

“There’s going to be some samplers that’ll leak out, along with some clips from songs with animated video pieces that will accompany them,” Snow says.

Along with a viral online marketing push, which includes a fan contest involving the new set’s cover art, Scars on Broadway will tour Europe through the end of September, before returning to the United States for a possible support slot on Metallica’s fall tour. “If they go out solo, we’ll go into 1,000- to 2,000-seaters, depending on how the record comes out and how it starts to grow,” Benveniste says.

The concept for Scars on Broadway was born after SOAD’s chart-topping 2005 releases “Moneymeize” and “Hypnotize,” says Malakian, who is SOAD’s chief songwriter. Before the Los Angeles four-piece announced its hiatus in 2006 to focus on solo projects, SOAD’s five albums had sold about 10 million copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

With his new band outside of SOAD, Malakian has been given the freedom to write songs without considering his other bandwidths. “I’d have more freedom to write songs, to get the creative juices flowing, and to write music that I enjoy,” Malakian says.

He adds that songs on Scars on Broadway’s new album have “evolved from the System sound. I think you can tell [the new songs] have been written by the same person,” says Malakian, who self-produced and helped finance the new album. “But at the same time I didn’t try to re-create anything I did in System.”

The musician admits that SOAD fans will likely gravitate toward the schizophrenic guitar slinger “Stoner Hair,” where Malakian as singer screams, “California’s been invaded by a hippie psychopath,” but adds that new songs like “World Long Gone” and “Kill Each Other/Live Forever” draw influence less from metal and more from early punk bands, along with heroes like David Bowie and the Beatles.

Additionally, in contrast to SOAD’s wacky time signatures and topic-driven lyrics, Scars on Broadway has a more straightforward rock-driven sound. “I feel more comfortable being more laid-back in the style of simple rhythms and letting the vocal carry the song, as opposed to mathematics,” Malakian says.

While having two members of SOAD certainly helps raise the new band’s profile, “we’re building a brand with Scars on Broadway,” Interscope’s Snow says.

But leading up to the album’s release, Malakian is still nervous. “I have 100% confidence in the songs, but people tend to get scared on name brands,” he says. “And because the System name brand isn’t on these songs, I hope they aren’t viewed any less, because I haven’t given any less of myself to these songs.”
Tierra Caliente Movement Picks Up Stateside Steam

Mexico’s music from the hills—better-known by its Spanish term, “música de tierra caliente”—has long played second fiddle to its more popular cousin, duranguense.

But in the last several months, tierra caliente seems to have found its groove, with a new generation of acts increasingly populating the Billboard sales and airplay charts.

At the helm of this new wave of tierra caliente is Tierra Cali, a quintet that has been recording for a decade, but only began charting in the past year.

This week, Tierra Cali has three titles on Billboard’s Top Latin Albums chart, including “Más Allá de la Distancia” (Discos Ciudad/Venevision), which debuted at No. 8 last month and is entering its seventh week in the chart’s top 20. It has already sold more than 70,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Tierra caliente’s resurgence seems to be a mix of demographics and distribution. The music, a kind of techno-cumbia that includes traditional banda instruments plus synthesizers, sounds similar to música duranguense, although not quite as frenetic, and, like duranguense, has been around for decades. But while duranguense found a second home in Chicago, allowing it to break big in the United States, tierra caliente remained a niche, regional genre largely confined to its home (and hot, weather-wise) Mexican states of Michoacán, Guerrero and Mexico.

Tierra caliente, like duranguense, found a bigger commercial opening in the ’90s, when tech-no-boom was born, a movement that blended traditional banda with electronic instruments. The tierra caliente groups took it a step further, quickening the pace and using keyboards.

But while the movement gained traction some three years ago thanks to groups like Beto y Sus Canarios and Triny y la Leyenda, things never took off like they did for duranguense.

Now, “duranguense is on the downturn and tierra caliente is taking shape,” Venevision Internacional VP of music Jorge Pino says. The indie label, distributed via a joint venture with Universal, has a licensing deal in place with Mexico City-based Discos Ciudad, which specializes in tierra caliente, and whose roster includes Tierra Cali, Dinastía de Tuzantla and El Cejas.

Their success, Pino says, and Tierra Cali’s in particular, “has been slow but constant. They didn’t break from one moment to the next.”

Tierra Cali recorded three albums released only locally in their Mexican states, before garnering a radio hit with “Amor Mío Te Amo” some years ago. The group had a brief stint on Billboard’s Top Latin Albums chart in 2006, but got an extra push when Venevision began licensing Discos Ciudad’s product two years ago and began to rerelease its entire catalog. Last year, Tierra Cali titles began cropping up on the charts.

“In the beginning our audience was young kids—12, 15, up to 18 years old—because that’s who goes to the dances in Mexico,” Tierra Cali lead composer Humberto Plancarte says. “It’s precisely thanks to the youth factor that tierra caliente has found new breath. Discos Ciudad owner Arturo Malagón says, “The children in those states are turning toward new faces, and that allows the movement to renew itself,” he says.

Tierra caliente’s original traction, Malagón says, comes from its immediate followers. He calculates that some 5 million Mexicans in the United States come from tierra caliente states, including Michoacán, a major source of migrants.

But now, with the Venevision deal in place, Malagón’s acts have also found access to a national audience via TV promotional campaigns, which all Venevision acts have access to thanks to the label’s deal with the Univision network.

“Now, when we get onstage, we see whole families—children and parents—and also people from countries like Guatemala and Nicaragua,” Plancarte says. “Our market definitely grew.”

The children are turning toward new faces, and that allows the movement to renew itself.”

—ARTURO MALAGÓN, DISCOS CIUDAD

Tierra caliente movement picks up stateside steam

HOT HOT HOT

HOME COOKIN’

A new generation of tierra caliente acts are reaching younger audiences. Here are three to watch:

TIERRA CALI
Made up of five brothers, the group is known for its more romantic take on tierra caliente and a versatile sound. Collectively, Tierra Cali has sold 148,000 albums in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Its top title, “Enamorado de Ti,” was released in 2007 in a special edition that has sold upwards of 70,000 copies. Tierra Cali is currently touring the States with opening group J.C. y Su Banda, an up-and-coming tierra caliente act.

EL CEJAS Y SU BANDA EL FUEGO
El Cejas’ sound is more entrenched in traditional banda, and its topics range from romantic to rough, including some narcocorridos. The group has two albums out—one self-released, one on Fonovisa—and is signed to Discos Ciudad. He has yet to enter the Billboard charts.

LA DINASTÍA DE Tuzantla
At a robust 15 years old, the band La Dinastía (above) is the oldest of the new generation. The act first entered the Billboard charts in 2005, then returned last year with two hits albums. Its most recent studio set, “Qué Churro,” spent four weeks on the Top Latin Albums chart earlier this year and has sold 21,000 U.S. copies. —LC
ALBUMS

ROCK
BLACK KIDS
Partie Traumatic
Producer: Bernard Butler
Almost Gold/Columbia
Release Date: July 22

Paul Weller's all over the place with his ninth solo album—he visits all his touchstones, but there's less nostalgia and more experimentation in used into the tracks than usual. And that's a good thing. About half of the material riff on Weller's trademark British soul rock; think “Nuggets” for the Kits pop set, Slightly pop germ “All I Wanna Do (Be With You)” fits right there, as does the co-write (with Oasis’ Noel Gallagher) “Echoes Round the Sun,” which rides a Bo Diddley beat across a river of distorted gui-
tars, skirmishing keyboards and mantra-like vocals. But then there are moments like “Song for Alice,” an entranc-
ing, near-psychedelic instru-
mental. On a grander scale, the closing quartet of inter-
twining songs is about as far out as Weller gets, veering from a spoken word about deities to a fractured mel-
lotron collage to the mutat-
ing soundscape of closer “Night Lights.” ~TC

SONIC YOUTH
Hits Are For Squares
Recipient: Tim Ziegler
Starbucks Entertainment
Release Date: June 16

It's easy to be cynical about a Sonic Youth compilation available only at Starbucks, especially one with songs picked by other rock stars and highbrow Hollywood types.

After all, weren't these guys once the kings of the anti-
establishment indie rock world? But hey, if this album introduces a few hundred rabid coffee drinkers to Sonic Youth, maybe it's not such a bad thing. Plus, the band has never really been the subject of a compilation like this before, and it's nice to have fa-
vorites like “Teenage Riot,” “Kool Thing” and “100%” all in one place. What really shine are underappreciated recent tracks like the gently unfold-
ing “Rain on Tin” and the re-
strained freakout “Stone,” which embody Sonic Youth's continuing evolution. As an overview, this is as satisfying as a large latte. ~JC

BROKEN SOCIAL SCENE PRESENTS... BRENDAN CANNING
Something for All of Us
Producers: Brendan Canning, Ryan Krook, John La Magna
Arts & Crafts
Release Date: July 22

Broken Social Scene is quickly becoming indie rock's version of Kiss. First singer/guitarist Kevin Drew is-
sued his solo debut, “Spirit,” and now comes bassist Bren-
dan Canning's first effort. And most of the elements of Bro-
ced Social Scene crop up here as well, including hazy vocals over wobbly-sounding guitars (the title track opener) and fuzzy bass-driven tracks (“Hit the Wall”). Canning seems more direct than when in a band setting. Sure, most of the members of BSS are present here, and this is an epic art-
rock album at its core, but Canning never becomes so in-
visible as to lose the plot. And occasionally, as on the rollick-
ing “Churches Under the Stars,” he recognizes that a great melody doesn't need to be disguised. More fun and more listenable than anyone could have expected. ~RT

POD
JON PETER LEWIS
Break the Silence
Producer: Chris Garcia
Release Date: July 22

Once told he looked like a “pen salesman” by “American Idol” judge Simon Cowell, season three's Jon Peter Lewis had a certain off-
beat charm that won over many of the show's fans. Sev-
eral years later, JPL's personality remains just as endear-
ing, though musically, he's grown more comfortable in his skin. Compared with 2006's uneven “Stories From Hollywood,” second full-
length “Break the Silence” is a more solid effort, with gu-
itar-fueled pop/rock (the title track, “Now That I'm Kneelin'”) juxtaposed against heartfelt acoustic numbers (piano ballad “No Fire,” a cover of Garth Brooks' “To Make You Feel My Love”) and blues rock (“Bridge”). A few songs serve as little more than filler (“Everybody Falls,” “Came Here For”), but on the whole “Silence” is likely to make one-time fans take note once again. ~JM

SOUNDTRACK

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Mamma Mia! The Movie Soundtrack
Producer: Benny Andersson
Decca
Release Date: July 8

“Mamma Mia!” the motion picture featuring 17 ABBA songs (and a hidden bonus), is destined to join the lexicon of modern signature musicals, a la “Hairspray” and “Dreamgirls,” showcasing ABBA's 30-year ever-resuc-
icitating legacy. Produced by group co-founder Benny An-
dersson with ABBA's original musicians, what makes this production work is the con-
trast between super-slick arrangements against decid-
edly imperfect vocals from actors like Meryl Streep, Pierce Brosnan and Amanda Seyfried. The cast can carry a tune, and Streep in partic-
ular shows aptitude in her upper range. (“The Winner Takes It All,” even with occa-
sional off notes, is truly ap-
flecting.) The best songs are, hey, that's a joke. They're all here: “Dancing Queen,” “S.O.S.,” “Take a Chance on Me,” and on and on. Pro-
ponents will join in with such abandon that every track ul-
timately becomes an ensembl-

Sleepy said in a recent interview that ABBA is a drug. “Mamma Mia!” is the purest high imaginable. ~CT

DR. DOG
Fate
Producer: none listed
Park the Van
Release Date: July 22

Philadelphia ragtag pop act Dr. Dog has returned to quickly make good on the prom-
ise of the critically lauded 2007 album “We All Belong” by sticking to what works. The band went back to its longstanding North Philadelphia studio to record “Fate” and is putting it out via Park the Van, the label it has been with for six releases. With “Fate,” Dr. Dog also revisit the lo-fi rock sounds and timeless American aesthetic that have set them apart from their contemporaries. Buoyant and sumptuous tracks like “The Old Days” and “My Friend” hark back to sim-
ter times of riding the rails and front porch strumming (yes, really). Thoughtfully added complexities and musicality, like the horns and honky-tonk pianos that accent “Army of Monsters” during Dr. Dog's rock tracks far style to a new level of maturity and prove it's not just destiny bringing the band its success. ~LW

MILEY CYRUS
Breakout
Producer: Jason Morey
Hollywood
Release Date: July 22

Newly a named album “Breakout” when you've already sold 7 million career units seems like a delayed reaction. But for Miley Cyrus, the game plan was apparently “first twine, then the world.” While it's still age-appropriate for minors, “Breakout” is for the big kids too. The natural-born popstar—who co-wrote all but two songs—involves everyone from Wilson Phillips ("Bottom of the Ocean") to the B-52s (“Fly on the Wall”), with a sparkplug energy and Stevie-Nicks-by-way-of-
Tennessee twang that's nothing if not adorable. Even a rock-out cover of “Girls Just Wanna Have Fun,” which could have been nullified by its obviousness, makes you OK with the fact that a generation will grow up thinking it's Cyrus original. Relying entirely on the full-blooded, all-American guitar, there's not a single dancefloor beat on “Breakout”. For once, the kids are pogo-ing, not grinding. ~KMM

BLUES

BUDDY GUY
Skin Deep
Producer: Tom Hambridge
Silverstone/Zomba
Release Date: July 7

As he jams with Eric Clapton around the middle of his latest CD, Buddy Guy says, “The blues are all around me. I just find something I can use.” That's seldom been a problem throughout Guy's career, which seems to be only getting more potent as he ages. At 72, Guy plays his guitar with the sting of someone a third his age and sings with the authoritative bar of a grizzled vet you know better than to mess with. But that doesn't stop anyone from playing along, and Guy certainly seems happy to school the “young’uns”—whether he's
dueling with Clapton on “Every Time I Sing the Blues” or danc-

ing around Robert Randolph's pedal steel on the galloping “That's My Home.” On “Who's Gonna Fill Those Shoes,” Guy ponders the future of the blues, reaching no conclusions but assuring us on these 12 tracks that its present is in pretty good hands. ~GG

CSS
Donkey
Producer: Adriano Cimena
Sub Pop
Release Date: July 22

All the dreaded sophomore album after an ipod spin. What does a cool young band do after a ditzy so saucy the act named it “Music Is My Hot, Hot Sex” becomes more associated with Apple than the Brazilian art scene from whence it came? In CSS' case, it just makes another solid album, in line with its first, if not a bit more pop-wise. “Donkey” has unex-
pected moments of grace, like singer Lovefoxx's lilting, “I'm gonna jump onto the table/And dance my ass off til I die/I'm gonna hopefully forget you” on “Left Behind,” the perfect song about heartbreak for today's neon-hued downtown girl (and yes, the first single). The band's impressive sense makes CSS stand out from all the other electropop bands that sound like Liquid Liquid and can turn a smutty lyric.~KM

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THE BILLBOARD REVIEWS

CROSBY, STILLS, NASH & YOUNG
Déjà Vu Live
Producers: Neil Young, L.A. Mathews
Reprise
Release Date: July 22
When it was released in 2006, it was easy to dismiss Neil Young's hastily assembled "Living With War" for not being all that tuneful, despite its admirably rebellious intentions. But when Young reunited with Crosby, Stills & Nash to play the balance of the disc live, "War" came alive. And thanks to Young's new documentary of that tour and this soundtrack, songs like "Let's Impeach the President," and "After the Garden" have justly gained new traction. Against epic renderings of old favorites like "Wooden Ships," "For What It's Worth" and an especially spirited rendition of Graham Nash's great "Military Madness," they form the emotional core of this rousing and accurate representation of the supergroup as it is today—sonically nudged in the direction of Young's ragged work with Crazy Horse, but still compelling and potent when not even plugged in.—WD

CHRISTIAN NICOLE MULLEN
A Dream to Believe In, Vol. 2
Producers: various
Word Records
Release Date: July 22
Nicole Mullen has an impressive set of pipes and is equally skilled at delivering poignant ballads, soul-drenched grooves and soaring worship anthems. She does all that on this collection, "like a Lady" boasts a cool vibe while instructing young men on how to treat a woman. "Brainwash" is a funky pop number that should be multitasking hit, while "Forever You Reign" is a vibrant worship song, "Work With Me (Dance)" is a buoyant dance tune that makes it impossible to sit still, while "Besieged and Broken" is a gorgeous ballad that showcases every nuance of Mullen's amazing voice. Throughout, Mullen refuses to have her tremendous gifts confined to any one musical box.—DEP

THE AVETT BROTHERS
The Second Gleam
Producer: none listed
Ramseur
Release Date: July 22
One of the greatest attributes of the Avett Brothers is their ability to whip up frothy, harmonic numbers out of just a few guitars and one DNA strand, but don't come to "The Second Gleam" looking for too terribly much of that. This sequel to the 2006 EP "Gleam" is focused on characters and storytelling. It opens by addressing abandonment ties to your childhood and murder. In "Murder in the City," there's some concern about which brother a father likes better, and there's no way to get all Freudian thinking about that. The most hopeful thing "Second Gleam" can muster is "I'm a better man for having gone through it," from the mournful opener " Tear Down This House." (as in, "that I grew up in"). But that said, this is a dark but potent hors d'oeuvre.—JV

CRITICS' CHOICE + A new release, regardless of chart position, highly recommended for musical merit. All albums commercially available in the United States are eligible.

usher
Moving Mountains (4:00)
Producers: Tricky, T. Nash
Writers: U. Raymond, C. Stewart, T. Nash, T. Harrell
Publishers: various
LaFace/Zomba
2001's "U Got It Bad" was the story of a broken heart and 2004's "Burn" offered emotion following betrayal, but Usher's first ball in four years, "Moving Mountains," is his most emotional epic cry yet. The dramatic, down-tempo song includes chilling piano and paced yet robust vocals over light synth and earthy sounds of despair. "Mountains" is the third single from the chart-topping "Here I Am," which achieved the highest first-week sales for a male artist this year. The video is a continuation from previous hit "I'm In This Club," a sort of wake-up to reality. Usher pulls off this fiery-heavy song with such ease and soul, as the track is destined to scale the chart mountain.—HM

TRISHA YEARWOOD
They Call It Falling for a Reason (3:30)
Producers: Garth Funds, matraca Berg, Jim Collins
Writers: M. Berg, J. Collins
Publisher: not listed
Big Machine
The follow-up to Trisha Yearwood's exceptional "This Is Me You're Talking To" from quintessential disc "Heaven, Heartache and the Power of Love" is a vibrant number as fresh and inviting as a warm summer breeze. Penned by Matraca Berg and Jim Collins, the song perfectly captures that giddy, exhilarating rush of emotion that comes with falling in love. Yearwood's gorgeous voice, as always, soars from start to finish as she perfectly nails each line. Celebrated for her ability to beautifully deliver a heartfelt ballad, this song will remind that's she's equally effective on faster fare. In fact, the current album features some of the best uptempo numbers any female country artist has cut in recent years. This is an ideal summertime love song that should remind listeners that long before Taylor and Carrie, ladies have more than held their own at the format.—DEP

BISHOP LAMONT
Grow Up (4:03)
Producer: Dr. Dre
Writers: R. Martin, A. Young
Publisher: not listed
Aftermath/Interscope
It's been 40 years since DJ Kool Herc first set foot in the Bronx and originated a genre of music—hip-hop—that would arguably become the biggest phenomenon in pop culture since rock 'n' roll. But too many variables in the gene pool today fail to reflect the wisdom of those early roots. At a beat courtesy of hip-hop's consummate producer Dr. Dre, newcomer Bishop Lamont takes his roots to task with "Grow Up," the launch from upcoming "The Reformation." He suggests not only what's wrong with the lifestyle, but how to change it for the better. Because he's challenging status quo rather than reinforcing it, Lamont deserves recognition as one of few rappers today whose message needs to be heard—SR

BECK
Chromatics (4:38)
Producers: Beck, Danger Mouse
Writer: Beck
Publisher: not listed
Interscope
Surprising with a neo-psychadelic full-band sound, Beck reveals a secret crush on My Bloody Valentine and other early-90s shoegaze bands on "Chromatics." The lead to new album "Modern Guilt." Over a hazy met of thumping bass, lush piano chords and frantic live drumming, he conjures apocalyptic images of people falling out of airplanes. "I can't believe what we've seen outside you and me, watching the jets go by." He sings in an ethereal, reverb-laden falsetto, too entranced to worry about coyness or irony. Even if this dream-like rock workout lacks a gratifying radio hook, it leaves a vapor trail of melody and noise that is mesmerizing.—SP

LEGENDARY CREDITS
EDITED BY JONATHAN COHEN
(ALBUMS) AND CHUCK TAYLOR
SINGLES
CONTRIBUTORS: Troy Carpenter, Jonathan Cohen, Gary Graff, Keri Mason, Michael Menchener, Al Mengo, Wes Onishi, Sven Phillip, Deborah Evans Price, Shad Reed, Chuck Taylor, Robert Thompson, Jeff Vobill, Chris Williams, Hikaru Wood, Lavina Wright
PICK A + A new release predicted to hit the top half of the chart in the corresponding format.

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Name Of The Game

ABBA Mania Back In Full Swing With Film, Soundtrack

ABBA is about to take a chance on the movies.

On July 18, "Mamma Mia" opened in the United States, employing nearly two dozen songs from the enduring Swedish quartet, including "Dancing Queen," "S.O.S.," "The Winner Takes It All" and "Take A Chance on Me."

The Universal Pictures film stars Meryl Streep, Pierce Brosnan, Amanda Seyfried, Colin Firth and Christine Baranski.

It is based on the Tony Award-nominated stage musical, which tells the story of Sophie, who hopes to discover her father's identity before her wedding. She invites three past lovers of single mom Donna back to the Greek isle they last visited 20 years ago. Obviously, mayhem ensues.

The stage version launched in March 1999 on London's West End and opened at New York's Winter Garden Theatre in October 2001. According to Crain's New York Business, "Mamma Mia" ranked No. 5 for the 2007-08 Broadway season, while the original cast recording is the fourth-best-selling in the Nielsen SoundScan era, with sales of 1.4 million.

Across the world, the play has been pitched in 170 cities in eight languages and seen by a reported 30 million, with a $2 billion total gross.

Before the movie has danced across a single U.S. screen, consumers are already clamoring "Gimme Gimme Gimme!" for the soundtrack, featuring new cast vocals—and for ABBA's catalog. The former, released July 10, debuts at a staggering No. 7 on this week's Billboard 200. It is produced by group co-founder Benny Andersson, utilizing musicians that recorded the original tracks.

Meanwhile, Universal's 1992 collection "ABBA Gold" is No. 6 this year on the Top Pop Catalog chart (its 44th week). Total SoundScan-reported sales for "Gold" are 4.4 million—and world-wide, 25 million.

Decca Label Group chairman Chris Roberts believes the film's allure comes down to its sunny disposition. "There's a wonderful feel-good factor when you experience 'Mamma Mia' and these great songs. If you're young, it just makes you happy. If you're older, there's nostalgia, and it all ends on such a positive note," he says.

Judy Craymer, who conceived the play and is the movie's producer, notes that the goal of adapting the theatrical phenomenon to the big screen "was to make a movie that the millions around the world who have enjoyed the stage show would want to see—and remind new audiences of those great ABBA songs. Their writing is innately theatrical, telling romantic stories that make the songs highly effective in a movie setting."

"Mamma Mia!" is already a smash in Australia, where it opened July 10 at No. 1, in front of summer blockbuster "Hancock." The movie soundtrack debuted at No. 4 on the July 14 Australian Record Industry Assn. album chart. In London, the film premiered June 30 and ranks at No. 3. The soundtrack is No. 1 on the Official U.K. Charts Co.'s Compilation list, while "ABBA Gold" is No. 12 on the Top 75 Albums tally.

Clearly, ABBA, whose 1972-82 legacy of hits has tallied worldwide album sales of more than 350 million, never lost its mojo. Three million albums still sell annually.

Universal Music Enterprises president/CEO Bruce Resnikoff says, "There is an instant connection between the story of 'Mamma Mia!' and the music, especially in this case where the music became the story rather than the other way around. Clearly, we are seeing that advertising for the film is producing organic growth in demand for ABBA's catalog."

Resnikoff adds that the label already experienced a sales uptick as the theatrical show unfurled around the globe. "With the film tie-in, we established retail alliances and Internet-based marketing campaigns six months ago, with the belief that the same excitement generated by show openings would be generated by the film," he says. "Advertising for the movie is effectively advertising for ABBA."

Ubiverse's mass-appeal campaign has been lapped up by TV, where cast members have taken turns on "The View," "The Ellen DeGeneres Show," "Today" and "Live With Regis and Kelly." Online initiatives with social networking sites and such destinations as Allmusic.com, Broadway.com and About.com, have delivered 18 million impressions, while mobile carriers are promoting ABBA ringtones/ringbacks.

Other media outlets are also cashing in. VH1 broadcast a "10 Most Excellent Things" feature, while Sirius Satellite Radio launched 2/7 ("ABBA Radio" channel for two weeks beginning July 7. Sirius president of entertainment and sports Scott Greenstein says that subscriber enthusiasm "reflects the warm affection the public feels toward ABBA. Their music embodies a timeless sense of fun."

Ironically, ABBA the group thrived for only a decade, while the theatrical version of "Mamma Mia!" has lived almost as long, with no signs of waning. Now the movie is destined to extend that reach, while ABBA's catalog seems destined for infinity.

Ask Andersson what his reaction might have been 30 years ago to the notion that his group's music would endure such fashion today, and he responds, "I'd say, 'You're out of your mind. It really is amazing, isn't it? All artistic work is about communication. That's the only aim any artist has. Re-creating these songs for the movie was a joyful journey. I'm just grateful that there is still so much life remaining.'"

—Laura Leebove
Top 10 With A Bullet

Radio Catching On To Miranda Lambert Revenge Tale

Count country star Miranda Lambert among those who are a bit surprised that “Gunpowder & Lead,” her tale of a defiant woman waiting for her abusive mate to return home, would be her first top 10 airplay single on Billboard’s Hot Country Songs chart.

While the lyrics would make rapper Lil Kim proud (“Slapped my face and he shook me like a rag doll, don’t that sound like a real man?” I’m going to show him what little girl’s made of, gunpowder and lead”), the song is not your typical country fare, even in a format that in its past has embraced prostitution (“Fancy”), the Bobbie Gentry song later covered by Reba McEntire and revengeful murder (Garth Brooks “The Thunder Rolls”).

“It was very shocking to me,” Lambert says. “It’s the most controversial song I’ve put out so far and it gets to the top. I thought it would be [last single] ‘Famous in a Small Town’ or something not so threatening. ‘Famous’ reached No. 14 in November, topping previous best “Kerosene,” which peaked at No. 15 in March 2006. “It was just a matter of time before radio figured out that she truly is a viable act.” Columbia Nashville VP of promotion Jimmy Rector says, citing Lambert’s live show as a strength. “Sometimes the fans find [artists] quicker than the industry or radio. It happened with [Kenny Chesney] and it happened with her.”

Country WKYK Charlotte, N.C., PD Bruce Logan admits that the song’s subject matter is “a bit rough,” but says “the audience is smarter than we give them credit for. All the people who love the song aren’t gunning for crazies about to off a loved one. They enjoy the song for the attitude, performance, and it’s fun.” Country WQYK Tampa, Fla., music director Jay Roberts agrees. Country music has “always dealt with real life issues in our music and to date I have only received one e-mail from a listener who was offended by the song,” he says.

Lambert says “Kerosene,” a song that finds Lambert exorcising revenge on a cheating mate, is the only other single of the seven the artist has released that has performed well for the station.

Given Lambert’s sales history—her album “Kerosene” has scanned more than 390,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan, and “Crazy Ex-Girlfriend,” from which “Gunpowder & Lead” was released, has tallied nearly 490,000 scans—Roberts is surprised that radio hasn’t embraced Lambert more quickly. “Listeners vote with their wallet when they buy a CD and in this instance radio is just now catching up,” he says.

Weekly sales of Lambert’s current album have more than doubled since the single was released. During the four weeks in January, “Crazy Ex-Girlfriend” sold an average of 4,400 units, while the album averaged 9,400 units sold during the four weeks ending July 13.

While “Gunpowder” is still climbing the charts, Lambert says she hopes her next single, “More Like Him,” will show her fans that she has another side. “I don’t want it always to be about the in-your-face, tough-chick songs, because that’s not all of me,” she says. “I also have a different, softer side, and I want for people to hear that.”

THE BOYS ARE BACK IN TOWN

After moving nearly 3 million copies of its 2005 debut album, “Extreme Behavior,” Hinder is eying another big release with its new album, “Take It to the Limit.”

The disc, due Nov. 4 via Universal Republic, is already off to strong start with the single “Like Me,” which debuts at No. 36 on Billboard’s Mainstream Rock chart this week.

“It was a combination of all the hard work they did at rock formats on the last album cycle,” Universal Republic senior VP of A&R Tom Mackay says. “The song is one of those immediate reactions.”

The track, which is available now on Rhapsody, will hit all digital retailers July 22. “We’d be lying if we said the last album was represented by ‘Lips of an Angel,’” Mackay says of the ballad that peaked at No. 3 on the Billboard Hot 100 and Adult Top 40 charts. “The first single here needs to be uptempo and exciting to cement them as a multifORMAT rock band.”

Hinder employed an unusual recording process for “Take It to the Limit,” tracking five potential singles first. This enabled management to mix, master and launch a single while the band worked on the second set of songs.

Drummer Cody Hanson says the success of “Extreme Behavior” gave the band confidence while writing. “We definitely didn’t make a duplicate record,” he says. “It’s different, but it’s definitely still us.”

The album will be promoted through a series of campaigns that reflect the band’s personality, which Mackay describes as “big, extreme and over the top.” While details are still coming together, Hinder hopes to invade Las Vegas for a full-scale promotion during the weekend prior to the album’s release.

The group will also work extensively with mobile partners, hoping to add to the ringtone records it broke with singles from “Extreme Behavior.”

Although “Lips of an Angel” and fellow ballad “Better Than Me” scored huge at pop radio, Mackay says success in the rock genre is Hinder’s first priority. “We have to remember where our bread is buttered,” he says. “They are a rock act. If we have crossover success, then that’s great.”

Hinder is currently on the road with 3 Doors Down and Staind until late September and will headline The Jägermeister tour in October. Mackay says extensive stimuli are in the works as well.

“There is a lot of international buzz, and the band is excited to get there,” he says. “This band is home for more than 10 days in the next two years, then something’s wrong.” —Evan Lucy

Nelson, left and Marsalis

THE ODD COUPLE

The left-of-center pairing of Willie Nelson and Wynton Marsalis finds the country and jazz icons cooking up some sweet music—as well as some not-so-sweet career milestones—on their respective releases.

Debuting at No. 20 on the Billboard 200, “Two Men With the Blues” (Blue Note) represents Nelson’s highest-charting album of the Nielsen SoundScan era and Marsalis’ best-charting album of his career (see Over the Counter, Page 6).

Prefacing that story, however, was a marketing campaign focused on one important element: introducing each artist to the other’s fan base.

“The unlikely concept of them together might not click right away,” says Perry Greenfield, the album’s product manager at Blue Note. “But once you hear them together, it makes perfect sense. It’s an event record but we also wanted to image it as a fun, loose project that speaks to everyone.”

A couple of months before the album’s July 8 release, Blue Note serviced an electronic press kit online to outlets. Reviews on various blogs and fan sites and in key print publications (including the New York Times) plus several listening parties (CMT.com was among the hosts) helped spread the word.

During week of release, Blue Note secured mentions of “Two Men With the Blues” during broadcast of ESPN’s “Baseball Tonight.”

Adding more grit to the promotional mill: the duo’s July 10 performance of the album track and Jimmy Reed classic “Exhale to Inhale” on “The Tonight Show With Jay Leno” and an 11-minute interview segment July 12 on NPR’s “All Things Considered.” Coming out of left field was a last-minute performance by Nelson July 9 at Los Angeles’ Hollywood Bowl. Stepping in for an ailing Natalie Cole, the Red Headed Stranger joined Marsalis on several album selections, including pop standard “Stardust” and the humorous “My Bucket’s Got a Hole in It.”

Recorded live in January 2007 at New York’s Jazz at Lincoln Center, “Two Men With The Blues” will get the live DVD treatment thanks to Eagle Vision. That release is tentatively set for October.

Nelson and Marsalis will appear Feb. 9, 2009, at Jazz at Lincoln Center’s Rose Theater, one of several concerts being staged for a celebration of Blue Note’s 70th anniversary.

“Casting a wide net—jazz, country and lifestyle fans key to understanding the awareness gates,” Greenfield says. “That’s why we feel this record will develop legs and run through the holidays.” —Gail Mitchell
New Hats For Executives, And For Nelson, Too

As the music industry reacts to EMI’s appointment of former consumer products executive to a command post and Sony BMG’s decision to entrust sales and distribution to a retailer, I am reminded of one of my favorite lines from a favorite Simon & Garfunkel song: “Orangutans are skeptical of changes in their cages.”

I recall the skepticism that rolled through the industry in the early ’80s when Frank Guglielmi left the Gap to oversee Musicland, which was then the largest record chain. The leadership team assembled favored retail experience over music industry expertise, and conventional wisdom held that the ins-and-outs of music would be too complicated for more outsiders to decode.

Turns out that Guglielmi’s team increased the chain’s relevance and the company had a pretty good run. These retail executives who previously had dealt with clothing, plants, shoes and other general merchandise helped modernize the music business, in part through active participation in retail trade group NARM.

I’ve heard more positive comments than doubts about Best Buy executive Jennifer “JJ” Schaefer taking over the sales reins at Sony BMG Music Entertainment. She deserves that praise, being one of the brighter executives I’ve met at the last 10 or so NARM conventions.

With the lingering suspicion that major music companies do not place enough emphasis on encouraging the sale of physical product, Schaefer’s perspective from the retailer’s side of the desk could bring critical balance to the executive suite.

I’ve observed much hand-wringing over consumer brands marketer Elio Leoni-Sciota becoming CEO of EMI’s recorded music division and chairman Guy Hands’ overall strategy to retain the company.

The notion of labels without presidents and centralized teams embracing the needs of multiple imprintson makes lots of orangutans uncomfortable.

“The end of the music business as we know it” screamed one widely circulated e-mail when Leoni-Sciota’s appointment was announced. But, considering that the vigorous growth of digital sales still don’t compensate for this decade’s CD declines, it would seem new thinking deserves a day.

WILLIE MEETS WYNONNA: Although he ranks as one of country music’s all-time greats, Willie Nelson’s chart history doesn’t allow you to confine him to a single box. In this decade, the man has climbed to No. 1 on Top Reggae Albums (“Countryman” in 2005), No. 2 on Top Blues Albums (“Million Cow Blues” in 2000) and tops the top 10 on Top Kid Audio (“Rainbow Connection” in 2001). Now a pairing with trumpeter Wynonna Marsalis puts him in the lead on Top Jazz Albums, interrupting the 57-week reign by Michael Bublé’s “Call Me Irresponsible.”

With 22,000 sold in its first week, “Two Men With The Blues” also bows at No. 20 on the Billboard 200, a career high bow for Nelson and a career peak for Marsalis. This becomes the eighth No. 1 on Top Jazz for the latter artist, whose previous peak on the big chart was No. 90 in 1984 for “Hot House Flowers.”

Nelson has had four prior top 10 placements, but none of those starred that high. His last visit to the top 20 was earned by “Always on My Mind,” which reached No. 2 in 1983. Two earlier Nelson albums garnered larger: Nielsen SoundScan weeks, his largest being the 27,000-unit start for “Live and Kickin’” in 2003. But, “Two Men” does mark Marsalis’ best sales week.

TITLE SEARCH: Lil Wayne’s “Tha Carter III” becomes only the second 2008 album to lead the Billboard 200 for as many as three weeks, the other being Jack Johnson’s “Sleep Through the Static.” Yes, Mel Lewinter, I noticed which label group fielded both of those titles.

Lil Wayne’s run will be disrupted next week by a rapper of longer tenure, as Nas’ untitled album led Nielsen SoundScan’s July 16 Building Chart by more than a 2-to-1 margin with unweighted first-day sales of 70,000.

The last rap album with a similar Wednesday Building total was Rick Ross’ chart-topping “Trilla,” which swelled from 67,000 the first day to an opening week of 198,000.

Market Watch

A weekly National Music Sales Report

Weekly Album Sales

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Digital album sales are also counted within album sales.

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**Note:** The chart positions are based on sales data and not on airplay or streaming.
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For week of July 26, 2008 | Chart reprints call 646-654-4633

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
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<td>Modern</td>
<td>8,000</td>
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<td>Coldplay</td>
<td>Viva La Vida or Death And All His Friends</td>
<td>EMI</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Wilie Nelson &amp; Young</td>
<td>Two Men With The Blues</td>
<td>SONY</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>The Bird And The Bee Sides</td>
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## Top Digital

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<td>Relaxing Road</td>
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<td>Modern</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Coldplay</td>
<td>Viva La Vida or Death And All His Friends</td>
<td>EMI</td>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>6/28/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Wilie Nelson &amp; Young</td>
<td>Two Men With The Blues</td>
<td>SONY</td>
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<td>6/28/08</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Adele</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>6/28/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Relaxing Road</td>
<td>The Bird And The Bee Sides</td>
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## Top Internet

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<td>Modern</td>
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<td>6/28/08</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Coldplay</td>
<td>Viva La Vida or Death And All His Friends</td>
<td>EMI</td>
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<td>6/28/08</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Wilie Nelson &amp; Young</td>
<td>Two Men With The Blues</td>
<td>SONY</td>
<td>6,000</td>
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<td>Adele</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>BLK MUSIC</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>6/28/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Relaxing Road</td>
<td>The Bird And The Bee Sides</td>
<td>BIG BLUE</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>6/28/08</td>
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## Between the Bullets

- **New Tropical Mark**
  - Aventura's "El Perdedor" moves into the penthouse on Latin Tropical Airplay in its 34th week, setting the chart's record for the longest journey to No. 1.
  
  In fact, among all of Billboard's Latin radio charts—Hot Latin Songs, Regional Mexican Airplay, Latin Pop Airplay, Tropical Airplay and Latin Rhythm Airplay—only one song took a more scenic route to the top. On the Jan. 6, 2001, Regional Mexican tally, Reggiel Martinez completed a 43-week rise to No. 1 with "Y Sigues Sintiendo." 
  
  "El Perdedor" reached No. 5 on Hot Latin Songs in May, becoming Aventura's sixth straight top five hit. It no longer appears on that chart because the recurrent rules for the Hot Latin Songs differ from the ones governing the Latin format charts.
  
  Aventura's " Kings of Bachata: Sold Out at Madison Square Garden" ranks No. 19 on Top Latin Albums. —Gary Trust

For more information, visit [www.americanradiohistory.com](http://www.americanradiohistory.com)
### HOT 100 AIRPLAY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><em>A BOW</em></td>
<td>JASON MRAZ</td>
<td>PHONOGENIC / EPIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><em>LOVE IN (Pope That Body)</em></td>
<td>HOT CHICAGO BOYS</td>
<td>HARD CORE / TWISTED SISTER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><em>On The Run</em></td>
<td>WILLIAMS LAMBERT</td>
<td>CHANDELLES / INTERSCOPE</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><em>Closer</em></td>
<td>MOURN</td>
<td>R提出的 / UNIVERSAL REPUBLIC</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td><em>If I Knew Your Mind</em></td>
<td>ADAM LAMBERT</td>
<td>REBEL RECORDS</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td><em>Raining</em></td>
<td>NELLY</td>
<td>BETTER DAYS RECORDS / UNIVERSAL MOTOWN</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><em>Fast &amp; Furious</em></td>
<td>JOSHUA DOZIER</td>
<td>THE SINGING SPY / ZAG ZIG</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>* Shut Up &amp; Let Me Go*</td>
<td>DRAKE</td>
<td>FUTURE TENSE / HIP HOP</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td><em>Stand Up For Your Right</em></td>
<td>WIZ KHALIFA &amp; SNOOP DOGGY DOGG</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td><em>The Way You Look Tonight</em></td>
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### HOT DIGITAL SONGS

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><em>Kissed A Girl</em></td>
<td>VIVA LA VIDA</td>
<td>EASTERN</td>
</tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td><em>Lollipops (Pop That Body)</em></td>
<td>ADAM LAMBERT</td>
<td>REBEL RECORDS</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><em>Love In A Club</em></td>
<td>LADY GAGA</td>
<td>KONWALS RECORDS</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td><em>Take A Bow</em></td>
<td>DRAKE</td>
<td>FUTURE TENSE / HIP HOP</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><em>MDM</em></td>
<td>NELLY</td>
<td>BETTER DAYS RECORDS / UNIVERSAL MOTOWN</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><em>Bleeding Love</em></td>
<td>LEA MICHELE</td>
<td>WALT DISNEY RECORDS</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td><em>Leave Me Be</em></td>
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<tr>
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<td><em>I'm Yours</em></td>
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<td>PHONOGENIC / EPIC</td>
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<td><em>A Milli</em></td>
<td>TI</td>
<td>YOUNG MONEY / UNIVERSAL MOTOWN</td>
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<td><em>I Love It When You Call</em></td>
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### ALBUM CHARTS

**Radio Airplay Singles Charts**

**Digital Songs Charts**

**Hot Digital Songs**

**Singles Charts**

**Recurrence Rules**

**Configurations**

**HitPredictor**

**Hot Dance Club Play**

**Award Cert. Levels**

**Album Charts**

**Single Charts**

**Music Video Sales Charts**

**DVD Sales/Video Sales**
### Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums

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<th>Position</th>
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<td>C-Murder</td>
<td>Screamin' 4 Vengeance</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Flo Rida</td>
<td>Fight With Me</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Shady</td>
<td>Units In The City</td>
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<td>Lalah Hathaway</td>
<td>Self Portrait</td>
<td>33</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Jheim</td>
<td>The Makings Of A Man</td>
<td>33</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Estelle</td>
<td>Shine</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>Unwrapped Vol. S.0: The Collapsible Sleeve</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>JULY 26, 2008</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Chris Brown</td>
<td>Just Me</td>
<td>37</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>Mai On Sunday</td>
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<td>14</td>
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### Mainstream R&B/Hip-Hop

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<tr>
<td>Luv Ya Girl</td>
<td>La Mila</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal Motown</td>
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<tr>
<td>All About Me</td>
<td>Keyshia Cole</td>
<td>Cash Money/Interscope</td>
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<tr>
<td>Take You Down</td>
<td>Chris Brown</td>
<td>Jive/RCA/Bad Boy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Put On</td>
<td>Lil Wayne</td>
<td>Cash Money/Atlantic</td>
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<td>Straight Outta Atlanta</td>
<td>Lil Wayne</td>
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<td>Girls Around The World</td>
<td>Lil Wayne</td>
<td>Cash Money/Atlantic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teenage Love Affair</td>
<td>T.I.</td>
<td>Cash Money/Atlantic</td>
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<td>Get Like Me</td>
<td>Lil Wayne</td>
<td>Cash Money/Atlantic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Love In This Club Part II</td>
<td>T.I.</td>
<td>Cash Money/Atlantic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Need Me Bad</td>
<td>Ashanti</td>
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<td>The Same Thing</td>
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<td>Lollipop (Part That Body)</td>
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<td>Ashanti</td>
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<tr>
<td>I'm A Flirt</td>
<td>Ashanti</td>
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### Adult R&B

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<td>Ludacris</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The River</td>
<td>Big Sean</td>
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<tr>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>Nelly Furtado</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal Motown</td>
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<tr>
<td>You're The Only One</td>
<td>Robin Thicke</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal Motown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teenage Love Affair</td>
<td>Alicia Keys</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal Motown</td>
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<td>Together</td>
<td>Alicia Keys</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal Motown</td>
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<td>Never Ever Land</td>
<td>J. Holiday</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal Motown</td>
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<tr>
<td>Just Fine</td>
<td>Keyshia Cole</td>
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<td>I Remember</td>
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<tr>
<td>I'm Changed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Don't Try to Change Me</td>
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<td>Cash Money/Universal Motown</td>
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### Rhythmic

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<tr>
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<td>Flo Rida</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal Motown</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lollipop (Part That Body)</td>
<td>Flo Rida</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal Motown</td>
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<td>Beautiful</td>
<td>Flo Rida</td>
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<td>Flo Rida</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal Motown</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fly</td>
<td>Flo Rida</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal Motown</td>
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<tr>
<td>Love in This Club</td>
<td>Flo Rida</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal Motown</td>
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<td>Closer</td>
<td>Flo Rida</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal Motown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Miss My Man</td>
<td>Flo Rida</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal Motown</td>
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<tr>
<td>Life Without You</td>
<td>Flo Rida</td>
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<td>I'm So Hisky</td>
<td>Flo Rida</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal Motown</td>
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<td>The Boss</td>
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<td>Can You Be My Friend</td>
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<td>Games' Pain</td>
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<td>Games' Pain Part 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Getting It</td>
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<tr>
<td>Looking Boy</td>
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<td>Get Silly</td>
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### Hot Rap Songs

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Beautiful</td>
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<td>Fly</td>
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<td>Love in This Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>Closer</td>
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<tr>
<td>I Miss My Man</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Without You</td>
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<tr>
<td>I'm So Hisky</td>
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<td>Baby</td>
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For complete chart data, visit [www.americanradiohistory.com](http://www.americanradiohistory.com).
HOT DANCE CLUB PLAY

1. [Artist] - [Title] [71] [Raj] Falle [From / on Label]
2. [Artist] - [Title] [62] [Raj] Falle [From / on Label]
3. [Artist] - [Title] [31] [Raj] Falle [From / on Label]
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5. [Artist] - [Title] [26] [Raj] Falle [From / on Label]
6. [Artist] - [Title] [15] [Raj] Falle [From / on Label]
7. [Artist] - [Title] [32] [Raj] Falle [From / on Label]
8. [Artist] - [Title] [42] [Raj] Falle [From / on Label]

TOP ELECTRONIC ALBUMS

1. [Artist] - [Title] [64] [Raj] Falle [From / on Label]
2. [Artist] - [Title] [51] [Raj] Falle [From / on Label]
3. [Artist] - [Title] [43] [Raj] Falle [From / on Label]
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8. [Artist] - [Title] [8] [Raj] Falle [From / on Label]

TOP GOSPEL SONGS

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2. [Artist] - [Title] [84] [Raj] Falle [From / on Label]
3. [Artist] - [Title] [77] [Raj] Falle [From / on Label]
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TOP DVD ALBUMS

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2. [Artist] - [Title] [81] [Raj] Falle [From / on Label]
3. [Artist] - [Title] [74] [Raj] Falle [From / on Label]
4. [Artist] - [Title] [67] [Raj] Falle [From / on Label]
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<td>2</td>
<td>IN THE HEART OF THE NIGHT</td>
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<td>OU OCH JAG</td>
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<td>ELLA ELLE &amp; R K</td>
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<td>THE REAL GROUP</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>HALL MEADOWS</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>PATRICK JARROW</td>
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EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE

Send submissions to: exec@billboard.com

RECORD COMPANIES: Sony BMG Music Entertainment names Jennifer Schaadler executive VP of sales. She was VP of music/MP3/mobile electronics at Best Buy.

Verve Music Group promotes Jamie Krents to VP of international. He was director.

Universal Republic Records names Dennis Blair VP of alternative promotion. He was senior director of rock/alternative promotion at RCA Records.

RCA Records Nashville taps Stacy Nichols as regional promotion manager. She was director of West Coast promotions at Midas Records.

Universal Music Group’s eLabs division ups Christopher Bell to VP of advanced technology. He was senior director.

Country Thunder and new sister label Permian Records appoint Bobby Young senior VP of promotion and artist development. He was Southeast regional promoter at Big Machine Records.

PUBLISHING: Sony/ATV Music Publishing in Los Angeles appoints Jarrett Mason senior director of marketing. He was director of marketing at EMI Music Resources in New York.

Cherry Lane Music Publishing ups David Shovers to director of income tracking and Anthony Verbanac to senior technology officer. Shovers was manager of income tracking, and Verbanac was senior director of information technology.

TOURING: Facility management firm Global Spectrum names Dean Dennis GM of the Pueblo (Colo.) Convention Center. He will continue to serve as VP of business development and client relations.

RELATED FIELDS: Vivendi Entertainment promotes Soumya Sriraman to senior VP of theatrical marketing. She was VP of marketing and operations.

—Edited by Mitchell Peters

GOOD WORKS

VHI’S WHO TRIBUTE RAISES $1 MILLION

As “one of the greatest rock bands of all time,” the decision to salute the Who at VHI’s third annual “Rock Honors” was simple, VHI senior VP of original music programming Lee Rolontz says.

With the help of tribute performances by Pearl Jam, Foo Fighters, Incubus, the Flaming Lips, and Tenacious D, the “Rock Honors” concert, held July 12 at Los Angeles’ Pauley Pavilion, raised more than $1 million for multiple charities.

“We realized this was a tremendous opportunity to do something good,” Rolontz says, noting that all money raised came from ticket sales. Prices ranged from $65 to $300.

Funds from “Rock Honors” will be dispersed to various charities, including the Double O Charity, Teenage Cancer Trust, the VHI Save the Music Foundation and select VHI autism organizations.

Along with appearances by actors Sean Penn and David Duchovny, surviving Who members Pete Townshend and Roger Daltrey treated the 6,000-strong audience to such classics as “Baba O’Riley,” “Won’t Get Fooled Again,” “The Seeker” and “My Generation.”

A full taping of the show is available via rock.vhi.com.

—Mitchell Peters

INSIDE TRACK

MANAGED CARE

Doghouse Records head Dirk Hemsath and his wife, label GM Emily, have launched a new management arm, the Working Group. The company plans to work with acts not already signed to Doghouse. One of its first clients, former Chamberlain frontman David Moore, will release his solo debut, “My Lover, My Stranger;” this fall, with first single "Breaking You Down" hitting iTunes July 29. The Working Group has also inked Miami rock outfit Atom Smash and the one-man-phenom Christopher Drew, who records as Never-Shout-Never. The latter, managed by Dave Conway, has become one of the top unsigned acts on MySpace, routinely racking up 30,000 online plays per day for his acoustic-driven emo (total plays to date are at nearly 3.3 million). Drew is self-releasing his debut EP, “YIPPEE,” July 29, while the Working Group shops him to labels.

FOND FAREWELL

Track says goodbye this week to longtime Sub Pop publicist Steve Manning, who is leaving the company after a nine-year run. Manning helped shepherd the careers of the Shins, the Postal Service and Wolf Parade, crowning a new period of growth for the label after several down years. So what’s next? “In September, I leave for Asia,” he says. “I will spend the rest of the year in Bali and India. I am going on a ‘manventure’ and will use that time to figure out what I am going to do upon returning to Seattle.”

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Lady Victoria Hervey threw a private pool party July 13 at Nikki Beach St. Tropez to celebrate the Aug. 5 release of Ne-Yo’s Def Jam album “Year of the Gentlemen.” With her, left, is Manchester United soccer star Patrice Evra.

In celebration of Production Advisors’ newest office in Chicago, the full-service branding entertainment company based in New York, joined forces with Production on Demand to introduce the companies’ services to advertising and branding communities in the Midwest. Held July 10 at Plan-It in Chicago’s Bucktown neighborhood, the launch event featured an exclusive performance from Flosstradamus, a Chicago-based DJ team comprising Josh Young, left, and Curt Cameruci.

Welsh singer Duffy rocked the house July 14 at E3 in Los Angeles, showcasing Xbox 360’s new music game “Lips,” which allows fans to perform songs downloaded from their own music library.

UJA-FEDERATION OF NEW YORK MUSIC VISIONARY LUNCHEON

Top industry leaders paid tribute to RIAA chairman/CEO Mitch Bainwol and president Cary Sherman July 15 at UJA-Federation of New York’s 2008 Music Visionary of the Year Award Luncheon at the Pierre Ballroom in New York. Among those toasting the honorees were industry leaders Edgar Bronfman Jr., Lyor Cohen, Julie Greenwald, Zach Horowitz, Craig Kallman, Josh Young, left, and Curt Cameruci.

Lilah Hathaway kicked off the tour to support her new album “Self Portrait.” at E.P. King’s Blues Club in New York. Cheering her on, from left, are WRKS New York personality Lanny Green, singer/actor Noel Gugnani (who was the supporting act), Sister/Sister publisher Jamie Brown. Hathaway and BET executive VP of music and entertainment programming Stephen Hill.

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