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ON THE CHARTS

ALBUMS

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TOP R&B/HIP-HOP

SINGLES

THE BILLBOARD HOT 100
HOT 100 AIRPLAY
HOT DIGITAL SONGS
ADULT CONTEMPORARY
ADULT TOP 40
HOT CHRISTIAN AC SONGS
HOT COUNTRY SONGS
HOT DANCE CLUB PLAY
HOT DANCE AIRPLAY
HOT GOSPEL SONGS
HOT LATIN SONGS
MAINSTREAM TOP 40
MODERN ROCK
HOT R&B/HIP-HOP SONGS
ADULT R&B
MAINSTREAM R&B/HIP-HOP
HOT RAP SONGS
RHYTHMIC
HOT RINGMASTERS

VIDEOS

TOP MUSIC VIDEO SALES
HOT VIDEOCLIPS

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Jägermeister
Naked Playboy Playmates. Tequila shots with morning radio DJs. After its debut went double-platinum, Hinder returns to "Take It to the Limit."

'PROMISE' NOTES
After selling more than 20 million albums worldwide, Il Divo's global reach gets a boost on "The Promise" thanks to Live Nation.

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photograph by Florian Schneider

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LATIN
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TOURING
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FILM & TV MUSIC
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MUSIC

BACK IN THE RACE
Nickelback '09 tour, Live Nation adds to band "Dark Horse."

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WOMEN IN MUSIC
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360 DEGREES OF BILLBOARD
BY TOMMY SILVERMAN

Now that the government has bailed out the banking system, it should take action to rescue the four major labels and the independent companies represented by Merlin. The U.S. recording industry, worth $14 billion in retail value when George W. Bush took office, has fallen to $9 billion today.

Could it be a coincidence that the music industry boom ended in 2000, at the peak of the American economy? Music has been one of this country’s most important exports, and jazz, blues, rock ‘n’ roll and hip-hop are all enjoyed worldwide. Rock ‘n’ roll may have done more to bring about the fall of the Soviet Union than the CIA. A strong music business is a matter of national security.

The precedent for government intervention is well established. This year alone, Congress has authorized $2.5 billion in loan guarantees for Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, a $700 billion asset relief package for banks and a $25 billion bailout for Detroit automakers. If they’re helping Motor City, shouldn’t they do something for Motown?

Anyone who has been to MIDEM or any international trade conference is aware that almost every other Western country supports its music business. Our neighbors to the north get subsidies for Canadian recordings and videos, as well as content rules for airplay on radio and TV. In some Scandinavian countries, the government practically helps A&R. The U.S. government spends nothing to support the American music scene.

As a result, artists like Feist and Amy Winehouse have been winning Grammy Awards right here in the United States. Could we face a future where the only American Grammy winners will be in the polito(pomegranate) and Native American music categories? Of the four major labels, only the Warner Music Group in an American company; the others are owned by the Japanese, British or French. Just as the government prevented a Dubai company from safeguarding American ports, it should take steps to stop rock ‘n’ roll from being owned by foreigners. At the very least, we should buy the Elvis Presley catalog back from the Japanese. Lou Dobbs would want that, too.

The government should only take a direct stake in labels as a last resort. But it can buy thousands of the CDs that have turned into toxic assets thanks to the rise of digital music. And there are several other actions it could take. Like the auto industry, the music business needs loan guarantees to retool to adapt to new technology. The government could fund a five-year, $25 billion borrowing package. As a condition, it could limit salaries and bonuses, and temporarily eliminate golden parachutes for top executives.

The labels could also benefit from FCC rules requiring all radio stations to play at least 50% American content, at least 50% developing artists and at least 30% independent acts. The budget of Voice of America should be increased, from $160 million to $300 million per year, and Scott Shannon and Barry Mayo should be appointed to run the organization.

The government should also provide artist subsidies to reduce album production. Between 2000 and last year, the number of new releases rose from 35,315 to 79,695, according to Nielsen SoundScan. This increase in production has created a glut, which the government could reduce by taking excess capacity offline, as it has done for agricultural commodities. It should establish a fund to buy back 20% of all U.S. artist CD returns, which it could then distribute to developing nations to spread American influence.

The recording industry is long overdue for a bailout, especially since its revenues trickle down for airplay on radio, as well as government subsidies for developing and recording studios. The United States spends about $605 billion annually on defense, so it would be a bargain to secure our national security by stabilizing the music business. Now, more than ever, we need the recording industry’s ability to infect the world with the sound and soul of America.

Tommy Silverman is founder/jowner of Tommy Boy Records (tommyboy.com).
If Barack Obama wins the election, the music business will get a valuable friend in Washington. But although stars from Bruce Springsteen to Jay-Z have stumped for the candidate, it won't be Obama himself.

Vice presidential hopeful Sen. Joseph Biden, D-Del., is one of the most influential members of Congress to champion legislation that protects intellectual property, and his election could help the entertainment industry promote its interests in Washington.

"Senator Biden has been particularly thoughtful about international theft of American property, criminal law in general and economic crimes against the country," RIAA senior VP of federal government relations Michele Ballantyne says. "He asks tough questions, he has always had terrific staff, and he doesn't mind taking a stand to protect American ingenuity."

Last year, Biden sponsored the RIAA-backed Perform Act, which sought to limit devices from recording and saving individual songs streamed from satellite and Internet radio services. And in April he proposed spending $1 billion to help federal and local law enforcement implement technology to monitor peer-to-peer networks for illegal activity, such as child pornography, that could also be used to target music files.

Most recently, Biden's past proposals to consolidate federal efforts to combat copyright infringement under a new "Copyright Czar" cabinet position found new life in the Prioritizing Resources and Organization for Intellectual Property Act, which was signed into law earlier this month. Provisions to have the Department of Justice (DOJ) prosecute pirates were not included in the final version.

Biden sits on the highly influential Senate Judiciary Committee, through which all intellectual property-related measures and intergovernmental trade agreements flow. The Commerce Committee traditionally talks on intellectual property—something not to be on the short list for the chief intellectual property position. But it is on the short list to be on the short list for the chief intellectual property position. Biden's views may stem from his committee position. "A lot of this just goes with the flow of what the Judiciary Committee traditionally does," a representative for Public Knowledge, a group that favors expanding fair-use rights, says. "We're going to be thinking about it in the context of what the Judiciary Committee traditionally does." Biden has no history of taking money from the entertainment industry. According to the Federal Election Committee, Biden has not received any campaign contributions from either the Motion Picture Assn. of America or the RIAA since 2000, and the Obama-Biden campaign is not accepting donations from lobbying groups.

It's possible that an Obama-Biden win would be a mixed blessing for the music business. But as copyright issues become more important, the music business needs all the friends in Washington it can get.
UPFRONT

Nituto Anniversary
Animated Trio Has ‘Undeniable’ Ambitions

Like most major pop acts, Alvin and the Chipmunks have big plans for their anniversary. Fifty years after the release of their first single, “The Chipmunk Song,” the animated trio will release “Undeniable,” an album of covers (led by Zeppelin’s “Rock and Roll,” Bon Jovi’s “Livin’ on a Prayer” and Bob Marley’s “Three Little Birds”), new songs and remixes on Razer & Tie.

Although the Chipmunks have released 44 albums, they came back into fashion last year with the CGI and live-action movie “Alvin and the Chipmunks” and its soundtrack, which sold 886,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

“Undeniable,” which comes out Nov. 4, could benefit from that attention. “The album has a sophisticated sound,” says Ross Bagdasarian Jr., the owner of the Chipmunks franchise and son of its original creator. “The musician- ship is really first-rate, so it’s not some kiddie version of those songs.”

In keeping with that idea, the Chipmunks’ version of Journey’s “Don’t Stop Believin’” will be worked to rock and talk stations, while the kid-focused material will be taken to outlets like Radio Disney.

To promote the new album, Razer & Tie is running a tongue-in-bulging cheek contest seeking a new lead singer to replace Alvin, who has left the band due to creativity—or perhaps created—differences. A video is being finished for the first single, “Shake Your Groove Thing,” while a new video for “We’re the Chipmunks” will incorporate historical footage from the group’s career. A direct-response TV advertising campaign featuring Bagdasarian will run on QVC in November.

“It’s a broad brand, and that’s how we’re going to market it,” Razer & Tie co-owner Cliff Chenfeld says. “We’re going to get the kid audience and we’re going to go broader than that.”

Lala’s New Business Model Raises Questions For Publishers

Critics claim that record label executives have spent the digital revolution with their heads in the clouds. Turns out that may just be where they belonged.

In backing the “virtual ownership” model introduced by the newly relaunched Lala music service, record labels are entering a potentially dicey corner of the digital landscape known as “cloud computing.”

The term refers to the concept of information and content stored on the Internet and temporarily delivered to computers or other access devices rather than being permanently downloaded. From a technology standpoint, what Lala is doing isn’t so different from subscription services like Napster and Rhapsody.

But Lala has a whole new business model. Users of subscription service pay a flat monthly fee, each time a song is played, those services pay labels and publishers a fee that amounts to about a penny per stream. Lala offers users the ability to stream a song as many times as they like for a 10-cent fee, from which Lala pays labels and publishers an undisclosed percentage. And those songs can only be played from a computer or digital music player connected to the Internet.

That’s the dicey part. Lala’s model is based on the expectation that some users will eventually buy and download MP3 files—for a price of 79 cents, if they already purchased a 10-cent stream—to play on an iPod or another device. So far, about one-third of those who bought streaming rights went on to purchase a permanent download.

“Consumers have demonstrated that they’re willing to pay a premium for portability,” Warner Music Group executive VP of digital strategy and business development Michael Nash says. “While there’s much greater ubiquity of Internet connectivity . . . you still have a situation where the Web-based consumer experience doesn’t satisfy all consumers’ needs or demands.”

Will that always be the case? In less than 10 years, wireless Internet access is expected to blanket the country through both WiFi and next-generation wireless networks. When MP3 players, mobile phones and even automobiles can stay connected to the Internet at all times, the need to download a file could be replaced by the ability to simply access it from the cloud.

“It will be unusual under almost any circumstance not to be able to connect into the Web one way or another,” says Geoff Ralston, Lala CEO and the creator of a cloud-computing e-mail program that eventually became Yahoo! Mail. “In a sense, worrying about files will become an anachronism.”

That would force a major overhaul in music licensing. Mechanical royalties contribute about 35% to the average large publishing company’s revenue, based on some estimates, of which digital represents about one-third. Without downloads, that bucket could dry up.

“It wreaks havoc on an economic model if this becomes the way to experience music,” says Jeff Levy, a partner at law firm Roberts, Ritholz, Levy, Sanders, Chickelel & Fields. “It changes what it means to own something, and that has tremendous consequences for publishers.”

Of course, this future is still years away, and NMPA president/CEO David Israelite says he’s confident the industry will be able to adapt, based on the new rate structure set by the Copyright Royalty Board earlier this month.

“It’s an important issue to keep an eye on,” he says. “But now that we’ve addressed interactive streaming and limited downloading, that will provide a model for some ground rules for how we get paid and it’ll make it easier for the next wave of technology.”

If current rules don’t apply, the CRB will start setting rates every five years instead of every 10 to address these new issues. Which is what Lala’s Ralston expects will be necessary.

“I have no doubt that there will be complex negotiation in the future,” he says. “This will be true for every form of media including film, TV, books, music. For anything that’s going into the digital realm, the rights holders are going to have to rethink how they license.”

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CLOUDY VISION

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Crash Of The Titans

What Ticketmaster's Acquisition Of Front Line Means For The Music Business

Ticketmaster's blockbuster agreement to acquire a controlling equity interest in Irving Azoff’s Front Line Management Group is the most dramatic salvo yet in its ongoing struggle with Live Nation for supremacy in the live music market. As part of the deal (billboard.biz, Oct. 23), Ticketmaster will acquire the minority equity stake in Front Line currently held by Warner Music Group for about $123 million in cash. Front Line founder/CEO Azoff will become CEO of what will become known as Ticketmaster Entertainment. Here’s how the deal could affect the various stakeholders:

IRVING AZOFF
No one emerges from this deal looking better than Azoff. The legendary manager and former label head and film producer has worked with fellow manager Howard Kaufman to develop Front Line into the world’s most powerful management company. With the sale of the company to Ticketmaster, Azoff suddenly finds himself at the helm of the ticketing giant at a time when touring drives the music business train.

He’ll also profit handsomely from the sale. Under the deal, Azoff will relinquish an unspecified amount of equity in Front Line for restricted stock awards representing about 4.5% of Ticketmaster’s stock.

TICKETMASTER
With master strategist Azoff at the helm—and with his leverage as manager of some of the world’s top touring acts—Ticketmaster just became much more than a ticketing company. Azoff already has publishing, recording, merchandising, branding and sponsorships in his tool box. Will concert promotion be next? Ticketmaster, which contracts primarily with venues, is the dominant player in this critical space. Ticketing has become the keys to the kingdom in the interaction between fans and artists. Ticketmaster and Live Nation both want to hold those keys, but ultimately they are in the artists’ pockets. The highest stakes going forward will be won and lost in artist relationships, and now Ticketmaster is sitting on pocket aces.

LIVE NATION
Live Nation, which is preparing to start its own ticketing company next year, has made inroads into Ticketmaster’s business, most recently by signing a deal with facility management firm SMG (billboard.biz, Sep. 11). And, as the world’s largest promoter, Live Nation has significant leverage of its own with its wealth of content. Live Nation’s primary selling point in striking its multiple deals with acts like Madonna, U2, Nickelback and others has been the synergy brought by vertical integration. But a multifaceted, diversified Ticketmaster will provide competition.

Still, Live Nation holds the touring checkout. Front Line represents a wide range of major touring artists, many of whom frequently tour and play concerts promoted by Live Nation, although Azoff has always maintained a close relationship with Live Nation. Ticketmaster competitor AEG Live, a division of Anschutz Entertainment Group, is the question. How will Ticketmaster’s deal affect the Ticketmaster/Live Nation relationship?

Should a Front Line act now be considered part of the Ticketmaster/Live Nation family? Not necessarily. It’s worth noting that managers work for their clients, not vice versa, and managers are beholden to make the best deals for their clients, regardless of affiliation. Sometimes that will mean playing for Live Nation. It’s highly doubtful that Azoff will pressure managers to align their artists with Ticketmaster just because it’s Ticketmaster. That said, Ticketmaster will no doubt seek to expand its own diversification into realms like merchandise, licensing and marketing. Plus, with the multiplatform success of the Eagles’ 2007 set “Long Road Out of Eden,” which was sold exclusively at Wal-Mart, Azoff has shown he can release an album without a record company.

VENUES
Live Nation owns the overwhelming majority of amphitheaters in North America, so what’s really at stake in terms of venue ticketing contracts are arenas. When the Eagles’ contract comes up for renewal, both companies will no doubt try to lock down for years. But those three talented artists all primarily play arenas, and as managers must serve their clients, so must Live Nation present its artists in the best venue. At some point options diminish, and there is little doubt a Live Nation tour will have to play a Ticketmaster ticketing building. Arenas will have to make sure their venue is the best option.

AZOFF

‘Azoff suddenly finds himself at the helm of the ticketing giant at a time when touring drives the music business train.'

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LEONID ASMAN

360 DEGREES OF BILLBOARD

LEVINE NAMED EXECUTIVE EDITOR OF BILLBOARD
Robert Levine has been named executive editor of Billboard, where he will oversee the editorial operations of the print magazine as well as the industry-focused Web site billboard.biz.

Levine will be based in New York and will report to Billboard editorial director Bill Werde. He replaces Werdé, who was promoted in August.

For the past four years, Levine was a freelance journalist covering music, technology and pop culture for the New York Times, Rolling Stone, Portfolio, Fortune and Vanity Fair. Before that, he worked as an editor at Wired and New York, where he edited features and cover stories.

He also teaches at the City University of New York’s Graduate School of Journalism. Levine has a B.A. from Brandeis University, an M.S.J. from Northwestern University’s Medill School of Journalism and a pair of Neil Peart’s drumsticks that he uses to play the videogame “Rock Band.”

CHART DEPARTMENT PROMOTIONS
Raphael George, who has been senior chart manager of R&B/hip-hop since 2007, has been promoted to associate director of charts for Billboard and sister publication Radio & Records. He succeeded Silvio Petrolongo, who was recently elevated to director of charts.

In his new role, George will help supervise all aspects of the charts for both brands with direct oversight of on-air activities related to the radio-based charts. He joined Billboard in 2005 after a 12-year career in radio, which included a seven-year run as assistant PD at urban WPHL Philadelphia.

Keith Caulfield has been promoted to senior chart manager/analyst. Caulfield has added management of the Billboard 200 to his cache of nine other album charts, and will also author the Over The Counter column.

He is based in Los Angeles and is a 10-year veteran of the chart department.

Gordon Murray, who has also been with the publication for 10 years, and oversees seven charts while also serving as Billboard research manager, has been appointed Dance chart manager.

Gray Trust has taken on management of the Mainstream Top 40 chart and editing duties of the Billboard Canadian Bulletin, a weekly e-mail push product distributed to the most influential music industry executives north of the border.

Trust also manages the Pop 100, Adult Contemporary and Adult Top 40 charts.

“Raphael, Keith, Gordon and I have long been vital contributors to the ever-expanding menu of chart offerings,” Petrolongo says. “Their expanded roles will strengthen our team as we chart the future course of the always evolving music industry.”

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FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

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- "Sex on Fire" Top 5 at Modern Rock Radio and growing

BREAKING ARTISTS


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www.americanradiohistory.com
Elton John’s celebrated “Red Piano” residency in Las Vegas has been a monster hit, and now it’s getting ready for a trip around the world.

Beginning Nov. 19 in Birmingham, England, “Red Piano” will play double in Liverpool and Manchester and also hit Germany, Denmark, Finland, Sweden and Norway. The international shows, booked by Keith Bradley at London-based 21 Artists, follow the Oct. 26 release of “The Red Piano Collection,” a Best Buy exclusive available as a two-DVD/CD set in standard definition and Blu-ray as well as a three-CD vinyl package. The project features the 14-song performance of the “Red Piano” show and a documentary about its creation.

During its Las Vegas residency at the Colosseum at Caesars Palace, “Red Piano” has raised in about $140 million from more than 200 shows since 2004, according to John’s camp. That’s a hunking $700,000 per night in gross ticket sales at a venue with a capacity in the 4,100 range.

The Colosseum may be the “house that Clinton built,” but it’s clear that John has found a home at Caesars. He’s got a permanent merch store in the sprawling hotel complex, and his presence (like the venue’s other residents Cher and Bette Midler) is everywhere. But even while evening out the box office at Caesars, John has continued to tour the country to great success, with grosses of about $30 million this year. “The brand is stronger than ever,” John’s longtime agent Howard Rose says.

Heavily the tour version of “Red Piano,” which costs some $2 million to $3 million, Bradley says. Acknowledging the expense and sweat equity of taking the production on tour, “The idea is to animate it over more shows,” he says. So far, so good. The upcoming European dates are pretty much closed, and none are in the planning stages.

“The original show was built and designed around a theater at the Colosseum, an extremely wide stage that was raked,” Bradley says. “One of the things we considered when we looked at the room originally was scale, the size everything had to be. When we put the let’s ‘E’ together, we used all the green neon gas that existed in North America at the time. We had to then think about how do that for a traveling show.”

Neon, as production managers know, doesn’t travel particularly well. “When we toured it, we decided when we made the let’s, which are obviously up and down in the air all the time, to make them out of LED that just looks like neon,” Bradley says. “That’s much more expensive to manufacture but much more robust in terms of travel and putting together. Tait (Towers) did the job in Pennsylvania—they do great work.” It’s a kind of complex. Neon’s not just on and off, it does tricks: “You can only have that is very complicated, circuitry-wise.”

Producers also had to build a raked stage that could be loaded in and out with relative ease. “Putting something into a theater, you spend a lot of time putting it in once, but once it’s in, it’s in for the run until you take it back out again,” Bradley says. “Here, we’re bouncing in and out of arenas in a day, so there are two sets of rigging going around, with all the trusting uppers and all the drapes and all that type of gear goes ahead of us. There were a lot of logistics switching it to arena from theatre.”

John is committed to “Red Piano” shows in Vegas through April 2009. He owns the show and could take it on the road startside if he so chose when Vegas is done. “After that point, we could actually move the touring situation to anywhere on the continent or even take it further afield,” Bradley says. “But it would take quite a few sea containers to move it, so once you land somewhere you need to be doing 15 or 20 shows to make it make any sense.”

Rose says, “At this point there are no plans to come to North America with that show,” adding it’s a possibility “somewhere down the road, but not in the short term.”

**Keys To The Kingdom**

Elton John’s ‘Red Piano’ Goes Global

On The Road

RAY WADDELL
Fading Glory
Best-Of Collections Face Worst Of Times

Rascal Flatts’ upcoming album release will provide the latest test for the viability of a flagging retail standby: the single-artist hits collection.

As one of the top-selling acts of any genre in recent years, Rascal Flatts appear well-positioned to sell many copies of its “Greatest Hits Volume 1,” which will be released Oct. 28 on Disney Music Group’s Lyric Street Records.

But even though the pop-country band has sold 17.2 million albums in the United States since it first broke in 2000, Lyric Street realized it needed to provide fans with an incentive to goose sales of the compilation.

To that end, the label is adding a holiday sales hook to “Greatest Hits Volume 1” by including a limited-time bonus CD of three Christmas songs, only one of which will be available as a digital download, according to Greg McCann, VP of marketing, sales and media at Lyric Street.

“We felt like this was the best way to handle the bonus material so that we can all sell records together,” McCann says of the label’s partnership with retailers.

Ben Kline, executive VP of sales, marketing and new media at Universal Music Group Nashville, warns that greatest-hits collections are “a dying breed” and agrees that new approaches are needed to market them.

“Either you load it up with a bunch of tracks and create a value proposition or [make them] relatively inexpensive,” Kline says. “You can’t expect people to pay the equivalent of $1.50 a track when they can get it online for 99 cents . . . They have to believe there’s a value or they won’t buy.”

While some multi-artist compilations such as the “Now That’s What I Call Music!” series continue to thrive, recent sales of single-artist hits collections have been decidedly mixed.

Garth Brooks’ 2007 collection “Ultimate Hits” (Pearl), which featured 34 songs, including four new ones and bonus material, has sold 1.9 million copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

By contrast, Faith Hill’s 2007 compilation “The Hits” (Warner Bros. Nashville) has sold 278,000 units, while Radiohead’s “The Best of” (Capitol) has sold 82,000 units of its single-disc version and 37,000 of its double-disc edition since its release in June, sharply off the sales pace of its previous albums. D’Angelo’s “The Best So Far” (Virgin), another June release, has sold 12,000 units.

When Virgin released the D’Angelo collection, it sweetened the package by adding a bonus DVD of videos.

“Even five to six years ago, the value was more derived from . . . the tracks themselves and the order of the tracks,” says Bill Gagnon, senior VP of catalog marketing North America at EMI Music Marketing. “Recently, the digital marketplace has made it so consumers can do a lot of that on their own. So we have to come up with different content.”

Although initial sales of “The Best So Far” haven’t been especially strong, Gagnon says he expects the title will remain a steady seller through time.

“When the greatest-hits album is an event record, with a major TV platform, you can blow it out,” he says. “If it’s a standard greatest-hits package, it can do OK out of the box and then it will sell consistently throughout its life.”

Despite the challenges posed by single-track downloads at Apple’s iTunes Store and unauthorized file-sharing networks, some industry observers believe greatest-hits packages are still viable for the foreseeable future.

“Every artist is different, some have a stronger fan base than others, some are more single-driven,” RCA Music Group executive VP/GM Tom Corson says. “One size does not fit all, and we’re going to create a custom plan for each of these artists.

“Closer: The Best of Sarah McLachlan” (Arista), which includes bonus tracks and is also available as a limited-edition two-disc set, has sold 57,000 copies in the two weeks since its release, according to SoundScan.

Meanwhile, Target will be exclusive retailer of the CD version of Christina Aguilera’s “Keeps Gettin’ Better—A Decade Of Hits” (RCA), which will include a DVD of her videos and is due Nov. 11. Individual tracks will be available as digital downloads and ringtones.

“One of the major opportunities moving forward is going to be with branded exclusives or some kind of branded release,” Corson says. “If you’re a retailer or a brand of any type and you have the opportunity to partner for a hits exclusive with a really great artist brand, what a great opportunity. The artist can benefit because maybe if he went down the traditional sales path it might not be quite as meaningful financially.”

Additional reporting by Gail Mitchell and Ed Christian.
Recession Exposure

Tech, Ad Weaknesses Leave Digital Music Vulnerable

There’s a great line from “The Sopranos” when Tony Soprano is screaming at his captains to stop blaming the economy for falling to “earn” and asks confidante Silvio Dante to tie the two industries that are traditionally recession-proof.

His response: “Certain aspects of show business and our thing”.

That theory will be tested as the global financial crisis paves the way for a new era of consumer frugality that could have a noticeable impact on the digital music space.

The relatively low cost of digital music, particularly 99-cent downloads, means that such purchases won’t be the first expense consumers cut if spending gets tight. But digital music isn’t just entertainment. It’s also part of the consumer technology business, which faces significant exposure to economic downturns.

Since iPod owners only buy an average of 25 songs per year, the growth in the a la carte download market has been dependent on sales of MP3 players bringing new users to the market. According to NPD Group, 66% of those who buy MP3 players are first-time owners, compared with 28% buying replacement devices.

As a result, digital download sales spike every Christmas. After leveling off in the early months of the new year, they set a higher bar for music downloading activity until the next holiday season. That cycle might stop penny-pinching families starting cutting back on entertainment products.

“Entertainment can be entirely recession susceptible,” NPD Group analyst Russ Crumpick says. “A lot of this really depends on what happens with iPod sales. If people buy fewer new or replacement iPods, you will see the next spiral step of digital music be a lot lower.”

The early signs aren’t good. In August NPD Group study, 37% of those surveyed said they plan to spend less on entertainment-related products and services this year than last. Only 11% said they intend to spend more, a drop from 18% from a similar report in April.

For those who do plan to make purchases, the focus is on gaming consoles and/or DVD players, not MP3 devices. According to the Consumer Electronics Assn.’s annual Holiday Purchase Patterns survey, MP3 players have fallen from the most-desired device on last year’s gift list with list for teens and adults to third for teens (behind computers and videogames) and fourth for adults (behind computers, TVs and mobile phones).

It gets worse. Since digital downloads alone aren’t compensating for falling CD sales, the music industry has diversified its digital revenue streams to include products like subscriptions and mobile ringtones. The financial crisis could affect all of them.

Ironically, ad-supported services, which offer a free product at a time of financial belt-tightening, would be the most exposed. Startups like utopia, SpiralFrog, Qtext and others selling cheap ads now in the hopes of seeing cost-per-thousand ad rates rise in the coming years are in for tough sledding as the volume and price of Internet advertising is expected to fall.

“If you have a model based on Internet advertising and you need Internet advertising to grow dramatically in the next couple of years to hit your numbers and reach profitability, you’re in trouble,” says former Yahoo Music chief David Goldberg, now an entrepreneur in residence at Benchmark Capital. “They’re relying on relatively high-priced advertising for an unproven model in a world of more supply and less demand.”

Overall, various estimates predict that U.S. Internet ad spending will grow by about 15%-20% this year over last year. But top Internet ad categories like retail, financial services, automotive and telecom are expected to see reduced spending, and analysts predict what money there is will flow to familiar sites and portals at the expense of “experimental media” services like online video and music services.

Mobile may not fare much better. Ringtones sales are already declining, and the more advanced mobile music services recently unveiled carry heavy browsing fees. AT&T Mobility’s Make-Up Tones service is $5 per month and its Remix place-shifting service costs another $10. And subscribers could hold off another year before buying a phone that can even access these services.

The one digital music business model that seems safe is subscriptions. Since the only people willing to pay the monthly fee for unlimited music are generally diehard fans, it’s unlikely a noticeable number will cancel their accounts. Still, don’t expect these companies to expand their customer base while the economy struggles.

With venture capital funds drying up and limited credit available for mergers and acquisitions, startup digital music services have few available options. They either have to hunker down and weather the storm or die.

The only good news is that separating the wheat from the chaff in the already crowded digital music space could ultimately help the surviving companies emerge stronger and better positioned to profit once things calm down. But in the short term, the entertainment industry can no longer consider itself immune from economic hard times.

When Tony Soprano (right) of “The Sopranos” wondered what anyone gets recession-proof, Silvio Dante replied: “Certain aspects of show business and our thing.”

HYBRID VEHICLE

Sirius XM and Pioneer Electronics have teamed on the XMp3 portable music device, a combined portable satellite radio receiver and MP3 player.

In addition to providing satellite programming, the XMp3 can record and store up to 10 hours of individual songs from Sirius XM channels and schedule up to five channels for simultaneous recording. It also has an auto-record feature that automatically saves up to 30 hours of any given channel, as well as a DVR-like feature that lets listeners rewind up to 30 minutes of live programming. It includes an SD memory card slot for transferring MP3s from users’ music libraries and music management software for organizing the mix of saved vs. owned content on the device.

The XMp3 is available now for a suggested price of $280.

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BITS & BRIEFS

NEW LICENSING SITE

Digital distribution company InGrooves has introduced a new music licensing site that allows media firms, production studios and others to browse, sample and acquire rights to music from its clients via an automated system. Licenses are pre-priced based on their intended use, and InGrooves also features a number of songs, artists and playlists based on theme and medium. Additionally, InGrooves is offering a blanket license for its entire catalog for all uses, allowing users to acquire bulk licenses for a flat monthly fee for up to 100 songs. YouLicens.com is providing its music-licensing platform to run the service’s back end.

DANCE DOWNLOADS

Dance and electronica fans have a new source online to download music dedicated specifically to the genre.

Masterbeat.com specializes in such genre subsets as house, dance, electro and trance, it is licensing music initially from Sony Music Entertainment and Warner Music Group. The tracks are all digital rights management-free, of which were previously not made available for sale, as they were commissioned by labels as special dance club or radio promotional remixes. And through a deal with Billboard, song remixes sold on the service will count toward that artist’s chart position.

MRAZ, GRIDMOB TEAM UP

Jason Mraz has tapped GridMob to power a mobile-phone photo campaign that he will incorporate into his live show. Details in the Photo, as it is called, invites fans to take pictures of their hometowns and submit them to the service. The pictures will be posted on a special Web site dedicated to the campaign, and Mraz will feature them on screens during concerts. Concertgoers can also take photos of one another during live events and submit them for viewing during the concert.

HOT RINGMASTERS

Nov. 2008

Billboard

Toni Swift, the only country artist in the top 20, rides 16-8 with “Love Story.” The track marks Swift’s first top 10 in three chart appearances and logs a 62% increase in downloads to 27,000.
Soundtrack ‘Addiction’
Indie Imprint Finds Niche In Movie Music

After seeing their fortunes dip for the last several years, soundtracks are coming back in a big way. Two recent examples: “Camp Rock” and “Mamma Mia!” have each sold 1 million units in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, since their releases in June and July.

But what are movie studios to do if they don’t have a huge budget, a ready-made collection of kid-friendly singalong songs or beloved camp classics from the ‘70s? Increasingly, they are turning to indie labels like Artists’ Addiction, which is behind the musical companions to Lionsgate’s “Saw” movie franchise, among other soundtracks.

“Most majors won’t release soundtracks these days unless they feel they are a safe bet, because all the associated costs are too high,” Artists’ Addiction co-founder Jonathan Platt says. “They are in a situation where they sell 100,000 records and still see a loss. We, on the other hand, are in a situation where we can sell 10,000 or 15,000 and see a profit.”

Many of the film and TV producers who approach Artists’ Addiction have smaller soundtrack budgets. Since its founding in 2005, Artists’ Addiction has released 40 soundtracks and compilations, with its smaller release pool allowing it to spend more time on each project. In addition to four “Saw” soundtracks, which have sold a combined 35,000 copies in the States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, Artists’ Addiction has released the soundtracks to “The Nanny Diaries” (23,000 copies) and “Stomp the Yard” (37,000), as well as for TV shows like “Friday Night Lights” (8,000) and “Charmed” (24,000 for “Charmed: The Final Chapter”).

“We also have more flexibility in terms of the artists we work with,” co-founder Jonathan Miller says. “The majors try to get as much of their own stuff on each album as possible, whereas we can work with the producers to try to figure out what makes the most sense for each audience.”

Being an indie label “allows us to be more creative and focused,” Miller adds. “We have the low overhead and we have a great team, so we have a lot of situations where artists see royalty payments after only 10,000 copies are sold.”

Many of the artists Miller and Platt work with have a deeper connection to the films than just another paycheck. “With ‘Saw,’ we’ve had pretty much every industrial artist out there appear on one of the five soundtracks,” Platt says. “We’ve had Marilyn Manson, Skinny Puppy, Drowning Pool and Ministry, to name a few. These artists are fans of the movies, and they are usually excited to offer remixes or unreleased tracks.”

Connecting to the film’s fans is another key part of Artists’ Addiction’s strategy. “Saw V” is due in theaters Oct. 24, with the soundtrack scheduled for release through iTunes and other digital retailers Oct. 21.

“Saw” is having a convention in November in New York, and we’ll be using that as an opportunity to market the record,” Miller says. “We also did some research and found that most of the sales of the ‘Saw’ soundtracks were digital, so for the fifth one, we’re releasing the album as a digital-only project and tying it in with the ‘Saw’ Web site and treating it almost like a movie release, with a shorter timeline and heavy online promotion.

“We thought the soundtrack as an extension of the brand, as well as an important part of the market value of the film,” Miller adds.

Razor & Tie co-owner Cliff Chenfeld, whose label put out the successful soundtracks to “Alvin and the Chipmunks” and “Another Cinderella Story,” cautions that just because a movie does well doesn’t mean the soundtrack will sell well and vice versa. For instance, the film “Hancock” is the fourth-highest-grossing film of 2008, according to the Internet Movie Database, yet the soundtrack sold only 4,000 copies.

Chenfeld also agrees with Miller and Platt that, as an indie with lower overhead, Razor & Tie can make a profit while selling fewer albums but still targeting resources at working the soundtrack.

“You have to approach a soundtrack as an album in its own right,” Chenfeld says. “We’re in a good position because we can step back and look at the album as a whole, not as a vehicle to launch a single or an artist, like a major label might.”

biz

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Crossover And Out

Despite Mainstream Promotion, Bilingual Acts Remain On Shaky Ground

For the past decade, countless labels—both mainstream and Latin—have been seduced by the siren song of developing home-grown bilingual, bicultural acts. But when it comes to real commercial success, only a handful of such acts have been able to break significant ground, despite the fact that they’ve been released on mainstream major labels with mainstream budgets.

Why exactly is that remains a maddening mystery. Most recently, rising Dominican pop singer Kat DeLuna, best-known for her 2007 hit single “Whine Up,” featuring Elephant Man, left her label, Epic Records, and is now working on a sophomore album with a host of producers. DeLuna’s debut, “9 Lives,” sold 63,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Another bilingual/bicultural Epic act, the D.E.Y., has yet to see its debut album released in the United States, although it was slated to street a year ago and has received heavy promotion.

Currently being worked in the market is duo Prima J, which released its self-titled debut on Geffen in June and has sold 25,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Similarly, Def Jam artist Karina Pasian’s debut, “First Love,” released Aug. 19, has sold 23,000 copies.

To be sure, these are not paltry numbers by today’s standards, much less for a new act. But demographicists have raised the expectations for these homegrown crossovers.

“Whoever cracks this will do great because it’s such a big market,” Prima J manager Jorge Hernandez says. “But how to connect is sort of elusive.”

In Prima J’s case, the duo was launched as a mainstream, urban crossover act. Calling the act Latin, Hernandez says, seemed redundant, because America today is so widely Latin to begin with.

On the other hand, he says, “Nothing has been served to that [Latin] audience as the mainstream. But when these acts launch directly into the mainstream, they compete with the mainstream.

What works best is “artists doing English-language music that appeals to that audience, regardless of the fact that they’re Latin, and there’s Latin music that Latin people buy.” Sony BMG U.S. Latin VP of digital business Lorenzo Braun says. Braun, who used to run the label’s urban department, has worked with such artists as Frankie J, who did well in both markets but launched from the Latin side, and Jhazbel, who was aiming for both but wasn’t released.

Whether being Latin or not is irrelevant, the fact is, the Latin card is almost always trowed out because the artist is Latin or for marketing purposes.

However, if the aim is to reach two markets simultaneously, history has proved time and again that Latin and mainstream labels must work together, each one promoting and marketing to its respective marketplace.

When that doesn’t happen, the crossover doesn’t happen either. The single exception in recent memory is Pitbull, who has been aggressively marketed in both languages and has gained mainstream and Latin traction.

Otherwise, producer Sergio George says, it is essential to have a solid foundation first, in either market, and move from there.

“It could happen, if you have the right song that works in all these radio stations,” George says. “But it’s on an artist-by-artist basis. As a movement, I don’t see it.”

And while most everyone agrees that crossing over is more of a common phenomenon if it starts from the Spanish side, even then, success is not guaranteed.

“I still believe that you can take an artist, develop them in the Latin space and there’s a massive space where you can cross over,” one executive says. “But if you’re going to play on that level, it has to be as good as the biggest acts in the world.”

Hyphy And Mighty

Movement Puts Modern Spin On Corrido Subject Matter

The drug trade has been a theme in corridos for decades, but what about getting high in a nightclub bathroom with your friends? Or bobbing your head and jumping up and down, head-banger-style, instead of dancing with a partner?

A new strain of fast, danceable corridos known as hyphy, driven by independent acts from northern California, is bubbling up across the country and getting attention from the majors.

Led by Los Inquietos del Norte and Los Amos de Nuevo León, the style is similar to the Bay Area hyphy rap movement in its inspiration of a jumpy, freestyle dance—“it’s like hip-hop but in a corrido version,” Los Inquietos’ José Meza says. With aggressive drumming and the guitarists running around onstage, “we give it a rock twist too.”

But the most signature characteristics are the flip-flop drug and alcohol references. An online video of a Los Inquietos concert shows the drummer lighting up some sort of smokable object onstage as the crowd eggs him on; the cover of Los Amos’ “Desmadre en el Baño” (Chaos in the Bathroom) album features a band member holding up a bag of what looks like cocaine.

“When Los Amos sing about those real things, people say, ‘Those cabrones are singing the truth,’ ” Los Amos’ José Guaardo says.

Luna Communications/La Maquina Musical Radio Network VP of programming Yesenia de Luna estimates that there are about 10-15 artists working in the new genre. At this point, “they are independent because it’s more underground,” she says.

Los Inquietos started out on Disa several years ago but now release music on the act’s own label, Eagle Music, with some product licensed to Venemusic. Los Amos was previously on Eagle but left to found its own label, Solo Records.

When Los Inquietos was on Disa, “I could count on one hand the stations that played our corridos,” Meza says. The group ended up scoring at first with a romantic song, “Si Ti,” which brought programmers out to the dances. It was there that the band’s wider content stood out.

“When kids want to hear it you have to give it to them,” Meza says.

On Nov. 18, Venemusic will release “La Borachera,” a collection of songs including the hit single of the same name, which had previously appeared on Los Inquietos’ “4.20 M Vicio” album. The group has been busy playing all over the South and West.

Disa now has Los Titanes de Durango, which despite its name is a norteño act. Other acts playing hyphy include Eagle Music’s Los Cocineros and another independent group, Apasionado.

—Avala Ben-Yehuda
Tunes You Can Use
Publishers Hope Searchable Databases Will Drive Synchs

With intense competition to land lucrative sync deals, music publishers are looking for ways to distinguish themselves from the rest of the pack in approaching advertising agencies, TV shows and filmmakers.

Enter thinkmusic.net, a searchable online music-sampling service created as a joint venture between Primary Wave Music Publishing and production house Pulse Music, both based in New York. The music database contains 6,000 songs and instrumentals—about 2,000 songs from the Primary Wave catalog, including tracks by Aerosmith, Hall & Oates, the Wallflowers, Nirvana, Bobby Vinton, Heart, Marvin Gaye and Earth, Wind & Fire—and 4,000 instrumentals created by Pulse Music.

Thinkmusic is not the first such service. Getty Images offers on its Web site such features as Premium Playlist and Pump Audio—searchable online music-sampling services for those looking to license just the right music to enhance their video images.

Premium Playlist includes 1,000 songs, from such acts as Barenaked Ladies, Smash Mouth and Norah Jones through nonexclusive deals with Warner/Chappell Music, Koch Records, Cherry Lane, Kobalt Music Group, Red Light Management, Liongate and Nettwerk. Pump Audio also serves as a soundtrack and TV commercial tool with a library of more than 100,000 music titles from independent artists.

While the Premium Playlist and Pump Audio search engines are easy to use, thinkmusic is even easier and allows users to build a playlist of songs that might be compatible with the commercial, show, movie or whatever the user is working on. Then the thinkmusic “game changer” kicks in—in the form of a downloaded video synchronizer that allows users to sync their visuals directly with the music, according to Primary Wave Music Publishing partner Justin Shukat. Users can also view lyrics to see if they match the creative too, he adds.

While thinkmusic is a Web-based application, the video synchronizer is installed on a user’s desktop. It allows film to be securely uploaded to the synchronizer, where the music can be synched in the appropriate places.

In addition to original hit songs and new tracks from developing artists, Pulse Music has 22 staff writer/producers collaborating daily on music for artists like Mary J. Blige, Biggie Smalls and Faith Hill and also makes original music for Fortune 500 companies, film, TV and advertising agencies in the company’s 10,000-square-foot studio facility. Pulse Music founder/owner JK Kipnis says. For each project, Pulse might create up to 25 different instrumental tracks, so when one track gets used the rest goes into building its catalog.

“Thinkmusic.net is a place where you can access thousands of customizable original and pre-cleared instrumental tracks as well as material from indie artists” to well-known acts, Kipnis says. “Often when music is licensed, it is what it is and can’t be altered. Here it can be modified.”

While Getty Music’s Premium Playlist and Pump Audio often provide the cost for licensing each track, thinkmusic doesn’t, because, according to Shukat, there are too many variables involved. So when a user decides on the music, the negotiating part is done offline. While most of the Primary Wave tracks are pre-cleared, some music featured on the site—like the Supremes, in which Primary Wave has a writer’s share—through Lamont Dozier—would have to be cleared, in this case, through EMI Music Publishing.

After reaching the thinkmusic.net home page, users are presented with five choices, one of which is a search button that brings them to a new page, designed around a vintage amplifier. That page has search buttons for artists, instrumentals, hits, songs and indie artists and such filters as male or female singers and song tempos, allowing users to whittle through the 5,092-song database. For example, if a user wanted to search the hard rock/metal subgenre, there would be 109 song results, and if the user wanted a medium tempo, a choice of 32 songs would result.

While anyone can access the thinkmusic’s Web site, in order to take advantage of the video synchronizer, visitors must sign up for a login, which allows for user qualification.

“People no longer work in the same fashion that they used to when there was a music supervisor, director and client,” Shukat says. “Now there might be 15 people involved in the decision. Thinkmusic users can then e-mail the other 15 people, who can sign in and see the music supervisors’ suggestions, analyzing each suggested piece of music against the video, he says. The site was nearly a year in the making, and so far the company plans to exclusively use the video synchronizer, although Shukat says it might consider licensing the application at a later date.

In the meantime, “we are going the tools to creative so that now they are in control of the process,” Shukat says. “Now, once they have chosen the music, they can reach out to a real company that is controlling the music right away. There is no search for the publishers.”
Back In Racks
AC/DC's 'Black Ice' Makes Big Splash At Retail

AC/DC is back with a blast.

Not only is the veteran Aussie rock act's new album, "Black Ice" (Columbia), expected to debut atop charts around the world after its Oct. 20 release, the set has also inspired big spikes in the band's global catalog sales.

"They're a bigger band now than they were five years ago, which is extraordinary," says Tim Prescott, CEO of Melbourne-based Albert Music, which licenses AC/DC to Sony BMG. "It's down to a fantastic job that Sony BMG/Columbia have done of really working the catalog."

The multipronged marketing push was geared around Father's Day, which falls on Sept. 8 in Australia. In the week ending Sept. 9, AC/DC became the first band to land six records on the Australian Recording Industry Assn.'s top 50 albums chart, led by "TNT" at No. 20. The national DVD chart also showed concert DVD "No Bull" at No. 1 and "Stiff Upper Lip Live" re-entering at No. 2.

One of the catalysts, Albert head of sales Tony Glover says, was a TV ad that promoted "Black Ice," the band's catalog releases and the Sept. 9 release of "No Bull." In September alone, AC/DC sold 100,000 catalog albums in Australia, Glover says. The picture is similar in the United States, where Wal-Mart is the exclusive retailer of "Black Ice."

"In America, there are still kids discovering the band every day," Columbia's New York-based VP of marketing Greg Linn says, citing the use of "Let There Be Rock" in "Rock Band 2."

"With our retail partners, it was about making sure plenty of catalog was out there between the 'No Bull' title, 'Rock N Roll Travails' at radio and concert tickets going on sale. All these things have built awareness."

Wal-Mart's aggressive in-store promotion of "Black Ice" was a game-changer, according to some senior distribution executives.

Wal-Mart has given AC/DC a store within a store in the young men's clothing department, with racks filled with AC/DC T-shirts and assorted merchandise. Wal-Mart will also be the exclusive retailer of the forthcoming AC/DC edition of "Rock Band."

"This is a band that wouldn't necessarily be gigantic, but Wal-Mart will make it a gigantic seller," Universal Music Group Distribution president/CEO Jim Une says.

Meanwhile, other U.S. retailers were also selling the so-called exclusive, either getting it from foreign wholesalers or buying it from Wal-Mart itself. For instance, Virgin Megastore locations in New York's Times Square and Union Square had the album. Virgin Entertainment Group North America CEO Mark Shmukler acknowledged that the retailer imported "Black Ice" but declined to say who its supplier was.

Sources say Wal-Mart sold 193,000 units of "Black Ice" in its first day of availability. Based upon that figure, industry executives project first-week U.S. sales for the album of anywhere from 500,000 to 900,000 units.

Although many AC/DC releases predate the Nielsen SoundScan era, the band now stands at No. 25 on the list of biggest-selling albums artists with 26.6 million copies sold since SoundScan began tracking data in 1991. Despite the lack of new product, the band has been steadily climbing that list—its was No. 28 at the end of 2007 with 25.7 million and No. 31 in 2006 with 24.5 million.

In the United Kingdom, anticipation for "Black Ice" has similarly boosted sales. According to the Official Charts Co., AC/DC's album weekly sales were up 46% month on month in September, with a further 86% month-on-month increase so far in October.

"The band has a great opportunity to reach out beyond their considerable core fan base and connect with a new, younger audience," says Rory Oronzo, head of music at market-leading U.K. music retailer HMV.

And such figures have been achieved despite—or maybe because of—the band's continued digital rollout.

"It's not as though the band made a decision quickly," Columbia's New York-based senior VP of digital marketing and business development Glenn Fresco says. "AC/DC has never lived in that space; it's not a space they feel comfortable in."

But while physical retailers are smiling, not everyone in the digital space is so happy.

"Their issue was with iTunes and its unwillingness to allow bundle-only sales," says Ben Drury, CEO of U.K. digital music store 7digital. "It's a shame if they penalize all digital services to make a point against one. The phrase is, 'Cutting off your nose to spite your face.'"

Global Newsline

Dido, Nash Honored At ASCAP Awards

The ASCAP Awards, held Oct. 15 at London's Grosvenor House Hotel, honored U.K. songwriters including Dido, Kate Nash and Annie Lennox. The song of the year honor went to John Beck and Steve Chrisanthou for EMI artist Corinne Bailey Rae's "Put Your Records On," while the Kooks won the ASCAP College Award for their debut album "Inside In/Inside Out" (Astralwerks). The awards recognize the most-performed works in 2007 by writer and publisher members of U.K. collecting society PRS, who are licensed by ASCAP for the United States. EMI Music Publishing U.K. managing director Guy Moot was named publisher of the year. Hosted by ASCAP senior VP of International Roger Greenaway and VP of membership Sean Devine, the ceremony also included a performance by Ashford & Simpson.

Barlow Takes Charge of Geffen U.K.

Universal Music Group is rolling out the Geffen label in the United Kingdom for the first time. Polydor co-president Colin Barlow has been appointed Geffen U.K. president. He will report to Universal Music U.K. chairman David Joseph. As well as signing and developing new artists, Geffen U.K. will be developing a TV production arm. Further plans will be announced in January, along with details of parallel publishing and artist management ventures. "With Geffen U.K. I want to create the hottest new company in the business, but it won't just be about records," Barlow said in a statement. "The difference to Geffen America was that it was an artist-led label and that is exactly what Geffen in the U.K. will become too." Geffen was founded in 1980 by record executive/film producer David Geffen, who sold the company to Universal Music in 1990.

Berklee College Builds European Business in Spain

The world's largest center of music and music business study since its founding in 1945, Berklee College of Music has won the public choice award for its score to Christophe Van Rompaey's film "Moscow, Belgium." —Ray Bennett

Dido, Nash Honored At ASCAP Awards

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Berklee College builds European business in Spain

The first stone of the European branch of Boston's Berklee College of Music has been laid in the Spanish Mediterranean city of Valencia. With 4,000 students and 500 teachers, Berklee has become part of the same Berklee College network that now includes 11 other schools around the world. —AP

Global Newsline

Badalamenti Scoops World Soundtrack Award

Veteran Hollywood film composers James Newton Howard and Angelo Badalamenti were among those honored at the eight annual World Soundtrack Awards, held Oct. 18 in association with the Ghent Film Festival in Belgium. Badalamenti picked up a lifetime achievement honor while Howard was named composer of the year for films including "Charlie Wilson's War." Other winners included British composer Dario Marianelli (best original film score for "Atonement"), Thomas Newman and Peter Gabriel for their "Wall-E" track "Down to Earth" (best original song written directly for a film) and "Let There Be Rock" (best composition for an advertisement). —AP

Opera Star Jenkins Signs 360 Warner Deal

Mezzo-soprano opera singer Katherine Jenkins has left Universal Classics & Jazz for an exclusive world-wide partnership with Warner Music Entertainment, a division of Warner Music Group. Jenkins and her management company Ban-dana Management will work with WME, sharing revenue across recorded music as well as other such revenue streams as sponsorship and merchandise. The first release under the 360 deal will be an album recorded with Grammy Award-winning American producer David Foster, who has worked with Michael Bublé, Josh Groban, Seal and Celine Dion. —AP
OFF THE HOOK
Mobile Music On Hold In Italy

MILAN—Mobile isn’t moving in Italy.

The music industry in the world’s eighth-biggest music market is hoping the arrival of new services in 2009 will kick-start its stalling mobile sector.

“Online music sales continue to grow in Italy, but mobile has reached an impasse,” says local IFPI affiliate FIMI president Enzo Mazza.

FIMI’s own figures, however, show that Mazza’s “impasse” is now a dramatic slump. The body says the trade value of mobile music sales plummeted by 38% during the first six months of 2008, down to €2.8 million ($3.3 million) from €4.5 million ($6.1 million) in the first semester of 2007.

That’s a “vertical collapse,” says Riccardo Uselli, managing director of Italian advertising-funded music downloads service Downlovers. While mobile sales slumped, online sales showed value growth of 30% from €2.7 million ($3.6 million) to €3.5 million ($4.7 million)—but the overall digital market’s trade value dropped by 8%. The digital market was worth €19.2 million ($26.3 million) in calendar 2007, according to the IFPI, with mobile music accounting for 53% of that.

Italy’s 58 million population has one of the world’s highest levels of mobile phone subscriptions in per-capita terms—more than 87 million, including 24 million with third-generation capabilities, according to IFPI figures.

(One of the world’s highest levels of mobile phone subscriptions in per-capita terms—more than 87 million, including 24 million with third-generation capabilities, according to IFPI figures.)

Universal Music Italy digital division manager Fabio Rivuzzi says that the high number of mobile subscriptions in Italy is potentially misleading. Industry research, he says, shows that many Italians “own several SIM cards, which they swap when talking to people on different networks.”

Mario Limongelli, president of independent labels body PMI, says Italy is now seeing the results of consumers losing interest in ringtones, “which proved to be a passing fad.”

One reason for that, Rivuzzi says, is that “prices for mobile services in Italy tend to be higher than in other countries. Mobile operators paid a lot of money for their licenses and therefore tend to charge more and take a higher cut on the music services.”

However, several insiders agree that many in the mobile content sector no longer view music as a strategic way of attracting customers. Rivuzzi says content aggregators have been keen to replace music—other than the biggest hit songs—with material like games, which are viewed as more attractive and can command higher prices.

Also contributing to “consumer disaffection” with mobile music offerings, BMG Ricordi labels senior VP/GM Andrea Rosi says, due to “a certain degree of deliberate vagueness about subscriptions, about what is free and what is to be paid for.”

Warner Music Italy new media director Paola Gregori agrees. “Operators began with pay-per-download but switched to the more nebulous subscription system,” Gregori says. “By trying to be a little too crafty, they lost the faith of consumers.”

The coming months may offer the record industry some solace. “We hope a lot of new business will be generated by the new subscription services due to launch,” Rivuzzi says.

First up is Nokia’s Comes With Music service, scheduled to launch in February 2009. The Nokia Music Store site opened in Italy “on an experimental basis” in April, Nokia music manager/Italy Andrea Montagnini says.

Negotiations are also under way among labels, Sony Ericsson and Vodafone for “all-you-can-eat” mobile services. (The July 11 launch of Apple’s iPhone in Italy came too late to affect FIMI’s figures.)

‘Online music sales continue to grow in Italy, but mobile has reached an impasse.’
—ENZO MAZZA, FIMI

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CITY OF HOPE’S MUSIC AND ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY PRESENTS

Songs of Hope V

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GLOBAL BY MARK WORDEN
A Night At The Opera

Live Classical Biz Targets Younger U.K. Audiences

M A N C H E S T E R, England—U.K. promoters and venues are trying to stop the far lady from singing for the classical concert business by targeting younger audiences.

With classical fare accounting for just 3.5% of total U.K. recorded music sales in 2007, according to labels body the BPI, and with concerns mounting about aging live audiences, a range of touring initiatives is bringing new fans to the genre.

National commercial classical-music network Classic FM recently signed a seven-figure sponsorship deal to promote a series of classical concerts at the O2 Arena and Indigo2 venues at the O2 entertainment complex in London. These include two 15,000-capacity performances of Carl Orff’s opera “Carmina Burana” at the arena in January 2009, the first traditional classical concerts held in the venue. The arena says 10,000 tickets have already been sold for the first night alone.

Classic FM managing director Darren Henley says the choice of a nontraditional venue is crucial to overcoming the perceived barriers to the enjoyment of live classical music—the protocols of when to talk, when to clap and what to wear.

“The O2 is a venue well-known for rock and pop,” he says. “We have a responsibility to engage with new audiences.”

Classic FM had a weekly reach of 5.5 million in the third quarter, according to audience measurement body RAJAR. Henley claims that “more people get their classical music from Classic FM than any other medium.”

The O2 will also play host to Blur/Gorillaz star Damon Albarn’s opera, “Monkey: Journey to the West,” which starts a monthlong residency Nov. 8 in a theater at the complex that is being built for the opera.

The show previously played seven dates at London’s Covent Garden Royal Opera House, which reports ticket sales of more than 14,000, with Albarn’s pop credentials proving a big draw among nontraditional opera fans. “Monkey” premiered at last year’s Manchester International Festival, moving 22,000 tickets for 12 performances, according to festival director Alex Poots, who is hoping for a similar crossover success next year with Rufus Wainwright’s new opera, “Prima Donna.”

“At least 20% of our [“Monkey”] audience had never been to an opera before,” Poots says. “Anecdotally, the ROH told us 90% of their ticket buyers had never been to Covent Garden before.”

The ROH also reached a new audience for its September production of Mozart’s “Don Giovanni,” via a low-cost ticket promotion with Britain’s biggest-selling daily tabloid newspaper, the Sun. The ROH says it had “thousands” of people signing up, with more than 90% of applications from first-time attendees. Meanwhile, EMI Classics Oct. 20 release of a CD of classically performed videogame music, “Video Games Live Volume One,” will coincide with a series of live global events, including a London show Oct. 24 at the 2,500-capacity Royal Festival Hall.

Composer/“Video Games Live” founder Tommy Tallarico says videogames are converting younger audiences to classical music the same way “Star Wars” and “Rocky” first interested him in the genre in the 70s.

“We constantly receive letters from parents telling us their children went to see our show and started taking violin lessons because they wanted to play the theme from ‘Halo,’ ‘Warcraft’ or ‘Kingdom Hearts,’” he says.


“People always want to hear the music they know and love,” he says. “It’s moving on from there to the more formal type of concerts that’s more difficult, but ‘Video Games Live’ and ‘Monkey’ are good ways of starting it.”

The audience for mainstream classical music is getting older and we need to address it fast.”

ROYALTY ROW

South African Publishers, Mobile Provider Battle In Court Over Downloads

J O H N E S B U R G—A court battle between a mobile music store and an authors’ body is highlighting a major divide over South Africa’s digital royalties.

The National Organization for Reproduction Rights in Music in Southern Africa (NORM) and Exact Mobile are waiting for a Cape Town court date to settle a dispute over the mechanical royalty rate on mobile phone downloads.

NORM—which represents all of South Africa’s major publishers—is claiming 2 million rand ($195,000) in damages and demanding Exact “cease infringing the copyright of its members” and pay royalties at 7.5% of the retail price, backdated to Jan. 1, 2006.

Exact’s defense says it has a valid agreement with NORM based on a sliding scale rate, starting at 15 cents (1 cent) for the first 150,000 downloads. NORM replaced that with the percentage rate in 2006. While the Wireless Application Service Providers’ Assn. (WASPA), of which Exact is a member, agrees that a percentage rate is the way forward, it says it should be fixed at 5%—which the 1978 Copyright Act states is the minimum percentage for copyright royalties in the absence of an agreement between two parties.

“We are a law-abiding company and that is what is required by the Copyright Act,” says Exact music content manager Gillian Ezra. “(Exact is currently paying NORM’s royalties into a holding account.)”

The current mechanical royalty rate for physical product is 6.76% of the wholesale price, but a digital rate hasn’t yet been set.

“The act has not been updated to incorporate the digital arena,” NORM board member and Sony/ATV managing director Jay Savage says. “(There is no correlation between digital rates and standard mechanical rates anywhere in the world primarily because of the nature of delivery has no similarity.)”

“International rates have a major influence on the rates that should be applied,” Universal Music Publishing executive VP of international Andrew Jenkins says. “An 8% download rate is paid in Europe, Latin America and Asia, and, like ringtones, (downloads) continue to attract significantly higher rates worldwide than those applying to physical sales. The digital world does not discriminate on territory, and the economics of bricks-and-mortar do not apply.”

But Exact director of portals and entertainment business Gavin Penkin, who is also head of WASPA’s licensing and music portfolio, says South Africa is “a very different market and should be treated as such.”

He claims Exact would go out of business if compelled to pay 7.5%, saying it currently keeps only 10% of the 20 rand ($1.95) retail price of a full-track download.

Meanwhile, WASPA has reached an agreement on 5% with the South African Recording Rights Assn., Ltd., which has an estimated 10% share of the publishing market.

“Five percent of something is better than 7.5% of nothing,” says Savage.

SARRAL GM of legal and corporate affairs Teboego Singo says, although his organization would like the act amended to a higher royalty rate.

That’s unlikely to happen anytime soon, however, with government departments seemingly divided over who would be responsible for driving any change in legislation.

In the meantime, publishers and authors are spoiling for the fight.

“Why should [South African musician] Hugh Masekela be paid 8% for downloads in Mexico, Poland or the Philippines and only 5% in South Africa?” Sony/ATV Music Publishing VP of international Guy Henderson asks.

Masekela agrees. “The South African music industry has a history of exploiting artists and songwriters, and nothing has changed,” he says. “Digital music users only want to pay the minimum set down by law, not what the owners of music are rightfully asking for.”
People need a concrete identification with the artist and need to have a CD or DVD in their hands. A singer is not a singer without an album.

Cris Morena

The creator of "Casi Angeles," "Rebelde Way" and other international tween TV hits talks about how she builds music franchises around her shows.

Long before the term "360" became part of the U.S. music industry's vocabulary, Argentine TV producer/composer/writer Cris Morena had perfected the concept.

Since the mid-1990s, Morena has been one of Latin America's leading producers of youth-oriented TV programming, specializing in tween-targeted shows that include a prominent musical component.

Her hit Argentine TV series "Chiquititas," "Fioricentita," "Casi Angeles" and "Rebelde Way" (which spawned the Mexican TV hit "RBD" and the group of the same name) have been broadcast in 35 countries. Morena also licenses the formats, which have resulted in local-language productions in more than a dozen countries, including Mexico, Brazil, Spain, Portugal, Israel and Turkey.

Morena creates multimedia franchises around each show that include top-selling albums (released via deals with such majors as Sony BMG and EMI), theatrical productions, magazines, merchandising, music publishing (Mardi Gras Publishing), tours, a retail store in Argentina and a recently launched Internet channel. Since 2002, Morena has run her own TV/music production company Cris Morena Group.

Most recently, Morena and her production and creative partners, RGB Entertainment (run by her ex-husband, impresario Gustavo Yankelevich) signed a three-year deal with Mexican media giant Televisa for the international exploitation and distribution of Cris Morena Group programming (billboard.biz, Oct. 9).

Morena's current projects include an 80-episode mobile-only series called "Atrapados," her first English-language series, "Jake & Blake," which she screened at the MIPCOM conference in Cannes in early October; and a new family-oriented musical series, "BB&B."
FIGHTING FOR THEIR RIGHT TO PARTY

JÄGERMEISTER. NAKED PLAYBOY PLAYMATES. TEQUILA SHOTS WITH MORNING RADIO DJS. AFTER ITS DEBUT ALBUM WENT DOUBLE-PLATINUM, HINDER RETURNS TO 'TAKE IT TO THE LIMIT'

BY MITCHELL PETERS
PHOTOGRAPHS BY FLORIAN SCHNEIDER
HINDER DRUMMER CODY HANSON and his bandmates just bought 120 bottles of Jägermeister. The Oklahoma City rock quintet recently installed a Jägermeister machine on its tour bus. ("It's just a machine with three bottles that go in upside down," Hanson says. "It keeps them at the perfect temperature, right above freezing.") It should come in handy for Hinder's upcoming headlining club tour, which is sponsored by the liquor company. On the road, the band guzzles about five bottles of Jäger per night, the drummer estimates. "We're partying and sharing a couple of them," he says, "but for the most part we're basically killing ourselves. It's a good time, so it's worth it." The party hasn't stopped since the release of Hinder's 2005 debut album, "Extreme Behavior," which has sold 2.7 million units in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan. And after more than two years of touring behind the album, which featured crossover radio hit "Lips of an Angel," Hinder will attempt to keep the momentum going with "Take It to the Limit," due Nov. 4 on Universal Republic.

"Take It to the Limit" is one of the label's most anticipated releases for the fall, and Universal Republic is putting all of its promotional muscle behind it. So far, it has already gotten a big push on radio, which was accompanied by monthly webisodes about the road to rock-focused Web sites. The group will also appear on "Jimmy Kimmel Live!" in early November, followed by a lengthy international tour.

"It's definitely round two," Hinder singer Austin Winkler says. "We got a little taste of what it's like and what our lives can be like on the road with 'Extreme Behavior,' and we want to take it to the next step."

For "Take It to the Limit," the group—Hanson, Winkler, guitarist Joe "Blower" Garvey, bassist Mike Rodden and guitarist Mark King—is connecting with its core rock fan base by selecting-in-your-face track "Use Me" as its first radio single. The song is No. 4 this week on the Mainstream Rock chart. Meanwhile, second single "Without You," an acoustic tinged ballad, recently went to all formats, including top 40, and has not yet charted.

"We felt it was really important to continue to go first to the rock base and then come with 'Without You,'" Universal Republic senior VP of marketing and artist development Kim Garner says. "It's important for us to keep their rock fan base, because ultimately they're a rock band.

Hinder's male fans should be pleased with the "Take It to the Limit" cover art: a photo of the quintet posing in front of a multimillion-dollar mansion and a bevy of Playboy Playmates. The album will be available in two versions: PG- and X-rated. Both feature the same cover, but the X-rated album, tagged with a warning sticker, contains photos inside of nude Playmates.

"It's a little twist to remind people that this is a rock band and they like to have fun," manager Kevin "Chief" Zaruk says. "It's shot very tastefully.

In another attempt to reach its rock demographic, Hinder has been releasing monthly webisodes about life on the road and the making of "Take It to the Limit" to various rock sites, including ultimate-guitar.com, artistdirect.com, tunnelambmusic.com, cagereattle.com, dailymotion.com and the about.com rock page.

The group launched a date Jägermeister Music tour Oct. 24 with support from hard rock groups Rev Theory and Trapt. Significant promotional dollars from Jägermeister fund national radio and print advertising for the U.S. trek that will visit 1,000- to 2,000-capacity venues through the end of the year. And since the record comes out on Nov. 4, we're going to have a song in the top three at rock radio and blazing up the charts at top 40," Zaruk says. Then, "we're going to tour the crap out of it for the next couple of years."

Although Hinder has remained relatively anonymous in Europe and the United Kingdom, the group plans to tour those regions in 2009, according to the Agency Group's Ken Fermaglich, who co-books the act in North America, Australia and Japan with Steve Kaul. Hinder is booked in the United Kingdom/Europe by TAG's Neil Warnock. The band also plans to tour next year in Australia, New Zealand and Japan.

Universal Motown Republic Group senior VP of international Kirk Harding says that Hinder failed to get any chart traction in Europe and the United Kingdom with "Extreme Behavior" because the label led with "Lips of an Angel" as the first radio single. Stateside, meanwhile, Hinder had already established itself at the rock format early on with "Get Stoned," which peaked at No. 4 on the Mainstream Rock chart and No. 37 on Modern Rock.

"We were essentially setting up on the back of a ballad, which made things particularly hard," Harding says. Harding is more optimistic that Hinder can break through on European and U.K. charts with the new album. "You see a lot of those major radio stations allowing hard rock bands onto playlists now," he says, citing Nickelback as an example. "It feels like the landscape has slightly changed."

Hinder did have an Australian hit, though, with "Lips of an Angel," which hit No. 1 on the Australian Recording Industry Assn. chart in February 2007, as did "Extreme Behavior."

The group returned to the studio with producer Brian Howes (who produced its debut album) for "Take It to the Limit." Most of the new album was written on the road, in addition to writing sessions in Florida and Canada. Primary songwriters Winkler and Hanson agree that "Take It to the Limit" is a "little more old-school-sounding" than "Extreme Behavior."

"You can see our influences come out," Hanson says, citing acts like Guns N' Roses, Mötley Crüe and Bon Jovi. "We do some things that haven't been done in a while, as far as the big gang vocals and hooks that you used to hear back in the day from our favorite rock bands."

Hinder's tender side comes out on "Far From Home," which reveals the hardships of maintaining a long-distance relationship while on the road, while "Up All Night" glorifies a "typical night on the town on the Hinder train," according to Winkler. (The latter song starts with the lyrics, "Saw a waitress, could'n't waste it/Opportunity knocks and you take it.")

And while it's been three years since its last album, through extensive touring the band has done some different things alongside such acts as Nickelback, 3 Doors Down, Aerosmith, Staind and Godsmack, the group has managed to remain in the public eye.

Radio stations were calling Universal after every interview, saying, "I haven't done an interview like that in 10 years."

KEVIN ZARUK, HINDER MANAGER

In 2007, Hinder grossed $4.4 million and drew more than 171,000 fans to 54 headlining concerts, according to Billboard Boxscore. A significant amount of those earnings came from last summer's Bad Boys of Rock amphitheater tour, which also featured support acts Buckcherry and Papa Roach.

Live Nation president of North Central music Rick Franks says that Hinder sold more than 13,000 tickets last summer for its first Bad Boys of Rock headlining show at the DTE Energy Music Theatre in Clarkson, Mich. Hinder has "all the tools for a very long career," Franks says, with a "great sound" and a "cool look."

Hinder's first road success began in markets around the band's home. In the months following the release of "Extreme Behavior," the act primarily performed in Midwest and Southern markets whose radio stations were playing "Get Stoned," according to Fermaglich. The band received a branding boost from adult film company Girls Gone Wild during a four-week winter club tour in 2006, with video crews filming the group and its college-leaning audiences.

Zaruk says the Girls Gone Wild trek was a blatant attempt to inform radio stations and press outlets that Hinder was a rock act. "We didn't want to sugarcoat it or hide the fact that they were an old-school rock band that has great songs and want to have fun," he says. "If there was any question about what kind of band these guys are, we let them know right away."

Living the rock star lifestyle has played to Hinder's advantage in more ways than one. On some tours, the group played concerts in the same market several times. So what keeps fans in those cities coming back during such a short period of time? "We take our shows and treat them like a party," Hanson says. "Everybody had that buddy in high school who always threw a party every weekend. And you had fun every time you went, so you just kept on going. That's kind of how our shows are."
Winkler says that partying on the road never gets old, but there are rare moments of regret. "We definitely draw the line when we go on YouTube and see a show that’s just absolutely dreadful," he says. "We know we partied too hard the night before. It happens every once in a while."

Winkler doesn’t hesitate to note that Hinder’s goal is to “bring back the fun of rock ’n’ roll,” last seen during the ’80s. “Rock ’n’ roll is supposed to be fun. It’s not supposed to be dark and depressing,” the singer explains. “We write about true-life experiences, and that’s why people connect with us so well.”

Hinder made its biggest connection with fans after the release of “Lips of an Angel,” its highest-charting and best-selling song to date. Everyone in the Hinder camp agrees that the track’s debut on top 40 radio was the turning point for the band, and replicating its success this time around may be difficult. The decision to follow “Get Stoned” with “Lips of an Angel” came during the Girls Gone Wild trek when Hanson received a phone call from Universal Republic senior VP of A&R Tom Mackay. It was a conversation that would soon change the course of Hinder’s career.

“Do me a favor,” Mackay told Hanson. “Spend the next week looking out in the crowd and talking to fans about what else they like on the album, so we can get some feedback about what the next single should be.”

Five shows later, Mackay got his answer. “Everybody and their mother are shitting their pants about ‘Lips of an Angel,’” Hanson told him. “It’s biker dudes in leather and 18-year-old girls. They’re all going nuts for it.”

Mackay, who signed Hinder after a bidding war among multiple major and indie labels, admits that he originally didn’t want “Lips of an Angel” to appear on “Extreme Behavior” (Hanson: “He said, ‘It sounds like a good B-side.’”) But the group insisted that the song, which reveals the hard-partying band’s more sensitive side, would be a breakthrough smash.

“We weren’t just going to have our A&R guy tell us the song couldn’t be on the record,” Winkler says. “We knew the monster hit that ‘Lips of an Angel’ was.” Radio airplay from the song eventually helped Hinder tap into a mainstream audience.

“Lips of an Angel” debuted on Billboard’s various rock radio airplay charts in April 2006, and after experiencing success in that format it crossed over to top 40 outlets. The track bowed on the Mainstream Top 40 chart Aug. 26, 2006, spending three weeks at No. 1. It peaked at No. 3 in October 2006 on the Billboard Hot 100.

“You could almost see it overnight,” Zaruk recalls. “One night they’re playing ‘Lips of an Angel’ and the crowd’s pretty into it, and a week later we’re opening for Nickelback and there’s 10,000 people singing every word at the top of their lungs.”

Between October and December 2006, with a major boost from “Lips of an Angel” “Extreme Behavior” was selling an average of 81,000 copies per week, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The song went on to sell 2 million ringtones, according to Nielsen RingScan, and has sold 2.3 million digital downloads.

Hinder’s success at radio comes as no surprise to KTDB Houston PD Don Jantzen, whose rock station was an early adopter of “Lips of an Angel.” “Everybody gets it,” he says. “I could play ‘Lips of an Angel’ for my mom, who is 66, and she would say, ‘That’s great!’ It’s a really broad brush that they paint with.”

For the new album’s first single, “Use Me,” KTDB has been playing it about 15 times per week, according to Jantzen, who says listeners are reacting positively to the track.

Establishing good relationships with radio programmers has played a large role in Hinder’s rise on the charts. During its early visits to stations for on-air interviews and acoustic performances, the band would bring along Hinder-branded tequila bottles. A few shots later, the group was making influential new friends.

“Whether it was seven at night or seven in the morning, they walked in with a case of beer, a bunch of shot glasses and a tequila bottle and said, ‘OK, let’s have a good interview,’” Zaruk says. “Radio stations were calling Universal after every interview, saying, ‘I haven’t done an interview like that in 10 years.’”

HINDER HOOKS UP WITH MALOOF ROLODEX

Hinder can add the Maloof family to its list of influential friends. The rock act is hoping to cash in on the four Maloof brothers’ long list of corporate connections via a new partnership with Maloof Music & Entertainment, a company overseen by partners Phil Maloof and Tony Guanci.

The Maloof family is perhaps best-known for its ownership of the NBA’s Sacramento Kings and the Palms Casino Resort in Las Vegas, but they have business relationships across numerous industries that could aid the band. “Basically, they’re going to act as a marketing company,” Hinder manager Kevin “Chief” Zaruk says, noting that Maloof and Guanci will use their business ties to seek branding and sponsorship opportunities for Hinder.

Zaruk declined to reveal the financials of the deal, but he says Maloof Music & Entertainment will “take a percentage off of money that they bring in.” So far, the agreement will only span the duration of Hinder’s forthcoming sophomore album, “Take it to the Limit.” “When you go with a marketing agency, which is great, there’s one owner and he has all the lieutenants working,” Maloof says. “With us, we’re out there meeting face to face with the CEO of Carl’s Jr. and Coca-Cola. We have more of a personal relationship.”

Zaruk adds, “There are so many unique things you can bring in that record labels can’t bring in, because, frankly, they’re understaffed these days and too busy trying to keep their own heads out of water.”

But Maloof Music & Entertainment isn’t looking to replace record labels, according to Guanci. “We’re a complement of those things,” he says, pointing to an up-coming promotion he and Maloof put together involving Carl’s Jr. Coca-Cola and Interscope rock act Rev Theory. Although no new deals had been locked down as a result of the Maloof/Hinder partnership at press time, the ideas were already flowing. “We’re talking about a Hinder credit card with Wells Fargo Bank,” Zaruk says. “Miller has a new beer called Miller 64, and it’s the lowest calorie beer on the market, it would be cool to bring them on as a [tour] sponsor.”

To help celebrate the new partnership, Maloof and Guanci are throwing Hinder an album release party Oct. 30 at the $40,000-per-night Hugh Hefner Sky Villa at the Palms. Hinder is also scheduled to perform that night at the 2,400-capacity Pearl located at the Palms Casino Resort. “They’re flying in every sponsor and every company that they’ve ever worked with,” Zaruk says.

Universal Republic senior VP of A&R Tom Mackay says the deal represents Hinder aiming for outside revenue streams. “It just shows you what these bands are doing now,” he says. “There’s absolutely no fear of the ins, commercial work and branding as long as they believe in it.”
On a typically gray London day this summer, four young men in Armani suits gathered in front of Buckingham Palace to mark the handover of the Olympic Games from Beijing to London in 2012.

With British flags waving in the crowd below them, Il Divo—an American/French/Swiss/Spanish quartet that has done operatic pop renditions of hits in several languages—marked the occasion with a performance of Mariah Carey’s “Hero.” In Spanish.

Surreal though it was, the performance may have been just the right choice for a modern international extravaganza. Like the Olympics, Il Divo is marketed with fervor in many languages and countries around the world. Recruited by and signed in the United Kingdom to Sony executive/reality show mogul Simon Cowell’s Syco label, the group has sold 22 million copies worldwide, according to the label, scoring top 10 albums in 21 countries (including Greece, Wallonia, Finland, Portugal, New Zealand—and the United States, where it has gone to No. 1 on the Billboard 200 and sold 4 million copies of its albums, according to Nielsen SoundScan).

And now Il Divo—made up of singers Urs Buhrer, David Miller, Sébastien Izambard and Carlos Marin—is getting another ally with worldwide reach: Live Nation. With its newest set, “The Promise”—arriving Nov. 18 in the States on Syco/Columbia (and Nov. 10 in about 30 other countries)—Syco is pooling its Web site user databases with those of Live Nation in order to target classical crossover fans online for exclusive Il Divo content. Live Nation is promoting all dates on the act’s next tour, scheduled to begin in mid-February in the United Kingdom, and has exclusive rights to Il Divo’s merchandise, tour sponsorships, fan club and VIP packages.

What we are trying to do is offer an Il Divo fan every possible service,” Syco Entertainment managing director Sonny Takhar says. “That includes everything from the album all the way through to tickets to merchandising in a one-stop shop.”

One idea is to bundle packages of tickets with the album. On the merch side, about 40% of Il Divo’s sales so far have come from program books, manager Peter Rudge says, with the rest coming from T-shirts, mouse pads and other items. On the group’s last tour, merch brought in “about $1 million. It’s not massive—it’s not by the standards of the Jonas Brothers—but I think we’re going to ramp that up this time.”

By the time “The Promise” is released, Sony labels in at least 10 countries will each have access to the content management system of IlDivo.com, Sony senior director of global marketing Karen Lieberman says. In a growing trend, the local labels will be able to post Il Divo news and tour information in their home country’s language and include purchase links to local retailers. Users are directed automatically to a unique version of the site based on their IP address, although the user format remains constant.

In the last couple of months, Sony has begun rolling out such “global sites” for AC/DC, Kings of Leon, the Script and Leona Lewis. But the benefit of partnering with Live Nation on Il Divo’s site, Lieberman says, “is that we’ll reach all the fans, whether they’ve seen a live show or bought an album.”

Results have been promising so far. Lieberman says IlDivo.com went from a weekly average of 100,000 page views before the site’s Sept. 23 relaunch to about 267,000 weekly page views at press time—and those figures didn’t include six more countries that were yet to come onboard.

While digital downloads account for less than 1% of Il Divo’s U.K. sales, according to Takhar (and 1.7% of U.S. sales, according to Nielsen SoundScan), “it doesn’t mean they’re not interacting on the Web. They may be ordering on Amazon or Borders, Target, Best Buy, Wal-Mart and Tesco.”

The label is devoting a great deal of attention to Amazon, which will hold a contest where the winner will be flown to see an Il Divo concert next year in the United Kingdom, Columbia senior VP of marketing John Doelp says. Amazon also will premiere the video for one of the songs from a live performance that Il Divo taped in September at an ancient Roman arena in Pula, Croatia.

Amazon has “the perfect audience for Il Divo,” says Doelp, who characterizes the group’s typical demo as “45-plus, majority female.” In turn, Amazon has “sold a lot of Il Divo over the years, so it made sense to try to forge that relationship a little further.”

Footage from the Croatia performance of songs from “The Promise” will be used in spots for a retailer and the album, as well as for a bonus DVD in a “luxury edition” of the album. This version, which also contains interviews on the DVD and a poster,
is not exclusive to a particular retailer, but stores including Target, Barnes & Noble, Borders, Kmart and Trans World will receive their own bonus material, Doelp says. "The majority of our business is so driven to the physical side that they're more of the partners we want to be in business with."

Beyond tailoring its Web and retail strategy to its audience, II

License To II
Thanks to a new push with Amazon, II Divo looks to continue its chart success.

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What we are trying to do is offer an II Divo fan every possible service.
—SONNY TAKHAR, SYCO ENTERTAINMENT

Divo is again focusing intensely on media appearances. The group has moved mainly physical product by putting its music where people are around the world gather: in front of the tube. The group has booked appearances on "Good Morning America," "Live With Regis and Kelly," a Paris LaBelle Christmas special, "X Factor"—owned by Simon and produced by talkbackThames (part of the FremantleMedia group) and Syco TV—and top morning shows in Japan.

"There isn't a natural radio format for II Divo," Takhar says. "The priorities are to get the band on the biggest TV shows in the world, full-stop, with the largest audiences." (After appearing on "The Oprah Winfrey Show" in December 2006, the band experienced a 128% increase in U.S. sales for its last album, "Siempre," according to Nielsen SoundScan.)

In the States, that also means Spanish-language TV, where II Divo will for the first time make a focused pitch to the Latin market. The group has taped national programs in Miami, such as Univision's morning show "Despierta America," a coveted spot for Latin acts. And "we're going to talk to the telenovelas and use that medium of television to continue the exposure of II Divo," Doelp says.

And while it may be quintessentially an international group, II Divo has made particularly strong inroads in Latin America, selling 1 million copies of its albums in the region, according to the label.

About half of those sales have come from Miami, where II Divo went platinum with "Siempre" for sales of more than 100,000 copies, according to trade group Amprofon. II Divo headed to Mexico for promotion immediately after its Miami stop.

Sony Music Latin America marketing VP Fernando Cabral says the label is pitching II Divo to wireless carriers in the region in hopes of securing a mobile preloads deal for "The Promise." (Such deals are becoming de rigueur for priority label releases in a region where piracy dominates.)

"Unlike II Divo's fans in other parts of the world, "I don't know if I would entirely categorize them as appealing to an older audience in this region," Cabral says. II Divo's "Regresa A Mi," from its first release, received airplay in the region after it was used in telenovelas in Mexico and Brazil, Cabral says.

Based to some degree on feedback from labels in the territories, "we pick the tracks to perform that we think we are going to connect with the audience in each of those countries," Rudge says.

Stateside, Columbia also has its sights set on locations "where the fans are and are living their regular lives," Doelp says, to convert new II Divo fans. That means ambient music at clothing stores, restaurants and possibly on video monitors at grocery stores, he says.

Following up TV performances with touring has been key, Rudge says. He expects II Divo to play about 150 dates behind "The Promise" in the next two years, hitting the States, Europe, Canada, Asia, Australia and New Zealand by October 2009. South Africa, Latin America and other markets are expected to follow.

Concertgoers will see II Divo dressed exclusively in Armani, which has stepped up its relationship with the group since the members' stylist dressed them in the Italian designer's suits for their first album cover. In addition to outfitting II Divo for the tour, Armani is sponsoring an album release party Oct. 20 in Barcelona. "We are currently discussing other opportunities with Mr. Armani and his team," Takhar says.

Besides the return of Armani, II Divo has other creative minds back on its team. In addition to the return of longtime producer Steve Mac, Spanish translations were done mainly by crossover king Rudy Perez (who got Beyoncé and Christina Aguilera to roll their R's). The new album includes Spanish covers of Abba's "The Winner Takes It All" (here titled "Va Todo Al Ganador"), Leonard Cohen's "Hallelujah," Frankie Goes to Hollywood's "The Power of Love" and an Italian version of Charles Aznavour's "She." There are also originals from returning songwriter Jorgen Elofsson, Andreas "Quiz" Romdhane and Josef Larossi.

"That power ballad format, we know how to do that now," says II Divo member Bulsher, a Swiss tenor. "Now we're eager to try something else and make it our own. Whether that's faster or a bit more subtle in the dynamics or something more classical or more rock-y, there's a lot of ways to go."

"Artistically it's very challenging, no matter what some other people, particularly opera lovers, might think," says Bulsher, who has a master's degree in opera interpretation. "There's always a lot of stuff that drops out because we can't get it to sound right."

Bulsher auditioned for II Divo while in London singing in a production of Handel's "Samson" oratorio. "I had never heard of Simon Cowell. I didn't have a TV at the time," he recalls. All he knew was that "it was for some record company, and they were looking for lyric tenors, southern European-looking."

Bulsher adds that he and his bandmates are comfortable interpreting songs in several languages. In an international genre like opera, "you're used to listening to a vocal coach and [imitating] the accent and making it sound as good as you possibly can," Bulsher says.

If that's the case, one might think II Divo could simply re-release a Spanish album in Latin America, an Italian version in Italy, a French version in France, etc. But "we don't try to change it or manipulate it for individual markets," Rudge says.

"We don't have a place to sit in a kind of clearinghouse for us to tell us what songs are working and what songs aren't," Rudge says. "We're not in the singles game. We're in the II Divo game."

Additional reporting by Mark Sutherland in London.

NOVEMBER 1, 2008 | www.billboard.biz | 25
Kathy Nelson, You Rock!

Congratulations From
Your Friends At Universal Pictures
On Being Named One Of
The "Top 20 Women In Music!"
Billboard’s Power Players series, now in its fourth year, highlights the achievements of individuals and companies that drive the fields of music and entertainment forward with their artistic and business vision.

This fourth annual Women in Music report demonstrates that female executives are increasingly leading the companies and trade organizations that are making a difference in our industry. Indeed, as we’ve noted before, this list reads like a tally of the top 20 people in the music business who happen to be women. The list reflects a broad range of sectors within our business.

Our Women in Music list of executives is selected and ranked by Billboard’s editorial staff. Billboard editors vote on several criteria: the ability of the executive to greenlight major projects, the success of that executive in the previous 12 months and the professional demeanor and leadership demonstrated by the executive.

But perhaps the most notable aspect of this list is that these executives are, in fact, representative of a far greater number of women who are shaping the future of our business. We salute them all as we proudly present this year’s Women in Music report. —Thom Duffy
Julie Greenwald
President, Atlantic Records

The No. 1 debut of T.I. on the Billboard 200 extends a 2008 winning streak for Atlantic Records under president Julie Greenwald with hits for acts including Kid Rock, Danity Kane, Paramore, Lupe Fiasco, Jason Mraz, Plies and the "Juno" soundtrack, along with great expectations for newcomers like Estelle and Carolina Liar. According to Nielsen SoundScan, Atlantic's label share for overall album units year to date is 7.06%, up 21% year-on-year. Yet Greenwald has also been brave enough to take chances, declining to sell Kid Rock's hit album "Rock N Roll Jesus" via iTunes and experimenting with the withdrawal of Estelle's "American Boy" single from digital download stores. Greenwald maintains her optimism and energy despite working in an industry she compares to trying to "build a business on quicksand. Breaking artists, motivating my staff, [retaining] my staff and the fact there's no turnover here" are Greenwald's points of pride. "We're winning [because] my staff really stays together and they all enjoy fighting with each other to get what they all need." Such initiatives as the launch in September of MySpace Music help Atlantic, along with other labels, "just by embracing the ways that people consume music [and] making it easier for them to do so."

Judy McGrath
Chairman/CEO, MTV Networks

Britney Spears wasn't the only winner of 2008 at MTV's Video Music Awards. The show drew 8.4 million viewers, a 19% increase over 2007, according to Nielsen Media Research. It was one of several winning moments last year for MTV Networks chairman/CEO Judy McGrath. Although McGrath oversees other channels like Comedy Central and Nickelodeon, music remains a focus for her as she navigates the transition to a multiplatform world. In July, MTV prepared for that world by launching Soundtrack, a Web site that contains a real-time listing of all the music played on every MTV show and every MTV channel, complete with streaming clips, artist profiles and, yes, videos. Meanwhile, MTV followed up its flagship videogame franchise "Rock Band," which has sold more than 3.5 million units, according to NPD Group, with the September launch of "Rock Band 2," while developer and MTV subsidiary Harmonix created an iPod version of the game called "Phase." And in the mobile realm, MTV tapped off-deck ringtone provider Thumbplay to create a personalized content portal that may soon include full-song downloads.

Sylvia Rhone
President, Universal Motown Records

The No. 1 story this year for Universal Motown—and one of the high-water marks for the record business—is the million-unit first-week debut of Lil Wayne's "Tha Carter III." Marking the highest first-week sales in Universal Motown history, the album sold 1.8 million units in the chart's top 15. "What's so rewarding about Wayne's success," Universal Motown president Sylvia Rhone says, "is that it proves that when the music is there, the consumer is there." Year to date, the label share of overall album units for Universal Motown Group (which includes Universal Motown and Universal Republic) reached 5.43%, according to Nielsen SoundScan, a year-on-year rise of 29%. Since joining Universal Motown four years ago, Rhone has been committed to a key goal: diversifying the label's roster, which now includes rock and pop and ranges from such established artists as Lil Wayne, Akon, Nelly and Erykah Badu to rising acts Forever the Sickest Kids, SafetySuit and Shontelle. "We've hitted our stride this year with a range and depth of artists that have made us major presence in the U.S. and internationally," Rhone says.

Kathy Willard
Executive VP/CFO, Live Nation

For Live Nation, the past year has brought groundbreaking multimedia deals with Madonna, U2 and Jay-Z and executive VP/CFO Kathy Willard crunched the numbers for those deals, while also preparing for the launch of Live Nation's ticketing division in early 2009. Through second-quarter 2008, Live Nation reported revenue of $1.2 billion, up 18% from the same period last year. Year-on-year, total attendance at concerts increased 14% and revenue per fan rose 6%. Willard, who reports to Live Nation president/CEO Michael Rapino, says of her role in the company's deal-making: "It's about executing and providing the returns to the artist and showing our investors the return on those initial investments." Another: focus this year was selling off Live Nation's North American television business and its motorsport division, which was a strategic move to focus the company's core business on music operations, she says. Since joining Live Nation predecessor SFX as controller in 1998, Willard has aimed to "make sure we're doing deals that make sense for the company and are focused on maintaining a strong balance sheet." Prior to SFX, Willard was director of finance for Bailey Network Management Division. She has also served in executive roles at the Dean McGee Eye Institute and Arthur Andersen.

Jody Gerson
Executive VP of U.S. creative, Sony/ATV Music Publishing

Earlier this year, former EMI Music Publishing executive VP Jody Gerson took the same role at Sony/ATV and the move, she says, fueled her ambition on behalf of artists and catalogs. "Going from where I grew up in the business and starting to build at Sony/ATV has made me hungry," Gerson says. Her recent achievements include the signings of Lady Gaga ("Not only an amazing artist, but a writer") and Johnsta Austin: "It's really my relationships with artists and writers that make me excited to come in every day," she says, also pointing to such Sony/ATV writers as Shakira, Linda Perry and Akon -- "and the Beatles, of course." For Gerson, a publisher's challenge today is: "We have to create opportunities from songs and writers." For example, she's now looking at the Leiber & Stoller catalog "to preserve and grow their legacy through branding opportunities or music-intensive film and theater projects." Sony/ATV held an 18.6% U.S. market share on the Publisher Airplay chart in second-quarter 2008, just below Universal Music Publishing Group's 18.83% share, according to tracking by Nielsen BDS and the Harry Fox Agency.

Sue Peterson
Senior buyer, Target Stores

Sue Peterson earns a spot on this list via her achievements in the past year in two different music buying teams, reporting to VP of entertainment Darrell Tucker. She is in her third year as NARM chairman and in overseeing Target's 14-strong music-buying team—including buyers, business analysts and merchandising specialists—Peterson will be in charge of the label group that controls about $1.2 billion in annual music sales (down from $1.3 billion in 2007). Billboard estimates. Peterson is also a member of the board of the Country Music Assn. and is the first executive to chair NARM for three years running. "Even though she represents a large company, she is very sensitive to the industry as a whole and to the broad perspective of the organization," NARM president Jim Donio says. During her NARM tenure, she has steered the trade group through some key initiatives, including sustainable packaging, its 50th anniversary this year and its preparation for new formats.

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You Rule!

Julie Greenwald
& Andrea Ganis

On being named two of Billboard's Top 20 Women in Music
Imagine coordinating the simultaneous release of independent music compilations from seven major music markets worldwide, with supporting media coverage. Under the leadership of its president, Alison Wenham, the Worldwide Independent Network staged its inaugural Independents Day promotion during the July 4 weekend. Wenham is also a member of the executive committee of the AIM. AIM’s 800 members represent some 20% of the U.K. music market, and W&L comprises trade associations in 30 countries that constitute a similar share of the global market. This year also saw the creation of the AIM-linked Assoc. of Independent Festivals with an initial membership of some 30 organizers or owners of independent music events.

Julie Swidler
Executive VP of business affairs/general counsel
Sony BMG Music Entertainment

“We are businesses that are transitioning to new business models along with new methods of distributing music,” says Julie Swidler, who in the past year made her transition from executive VP of business and legal affairs at the BMG U.S. Label Group to the same responsibilities on a global level for Sony BMG Music Entertainment. (In the United States, Sony BMG Music Entertainment has a year-to-date label share in overall album units of 24.07%, down 0.66% from the same period last year.) In her new role, Swidler provides guidance to Sony BMG labels and operating units on issues including artist and employment contracts, third-party agreements, digital technology issues, strategic negotiations, transactional matters and litigation. She is also a member of the company’s executive committee. The new role presented “an amazing opportunity,” she says. “Now I have the ability to really see our challenges as a company and be part of the decision-making process in our strategy for the future.”

Lisa Ellis
Executive VP, Sony Music Label Group

When Maxwell made a surprise appearance on this year’s BET Awards telecast, helping promote his album coming Oct. 29, Lisa Ellis was behind the scenes, making it happen. The former president of Sony Urban Music, Ellis is now executive VP of Sony Music Label Group, working closely with Sony chairman Rob Stringer on projects ranging from the digital realm to green initiatives. But Ellis also stays hands-on with artists’ projects, including Maxwell’s new set, John Legend’s third studio album, “Evolver”; and the debut CD from actor Terrence Howard, “Shine Through It.” Also on her radar for next year: the sophomore set from R&B singer Alice Smith (“Janis Joplin meets Amy Winehouse”) and Wyclef Jean’s “Music Fury” album, which he’ll launch via a marketing initiative with Motorola. Sony Music Label Group has an 11.42% label share in overall album units year to date, up from 11.26% for the same period last year, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Alexandra Patsavas
Owner, Chop Shop Music Supervision

Alexandra Patsavas almost had a very bad year. As owner of Chop Shop Music Supervision, she watched the 2007 TV season be sharply curtailed by the writer’s strike between November 2007 and February 2008. A shorter TV season meant less work for Patsavas, who handles music supervision duties for such shows as “Gossip Girl” (which averages 3.5 million viewers, according to Nielsen Media Research), “Mad Men” (1.6 million), “Chuck” (6.6 million), “Grey’s Anatomy” (18.4 million) and “Private Practice” (8 million). Instead of wallowing in her predicament, Patsavas turned her attention to her year-old record label Chop Shop Records, an entity of Atlantic.

“I was able to concentrate on the label during the strike,” she says. “We have three full-length albums—from Jade McNeilis, the Little Ones and Anna Marina—to look forward to finishing.” In addition, by collaborating with “Gossip Girl” creators Stephanie Savage and Josh Schwartz, Patsavas compiled “OMFGG: Original Music Featured on Gossip Girl,” which has sold 3.000 units, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The first companion soundtrack to the teenage soap drama was released digitally Sept. 2, and a physical CD will arrive Oct. 28. Patsavas is credited with giving wider exposure to Snow Patrol’s “Chasing Cars” and the Fray’s “How to Save a Life” after both were heard on “Grey’s Anatomy.”

Kathy Nelson
President of film music, Universal Pictures

“It’s one of those things that comes around once in a while,” Kathy Nelson says of “Miranda Mut,” the soundtrack to the film adaptation of the Broadway smash featuring the music of ABBA, which topped the Billboard 200 and has sold 1 million units, according to Nielsen SoundScan. While that project was a highlight of Nelson’s year as president of film music for Universal Pictures, she’s turned her attention to new projects including “Milk” and “The Wolfman,” working with longtime collaborator, composer Danny Elfman. Other projects under Nelson’s musical wing include “Confessions of a Shopoholic,” which reunites her with film producer Jerry Bruckheimer, who she teamed with on such past multiplatinum soundtrack hits as “Armageddon” and “Demonic Minds.” Nelson says, “It’s a great time for music and working on films in music, as good as it’s ever been. And maybe better, because people are a little more refined in what they notice, so we’ve all had to step up our game.”
SylVia,

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2008 BILLBOARD WOMEN IN MUSIC HONOREES
Marilyn Bergman
Chairman/president, ASCAP

Under the leadership of chairman/president Marilyn Bergman, ASCAP reports that its total revenue for 2007 was $863 million, a 10% increase over 2006, while it also saw a 13% rise in members to 330,000. For Bergman, her goal this year was to continue standing up for songwriters and composers in the nation's capital. "My mission is to make sure lawmakers understand the essential role provided by those who create music," says Bergman, who simultaneously continues her award-winning career as a lyricist in collaboration with her husband, Alan. Bergman also recently launched ASCAP's third successful Expo with a "Bill of Rights for Songwriters and Composers" and advanced the work of the ASCAP Foundation's Children Will Listen program. This initiative, which began in 2006, has taken ASCAP's message of music appreciation to hundreds of students. Bergman also oversees ASCAP's ongoing fight for fair compensation for digital use of its members' copyrights.

Amanda Marks
Executive VP/GM of digital distribution, Universal Music Group Distribution

In the past year, Amanda Marks, executive VP/GM of digital distribution for Universal Music Group Distribution, has pushed outside of the digital box. BMG sources focused on bringing new players and consumer segments into the marketplace with new business models that "don't easily fit into the boxes and systems we had set up," Marks says. That approach has allowed UMG to benefit from new relationships with the likes of YouTube, imeem and MySpace. "All of these opportunities provide us with the ability to earn revenue where we had none before," she adds. As a result, Universal and its combined distribution market share for albums and digital track-equivalent albums total 31.9% year to date, down slightly year-on-year from 32.4%, according to Nielsen SoundScan. NARM president Jim Donio says of Marks: "She brings a breadth of experience, knowledge and sensitivity to how the industry is changing to help move digital forward." Marks began her music career with a group of entrepreneurs that had a small cluster of companies involved in expediting tours. But she then stepped outside the industry to work for Human Rights Watch and then Human Rights First before returning to the business and the legal affairs department at Mercury Records. When PolyGram merged with Universal, Marks helped write the business plan for Jimmy and Doug's Farmclub.com.

Lynn Hazan-DeVaull
Executive VP/GM, RED Distribution

RED Distribution increased its distribution market share to 3.4% for the year to date, according to Nielsen SoundScan, up from 2.7% year-on-year. Its share has grown every year since 2005 when Lynn Hazan-DeVaull joined the company. In her role as RED's executive VP/GM, Hazan-DeVaull works closely with RED president Bob Morelli. In the past year, she has focused on adding services for the company's distributed labels, including new online marketing and promotional tools. "My role is fostering teamwork and making sure we execute the mission by integrating all the drivers across all the departments," Hazan-DeVaull says. "I think we have the best team out there and it is exciting to be a part of that." Hazan-DeVaull has also been an intern at management company RZO, a tour accountant for Lollapalooza, a CFO of ICA and has worked with the international finance group at BMG. Morelli notes that Hazan-DeVaull also serves as RED's CFO and "assists me in overall operations and in matters of business affairs, and she does all aspects of her job very well. She is the quintessential high-end multipatker."

Kate Ramos
Senior VP of touring alliances, Live Nation

Some 649,000 fans have seen the Jonas Brothers so far on their Burning Up Tour this year, and the marketing message from tour sponsor Burger King reached those hungry kids through the lens of the band's senior VP of touring alliances for Live Nation. The Australian native honed her sponsorship expertise in the U.S. Latin market with the stateside arm of Mexican live entertainment giant C.I.F. and later with Vivelo, the joint touring venture of Clear Channel and Televisa. Live Nation's 360 deal with Shakira means Ramos will help launch everything from product lines to coordinated fan club strategies. "We're involved in all aspects of Shakira Inc.," Ramos says. Also in 2008, Ramos "bargy"—the ING-sponsored Junto Es Concierto tour—returned for its fourth year, this time pairing Marc Anthony and Alejandro Fernandez. A setlist at New York's Madison Square Garden grossed $1.4 million from 14,693 tickets sold, all according to Billboard Boxscore. "It's hard sometimes to have all parties in agreement," Ramos says, "but when all the pieces fit, there's no better feeling."

Andrea Ganis
Executive VP, Atlantic Records

Atlantic Records executive VP Andrea Ganis says that during the past year, "the combination of great A&R, tremendous marketing and promotion have put us back where we like to be." With what she describes as her "focused, tenacious" promotion team, Ganis ticks off multiple success stories: "T.I. is currently exploding at several formats," she says. "The stateside success Estelle is experiencing replicates her worldwide status. Shine- down is turning a decisive sales corner with a great third album. Death Cab for Cutie sells platinum-plus with their mystique intact. Staind continues to rock lyrically with very different audiences, and Beckcherry is embraced at adult [formats] while never losing a shred of their badass persona. And then there's Kid Rock and his multiformal hit "All Summer Long," which sent his album "Rock N Roll Jesus" up the Billboard 200. Coming up: "Carolina Liar, Laura Izibor, Serena Ryder and Janelle Mon". Ganis says, "We're looking forward to the journey each of them will take us on."

"Only one man in a thousand is a leader of men, the other 999 follow women."

Groucho Marx

Congratulations to

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Chairman & CEO, BET Networks  
Chairman & CEO, MTV Networks

Our favorites among the Billboard Top 25 Women in Music

Cheers to all the honorees
Billboard is proud to salute three trailblazing artists at the third annual Women in Music breakfast, to be held Oct. 24 at New York's St. Regis Hotel. All three have inspired the industry with their success, leadership and new ideas.

**Ciara**

By Gail Mitchell

One word pinpoints the driven force known to music fans as Ciara: determination. That natural-born talent—no longer a publishing deal at 15—hasn’t looked back since her 2003 high school graduation when she wrote that her goal has become a professional singer.

In the last five years, the Atlanta-based singer/songwriter has achieved that and more. Bursting on the scene in 2004 with back-to-back pop hits (the No. 1 “Goodies” and No. 2 “1, 2 Step”), Ciara has notched a host of Billboard Hot 100 hits on her own (“Promise”) and with others ("Like You" with Bow Wow) as well as two platinum albums (2004's "Goodies" and 2006's "Ciara: The Evolution"). Now, as she looks ahead to the early-2009 release of third album “Fantasy Ride,” Ciara celebrates another career milestone: being named Billboard's Woman of the Year at the Oct. 24 Women in Music breakfast in New York.

"Every time I step out to do my job as an entertainer and a businesswoman, I'm representing the everyday woman," Ciara says. "That's what motivates me to keep things going and to be the best woman I can be."

Ciara's determination and discipline are rooted in her upbringing. The only child of an Army dad and an Air Force mom, she lived in Germany, New York, California, Arizona and Nevada before her family settled in Atlanta. Opting to go solo when a girl-group stint didn't work out, Ciara later met producer Jazze Pha and signed with his Sho’Nuff label.

That and other collaborations yielded her first album and the sobriquet “princess of crunk & B,” thanks to the Lil Jon-produced, no-means-no female anthem “Goodies.” But beyond the crunk and funk, the newcomer artfully introduced several other talents: ear-catching vocals, eye-catching dance moves and message-sending lyrics.

It all adds up to a relatability factor that Zomba Label Group executive Lisa Cambridge-Mitchell declares is the propellant behind Ciara's fast-rising success. "There's something about Ciara that's very relatable and accessible," says Cambridge-Mitchell, who as VP of marketing is developing the campaign for Ciara's upcoming album. "Whether she's pushing the envelope musically or being creative visually, there's something about her that fans—particularly young girls—can see in themselves. She's a young woman coming into her own, extremely focused on pushing her artistry."

It's a more confident and musically creative Ciara who will be taking fans on a "Fantasy Ride" next year. The set finds the singer/songwriter expanding on her dance and crunk roots while exploring her sensual side. Leading the charge is current single and uptempo female anthem “Go Girl" featuring T-Pain.

"This album is about having fun through music," Ciara told Billboard in a recent cover story (Aug. 2). "My mission is to take fans on a musical journey. . . . so they get a chance to see the sides of me they still haven't seen."

One of those sides is that of Ms. Entrepreneur. Ciara has established the Universal Dance and Talent agency to help aspiring creative artists. Headquartered in Atlanta with an office in Los Angeles, UDT has placed dancers on tour with Ne-Yo and T-Pain. Another UDT dancer currently performing on Usher's One Night Stand ladies-only tour also did some video choreography for the female heartthrob.

Determined to have a "lot more going on outside of music," Ciara has signed a deal with Wilhelmina Models, whose roster includes fellow singer/songwriters Fergie, Natasha Bedingfield and the Veronicas. And she has followed her first acting role—the 2006 MTV Films production "All You've Got"—with a starring role in the 2009 DVD release "Mama, I Want to Sing." Inspired by the off-Broadway play of the same name and produced by Jeff Ciganian, "Sing" also stars Lynn Whitfield and Billy Zane.

"To be a successful woman, you'll face challenges whether you're in the music industry or dealing with life in general," Ciara says. "But women have been doing great things from day one. And with Hillary Clinton running this year as a presidential candidate, it's become clearer: Females are forging an even stronger presence."

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continued on >>p30
To all the great women who keep us rockin'
With three decades in the business, 10.5 million albums sold in the United States (according to the RIAA) and a place in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, you'd think the outlaw spirit that once guided Deborah Harry's life and career might have faded by now, replaced by the pragmatic conservatism of a career artist.

But get the eternally young 61-year-old talking about the past, and she still revels in her iconoclastic moments.

"Probably one of the first people to be outrageously inventive in crossing over was [Bob] Dylan," says Harry, who will receive the Icon Award Oct. 24 at Billboard's Women in Music breakfast in New York. "He took electronic instruments into folk. People were completely outraged; they were furious. Really, this was hell. This was committing complete sacrilege. That's the same response we got when we did "Heart of Glass." We had committed sacrilege. Rock 'n' roll people were completely offended and wouldn't even talk to us. It was great. We thought, "My God, we did what Dylan did. That's outstanding. What could be more punk than that?"

The creative flame still burns bright for Harry, who inspired a generation of frontwomen as lead singer of Blondie, the band that revolutionized music and fashion in the late '70s. And "the most beautiful girl in any room, in any city, on any planet"—as Shirley Manson introduced her at the 2006 Rock and Roll Hall of Fame ceremony—didn't stop there, extending her career into solo work, jazz collaborations and acting.

When Harry moved to a chaotic, poor and artistically explosive New York in the late '60s, she worked tables at Max's Kansas City and picked clothes out of the trash. She formed Blondie with guitarist Chris Stein in 1973, when she was already 30. Combining new wave and punk sensibilities with a varied palette of sounds—from disco to reggae to rock—Blondie defiantly pioneered the idea of organic crossover. Harry's commanding alto and slyly glam-punk style provided the perfect representation of the ideal.

"Because I was young and cute, I got away with a lot," she says. "Or youngish and cute. I should say." Sentiment songs like "Heart of Glass," "Call Me" and "Rapture"—the first song involving a rap to go No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100—changed the idea of what a pop song could be.

"By the time we got to 'Rapture' we kind of knew what was going on," says Harry, who co-wrote the song with Stein. "We were both so original and so influenced by so many different things and embracing so many different things. Chris is a very ingenious guy, and I have to really give him credit for a lot of his insights about how we would combine things. I think that's probably what drew us together. We really loved doing that kind of crossover."

When Blondie disbanded in 1982, Harry embarked on a solo career, which has yielded five albums. The band reunited in 1997 and continues to tour and record today.

Harry is also a member of the jazz collective the Jazz Passengers and an accomplished actress, appearing in adventurous independent films like "Spun" and "Heavy" and on the small screen in such shows as "Sabrina the Teenage Witch" and "Absolutely Fabulous."

While Harry says she doesn't think there is a music business anymore, she does find old school inspiration in the new tools available to artists.

"A lot of people who would quite possibly never venture into becoming a professional musician or entertainer can exercise a moment of feeling, through music, by putting it out on YouTube. They can actually participate," she says.

"One of the great aspects about music is performance. Concerts in the '60s were like tribal events. Everybody was there, and it was all about peace and love and the music. There was this embodiment of this sort of vibe that took over the whole thing. It wasn't just people going to a concert. I think separating everyone, and bringing them back together through the Internet, is coming almost full circle, in a very sad way. It's like a sharing of a mind, an electronic version of the mind. It's very, I don't know, the right word...metaphysical, I guess."

Ever busy, Harry is currently working with Stein on new Blondie material. "We are trying to put together a new package of music, and we're debating about how we want to release this stuff, how we want to expose it to the public," she says. "It's a new dilemma. But I'm really excited about it."
RISING STAR

Colbie Caillat
By Cortney Harding

True to the title of her breakthrough hit, Colbie Caillat is indeed bubbly.

Reached in Brazil as she lounged on the beach between playing shows and performing on a soap opera, the 23-year-old California native speaks excitedly about everything from the weather to her meteoric rise.

Only two years ago, Caillat was posting songs on her MySpace page, hoping someone would hear them and book her at a coffee shop; now, she's sold 1.8 million copies of her debut album, "Coco," and 2.6 million of "Bubbly," according to Nielsen SoundScan.

But inside the cheerful surfer girl bears the heart of a savvy businesswoman and strong-willed songwriter, among the qualities for which Caillat is receiving the Rising Star Award Oct. 24 as part of Billboard's third annual Women in Music breakfast in New York.

"After I became the No. 1 unsigned artist on MySpace, the thing I did was get a manager," she says. "Then the record labels started calling, and I could go in knowing what I wanted and what was best for me. My main goal was my own artistic freedom; I didn't want to be forced to work with other writers or new producers or to change my image."

Caillat eventually signed with Universal Republic, but not before meeting with a number of labels and evaluating offers. She also called in two of her biggest supporters and advocates—her parents. "Colbie's mom and dad asked me point blank: 'Why should my daughter sign to your label?'" Universal Republic president/CEO Monte Lipman says. "It was almost like being on a date. But ultimately, I think she signed with us because we had such enthusiasm for the project."

Because Caillat had such luck with the online world, Lipman focused much of the promotion for "Coco" in the digital realm. "We know that the point of destination to discover her had been the online space, and we put together a very aggressive online marketing campaign," Lipman says. The focus on the Web led the album to sell 40,000 digital copies the week it was released, four times more than the number it sold at physical retail.

The promo was not confined to the online world, though—the success of "Bubbly," at terrestrial radio was no doubt a big sales driver. The song reached No. 5 on the Billboard Hot 100 and topped the Adult Top 40 chart. "The success at radio really drove it home for her," Lipman says. A follow-up single, "Realize," peaked at No. 20 on the Hot 100 and No. 6 on Adult Top 40.

But even with all the initial success, there was a big wrinkle in the plan. Even though millions on MySpace had heard Caillat, she had barely performed in front of a live audience. "I had played about 10 little shows at clubs in my town before I went on tour with Lifehouse and the Goos Goos Dolls," she says. "I was so terrified." But Caillat took the opportunity to learn from a man she describes as one of her idols, John Mayer.

"I went on tour with John and watched him perform every night, and I saw how he talked to the audience," she says. "I get really shy onstage between songs, and John can just get up there and chat and make it seem easy. He taught me to be myself onstage. And he taught me that telling jokes works really well," she says with a laugh. "I think I want to do comedy now."

With her U.S. career well under way, Caillat started to work on the rest of the world, developing a strong following throughout Europe as well as in Brazil. "I think my music matches the lifestyle in Brazil," she says. "I write easygoing, feel-good music, and Brazilians like the laid-back beach feel."

Although her music may be laid-back, Caillat isn't eager to rest on her laurels and chill on the sand. In August, she recorded a song and video for the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics, "Somebody Special," and released another music video for her song "The Little Things." She will release her debut album, Nov. 11 with new tracks that include live covers of Lenny Kravitz's "Tell Me" and Bob Marley's "Turn Your Lights Down Low," a cover of Dusty Springfield's "Brand New Me," "Somebody Special," an acoustic version of "Bubbly" and a collaboration with James called "Hoy Me Voy."

Caillat is blocking out January, February and March to record her next album and has rented a house in Hawaii to serve as a retreat to finish writing. But for Caillat, this is only the beginning. "I admire women like Joni Mitchell and Gwen Stefani, because they've had such great careers and can do so many different things," she says. "I really look up to them and hope I can do that too."

congratulations

Colbie

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EMI and Capitol Records would like to congratulate international music icon and fashion legend Debbie Harry on receiving the Billboard Women in Music Icon Award.

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BACK IN THE RACE

Nickelback '09 Tour, Live Nation Ads To Back 'Dark Horse"

Chad Kroeger laughs when asked if the phenomenal sales for 2005’s “All the Right Reasons” gave confidence to Nickelback as it set out to make its sixth studio album, “Dark Horse.”

“No, because look what we have to try to live up to,” says Kroeger, who co-founded the quartet in 1995 in Alberta, Canada. “There’s a mountain sitting behind us. We’ve got to try and put something out now that’s going to stand up to that. So for us, the bar has been raised ridiculously high.”

“Dark Horse,” which comes out Nov. 18 on Roadrunner and was co-produced by Mutt Lange, certainly has a target to clear. Buoyed by seven multiformat hit singles and five No. 1 videos—and apparently unaffected by widespread critical drubbing—“All the Right Reasons” has sold 10 million copies worldwide, according to Roadrunner, and spent a staggering 110 consecutive weeks in the top 30 of the Billboard 200. It fell off the chart Oct. 11 after a 156-week run, the longest registered in 11 years.

“All the Right Reasons” also took off in a big way this summer in Europe, meaning Kroeger and his bandmates—brother and bassist Mike Kroeger, guitarist Ryan Peake and drummer Daniel Adair—were multi-tasking across two continents as they recorded “Dark Horse” and promoted its predecessor.

“We’ve never left the previous album cycle,” Roadrunner president Jonas Nachsin says. “That’s got to be a serious positive sign going into a new one. It’s become such a monster to try to put our arms around, we’re just doing the best we can to guide it into fruition at this point.”

In his first interview about the new album, Kroeger—who started working with Lange (“The dude is my hero,” he says) on “Dark Horse” in March in Switzerland—acknowledges that he “would’ve liked a longer break” for himself. But he also recognized it was time for more Nickelback music in the marketplace.

“If you’re a fan of the band and you went out and got ‘All the Right Reasons’ the first week it was released, you’d be waiting for new material for, like, three years now,” Kroeger says. “So it was definitely time for us to make sure that we had a new album and some new songs for the fans.”

They were apparently hungry for it. First single “Gotta Be Somebody” is already hitting at seven rock and pop formats since its Sept. 30 delivery, from triple A and hot AC to top 40 and active rock, and is in the top five of five of them. And Nachsin says the label continues to see radio as Nickelback’s chief ally.

“These days, everyone is talking about different forms of exposure, how artists become successful,” he says. “We’ve always felt, and it’s been proven over time, radio is the strongest suit for the band. If people hear Nickelback material over the radio, the record sells—and that’s happened at a pretty phenomenally successful rate over many years.”

“What we plan on doing is methodically releasing singles strategically to pop and rock formats over the next two years, until we run out or it’s time to go away for a minute. That tends to be what works for Nickelback and has given them not only immediate sales but unbelievable, and these days, unprecedented longevity.”

Roadrunner and Nickelback delivered with a twist this time, however. When “Gotta Be Somebody” was released, a free download of the song was offered for 24 hours with a widget that was available to individual stations to allow listeners to get the song from their Web sites, too. “We wanted to reach fans of the band,” Nachsin says, “because we realized a lot of fans find out about Nickelback through radio.” Some 125 stations took advantage of the program, which was spearheaded by Roadrunner senior VP’s Mike Easterlin (promotion) and Jon Satterley (new media).

The album will also be boosted by the group’s feature spot in an upcoming consumer ad campaign by Live Nation, which signed Nickelback to a long-term, multimillion-dollar deal in July, and Citibank. Nickelback isn’t planning on touring until the spring—“We’ve been bitten too many times going out too early,” Kroeger says—so it has taped a special concert for the multimillion-dollar initiative that rolls out in November and will involve TV, radio and print placements hawking the promotion and its concerts.

To Nachsin, “That’s just another sign of the mainstream acceptance level for the band and how much they’ve been able to penetrate the marketplace over the years.”

Nachsin says Roadrunner and Live Nation will cooperate in their efforts on behalf of Nickelback. The group still owes the label two studio albums and a greatest-hits package, “so we’re going to be the Nickelback business for a few years to come. There are only good feelings.”

Nickelback has taped another performance for Walmart’s “Soundcheck” program that will be shown in stores and on the retailer’s Web site. The group also participated in iTunes’ Complete My Album campaign, which will offer some album tracks prior to release.

Not planned, at least for the moment, are any exclusive versions for individual retailers. “If someone comes to us with a particular program, of course we are all ears,” Nachsin says. “But to get into the fan base needing to buy an album from each retailer to get the extra song they want, I don’t think will work for this band. It hasn’t proven necessary in the past. There are plenty of sales to go around.”

For an extended interview with Chad Kroeger, go to billboard.com. For more on Nickelback’s Mutt Lange connection, go to billboard.biz.
Still His ‘Moment’

VP’s Beres Hammond Shines On 25th Album

With a voice as soulful as Otis Redding’s, as romantic as Luther Vandross and as purely Jamaican as reggae itself, Beres Hammond has been a consistent hitmaker since the ’70s. And those qualities are still on display on his 25th album, “A Moment in Time,” due Nov. 11 on VP Records, reconfirming a widely held appraisal of the 54-year-old as Jamaica’s greatest living singer/songwriter.

“You would be hard-pressed to find a singer alive that has the catalog that Beres Hammond has,” says Ainsworth “Big A” Higgins, an on-air personality at Jamaican radio station IRIE FM. “Someone would have to look at the works of [the late] Dennis Brown and Bob Marley to find his equal in terms of hit songs, and he continues making hits for a generation young enough to be his grandchildren.”

VP digitally released “A Moment in Time” Aug. 19 to coincide with Hammond’s August/September North American tour and as a means of redirecting its customers toward online purchases. “Reggae still does well with CDs, unlike other music that does better digitally,” the label’s VP of sales and marketing Crissy Barber says. “We thought it was important to digitally release an album by one of our priority artists before releasing the CD, because we want reggae to keep in step with industry trends.” The set is the top seller at VP’s online store, Planetreggae.com, Barber says.

Hammond’s most successful effort for the label, the 2001 Grammy Award-nominated “Music Is Life,” has sold 46,000 U.S. copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. His all-time best seller is the 1994 Elektra album “In Control” (67,000 units).

“Beres is not a follower of trends. He is not going to make Beres records, traditional Jamaican records, and those records have a sales ceiling in America,” says Dante Ross, who signed Hammond to Elektra in 1993 and is now VP of SRC Records. “He doesn’t need the industry to approve. He tours like a mad man, his voice is timeless, and he will be making great records for another 20 years.”

Hammond’s lack of crossover success is of greater concern to the reggae industry, which struggles for a consistent presence in the mainstream despite the music’s far-reaching influence, than it is to Hammond. His recent tour attracted capacity crowds in Toronto and Montreal and upwards of 20,000 fans at a free concert in Brooklyn’s Williams Park.

“Things couldn’t be any better for me than they are now. When I first started out, I just wanted to be on the road, performing. I never imagined it to be like this,” the bespectacled singer says, gesturing to the luxurious interior of his tour bus following his Brooklyn performance. “At one time there wasn’t any bus and now we have two on the road, and I have had this for many years. There are many artists who have been on the Billboard charts and still can’t have this kind of fan base.”

Hammond has amassed his global fan base with a succession of No. 1 singles in Jamaica and on reggae charts internationally. His songs seamlessly shift between political and spiritual themes and occasionally pay homage to the artists that have most inspired him. But Hammond is renowned as reggae’s most sublime romantic crooner. Whether pledging a lifetime of devotion (“Full Attention”) or rending love on the side ("Double Trouble")), his impassioned vocals living a deeper texture to the love-song prototype, as do his lyrics, which adapt everyday circumstances as handily as references to the Songs of Solomon.

For “A Moment in Time,” which he produced at his Harmony House studio in Kingston, Hammond worked with an ensemble of Jamaica’s finest musicians. “Still Will Be Heaven” juxtaposes orchestral strings with a one-drop rhythm as Hammond muses on a long-term relationship that hasn’t gone stale over time but has grown more profound, much like hit music. “I just get a song in my head and record it in the matter it came to me,” he offers as the reason for his enduring allure. “I don’t change nothing, and it always seems to be wrong.”

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GLOBAL PULSE

EDITED BY TOM FERGUSON

Rock

Damage Control

‘Microcastle’ Leak Presents Deerhunter With Major Dilemma

In 2007, the blogosphere was Deerhunter’s best friend. From the beginning, the buzz was as loud as the band’s punishing psychodelia, leading to a packed South by Southwest showcase and sales of 18,000 copies for its Kranky debut, “Cryptograms.” Not bad for a band that had little notoriety outside its Atlanta hometown just months earlier.

But a year makes a big difference, especially in the hype machine. In May, follow-up album “Microcastle” leaked online, nearly six months ahead of its planned Oct. 28 release via Kranky. (A.A.D handles the album internationally.) Frontman Bradford Cox stoked the flames on his Web site, lashing out at bloggers one moment and offering heartfelt apologies the next. The beast that helped birth Deerhunter had bitten back.

“I don’t blame kids for downloading the record,” Cox says now. “I blame idiots for leaking the record.”

Deerhunter tried to counteract the leak in a way many artists these days do: adding extra material. It recorded another album of 15 lo-fi songs during the summer to bundle with “Microcastle.” Titled “Weird Era Cont.,” but then those songs leaked as well.

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LATEST BUZZ

More Wayne

Lil Wayne’s “Tha Carter III” is handsly the best-selling album of 2008, but the rapper has plans to make it even bigger. The set will be rereleased with all brand-new songs, Wayne told MTV, although Universal says there aren’t any details confirmed at deadline. Wayne recently revealed on his ESPN.com blog that he had already begun work on “Tha Carter IV” and that he will release a 20-song mixtape, “Dedication 3,” on his Web site.

Aer It Out

After spending most of 2008 dealing with health issues, the members of Aerosmith plan to get back together in 2009—to, among other things, complete an album that the group has already started recording. “We haven’t gone back into the studio to put the final touches on it,” guitarist Brad Whitford says. “Hopefully it’ll be sooner rather than later.”

Top Dogs

The Black Keys are logging time in Los Angeles for songwriting sessions with Z.Z. Top’s Billy F. Gibbons and producer Rick Rubin, in the hopes of creating material for the latter group’s upcoming, Rubin-produced album. “I’m such a big fan of these guys . . . it makes total sense,” Gibbons told Billboard.com earlier this year of the Black Keys. “And that’s pretty down and dirty, which is good for ZZ Top.”

Boy Crazy

Soulja Boy Tell’Em, best-known for the hit song “Crank That (Soulja Boy)” from his 2007 debut, “SouljaBoyTell’Em.com,” returns Dec. 16 with his sophomore set, “SouljaBoyTell’Em.” (Colpakk Music/Interscope) is led by the single “Birdwalk.” The new album features production from Mr. Collipark, Pooch Da Don and Soulja Boy himself. Other album tracks include “What a Mama” featuring Sean Kingston and “Turn My Swag On,” which will be released virtually.

Reporting by Jonathan Cohen and Mariel Conception.

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Global Pulse

Going Undersound

The July 2005 London bombings and the much-publicized police killing of innocent terror suspect Jean Charles de Menezes one week later have had a profound affect on the U.K. capital in the eyes of world musician Nitzer Ebbing.

The multi-instrumentalist/DJ has described his new album, “London Undersound” (Cooking Vinyl), as an attempt to capture the post-2005 city and its humanity. The Oct. 13 U.K. release features collaborators including Paul McCartney and Spanish alternative act Ojos de Brujo, plus U.K. singer/songwriters Imogen Heap and Natty.

The result is a potent mix, Cooking Vinyl A&R director Rob Collins says. The album “is culturally brilliant,” he says, “but we’re not relying on the collaborations. There’s a cool underground thing to counter that, with some great remixes in the clubs.”

Sawhney kicks off a nine-date U.K./Ireland tour booked by Primary Talent Oct. 27, followed by European shows. Cooking Vinyl head of international Annette Collins notes that the album received a simultaneous release in Continental Europe, Asia and Australia. North and South America will follow next year. “It has a very international sound; we have plans to push it in all territories in 2009,” she says.

Zomba Music-published

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www.americanradiohistory.com
Sawhney is currently working on music for two movies, the Brian Epstein biopic "The Fifth Beatle" and Canadian film "Exclusion." —Steve Adams

Many Swell Returns

How A Focus On Touring Paid Off For 'Once' Stars

This time last year, Irish singer/songwriter duo the Swell Season (Glenn Hansard and Marketa Irglová) was preparing for its biggest North American tour, a 16-date run hitting midsize theaters in major markets.

The music that the artists wrote for indie film "Once" (in which they also starred) was rising a wave of word-of-mouth attention, and the aim of the tour was to keep the music alive, in the hope that Academy Award voters would have it front of mind when submitting their nominations. It worked. " Falling Slowly" got the nod for best original song, and the Swell Season planned to tour a little after the Oscars and then head straight to the studio to make a new album.

But that plan went out the window once "Falling Slowly" won the Oscar and the soundtrack began selling in big numbers. (It has sold 636,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.) Recording plans were scrapped and instead, the Swell Season spent most of 2008 on the road, turning out one of the most successful recent tours spawned by a movie. Numbers are still tickling in, but 15 shows reported to Billboard Boxscore grossed $1.8 million, in line with the pre-show gross for 2007. Down From The Mountain tour spun off from the film "O Brother, Where Art Thou?" That outing grossed $1.3 million from 32 shows. "What it was, that threw everything into chaos," Swell Season manager Howard Greynolds says. "That's been the biggest adjustment: We were going to do the summer and fall making a record, and we just added more dates. We got more and more offers and decided to consider them, because it would be a good way to reach more and more people. When it came to deciding to do a record, we'd have more of a fan base.

And while Down From The Mountain featured well-known artists like Emmylou Harris and Alison Krauss, Hansard and Irglová were relatively unknown in the States when "Once" began heating up, although the former had achieved modest success stateside with his band the Frames. So, the Swell Season audience connected to the band and the film in a very different way. "The movie had a personal attachment and from there, the fans felt an ownership to it," Greynolds says. "But a lot of people don't have a sentimental Hollywood feeling. He suspects the live show gave fans the best of both worlds—they got to see the couple onstage, together, which is not what happens at the end of "Once." Before the Swell Season, Billions Corp. was already in the midst of plotting the spring tour, but with even the successful run in 2007 (which grossed $476,662 from 14 shows), it was hard to convince some promoters.

"I knew the shows were going to sell out, but some of the promoters didn't believe me," booking agent Ali Hedrick recalls. "I knew from the fan emails and from the amount of records that they were selling that they were going to do very well." To ensure audiences made the connection between the

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But that plan went out the window once "Falling Slowly" won the Oscar and the soundtrack began selling in big numbers. (It has sold 636,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.) Recording plans were scrapped and instead, the Swell Season spent most of 2008 on the road, turning out one of the most successful recent tours spawned by a movie. Numbers are still tickling in, but 15 shows reported to Billboard Boxscore grossed $1.8 million, in line with the pre-show gross for 2007. Down From The Mountain tour spun off from the film "O Brother, Where Art Thou?" That outing grossed $1.3 million from 32 shows. "What it was, that threw everything into chaos," Swell Season manager Howard Greynolds says. "That's been the biggest adjustment: We were going to do the summer and fall making a record, and we just added more dates. We got more and more offers and decided to consider them, because it would be a good way to reach more and more people. When it came to deciding to do a record, we'd have more of a fan base.

And while Down From The Mountain featured well-known artists like Emmylou Harris and Alison Krauss, Hansard and Irglová were relatively unknown in the States when "Once" began heating up, although the former had achieved modest success stateside with his band the Frames. So, the Swell Season audience connected to the band and the film in a very different way. "The movie had a personal attachment and from there, the fans felt an ownership to it," Greynolds says. "But a lot of people don't have a sentimental Hollywood feeling. He suspects the live show gave fans the best of both worlds—they got to see the couple onstage, together, which is not what happens at the end of "Once." Before the Swell Season, Billions Corp. was already in the midst of plotting the spring tour, but with even the successful run in 2007 (which grossed $476,662 from 14 shows), it was hard to convince some promoters.

"I knew the shows were going to sell out, but some of the promoters didn't believe me," booking agent Ali Hedrick recalls. "I knew from the fan emails and from the amount of records that they were selling that they were going to do very well." To ensure audiences made the connection between the
Ryan Adams’ music is often overshadowed by his eccentric behavior and the pure volume of his recorded output. But on “Cardinology,” due Oct. 28 via Lost Highway, his songs are the real story, not Adams himself. In fact, the artist is so happy with the evolution of his band the Cardinals during the course of five albums in the past three years that he says he’d be content if his name was dropped entirely from the packaging. “The stuff we do communally is 10 times better than the stuff I come up with,” he says.

Adams may be overstating things a little, and such comments should be taken with a grain of salt from a guy who moments earlier was going off on a tangent about ‘80s pop metal (“Hey, if Def Leppard started a cooking school, they’d be Chef Leppard!”). But there’s no question the camaraderie he shares with guitarist Neal Casal, drummer Brad Pemberton, pedal steel player Jon Graboff and bassist Chris Feinstein has helped him create one of the most focused albums of his career.

On “Cardinology,” which fulfills Adams’ contract with the label for which he’s recorded since 2000, the artist details his battles with substance abuse and his struggles to sustain relationships with remarkable clarity, best heard on the anthemic “Cobwebs,” the drumless “Crossed Out Name,” the harmony-rich “Natural Ghost” (“You make me feel like I’m not here/But I am/More than you think I am”) and the soft, Wilco-esque ballad “Everygreen.”

Adams’ newfound clarity is music to the ears of Lost Highway chairman Luke Lewis. “He’s acting grown-up right now,” he says with a laugh. “I kind of wish the petulant child occasionally.”

“We did a really great record that sounds totally like the Cardinals,” Adams says with pride. “It’s pretty much live on the floor. I think we did it in a really brave way. We did it raw, like we were doing a gig.”

Lost Highway is planning a host of initiatives to ensure “Cardinology” gets heard. The Cardinals got the ball rolling by playing many new songs on late-summer support dates with Oasis and added even more to the set list during a fall headlining tour. “The tendency is for artists to let an album release drive ticket sales. It used to be the other way around. So I’m thankful he’s doing it,” Lewis says.

To court Adams devotees, the label is pressing a limited run of 4,000 red vinyl copies of “Cardinology” with an alternate cover and a graphic novel/lyric book by artist Leah Hayes, as well as a 7-inch single with two previously unreleased songs. Fans who pre-order the album through iTunes receive an immediate download of first single “Fix it,” which has sold 8,700 digital copies in its first two weeks of sale, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Adams offers an amusingly unfiltered look into his life at Cardinology.com, where he posts everything from set lists and live clips to fan mail, rants about his favorite Sonic Youth albums and corny fake hip-hop songs he wrote on the tour bus while bored. Although “Cardinology” is very much a band album, “we can use his personality to raise awareness for the record,” Lost Highway VP of marketing and artist development Andy Nelson says.

Online listening parties were held the week before street date with Lilke (which also showed Adams’ artwork) and TouchTunes, and the Cardinals will tape appearances on “Sessions @ AOL” and “Late Show with David Letterman” during release week. Following a Halloween show at Harlem’s Apollo Theatre, the band begins a short European tour Nov. 8 in Dublin. Eleven December dates opening for Oasis in North America will close out the year, with more headlining shows on tap for February.

With “Cardinology” ready to hit the market, Lewis is somewhat waistful about the likely end of his often rocky working relationship with Adams. The pair fought frequently over how much music Adams could—or should—release. Through it all, though, Lewis remained the musician’s “biggest fan.”

“We took some pretty harsh criticism for putting out so much music, but we could have put out more,” he says. (In 2009, Lost Highway will issue an Adams anthology featuring several new songs.) “As much as we’ve tried to accommodate him by putting out a lot of records, a major-label deal is probably a bit restrictive for Ryan. My sense is he’d be better served by being independent, and by that I mean totally independent.”

Indeed, Adams is already looking past “Cardinology” and dreaming about where he and his bandmates will go next. “Shit’s going to get weird and awesome,” he says. “Because we’re into bands like Oasis and Foo Fighters: big, monolithic rock bands who really explore all those areas. That’s what Cardinals is. That’s the work I want to do.”
THE BILLBOARD REVIEWS

ALBUMS

SOUNDTRACK

VARIOUS ARTISTS
High School Musical 3: Senior Year
Producers: Various
Release Date: Oct. 21

The genius of the “High School Musical” machine becomes more apparent in its third installment—the first for the big screen. As seniors Troy (Zac Efron), Gabriella (Vanessa Hudgens) and Sharpay (Ashley Tisdale) graduate from fictitious East High, they also leave the franchise and attempt to repackaging themselves as mainstream pop stars with wider demographic appeal. Meanwhile, new faces like British exchange student Tiara (Jemma McKenzie-Brown) start to sing and dance their way into the hearts of the faithful. The infinitely rehashable series has its musical formula down: Take “Rent” style modern Broadway, add a kid-friendly dance beat with allusions to current pop, remove all hints of angst or lust. The result is another utopian vision of American teens, made for preteens. But the cast attacks the material with such sell-it-to-the-back-row spunk that anyone who likes a good show can’t help but get a kick out of it. —KM

COUNTRY

TOBY KEITH
That Don’t Make Me a Bad Guy
Producer: Toby Keith
Release Date: Oct. 28

In a world of copycats, Toby Keith stands alone—I created my niche,” he says. That said, his new album is not exactly like the last or the one before that, and is pleasantly surprising in its evolution. Despite the familiar bravado of “Time That It Would Take” (“In the time it would take me to tell you what I’ve been, I could take you places you ain’t never been before”), there’s also a vulnerability here. “Lost You Anyway” and current single “She Never Cried in Front of Me” detail self-investigation following failed relationships. Meanwhile, “Creole Woman” finds him unable to avoid the temptations of a voodoo mistress. The bluesy “Missin’ Me Some You,” written from the perspective of a soldier on duty somewhere in the Middle East, is the set’s best cut.—KT

ROCK

SNOW PATROL
A Hundred Million Suns
Producer: Jacknife Lee
Release Date: Oct. 28

Snow Patrol handily manages the challenge of following up breakout album “Eyes Open” on “A Hundred Million Suns.” The music’s inherent dignity ensures that lyrics like “kiss me, kiss me/Life is way too short to scream and shout” don’t smirks, and it keeps the brazen romanticism and sentimentality from becoming too glaring. “If There’s A Rocket Tie Me To It” nods to Coldplay, preserving the driving urgency of previous hit “Chasing Cars.” “Take Back The City” and “Engines” also hijack the beat, but midtempo winners “Lifeboats” and “The Golden Floor” are much better realized. Three-act, 16-minute finale “The Lightning Strike” recounts being forced to take shelter with a beloved in a storm and the revered memory of those transcendent moments. “I don’t want to run/Just overwhelm me,” Gary Lightbody sings—an amplie description for the album’s overall intentions.—CLT

BLOC PARTY
Intimacy
Producers: Jacknife Lee, Paul Epworth
Release Date: Oct. 28

It’s easy to hear why Bloc Party decided to rush release the digital edition of its third studio disc in August. Full of jagged guitar riffs, forward-motion drum beats and air-siren keyboard lines—not to mention a true-to-its-title lyrical focus on the excruciating end of a romantic relationship—“Intimacy” is the English dance-punk outfit’s most urgent-sounding effort yet, and frontman Kele Okereke and his bandmates probably couldn’t bear the thought of waiting two or three months for it to be heard. As it happens, the album’s heat hasn’t cooled yet. On such tracks as opener “Ares,” “Trojan Horse” and “Mercury” (the album’s drum-n-bass-inspired lead single) Bloc Party generates a textural and emotional intensity that it has only hinted at in the past.—MW

JOHN LEGEND
Evolver
Producers: Various
GOOD Music/Columbia
Release Date: Oct. 26

John Legend made his mark by showing up fully coated in vintage Philadelphia soul, but this aptly titled third album finds him shelving his silky throwback vibe for a collection of tracks more interested in 808s and heartbeat. “Evolver” opens with shiny 1984 club-bounce (“Green Light,” quickly commandeered by André 3000), moves directly into voked Kanye West (“It’s Over”) and involves lots of Flash Gordon swoops and sweeps (“Good Morning”). Legend’s voice remains beyond reproach, but for a guy who’s an oasis of style and soul in a sea of synthetic, robo-call R&B, at times, he seems like you when playing catch-up. Legend scores far better when he sticks to his strengths, like on the reggae-twisted “No Other Love,” the ready-made Obama rally theme “If You’re Out There” and the soaring “Everybody Knows,” a tear-streaked lament that ends with the great line, “I wish you the best/I guess.”—V

Deerhunter
Microcastle
Producer: Nicolas Verhees
Release Date: Oct. 28

While Deerhunter’s 2007 breakout, “Cryptograms,” was teeming with a sort of raw unpredictability, “Microcastle” falls more along the mellower lines of frontman Bradford Cox’s Atlas Sound side project. Here Cox and his bandmates take a proverbial chill pill, finding solace in dreamy psych-pop draped in gentle, prettily-dressed washes of feedback. “Agoraphobia” and “Never Stop” have definite pop sensibilities, while the little track’s sparse guitar lines build into a Pixies-style breakdown. A haunting piano leads “Green Jacket” before evaporating into Cox’s washed-out vocals, and the woozy guitar backing “Twilight at Carbon Light” closes the set by escalating into a spectacular wall of noise. Another winner full of eerie beauty and restraint.—JM

Lady Gaga
The Fame
Producer: Vincent Herbert
Streamline/KonLive
Release Date: Oct. 28

Lady Gaga is a 22-year-old debut artist sporting a blonde Cher wig, hooded Catwoman suit and glowing staff who she calls the “disco stick”—but not if she delivers an album full of hits. Lady Gaga’s first single, the heavily synthesized “Just Dance,” is now impacting the Pop 100, after a summer of burning up the dance charts. But full-length “The Fame” proves she’s more than one hit and a bag of stage tricks. The album borrows sonically from hip-hop, dance-pop and modern R&B but has the glam-rock soul of Gaga’s beloved Queen and David Bowie. “Poker Face” and “Love Game” carry the pleather-and-sequins vibe of the downtown New York scene out of the underground and onto the FM dial.

Ryan Adams & The Cardinals
Cardiology
Producer: Tom Schick
Lost Highway
Release Date: Oct. 28

Ryan Adams enjoys yapping about White Lion and Tesla more than his own music, but that’s just fine when he’s releasing albums as strong as “Cardiology.” Constant recording and touring with his band the Cardinals has brought welcome focus to Adams’ muse; rarely has it been so easy to personalize his narratives of screwed up romance (“Crossed-Out Name”) and all the attendant consequences (“Go Easy”). Musically, the band works up a handsome country rock sound with shades of the Rolling Stones and Wilco throughout, making room for swagger (“Fix It,” “Magick”) and sentimentality (“Natural Ghost,” “Evergreen”) in equal measure. Adams has also found a way to better reconcile his grand sonic ambitions with the material; “Cowgirls” has arena-sized emotion without bombastic production, and “Born Into a Light” has just the right doldrum of harmony and twang.—JC

The Cure
4:13 Dream
Producers: Robert Smith, Keith Urban
Suretone/Geffen
Release Date: Oct. 28

The Cure’s 13 studio albums have established Robert Smith as a master craftsman of the beautifully calculated mess. The lush arrangements on “4:13 Dream” don’t build a Wall of Sound so much as an easy listener, where heavily distorted guitar and effects share momentum with fluid melodies and memorable pop hooks. Six-minute opener “Underneath The Stars” builds a dark, wistful dreamscape that is jolted to consciousness by first single “The Only One,” a playful, ecstatic love song in the vein of hits like “Friday I’m In Love.” “The Hungry Ghost” is a galloping tale of greed set against paradoxically optimistic chord progressions, while “This. Here and Now. With You” uses ascending and descending scales to captivating effect. The set goes out with the frenetic rocker “It’s Over,” but longtime fans may wish it weren’t. This was originally planned as a double-album.—EN
without losing its smut and sass. Comparisons to acts like Scissor Sisters and Princeess Superstar are inevitable, but Gaga's got a shredder pop ear.—AM

LATIN

ATERCIOPELADOS
Rio
Producer: Hector Butrago Nacional
Release Date: Oct. 21

The miracle of Aterciopelados is that it backs up its message songs with beautiful, infectious music. The Colombian duo's latest, "Rio," is no exception—it's an antiraw statement and a plea to protect the environment, especially the title track about the polluted Rio Bogota. But it's also an exquisitely rendered celebration of nature in all its forms (rain, lightning, laughter, unconditional love and even the simple pleasure of opening a box of cookies). There's a mix of strident, percussive anthems ("Gracias," "Madre," "Hips de Tigre") but also more melodic material ("Tomate," "Agua"). The beauty here is that Aterciopelados' musical worldview is not only big enough for rock, pop, charting and chill-out, but that it can use all these styles to make a statement.—ABY

CHRISTIAN

MICHAEL W. SMITH

A New Hallelujah
Producer: Michael W. Smith
Reunion Records
Release Date: Oct. 28

Michael W. Smith's two previous praise and worship projects set the industry standard in terms of record sales and creative vision. The veteran artist raises the bar yet again with "A New Hallelujah." Recorded live last summer at Houston's Lakeview Church, the project makes listeners feel like they're sitting in the front pew singing along and getting the music they came to see performed uniquely, truly special. Smith's goal was a more global feel, and he achieved that by utilizing the African Children's Choir on the title track and buoyant "When I Think of You." Special guest Coalo Zamorano's Spanish delivery of "I Surrender All" is another highlight. Look for an accompanying live DVD in 2009.—DEP

SINGLES

R&B/HIP-HOP

EMINEM

I'm Having a Relapse (2:07)
Producer: not listed
Writer: M. Mathers
Publisher: not listed
Aftermath

The song is only 2:07, there's no real chorus and in fact, this whole "Relapse" might better be referred to as freestyle. But the fact that Eminem is enough to merit immediate response from radio. After months of speculation, Eminem finally premiered some new music and revealed his upcoming album title, "Relapse," complete with a return to his Slim Shady persona. This is obvi-ously a mere appetizer from the album's main course, but a worthy reminder that shows one of hip-hop's best lyricists maintains his ability to make hardcore rap funny. The best is no doubt to come.—SR

POPE

GYM CLASS HEROES FEATURING THE DREAM

Cookie Jar (3:35)
Producer: C. "Tricky" Stewart, Trents "The-Dream" Nash, Sean Hall
Writers: Gym Class Heroes, C. Stewart, T. Nash, T. Pain
Publishers: various

Remix is all about that base, that hard thrust, that is the basis of all pop, and this song is a perfect example. The bass line is funky, the rhythm is catchy and the overall sound is just plain fun.—SV

AC

CHRIS RICE

So Much for My Sad Song (3:53)
Producer: Monroe Jones
Writer: C. Rice
Publisher: Clumsy Fly, ASAPC

"The song is only 2:07, there's no real chorus and in fact, this whole "Relapse" might better be referred to as freestyle. But the fact that Eminem is enough to merit immediate response from radio. After months of speculation, Eminem finally premiered some new music and revealed his upcoming album title, "Relapse," complete with a return to his Slim Shady persona. This is obvi-ously a mere appetizer from the album's main course, but a worthy reminder that shows one of hip-hop's best lyricists maintains his ability to make hardcore rap funny. The best is no doubt to come.—SR"

KEVIN RUDOLF FEATURING LIL WAYNE

Let It Rock (3:56)
Producer: Kevin Rudolf
Writer: J. Rudolf, D. Carter
Publishers: various
Cash Money/Universal Republic

In-demand Miami producer/guitarist Kevin Rudolf bolts his way to a No. 5 Billboard Hot 100 debut with "Let It Rock," employing the year's most bannable rapper, Lil Wayne. The adenoidal kisser scatters sex appeal on strings and bangs with a catchy hock worthy of a club blowout or big stage game, boasting equal parts electro, pop and hip-hop. Rudolf's production genius and song skills paired him in the past with Justin Tim-berlake, LL Cool J, Neely Purto, the Black Eyed Peas and David Banner, and here, he proves his airwave mojo with most added kudos at Top 40 radio. Rudolf's debut, "In the City," arranges Nov. 25.—MM

ROCK

KINGS OF LEON

Sex on Fire (3:23)
Producer: Angelo Petraglia, Jaccouire King
Writers: C. Followill, N. Followill, M. Followill, J. Followill
Publishers: various
RCA/RMG

"Sex on Fire" nearly didn't make it on the Southern rock act's fourth album, "Only by the Night." Convinced the line "This sex on fire" wasn't up to snuff, vocalist/rythum guitarist Caleb Followill considered dumping the song until his bandmates encouraged him to keep working on it. Followill shouldn't have worried: "Sex on Fire" became the band's first U.K. No. 1 single, where the quartet headlined the Glastonbury Festival last summer, and it has piqued interest at modern rock and triple-A radio nationwide. Produced by longtime collaborator Angelo Petraglia and Jaccouire King, the track is an uncomplicated, infectious rocker that highlights Followill's straightforward —from the gut vocals. Lyrics are provocative, especially for brothers Caleb, Nathan and Jared, who were reared on gospel, but the song's flailless execution and exuberant swagger make it worth returning to repeatedly.—AC

PARAMORE

Decode (4:12)
Producer: Rob Cavallo
Writers: H. Williams, J. Farro, T. York
Publishers: various
Fueled by Ramen/Chop Shop/R&R

"Decode" is one of two original songs Paramore contributes to the "Twilight" soundtrack, due Nov. 4. Inspired by Stephanie Meyer's novel and the forthcoming movie—aobre a clique of teen vampires in the Pacific Northwest—vocalist Hayley Williams captures the tension and urgency between undead protagonist Edward and mortal love interest Bella with an impassioned, yet restrained performance. The lead single on a soundtrack that includes Muse, Iron & Wine and a new song by Perry Farrell ("Go All the Way"). "Decode" debuted Oct. 1 on Meyer's Web site and the band's official fan club site. Building on momentum that the Franklin, Tenn.-based quartet generated with "Riot!" singles "Crushcrushcrush" and "That's What You Get," expertly crafted fol- low-up "Decode" promises to stake a claim at modern rock and Top 40 radio.—AC

www.americanradiohistory.com
Totally Toby

New Album, Movie Keep Keith Kicking

As he attempts to balance music, producing and starring in movies, running a label, touring and maintaining a small chain of I Love This Bar restaurants and clubs, Toby Keith could be forgiven for running around like a chicken with its head cut off.

The secret to not ending up that way? Trusting his team.

"It's a real fine-tuned blend of perfection for me," Keith says. "Everybody at my label's been doing this a long time. I don't need to sit in a chair with my feet on a desk with a cigar and tell them what to do. They know their jobs. The restaurants are run by a corporation, once every two or three years I do a movie project, and I only do 60 or 65 shows now."

The Oklahoman has scored 35 top 10 singles, including 17 No. 1s, since his debut on the Billboard Hot Country Songs chart in 1993. His current single, "She Never Cried in Front of Me," jumps 2-1 this week on Hot Country Songs, and its parent album, "That Don't Make Me a Bad Guy," arrives Oct. 28 on his own Show Dog Nashville label.

Keith either wrote or co-wrote every cut on the project with collaborators that include Bobby Pinson (Sugarland's "Want To"), Vicky McGehee (Jason Aldean's "Why") and Eddy Raven. Keith calls Raven, with whom he wrote "Cabo San Lucas," "overlooked" for his work as an '80s country star and songwriter. "He was never looked upon as a superstar. He never got his credit."

Keith, who last worked with an outside producer on 2006's "White Trash With Money," self-produced the set. "Producers are all good and fine," he says before adding the inevitable qualifier. "But I just don't need outside production anymore. I am my niche. I created my niche. I created my world. When I come on singing it doesn't have to be some grand production. It's all me now. I've got my fingerprints all over it."

Meanwhile, his second movie, "Beer For My Horses," in which he stars alongside comedian/co-writer Rodney Carrington, will begin airing Nov. 2 on CMT after a limited run in theaters. The film, based loosely on Keith's 2003 hit of the same name with Willie Nelson, includes appearances by Nelson, Ted Nugent and Tom Skerritt. An accompanying soundtrack, with songs from Mac Davis, David Allan Coe and Mel Tillis, among others, was released Aug. 12 and has sold 16,000 copies.

Despite having sold 26.4 million units in his 15-year career, Keith says record sales have never been among his top five sources of revenue. "My income from songwriting and from restaurants and from merchandise and from concerts and from Ford endorsements has always been grander than what my record sales are," he says.

Keith's income—at $4 million—was third on Forbes' annual ranking of the world's best-paid music stars behind the Police and Beyoncé for the time period of June 1, 2007-June 1, 2008—means he can take a chance on new artists.

"I sign people that I dig and because I love what they're doing," he says of his Show Dog Nashville roster, which is home to Mica Roberts, Carter's Chord, Trailer Choir and Flyin'Fowl Train. "This label was going to be open anyway. They were going to be promoting my albums and my soundtracks, so while we're open and running it makes perfect sense that in the time that they're not promoting me you've got a system running to try and break a new act."

"I can fail at that some," he adds. "My money's all out on the road. As long as I got new songs on the radio, I've got a hot tour [Sony BMG Nashville chairman] Joe Galante and [Universal Music Group Nashville chairman] Luke Lewis don't do concerts—they have to live off their bottom line. We can fail and miss shots because it doesn't affect our bottom line."

WNCB Birmingham, Ala., PD Justin Casadimires Keith for his candidate. "Toby is Toby," he says. "He's got a little outlaw in him and yet he has a sense of humor. He says what he feels, he is transparent with his fans, he visits the troops, and I believe the audience sees that sincerity and connects with that."
The Hoax Factor

U.K. Reality Pop Spoof Beats The Real Thing

In a world in which careers are built or vanished by a panel of judges in front of millions of viewers, "reality TV" has always been a loose term. Sometimes the reality arrives later, when a pop idol discovers it can get pretty cold outside the small screen.

But on the U.K. singles chart published Oct. 19 by the Official Charts Co., fantasy and reality became comically blurred. "Don't Call This Love" (Sony/Sony Music), the new single by 2007 "X Factor" winner Leon Jackson, debuted at No. 3 with sales of 32,404 units—but was ousted by a single from the imaginary winning contestant in a comedy show that saturated the entire reality TV syndrome.

Popular English comic Peter Kay conceived and starred in a two-hour Channel 4 program broadcast Oct. 12 that revolved in the title "Peter Kay's Britain the Pop Factor... and Possibly a New Celebrity Jesus Christ: Songstar Superstar Strictly on Ice."

The show took the form of a live talent final, featuring appearances by producer Pete Waterman and DJ Neil Fox, judges on actual shows like "Popstars" and "Pop Idol." Kay played transsexual singer Geraldine McQueen, who won a genuine public vote ahead of quarter 2 Up 2 Down.

Kay has cached a chart force, having been featured on English vocalist Tony Christie's massive 2005 reissue of "Is This the Way to Amarillo." The show was a huge ratings winner for Channel 4, with a total audience in excess of 6 million, according to research company Attentional.

As tradition demands, the winner immediately released a single, and McQueen's "The Winner's Song," released Oct. 14 by Polydor/Universal and co-written by Kay and Take That's Gary Barlow, duly trumped Jackson, selling 39,564 copies for a No. 2 debut.

HMV rock and pop buyer John Hirst says the U.K. media's buildup of the battle between satire and reality "helped make the whole thing self-fulfilling. Geraldine's song is quite catchy, which shouldn't come as a surprise given that Gary Barlow penned it and the show was watched by a few million. Clearly enough people were happy enough to go along with the spoof."

In a further twist, Sony/ATV, which already publishes Barlow, announced Oct. 20 that it had signed "McQueen" to a worldwide two-single deal for "The Winner's Song" and a planned follow-up for the Christmas market.

"We learned that Gary Barlow was working on a top secret project with Peter Kay," Sony/ATV managing director Rak Sanghvi says. "Given Peter's huge public appeal, we immediately asked to be involved. We've been knocked out by the reaction, but we knew with these two guys working together, it couldn't fail."

But Hirst does not think the bizarre chart incident signals any reduction in the influence of TV talent shows, pointing to strong first-week sales for Jackson's debut album, "Right Now," released Oct. 20. "I wouldn't write off the 'X-Factor' winner just yet, but my kids loved 'The Royle Family,'" he says.

"Simple' Gifts

If screenwriter-turned-musician Josh Radin ever decides to go back to his previous occupation as a Hollywood script writer, he's got a pretty good story right in front of him.

During the course of the last few years, Radin went from being played on "Grey's Anatomy" before he had a record deal to being dropped by his label to serenading Ellen DeGeneres as she walked down the aisle. That good luck has also translated into sales; his latest album, "Simple Times," has sold 37,000 copies since it was released in September, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

"There is some cliché expression about preparation meeting opportunity, but it does ring true," Radin says. "I've worked hard, but a lot of my opportunities are due to being in the right place at the right time."

After Radin made the leap from writing scripts to writing songs, he used his Hollywood connections to score placements in "Grey's Anatomy," a move the did not go unnoticed by the majors.

"There was a bidding war in 2005, and I went with Columbia because they promised me I'd be opening for (Bob) Dylan and have complete artistic freedom," he says. "Then I went to the studio to make the follow-up. After I turned it in, I got a call from the label saying they liked it but they didn't hear a top 40 hit. They gave me two choices: go to the studio with Rick Rubin to make a hit or buy myself out." Radin put up the cash and bought his masters, then signed to the newly launched Mom and Pop Records with the goal of getting his record out as quickly as possible.

"What we did with Josh speaks to our ability to turn things around quickly, " Mom and Pop President Michael Goldstone says. "We signed him in August and had the record out a month later."

Because of the short lead time, many of the traditional long-lead press outlets could not cover the record, so Radin and Goldstone had to rely on TV placements and synch deals for exposure. Luckily, one of Radin's biggest fans is TV host DeGeneres, whom he met at a charity event.

"I've played her show twice, and she asked me to sing at her wedding," Radin says. "I thought she was kidding at first, but I wound up singing during the ceremony. It was pretty amazing. She's one of the best fans I could ask for." —Courtney Harding
Kenny Chesney's "Lucky Old Sun" bows atop the Billboard 200 with 176,000, giving the country superstar his fifth No. 1 on the big chart. On Top Country Albums, Chesney celebrates his eighth chart-topper. That's a passel of No. 1s, no doubt. However, he's still far behind that chart's leader, as George Strait has netted a whopping 22 No. 1s.

However, this is Chesney's lowest sales debut for a studio album since 1999, when "Everywhere We Go" bowed with 30,000 at No. 51 on the Billboard 200. All of his following five studio albums (released between 2002 and 2007) but one launched with more than 300,000. Only 2002's "No Shoes, No Shirt, No Problems" started with a lower figure--235,000.

"Lucky Old Sun" crowns the charts on the strength of its deluxe edition, which streeted Oct. 14, a week before the standard version hit stores. The deluxe set included a handful of bonus tracks not found on the standard version, as explained last week in this column.

In any other week, "Lucky" might be fortunate enough to stick around for a second frame at No. 1 on the Billboard 200. However, two new albums will hog the top slots on the chart next week: AC/DC's "Black Ice" and the soundtrack to "High School Musical 3: Senior Year." The AC/DC set, the veteran band's first new studio offering since 2000's "Stiff Upper Lip," was released exclusively through Wal-Mart, Sam's Club and the band's official Web site on Oct. 20 (see story, page 16). The album will then benefit from a full seven-day sales cycle on next week's charts, as opposed to the six-day frame that new Tuesday releases receive. (Nielsen SoundScan's tracking week runs Monday through the close of business Sunday.)

Sales indicate that "Black Ice" moved 193,000 in its first day of release and approximately 120,000 in its second day.

Industry prognosticators suggest that "Black Ice" could move as much as 800,000 in its first full week in stores. However, because of the unique nature of this exclusive title, which is getting lavish promotion from Wal-Mart, its finish-line total could go higher or lower.

With families out shopping this weekend for Halloween costumes and groceries, one can envision dads running to the massive AC/DC display in Wal-Mart while the kids scramble to find the "HSMS3" set.

If projections hold, "Black Ice" will become AC/DC's second No. 1 album following 1981's "For Those About to Rock We Salute You." Yes, believe it or not, neither "Highway to Hell" nor "Back in Black" topped the tally. They reached Nos. 17 and 4, respectively.
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<th>ARTIST</th>
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<td>Shogun</td>
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<td>One World (Soundtrack)</td>
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<td>THIRD DAY</td>
<td>Revelation</td>
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<td>Graffiti The World</td>
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<td>Jordan Sparks</td>
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<td>FRANK SINATRA</td>
<td>Nothing But The Best</td>
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<td>ALCIA KEEYS</td>
<td>As I Am</td>
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<td>JENNY LEWIS</td>
<td>Acid Toupee</td>
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<td>DAN EVANS</td>
<td>Goin' All Out</td>
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<td>LOS PIKADENTES DE CABORCA</td>
<td>Vamonos Papi Rio</td>
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<td>RIOT!</td>
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<td>The Way Of All Flesh</td>
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<td>MADONNA</td>
<td>Hard Candy</td>
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The winner of this week's VH-1 "Ice Premies" (Oct. 23) was a 17% increase since July. With its first effort through its own label on EMI, the former Virgin artist struts in with nearly 4,000 and a No. 3 debut on Top Holiday Albums.

The "Polishing" tour's hit "Fly" by this week's winner sees her Christmas effort start with 5,000 and a No. 7 debut on Top Holiday Albums.

With the disc's premier cable debut on HBO coming, the album earns its first sales increase since July.

The set gathers up previously released holiday tunes from the stage show with four newly recorded songs.

The winer of four awards at VH-1 "Ice Premies" (Oct. 23) flies with a 26% increase and its best sales frame in more than a month.

Data for week of NOVEMBER 1, 2008 | For chart reprints call 646.654.4633

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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More charts. Deeper charts. Go to billboard.biz/charts to find Billboard's complete menu of more than 185 charts—albums, singles, digital, mobile, and more—refreshed every Thursday.
**HOT COUNTRY SONGS**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
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<td>Kenny Chesney/Wichita Lineman</td>
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<td>LOVE STORY</td>
<td>Taylor Swift</td>
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<td>Darius Rucker</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>LET IT GO</td>
<td>Tim McGraw</td>
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**TOP COUNTRY ALBUMS**

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<th>Year</th>
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<td>Lucky Old Sun</td>
<td>Capitol Nashville</td>
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<tr>
<td>BILLY CURRINGTON</td>
<td>Little Bit of Everything</td>
<td>Republic Nashville</td>
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<tr>
<td>SUGARLAND</td>
<td>Love on the Inside</td>
<td>Epic Nashville</td>
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<tr>
<td>TAYLOR SWIFT</td>
<td>Fearless</td>
<td>Big Machine</td>
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<td>ROBERT PLANT &amp; ALISON KRAUSS</td>
<td>Raising Sand</td>
<td>Varispeed</td>
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<td>LITTLE BIG TOWN</td>
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<td>FAITH HILL</td>
<td>Joy To The World</td>
<td>Warner Bros</td>
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<td>CARRIE UNDERWOOD</td>
<td>Carnival Ride</td>
<td>Sony Music</td>
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<td>ELVIS PRESLEY</td>
<td>Christmas Duets</td>
<td>RCA Nashville</td>
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<td>JAMEY JOHNSON</td>
<td>That Lonesome Song</td>
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<td>TIM McGRAW</td>
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Go to www.billboard.com for complete chart data.
### TOP R&B/HIP-HOP ALBUMS

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### ADULT R&B

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### HOT RAP SONGS

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Data week for November 1, 2008 | CHARTS LEGEND on Page 55

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data

www.americanradiohistory.com
## HOT DANCE CLUB PLAY

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<td>Just Another Day</td>
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<td>You Make Me Feel (Only Love Can Break Me Down)</td>
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<td>Into the Nightlife</td>
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## TOP ELECTRONIC ALBUMS

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## TOP DANCE AIRPLAY

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<td>What I Want</td>
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## TOP CHRISTIAN ALBUMS

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## TOP GOSPEL ALBUMS

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## TOP GOSPEL SONGS

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<td>Today Is The Day</td>
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<td>One Life To Live</td>
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<td>Whatever You're Doing (Something Heavenly)</td>
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Data for week of NOVEMBER 1, 2008 | For chart reprints call 646.654.4533

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data | 61
**HITS OF THE WORLD**

**JAPAN**

**ALBUMS**

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**UNITED KINGDOM**

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**GERMANY**

**ALBUMS**

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*Source: Billboard*
For ad placement in print and online call Jeff Serrette 800-223-7524/jserrette@billboard.com
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RECORD COMPANIES: Warner Bros. Records names David Marcus senior VP of strategic initiatives. He was senior VP of music at Ticketmaster.

Sony BMG Music Entertainment taps David Levin as senior VP/business manager of sales. He was VP of digital sales and new sales initiatives for global digital business at Sony BMG.


BMI names Simon Aldridge senior executive of writer/publisher relations in Europe. He was head of A&R at Sony/ATV Music Publishing in London.

TOURING: Comedy Central Live Entertainment names Mitch Fried senior VP. He was senior VP of promotion marketing at Comedy Central.

MEDIA: MTV Networks Music and Logo Group promotes Tom Calderone to president of VHI. He was executive VP/OM.

RELATED FIELDS: The Recording Academy appoints Rick Engdahl VP of information technology. He previously served in the same role at Sega Entertainment.

—Edited by Mitchell Peters

GOOD WORKS

SIMPLE PLAN DONATES SONG PROCEEDS TO CANCER CHARITIES

When Simple Plan singer Pierre Bouvier discovered in 2006 that his 28-year-old brother, Jay, was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin lymphoma, the artist turned to songwriting as a method of therapy. "It hit me hard," Bouvier says. "There was a chance that he might not make it."

At the time, Simple Plan was writing material for its third self-titled album. And while Bouvier's brother was undergoing chemotherapy, the Canadian rock outfit continued to work on the set, which was released earlier this year on Lava/Atlantic.

From those difficult songwriting sessions came "Save You," a track that expresses "how helpless I felt and how difficult it was to see someone you care about go through something like that," Bouvier says.

Now, at the perfect time to celebrate the recovery of Bouvier's brother, the Simple Plan Foundation is donating net proceeds from digital downloads of "Save You" to various cancer-focused charities. The donation period began Oct. 14 and continues through the end of January. Fan feedback on "Save You" has been positive. During meet-and-greets at concerts, "there's always somebody that comes up to me and says, 'This song really helped me out, because someone in my family went through the same thing,'" Bouvier says. "People really appreciate it."

"Save You," which appears on Simple Plan's self-titled album, sold 7,000 downloads in the week ending Oct. 19, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The donation effort is a partnership involving Simple Plan, iTunes, Lava/Atlantic and publisher Warner/Chappell Music.

Since launching the Simple Plan Foundation more than two years ago, the organization has raised about $300,000 for various organizations around Montreal, according to Bouvier.

—Mitchell Peters

SLASH AND BURN

A solo album or the third Velvet Revolver album—or possibly both—are on Slash's docket for 2009. The guitarist tells Track he's "at the very tail end of the demo phase" for the solo project, which he hopes to start recording early next year. He began creating material during Velvet Revolver's last tour and says that while it will have references to his work with that band and Guns n' Roses, "there's really no particular direction. I just wanted to take a little bit of a break from all the politics and the democracy that is a band and just sort of do my own thing for a little bit. There will be a lot of stuff I don't have the freedom to do in a band situation."

Slash plans to use different singers for each of the album's songs but isn't divulging who's on the list yet. "They're all sort of well-known singers," he says. "It's sort of like how I get to play on a lot of other people's records, so other people will just play on this one."

Slash cautions that the solo album could be interrupted if Velvet Revolver finds a replacement for vocalist Scott Weiland in the near future. The group has turned down offers to conduct the search via a reality TV show—"there's such a huge lack of integrity in that process—but is considering a variety of possibilities, including some established singers whose interest has surprised the band.

"There's been a couple that might have been interesting," Slash says, "but with any of those 'name' people ... it's really hard to make something sound original if you've got somebody people are so familiar with hearing somewhere else."

INSIDE TRACK

2008 ASCAP COUNTRY AWARDS

ASCAP held its 46th annual Country Music Awards Oct. 13 at the Ryman Auditorium in Nashville, honoring the genre's top songwriters and music publishers. Hosted by ASCAP CEO John LoFrumento and senior VP Connie Bradley, the event kicked off with a performance by the SteelDrivers. ASCAP writers of the past year's top five most-performed songs then treated the crowd with their own special renditions of their hits. Dierks Bentley, Rod Janzen and special guests the Goodnights performed "Free & Easy (Down the Road I Go)." egret Thibodeaux and special guest Cole (co-writer) Luke Bryan performed "Good Directions." Dave Turnbull performed "Lucky Man." Chris Watlin performed "Don't Blink," with his wife, Camille, on sax and Jeff Gilmansen on cello. and Dave Berg and Rivers Rutherford performed "These Are My People."

Reba McEntire received ASCAP's Golden Note Award for her career achievements after being honored with renditions of two hits by Brooks & Dunn, Lyle Lovett and Kristy Clarkston. Other award winners included Berg (who was named ASCAP songwriter of the year), Alan Jackson (songwriter artist of the year), Thibodeaux (song of the year for "Good Directions"), EMI Music Publishing (publisher of the year), and Great American Country (which picked up ASCAP's Partners in Music Awards). various countries won awards.

1. From left: ASCAP CEO John LoFrumento, Rachel Thibodeau, Dave Berg and ASCAP senior VP Connie Bradley.
2. From left: Reba McEntire, Brad Paisley, Kittie Pickler and ASCAP CEO John LoFrumento on red carpet.
3. ASCAP Golden Note Award honoree Reba McEntire.
MEDIA AND MONEY

Dow Jones and Billboard parent the Nielsen Co. presented the second annual Media and Money Conference Oct. 14-15 at the Marriott Marquis in New York. Guided by the editorial teams of both organizations, the event united the media and entertainment industry with private and public investors in an environment meant to foster learning and forge new business opportunities. Sponsors for this year's conference included Loeb & Loeb LLP, Qualcomm, MediaFlo USA, Aeguor Technologies, Booz & & Co. and PricewaterhouseCoopers. PHOTOS COURTESY OF ALIM URMANCHEEV PHOTOGRAPHY

The last keynote session of the two-day Media and Money Conference featured Weinstein Co. co-chairman and Miramax Films president/CEO Lee 5alomson, left. It was moderated by the Hollywood Record's deputy editor Andrew Wallenstein.

Jacob president/CEO Philippe Dauman began the second day of the conference with a keynote: "Content is Still the King of Growth," identifying opportunities for companies during the media and entertainment industry's current period of transition.

Lodj & Loles/LPP sponsored the first morning session of the conference. The keynote speaker was media and entertainment industry's new business development opportunity.
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