THE OLYMPICS ISSUE

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THE POLICE - PROMOTED WORLDWIDE BY LIVE NATION.
PRODUCED BY LIVE NATION GLOBAL TOURING & RZO PRODUCTIONS.
Patience With Business Models, Policies And Relationships Is A Virtue

BY TYL VAN TOORN

I knew something powerful was happening the moment I stepped off a flight at D22, a close-sized live venue known as the breeding ground for Beijing’s up-and-coming rock scene. The band onstage, Car Sick Cars, was amazing, and fans were tearing the place down. This was history in the making. I felt like I was witnessing a cultural revolution on that late May day, one that would have surprised those who think of China only in terms of copyright infringement.

While my night at D22 would force me to shake my head in amazement for weeks, I was getting used to leaving my preconceived views on China debunked. This was my third trip to Beijing but I was just starting to understand why the West has struggled to make an impact on the Chinese market.

On this trip, our company was producing TransmiChina, a music industry trade mission that ran May 28-31 and involved a conference, showcases and some very long dinners. The purpose of the mission was simple: listenership. That may seem like a sensible approach but most Western businesses have tried to penetrate the Chinese market with practices that seem almost colonial in nature. It should come as no surprise to learn that China is in no mood to be colonized.

China is undergoing an unprecedented social, political and economic transition — and it is doing it on its own terms. As a result, citizens are striving for a better quality of life through increased access to consumer goods and artistic freedoms. And yet these changes are tied to a strong cultural identity and the traditions and institutions that underpin it.

The Chinese know who they are. And if you want to do business with them, you should get to know them, too. In the past year, our group has been building strong relationships with some great people in the Chinese music business. In doing so, we have identified several fundamental misunderstandings that led us to view Westerners from building working business models in China.

First of all, while music piracy may be a problem, it’s not one for many in the Chinese music biz. Chinese business leaders aren’t stupid. If they could figure out how to increase revenue through intellectual property protection, they would.

But why adopt Western-designed copyright laws when these same laws have been proven irrelevant in our own domestic marketplace? The key is to ensure that there is a return on investment for the creation and distribution of music. The Chinese understand that they will be best served from learning from our mistakes, not repeating them.

Businesses, therefore, would be well served to capitalize on the lack of structural impediments within China, taking advantage of the opportunity to try out new models that could eventually lead to new ways of monetizing content. The Internet is a great platform for music discovery in China. With more than 250 million users, it would be a serious mistake to ignore the opportunities inherent in offering potential consumers improved access to music. Monetizing music, however, needs to be based on what consumers are willing to pay. The wildly popular assertion that more than 90% of music distributed in China is pirated is misguided. It suggests that this market existed to begin with.

Secondly, China’s economy is growing at an unparalleled speed under the direction of a unique leadership paradigm. In the process, a middle class is quickly blossoming and there are more young people who have more time and money for leisure. The irony is that they aren’t necessarily buying iPods or Motorolas. It is quite apparent that the companies marketing these products aren’t having the same rate of success as they would in other parts of the world.

These kids are just as likely buying Chinese brand products simply because they don’t have the same loyalty that has been generated in North America and Europe. Marketing in China is in a different cycle of development than in most Western markets. All the rules are different, and consumer trends will need to be incubated on the ground in China. This also applies to music.

Most important, China is already illustrating that great music will continue to be created regardless of the transitional forces at play in the recorded music sector. Furthermore, building fan loyalty in front of the stage still plays a major factor in getting paid to play your music. As a major live promoter pointed out to me in my first visit to China, “We haven’t even developed a proper live ticked market yet. Let’s do that first” (see story, page 22).

I tend to agree with this line of thinking, considering China has more than 100 cities with populations of more than one million. The question is: When? My beloved D22 is temporally closed leading up to the Olympics; many clubs have been affected by a new permitting process that China started to coincide with the games. Without a doubt, D22 will be open for business again soon, and we’ll see the ongoing development of local artists take place there and at many other venues.

D22 is a spark in a very large forest. Many people working in and around the Chinese music community know it’s important — even necessary — to take things slowly and to build relationships. But when this spark lights, we’ll see an industry completely explode into see. That may not happen immediately after the Olympics, but once the spotlight that comes with the games has passed, it’s a safe bet you’ll see more opportunities for discovery of artists and a re-emergence of live music in China.

China is keen to become a trading partner with anyone, but it will be on terms that reciprocate value. It is definitely on the leading edge of technological advance and Internet development. But sometimes age-old traditions and values are stronger. In this case, building relationships is important in China and this takes time. Learning, trustworthy relationships are hard to come by, but in the end, they will give you the insights required to successfully overcome the common misconceptions that have left many successful Western multinationals in the dust when trying to build a foothold in China.

Tyl van Toorn is CEO of TNT Productions and founder/producer of transmission and TransmiChina (transmi.com.au).

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SONY BMG LOSES $49M IN FISCAL Q1
Sony BMG Music Entertainment lost 5.2 billion yen ($49 million) on sales of $871 billion yen ($820 million) in its fiscal first quarter ended June 30. That represents a downturn from the 2.2 billion yen ($21 million) in net income the company posted during the same period last year and a 6.3% drop in sales from the 92.9 billion yen ($875 million) it rang up this time last year.

CARBON FOOTPRINT CHECK FOR RADIOHEAD
Radiohead is surveying fans about their travel arrangements for the band's world tour this year to help minimize carbon emissions on future live outings. The U.K. rock band has contacted ticket buyers in order to determine the carbon footprint of fans traveling to and from shows. Respondents are informed of their personal carbon footprint and will be rewarded with a souvenir live track from the band's tour.

BLACK CROWES ACCUSE WILSON
Lawyers for the Black Crowes have served copyright infringement notices to Gretchen Wilson, TNT, Sony BMG and publishing company J Money Music over the band's 1991 hit "Jealous Again." The Crowes claim Wilson used parts of the composition in her own song, "Work Hard, Play Harder," which TNT in turn showed for its show "Saving Grace." A representative for Wilson had no comment on the development.

UPFRONT

SONY BMG BUYS 11.5% OF SONY ENTERTAINMENT
Sony BMG Music Entertainment has purchased a 11.5% stake in Sony Entertainment. This comes after Sony sold a minority stake in BMG earlier this year for $1 billion.
ITALY'S LARGEST BITTORRENT SITE SHUTTERED
Italian authorities have closed down Colombo BT.org, the country's largest BitTorrent tracker site, the IFPI reports. The closure followed an extensive investigation by fiscal police the Guardia di Finanza, which worked in tandem with IFPI-affiliated anti-piracy organization FPM. Colombo-BT.org claimed more than 400,000 registered users and boasted more than 800,000 unique user accesses per month. Its system provided access to an estimated 390,000 music files and 500,000 movie files.

MEXICAN AUTHORITIES SHUT DOWN FILE-SHARING SERVER
Mexican authorities have shut down a file-sharing server that enabled the exchange of music and videogames online via DirectConnect, a worldwide peer-to-peer network that has been the subject of IFPI lawsuits and international police raids. The Mexican server was a hub of DirectConnect known as "Sunnydale." Using information supplied by local anti-piracy trade group APCM, the Mexican attorney general's office asked the hub's Internet service provider to shut down the server's connection. The server has been inactive since July 9.

PANIC AT THE DISCO/DASHBOARD TO 'ROCK' ON TOUR
Panic at the Disco and Dashboard Confessional will perform the first "Rock Band"-branded tour this fall, which will offer local fans the chance to play the videogame onstage in each market. Plain White T's and the Cab are also on the bill. The tour begins Oct. 5 in San Diego and will play arenas through Nov. 14. Details about the onstage "Rock Band" competitions will be forthcoming on the event's Web site. "Rock Band 2" hits stores in September.

CHANNEL CHOICES
Overlapping Programming Will Force Tough Decisions
One of the first tasks facing Sirius XM executives will be to consolidate overlapping programming between the former rivals. Sirius and XM have downplayed the prospect of shuttering channels, but they will still face challenges. The bill, "The DISCO, local anti-piracy network that DirectConnect, videogame online server »" in will begin Oct. 9. White in September. "Dashboard Confessional" begins Oct. 9. Sirius and XM have been major players in the music and programming scene, and they are facing a major challenge. Sirius XM is estimated to have 500,000 subscribers, while XM has 500,000. The two companies have merged, and the new company is facing significant challenges. Sirius XM has been accused of stealing music and using it without permission, while XM has been accused of using music without the proper licensing. The two companies have been in litigation for years, and it is not yet clear who will win.

LISTENING TO YOUR OWN COLLECTION VERSUS LISTENING TO A PROGRAMMED EXPERIENCE IS STILL FUNDAMENTALLY DIFFERENT.
-DAVID CARD, JUPITER RESEARCH

"If you can double down on cars, that could be of their best bets," Card says. Leading up to the merger, XM and Sirius had made great strides in adding their receivers as factory-installed options in many cars. But a slowing economy and spiking gas prices have led to a sharp downturn in U.S. sales of new cars. And one of the most significant new offerings to come from the combined company—an all a la carte option for subscribers to choose the only stations they want—will require new receivers available for purchase only at retail, which could limit the number of new customers that option will attract. Satellite carriers are still far ahead of Internet radio and the iPod in terms of their integration in car stereo systems. Web radio doesn't have any direct input into the car today, other than connecting an Internet-enabled mobile device like the iPhone to the car stereo—not exactly a common practice. Such radio channels are also facing uncertainty of their own over exactly how much they have to pay for the music they transmit. If the recently increased performance royalty rates that they pay remain in effect, many would be Sirius XM competitors in Internet radio claim that they'll be forced out of business. Meanwhile, the auto industry is still struggling to find an easy integration on a mass-market factory-installed scale for iPods and other portable devices. Yet even as that becomes a more popular option, iPods are seen as complementary to the radio experience, not competing. "Listening to your own collection versus listening to a programmed experience is still fundamentally different and (there's) still a need for both," Card says.

ONE OF THE FIRST TASKS FACING SIRIUS XM EXECUTIVES WILL BE TO CONSOLIDATE OVERLAPPING PROGRAMMING BETWEEN THE FORMER RIVALS. SIRIUS AND XM HAVE DOWNPAYED THE PROSPECT OF SHUTTERING CHANNELS, BUT THEY WILL STILL FACE CHALLENGES. THE BILL, "THE DISCO, LOCAL ANTI-PIRACY NETWORK THAT DIRECTCONNECT, VIDEOGAME ONLINE SERVER »" IN WILL BEGIN OCT. 9. WHITE IN SEPTEMBER. "DASHBOARD CONFESSIONAL" BEGINS OCT. 9. SIRIUS AND XM HAVE BEEN MAJOR PLAYERS IN THE MUSIC AND PROGRAMMING SCENE, AND THEY ARE FACING A MAJOR CHALLENGE. SIRIUS XM HAS BEEN ACCUSED OF STEALING MUSIC AND USING IT WITHOUT PERMISSION, WHILE XM HAS BEEN ACCUSED OF USING MUSIC WITHOUT THE PROPER LICENSING. THE TWO COMPANIES HAVE BEEN IN LITIGATION FOR YEARS, AND IT IS NOT YET CLEAR WHO WILL WIN.

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Now Comes The Hard Part
After The Merger, Sirius XM Faces Tricky Landscape
Now that the two U.S. satellite radio broadcasters completed their merger July 10 from Sirius XM Radio, the combined company will face a host of challenges in navigating the new digital landscape.

Over the long haul, the prospect of widespread Internet availability threatens to consign satellite carriers to technological redundancy, as it becomes easier for cell phones and other hand-held devices to stream music over the Internet. And in the near term, new rival carriers will continue to emerge, the most recent being Apple's iTunes and its App Store, which offers a slew of free downloadable music applications, including one from streaming music site Pandora that's already a hit. Sirius, which already has 10 million subscribers, is predicted to top 20 million by the end of 2008, and its revenue sources are strong, including $1.5 billion in quarterly revenue from music sales and more than $3 billion in annual revenue from online music streaming. Sirius has been accused of stealing music and using it without permission, while XM has been accused of using music without the proper licensing. The two companies have been in litigation for years, and it is not yet clear who will win.

HOME FRONT
360 DEGREES OF BILLBOARD
BILLBOARD'S CONNIFF HEAD FOR FRONT LINE
Billboard group editorial director Tamara Conniiff will leave the magazine next month to become president of music services for Irving Azoff's Front Line Management Group. Conniiff has been with HNFL/ VNU) for 10 years, having joined the company as music editor for the Hollywood Reporter and senior editor in charge of music for Amusement Business, before becoming the first female and youngest executive director of Bill- board in 2004. Billboard executive editor Bill Werde will assume Conniiff's editorial and management responsibilities for the firm. Front Line Management Group represents a wide range of major acts, including the Eagles, Christina Aguilera, Neil Diamond, Van Halen, Steely Dan and Guns N' Roses.
Thank you for 20 great years!
UPFRONT

BRANDING
BY KAMAU HIGH

>> OASIS' BIG BROTHER INKS NORTH AMERICAN DISTRO DEAL
Oasis’ Big Brother Recordings has signed a North American distribution deal with Warner Bros. Records. The first new release under the deal will be the band’s new studio album, “Dig Out Your Soul,” due Oct. 7. As previously reported, the album will be preceded by the Noel Gallagher-penned single “The Shock of the Lightning,” which will street Sept. 29.

>> CHEECH & CHONG PLAN TREK
Comedy duo Cheech & Chong will reunite for their first tour in more than 25 years, beginning Sept. 12 at the Tower Theatre in Upper Darby, Pa. More than 20 dates have been announced in the upcoming weeks. The Light Up America . . . Tour will visit such markets as Washington, D.C.; Detroit; Miami; Los Angeles; and Boston. Tickets go on sale Aug. 8 via livenation.com.

>> FARRELL LEADS CCMA NOMS
Newcomer Jessie Farrell leads the field with seven nominations for the 2008 Canadian Country Music Awards, which will be held Sept. 8 at the MTS Centre in Winnipeg. Farrell garnered nods for single of the year, album, female artist, CMT video, songwriter, top new talent (female) and Fans’ Choice. Terri Clark hosts the show, which will feature performances from Farrell, George Canyon, Dierks Bentley and Docc Walker, among others.


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BOND THEME SONGS THAT CHARTED ON THE HOT 100

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RANK</th>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>PEAK</th>
<th>DEBUT DATE</th>
<th>LABEL</th>
<th>BOX OFFICE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>DURAN DURAN</td>
<td>&quot;A View to a Kill&quot;</td>
<td>1/2 weeks</td>
<td>May 18, 1985</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
<td>$50.3 million</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Carly Simon</td>
<td>&quot;Nobody Does It Better&quot; (from &quot;The Spy Who Loved Me&quot;)</td>
<td>1/2 weeks</td>
<td>July 23, 1977</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>$48.8 million</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Wings</td>
<td>&quot;Live and Let Die&quot;</td>
<td>1/2 weeks</td>
<td>July 4, 1972</td>
<td>EMI</td>
<td>$35.3 million</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sheena Easton</td>
<td>&quot;For Your Eyes Only&quot;</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>July 25, 1981</td>
<td>EMI</td>
<td>$54.8 million</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Madonna</td>
<td>&quot;Die Another Day&quot;</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Oct. 19, 2002</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
<td>$160.9 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Shirley Bassey</td>
<td>&quot;Goldfinger&quot;</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Jan. 30, 1965</td>
<td>United Artists</td>
<td>$51.0 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Tom Jones</td>
<td>&quot;Thunderball&quot;</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Dec. 11, 1965</td>
<td>Parlophone</td>
<td>$65.5 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Rita Coolidge</td>
<td>&quot;All Time High&quot; (from &quot;Live and Let Die&quot;)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>July 7, 1973</td>
<td>A&amp;M</td>
<td>$67.8 million</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Nancy Sinatra</td>
<td>&quot;You Only Live Twice&quot;</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>June 26, 1967</td>
<td>Reprise</td>
<td>$45.0 million</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Shirley Bassey</td>
<td>&quot;Diamonds Are Forever&quot;</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Jan. 29, 1971</td>
<td>United Artists</td>
<td>$43.8 million</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Chris Cornell</td>
<td>&quot;You Know My Name&quot; (from &quot;Casino Royale&quot;)</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>Dec. 3, 2006</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
<td>$167.4 million</td>
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Sources: Nielsen SoundScan, Box Office Mojo. Tracks ranked by peak position on the Billboard Hot 100. Titles were broken by weeks spent at peak. If tied remained, they were broken by the number of weeks spent on the chart.

CAT IN THE HAT

Chris Brown Inks New Era Pact For Branded Headwear

R&B hitmaker Chris Brown has designed a line of branded caps for headwear and apparel maker New Era Cap, which will pay the singer a royalty for every hat sold, Billboard has learned.

The caps will go on sale Aug. 14 at hat retailer Lids, New Era stores and newera.com. Brown’s line of baseball-style caps will come in six designs, including one evoking the 1980s with an image of a boom box and another featuring the initials “CBE,” for Chris Brown Entertainment, Brown’s record label on Interscope.

Brown, who declined to comment on the deal, designed 10 hats and retains ownership rights to the four unused designs. Rather than pay Brown a flat fee, New Era will pay him a royalty based on the number of hats sold. It is the second time New Era has done a royalty-based deal with a celebrity. The company’s first such deal was with film director Spike Lee earlier this year. Lee’s hat sell for $60, while Brown’s hats will retail for between $35 and $40.

Before he signed his deal with New Era, Brown regularly promoted the company’s caps in videos for his singles “Kiss Kiss,” “Run It,” “Wall to Wall” and, most recently, for David Banner’s “Get Like Me (Shinin’ Is a Habit).”

New Era declined to provide specific information about Brown’s expected compensation but noted that sales of 5,000 caps would be considered significant. “Usually what we’ve done with celebrity collaborations has been limited and not intended for the mass market,” New Era entertainment marketing manager Jennifer Yu says. “We saw this as a next step to open up to a larger market.”

The New Era pact is Brown’s second branding venture of the summer. On July 29, William Wrigley Jr. Co. announced it commissioned Brown, Ne-Yo and Julianne Hough to record new versions of some of the chewing gum company’s signature jingles (Billboard, Aug. 2). In Brown’s most recent video, “Forever,” he is seen chewing a piece of gum and the chorus includes the jingle for Doublesmint Gum, “Double your pleasure, double your fun.”

Best known as an officially licensed cap maker for Major League Baseball and other professional and amateur sports clients, New Era has also been cutting deals with entertainment brands. The company has recently secured licensing agreements with Marvel and Warner Bros.’ DC Comics to launch a series of super-hero branded caps. In July, New Era signed a deal with Microsoft’s Zune digital media player under which New Era will produce limited-edition caps and Zune will make customized music players designed by Nelly, Linkin Park, N.E.R.D and other musicians and entertainment figures.

SOUNDTACK
BY ANN DONAHUE

A View To A Hit?

James Bond Theme Songs Have Mixed Chart Record

Pairing Alicia Keys and Jack White for the theme to the next James Bond movie, “Quantum of Solace,” may be an inspired creative choice—it’s the first duet in the franchise’s history (billboard.biz, July 29). But will their track “Another Way to Die” (J Records) kill ’em outside of theaters after the movie premieres Nov.? 7.

During the ’60s and ’70s, Bond theme songs routinely landed on the charts. But more recent incorporations of more nations have been hit or miss in terms of music industry success. Eleven themes—out of 18 total from the Bond franchise that featured such songs—have charted on the Billboard Hot 100, and only two have done so in the past 20 years.

But don’t forget that Bond is an international man of mystery. Despite not charting in the United States, Tina Turner’s “GoldenEye” went to No. 7. Garbage’s “The World Is Not Enough” went to No. 11 and Sheryl Crow’s “Tomorrow Never Dies” went to No. 12 on the Official U.K. Singles chart.

And yes, M has them all on her iPod.

DURAN DURAN

One of the caps designed by CHRIS BROWN under a deal with New Era (inset).

DANIEL CRAIG at James Bond

Wesley Daniels”}

www.americanradiohistory.com
Coming Attractions
Island Def Jam Mulls Exclusive Video Screenings

Island Def Jam Music Group is considering a novel way to promote its new music releases: stage exclusive screenings of a music video before a movie.

The idea, Island Def Jam VP of strategic marketing Jeff Straughn says, is to debut videos in theaters before either the song or the video is released to radio or other outlets.

"I'm talking about setting it up so people know about it beforehand, which would give it more drama," Straughn says.

That sense of anticipation and excitement could help strengthen Island Def Jam's marketing of its artist roster. But it would come with sizable risks—namely the possibility that the label would tick off radio stations or TV networks that wouldn't have immediate access to a new music release, not to mention fans who would be similarly shut out unless they purchased a movie ticket.

But Straughn thinks the approach holds promise if Island Def Jam matches the right act with the right film or entertainment franchise.

"We could put a Young Jeezy [video] in front of a movie like 'The Dark Knight' or some other R-rated or urban-leaning movie," he says. "Then we might put Duffy in front of an 'Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull.' Ultimately we want to take a variety of content and sprinkle it across the right screens."

As a first step in this direction, Island Def Jam, part of Universal Music Group, began showing the video for Rihanna's single "Disturbia" in theaters in July as part of its promotional campaign for her album "Good Girl Gone Bad: Reloaded." At the end of the "Disturbia" video seen in theaters, a message is screened direct to the audience to send a text message to a special number to buy a "Disturbia" ringtone.

To place the video in theaters, Island Def Jam went to Screenvision, a cinema advertising network that controls more than 14,000 U.S. screens. Rather than paying Screenvision a fee for running the video, Island Def Jam is sharing revenue from the resulting ringtone sales.

How would Island Def Jam get the word out about the imminent premiere of a video? Straughn says he's in talks with several film studios to persuade them to mention in trailers or on movie posters that a video is showing before a film.

"Will any studios go for it? Paramount, 20th Century Fox and Sony Pictures declined to comment. Others, including Warner Bros. and MTV Films, didn't respond by press time.

Fox Music president Robert Kraft, who oversees music operations at Fox's film, TV and soundtrack properties, thinks playing music videos before movies with similar audience demographics is a "genius" idea. But while it wouldn't be Kraft's decision to make, he warns that including a mention of another product in a trailer is not something a studio is likely to do, unless there's a direct benefit to its bottom line.

"Here's the gap in this logic: Fox is about selling movie tickets, period," he says, adding, "Who the fuck cares about a band? [Island Def Jam] wants a mention in a trailer? These trailers are considered sacrosanct."

For his part, Straughn's interest in music screens as a way to promote Island Def Jam's roster isn't the only nontraditional platform he's considering.

"It's a blank canvas and a lot that hasn't been done yet," he says, adding that "it doesn't just end with movies. There are other venues on the sports league side that in the next year you may be hearing about us doing business with things that make a lot of sense and build more on what we're doing now."

"For a North Carolina jazz band like us, traveling across the world to play for the servicemen and women who protect our country has pretty much been a life-changing experience. I mean, we're playing for our troops and visiting historic and far-off places we never thought we'd see. I think you can ask anyone from our group, the most meaningful part of it all has to be when we'd get in a real groove up on stage and look out and see the troops letting loose and dancing. It was really something—it made us feel like man we're doing something really good here."

- STANLEY BAIRD – JAZZ ARTIST

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

**6 QUESTIONS with BOB BECKER**

by CORTNEY HARDING

Long before the world knew about Plain White T’s frontman Tom Higgenson’s crush on a girl named Delilah, Fearless Records founder Bob Becker saw the band’s potential and shepherded it through its early years before the act headed to Hollywood Records. Since founding the Westminister Calif.-based label in 1994, Becker has released records by bands as diverse as ska comedians the Aquabats and punks Dynamite Boy and Sugarcuit. He also helped break post-hardcore band At the Drive In, from which vocalist Cedric Bixler-Zavala and guitarist Omar Rodriguez-Lopez emerged to form the Mars Volta.

Becker’s success with the T’s and At the Drive In, as well as the “Punk Goes…” compilation series, has led some to wonder whether Fearless might follow in the footsteps of fellow pop-punk label Fueled by Ramen and strike a deal with a major. In an interview with Billboard, Becker responded to the speculation and talked about the business.

1. Rumors have circulated that you might be the next Fueled by Ramen and strike a deal with a major. How has being an indie worked out for you so far?

That’s a very tricky question, and one I battle with all the time. Being indie is great. I have so much freedom and can sign who I want, when I want. It’s almost like the label is still run out of my bedroom. On the other hand, there is still a glass ceiling in this business. We get to a point with some bands where we’ve sold 100,000 copies and want to get them on radio and MTV, and those outlets won’t talk to us. In the cases where we have done deals to get artists on with majors, we’ve done it because it’s in the best interest of the artist. It’s certainly not a great deal for us. We usually wind up getting disconnected from the project.

2. What would compel you to do a deal like Fueled by Ramen’s?

Fueled by Ramen seems to have a good deal with Atlantic. It certainly looks like they get the help they need for certain acts, but even the acts that don’t sell big get worked. It’s appealing because if it works right, we’ll have a system for seamless transitions, and even if the major drops the ball, we could help the artists. We’d need to be with somebody that recognized how much of the hard work labels like ours actually did, because getting those first fans onboard is often the hardest part.

3. How do you utilize your fan base to promote your records?

Well, once we have those early fans, we get them really involved. They’re so valuable to the band, and we use listening sessions, advance copies of the album, street team missions and tickets to keep them invested in helping the band grow. And you can never underestimate the power of word-of-mouth and blog chatter.

4. You’ve been outspoken about your embrace of file-sharing and viewing BigChampagne numbers as relevant data. In an industry that seems invested in shutting down those channels, why do you see them as positive?

I’ve always seen vinyl as a marketing tool. We’d never want people to buy vinyl, but we need to be there when people make the decision to go digital. You also can never underestimate the power of word-of-mouth and blog chatter.

My feeling has always been that the music gets passed around, the more it sells. Some people will get music for free no matter what, but if they share it with five friends, two might get the record for free and three might go out and buy it. It helps with the word-of-mouth. It sounds crazy to a big exec, but my belief is that if you put out good music, the money will follow. Music will always have a value, but the ways people make money from it will change.

5. How do you explain your success with the “Punk Goes…” series of cover albums, which have sold 369,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan?

It’s harmless fun! And not something people should take too seriously as an artistic venture. Bands like the fun of covering unusual songs and the kids like the novelty of it. We may or may not do more.

6. What else can we expect from you this year?

We have records coming from Static Lullaby and Morning Light, and we will also be involved with the marketing of the new Plain White T’s album, which is out in September.

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**Back To Black**

**Kemado’s Mexican Summer Imprint Embraces Vinyl**

It was bound to happen sooner or later. After the unprentented “look, kids, vinyl’s back” trend piece hit the wires, vinyl-centered labels have begun to surface, such as Aesthetic Audio of Detroit, which puts out deep house club anthems, and I’m Better Than Everyone Records in Pittsburgh, which focuses on metal bands. The latest entry into the market is Mexican Summer, a project of Anthology Recordings founder Keith Abrahamsson and a sub-label of Kemado Records. Mexican Summer will officially launch in September with three limited edition releases from Dungen, Nachtmystium and Headress. The label then plans to issue two new releases every month and has albums scheduled through the spring of 2009. All releases will include a download card.

Abrahamsson says he’s always wanted to start a vinyl project, but the timing was never exactly right. “For me, vinyl never really went away,” he says. “But there were a lot of people who forgot about it. I’m hoping that vinyl can become a substantial force again and that Mexican Summer can be part of that.”

Mexican Summer’s roster will be heavily curated, according to Abrahamsson, and the label will not sign any multi-album deals with artists. “We’re focused on one-offs and special projects,” he says. “We’re doing things like issuing a picture disc with Black Moth Super Rainbow or putting out alternate versions of a Dungen song.” Abrahamsson adds that many of the acts he’s planning on releasing are not signed to Kemado.

One planned release is by Bobby Beausoleil & the Orkustra. Beausoleil recorded the album behind bars after being convicted of taking part in one of the 1969 Manson Family murders. “He had a studio in prison, and he’s made records with other inmates,” Abrahamsson says. “It’s a pretty cool story.”

In terms of getting the records to consumers, Abrahamsson says Mexican Summer will launch a subscription service, much like the singles clubs of yester-year. “We have a tiered subscription service, but people who join the service at any level will end up saving money on the records,” he says. “We’re also going to partner with 30 or 40 independent retailers to sell the albums.”

As vinyl-only labels like Mexican Summer line up partnerships with retailers, they may also have to pay added attention to their ties with publishers. A vinyl LP sold with a digital download card can technically be considered two separate releases, both of which would require payment of mechanical royalties to songwriters and publishers.

“The letter of [the] law doesn’t consider whether one of those products was being given away, free or sold for profit,” says Bob Kohn, CEO of RoyaltyShare, a provider of royalty processing and accounting services. Kohn adds that this doesn’t necessarily doom the vinyl-plus-digital model because labels can apply for waivers and because “there is almost always room to negotiate, although in some cases, such as covers of well-known songs, it could be very difficult.”

Abrahamsson says he has yet to be approached by any publishers about double mechanical royalties, noting that most of Mexican Summer’s releases are expected to be limited to small runs of 1,000 copies each. “We really see the download card as a value-added,” he says. “The card is a huge part of selling the physical product. None of our artists have said they felt ripped off, and I think many of them see the download card as being a promotional tool, no different than a track on a sampler.”

One of those artists is Marissa Nadler, who is just excited to be part of the project. “Vinyl as an object is really appealing in terms of the size and intimacy it confers,” she says. “There are a lot of people who buy vinyl and don’t even have record players. They just love the artwork.”

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Executive Producer, Gossip Girl

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THE TRASCENDERS
Teresa Yoshiki, Brian Lapin, Mike Fratantuno - Composers, Gossip Girl

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Hybrid Hits

Codiscos Mines Hits In Mexican-Colombian Fusion

When media company Warner Music Group’s Chayanne label has been around since the mid-90s, the label is known for its successful Latin pop and regional Latino hits. But what if Chayanne could add a new genre to its repertoire? What if the label could combine its popular Colombian styles with Mexican ranchera? This is exactly what Codiscos, the Latin pop label of Warner Music Group, has been doing.

 Codiscos has been releasing successful Latin pop albums for years. But now, the label has turned its attention to the Mexican ranchera genre. The idea is to create a new sound that will appeal to both Mexican and Colombian audiences. The result is a fusion of two distinct musical styles.

The first album to be released by Codiscos under this new genre is "Amor Inmortal." The album features a mix of Mexican ranchera and Colombian pop songs. The album is a success, and it is very popular among both Mexican and Colombian listeners.

The success of "Amor Inmortal" has led to the release of another album, "Perfecto Mundo." This album features a mix of Mexican ranchera and Colombian pop songs. The album is a success, and it is very popular among both Mexican and Colombian listeners.

The success of "Amor Inmortal" and "Perfecto Mundo" has led to the release of another album, "Feria del Disco." This album features a mix of Mexican ranchera and Colombian pop songs. The album is a success, and it is very popular among both Mexican and Colombian listeners.

The success of "Amor Inmortal," "Perfecto Mundo," and "Feria del Disco" has led to the release of another album, "Inmortal." This album features a mix of Mexican ranchera and Colombian pop songs. The album is a success, and it is very popular among both Mexican and Colombian listeners.

The success of "Amor Inmortal," "Perfecto Mundo," "Feria del Disco," and "Inmortal" has led to the release of another album, "Feria del Disco." This album features a mix of Mexican ranchera and Colombian pop songs. The album is a success, and it is very popular among both Mexican and Colombian listeners.

The success of "Amor Inmortal," "Perfecto Mundo," "Feria del Disco," "Inmortal," and "Feria del Disco" has led to the release of another album, "Feria del Disco." This album features a mix of Mexican ranchera and Colombian pop songs. The album is a success, and it is very popular among both Mexican and Colombian listeners.
pack it up
more preloaded mp3 players come to market

Even though the discards still expect everything regarding the digital delivery of music to happen yesterday, many aspects of it continue to unfold slowly. Consider the seemingly promising concept of specially branded MP3 players preloaded with music.

At NARM’s annual convention in 2006, preloaded players were one of the proposals flying around to stimulate sales. Since then, Sony BMG Music Entertainment has released two such items with San Francisco-based company ZVUE, loading its biggest hits in 2006 into a ZVUE MP3 player sold at Wal-Mart during the year-end holiday season. It followed the same formula in 2007, and both players each sold more than 30,000 units, according to ZVUE senior director of marketing Mark Heyert.

Despite that success, the recording industry has shown relatively little interest in preloaded MP3 players. But that hasn’t stopped financial troubled ZVUE from rolling out new ones. Its latest entry: a Journey-branded player released to promote the band’s recent “Revelation” CD/DVD package.

Apparent pleased with ZVUE’s Sony BMG players, Wal-Mart digital audio buyer Eric Bright approached ZVUE about doing a “Revelation”-branded player, while Wal-Mart music buyer Troy Steiner pitched the idea to the band’s management. Wal-Mart is ZVUE’s largest account and the exclusive retailer of “Revelation,” which consists of a CD of new songs, another disc of rerecorded band classics and a 70-minute concert DVD. Since its June 3 release, the Wal-Mart chain, its Web site and the band’s site have scanned 337,000 units of “Revelation,” including 1,000 digital downloads, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Wal-Mart released the “Revelation” MP3 player during the week of July 22, shipping 28,000 units to about 1,600 stores, says Journey manager John Baruch of Front Line Management. The player, which retails for $39.98, is emblazoned with the album’s artwork and preloaded with the title’s entire music portion. Each sale of a “Revelation” player will count as a physical album sale.

ZVUE has been assembling other preloaded players as well. In May, it released a patriotic-themed “Spirit” MP3 player, which retails for $34.88 and comes with 15 songs from the Universal Music Group catalog, including Chuck Berry’s “Back in the U.S.A.,” Lynyrd Skynyrd’s “Sweet Home Alabama,” Lee Greenwood’s “God Bless the U.S.A.” and that well-known patriotic anthem, Kiss’ “Rock and Roll All Nite.”

Still to come is a video-enabled MP3 player featuring clips of Elvis Presley concert footage. The player, due Aug. 12 at Wal-Mart, comes with 10 videos, including five performances from his televised 1968 comeback special and five songs from his “Aloha From Hawaii” concert.

Nomoto, which administers Journey songs, cleared the rights for the “Revelation” player, according to ZVUE’s Heyert, and the “Spirit” player’s songs were cleared by Susan Burger of Third Tier Music, while the overall deal was put together by ZVUE content consultant Steve Rush. Elvis Presley Enterprises granted clearance for use of the videoclips included in the Elvis player.

Wal-Mart representatives couldn’t be reached by press time. But despite the retail giant’s apparent enthusiasm for preloaded MP3 players, ZVUE faces a tough road ahead. In March, the company acknowledged in a filing to the Securities and Exchange Commission that its independent accounting firm had “expressed substantial doubt about our ability to continue as a going concern.” During the quarter ended March 31, the company posted a net loss of $7.6 million, widening from a net loss of $2.9 million during the same period last year. Total revenue came in at just $862,000 (nearly all of it from advertising revenue), up from $390,000 a year earlier.

On July 22, the day after ZVUE said it received its second warning of the year from Nasdaq that it no longer met its listing requirements, the company announced a restructuring plan aimed at capturing $1.4 million in cost savings. “We have realigned our business objectives and have received financing to fund growth in our (media player) business, which gives us additional flexibility as that business grows and frees up cash for our entire operation,” ZVUE president/CEO Jeff Oscodar said in a statement.

Notwithstanding ZVUE’s difficulties, some label executives think a preloaded MP3 player is a good idea because it is a way of turning on nondigital music buyers to the digital distribution space. Apple toyed with a similar concept several years ago with its special-edition U2 iPod, which wasn’t preloaded with songs but instead came packaged with an iTunes gift card that entitled the buyer to download the band’s recordings. The player sold well enough to prompt the company to introduce another U2-branded player in conjunction with the rollout of video-enabled iPods.

But Newbury Comics CEO Mike Dressen wonders if preloaded MP3 players are an idea with a limited window, given that so many consumers already own iPods. However, others say that Wal-Mart is the perfect place to sell preloaded players, because its customers are the last to adapt to technology innovations. In fact, Wal-Mart was one of the last accounts to drop cassettes.
CROSSOVER STARS FUEL BRANDING INTEREST IN CLASSICAL MUSIC

MANCHESTER—British tenor Paul Potts is the latest beneficiary of European advertisers' newest love affair with classical music.

Potts' 2007 debut album "One Chance" (Syco/Sony BMG) soared 16-3 on Germany's Media Control/GFK album chart dated July 22 and topped the chart one week later, boosted by a national TV ad campaign for Deutsche Telekom featuring his performance of Puccini's "Nessun Dorma."

The ad launched in Germany July 1. Potts' London-based manager Harry Magee says, "The album had sold 45,000 units in Germany, but in the 10 days after that, sold another 90,000." he says. "In any market in the world these days, that's explosive growth."

While most high-profile ads featuring artists focus on rock/pop musicians, advertisers have long used classical music to convey an image of quality and trust. But widespread marketing of classical crossover artists like Potts in Europe in recent years (Billboard, Nov. 18, 2006) has given classical musicians more exposure than ever—which brands are increasingly exploiting.

Although no one is keen to disclose actual figures, artist manager Jonathan Shaft says top classical artists can now "expect to earn around 50% of their income from advertising."

Potts' "Nessun Dorma" is a top five single in Germany, where Magee also reports "a significant increase in live booking interest," he says. Potts received a "substantial" ex-gratia payment from the Deutsche Telekom ad despite having previously signed away the rights for the footage used, which came from his audition for reality TV show "Britain's Got Talent" (Billboard, Sept. 29, 2007). Potts' audition is "one of those unforgettable TV moments," says production company Fremantle Media head of archive sales Gordon Craig, who brokered the Deutsche Telekom deal. "It's had over 26 million YouTube hits," he adds. "There's no doubt it touched many people."

Other classical acts featured in European ads range from Shaft-managed British crossover star Mylene Klass (U.K. clothing/food retailer Marks & Spencer) to award-winning Chinese pianist Lang Lang (German sportswear manufacturer Adidas).

In March, Adidas added a limited edition Lang-branded version of its Gazelle sneakers to its Originals line. The sneakers retail at around $85 and feature Lang's name alongside a golden piano pedal image. Although not revealing financial details, an Adidas representative says Lang "goes perfectly with our Originals brand. He has a passion for sports, and his artistic performances are unique and dynamic."

The branding deal was Adidas' first with a classical musician, Lang says, adding, "It was a good opportunity for me to reach a wider audience and to encourage more companies to use classical music."

The pianist—who, according to his label Universal Classics, has sold 1 million albums worldwide—also appears in TV commercials for Sony Electronics and Audi automobiles. In addition, Lang has a branding deal with German luxury goods manufacturer Montblanc, which has also used U.S. violinist Joshua Bell and Welsh soprano Katherine Jenkins in its marketing campaigns.

Since January 2007, pianist and radio TV presenter Klass has appeared in high-profile Marks & Spencer (M&S) U.K. advertising campaigns that were publicly credited by the firm's chief executive Stuart Rose with helping raise its market share in 2007.

The company did not return calls, but Gordon MacMillan, editor of U.K. marketing Web site Brand Republic, says EM Classics artist Klass was "a good choice for [M&S] as she comes with not a vast amount of baggage and appeals to a really broad audience—probably, in part, down to the fact that she is a serious classical musician."

Prior to managing Klass, London-based Shaft guided the career of Welsh crossover singer Charlotte Church. Noting the new importance of ad revenue, he says that classical artists "virtually never recoup from recording. I've negotiated major deals with classical clients from Proctor & Gamble to the Ford Motor Corp. and M&S."

Going forward, Shaft adds, "high-profile artists are going to earn most of their money from performance and from advertising deals."
WARNING SHOT

British ISPs To Issue Notices To File Sharers

LONDON—The jury's still out on naming the winners in the United Kingdom's latest attempt to tackle illegal file sharing.

On July 24, national newspaper headlines trumpeted the unveiling of measures that, one claimed, would lead "Parents to Be Punished for Children's Net Piracy." But the immediate reality of the U.K. government's consultative document published later that day was less dramatic.

Rather than threatening penalties for errant offsprings' misuse of the Internet, it contained a memorandum of understanding committing six leading Internet service providers (ISPs) to educating users about the illegality of unauthorized file sharing.

The signatories were BSkyB, Carphone Warehouse, Tiscali, BT, Orange Media and Virgin Media, plus labels body BPI and the Motion Picture Assn.

The BPI has been seeking a "three strikes" system under which the broadband connect-
tions of file sharers would be canceled should they ignore three written warnings. Although the memorandum falls short of that mark, BPI CEO Geoff Taylor says, "It's the beginning of a process," adding, "We're not pretending this will eliminate all online piracy or file sharing."

ISPs also stress the distance left to go. "There's quite a lot left to work through and dis-
cuss," BSkyB COO Mike Darcey says.

Interested parties have until Oct. 30 to sub-
mit comments on the consultative document to the Department for Business Enterprise & Regulatory Reform (BERR).

The memorandum was drafted during discus-
sions involving the BERR, ISPs and rights hold-
ers, and the government has been keenest to claim it as a victory.

In a statement, Business Secretary of State

John Hutton said it represented an "intelligent" and "light-touch approach," telling consumers "what they can do, rather than just what they can't."

Signatories committed to a three-month trial, during which rights holders are to identify up to 1,000 transgressing Internet accounts each week. The ISPs will then contact those users, pointing them toward legal alternatives.

In the next four months, a working group under the auspices of telecoms regulator Ofcom will identify mechanisms for tackling repeat infringers.

A BERR representative says this "co-regula-
tory" approach represents a "much more flex-
ible option" than "rigid legislation that is outpaced by technology."

The BPI claims 6.5 million U.K. broadband accounts use illegal peer-to-peer music services and Taylor insists the "three strikes" suggestion remains a "proportionate approach." But, he adds, "We're not dogmatic about what the effective mechanism has to be, as long as it's effective."

Nevertheless, even the initial memorandum commitments could be problematic. There isn't a set formula for warning messages to file shar-
ers, for example. "It's a complex area," Darcey says. "What is the burden of proof before you send the letters? What precisely will you say?"

Prior to the memorandum's publication, Virgin Media struck its own deal with the BPI (bill-
board.biz, June 6) to issue mes-
dages during a 10-week period to customers spelling out the disadvantages of illicit downloads. BT subsequently announced a simi-
lar scheme (billboard.biz, June 27).

However, a wave of negative publicity in early July followed Virgin Media's mailing of 800 letters in envelopes stickered with the message, "Important! If you don't read this, your broadband could be disconnected." Dismissing that mes-
sage as "an administrative error," a spokesman insists its letters "at no point" actually threatened disconnection.

A Carphone Warehouse spokesman also emphasizes it will only warn customers rather than "threatening to disconnect or giving any personal details to third parties."

Hanging over this is the government's re-
cent warning that it would not hesitate to legis-
late in this area if required. A deadline of April 29, 2009, was set for legislation to be imple-
mented if a voluntary solution could not be reached.

Many music industry executives, wary of restrictive legislation, trust that won't happen. "I'm hoping the government won't be stepping in," Universal Music Group International chairman/CEO Lucian Grainge says.

"(And) you can't be in this game unless you're an optimist."
All The Web’s A Stage
The Benefits And Pitfalls Of Artist Promotion Sites

Ever since a few acts found fame on MySpace and YouTube, new services have emerged to take advantage of artists’ interest in using the Internet as a promotional tool, with many balancing the line between service and scam.

Gaining particular momentum in the last year are so-called “performance-based” social networking services. These sites invite aspiring artists to upload music and videos to a social network designed to let others view and vote for their favorite submissions. Some, like the 2-month-old WeMix and soon-to-launch MyAWOL, are taking a sort of label approach—using their network as an internal A&R tool to discover artists and then promoting them through more traditional channels. Others, like FameCast, City of Fame and MusicNation, are more straightforward music contests, offering winners rewards of cash and/or services.

On one hand, these sites can provide a valuable service by giving unknown acts a platform for self-promotion previously unavailable to struggling artists desperate for attention. On the other hand, they rely completely on these unknown artists to provide the very foundation of their business—content and, in some cases, promotion—for no compensation.

As a result, struggling acts reiterating between hustling and getting hustled are asking themselves: Is this a fair trade-off?

Many of these performance-based social networking sites call for more than just an online destination for music. WeMix, backed by rapper Ludacris and reality TV producer Matt Appel, will pair select members with famous artists to produce their music. WeMix will then sell the resulting songs as iTunes downloads, ringtones, etc. WeMix will take a cut of all sales and apply recognizable costs against the artists’ share.

In addition to host Ludacris, WeMix is conducting short-term contests involving other celebrities. This includes Linkin Park’s Mike Shinoda, who is looking for music inspired by his artwork, and Anatomy Angel’s lead singer Torri Hunter, who is soliciting new songs to play as his bat theme.

FameCast, which launched in January 2007, has a partnership with Spin magazine, which spotlights the site’s monthly winners. FameCast winners in each contest cycle also compete for a grand prize of $20,000 and get a shot at performing at Lollapalooza and the Austin City Limits Music Festival. Our Stage, another site that awards winners with live performance opportunities, recently forged a deal that would provide its top artists with opening act gigs at some 300 Live Nation-produced concerts.

“We’re really blending online and offline exposure for these artists,” FameCast CEO Kent Savage says. “It’s not just an Internet experience, although it does begin on a digital stage.”

Nielsen Online doesn’t have monthly traffic data for FameCast or WeMix. But Savage says FameCast has more than 250,000 registered users and about 15,000 contributing artists, while Appel says participating artists at WeMix have uploaded more than 75,000 songs, the more popular of which are each receiving more than 65,000 spins.

That could provide some good exposure. But what are participating artists getting out of it? Each of these services draws most of its revenue from Internet advertising, which is based on page views. Yet while ad-supported sites like ustream and Last.fm have to pay hefty per-slip licensing fees for major label music—in some cases even giving up an equity stake in the company—the hopefuls contributing to these discovery sites don’t get any cut of the advertising revenue that their music helps generate.

This is hardly uncommon. YouTube only recently implemented a program to pay certain channel partners a share of ad revenue for page views, although competitors like Revver have made it part of their core business model.

Certainly not all artists contributing to these services benefit from a per-slip cut, as a few hundred streams per month would result in mere pennies. But those artists who rise to the top of the most popular lists have a strong argument for compensation, particularly if you buy the 80/20 rule that 80% of the traffic on these sites is generated by the most popular 20% of songs.

Those running these services defend their business model by pointing to the fact that participating artists don’t have to pay for site development and maintenance, hosting fees, marketing or any of the other things that go into operating the site. Such costs would likely far exceed what their share of ad revenue would generate.

“We’re eating a substantial portion of promotional marketing costs,” Appel says. “The real estate here is the site, and the music is our Long Tail downstream asset.”

Both WeMix and FameCast plan to add a sales component to their services. Artists signing to the WeMix label will generate revenue from iTunes sales and other products. In the coming months, FameCast will begin allowing artists to sell their demos and merchandise on the site and keep all profits in exchange for a flat hosting fee. It’s also striking an affiliation deal with iTunes.

So long as these services remain free to participating artists, their legitimacy will likely remain intact. However as the online battle for eyeballs intensifies, these services compensating artists most will attract the best talent, and in turn, traffic.

THREE OF A KIND

So it’s been three years since you launched your line of music-based mobile phones. What do you do to celebrate? Well, you introduce three new phones of course. Sony-Ericsson’s Walkman-branded line of music phones is celebrating its third birthday with three new devices—the W502 and W902 “candy bar” style phones and the W595 “slider.” All have built-in cameras and speakers and are compatible with Sony-Ericsson’s new wireless portable speakers. They also feature removable memory cards that enable users to upgrade storage up to 8 GB.

The three phones will be on sale in select markets directly from mobile operators later this year, when pricing will be announced.
From Labels To Live
Major-Label Vets Start Fresh In Touring World

Two well-known and talented former record label executives have resurfaced on the New York live music scene, arguably speaking volumes as to the relative health of the live business as opposed to the world of recorded music.

Harvey Leeds has joined Live Nation's New York office, reporting to Live Nation New York president Kevin Morrow. Leeds retired March 31 after 35 years at Sony Music, where he was long a protagonist of the importance of touring and its role in artist development.

"Harvey brings 35 years of knowledge, a passion for the music, and a Rolodex of managers and agents that goes back as far as any in music," Morrow says. News of Leeds' new post was first tipped July 18 on billboard.biz.

He's going to buy talent, create events and help us with some of the more genre-specific areas," Morrow says, speaking to On The Road in the Miles dugout at Shea Stadium just prior to the first of Billy Joel's last play at Shea concerts.

Leeds says he launched Headquarters Media April 2 after sleeping in for one day and began June 9 as a consultant for Live Nation.

Under Headquarters Media, Leeds is managing such acts as Amanda Palmer and New Found Glory and is consulting "a major toy company, a guitar manufacturer and various PBS television specials."

At Live Nation, Leeds is creating special events, including a Ukulele festival titled Ukulele Wah Wah, which began July 21, and is also involved in the artist development series at Troubadour Theatre and the New York in conjunction with rock station WRXP. Among the acts booked as part of the series are Figo, Gint, Watt White, Phil Bensken, Slow Runner, Sub Rosa, the Giraffes and Easy Anthem.

I'm psyched to be raising the Headquarters flag, the Live Nation New York office, and working with Kevin Morrow and [Live Nation New York chairman] Ron Delsener in the ultimate concert," Leeds says, adding in typical Leeds fashion, "Working on 42nd Street between 'Mary Poppins' and McDonald's is where every rock roll kid wants to be.

Leeds is clearly enthused to have a post-label career where he can focus on the live business he has supported for so many years. "I have been given a blank canvas to paint on and the freedoms to use all my skills, tour and record company experience within Live Nation," Leeds says.

Asked what he learned from 35 years at the label that translates to live, he says, "Listen to the street. Patience is the first thing you have to know about the next wave. He adds, "You can't download the one-to-one excitement of the press the cloth live experience."

Leeds isn't the only former Sony BMG exec to make the move to the live side. Liana Farnham, formerly VP of marketing/artist development at Columbia Records, is now VP of concert marketing for Madison Square Garden Entertainment (billboard.biz, July 28).

In her new role, Farnham will be responsible for the marketing of all concerts, family shows, events and attractions at Madison Square Garden, the WaMu Theater, Radio City Music Hall and the Beacon Theatre in New York, as well as MSG's Chicago Theatre. She will also work closely with other MSG divisions, including Fuse and MSG Media, to create content and cross platform marketing initiatives that enhance the company's efforts in bringing artists to MSG's venues.

MSG has been in megawave mode in the past 18 months thanks to expanded productions, acquisitions and new initiatives designed to grow its brand in the live entertainment industry nationwide. The division has increased bookings and productions for a variety of concerts and special events across all its venues, and president Jay Marciano says MSG will continue to develop and partner on new entertainment properties going forward.

Among MSG's more recent developments was moving toward the purchase of 910 acres in rural Springfield, N.Y., with plans to spend $15 million launching a three-day, multigenerational music festival in 2010 (billboard.biz, July 8).

Farnham comes to MSG following a 13-year run at Sony BMG and, like Leeds, was a big proponent of touring, creating the touring marketing department at Columbia in 1995. As department head, her responsibilities included overseeing all aspects of marketing relating to personal appearances and touring. Leeds and Farnham have led panels at the Billboard Touring Conference, which this year is set for Nov. 19-20 in New York. Farnham is on the Touring Conference Advisory Board.

Prior to Sony BMG, Farnham worked in Washington, D.C., promoting concerts with I.M.P. Productions, where she oversaw all concert promotion and advertising, as well as developed local and national sponsorship initiatives.

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

ARTIST(S)  GROSS/ VENUE, DATE  ATTENDANCE  PROMOTOR

1  BILLY JOEL  $12,861,833  July 18, 2008  117,765  Live Nation, HJS Entertainment
2  KENNY CHESENY, KEITH URBAN, SAMMY HAGAR & OTHERS  $5,274,364  Sahlen's Stadium, Frontier Field, Rochester, N.Y., July 26  20,296  Live Nation Global Touring
3  BILLY JOEL  $12,873,906  July 14, 2008  149,500  Michael Jackson "This Is It" Special Show, New England Country Music Festival, The Moscone Group/AEG Live
4  BILLY JOEL  $5,371,902  The Commodore Ballroom, Vancouver, B.C., July 18-20  18,914  10,581 live shows one sold out  Concerts West/AEG Live
5  THE POLICE, ELVIS COSTELLO & THE IMPOSTERS  $5,220,256  August 19, 2008  17,315  Live Nation Global Touring
6  COLDPLAY, SHEARWATER  $2,487,994  July 10, 2008  68,051  Live Nation
7  KID ROCK, REV RUN, UNCLE KRACKER  $1,454,257  DTE Energy Music Center, Clarkston, Mich., July 22, 2008  63,682  Live Nation, Palace Sports & Entertainment
8  GEORGE MICHAEL  $1,319,091  Bell Centre, Montreal, July 18  9,865  Gilett Entertainment Group, Live Nation
9  THE POLICE, ELVIS COSTELLO & THE IMPOSTERS  $1,231,578  July 18, 2008  75,150  Live Nation Global Touring
10  RASCAL FLATTS, TAYLOR SWIFT, THRASHER/MOBILE  $1,059,660  July 15, 2008  1,557,069  Live Nation, MSG Live
11  THE POLICE, ELVIS COSTELLO & THE IMPOSTERS  $975,728  July 26, 2008  140,762  Live Nation Global Touring
12  THE POLICE, ELVIS COSTELLO & THE IMPOSTERS  $973,619  July 27, 2008  179,000  Live Nation Global Touring
13  THE POLICE, ELVIS COSTELLO & THE IMPOSTERS  $951,206  July 25, 2008  186,626  Live Nation Global Touring
14  JONAS BROTHERS, DEMI LOVATO  $905,548  July 23, 2008  186,626  Live Nation Global Touring
15  KENNY CHESENY, LEANN RIMES  $877,777  July 22, 2008  147,475  Live Nation, The Messina Group/AEG Live
16  JOURNEY, HEART, CHEAP TRICK  $814,705  August 19, 2008  150,150  Live Nation
17  JUAN LUIS GUERRA  $810,149  July 13, 2008  135,040  Live Nation Global Touring
18  JONAS BROTHERS, DEMI LOVATO  $789,076  July 21, 2008  135,040  Live Nation Global Touring
19  JOURNEY, HEART, CHEAP TRICK  $756,018  July 14, 2008  125,950  Live Nation
20  RASCAL FLATTS, TAYLOR SWIFT, THRASHER/MOBILE  $713,375  July 20, 2008  179,000  Live Nation Global Touring
21  KENNY CHESENY, LEANN RIMES  $710,092  July 17, 2008  125,950  Live Nation
22  THE POLICE, ELVIS COSTELLO & THE IMPOSTERS  $709,598  July 16, 2008  125,950  Live Nation Global Touring
23  JONAS BROTHERS, DEMI LOVATO  $707,738  July 15, 2008  125,950  Live Nation
25  KENNY CHESENY, LEANN RIMES  $701,670  July 19, 2008  125,950  Live Nation
26  JONAS BROTHERS, DEMI LOVATO  $699,808  July 18, 2008  125,950  Live Nation
27  THE POLICE, ELVIS COSTELLO & THE IMPOSTERS  $684,385  July 17, 2008  114,700  Live Nation Global Touring
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Swifter. Higher. Stronger. Louder?

The Olympic Games are the biggest sports/entertainment event on the planet, with hundreds of competitions attracting thousands of athletes and billions of TV viewers. But the location of this year’s games in Beijing makes it an especially significant one for the music and entertainment industries. The Olympics represent China’s most ambitious effort yet to demonstrate its modernity and openness to the world. Western entertainment companies hope the games will unlock commercial access to the Middle Kingdom’s enormous population, while their Chinese counterparts hope to use the Olympic spotlight to showcase their own musical stars. Sadly, not everyone in the Chinese government seems to have gotten the memo so, in the Olympic spirit, Billboard presents its guide to doing business off the back of the greatest show on earth. Let the games begin...
Chinese Rocks! International Biz Hopes New Venues, Infrastructure Will Open Up Touring Market By Ray Waddell

In the coming weeks, Beijing's impressive array of new and refurbished venues will echo to applause as the world's finest athletes strain every sinew in search of glory.

But once the final medal has been handed out, hopes are high that crowds will return to the same venues to cheer the pick of the planet's touring artists.

Touring execs hope the new showplaces will just be the start for a Chinese market ripe for international and regional touring, while stressing China will still need more state-of-the-art venues, even after the Olympics' impact.

"For all the new construction and renovation, the Olympics have really only developed two new venues that will move the concert business forward in Beijing [see story, page 21]," says Jonathan Krane, CEO of promoter/ticketing firm Emma Ticketmaster. "The venue building boom in Beijing has no direct impact on the concert business in the rest of China, except that as the major cities continue to see an increase in touring talent—fuelled in part by better venues—promoters will, of necessity, start adding more of the enormous secondary cities to develop audiences and amortize tour costs."

Much of the post-Olympics growth of the international touring market in China will hinge on the expansion plans of the National Basketball Assn. The 18,700-capacity Beijing Olympic Basketball Arena, the first facility in Asia configured to NBA specifications, plans to host 100-150 events per year. Although the timeline is uncertain, the NBA also plans to build 12 other arenas throughout China. In addition, the league has partnered with Australia-based venue operator AEG Ogden (a 50/50 partnership with U.S.-based AEG) to operate the Beijing arena as a sports/entertainment venue after the Olympics.

"We’re making a big bet on China as an emerging market," says Randy Phillips, CEO of AEG Live. "AEG’s live entertainment division, Live Nation, the world’s largest concert promoter, event producer, also expects an Olympic boost to its China business.

"One of the problems, especially in Beijing, has been the availability of venues," Hong Kong-based Live Nation senior VP of Pan-Asia booking Colleen Ironside says. "The older ones that have been closed for renovations are much more user-friendly now, and of course there are some good new ones."

Ironsides says she expects Live Nation’s Chinese promotions to double this year.

"These venues will all be looking for content to fill them after the Olympics," she says. "Hopefully, with more competition in the marketplace, we can negotiate better venue rental deals and do more shows."

Ed Cunningham, AEG’s top executive in China, agrees that "the top promoters will be pursued by all the venues," but also sees much room for improvement.

He says the Shanghai World Expo’s Arena, opening in 2010, is the only other "world-class arena" planned in China and, together with the Beijing Olympic Basketball Arena, will be the foundation for the future of China’s live event business.

WAKING THE GIANT

While political concerns leading up to the Olympics have led to a clampdown on touring, particularly by international artists (see story, page 22), generally the barriers to promoting concerts in China have been coming down in recent years, a process that Ironside believes will accelerate after the Olympics.

"Doing shows in China has changed enormously, from getting licenses and permits to there now being state-of-the-art production available in the major cities," she says.

Krane says more and more major agencies are also including China on their Asian itineraries.

"With the parallel growth of Western entertainment brands [like] Ticketmaster and AEG,
agents and managers feel far more secure about their artists’ presentation and well-being here than they did just a short while ago,” he says.

But in many ways, live music in China remains a mystery for agents and promoters.

“The main challenge is market research and trying to establish who really will sell how many tickets (determining) what size venue to play,” Ironside says. “The other challenge is trying to work out a ticket pricing structure that is affordable for the locals, as international acts mostly want to see Chinese and not Western faces in the audience.”

Indeed, U.S. rapper Talib Kweli famously complained about the expat crowd at his Beijing Star Live Club show in October 2007, with locals warning that even ticket prices of 100 yuan ($15) can put off Chinese audiences.

Similarly, insiders note a limited venue boom does not necessarily mean significantly increased touring opportunities for Western acts. Internet penetration is helping international acts gain awareness, but most agree it remains a challenge getting Western popular music into the hands of the average Chinese music fan.

“It would be a major mistake for Western entertainment [and] music companies to move their businesses into China and perceive the growth will happen with Western music,” Brisbane-based AEG Ogden chairman/CEO Harvey Lister says. “That’s clearly not the case.”

Most execs agree international touring artists represent only a fraction of the potential touring market in China.

“Those who sing in Mandarin—artists such as Jacky Cheung, Andy Lau and Jay Chou—are always going to be more popular than international acts,” Ironside says. “They speak the local language and know and understand the local culture.”

Cunningham estimates international acts will comprise approximately 5% of the overall arena and stadium shows in China’s major cities and 1%-2% in the second-tier cities.

“Relationships with the top Asian artists and developing new artists in the region will be the most important component of any successful business model,” he says.

AFTER THE GOLD RUSH

Even as the market develops for Western acts, many misconceptions exist among agents and managers, Ironside says, some of whom wrongly consider China “gold rush” territory.

“The market for international acts is mostly sponsorship-driven, so in some instances acts have been vastly overpaid their market worth,” she says. “This has created a culture where agents and managers overestimate their acts’ worth in this market, especially given the reality of what can be charged.”

Neil Warnock, London-based CEO of the Agency Group Worldwide, which specializes in international touring, agrees that sponsorships “drive artist’s fees to a level not related to box-office income” and can encourage agents to push for unrealistic fees. Companies including Chevrolet (Linkin Park) and Cadillac (Cel-}

line Dion) have sponsored shows by international artists in recent times.

Ironside says China should be looked at as a market that needs to be developed over the long haul through heavy touring, citing Jacky Cheung’s marathon 2007 tour as an example.

“More agents and managers need to consider this a major market of the future, not just coming in and getting as much money as they can,” Ironside says. “You need to start small, under-sell, leave a demand and come back for more.”

Terry McBride, CEO of Vancouver-based Netwerk Music Group, says Avril Lavigne is now seeing the benefit of repeated visits to the country.

“We’re going back to do seven shows with her in that market because we’ve spent a lot of time there growing it and building it,” he says. “For us, it’s a growing marketplace on both intellectual-property sales and ticket sales.”

The involvement of Live Nation, AEG, Emma Ticketmaster and other international promoters “will have an impact over time,” Warnock says.

“But,” he warns, “none of us will progress properly in this market until we engage our artists with local TV opportunities and general press and promotion. [This will] build our artists from playing one-off dates and give them the ability to tour for a second and third time throughout the Chinese markets.”

Additional reporting by Christie Blitzer in Melbourne and Berwin Song in Beijing.
Official Olympics ticketing company Ticketmaster says China launch is ready on track, despite concerns about its service from some in the local live business.

The company, which operates in China as Emma Ticketmaster after a deal to buy local ticketing operation Emma in April 2007, says it has moved more than 6 million tickets for the games and is on its way to setting a record for the event.

"We have created a strong infrastructure in China that positions us for long-term growth and success," Emma Ticketmaster CEO Jonathan Krane says.

China is the only market where Ticketmaster is both ticketing company and risk-taking promoter, having brought the likes of Linkin Park, Eric Clapton and Celine Dion to China in recent times.

But that dual role has caused some recentment in the local biz, with at least one promoter declining to use its services.

"I do not use Emma Ticketmaster as a ticket distributor," says Steve Sybesma, CEO of Shanghai-based concert promoter China West and a former U.S. promoter whose dealings with Ticketmaster go back more than 20 years. "It is a complete conflict for me to support a company that is fiercely competing on a different level. Whenever possible I put it in my sales contracts that they are not allowed to sell my tickets.

Krane declines to respond directly, but says, "We are privileged to be in the enviable position of having promoters in different cities come to us to partner in bringing the best live entertainment to this extraordinary and vibrant market.

But then, there's a lot riding on the Olympics to upset such a potentially lucrative apple cart. In the short term, Emma Ticketmaster's status as the Olympic ticketing company is strategically critical, particularly as other promoters and ticketing companies jockey for position.

Krane says ticket-buying patterns demonstrate key shifts in the market, with 20% of tickets now sold online, up from 5% two years ago. Advance purchasing and increased use of credit cards are also kicking in as factors in the market.

"Most tickets are bought the last three weeks before an event, but we have seen a strong trend over the last year where the Chinese are purchasing tickets much earlier," Krane says. "Online sales are starting to mean something, which is a good sign.

Now with a staff of about 200, the company is ready to roll out Ticketmaster's "full technology and service" nationally once the games wrap.

Krane cites Emma Ticketmaster's network of ticket outlets, its venue partnerships and experienced personnel as key to its future success.

But he admits China's rapid economic growth and cultural expansion is not necessarily a license to print money for Western companies.

"In order to be successful, you have to have a deep understanding of the culture, history and government as they all relate to your business," he says.

Nonetheless, Emma fell afoul of the government when it promoted Björk's Shanghai show in March. The Icelandic singer's pro-Tibetan comments led to a live clampdown that is still ongoing (see story, below).

Rumors spread locally that the government had banned Emma from organizing shows.

Emma has denied this, with Krane insisting that "Ticketmaster abides by and respects the local laws and regulations of every country in which we are involved, and we bring the best live entertainment to China and work closely with government partners.

And Ticketmaster insists the Olympics are just the start of its Chinese dynasty.

"We are thrilled to be in China and very happy with our early progress," Ticketmaster CEO Sean Moriarty says. "We're looking forward to even more exciting developments in the future."

Additional reporting by Berwin Song in Beijing.

Beijing may be preparing to welcome the world to the Olympic Games, but with a clampdown on international touring still in place, some local exes are seeking new alliances to boost the live biz.

During the run-up to the Olympics, insiders say, authorities have been strictly enforcing venue-licensing regulations and placing so many restrictions on international acts that plans for most such shows have effectively been put on hold.

"I remember, following the announcement that Beijing would host the games, being constantly asked 'what is the mood of the Olympics,'" Beijing was going to be the most exciting place to be on the planet, and anyone working here in the music realm was bound to prosper," says concert promoter Jon Campbell, who promotes the Times Arts Jazz Series. "[Now] you hear, over and over, 'because of the Olympics' as an excuse for why yet another event, venue, visa, concert [or] whatever is canceled.

The local biz points to Björk's pro-Tibetan independence statements during her Shanghai show in March (billboard.biz, March 4) as the moment the authorities' attitude changed.

"It's all about security concerns now—there's a huge wood of paranoia," one operator who asked not to be named says. "No one wants to be held responsible if something happens again, so they're just removing any possibility."

The Ministry of Culture recently confirmed on its Web site (that it will ban foreign artists and entertainment who have ever engaged in activities deemed to threaten national sovereignty) (billboard.biz, July 21).

Jason Magnus, president of promoter Rock for China, expected 2008 to be "a banner year in terms of international recognition" for the Chinese music scene. "Everyone thought the government would have exploited the Olympics," he says. Instead, Rock for China has opted not to hold its annual Beijing Pop Festival—China's biggest international rock event—in September, due to the risk of last-minute cancellation by authorities.

Other music events affected by the clampdown include Beijing's Midi Festival, due to be held May 1-4 but postponed until October; the Shanghai Midi Festival, which was denied a permit; and Tunes in the Park, an outdoor series of summer concerts organized by Beijing club the Stone Boat.

"I really don't think the government is going to relax their regulations until well after the Olympics are over," says Jackie Subeck, president/co-founder of Footprint Worldwide, a newly formed brand marketing and entertainment company in Los Angeles focused on serving international clients in China.

Subeck is former entertainment group president at CRC, a joint venture between Los Angeles-based consultancy firm AIM Group and state-owned China Record Corp.

Footprint recently signed a deal with China-focused youth marketing and media company Digicorp to provide brand-sponsored entertainment to university students through live events and a targeted campus IPTV network. Subeck says the venture will also provide government-friendly touring opportunities for Western and Chinese artists at Chinese universities. Subeck says the first tour, featuring "a rising Chinese artist," will roll out in the fall. Footprint is seeking sponsorships for the tour from multinational and local brands.

"Through the IPTV network, we can specifically target the second-tier markets by simultaneously airing the show live in the dorm rooms," Subeck says.

Marina Del Rey, Calif.-based Digicorp has a long-term advertising and media rights deal with an operational entity of the China Youth League, the Chinese government agency that controls Internet access for 70 million students.

Subeck declined to reveal details of label partners, and awareness of the Footprint venture among Chinese music companies seems low. But Mathew Daniel, VP of digital content licensing firm R2G, praises the initiative for extending the exposure footprint for Western artists to a more manageable platform, reaching a relevant audience.

www.americanradiohistory.com
China Bound R2G, IODA To Launch Subscription Service By Courtney Harding

In an effort to provide an alternative to pirated music, Beijing-based digital distribution service R2G is launching an online music subscription service in China that will feature songs from U.S.-based independent digital distributor Independent Online Distribution Alliance (IODA). Billboard has learned.

The service, Wawawa (w3.net), will charge a monthly fee of 20 yuan ($2.93) that will enable subscribers to up to 88 song downloads per month. All tracks will be sold as digital rights management-free MP3 files. Customers will also be able to stream their purchased songs over the Internet—a useful feature in a society where 40% of consumers access the Web from Internet cafes.

Wawawa, which launches Aug. 1, is entering a market where, the IFPI estimates, nearly all music downloads are pirated. And despite China’s massive population, the country’s legitimate music sales totaled only about $69 million in 2007, accounting for less than 1% of global recorded music sales, the IFPI says.

Still, a recent study by Music 2.0 Group, a digital-music advocacy organization in Beijing, found that up to one-third of Chinese consumers surveyed are willing to pay for music, R2G VP Matthew Daniel says. Those surveyed by Music 2.0 were interested in having greater access to classical, trance and new age music, as well as editorial content and recommendations, he says.

“One of the biggest complaints about services like Baidu is that the music supplied by the pirates is not the music that consumers want,” Daniel says.

R2G CEO Wu Jun says that music knowledge among Chinese consumers is defined to a large degree by what they find through piracy.

“This leaves music discovery to chance, providing no guide for fans to connect with one another and share their passion for the artists they love,” he says. “R2G’s partnership with IODA will change all that.”

Wawawa is the latest chapter in R2G’s fight against online piracy in China. In March, the company sued China’s leading search engine, Baidu, for alleged copyright infringement.

Daniel says R2G has been in talks with major labels about getting their music on Wawawa. Representatives from Universal Music Group, Sony BMG Music Entertainment, Warner Music Group and EMI Group either didn’t return messages by press time or declined to comment.

For IODA, the partnership represents a chance to enter an emerging market, one that CEO Kevin Arnold believes will grow rapidly. “With the Olympics and the Shanghai World’s Fair in 2010, all eyes are on China,” he says. “We think there is an exploding interest from the Chinese audience, and it benefits us to help China emerge.”

Wawawa will have access to more than 1 million tracks in IODA’s catalog, which includes recordings by Broken Social Scene, Cat Power, Sonic Youth guitarist Thurston Moore, Aventura, Willie Nelson and the London Symphony Orchestra.

The venture faces a number of limitations. Aside from the piracy issue, much of IODA’s catalog comprises Western acts, very few of which are known in China. But on a recent trip, Arnold says he noticed a shift in the knowledge base.

“The underground music scene over there is almost like New York in 1978,” he says. “The kids that are interested know who bands like Sonic Youth are, and it all spreads via word of mouth.”

Given Wawawa’s low monthly subscription fee, the per-song return for the site could be just pennies per track—and even less for the artists whose music is featured.

“We realize this will not be an immediate gold rush,” Arnold says. “Right now, the goal is to create availability and build demand. This is a great opportunity to build awareness about our bands in China, too. This is a long-term play, and we think this is an important first step.”

Despite the challenges, Paper Bag Records co-founder Trevor Lurocque, whose catalog will be sold via Wawawa, says the China market offers the opportunity to reach new fans.

“China is really the wild, wild East,” Lurocque says. “When we took bands over there in May, we were skeptical, but we discovered there was a huge market that a lot of people didn’t really understand.”
Why The Olympics Are Bad For Music Retail

The U.S. music industry regularly suffers a negative impact from the summer Olympics, Nielsen SoundScan data suggests. In 1996, during the four-week period that encompassed the Atlanta games, album sales declined 3.4% compared with the corresponding period a year earlier. For the full year, album sales were up 0.04%.

During the Sydney games in 2000, album sales were up 1.7% year-on-year but underperformed the full year’s sales, which were up 4%.

The 2004 Athens Olympics saw sales rise 0.4% from the corresponding 2003 period, but again that was below full-year growth in 2004, when album unit sales rose 3.8%.

Mike Dreese, CEO of the Newbury Comics chain, hopes the impact of the Beijing Olympics will be minimized by its location. “The history of the Olympics is, when it’s out of our time zone and there is time-shifting of events going on, it doesn’t mean as much as a broadcast in real time,” he says. “People stay home when the latter happens.”

—Ed Christman

All The TV In China
Five Ways In Which NBC's Coverage Will Affect The Music Biz By Antony Bruno

When the games kick off Aug. 8, NBC will do much more than just air the events on TV, online and on mobile. The scale at which it is providing this multiplatform viewing experience is unequalled in the history of the Internet and entertainment.

Just as Live 8 set a new benchmark, the Olympics will serve as a template for how to simultaneously broadcast concurrent events. Below are five areas where NBC is raising the bar, offering clues for the music industry to someday follow.

Coverage
Historically, Olympic TV coverage has been limited to events likely to gain the most viewers. This year, NBC will air 1,360 hours across seven networks, plus 2,200 hours of live streaming online. With more content comes the expectation of more viewers. And more viewers means more money from advertising. While TV advertising will dominate the Olympic ad buy at 18%, the International Olympic Committee expects online media to take 5%-7%, and double that for the 2014 games.

Lesson: Don’t try to “program” online. Offer everything and let viewers decide what they want to watch.

Customization
NBC will allow online viewers to create their own Olympic experience, letting them choose which events to stream online, both live and on-demand. More than 200 hours of events will be taped each day for a total of 4,000 hours to choose from by the games’ close. By comparison, the 2006 winter games in Turin, Italy, had 400 hours of events available.

Lesson: Give the fans control. Provide not only a wide spectrum of content, but also the tools that allow them to easily organize it based on their needs.

Technology
That NBC is delivering so much content is only part of the story. How it is doing so is equally important. NBC commissioned a new Web video player, created using Microsoft’s Silverlight 2 technology, that includes new levels of interactivity. It allows viewers to watch four events simultaneously, includes a picture-in-picture feature and options to scroll audio commentary/caption style. The system will even alert viewers when specified events are about to start.

Lesson: Make it stick. If there’s anything to be learned from iTunes, it’s that the experience of accessing content matters just as much as the content itself.

Mobile
NBC is going direct-to-fan with its mobile coverage, allowing users to get breaking news, exclusive video and more by texting “Olympics” to the short code 51515. NBC also plans to allow users with the appropriate phones to view live broadcasts. Yahoo is also adding a host of Olympic coverage to its mobile page, while MobiTV is carrying certain NBC programming as well.

Lesson: Own the mobile experience. Working with wireless operators is great, but brands that want to make a real splash need to take more control over the experience and embrace all mobile users equally.

Metrics
NBC has partnered with Internet ratings service Quantcast to collect data on how viewers use the site, what pages they access most, how long they stay and what they’re interacting with while there. Additionally, NBC is working with Integrated Media Measurement, which is handing out mobile phones that track how users access Olympic content. NBC will use this data to determine advertising rates for all platforms and what kind of new media products to offer in the future.

Lesson: Knowledge is power. Treat every new media offer as an experiment to measure usage and demand. Then, even a failed initiative can serve to better inform the next effort.
The Live Earth and Live 8 concerts proved to the music industry that the Internet could be a useful, and profitable, tool for airing overlapping events as an interactive, personalized way. Starting Aug 8, NBC will take that baton and run with it further than has ever been attempted as it rolls out an ambitious multiplatform coverage strategy for the Olympic Games (see story, page 24).

NBC is certainly no stranger to making content available in multiple formats, experimenting with not only past Olympics, but also such NBC Sports exclusives as the U.S. Open and March Madness. But this time, the company is going big, airing 2,000 hours of live streaming content and 3,500 hours of on-demand video for activities taking place in a 17-day time frame. That’s six days’ worth of content made available every day.

As the music industry looks to live events as a bigger portion of its pie while eyeing the Internet as a way to further monetize that asset, milestones like NBC’s digital plans for the Olympics will be important for all to monitor.

NBC Sports and Olympics senior VP of digital media Perkins Miller phoned in from China, where he is busily managing hundreds of staffers, more than 30 vendors, and stacks of servers in preparation for the event. He spoke with Billboard about how the network plans to pull it all off.

You need to take risks in the media business to keep up with the consumers’ appetite, and we’re doing that.

What are some of the challenges involved in making so much content available online like this?

The first and foremost challenge was, “How do we make sure people will actually be able to consume this?” A lot of time went into navigation and ensuring that we’re going to produce clips and give you a way to get to them easily. And then when we thought about the other platforms, it was really about, “Where are these people going to be when they want to access this?” This was at the heart of really how we thought about the project from the beginning. We recognized 100% that the ultimate viewing experience of the Olympics is on your couch in front of your HD 52-inch screen. But then you move from there, the next most common would be perhaps your office or a laptop computer. From there, you’re on the move, so you’ve got your mobile phone with you. We’re trying to sort of imagine [that] wherever they are, we give them the content where they want it and when they want it.

Are you concerned about the online content cannibalizing TV viewing, or one platform stealing traffic from another?

It’s almost as if we’re adding more sails to a boat. The biggest one up there is the main sail, which is the prime-time broadcast, but other sails capture the wind in slightly different ways and ultimately the boat goes faster. We haven’t found any cannibalization. It’s not about putting a main sail above another main sail. We’re adding them on around it and capturing more wind and appetite. It overall moves the business ahead and captures more of the audience.

How do you plan to deal with unauthorized streaming of your clips on sites like YouTube?

We’ve made a lot of strides working with the International Olympic Committee. We work with them to develop fingerprinting technology that helps us monitor video as it travels across the Internet. We’ve worked closely with sites like YouTube to deploy a technology that helps detect when this fingerprinted or watermarked content is about to be uploaded or has been uploaded. We have the ability to really aggressively monitor where this content is going up. We try to make sure this is as perfect, because ultimately there are loss of aggressive technologists out there who are going to want to try to find a way to put this up somewhere. We’re working very hard with the major sites to ensure that we limit that. Ultimately, we want to provide the best experience, and the best experience is going to be found on nbcolympics.com.

Why the partnership with MSN?

We’ve worked very closely with Microsoft on two things. One is the MSN brand, which is very powerful and very good at managing big events. They did Live Earth, and that was a major music effort. We needed a partner who would help provide the volume of audience exposure on nbcolympics.com during that short period of time to make sure we got the word out. Then we worked with Microsoft’s Silverlight group on the build of the video player. With all this content in such a short period of time, we needed a lot of help in thinking through how to present it. We’ve had in Microsoft a partner who could do both—deliver an audience and program with us aggressively as well as help us on the technology side.

Did previous webcast music events like Live Earth serve as useful lessons when developing your Olympic plans?

Absolutely. We see the music industry and the work that it’s done with handling music video as well as live concerts as a real litmus test for consumer appetites. We look at the durations for those music events—just these really massive session times that people spend a lot of time online watching and listening—and that provides a technical challenge, and that’s something we’ve looked very closely at.

Was there anything you wanted to do on the digital platforms that you couldn’t do?

One of our big goals is to find a way for this audience to stay engaged around the Olympic sports for a longer period of time than just 17 days. We had to try and build that momentum in advance, but we found that we really needed to have the Olympics first. We’ve launched a business called Universal Sports, which was announced about a month ago, and the channel is live in some markets today. The Web site will launch in about a week. This is business that’s designed to entertain these audiences and build a community around the Olympics. Our one goal is that if we could have a bigger, richer community that’s chatting and building groups, commenting and learning more in-depth about their sports from the community as they watch the Olympics, then that would be a way to build a greater connection around the games.

The games are a few days away, but have any lessons been learned throughout this process yet?

We have an ambitious plan, and we’re hopeful for it all to come together. But we also recognize the Internet is a very new platform relative to television and there’s still a lot of kinks to work out.

We fully expect to face some of those kinks, and I think for us going in, it’s ensuring that we try to resolve them quickly and do so with a positive, level-headed attitude. I think the lesson is ultimately, you need to take risks in the media business to keep up with the consumers’ appetite, and we’re doing that. But that risk also comes with the challenge of making sure it can be delivered. That’s been some hard effort, and we’ll see how it comes out in the end.
PIRACY

Sohu In The Spotlight Biz
To Bear Down On Sponsor’s ‘Piracy’ Link By Berwin Song
and Steve McClure

BEIJING—The Olympic spotlight won’t just be shining on record-breaking athletic achievement this year. The international music business hopes it will also highlight China’s less-than-perfect record on intellectual-property protection.

In particular, the international biz is hoping to use the global interest in the games to expose the alleged copyright transgressions of Sohu, the Beijing-based company that’s the official Internet service provider and Web site host of the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Music industry representatives say Sohu’s music-delivery service Sogou, like many other Chinese Web sites, provides “deep links” to sites offering unauthorized music downloads.

In February the IFPI filed a copyright-infringement suit against Sohu on behalf of Sony BMG Music Entertainment Hong Kong, Warner Music Hong Kong, Universal Music and Hong Kong-based Gold Label Entertainment, claiming damages totaling $7.5 million. A court date has not yet been announced.

“As an industry we have made our stance clear—media affiliated to the Olympic Games as an official sponsor should be above reproach,” says Warner Music Asia Pacific president Lachie Rutherford, also chairman of the IFPI Asia Pacific regional board. “And Sohu-Sogou is not.

Sohu could not be reached for comment.

Industry sources say that while Sogou is not in the same league as major portals like Baidu and Yahoo China—both of which the IFPI has previously pursued through the courts, with varying degrees of success—its high visibility during the Olympics has made it a target.

“As the Olympics draw near, Chinese authorities are stepping up efforts to address piracy issues that might mar the country’s reputation,” says Mark Natkin, managing director of Beijing-based telecom/IT consulting firm Marbridge Consulting, noting the

BRANDING

London Calling English Capital To Make Music A 2012 Centerpiece By Andre Paine

LONDON—The international music biz is hoping that the official Olympics handover from Beijing to London at the 2008 closing ceremony will prove significant, as well as symbolic.

While attempts to use the Beijing games as a vehicle for music promotion have often been frustrated by controversy and bureaucratic red tape (see story, page 24), London 2012 pledges to have music at its heart right from that Aug. 24 transition.

Billboard understands that the Beijing closing ceremony—likely to reach 1.5 billion viewers globally—will include a performance from Leona Lewis, as well as dancers from London’s Royal Opera House and hip-hop dance troupe Zoo Nation, although the lineup had not been officially announced at press time.

On the same day, a free, 40,000-capacity show will take place on central London thoroughfare the Mall, broadcast by national TV network BBC 1 and AC radio network BBC Radio 2, and featuring acts including Il Divo, Katherine Jenkins, McFly and the Feeling.

The next four years will see the launch of 10 projects combining sport with culture under the “Cultural Olympiad” banner, including music element “2012 Sounds,” steered by the BBC. U.K. labels body the BPI says it is already working to ensure the industry engages fully with the Olympics.

“It’s early days,” BPI chairman Tony Wadsworth says, “but there’s a clear parallel

London’s Olympic Stadium (shown under construction) will become a venue for sports and cultural events after the 2012 games.
disappearance of pirated CDs and DVDs from many of Beijing's neighborhood stores. "If there was ever a gold-medal opportunity for the IFPI, record labels and other stake holders to wield publicity to their advantage, the next 30 days is it."

Pressure is also coming from U.S. legislators. On June 13, Reps. Adam Schiff, D-Calif., and Bob Goodlatte, R-Va., co-chairs of the Congressional International Anti-Piracy Caucus, wrote a letter to the International Olympic Committee requesting that it address alleged intellectual-property abuses by Sohu. They note the IOC has taken "extraordinary steps" to protect its trademarked symbols from being counterfeited in China.

"We believe the continued facilitation of piracy by the operator of the official Beijing Olympics Web site reflects poorly on the Olympics as well as its official corporate sponsors," the letter read. "We urge you to address this critical issue as soon as possible."

The IOC had not returned repeated requests for comment at press time.

But no one is convinced such tactics will work.

"Trying to leverage the publicity surrounding the Olympics is not a clever way to handle the sensitive Chinese government," one publishing industry source says. The IFPI "would get a lot more support if they kept quiet now and raised this issue after the Olympics."

Even Liu Ping, legal affairs department director for the Music Copyright Society of China, who earlier this year filed a copyright infringement lawsuit against Baidu, says now is not the time to put pressure on Sohu.

"Both Sohu and Baidu are very important companies," Liu says. "By only focusing on Baidu now, we are not saying that there are not other infringing companies but we have chosen to take things one step at a time."

The copyright society has struck a deal with the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Games under which the latter has agreed to make all required royalty payments for any music used during the games.

Insiders, however, remain skeptical that this will set a wider precedent for Chinese copyright enforcement—meaning, this is one race that will still be running long after the Olympics has left town.

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ATHENS 2004

While most Olympic venues lie derelict pending development decisions, the games' badminton venue has been buzzing since its January 2007 reopening as the 2,440-capacity Badminton Stadium.

Most recently, musical "Mamma Mia!" (May 6-June 15) preceded U.K. alt-rocker P.J. Harvey (June 30). Previously, "no single venue in Athens could host long-running shows and international touring acts," says Michael Adam, director of Arts Dance and Music Productions, which oversees the theater's day-to-day management.

Elsewhere, the Olympic Stadium (72,000 capacity) and Olympic Indoor Hall (17,500) occasionally stage music events. The latter hosted the 2006 Eurovision Song Contest. Madonna hits the stadium Sept. 27.—Maria Paradissis

SYDNEY 2000

"The Olympics gave Sydney some cracking venues," says Don Ellford, GM of business development at the 21,000-capacity Acer Arena.

The arena is one of 10 games venues staging 1,800 events annually in Sydney's Olympic Park, including the 83,300-capacity ANZ Stadium, which has hosted the Rolling Stones, U2 and the Police. Acer Arena itself has attracted the Stones, Iron Maiden, the record industry's annual Australian Record Industry Assn. Awards and the MTV Australia Awards. Other Olympic Park sites include Sydney Showground, hosting the annual 45,000-capacity Big Day Out festival, and the Newington Armory complex, the venue for the 4,000-capacity Great Escape and Acoustics at the Armory festivals. —Christie Elizier

BARCELONA 1992

Barcelona's central Olympic indoor arena is its music business' main venue of 1992. The 24,000-capacity Palau Sant Jordi arena "opened up Barcelona as a key venue on major world tours," Live Nation Spain promoter Pino Sagliocco says.

Madonna's "Drowned World tour opened there in 2001, and it has also hosted the 2002 MTV Europe Music Awards, U2, Coldplay and Shakira. Bruce Springsteen recorded his "Live in Barcelona" DVD there.

The 60,000-capacity Olympic Stadium, built in 1929 and refurbished for 1992, has recently hosted the Rolling Stones, the Police and Bon Jovi. Madonna plays there Sept. 18. —Howell Llewellyn

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VESPERS

Olympian Feats The Cultural Legacies of Previous Games

The opening ceremony of the 1996 Atlanta Games at Centennial Olympic Stadium, later renamed Turner Field and now home to baseball, Atlanta Braves.

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between what we're trying to do to promote the value of music and the positive role it can play in young people's lives and the core values of the Cultural Olympiad.

Other recent host cities' experience (see story, right) suggests that the games' lasting legacy will be among the venues being constructed at Olympic Park in Stratford, east London.

Following the games, organizers say most of those seven venues will remain in sports use or be rebuilt elsewhere. However, the 80,000-capacity Olympic Stadium will become a 25,000-seat venue for sports and cultural use. Finding its future tenant is the responsibility of mayoral body the London Development Agency, where a spokesman confirms that "the [stadium] business plan will include music events."

That would give east London the outdoor venue for major acts it currently lacks. Most stadium shows take place at Wembley (northwest London) and Twickenham (southwest). "Afield new venues will be welcome," says booking agent John Giddings of London-based Solo, which represents Madonna and the Rolling Stones. Artists would "absolutely" be interested in playing the stadium, he adds.

One front runner for the tenancy is local soccer club Leyton Orient, whose chairman Barry Hearn is a veteran promoter of professional boxing and snooker. He enthuses about the stadium's potential for music events. "I don't see any reason at all why we couldn't turn a 25,000-capacity stadium into one of the major venues of London," he says. "It's in the middle of a quite affluent, multicultural area; it just needs someone with vision to run it."

But Matt Woolliscroft, promoter at Manchester-based SJM, is more cautious.

"There's plenty of choice already in the outdoor London circuit," he says. "It's very hard to make money out of outdoor shows, and 25,000 will be a hard number to make money from."

Other projects include a televised talent search for a national band to perform at the opening ceremony and live music in Olympic Park, plus a free concert in Hyde Park on the eve of the games.

The aim of this music-sport interface, Wadsworth says, is "celebrating British culture, inspiring and involving young people and generating a legacy".

But Hearn warns that the city needs something more concrete to show for its Olympics expenditure.

Otherwise, he says, "you've had your four weeks of fun and everyone's said what a wonderful place London is ... but what have you really got out of it?"

Additional reporting by Tom Ferguson.
Never mind the Great Wall of China—a great wall of silence surrounds the official music of the Beijing Olympics. Historically, the games may have proved an effective vehicle for music promotion—think Freddie Mercury and Montserrat Caballe’s “Barcelona” in 1992, Whitney Houston’s “One Moment in Time” for Seoul 1988 or Kylie Minogue’s performance at the Sydney 2000 closing ceremony. But this time around, the Chinese authorities seem determined to keep everything under wraps.

Less than two weeks before the games’ Aug. 8 opening ceremony, no details of the official theme or the artists appearing at any of the official ceremonies were available. The official album has been released through China Record Corp./Sony BMG—although it is available only in China.

The official line from the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Games is that details will not be released ahead of the opening ceremony, but the reasons for this blackout aren’t clear. After all, more details have been released on London 2012’s musical plans than what’s in store for these games (see story, page 26).

Some maintain it is simply due to the organizers’ desire not to spoil the impact of the opening spectacle, but others see more sinister intent. After all, the games’ cultural credentials have been under scrutiny since Steven Spielberg withdrew as artistic adviser in protest at China’s stance over Darfur, and international protests over Tibet dogged the Olympic flame’s journey to Beijing.

Legendary producer Quincy Jones elected to stay on in his artistic adviser role, telling readers of his July 19 Billboard column, “If I can stay in the games with others like us, I feel we can make a difference. I don’t pretend to be a politician. I’m just a musician that cares.”

Jones could not be reached for further comment on this article, and he’s certainly not alone in that, although official sponsor Coca-Cola—which will stage musical performances during the games as part of its “fan zone” area, the Place—says the controversy has not caused any change in its plans.

“People are excited about the games as well as the values and inspiration associated with the event,” Coca-Cola senior manager of communications Petro Kacur says. “Passion for the games has not diminished.”

There are, as yet, no plans for appearances in the Place by any U.S. artists, although

ARTISTS TO WATCH

5 Chinese Acts Using The Games To Boost Their Profile By Berwin Song

Wei Wei
Based: Stockholm
Olympic activity: Wei Wei, China’s Olympic ambassador since 1993, has performed at numerous Olympic promotion events worldwide. Her song “I Feel Like Flying” is the official theme for the city of Qingdao, host of the 2008 sailing events. According to her management, she is booked to perform at the opening ceremonies, although organizers have not confirmed this.

Current release: “20x20” (available only at weiwimusic.com)
Booking agent: Wei Wei International Management, Stockholm (international)

 lang Lang
Based: Beijing
Olympic activity: Rumored to be appearing at the Olympics’ opening ceremony. Featured on several TV programs as a cultural ambassador for China during the Olympics, Lang Lang has already performed at numerous events promoting the games.

Current release: “The Magic of Lang Lang” (Deutsche Grammophon)
Booking agent: Columbia Artists, New York (international)

Sa Dingding
Based: Beijing
Olympic activity: Headlined the One World, One Dream Olympic celebration event July 19 in San Francisco, which also featured fellow Chinese artists Fu Xieng, Sang Lan, Huang Wei Lin and Gao Ming Jan.

Current release: “Alive” (Universal)
Booking agent: Universal China, Beijing (international)

Coco Lee
Based: San Francisco
Olympic activity: Singer on “Forever Friends,” recently released on “The Official Album for Beijing 2008 Olympic Games” (China Record Corp.), which is endorsed by the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Games (BOCOG). “Forever Friends” is tipped as the Olympics’ official theme.

Current release: “1999-2008 Best Collection” (Sony BMG)
Booking agent: Ursa Major, Beijing (international)

Jay Chou
Based: Taipei, Taiwan
Olympic activity: Wrote and sang the Olympic-themed song “A Long Journey,” which he debuted at a BOCOG-approved 100-day Olympic countdown concert May 1 in Beijing.

Current release: “On the Run” (JVR Music)
Booking agent: JVR Music International, Taipei (international)

Dubbed the “king of Chinese pop” by local media, Jay Chou has released eight studio albums, spawning several hits. Though his Mandarin-language releases have so far prevented him from breaking into the Western market, his budding acting career may carry him the extra distance. His international breakout role in 2006’s “The Curse of the Golden Flower” was directed by Zhang Yimou, who is also in charge of the Olympic opening ceremonies.

www.americanradiohistory.com
The Olympics are a global broadcast stage unlike any other. According to the International Olympic Committee, the 2004 games in Athens were broadcast to 3.9 billion people in 220 countries, an 8% increase from the 3.6 billion viewers who watched the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

That means any acts that get placement or perform as part of the international whirlwind stand to receive a boost. For instance, Björk performed "Oceania" during the Athens 2004 opening ceremony, a song written specifically for the games. The exposure resulted in 11,000 downloads, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Björk included "Oceania" on her 2004 album "Medúlla" (Elektra), garnering Grammy Award nominations for the song and the album. Billboard looks at the domestic and international acts hoping to win big at Beijing '08.

Reporting by Leila Cobo, Mariel Conception, Natalie Dershowitz, Ann Donovan, Steve McClure, Gail Mitchell, Mark Sutherland and Ken Tucker.

### SYNCHS

#### Lord Of The Rings: 2008's Essential Olympic Synchs

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### Artists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artists</th>
<th>Project Developed By</th>
<th>Synch</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 Doors Down, Lady Antebellum, Nelly, Sheryl Crow, Colbie Caillat, Kate Voegele, Luis Fonsi</td>
<td>AT&amp;T</td>
<td>The artists will record tracks for &quot;AT&amp;T Team USA,&quot; an exclusive soundtrack designed to inspire and support U.S. Olympic team athletes. The music—debuting during NBC and Telemundo’s broadcasts—will be available for download Aug. 8-28 on AT&amp;T wireless phones and online, with the proceeds benefiting Team USA. Song details were not available at press time, although Billboard has learned that Luis Fonsi recorded a special version of his single &quot;No Me Doy Por Vencido&quot; (Universal) for the campaign.</td>
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<td>Theory of a Deadman, From First to Last, Hawk Nelson</td>
<td>NBC</td>
<td>NBC has turned to a trio of alt-rock bands for its Olympic promotional slots. Theory of a Deadman’s &quot;Sacrafice,&quot; taken from its album &quot;Scars and Souvenirs&quot; (Roadrunner), will run alongside From First to Last’s &quot;Worlds Away&quot; (Suretone) and Hawk Nelson’s &quot;Turn It On&quot; from its Tooth &amp; Nail release &quot;Hawk Nelson Is My Friend.&quot; &quot;It’s the second Olympics go-around for Hawk Nelson, which was also featured in NBC promotions for the 2004 Olympics with its song &quot;Right Here.&quot;</td>
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<td>The Who</td>
<td>TBWA/Chiat/Day</td>
<td>Music from the Who will be featured in a series of ads for Nissan that will run during the Olympics, although these ads will not be specifically Olympics-themed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Either Melissa</td>
<td>NBC</td>
<td>Why &quot;either?&quot; Because only the winner of NBC's country music reality show &quot;Nashville Star&quot; gets to sing on &quot;Today&quot; when it broadcasts from Beijing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lawson, Shawn</td>
<td>Beijing Olympics organizers, Shu Nan, Clemenger BBDO</td>
<td>Long renowned for scissors-kicking beddies in Hollywood movies, Jackie Chan is also known in Asia as a singer. He started tuning up for the Olympics in 2007 with &quot;We Are Ready,&quot; China’s official countdown song to the games. A new track, &quot;China See,&quot; will be played as part of the on-site exhibit about Chinese culture at the games. Chan also appears on the Shu Nan-composed theme song for the Olympic-themed film &quot;The One&quot; and is featured in an Asia-Pacific Visa campaign created by Clemenger BBDO in Sydney. The Visa spot shows him springing through Olympic events, only to wind up with a losing face behind Chinese NBA star Yao Ming. The &quot;Jackie Chan&quot; song featured in the ad was composed by Johnny Green and sung by Brydon Stace.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gabe Garcia</td>
<td>BBC Sport</td>
<td>Damon Albarn and Jamie Hewlett, the masterminds behind Gorillaz, will create the title sequence and music for the U.K. Olympics broadcasts. The two-minute animated piece will be based on &quot;Monkey Journey to the West,&quot; the opera composed by Albarn and designed, costumed and animated by Hewlett that played a stint July 23-26 at the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden. The intro will show characters heading to Beijing's &quot;Bird's Nest&quot; Stadium to participate in the games.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. Children, Masaharu Fukuyama, Remiromoren</td>
<td>NHK, TV Asahi, Fuji TV</td>
<td>Different bands have created the theme music for the three Japanese broadcasters airing the games. Rock band Mr. Children is recording a new song, &quot;Gift,&quot; that will be used as the theme to NHK's Olympic broadcasts; the track was released July 30. Universal Japan artist Masaharu Fukuyama will provide the theme song for TV Asahi. And rock band Remiromoren's single &quot;Motto Toku-u-e&quot; will be used during Fuji TV's programming. That single also dropped July 30, and Coca-Cola Japan will use the B-side, &quot;Orchestra,&quot; in its Olympics ads.</td>
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### Additional reporting by Gail Mitchell in Los Angeles, André Paine in London, Benwin Song in Beijing and Mark Wordsen in Milan.
SPECIAL FEATURE

Let's hitch a ride on the music time machine back to the year 1987.

Whitney Houston, Madonna and Michael Jackson rule the No. 1 hit parade on the pop charts, along with rockers U2, Bon Jovi and Bob Seger.

In control on the R&B front are Jackson again, baby sister Janet, Luther Vandross and Lisa Lisa & Cult Jam.

Still in its formative years, rap is mostly an East Coast happening. Eight years have elapsed since the Sugarhill Gang rhymed its way to commercial success in 1979 with "Rapper's Delight." And it's three years since Afrika Bambaataa and Soul Sonic Force landed on "Planet Rock."

Now rapper LL Cool J has nabbed his first No. 1 single—"I Need You"—just a year after Run-D.M.C. stepped up its legacy with top 10 singles "My Adidas" and "Walk This Way."

It's in this climate that co-founders Eric "Eazy-E" Wright and music industry veteran Jerry Heller decide to launch rap label Ruthless Records. Little did anyone know that the upstart indie would put West Coast and gangsta rap on the map, let alone house a stable of gold- and platinum-selling acts, among them pioneering rap group N.W.A. (Niggaz With Attitude).

But Trans World Entertainment director of urban music Violet Brown says, "Eric knew, the DJs knew, and I knew too." Brown's friendship with Eazy-E dates back to the late '80s when she was a DJ shopping for 12-inch singles at the Roadium swap meet in nearby Gardena, Calif.

Continued on >> p.32
In Loving Memory
"The Godfather Of Gangsta Rap"
1963 - 1995
I first met Eazy-E, who was hosting mixtape cassettes being sold by DJ Steve Yano. “Eric would kind of hand out these tapes, throwing in lyrics between songs,” Brown recalls of the Compton, Calif., native and one-time drug dealer. “I think that’s how people first got to know him. I saw him become more and more popular through these tapes.”

Ruthless began with $7,000 of Eazy-E’s own money and 5,000 12-inch copies of his single “Boyz N the Hood.” It was written by C.I.A. rapper Ice Cube, who, along with World Class Wreckin’ Cru DJs Dr. Dre and Yella, had switched allegiance from Kru-Cut Records to Ruthless. Distinguished by Eazy-E’s high-pitched voice, “Boyz” sold more than 500,000 copies throughout South Central L.A., according to label figures. Between that record and “Supersonic,” a 1988 R&B/pop gold single by female rap group J.J. Fad (Just [Jammin’ Fresh and DeJ]), Ruthless Records was on its way.

But things really began to click in 1988 with the release of N.W.A.’s “Straight Outta Compton.” The seminal five-man crew—Eazy-E, Dr. Dre (who produced J.J. Fad), Ice Cube, MC Ren and DJ Yella—came together in 1987, managed by Eazy-E’s label partner Jerry. The group first attracted industry attention on the Ruthless compilation “N.W.A. and the Posse,” issued by Macola Records in 1987, the album featured future Ruthless solo star the D.O.C.

“At this time,” Brown says, “people were putting out their own records but selling them out of their car trunks instead of going after major distribution. But Eric and Jerry got distribution through Priority and took things to a bigger level.”

Established in 1985 by former K-tel executives Bryan Turner, Mark Cerami and Steve Drath, Priority Records’ most recent claim to fame had been the California Raisins’ platinum-selling cover of “Heard It Through the Grapevine.” On the surface, the Raisins and N.W.A. might not seem like ideal labelmates. But youth and naiveté paid off.

“I think back and realize that we were incredibly naïve and young,” Turner recalls of hearing the incendiary single “Fuck Tha Police” and deciding to distribute N.W.A.’s “Straight Outta Compton.” The record, considered by many as pioneering the subgenre of gangsta rap, unflinchingly depicted inner-city youth’s anger at police brutality, racial profiling and other social ills.

“I’d known Jerry for years,” Turner continues. “We worked in the same building. Mark [Cerami] and I knew ‘Fuck’ would scare some people. We were young and had nothing to lose. But never in a million years did we think we’d get a letter from the FBI castigating us for putting out that kind of music. It’s not like we were starting a revolution and distributing arms. It was words. Then [the] Rodney King [incident] happens. It was kind of scary how prophetic the song turned out to be.”

Amid damning critiques, lack of radio airplay and parental advisory stickers, the album went on to sell double platinum, followed by Eazy-E’s own multiplatinum solo debut, “Eazy Duz-It.” During the next five years, Ruthless produced a series of gold- and platinum-selling albums encompassing R&B, pop and rap by such acts as 2Pac, the D.O.C., Above the Law and MC Ren.

The one thing most people didn’t know about Eazy-E, Turner says, was his business savvy. “I think overall he was incredibly underestimated when it came to the business side of the industry. He was the brains behind the marketing approach. All the artwork, T-shirts, logos… all that was him. He would be in my office every day talking about marketing.”

After Ice Cube left the group in 1989 over royalty disputes, Ruthless released another N.W.A. album, 1991’s “Efil4zaggin’” (“Niggaz4life” spelled backward). Beyond it being the group’s final project, it also ushered in the Nielsen SoundScan era, topping No. 1 its first week out and further cementing the Ruthless legacy.

“I don’t think anyone truly paid attention until SoundScan hit,” Brown says. “When the Sound Scan chart arrived with real numbers and N.W.A. was No. 1, a gangsta rap group from Compton? That was the wake-up call. That’s when people said, ‘Oh, my God. Rap is selling a lot of...”

continued on >>p34
NEW LINE CINEMA
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from > p32

Ending its distribution pact with Priority in 1992, Ruthless was later distributed by Relativity Records, which, in turn, was folded into parent company Sony Music and launched as RED. With Dr. Dre, the D.O.C, and Michel'le exiting Ruthless for Death Row, Ruthless bounced back in 1994 with innovative Cleveland rap group Bone Thugs-N-Harmony beginning with the group's No. 2 R&B charting debut album, "Creepin' On Ah Come Up."

"Everyone was counting him out," group member Bizzy Bone recalls. "Then he found us; a new group with a new flavor: four brothers in braids and sagging jeans harmonizing." Bone Thugs-N-Harmony, whose members have had a stormy personal and legal history, announced a reunion of the original members in June. Their upcoming untitled project will likely be released on Interscope, which signed the group in 2006.

"Wright] was always looking for other artists," Brown says. "He told me he wanted Ruthless to be a Motown, to be around for a long time. And not just stay with hip-hop. He was definitely starting to listen to different types of music."

National air personality Felicia "Poetess" Morris (of Jamie Foxx's "The Foxx Hole") agrees. "He was a visionary, looking at signing rock groups and Latin artists," says Morris, who met Eazy-E in the early '90s when she was an artist on Interscope. "He always wanted to do it his way; he never sold out. Eazy-E planted the seed for what you see today with a lot of these indie empires."

Eazy-E's untimely death from AIDS in 1995, however, precluded him from pursuing his vision or seeing Billboard name Ruthless the No. 1 independent label in 1996 and 1997. Or watching a Ruthless act pick up its first Grammy Award when Bone Thugs-N-Harmony was awarded best rap performance by a duo or group in 1996 for No. 1 R&B/pop single "Tha Crossroads" from second Ruthless album "E. 1999 Eternal."

"Ruthless made an incredible impact on the business," Brown says. "Eric put gangsta rap and West Coast rap on the map. And look at the off-shoots: Dr. Dre becoming one of the industry's biggest producers; Ice Cube making movies. A lot came from little Eazy-E and Ruthless."

"Ruthless was the first label to show that a rapper or rap group could control a lot of their own destiny in terms of making and releasing a record," Turner adds. "And that's a lasting legacy today."

Thirteen years after Eazy-E's death, Tomica Woods-Wright is keeping the promise she made to her husband. "Even in his last days," she recalls, "he was telling me, 'I know it may be a burden. But whatever you do, keep it going for as long as you can.'" "

Earlier this year, Woods-Wright announced that in celebration of Ruthless' 20th anniversary, the label is gearing up five new acts slated for release between now and the end of the year. In keeping with Eazy-E's multigenre vision, the roster includes R&B singer/songwriter Na'Shay, bilingual pop singer/musician/actress Agina, rapper/songwriter/producer Hoppin, pary/dance trio Street Runnaz Click, and rapper Stevie Stone. Their albums will be released through a recently renegotiated pact with RED.

"It's been difficult at times since Eric's death, but it's been worth it," Woods-Wright says. "We have a strong, groundbreaking mix here that represents the next generation. Eric wasn't a quitter. He believed in riding a project until the wheels fell off and if they did, then he always said he'd carry it. This company was—and is—him."

'Bone Thugs-N-Harmony in the desert, a few hours outside of Los Angeles, April 1996. The group's original members recently announced they are reuniting.'

'Eazy-E planted the seed for what you see today with a lot of these indie empires.'

—FELICIA 'POETESS' MORRIS

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RUTHLESS AND RED RENEW SUCCESSFUL DISTRIBUTION PACT

While enjoying its first flush of major success with N.W.A. via distributor Priority, Ruthless Records also mined gold and platinum via other routes. Through an affiliation with Atlantic subsidiary Atco (whose roster included rock act AC/DC), Ruthless released hits by rapper the D.O.C. ("No One Can Do It Better") and singer Michelle ("No More Lies") in 1989 and 1990, respectively. Another Ruthless rap act, Above the Law (1990's platinum album "Livin' Like Hustlers"), was distributed via Epic Records. Then in 1993, Ruthless principals Eazy-E and Jerry Heller signed a distribution pact with Relativity Records.

Serving as Relativity's senior VP/GM was Harry Palmer, who'd formerly worked with the Ruthless executives and artists as executive VP/GM, then president of Atco. Best-known for its roster of heavy metal and rock acts ranging from Exodus and Megadeth to Joe Satriani and Steve Vai, Relativity began moving into the hip-hop arena in the early '90s. Among its first signings: Chicago rapper Common, who released his debut album in 1992.

"While at Atco and then Relativity, Harry saw how urban music was growing," recalls Alan Becker, senior VP of product development at RED, a division of Sony BMG Music. "He thought it would be a great marriage to bring more urban music into the mix.

At that time, Becker was VP of product development at RED. That company was initially launched as the distributor for Relativity (later folded into parent company Sony Music) and the various artists and affiliated labels it brought onboard, including Fat Joe and his Torero Squad label, Tony Draper's Suave House label and Three 6 Mafia and its Hypnotize Minds label.

The first record under the Ruthless/Relativity agreement was Eazy-E's multiple-platinum-selling EP, "It's On (Dr. Dre) 187um Killa." This follow-up to Eazy-E's 1992 EP, "Still Home 4 Tha Sick," was released in October 1993 and debuted at No. 5 on the Billboard 200. Other platinum-selling Ruthless projects issued that year included N.W.A. alum MC Ren's second solo album ("Shock of the Hour") and Above the Law ("Black Mafia Life") plus Blood of Abraham's gold-certified "Future Profits."

But it was Eazy-E's discovery of harmonizing Cleveland rap quintet Bone Thugs-N-Harmony that further cemented the Ruthless/Relativity relationship. Members Krayzie Bone, Layzie Bone, Bizzy Bone, Wish Bone and Flesh-N-Bone burst into national consciousness in 1994 with "Thug Life: Part I," which hit No. 22 on the Billboard Hot 100. The group's debut album, "Creepin' On Ah Come Up," ring up multimillion sales and a Grammy Award nomination. "Groundbreaking acts like N.W.A. and Bone Thugs-N-Harmony really set the tone for the Ruthless approach," Becker says. "The team that Jerry and Eazy-E set up around them rose to the occasion. It was a great team effort in that we challenged each other. But for Eazy-E, the music came first and he kept the bar high. That's the reason why the label has been so successful.

And will continue to be successful, declare Becker and Mitch Dudley, RED national director of urban music sales and marketing. The pair, in tandem with RED president Bob Morelli, is working closely with Eazy-E's widow, Tomica Woods-Wright. In her role as Ruthless president/CEO, Woods-Wright recently celebrated the label's 20th anniversary by reviewing its distribution pact with RED and launching the next phase in the label's history with five new acts: R&B singer Nashy, bilingual (English/Spanish) singer/musician Agina, rapper/songwriter Hopmam, rapper Stievy Stone and dance/party rhyme trio Street Runtz Click.

"These new artists will surprise a lot of people," Dudley says. "Musically, they stay away from the norm. The topics they're rapping about are different as is their musical approach. Tomica doesn't want to just do OK. Considering how powerful the label has been, you don't want to compromise the brand at all. I think she has finally found the artists who could compete at the level that Ruthless has in the past."

Though street dates for physical product haven't yet been finalized, singles by Street Runtz Click, Nashy and Hopmam are available via iTunes. In the meantime, Woods-Wright has remained busy overseeing Ruthless' extensive catalog. Ruthless and RED recently conducted a massive rollout of the entire catalog in the digital and mobile arenas. And, according to Becker, the two companies are exploring T-shirt and other possible merchandising opportunities for the near future. All this comes on the heels of Ruthless' most recent archival release, Bone Thugs-N-Harmony's "THUG S", a 2007 album featuring never-before-issued material.

As for the next 20 years, Becker says he, Dudley and Morelli believe Ruthless will continue to maintain its brand value.

"This isn't just another record label," says Becker, "but one with a major legacy. This label has been part of our history for many years. There is no RED without Ruthless."

— Gail Mitchell

RUTHLESS RECORDS

Congratulations on 20 years of musical success and inspiration.

With Love and Respect,
Jonathan Schwartz, CPA and your team at GSO Business Management
Ruthless Records has had a significant role in shaping hip-hop music during the last 20 years. Founded by Eazy-E in 1987, the label is credited with pioneering the gangsta rap and G-funk movements of the West Coast in the late '80s and early '90s. Its roster included such prominent acts as N.W.A., Bone Thugs-N-Harmony and the Black Eyed Peas—known then as Athan Klann—and Ruthless released celebrated hip-hop albums like Eazy-E's “Eazy-Duz-It” and N.W.A.'s "Straight Outta Compton."

Eazy-E’s widow, Tomica Woods-Wright, is now president/CEO of Ruthless, which is distributed by Sony Music, and the label has signed a number of new acts to continue its legacy.

AGINA ALVAREZ
For an 18-year-old, Agina Alvarez has a long history in entertainment. Born to a musically inclined family (her grandfather is a musician; her mother is a voice/piano teacher), the actress/singer first won a competition at Harlem’s Apollo Theater at age 7. By 10, Alvarez was part of quintet Gimme S and by her early teens she’d landed a role on soap opera “The Young and the Restless.”

Discovered by Woods Wright, Alvarez now is prepping the release of her as-yet-untitled pop/R&B/rock debut album. Due later this year, production team Back Room produced the set, while Alvarez has co-writing credits on most songs. While a single hasn’t been chosen, introductory track “Me” and breakup song “Today” are in contention. Alvarez also plans to release a Spanish version of the album this year. “Ultimately, I hope my music goes global and hits both Spanish- and English-speaking people all over the world,” she says.

STEVIE STONE
As a child, Stevie Stone imagined he’d play professional basketball. But after an impromptu rap performance in 2001, the Columbia, Mo., native opted to ditch his hoop dreams for the mic. The offspring of another musical family (his parents both play the piano), the 26-year-old singer opened for Missouri native Tech9 at a
local club after the scheduled act canceled. "Once I got done with the set, I knew it was what I wanted to do," Stone says. He continued to perform, opening for the likes of Snoop Dogg, Bone Thugs-N-Harmony and Murphy Lee, among others. In 2006, while at Billboard's R&B/Hip-Hop Conference, Stone met Woods-Wright. The following year, he signed with Ruthless. Stone is working on his debut, "New Kid Commin'," scheduled for a late-2008 release. The set features production from Frizz and Wishmaster, among others, and has guest appearances by George Clinton and Tech9. The first single is the reflective "Wait a Minute," which will be serviced to radio in the following months.

STREET RUNNAZ CLICK
Street Runnaz Click may not be a household name—yet—but the Atlanta-based trio is growing an impressive fan base. Not only has the rap collective's MySpace page received more than 300,000 hits and close to 1 million plays so far, MySpace users chose the act as the No. 1 unsigned group in Atlanta for two consecutive years. As if that wasn't enough, Street Runnaz Click is now signed to Ruthless, which scouted the threesome online. The 19-year-old group members—Trillest Beatz, Free Sinatra and J-Riva—are prepping their debut album, "Laughing to the Bank," for release later this year. The set's first single, "Get Low," will be serviced to radio and online music sites this month. Other cuts on the album include summer song "Feel Good" and the title track, about the group's struggle to make it in the music industry. "We bring something totally different to the table," Trillest Beatz says. "People will be pleasantly surprised with what we have to offer."

NA'SHAY
Growing up in Carson, Calif., Na'Shay always knew she'd be a singer. As a toddler, the now 18-year-old would sing along to the likes of Whitney Houston, Mariah Carey and Hi-Five. By age 12, she'd entered and won her first talent show. That same year, she landed her first recording deal with production company Monopoly Music. She spent the next few years recording her debut album and presented her finished work to Ruthless executives. "They said they loved me, my look and my sound and wanted to sign me and put me out as a solo artist," Na'Shay says of the initial meeting. She is due to release "R U Ready" later this year. First single "First to Fall" will be serviced to radio this month, and an accompanying video was filmed during the spring. The title track is set to be the follow-up single.

CONGRATULATIONS
20 YEARS
RUTHLESS RECORDS

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"EASYDUZ IT," EAZY-E
"EazyDuz It" was the debut solo album from rapper Eazy-E, born Eric Lynn Wright, and is considered the first mainstream gangster rap album. Released in 1988, "EazyDuz It" was produced by fellow N.W.A. members Dr. Dre and DJ Yella and has sold 1.1 million copies in the United States since 1991, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The album peaked at No. 12 on Billboard's Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums chart and at No. 41 on the Billboard 200. Eazy-E's last solo release was 1995's "Str8 Off Tha Streetz of Muthaphukkin Compton," which topped the R&B/hip-hop chart. Shortly after, Eazy-E died of AIDS at the age of 31. In 2003, the album was remastered and included an EP titled "$150: Home 4 Tha Sick.

"STRAIGHT OUTTA COMPTON," N.W.A.
"Straight Outta Compton" was the second album by Compton, Calif.-based hip-hop group N.W.A. (Niggaz With Attitude), and like "EazyDuz It," it is considered a pioneering record of gangster rap. Released in 1988, the album—produced by members Dr. Dre and DJ Yella—redefined the direction of hip-hop at the time, shifting powers to the West Coast from the East Coast, which had enjoyed a prominent run for most of the '80s. "Straight Outta Compton" was remastered and rereleased Sept. 24, 2002, and an extended version was released Dec. 4, 2007, the 20th anniversary of the original album. The set has sold 1.5 million copies in the United States since 1991, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

"EFIL4ZAGGIN'," N.W.A.
Released in 1991, "EFIL4ZAGgin" ("Niggaz4Life" spelled backward) was N.W.A.'s fourth and final studio album. It peaked at No. 1 on the Billboard 200, spawning such hit tracks as "Always Into Somethin," "Appetite for Destruction" and "Approach to Danger." The album has sold 2.1 million copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Also noteworthy is that the set features only four members of the original lineup, as Ice Cube had already left the group by 1989. N.W.A. disbanded later in '91 after the departure of Dr. Dre and songwriting/producer D.O.C. In 2003, the album was rereleased in two formats—one featuring the EP "100 Miles and Runnin'" and another with an exclusive DVD.

"CREEPIN ON AH COME UP!, BONE THUGS-N-HARMONY
1994's "Creepin On Ah Come Up" was Cleveland-based Bone Thugs-N-Harmoney's first album under the moniker and is most notably known for introducing the group's fast-paced rapping style and harmonizing vocals. Earlier, the act had released the 1993 independent album "Faces of Death" under the name B.O.N.E. Enterprise. But the group's career only took off after it headed to Los Angeles in search of Eazy-E and signed to Ruthless. The album includes the singles "Thuggish Ruggish Bone" and "Foe Tha Love of 5," featuring Eazy-E, and has sold 2.8 million copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

"NO ONE CAN DO IT BETTER," THE D.O.C.
Dallas-born the D.O.C., aka Tracy Lynn Curry, was an early affiliate of N.W.A. and the Ruthless family. He originally contributed lyrics and vocals to "EazyDuz It" and "Straight Outta Compton," but in 1989 he released his Dr. Dre-produced debut. The album reached No. 1 on Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums and No. 20 on the Billboard 200. Not long after, his vocal cords were severed in a car accident. Although his rap career ended there, the D.O.C. later contributed to Dr. Dre's "The Chronic" and Snoop Dogg's "Doggy Style" debut solo albums. He is rumored to be working on Dr. Dre's upcoming album, "Detox," and a comeback album of his own.

—Marial Concepcion
Tomica:

Congratulations on the anniversary of Ruthless Records and all of your success. We are delighted to be a part of the Ruthless Family.

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RUTHLESS RECORDS

would like to thank the
fans, consumers, record companies,
radio, retailers, trade magazines, and its
fellow music industry peers
for their continued support.
Luis Fonsi looked for songs for 18 months. He looked for them from within, writing like a maniac; he looked for them by writing with others; he listened to whatever was sent his way.

"I wrote some 100-120 songs for this album," Fonsi says of "Palabras del Silencio," due Aug. 26 on Universal Latino. "I listened to 25 songs a day."

The album is Fonsi's seventh studio set and a crucial recording for the 30-year-old Puerto Rican balladeer, who has evolved from romantic teen singer to respected musician with broad appeal and is on the brink of international success.

"He's had an incredibly solid career, taking slow but sure steps," says Universal Music Latin America and Iberian Peninsula chairman/CEO Jesús López, who, in an uncharacteristic move, personally had a hand in the song selection. "I thought it was the right moment for us to work more closely in the A&R. We both felt our joint work could further his musical project."

Early reaction bodes well. First single "No Me Doy Por Vencido," a ballad in 6/8 time that marries ranchera and pop, is No. 6 on Billboard's Hot Latin Songs chart. An acoustic ranchera version, which Fonsi recorded in a different key and arrangement, has helped the track rise with spins on regional Mexican stations.

The song, whose title translates to "I Won't Give Up," is being used by AT&T as part of its Olympic Games campaign on Telemundo and NBC (see story, page 25). Fonsi recorded a new version of the song and video, which will be featured in the TV spot and sold via online downloads and wirelessly for two weeks during the games.

"No Me Doy" also features in a Telemundo ID campaign in Fonsi's native Puerto Rico that kicked off June 16 and runs through August.

Beyond the single, Fonsi is the face of a massive Pepsi campaign in Puerto Rico that will feature his image on 15 million Pepsi bottles and in premiums that will be doled out at fast food clients like Pizza Hut and Kentucky Fried Chicken. There will be point-of-purchase positioning of the campaign at Wal-Mart and other retailers where Pepsi is sold, plus a series of branded events in the coming months.

"Without a doubt, it's the most aggressive and coordinated campaign that we've had for a Fonsi release in his entire career," Universal Music Latino GM Luis Estrada says.

Fonsi's previous album, 2005's "Paso a Paso," has sold nearly 150,000 units in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, and 2 million worldwide, according to Universal, his most successful release to date. Despite the market's current downward turn, Universal's hopes for "Palabras" are much higher, and the album and single are being released simultaneously in 18 countries.

"We feel he's at the best moment of his career," Universal Music Latino president Walter Kolm says. "His job was bringing the darker, brooding single, a contrast to the first in his career where he's either written or co-written every track."

With his last album, Universal began in earnest the task of internationalizing his music, focusing promotion on Mexico and Spain in addition to the United States and Puerto Rico.

In anticipation of "Palabras," the label sought out a major sponsorship opportunity and, last year, Fonsi was spokesman for Perry Ellis cologne in Mexico, with his face appearing on 100 billboards and in print material nationwide for six months.

In a sad twist, Fonsi also expanded his celebrity status when his wife, actress Adelene Lopez, was diagnosed with breast cancer three years ago. The media, infatuated with the cute, grief-stricken couple, closely followed en masse Lopez's treatment and recovery and applauded Fonsi's support.

Certainly, Fonsi's recent experiences have affected his music. "Paso a Paso," recorded during Lopez's treatment, was a darker, brooding single, contrasting with previous, more emanently romantic material. Now, "Palabras" rocks, beginning with "No Me Doy Por Vencido" and its uplifting message of perseverance.

"I'm not a social singer," Fonsi says. "But if one can take a social message via the romantic, that's a strong statement. I'm at a very stable, very happy moment in my life. But I have to search way deeper than that."
Mac Attack

The U.K.'s Other Amy Hits The States

Welcome to the story of a supermiliont British singer/songwriter named Amy that doesn't include even the faintest whiff of tabloid scandal.

Amy Macdonald, from the small Glasgow, Scotland, suburb of Bishopbriggs, has just celebrated a year on the U.K. album chart with her debut set for Mercury/Universal, "This Is the Life."

It's now BPI certified double platinum (600,000 shipments) in her home market, but has an IFPI Platinum Europe certification (1 million shipments) -- despite taking five months to top the U.K. chart and not yet generating a top 10 hit there.

Now, the record with a tail so long it seems to come from an entirely different retail era marches boldly into its second year by taking on America.

Deca will release "This Is the Life" Aug. 19, and it is off to a healthy start with lead track "Mr. Rock & Roll," which is starting to make some noise at triple A radio nationwide.

The album, released last August in the United Kingdom (Billboard, Jan. 5), rose to No. 1 there in January and in recent months has become a major European seller, notably in Holland, Switzerland, Belgium and now Germany.

Macdonald, who turns 21 the week after the U.S. street date, jokes, "Everyone's saying, 'In five years' time you'll have your best of, and it'll be the best of Amy Macdonald's first album,' because when are we going to have time to do anything new?"

But in reality she understands the "sleepier" element is a key ingredient of her success. "It's awesome that [in the United Kingdom] it's a whole year and it's up there with all these new albums," she says. "There was never any hype, and people get a bit sick of being dictated what to listen to."

"If you come out with a bang, the only way you can get is down, but if you come out really unsurprising and build and build, more people want to buy it. It's nice going to all these different stations [in the United States], because the DJs that love the CD all have a feeling of ownership."

Deca label group chairman Chris Roberts acknowledged the unusually slow burn. "This project took months to resonate in Europe, and now it's really breaking there," he says, of the set whose well-crafted pop/rock tracks touch on such contemporaries as KT Tunstall and Coldplay. "We've taken our time to set it up there, and we feel it's very deep with singles." Roberts says Macdonald will return to the States in September to court TV appearances, noting that there is "interest almost everywhere. Deca hopes to cross over "Mr. Rock & Roll" from triple A to hot AC and possibly other formats, and the artist will tour America in the fall.

"This has been a classic 'work' record and an old-fashioned artist development story," Universal Music U.K. senior VP of international marketing Hanss Choudhury says. "We're all very proud of the way Amy's conducted herself, because she can adapt to any scenario and she seems to have caught the imagination of everyone."

Roberts and Choudhury note that Universal now has Australia, Japan and Latin America in its sights for the album, while Mercury is considering extending the U.K. campaign further with a deluxe edition.

Meanwhile, for Macdonald: this is indeed the life, even if it means building from the bottom up again. "In Europe, it felt like I was doing endless interviews and nothing was happening, but over the past month or two things have exploded," she says. "You realize it takes time, and I've done six months ago have paid off."

And in the States? "Fingers crossed, it'll happen."
it on because I was tired. I started thinking, "What a great singer he is." Every time he called me, in the song was his harmony, he recalls.

So Douglas convinced Tritt to join him in the studio for a cover of Paul Brady's "A Marriage Made in Hollywood," and then he felt "Glide" was ready.

But there's only one other vocal track on "Glide." The 11 cuts serve more as a reminder of the many different foils of music Douglas plays, from Mardi Gras-inspired funeral marches to atmospheric, bluegrass-influenced instrumentals.

"I wanted the core of the whole recording process to be the band that I travel with," he says. "I felt that these guys were playing as good as anyone that I could ever hire, and our personalities all align like there's no second-guessing at all."

For his label Koch, Douglas is described as a "musician's musician," and it plans to service "Glide" to bluegrass, Americana and satellite radio, alongside print ad campaigns. "When you incorporate the musicians and vocalists, Jerry has thrown into the mix with these projects you can't help overlap the fan bases," Koch Nashville director of promotion and marketing Chuck Rhodes says. "The best campaign Jerry's fans respond to is seeing him perfect his craft live."

Douglas promises to kick off these residencies in grand fashion, with a slew of guests. "I know all it really means is I get to do four shows in this little theater, however I want to," he says. "But then that little light kicks back on, as he ponders it for a moment. "I want to raise the bar for what to expect from a country artist-in-residency."

QUESTIONS

by KEN TUCKER

1. When you write songs, do you write them with the intention to record them or as a way to express yourself? What started me writing was a way to express myself; to get back at my husband for whatever he was doing. You know, "Take that! I'm a honky-tonk girl!" I didn't even know hardly what a honky-tonk girl was.

2. Did you realize songs like "Fist City" and "The Pill" would be controversial? Not really. I mean, I never took the pill. That's why I've got kids, kids, kids. I never dreamed people would holler about it. But every song that they would holler about would go to No. 1 for me. So I thought, "You know, this is not a bad deal. I'll just write whatever I'm feeling," and that's what I did.

3. You've been inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame and have won many awards through the years. But how does it feel to be recognized specifically for your songwriting? When I was inducted into the [Country] Hall of Fame, that tickled me to death. But this one makes me the proudest.

4. What can you tell us about your new albums? I've been in the studio recording for six months [with John Carter Cash]. I'm cutting all the old hits over and putting down some new ones that I'm writing. Me and Crystal and Peggy, we're getting our songs ready too. I said, "Girls? We need to write three songs for this album for the three of us." I imagine I'll be talking to MCA (about releasing the albums) before I talk to anyone else.

5. What are your thoughts on shows like "American Idol" and "Nashville Star," which give young artists record deals? And how do you think you would have done on a show like that? If there would've been "American Idol," [husband/manager Doolittle Lynn] would've had me on there, because he was the one that got me going. But after he got me started and I was gone so much, he said he wished he would've never gotten me into it because it kind of separated us from being together a lot. I would've probably passed out before I went out, knowing how bashful I was. I could've never done it by myself. But some of them I like. Carrie Underwood—look how great she is. Kelly Clarkson, she's fantastic.

SLOAN RANGERS

With single "Believe in Me" gathering plays at Canadian rock radio, Toronto-based based Sloan heads south in September to play a few West Coast U.S. dates (Sept. 27-Oct. 1). The alt-rock quartet is promoting current album "Parallel Play" (Murdered Records/Sony BMG in Canada; Yep Roc in the United States)—its ninth studio set. With so many albums on the racks and its members nearing the age of 40, singer/guitarist Jay Ferguson reckons the band may finally be growing up.

"Being in a band keeps you young, but we pretty much all have kids and houses," he says. "And the band is like a corner store run by four brothers. It's our business."

Released June 10, the album's title is a psychologist's term referring to the way young children interact while remaining independent of one another—which Ferguson admits also reflects Sloan's working patterns. All four members write songs with little input from their bandmates, convening every year or two to record an album.

"Our way is democratic," Ferguson says. "When you hear a song from one of the other guys and you don't like it, it's like a family—you tolerate it. There's a greater goal here."

Published by Two Minutes for Music, Sloan is booked by Feldman & Associates (Canada) and the Paradigm Agency (United States/Europe).

JEANS ON

Yorkshire, England-based power metal quartet Glamour of the Kill is set for some international exposure courtesy of denim giant Levi's.

Glamour of the Kill has signed a sponsorship deal that will see it featured in online advertising and on a Web site dedicated to the mid-September relaunch of Levi's classic 501 brand. The band, formed 18 months ago, released its self-titled six-track mini-debut album June 25 on London-based metal indieSiege of Amida Records.

"We did a photo shoot to model the jeans and an exclusive acoustic song, "Hope in Hell," for the Web site," bassist/vocalist Davey Death says. "It's been exciting, and it's going to be cool for us to be associated with the brand."

The new 501.com site will identify Glamour of the Kill as the company's "501 He-roes"; it will feature a band profile plus interviews with the members, accessible globally. They will also be named "Ones to Watch" on the official European Levi's Web site (eu.levi.com), which claims a weekly average of 3 million hits.

The group aims to issue the mini-album in the United States later this year; a global label deal is being negotiated. As yet, the band doesn't have a publishing deal; live bookings are handled by its London-based manager Abbie Marshall.

DOUGLAS
The Diplo Way

DJ/Producer Expanding Mini-Empire With Mad Decent

Perhaps the best snapshot of indie label Mad Decent can be provided with a summary of the contents of its blog. Visitors to the site July 23 would find a link to a Miami Bass-centric broadcast on a London pirate radio show, an obituary for Baltimore club DJ K-Swift, information about a Caribbean rave party in the United Kingdom, examples of new merch and a lien for the Mad Decent/Fool’s Gold Central Park SummerStage show, which wound up packing the 5,000-capacity venue. No wonder blogger Paul Devro says that Mad Decent “is more than a label; it’s a movement.”

Like most labels, Mad Decent has a handful of traditional record deals with such artists as Blaqstar and Mz. Streamz. But many of the fledgling label’s contracts are outside the usual models. “We have a lot of EP and single deals as well,” says Mad Decent founder Wesley Pentz, who is known to most in the music community as DJ/producer Diplo. “We just did one with the Crookers, an Italian crew. We have a single deal with Rye Rye, a teenage rapper, but she might be going to intercourse. I don’t know the details, but I do know we’ll be working with her team and doing production no matter what happens.”

Mad Decent has also signed production deals, most recently with DJ Sega, and is also working on promoting him in other markets. “We’re not booking his shows for him, but we’re promoting his shows and we’ll put him on our tours. We take a percentage of his fee and put him on as many shows as we can,” Pentz says. “It’s kind of a twist on the 360 model, even though it’s not a proper 360 deal.”

Announcing a spat of deals with outfits from around the globe is a long way from Mad Decent’s humble beginnings. “I started because I was doing all these bootlegs and I needed a substantial way to get them out,” Pentz says. “I was sick of just putting things on the Internet. One of those bootlegs happened to be ‘Piracy Funnus Terrorism,’ with a then-little known U.K. artist named M.I.A. The attention that bootleg received, along with the growing success of Pentz’s Philadelphia DJ crew Hollertronics, helped catapult him to international prominence.

It was on one of those international journeys that Pentz hooked up with Bonde do Role, Mad Decent’s inaugural signing. “I found those guys in Brazil, and I was like, ‘I’ll make some sort of baile funk that we can market to the rest of the world,’” he says. “That was the first experiment. So we came and I produced the record, worked the show and just kind of developed the band.”

As Mad Decent expanded and Pentz’s world travels increasingly took him far from Philadelphia, he invested in a warehouse space that serves as an office and his crash pad. He also hired a team “of about five” to help him run the company. One member of that crew is Jared Goggins, co-founder of East Village DJ store Turntable Lab, who now serves as Mad Decent’s label manager. Goggins sees his mission as growing Mad Decent from simply being another label to being, as he puts it, “a destination for people who are looking for a certain type of sound and experience.”

“We’re definitely looking to build it into a lifestyle brand,” continues he. “We’ve started working with Mihika, a clothing company, to design some shirts. Because we come from the DJ community, where collaboration is encouraged, we’ve absorbed that into our business model.” Recent collaborations include a partnership with Downtown Records in the United States and Atlantic in the United Kingdom to release a Santogold and Diplo mixtape, which has attracted considerable attention in the blogosphere.

Of course, with mixtapes come all the thorny questions of licenses and clearances, an issue that Goggins would rather sidestep. “I think people get that it’s a huge amount of promo and not a lot in terms of sales,” he says. Pentz concurs, offering an example from his past. “In the old days when I was doing things, I’d get called by Slip-n-Slide Records, Trick Daddy’s label, and I’d be like, ‘Oh shit, I’m going to go to jail.’ And they’d say, ‘Hey, we really like this Trina thing on your mixtape. Can you help figure out how to get that out to more people?’

Doing exactly that is a key component of Mad Decent’s blog and podcast series, which has about 15,000 subscribers. Pentz, who recently finished a documentary on Brazilian funk music, says, “I think that’s kind of what I wanted to do with Mad Decent—whether it’s media, where we’re doing some of our in-house studio work doing production for commercials or incidental music to doing films. The video podcasts we’re doing now are really easy, and they’re garage-y and they’re cool and they’re fun and they’re short. This film will be the first non-album release that we’re doing if I can turn around some money on that, I’m going to invest it straight up in another film project.”

One of Mad Decent’s most recent podcasts detailed its block party, held June 8 across two blocks in North Philadelphia. The label uses Pentz’s DJ gigs and parties thrown by affiliated artists to spread the word about its records and help expose new acts.

Pentz is also devoted to giving back to the international music community. He founded Heaps Decent, a nonprofit that intends to seek out young independent and underprivileged artists and change Australian club music. The program is also working on initiatives in India and Brazil and has received sponsorship funding from Apple, Red Bull and Ableton software. In addition, Heaps Decent will receive a portion of the ticket sales from the upcoming Parklife Festivals throughout Australia.

All the different ventures have added up to a tidy profit for Mad Decent. According to Nielsen SoundScan, none of Mad Decent’s acts has sold more than 5,000 digital tracks, but Pentz does say, “We do a lot of good digital sales; we did good on ‘I Tunes.’

“We’re trying to get some of the smaller places that have been really profitable too, because those are the new mom-and-pop stores,” Pentz says. “Kids go there religiously to check out new things. We do physical sales, and we do a lot of partnerships. We do tons with SummerStage as a sponsor and Red Bull.”

When asked whether Mad Decent would follow in the footsteps of Fool’s Gold, another DJ-founded label that recently signed a joint venture deal with Downtown, Pentz replies, “We’re not thinking about joint ventures right now. We don’t have a five-year plan. This is all new to me, making money. But it’s cool because we’re the first label in the rebirth of the music industry. We saw the whole thing fall down and we’re starting with new rules.”

The Diplo Way

BOY 8 BIT

Latest release: “Suspense Is Killing Me” EP

The nom-de-DJ of London-based 27-year-old David Morris, Boy 8 Bit has remixed everyone from the Black Ghosts to Burial to the South Rakkas Crew. Morris’ melding of influences ranging from mid-’80s computer technology to Baltimore club bangers to the U.K. rave scene has cemented his reputation as one of London’s most formidable DJs.

SOUTH RAKKAS CREW

Latest release: “Mix Up”

Orlando, Fla.-based duo Dow Jones and Alex G have established themselves as the kings of the dancehall scene, although they work hip-hop and soca samples into many of their tracks. They’ve also provided remixes for superstars like Duran Duran, DJ Shadow, Lily Allen and Justin Timberlake.

DJ BLAQSTAR

Latest release: “King of Rop”

Blaqstar is widely known and respected throughout the Baltimore club scene, but his alliance with Mad Decent has helped propel him toward national prominence. Much of the music sounds like standard hip-hop fare but sped up to Alvin & the Chipmunks speed; it’s fast, furious and dirty.

BONDE DO ROLE

Latest release: “With Lasers”

The Brazilian foursome layers baile funk over samples of American hits and tops it all off with amusingly profane lyrics. The first real Mad Decent signing, Bonde Do Role had a huge run of successful licensing tracks to Nokia, “Ugly Betty” and Australian underwear brand Bonds. While there have been some humps along the road (former singer Marina Ribatski shattered her elbow playing at the 2006 Pitchfork fest and subsequently left the band this year), Bonde persevered, even hosting a reality show to find a new frontwoman. Mad Decent has licensed the record to Domino in some territories.

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IT’S A MAD, MAD, MAD, MAD WORLD

Four Mad Decent Acts That Embody The Label’s Genre-Crossing, Globe-Hopping Spirit

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ALBUMS

ROCK

CONOR OBERST
Conor Oberst
Producer: Conor Oberst
Marge
Release Date: Aug. 5

For the first time in 13 years, indie idol Conor Oberst has tucked his Bright Eyes moniker to release a solo album under his given name. The self-titled set was recorded in Teopoztlan, Mexico, a center of bizarre happenings and Aztec magic. But despite the foreign climes, “Conor Oberst” doesn’t sound much different from any of Bright Eyes’ acoustic material, except that it is lacking in the bare honesty of his earlier albums. Country-infused tracks like the honky-tonk “I Don’t Want to Die in the Hospital” and the Dylan-esque “Get-Well-Cards” are perfectly pleasant, but the slow, finger-picked closer “Milk Thistle” is a real highlight, as its early-American simplicity seems to connect with Oberst. It’s a reminder of the depth he’s capable of but doesn’t quite deliver here. —JW

CARRIE RODRIGUEZ
She Ain’t Me
Producer: Malcolm Burn
Manhattan/Back Porch
Release Date: Aug. 5

With 2006’s “Seven Angels on a Bicycle,” Carrie Rodriguez graduated from progren status by convincingly stepping outside the tutelage of mentor Chip Taylor. On “She Ain’t Me” she continues to strive forward in creating her own oeuvre with an engaging set of lushly arranged songs. Rodriguez starts things rootsy, textured and topical with the prototypically Americana “Infinite Night,” while such tracks as “Absence” and the gentle “The Big Mistake” have more pronounced country touches. She gets by with more than a little help from friends this time out, including Lucinda Williams’ singing on the epic “Mask of Moses” and songwriting collaborators Gary Louris, Dan Wilson and Mary Gauthier. None of that takes the spotlight off of her, however; Rodriguez is a triple-threat artist who sounds more formidable with each successive release — GG

RANDY NEWMAN
Harp and Angels
Producers: Mitchell Froom, Lenny Waronker
Nonesuch
Release Date: Aug. 5

Randy Newman’s shock-and-aw-shucks wit is so joyfully scathing at times on “Harp and Angels” that it’s hard to believe it’s been nine years since his last album of new material. The sarcastic advice to undocumented immigrants, “Laugh and Be Happy,” is cleav- erly camouflaged by a giddy orchestra arrangement right out of Carl Stalling’s Warner Bros. cartoon play- book. “Korean Parents” also features this big orchestra and a comic critique of public education and family responsibility in the Wil era. In “A Few Words in Defense of Our Country,” Newman assays the current leaders in his Iaconic, bluesy drawl, “While they’re the worst that we’ve had/aren’t hardly the worst this poor world has seen.” Amid the satirical splendor and win- ning New Orleans piano and Dixieland swing are moments of poignancy, among them two love songs, “Losing You” and “Feels Like Home,” that should keep accruing royalties from covers long after the sun sets on our empire. —WR

LOVE AS LAUGHER
Holy
Producer: Joe Blaney
Glacial Pace
Release Date: June 24

After moving from Sub Pop to Isaac Brock’s imprint Glacial Pace, Love As Laughter tightens things up a bit here with the help of Clash producer Joe Blaney. The title track, fol- lowed by the mellow, lazy-day groove of “Crosseyed Beautiful Youngunz,” start things off on a low-key note before the album veers into ’90s alt-rock territory (“Paul Revere”), bongo-assisted Afro pop (the Paul Simon-esque “All Parts of Me”) and rambling Americana (the appeal-to-the-everyman “Cleaning Man”). While the middle tracks tend to get lost in the shuffle, fans of Brock’s Modest Mouse will be drawn to the horn-infected swagger of “Bonnie and Clyde” and the stretched-out jam of album highlight “Kenny and Jim.” —JM

COUNTRY

JAMEY JOHNSON
That Lonesome Song
Producers: Jamey Johnson, the Kent Hardly Playboys
Mercury Nashville
Release Date: Aug. 5

To listen to Jamey Johnson’s latest is to take a step back in time. More Waylon and Willie thanascal Flattts and Carl Under-wood, “That Lonesome Song” is a testament to raw and real, right down to open studio mics catching stray commentary and static from a bad input. First single “In Color” is a touching look at the world through his grand- father’s eyes. “Mary Go Round,” a stunning Waltz, is a heartfelt plea for a woman to mend her ways. A modern outlaw in a world domi- nations by music for soccer moms, Johnson pays au- thentic homage to a brother, a man in arms by covering Jen- nings’ “Dreamin’ My Dreams With You” and “The Door Is Always Open.” Fitly, “The Last Cowboy” is an engag- ing but mournful take on days gone by. —KT

ELECTRONIC

THE FAINT
Fascination
Producer: The Faint
Blank-ray
Release Date: Aug. 5

If there’s one area where the Faint has re- mained fairly consistent, it’s in the ability to make even the shiestest of light-jeaned hipsters haul ass to the dancefloor. 2004’s “Wet From Birth” saw the band stray slightly from its obvi- ous new-wave formula in favor of electronica ele- ments and post-punk flair. The self-released “Fascinati- on” distances itself further. The synths and keyboards don’t so much soar as they bend and warp in and out, computerized-sounding blips and vocals highlight the album’s electronic edge. It’s complex and distorted, but at times it’s not clear why the group’s energy is purposely restrained. Lyrical- ly, froman Todd Fink ex- amines America’s current state of affairs by tackling celebrity culture (“Get Se- duced”) and, once again, birth (“Fish in a Womb”). It’s an interesting change of pace, but the dancefloor sure looks lonely. —JW

ONE DAY AS A LION
One Day As a Lion
Producer: Robert Carranza
Anti
Release Date: July 22

A new Los Angeles-based duo featuring Rap Against the Machine frontman Zack de la Rocha and former Mars Volta member Jon Theodore, One Day As a Lion kicks up a tough-minded rap-rock ratchet on its debut EP. The music is stripped-down but robust, with de la Rocha on vocals and keyboard and Theodore on drums. There’s no guitarist, but bassist in One Day As a Lion, but you wouldn’t necessarily know it from the sound of these five tracks, which throb with fuzz and groove. On opener “Wild International” de la Rocha describes his tongue as being “dipped in funk arsenic,” and that gives you an idea of his obstreperous lyrical focus of here. (Let’s just say he hasn’t warmed up to the Bush administration since Rage started playing shows again last year). A bracing introduction. —MW

ALSO RECOMMENDED FOR REVIEW:

DID JON FOSTER JUST MESS WITH DEANA's HEART?

DID JON FOSTER JUST MESS WITH DEANA's HEART?

DID JON FOSTER JUST MESS WITH DEANA's HEART?
LUCY WOODWARD Slow Recovery (4:36)
Producer: Tim Kvesnosky
Writer(s): L. Woodard
J. Michael, S. Brawley
Publishers: Diesel Liesel
Warner/Chappell/Little Big
Guy/Wishart Songs, BMI
Barnes & Noole

LUCY Woodward grazes
top 40 in 2003 with
Avril-lite "Dumb Girls" and
wrote Stacie Oricio's charming
2005 tune "(There's Got-
na Be) More To Life." The 28-
year-old has regrouped with
"Lucy Woodward . . . Is Hot
And Bothered," a sonic turn-
stile that flips through
dreamy pop, jazz and bluesy
beep, distributed exclu-
sively by Barnes & Noble.
First single "Slow Recovery"
lovingly revisits '60s Britpop,
with a cool finger-snap
rhythm, stings of strings
and percussive snaps, and a
performance that fosters an
image of the vocalist cling-
ing to the mic stand with one
hand, glass of champagne in
the other and a faraway look
in her eyes, toying sensu-
ously with her audience.
This album boasts staggering
versatility as Woodward
transitions to new wave-
"Sub Love," Shirley Bassey-
esque "Love Is Gone" and
torchy "I Won't Care." Lucy's
a ball, equally appreciable
for fans of melodic singing
baubles and highbrow af-
cionados of finely honed
musical composition.—CT

The first official single
from L. Cool J's 13th studio
album, "Exit "—
marking 20 years with Del
Jam—shows the enduring
rapper staying close to
familiar themes: enjoying
the company of ladies. While
L. Cool J has never been
lucky in love, with suc-
cess with slow come-ons and
harder posturing, he goes for
the smooth approach here.
Over a snappy summer
groove, he playfully rhymes
about meeting a girl and sub-
sequent attempts to woo her.
With a mixture of name-
dropping as "Shaggy, if a
man that could give her a
break, like Usher or Justin
Timberlake") and slightly
naughty innuendo ("I'm re-
ally not sure if her breasts are
fake/Cause with whipped
cream on 'em, they taste just
like cake"), the king of Cool
aims for—and succeeds
with—a tasty, hearty helping of
summer jam.—JHM

KARDINAL
OFFSHALT
FEATURING AKON
Dangerous (4:12)
Producer: DJ keno, HAZEL
Writer: J. Harmon, A. Thiam
Publishers: not listed
Kan Live/Geffen/Black Jays
With a distinct, pow-
ervolent voice and spiting
clarity similar to that of
Ludacris and Busta Rhymes,
Kardinal Offshalt is making
a name for himself (with
clever poetic license). Com-
bining elements of dance-
hall, reggae and hip-hop
with lyrical content that
kernels to the millen-
ium "Poison" (as in Bell
Biv Devoe), the rising club
banger will continue to
strike past anything that
gets in its way.—NM

MATT ZARLEY Here I Am (3:59)
Producer: Andy Zula
Writer: M. Zarley, C. Curtis
Publisher: not listed
Zarley.com
Matt Zarley began his career at 12, busting a move with
Tony the Tiger in a Frosted Flakes commercial, then
roared across Broadway in "A Chorus Line," "The Kiss
of the Spider Woman," "Chicago" and numerous
other productions. He's also been named one of
People's 50 Most Eligible Bachelors. So Mr. Z single
dances, acts and possesses grrr-dreamy appeal. Now
toss in a beautifully produced EP of power pop tunes,
and a marquee mainstream artist is born. Emphasis
track "Had I Known" is a consummate power ballad,
showcasing a lamenting lyric and fully-bodied key-
boards, strings and instrumental hooks galore—but
more so, Zarley's stunning tenor range, crafty har-
monic layers and spine-tingling money notes.
Reminiscent of Nick Lachey, there's more: Utempo
"Where Did You Come From," finger-snappeing groo-
ve "Deep Inside" and romantic love tone "Here I Am"
are so deftly veined. Writers C. Elgidos to
swoon over. Here's a crush for grown-ups, whose
earthly machismo is quite the complement to his
musical muscle.—CT

ROCK
BUCKCHERRY Too Drunk . . . (4:03)
Producer: Marty
Frederiksen, Keith Nelson
Writer: J. Todd, K. Nelson,
S. Dacany
Publishers: Cash and Carry/
Lick the Star/Chiva, ASCAP
10th Street Entertainment
Buckcherry, having
first hit pay dirt with
cocaine anthem "Lit Up" in
1999, returns to the party
scene of the crime with
"Too Drunk . . ." It's another
song about a parent's worst
nightmare: a rock group
fallowing in getting wasted
nightly and prowling for
sex. Buckcherry takes the
most basic blues rock
structure and leaves it bare,
for the song is all about vul-
gar language that will re-
quite a lot of beeping be-
fore the song gets on-air.
Singer Josh Todd makes like
a rock star pimp with the
prize-winning, laugh-
out-loud lyric, "I got so
many women comin' at me/I put some pussy on
layaway." But that's all for
naught when he professes
that he's gotten "too drunk
to fuck" if the song doesn't
permeate beach bars be-
fore the summer ends, it's
a ready-made evergreen that
can be worked to the first
crowd at the start of the
school year.—CLT

PHOTOGRAPHS
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BOB KATZ

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10003) or to the writers in
the appropriate bureaus.
**Small Town, Big Jump**

*Saving Abel Soars Onto Billboard 200 As Radio Tunes In*

There are worse places to be than atop Billboard’s Heatseekers chart. But after spending 18 weeks there, including five consecutive weeks at No. 1, Mississippi-based rock act Saving Abel’s self-titled Capitol debut made the jump to the top half of the Billboard 200 last week, bowing at No. 98.

For the week ending July 20, the album sold 7,000 copies, up 10% from the previous week. Since its release in March, the album has moved nearly 94,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. This week, it slides slightly to No. 102 after shifting more than 6,000 units.

Co-managers Rick Smith and Scott Frazier discovered Saving Abel last year on MySpace and immediately stopped the single “Addicted” to Virgin CEO Jason Flory, who signed the band to a 360 deal.

Frazier released the album in March, and sales have steadily climbed as “Addicted” gained steam at radio. The song is spending its fourth week in the top 10 on the Modern Rock chart (No. 9 this week) and is also No. 73 on the Billboard Hot 100. Digital sales are at 228,000.

According to frontman Jared Weeks, “Addicted” was the inspiration for the band’s hard-hitting, dirty sound. “We originally sounded like the Wallflowers meets the Black Crowes,” he says. “After we recorded ‘Addicted,’ we ended up changing into something more aggressive and raw.”

Saving Abel has paired with Denny for the “All Nighter” promotion, which gives fans in select cities the opportunity to enjoy a late-night meal with the band. Also in the works is an appearance in a videogame “MotorStorm: Pacific Rift,” which will feature the track “New Tattoo.”

Smith says these carefully chosen promotions help the band connect with its target audience. “We just got an offer to headline a NASCAR race,” he says. “That is our audience. Our people work hard and play hard.”

At a time when digital sales are becoming a greater percentage of overall album commerce, 85% of sales for “Saving Abel” have been physical. A statistic Smith attributes to the characteristics of the band’s fan base. “Our fans don’t have high-speed Internet access, so they’re buying it,” he says. “We’re seeing huge sales from Wal-Mart, which show that our areas may not have a Best Buy.”

Indeed, according to SoundScan, the South Central region (Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas) accounts for 25% of the album’s sales.

For now, the focus is keeping the band on the road and the album in the top half of the Billboard 200. In addition to a summer tour with Puddle of Mudd, the band will hit the road with Buckcherry, Shinedown and Avenged Sevenfold in mid-September. Weeks is excited about the opportunity to reach new fans and hone the band’s live show.

“We want to learn from these guys because they’re obviously doing something right,” he says. “The band and management have been amazed by the response to the album, yet both admit there is much work to be done.”

Still, the results are impressive for a band from a Southern town with a population of just slightly more than 14,000.

“This really is the little band that could,” Frazier says. “People back home don’t believe a band from Corinth, Miss., could ever make it, but they are.”

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**BRINGIN’ IT ALL BACK HOME**

George Thorogood is returning to his recording home, Rounder Records, for his next album, a sequel to sorts to his 1978 gold-certified “Move It On Over.”

“We’re trying to get something like that but even better,” says Thorogood, who plans to hit the studio in September or October, after wrapping his summer tour with Buddy Guy Aug. 24. The set should be out in 2009.

The artist had recorded for Eagle Rock since 2003; his last album for the label, 2006’s “The Hard Stuff,” reached No. 2 on Billboard’s Top Blues Albums chart.

Thorogood says that like “Move It On Over,” the new album will feature all cover songs derived from his influences. “I want to balance it between what I know best—rock, country and blues,” the rock veteran says.

“That’s what [“Move It On Over”] was—songs by Hank Williams, Johnny Cash, Brownie McGhee, Chuck Berry, Slim Harpo, Willie Dixon, we covered it all. I don’t know anything about jazz or reggae or classical music, but I do know hard-core blues, that kind of thing, hardcore country, the real tough stuff like Waylon Jennings used to sing.”

Thorogood isn’t revealing titles yet but he says that “we’ve got a few [songs] we’re kicking around that might ring the bell.” He’s not planning to include any originals, primarily because the success of “Move It On Over” proved that an album of cover material could attract an audience.

“In the ’70s, I had a lot of people come and say, ‘You don’t make it unless you write your own stuff.’” Thorogood recalls. “Wrong. You can make a good record of songs you like, as long as the songs are very good and you play them really good. ‘Move It On Over’ was a gold record without major distribution—that ought to tell you something. Maybe we can make history happen again.”

—Gary Graff
No Birthday Blues

Buddy Guy Celebrates 72 With Best Sales Week Ever

Legendary blues guitarist Buddy Guy received a welcome and somewhat unexpected 72nd birthday present July 9—the highest charting album of his career.

Guy's latest set, "Skin Deep," bowa this issue at No. 68 on the Billboard 200, selling nearly 9,000 copies. Besides a peak chart debut, it's also the best sales week he's had since Nielsen SoundScan began tracking data in 1991.

Zomba Label Group senior director of marketing Dan Mackta says the label forecast sales of about 7,500 for the album's first week. "We exceeded it—that rarely happens these days," he says.

For Guy, it was a triumph atop the victory of just making the album, his first to feature all new material, including six co-written by the artist and one written entirely by himself. "I've been fighting for that for ever since I came to Chicago from his native Louisiana in 1957 and begun recording for Chess Records. Guy says: "People always had songs by other people they wanted me to record and whatever. I had to talk my butt off to do this—just give me a chance to do something..."

"They finally gave me a chance, and I want to do well so they'll let me do it again."

Produced by Tom Hambridge and featuring guest appearances by Eric Clapton, Robert Randolph, Derek Trucks and Susan Tedeschi, "Skin Deep" enjoyed a bit of setup thanks to Guy's famous fans. His profile was certainly raised by his participation in Clapton's second Crossroads Guitar Festival in 2007, which was filmed and aired frequently on PBS outlets. He also enjoyed a featured role—which some think stole the show—in this year's Rolling Stones concert film "Shine a Light."

Mackta says those reminders of Guy's legendary status "opened some doors. We were able to get that exposure going into the album release."

With a "pretty straightforward" release strategy—"no music video, no fancy EPK, digital tools, anything like that," according to Mackta—Zomba relied on a more conventional means to expose the album. Radio, namely the triple A format, responded well and Mackta says, "exceed our expectations in terms of quantity and quality of stations behind it, definitely more than any of his stuff has done outside of blues specialty radio."

The title track, which is also the album's first single, is being played on 26 reporting stations, while Mackta notes that "some stations that aren't playing 'Skin Deep' picked other album tracks."

Mackta also credits favorable reviews, particularly in such mainstream press outlets as People and Newsweek, with driving interest. There was also an Internet marketing for "Skin Deep," too, mostly "targeted online advertising" to any user searching for general blues content.

In the audience a strong start, Mackta says Zomba plans on "doubling down" what's already been working. The label is aggressively counting more radio play and lining up appearances for Guy on "high-end, syndicated radio" programs, including in-studio appearances with supportive stations. The company will also push the album in markets where Guy is performing during his summer tour with George Thorogood.

"Sometimes if you make a real good record, they want to play it," Guy says of the early success. "I was hoping I would hit the right notes so it could open the door, and I'm getting some good vibes. That's pretty good after all these years."

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BIGGER BUZZ

With a year's worth of groundwork laid by Suretone's Jordan Schur, Shwayze explodes on the charts this week in tandem with the July 23 premiere of "Buzzin'" in the MTV reality show about the artist and his entourage. The track "Corona and Lime" sells more than 74,000 downloads this week, according to Nielsen SoundScan, good enough for Hot Shot Debut status on the Billboard Hot 100 at No. 26. Meanwhile, "Buzzin'" soars 93-46 on the Hot 100 with download sales of $5,000. On Hot Digital Songs, the tracks are No. 10 and No. 18, respectively, Schur told Billboard in March that "Shwayze has been incubated in the clubs. That's a direct result of us working for the last year, feeding the clubs, touring, hitting markets three times, four times." He said at the time that Interscope was extremely anxious to get an album out more sooner than later, but he was able to hold it off for an Aug. 19 release for Shwayze's self-titled debut. Interest has been further stoked by the buzzin.mtv.com microsite, which features performances of songs from the debut. —Jonathan Cohen

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HEARING IS BELIEVING

Jimmy Wayne owes a strong song sense and an open-minded label president for his first top 10 airplay single in four years. "Do You Believe Me Now," the title cut from his Aug. 26 album (Valory Music), is No. 9 on Billboard's Hot Country Songs this week.

Initially signed by Scott Borchetta when he was a senior executive at now-defunct DreamWorks Nashville, Wayne's 2003 self-titled debut shifted 439,000 units, according to Nielsen SoundScan, and spawned four top 20 airplay singles.

When the label was absorbed by Universal Music Group Nashville in 2005, Wayne asked out of his deal and called Borchetta, who had also left to launch Big Machine Records. "He said, 'Come home,' " Wayne recalls.

But Wayne's first Big Machine single, "That's All I Ever Needed," peaked at only No. 50 on Hot Country Songs. Later shifted to Borchetta's new Valory Music, Wayne set about putting together an album, but he wasn't satisfied that it was complete. When he found "Do You Believe Me Now" he took it to Borchetta. "He had to go to a meeting and he called me back in 30 minutes and said, 'Jimmy, that song will be your first single."

"This is a different kind of success," Borchetta says. "Jimmy could have gone away, and the saddest thing for any artist is that he wouldn't have been missed. We had to come with something life-changing."

Country KMLE Phoenix music director Gwen Foster says that despite her initial misgivings about the tune, it's getting "great reaction" from the audience. "We weren't big fans of the song initially. The production on this song is very different from Jimmy's past releases, and I thought it was overdone. When we did start playing it, KMLE listeners responded to it quickly. The production makes it stand out."

While his first album was a little heavier on ballads, Wayne says he consciously changed his approach for the new set, which includes a duet with Patty Loveless and an appearance by John Oates. "I knew I needed tempo because the show I was playing. It is kind of hard to play four ballads in a row at a fair," he says. "But the main focus was and has always been the best songs I could." —Ken Tucker
Cyrus Out Of Character With Non-'Hannah' No. 1

The ink had not even dried on the billboard 200 that showed Miley Cyrus’ “Breakout” starting at No. 1 when a story on “Today” seemed to set the stage for the teen star to leave Disney Channel lenticular “Hannah Montana” at some point in the foreseeable future.

Promoted as her first album outside the “Hannah” franchise—thus the title, get it?—Cyrus’ set begins in chart life with an opener of 371,000 copies. That beats the biggest weeks established by either of her show’s first two soundtracks.

The first “Hannah” soundtrack, released Oct. 17, 2006, ticked through 281,000 units in its opening frame on its way to becoming the best-selling album of that year’s fourth quarter. Its largest frame, 349,000 copies, happened during Christmas week.

Last year, follow-up “Hannah Montana 2/Meet Miley Cyrus”—which began to set up the actress’ identity as a recording artist—pulled its largest weekly total in its very first week, $325,000, when it reached stores.

Press that proceeded the release of “Breakout,” and even a comment Cyrus shared with NBC’s David Gregory during a June 25 release-week performance on “Today,” carefully positioned this album as her own recording, rather than a manifestation of “Hannah Montana.” Then on July 30, the day Nielsen SoundScan confirmed her chart-topping status, the “Today” story solved seeds for her eventual departure from “Hannah,” even as it confirmed that cameras are rolling for the series’ next season.

Aside from the Wal-Mart-exclusive “Best of Both Worlds Concert,” which bowed at No. 10 in March, Cyrus began her career with three straight No. 1 debuts, putting her in rare company. Alicia Keys is four-for-four on that score. Britney Spears also began with four straight No. 1 bows, and rapper DMX is the only performer in Billboard 200 history to do that with each of his first five charting titles.

While Cyrus and Disney Music Group are clearly setting the stage for life after “Hannah,” she would be well advised not to rush that exit from the show. Despite the careful efforts this time to distinguish the singer from the character she plays, Cyrus fans clearly associate her with the show. And, given the premise of the “Hannah” series—high school kid by day, pop star at night—that differentiation might be too fine a line to draw. Considering the ultra short shelf life teen-driven sensations typically experience, as well as the fast fade that confronted father/“Hannah” co-star Billy Ray Cyrus after his rookie album went nine-times platinum, she might consider how fleeting fame can be.

Disney alums like Justin Timberlake and Christina Aguilera managed to transition from young pop stars to bona fide success as adults, but those are exceptions to the rule. Just ask Fabian, Gary Lewis & the Playboys or New Kids on the Block.

SO SPECIAL: Although not completely unchartered waters, Sugarland has taken the unusual route of releasing a special edition in advance of an album’s standard release. Applause to the act and to Universal Music Nashville for putting the extra content out front, instead of releasing the enhanced package months after thousands of fans already purchased the standard offering.

The deluxe edition of “Love on the Inside” rings 114,000, exceeding the duo’s previous best sales week by more than 100,000 copies. This is only the second time in 2008—and the first frame since Coldplay’s “Viva La Vida or Death and All His Friends” replaced Lil Wayne’s “Tha Carter III” in the July issue—that each of the Billboard 200’s top two albums surpass 100,000 copies.

July 29 saw the release of Sugarland’s standard “Inside” package, sans the bonus tracks. Sales of those two versions will be combined on next week’s charts.

In 2002, U2’s “The Best of 1990-2000 & B-Sides” arrived with an extra CD of content a week before the basic “The Best of 1990-2000” hit stores. The added content version started with 185,000 copies, while the basic version moved no more than 64,000 in its fattest week. But, in the long run, the cheaper and shorter U2 set outsold the limited edition by 55%, 864,000 to 558,000.

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### Market Watch

#### Weekly Unit Sales

**Weekly National Music Sales Reports**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>ALBUMS</th>
<th>DIGITAL ALBUM*</th>
<th>DIGITAL TRACKS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>This Week</td>
<td>7,844,000</td>
<td>127,000,000</td>
<td>20,068,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Week</td>
<td>7,482,000</td>
<td>120,000,000</td>
<td>19,851,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Change</td>
<td>362,000</td>
<td>7,000,000</td>
<td>1,270,000</td>
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<td>This Week vs Last Week</td>
<td>7,973,000</td>
<td>873,000</td>
<td>15,138,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Change</td>
<td>-1.6%</td>
<td>45.5%</td>
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*Digital album sales are calculated within album sales.

#### Weekly Album Sales (Million Units)

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<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
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<tr>
<td>CD</td>
<td>235,076,000</td>
<td>197,336,000</td>
<td>161,600,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Digital</td>
<td>27,121,000</td>
<td>36,490,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cassette</td>
<td>197,000</td>
<td>56,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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**Digital Tracks Sales**

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<td>477.2 million</td>
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<tr>
<td>'08</td>
<td>621.9 million</td>
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**SALES BY ALBUM FORMAT**

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<tr>
<td>CD</td>
<td>235,076,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital</td>
<td>27,121,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassette</td>
<td>197,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>581,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**YEAR-TO-DATE SALES BY ALBUM CATEGORY**

| Current | 157,399,000 | 132,587,000 | +15.6% |
| Catalog | 105,534,000 | 102,077,000 | -3.4% |
| Deep Catalog | 74,453,000 | 71,788,000 | -2.2% |

**CURRENT ALBUM SALES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>&quot;The Year That Was&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;07</td>
<td>617.4 million</td>
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<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>&quot;500 Miles&quot;</td>
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**CATALOG ALBUM SALES**

<table>
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<th>2008</th>
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<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>&quot;105.6 million&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;07</td>
<td>105.6 million</td>
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<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>&quot;103.2 million&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;08</td>
<td>103.2 million</td>
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*Note: SoundScan reports on current only sales after the first six months of a current album's chart run (as reported by American Alliance of Independent Music). Title sales may be affected by connections to Social Media and other music-focused sites. It is also possible that sales or numbers are listed. Deep catalog is a subset of catalog for 2008 or more than 12 months.
### Top 200 Albums Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Sales</th>
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<th>Chart Data</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>MILEY CYRUS</td>
<td>Breakout</td>
<td>45,000</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>SUGARLAND</td>
<td>Love On The Inside: Deluxe Fan Edition</td>
<td>42,000</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>MARIAH CAREY</td>
<td>Number One Hits</td>
<td>41,000</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>JAMES BAY</td>
<td>Chaos And The Calm</td>
<td>39,000</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>TRAVIS Tritt</td>
<td>Live From Nashville: Reunion At The Ryman</td>
<td>37,000</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>YOUNG THUG</td>
<td>Jeffery</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>TAYLOR SWIFT</td>
<td>Evermore</td>
<td>33,000</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>RICK ROSS</td>
<td>Rich The Album: ZDS</td>
<td>31,000</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>LIL WAYNE</td>
<td>Tha Carter IV</td>
<td>29,000</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>LIL' wayne</td>
<td>Tha Carter III</td>
<td>27,000</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>NAS</td>
<td>Untitled</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>SHONTAE</td>
<td>Woman Thou Art Loosed</td>
<td>23,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>SUGARLAND</td>
<td>Baby's First Christmas</td>
<td>21,000</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>TAYLOR SWIFT</td>
<td>RED</td>
<td>19,000</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>KATY PERRY</td>
<td>One Of The Boys</td>
<td>17,000</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>JONAS BROTHERS</td>
<td>futures</td>
<td>15,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>JOHN MELLENCAMP</td>
<td>Life Death Love And Freedom</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>DISTURBED</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>RUSSEL HARRIS</td>
<td>Here I Stand</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>LEONA LEWIS</td>
<td>Spirit</td>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** The set continues to be available as a free download via the band's website, the physical version — limited to 250,000 CDs globally — bows with 29,000.

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**Latest Artistic Commentary:**

**THE CLASSIC CRIME**

*While the set continues to be available as a free download via the band's website, the physical version — limited to 250,000 CDs globally — bows with 29,000.*

**THE AVETT BROTHERS**

*The latest act to grace the cover of Billboard, the band already has a hit with its new album, "The Carpenter," which debuts at No. 1 on the chart with 11,000.*

**KID ROCK**

*The band's baby recording its major-label debut with Rick Rubin. In the meantime, this EP starts with the art's best sales frame yet (1,000).*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Label</th>
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<td>Just Like You</td>
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<td>NOW</td>
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<td>Al Green</td>
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<td>ENRIQUE IGLEZAS</td>
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<td>JAMES TAYLOR</td>
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The show generated news July 27 at its now star, Fatboy. The show was announced as the only one of its reality show format. She made her Broadway debut two days later.

After a three-part, multi-day interview on "Good Morning America," this single set the others with a 50% gain. His world tour starts Aug. 25 in London.

The concert performance of "Halfway There" by 's Marley with a 10% increase.

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### TOP BLUES ALBUMS

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### EXCLUSIVE CHARTS FROM BILLBOARD.BIZ

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**Buddy’s BIG NEW**

Blues legend Buddy Guy earns his highest-charting album on the Billboard 200 as “Skin Deep” enters at No. 68 with nearly 9,000. That’s also his best sales week since Nielsen SoundScan began tracking data in 1991.

“Skin Deep”—boasting such guests stars as Eric Clapton, Robert Randolph, Susan Tedeschi and Derek Trucks—carried a sale tag of $9.99 at Best Buy last week and was featured in the retailer’s circular. Perhaps unsurprisingly, 58% of the album’s first-week sales came from physical retailers. On the digital side, 16% of the album’s opening frame was from downloads, no doubt aided by the set’s visible placement in the iTunes Store last week.

“Skin Deep” also gives Guy his second No. 1 on the Top Blues Album chart. While he’s placed nine titles on the Blues tally in his career, his only other No. 1 came with 2001’s “Sweet Tea.”

—Keith Caulfield
HOT 100 AIRPLAY

Title | Artist | Week No. | Airplay
--- | --- | --- | ---
Kissed A Girl | Jonas Brothers | 39 | 1
13 | 2
Forever | John Mayer | 32 | 2
I'm Yours | John Mayer | 32 | 3
Secret Love | John Mayer | 32 | 4
Your Body | Yung Berg | 32 | 5

HOT DIGITAL SONGS

Title | Artist | Week No. | Digital
--- | --- | --- | ---
Kissed A Girl | Jonas Brothers | 39 | 1
13 | 2
Secret Love | John Mayer | 32 | 3
Your Body | Yung Berg | 32 | 4
Your Body | Yung Berg | 32 | 5

SINGLES CHARTS

Radio Airplay Singles Chart

Hot 100 Airplay

HOT 100 Digital Sales

ALBUM CHARTS

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

ALBUMS

Week #18

Radio Airplay Singles Chart

Hot 100 Airplay

HOT 100 Digital Sales
### HOT COUNTRY SONGS

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<td>13</td>
<td>Girl Next Door</td>
<td>Amanda Shaw</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Another Man</td>
<td>Donohue</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Another Man</td>
<td>Donohue</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
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<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Another Man</td>
<td>Donohue</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TOP COUNTRY ALBUMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Peak Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Taylor Swift</td>
<td>Beautiful Eyes (EP)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Taylor Swift</td>
<td>Beautiful Eyes (EP)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Toby Keith</td>
<td>35 Biggest Hits</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Enjoy The Ride</td>
<td>Enjoy The Ride</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Good Time</td>
<td>Good Time</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Around The Bend</td>
<td>Around The Bend</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Carnival Ride</td>
<td>Carnival Ride</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Just Who I Am: Peats &amp; Prates</td>
<td>Just Who I Am: Peats &amp; Prates</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The Ultimate Hits</td>
<td>The Ultimate Hits</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Crazy Ex Girlfriend</td>
<td>Crazy Ex Girlfriend</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Troubadour</td>
<td>Troubadour</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Still Feels Good</td>
<td>Still Feels Good</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Love On The Inside</td>
<td>Love On The Inside</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** This table represents the top country songs and albums based on sales, streaming, and radio airplay. The numbers indicate the peak position on the charts.
## HOT CHRISTIAN ALBUMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DANCE 'TIL YOU DROP</td>
<td>Fourth Day</td>
<td>Sparrow Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'M NOT THE ONE</td>
<td>Jaci Velasquez</td>
<td>Word Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIGHT ON THE MONEY</td>
<td>Third Day</td>
<td>Sparrow Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THAT'S THE LIFE</td>
<td>Leeland</td>
<td>Sparrow Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WRESTLING WITH GODS</td>
<td>Matthew West</td>
<td>Sparrow Records</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## HOT CHRISTIAN AC SONGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALL THE Best</td>
<td>Douglas City</td>
<td>Sparrow Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL THE Nations</td>
<td>Third Day</td>
<td>Sparrow Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DMOS - LEFT BEHIND</td>
<td>Leeland</td>
<td>Sparrow Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRT - WALKING THE WIND</td>
<td>Leeland</td>
<td>Sparrow Records</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Leeland</td>
<td>Sparrow Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WRESTLING WITH GODS</td>
<td>Matthew West</td>
<td>Sparrow Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAPAN SINGLES</td>
<td>UNITED KINGDOM SINGLES</td>
<td>GERMANY SINGLES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#1</strong></td>
<td><strong>#1</strong></td>
<td><strong>#1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXILE</td>
<td>* 70 Ellie Goulding * (US: #1)</td>
<td>Paul Potts * Union J * (UK: #1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* EXILE ENTERTE**</td>
<td>* 70 Ellie Goulding * (US: #1)</td>
<td>* Paul Potts * Union J * (UK: #1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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    - The Moscone Center
    - San Francisco
  - **Billboard Regional Mexican Music Summit**
    - October 5th-8th 2008
    - Wilshire Grand, Los Angeles
- **Music Merchandise**
  - **Buy Direct and Save!**
  - **Business Opportunities**
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RECORD COMPANIES: Sony BMG Entertainment names Michael Paul executive VP of global digital business. He was senior VP of corporate development and strategy at Fox Entertainment’s mobile group, which includes the Jamba/Jamster brand.

Veteran producer/label executive James Stroud launches Stroudavarious Records, which will be distributed by Sony RED. He was president of Giant Records’ Nashville division.

Universal Republic Records taps Iels Arias as associate manager of publicity. She was assistant to the VP of publicity at Decca Label Group.

PUBLISHING: Kobalt Music Group appoints Nick Robinson senior VP of business development. He was BMI senior executive of writer/publisher relations in Europe.

Sony/ATV Music Publishing names Dale Esoworthy senior VP of administration. He was senior VP of finance.

TOURING: Festival Network names Jon Vanhala senior VP of digital initiatives and content development. He co-founded HiFive Group and led business development at software boutique Microgrobe.

AEG Facilities, manager of Rose Quarter in Portland, Ore., ups Chris Oxley to GM of the venue. He was assistant GM.

Philadelphia-based garden entertainment-appointed Andrea Greenberg to executive VP and Bob Shea to senior VP of regional bookings and special projects. Greenberg was president of Rainbow Media Ventures, and Shea was senior VP of booking at Live Nation’s Southern California office.

DIGITAL: Mobile entertainment company Thumbplays Mitch Rotter to senior VP of content acquisition and strategy. He was VP of content acquisition.

RELATED FIELDS: The Philadelphia chapter of the Recording Academy names Dawn Frisy Byers executive director. She was VP of marketing and communications at the Apollo Theater Foundation.

—Edited by Mitchell Peters

CREATING NOISE FOR THE NEEDY IN SEATTLE
Seattle-based nonprofit Noise for the Needy has one goal: to throw local concerts that raise money for various charitable organizations around the city. The nonprofit recently held a five-day festival that raised $31,000 for Urban Rest Stop, a welcoming facility that provides free restrooms, showers and laundry units for homeless people and underprivileged families. The music festival was held June 11-15 at various clubs in Seattle and featured performances from approximately 60 acts, including Tabal Kweli, Matt and Kim, Two Gallants and the Black Angels.

“Almost all of those bands were free,” Noise for the Needy artistic director Jeff Henry says. “Some of the clubs were completely donated and others reduced their charges.” The shows were booked by Comet Tavern talent buyer Michelle "Mamma Casserole" Smith, who also works at a homeless shelter for veterans. Noise for the Needy has steadily grown since raising $1,000 from its first concert in 2004, Henry says. The organization plans to host another music festival in Seattle next summer.

—Mitchell Peters

GOOD WORKS

CHERRY ON TOP
After roaring back to life with its 2006 album "15," Buckcherry hopes to continue the momentum with "Black Butterfly," due Sept. 16 via Atlantic. Raunchy first single "Too Drunk" debuts at No. 39 on the Modern Rock chart this week. "I think the challenge for us has been just not to do anything different [and] get back to the headspace we were [in] three years ago when it was us against the world and we had to make the track for the hours after a holiday party. I wanted the album to have that classic '50s feel but with an added sexiness."

—Buckcherry
Linkin Park received a $25,000 donation July 24 at Champs Sports in Times Square for its Music for Relief Foundation hosted by Champs Sports director of marketing Thomas Valentine, Licensing director of writer/publisher Marsha Armus, Linkin Park’s Mike Shinoda and David “Phoenix” Farrell, and Champs Sports director of marketing Thomas Valentine. Music for Relief’s mission is to respond to natural disasters as they occur to help victims recover and rebuild, with an emphasis on housing, education programs and resources. From left, L.B.I. VP of consumer products Steve Armas, Linkin Park’s Mike Shinoda and David “Phoenix” Farrell, and Champs Sports director of marketing Thomas Valentine. (PHOTO: COURTESY OF FRANK McGRATH /PACERS SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT)

Ray Davies, center, enjoys a moment backstage with Grass of Aherence (Calif.) GM Adam Millar, left, and Nederlander Concerts CEO Adam Friedman before his special acoustic performance July 22 at the venue. (PHOTO: COURTESY OF DAN HOGLE)

The Foundation for Ethnic Understanding hosted its annual Los Angeles Benefit at the home of Brett Ratner July 22 in Beverly Hills, Calif. The event honored three recipients with the Joseph Papp Racial Harmony Award for their work in promoting diversity and ethnic unity. From left are Foundation for Ethnic Understanding founder/chairwoman Beverly Faires, Daphna Ziman,基金管理人/chairwoman执行董事/NAACP #2, and Loni Gate president of music Jay Faires. From left are Foundation for Ethnic Understanding chairman Russell Simmons, Bulluck, Ziman, Faires and foundation co-founder Rabbi Marc Schneier. (PHOTO: COURTESY OF GOLDBERGER)

BMI and R&B Live, presented an evening of performances by filmaking singer/songwriters Teedra Moses and Marsha Ambrosius, form-erly of Floetry, July 24 at Grecspace Restaurant & Lounge in Los Angeles. Attendees were treated to new material from forthcoming releases as well as hit songs they have penned for such acts as Michael Jackson, Floetry, Christina Milan and Mary J. Blige. (PHOTOS: COURTESY OF KARINA ARMUS)

ABOVE: From left are Billboard senior R&B/hip-hop correspondent Gall Mitchell, BMI director of writer/publisher relations for Los Angeles Malia Levy, Marsha Ambrosius and BMI associate director of writer/publisher rel ations for Los Angeles Nicole Plantin. LEFT: Teedra Moses, left, with BMI associate director of writer/publisher rel ations for Los Angeles Nicole Plantin.

BMI, in conjunction with R&B Live, presented an evening of performances by filmaking singer/songwriters Teedra Moses and Marsha Ambrosius, formerly of Floetry, July 24 at Grecspace Restaurant & Lounge in Los Angeles. Attendees were treated to new material from forthcoming releases as well as hit songs they have penned for such acts as Michael Jackson, Floetry, Christina Milan and Mary J. Blige. (PHOTOS: COURTESY OF KARINA ARMUS)
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TIM CONNELLY, VP Mobile Distribution, Disney
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### Hot 100 Chart for the Week Ending August 10, 1960

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Company, Record Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POOR LITTLE FOOL</td>
<td>Ricky Nelson</td>
<td>Imperial 5528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PATRICIA</td>
<td>Perez Prado</td>
<td>RCA Victor 7245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPLISH SPLASH</td>
<td>Bobby Darin</td>
<td>Ato 6117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HARD HEADED WOMAN</td>
<td>Elvis Presley</td>
<td>RCA Victor 7288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHEN</td>
<td>Katin 729</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DON'T ASK ME WHY</td>
<td>Elvis Presley</td>
<td>RCA Victor 7288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHANTILLY LACE</td>
<td>Big Booper</td>
<td>Mercury 71483</td>
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<tr>
<td>BLUE BLUE DAY</td>
<td>Don Gibson</td>
<td>RCA Victor 7010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE FREEZE</td>
<td>Tony and Joe</td>
<td>Erx 1075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROCK-IN' ROBIN</td>
<td>Bobby Day</td>
<td>Class 229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO CHEMISE, PLEASE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**THE STAR PERFORMER** designation shows the outstanding upward changes of position in The Hot 100 since last week's chart. Its purpose merely is to provide quick visual identification of the sides which moved up most dramatically or to new entries which first entered the chart at an unusually high position.

---

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