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HOW WEB SITES COULD MAKE MONEY ON MIX ‘TAPES’
COULD THE ECONOMY KILL SUMMER FESTIVALS?

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TicketMonster?
A Possible Live Nation-Ticketmaster Merger Could Hurt The Music Business

BY DON VACCARO

The potential merger talks between Live Nation and Ticketmaster, which came to light recently in the Wall Street Journal, may make good business sense for the companies involved. But it’s bad for everyone else in the industry: venues, artists, managers, agents, promoters and fans.

I don’t think the deal can be completed. With a new sheriff in Washington, D.C., a merger that is so bad for everyone involved and affected by live entertainment—a business that touches so many of us on a consistently positive basis—won’t be allowed to happen.

Who will hurt by this deal? I think the better question is, who won’t be?

Venues: Venues top the list of industry players that would suffer in such a merger. SMG’s recent move to switch its ticketing operations from Ticketmaster to Live Nation created real bitterness at Ticketmaster, causing then-CEO Sean Moriarity to issue a statement intimating that his company might enter the venue management business if SMG followed through with its plans. The message was clear: If you play in my sandbox, I’ll look for ways to hurt you.

If a merger goes through, it would be even easier to find new ways. Not only could venues lose revenue sharing funds from ticket service charge fees, they could face restrictions on the companies they could partner with. Perhaps worst of all, venues would have to balance their need to book the right entertainment at the right price with the risk of alienating a concert giant and thus losing shows that could have played the building.

Artists, managers, agents: The proposed merger could restrict the opportunities of artists who aren’t part of the combined entity to play at the venues served by Ticketmaster and those run by Live Nation. Managers and agents would also lose their ability to work with their clients as well as they had before the merger. Could certain marketing opportunities be reserved for clients of Front Line, the management company owned by Ticketmaster? What about the best-on-sale dates or set times?

Promoters: Promoters and other ticketing companies would obviously have a hard time competing against such a dominant entity.

Fans—and the Boss: If so much of live entertainment is controlled by one company, it’s inevitable that ticket prices will rise. So will service fees. Ultimately tickets would go directly to the secondary-market.

That’s why Bruce Springsteen and his manager, Jon Landau, wrote a letter to fans that came out against the merger. Other artists and event producers will jump on the bandwagon with similar statements. Artists will vent their frustrations with the tanking economy, but their anger will focus on the possible merger. With consumers hurting and Wall Street greased fresh in the minds of Americans, the negative reaction will have legs.

Whether you’re in the music business or just a fan of live entertainment, the specter of a live entertainment superpower should frighten you.

Don Vaccaro is founder/CEO of TicketNetwork.com, an online ticket exchange. He has more than 25 years of experience in the secondary ticket market, including a decade in industry-related software development.

I’m only buying a few songs
33% and albums by my favorite artists this year.

I’m not buying any new music.

19%
They said “speak now or forever hold your peace” before corporate mergers, the sight of Live Nation and Ticketmaster Entertainment standing at the altar would surely draw a chorus of colorful commentary—not all of it printable.

At a time when live entertainment remains one of the healthiest sectors of the troubled music business, Live Nation and Ticketmaster together would control the majority of box-office dollars, the myriad revenue opportunities that come from concert ticketing and the limited-e-commerce that the fan-ticket connection brings to live music.

But while an announcement on a potential merger seems imminent, consummating this union won’t be easy. The two music industry giants would have to get regulatory approval, not to mention the consent of their respective boards.

Perhaps the most vehement opposition would come from Live Nation competitor and live entertainment power player Anschutz Entertainment Group, the parent of AEG Live. AEG, owned by Denver business titan Philip Anschutz, is diverse and deep-pocketed. And sources tell Billboard that Ticketmaster had been in negotiations to acquire a significant portion of AEG as recently as last week.

The news about a potential Live Nation-Ticketmaster deal broke shortly after the Ticketmaster-AEG talks fell apart. “There’s a billionaire in Denver who’s very happy this morning,” a source familiar with the situation told Billboard the day after the first news reports emerged about the Live Nation-Ticketmaster talks.

AEG reps declined to comment. Likewise, Live Nation and Ticketmaster have remained mum.

Another challenge could come from German business giant Klaus-Peter Sch鲁lenberg, executive board chairman at CTS Eventim, Live Nation’s partner in launching its own global ticketing company. Under a 10-year contract that just went into effect, CTS provides Live Nation ticketing services in North America and Europe.

CTS executives can’t be happy to hear that longtime rival Ticketmaster might be joining forces with Live Nation. And insiders doubt Ticketmaster and CTS could mesh, so CTS would have to be reckoned with.

A Live Nation-Ticketmaster Combo Portends Big Changes

With Sch鲁lenberg unlikely to reach an agreement, and in addition to their formidable might in the live music business, Live Nation and Ticketmaster also boast other key assets in their vertically integrated operations. Consider their artist rosters. Live Nation has forged long-term multimillion-dollar deals with Madonna, U2, Nickelback, Shakira, Jay-Z and the Jonas Brothers. The Front Line division of Ticketmaster Entertainment has ties with some 200 clients, including the Eagles, Aerosmith, Jimmy Buffett, Kid Rock, Neil Diamond and Guns N’ Roses. Front Line helped Ticketmaster compete with Live Nation on the artist relationship front. Together, they’ll have no rival in that regard.

Some artists, particularly established acts, could benefit greatly in maximizing the synergies of a Live Nation-Ticketmaster, which could also be strongly positioned to explore developing acts. And artists not interested in being part of such a corporate behemoth could still find plenty of creative and influential boutique managers who’d tout their independence to clients.

A combined Live Nation-Ticketmaster entity would also control a huge customer database. The marketing efficiencies would be enormous, as would the value to sponsors. How they would use this information and who they would allow to access it are key questions.

With one company instead of two, Front Line would be less likely to pressure Live Nation for touring guarantees that make ticket-sale profit margins razor thin. With their combined efforts, ancillary revenue from ticketing lessens the importance of revenue from straight ticket sales.

Where does all this leave other players in the music business? Potentially marginalized.

With live music already the most reliable income stream for most artists, record labels would wield even less power and would assume more limited roles as distributors and, to a lesser extent, marketers.

Independent promoters have to be worried that they could be on the outside looking in, and, like AEG, would probably do anything in their power to keep this merger from happening, including appealing to the U.S. Department of Justice on antitrust grounds. Venues could lose any leverage they had when two giants competed for their business.

Anxiety is probably also running high at secondary-market sellers like StubHub. A dynamically priced house could become the norm, with the primary stakeholders controlling the stakes and others potentially muscled out.

**GIANT STEPS**

**Live attractions:** THE EAGLES (above) and JAY-Z with Sch鲁lenberg couldn’t be reached for comment.

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_Countdown To Clarity

Internet Radio Royalty Rate Talks Near Deadline

After nearly two years of acrimony and uncertainty, the Internet radio business appears close to resolving a protracted royalty dispute with SoundExchange.

Under legislation passed by Congress last year, online radio stations and SoundExchange have until Feb. 15 to negotiate a compromise on statutory royalty rate increases for the 2006-10 rate period. The lack of clarity on the issue has made it difficult for existing players and potential newcomers to calculate the cost of running an online radio business.

In March 2007, the U.S. Copyright Royalty Board (CRB) approved sharp increases in the statutory royalty rates paid by webcasters to stream songs. That triggered complaints among Web radio operators that the new rates—which were set to more than double during the four-year rate term ending in 2010—were so high they would put many services out of business.

In response to the outcry, Congress passed the Webcaster Settlement Act of 2008 to encourage all parties to negotiate a compromise on the rates. Under the law, any rate settlement reached between SoundExchange and webcasters by Feb. 15 would apply to all copyright holders, not just SoundExchange members, who represent about 95% of the recorded music available today.

According to SoundExchange, about 85%-90% of Internet radio companies that were making royalty payments before the 2007 CRB ruling have continued to do so under the new rates. Some services, like Pandora, are paying fees less than the new statutory rate but more than what they were paying previously. And others aren't paying at all, pending the outcome of the settlement talks. SoundExchange has agreed not to force the issue until after Feb. 15.

All sides have already filed petitions to participate in the CRB proceeding for the next royalty rate term beginning in 2011. Several sources say it's possible that some deals announced by Feb. 15 may extend through the end of 2015 to avoid another round of negotiations.

Any webcasting entities that past the Feb. 15 deadline without a settlement have one final recourse. Oral arguments in the appeal of the CRB rulings are set for March 19. Any settlement announced Feb. 15 will almost certainly include dropping the appeal. But all parties contacted by Billboard expressed confidence that a settlement would be reached by the deadline.

Efforts to reach a settlement are complicated by the number of parties involved in the talks. The Digital Media Assn. (DiMA) represents larger Internet radio services, such as those run by Yahoo, AOL and Pandora. The National Assn. of Broadcasters negotiates for terrestrial radio stations that simulcast their programming online. The Intercollege Broadcasters System speaks on behalf of college stations. And smaller webcasters are represented by a number of entities. By Feb. 15, it's likely there will be a different agreement for each rather than one blanket settlement that applies to all, according to parties involved in the negotiations.

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting is the only webcasting group to reach a comprehensive agreement with SoundExchange, announcing in early January a rate deal covering about 450 noncommercial public radio stations.

Other partial settlements since the CRB ruling include a May 2007 offer to small webcasters—which making less than $1.25 million in total revenue a year—the option of paying royalties based on a percentage of their revenue rather than by song. Under this offer, small webcasters could pay royalties of 10% on their first $250,000 of gross revenue and 12% on all revenue above that, with a cap on the number of streams they serve per month. The offer expired in September 2007.

In July of that year, DiMA struck a deal that capped the $500 per-channel minimum fee outlined in the original CRB ruling to $50,000 for DMA members that agreed to provide more detailed reporting of the music played on their services. Among the issues to be sorted out by Feb. 15 is the fact that the per-channel minimum cap negotiated by DiMA doesn't apply to the many DMA members still negotiating a settlement.

## Back In The Ring

Fight Over Radio Performance Royalties Resumes In Congress

The music business has battled in vain for decades to require U.S. terrestrial radio stations to pay for the right to air sound recordings.

But a shift in the tenor of the debate on Capitol Hill over performance royalties suggests that the quest is no longer quite so quixotic.

In early February, House Judiciary Committee chairman John Conyers, D-Mich., and Senate Judiciary Committee chairman Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., reintroduced the Performance Rights Act, which would require U.S. terrestrial radio stations that play music to pay royalties to artists and musicians performing the songs as well as the right holders who own the master recordings. Terrestrial stations already pay publishing royalties to songwriters. The National Assn. of Broadcasters was quick to dismiss the legislation, with NAB president/CEO David Reif saying in a statement that "local radio broadcasters consider this fee a 'performance tax' that will not only harm your local radio stations but will threaten new artists trying to break into the business as well as your constituents who rely on local radio."

In a sign of the NAB's pull, 226 representatives and 14 senators joined Rep. Raymond Green, D-Texas, and Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., in sponsoring a non-binding resolution in 2007 declaring that Congress shouldn't impose any new performance fees, taxes, royalties or other charges on terrestrial radio stations. But with such congressional leaders as Conyers and Leahy in its camp, the recording industry can point to signs of progress in its fight to get performance royalties.

In recent years, hearings on Capitol Hill about the pending merger of XM Satellite Radio and Sirius Satellite Radio and the controversy over the U.S. Copyright Royalty Board's decision to increase royalty rates for Internet radio stations have helped draw attention to the fact that terrestrial radio stations are exempt from performance royalties, even though satellite and Web radio companies are required to pay them. Meanwhile, artists groups and the RIAA have also been highlighting the fact that the United States is the only industrialized country that doesn't require terrestrial radio stations to pay performance royalties.

RIAA chairman/CEO Mitch Bainwol says the fight to make artist performance royalties a reality has always been envisioned as multijurisdictional process. "The beginning phase was about educating policymakers about this special-interest loophole in the law," Bainwol says. "We've successfully told our story to lawmakers, and now comes the time to begin to advance legislation."

Bainwol says he sees reasons to be optimistic.

"The changes in the music marketplace, the changes in the composition of Congress and the unprecedented unity of the music community has given our arguments new resonance," he says. "In a multiplatform world, this archaic gap in the law for terrestrial broadcasters has become even more indefensible."
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Take A Walk
Endemol Signs Deal With Former Epic President

The Dutch TV production company Endemol, the producer of the game show “Deal or No Deal” and edgy reality fare like “Fear Factor” and “Big Brother,” has been on a multipurpose media expansion spree. Since the start of the year, the company has announced plans to develop a new online reality series with MySpace, launched a new production subsidiary in Brazil, acquired a TV production and distribution company in Australia and signed a deal in Egypt to produce a local version of “Fear Factor.”

In its latest move, Endemol signed a deal with former Epic president Charlie Walk that calls for Walk’s newly launched company, CWE Media, to develop and produce reality and scripted TV programming for Endemol.

“By years, Charlie has had a knack for identifying and growing talent on the record side of the business,” says Endemol North America chairman David Goldberg. “I think the process in television is very similar—you’re looking for talented people, you’re looking for great ideas… If you have the ability in media to spot trends, have your fingers on the pulse in one genre, my feeling is you can do it in other genres.”

CWE has several projects under way, one of which is “NAIL’d,” a reality show set in a Miami nail salon that Walk is developing with MTV.

“We found an amazing character that runs an actual salon where a lot of celebrities and locals go,” Walk says. “What we’re going to do is create our own physical nail salon brand and nail salon production and create an environment where it’ll be not just the characters of the show but real people going in and out and capturing the essence of what happens in a nail salon.”

Endemol and CWE are shopping around “NAIL’d” to U.S. broadcast and cable networks. Most of Endemol’s music-themed programming has been aired outside the United States, although it also produced ABC’s short-lived “The One: Making a Music Star” in 2006.

Walk says “NAIL’d” will feature music but he and Goldberg say that music-themed shows won’t be his primary focus.

“Charlie understands what consumers want,” Goldberg says. “He’s a big fan of television, he’s studied television, and the ideas that he’s come to us with thus far actually have very little to do with music.”

Whatever the format, Endemol’s specialty is developing TV concepts that can be adapted for multiple international markets. “Fear Factor” and “Deal or No Deal” originated in the Netherlands, while the ABC reality series “Wipe-Out,” which was produced by Endemol USA, is being adapted for markets in Europe and the Middle East.

“The real philosophy is to create content and television formats in as many countries as we can and then exploit the original idea in as many countries as we possibly can,” Goldberg says.

After two decades at Sony Music, Charlie Walk left his post as president of Epic Records in December to launch Charlie Walk Entertainment Media, a multimedia production company. At Epic, Walk promoted his acts through a variety of nontraditional deals, including a Rhapsody advertising campaign that helped break Sara Bareilles and an unusual partnership with ABC under which the network featured music by the label’s artists in its shows. While he declined to discuss his tenure at Sony, he spoke with Billboard about CWE Media’s deal with Endemol and what he has planned.

Why move to TV now?
For me, it’s not just about moving to TV—it’s about participat- ing and creating the future of content across all platforms. And that means not leaving the music business per se and that means partnering up with an amazing company like Endemol that understands the future of content as it relates to digital launches and streaming to networks or cable. The truth is, wherever there’s a screen and the masses are going to watch something is where we need to be.

Why did you decide to go with Endemol?
First and foremost, their chairman David Goldberg is open for business. His attitude is very different than most in the sense that he’s looking for content… and have that content not just play in the U.S. but plug it into the Endemol system, which are global formats that can be tweaked and tuned for a specific market. Not only does it work, it evolves as the technology evolves and it evolves as the con- sumer moves through different ways of viewing content or absorbing content. I felt it was the best place to quickly and effi- ciently execute some of the ideas and concepts we have in play.

Because you come from a music background, are the shows you develop for Endemol going to have a big music component to them?
I think it’s a case-by-case basis. There will be music concept-based shows that we think someone is going to want to watch. I still have a hunger for breaking new talent.

Talk a little bit about the show “NAIL’d.”
Should you go to a nail salon anywhere in the U.S.A., you end up seeing the same people that go to the same time and they have a relationship with their manicurists. And not only is there a relationship, but there’s gossip, drama, and what happens in- side that nail salon sometimes takes on a life of its own. And by the way, that show will have great music in it. And if it’s up to me, it will have new music in it. If you look at what “The Hills” has done or what “The City” has done now, it has fabulous new music in it. What I’d like to be able to do with our shows is get more into the music side of it even- tually is to be able to have more artists that we’re partners with and plug them into the shows.

When you were at Epic, you had a great partnership with ABC, but now you’re underground. Did the success of that, especially with the Fray on “Grey’s Anatomy,” aff- ect what you wanted to do in terms of getting music and TV together?
I think our partnership with ABC was revolutionary and important. We made exclusive deals with the network as it related to the audience, depending on the platform that they had to offer. And what I learned from that experience is that it’s really about the platform. There are great artists out there right now, signed to major labels, that have trouble breaking because they don’t have the platform. And my thinking is, as it relates to CWE and partnering up with the right people on the music side of the TV side, [is] that I want to figure out the appropriate platforms to break television shows with visual concepts and music, where you get as many eyeballs or “earballs” as possible.

What are some branding initiatives you’ve seen that you really like?
One of the greatest examples was 50 Cent and Vitamin Water. Together they worked on a campaign that was real and made a difference because he drank the product and incorporated it into his brand at the time. I think those types of situations can work in the future as long as it’s authentic and real and it’s not just the quote-unquote check per se. You’ve got to have an artist who actually believes in the brand.
RECESSION BLUES

Festival Cancellations Reflect Economic Pressures

The international music festival market is beginning to feel the pressures of the global economic downturn. Organizers of the Langerado Music Festival in Miami and the Hydro Connect Festival in Scotland recently called off their events, citing the recession's impact on ticket sales as a major factor.

"The economy just really took us for a hit," Langerado co-promoter Ethan Schwartz says. "The entertainment dollar is stretched thin for people right now."

Hydro Connect promoter Geoff Ellis said in a statement that high costs and the impact of the credit crunch on the festival's audience "means that it would be foolish for us to expect the growth necessary to help Connect thrive in 2009."

As consumers become more cautious about how they spend their entertainment dollars, most industry observers believe that large, established international festivals like Coachella, Bonnaroo and Glastonbury will weather the economic storm. But newer, smaller events may not be so lucky.

"I won't be surprised if some number of the festivals that have popped up in the last two or three years struggle this year, even when they have competitive lineups," says Billions Corporation president David Visceli. "I don't think the festival ticket-buying audience will be as big this year as it was last year."

Langerado, originally set for March 6-8 at Bonnaroo, will not be so lucky.

"It was right when everything started to crumble with the economy," he says, noting that a three-day pass costs $150. "In the past we've always seen an uptick in the beginning of January, but it never appeared this year."

Schwartz declined to reveal a specific ticket count, but noted that in recent weeks the festival was only selling about 30 tickets per day. "Normally we'd be selling a few hundred tickets a day at this point," he says. "There were dismal counts. Acts that were scheduled to appear at Langerado included Death Cab for Cutie, Spoon, Dogg and Ryan Adams & the Cardinals."

Kiri Sommer, a booking agent at the William Morris Agency, says that part of Langerado's failure was its location. After being held at various locations in South Florida during the past six years, the festival was due to move to Miami in 2009.

"With the exception of Ultra Music Festival, Miami has never really been the optimal landscape for an alternative music festival," says Sommer, who books such acts as the Killers and Amy Winehouse. The agent noted that the Bang Music Festival debuted in Miami in 2005 and failed to reappear after its second year.

Along with Langerado and Hydro Connect, other festival organizers are expecting to cut back in 2009. Festival Network executive chairman Chris Shields says the company "is in belt-tightening mode—streamlining operations to better prepare for the 2009 season. Festival Network produces worldwide jazz and folk-themed music events, including the PlayBoy Jazz Festival and the JVC Jazz Festivals in New York and Paris."

Others are more optimistic. AC Entertainment president Ashley Capps, whose company co-produces Bonnaroo with Superfly Productions, says he's "extremely bullish about our ticket sales" for the fest's 2009 edition, which will be held June 11-14 in Manchester, Tenn., featuring headliners Bruce Springsteen, Phish, the Beastie Boys and Nine Inch Nails.

AEG Live CEO Randy Phillips believes that this year's three-day Coachella festival in Indio, Calif., could sell more than 150,000 tickets, which would be on par with last year's event, according to Billboard Boxscore. The 10th annual Coachella is set for April 17-19 at Empire Polo Field and will feature Paul McCartney, the Killers and the Cure at the top of the bill.

AEG Live-promoted festivals returning for their second year include All Points West Music & Arts Festival (New York) and Mile High Music Festival (Denver), and possibly the Rothbury Festival (Rothbury, Mich.), according to Phillips. "We're 95% there to greenlighting it," he says of Rothbury, noting that headliners still need to be confirmed.

Bonnaroo and Coachella are among the festivals offering layaway plans on tickets (Billboard, Jan. 10). Similarly, the United Kingdom's Glastonbury Festival, which has reported strong ticket sales, allowed festivalgoers to reserve £75 ($248.33) tickets with a £50 ($70.95) deposit. The balance of the ticket price had to be paid by Feb. 1, with a £40 ($56.75) refund for those who didn't complete the purchase. In a statement, organizers said there were a "limited amount of cancelled tickets" from those who did not complete the purchase after receiving a ticket...

Additional reporting by Andre Paine and Jen Wilson in London.

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Go to www.billboard.com/order to get your copy today!
After His Super Bowl Halftime Show, Bruce Springsteen Is Poised For A Big Sales Boost

The Pittsburgh Steelers weren't the only ones to emerge victorious in Super Bowl XLIII. The other winners? Bruce Springsteen & the E Street Band.

If past experience is any indicator, the Boss' rousing halftime set will give an important boost to sales of his new album, "Working on a Dream" (Columbia).

The title debuts this week at the top of the Billboard 200, based on sales tracked by Nielsen SoundScan through Sunday, Feb. 1. Because the SoundScan data includes only a few hours of post-Super Bowl sales, the impact of Springsteen's halftime performance won't be fully felt until the following week.

A Nielsen PreView examination of SoundScan sales data for the previous four Super Bowl halftime acts reveals that all enjoyed a significant boost in sales following their performances. And we’re not talking about a simple one-week bump. All acts enjoyed a sales increase that lasted at least several weeks after the game.

And because the Super Bowl halftime show serves as a point of discovery or rediscovery for many consumers, the biggest sales gains typically come from markets where the performer has the weakest customer loyalty.

To chart these trends, Nielsen PreView tallied SoundScan sales data for bricks-and-mortar stores in the 100 largest U.S. designated market areas (DMA) before and after the previous four Super Bowls, which featured Paul McCartney in 2005, the Rolling Stones in 2006, Prince in 2007 and Tom Petty in 2008.

Nielsen PreView tracked the sales of one greatest-hits title per artist: "Beatles 1" for McCartney (because three of the four numbers he played were Beatles songs), the Stones' "Forty Licks," Prince's "The Very Best of Prince" and Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers' "Greatest Hits." PreView also looked at nationwide digital track sales of songs performed during the halftime shows.

Of course, these numbers provide only a snapshot of the total sales impact of a Super Bowl performance, which can also lift sales of catalog albums and other digital tracks. But the results were clear—a Super Bowl appearance can have a significant effect on sales.

And that means Springsteen can count on seeing better days in the weeks ahead.

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Dan O'Toole is VP of research and marketing at Nielsen PreView (nielsenpreview.com).

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### GAINING YARDAGE

Prince's dazzling halftime performance at Super Bowl XLI in 2007 perhaps provides the best yardstick by which to measure post-game sales expectations for Bruce Springsteen, whose halftime performance was similarly well-received. By contrast, Super Bowl sets by Paul McCartney and the Rolling Stones generated less excitement.

### PERCENT INCREASE FOR DIGITAL TRACK DOWNLOADS OF SONGS PLAYED AT HALFTIME BY ARTIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>PreSuper Bowl</th>
<th>Super Bowl</th>
<th>Post-Super Bowl</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paul McCartney</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>352%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruce Springsteen</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>247%</td>
<td>129%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Rolling Stones</td>
<td>105%</td>
<td>247%</td>
<td>129%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Average weekly sales increase nationwide during the six-week period beginning with Super Bowl week, compared with average weekly sales during the three weeks prior to the Super Bowl.)

### PERCENT INCREASE FOR GREATEST-HITS ALBUM BY ARTIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paul McCartney</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>175%</td>
<td>348%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruce Springsteen</td>
<td>105%</td>
<td>247%</td>
<td>129%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Rolling Stones</td>
<td>105%</td>
<td>247%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Average weekly sales increase in each DMA during the six-week period beginning with Super Bowl week, compared with average weekly sales during the three-week period prior to the Super Bowl.)

### PERCENT INCREASE IN GREATEST-HITS ALBUM SALES BY WEEK AFTER THE SUPER BOWL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Pre-Super Bowl</th>
<th>Super Bowl</th>
<th>Post-Super Bowl</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paul McCartney</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>105%</td>
<td>247%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruce Springsteen</td>
<td>105%</td>
<td>247%</td>
<td>129%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Rolling Stones</td>
<td>105%</td>
<td>247%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Average sales increase for all four titles across all 100 DMAs, compared with average weekly sales total for all four titles in each of the three weeks prior to the Super Bowl.)

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### SALES GAINS BASED ON CUSTOMER LOYALTY IN A SPECIFIC MARKET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Markets</th>
<th>Moderate High Interest</th>
<th>Moderate Low Interest</th>
<th>Average Interest</th>
<th>Strong High Interest</th>
<th>Strong Low Interest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Games</td>
<td>277%</td>
<td>208%</td>
<td>187%</td>
<td>159%</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Projections based on the same customer loyalty model used for previous pre-Super Bowl studies. Each DMA is designated as high- or low- interest market, with strong and average sales gains for high- and low-interest markets, respectively.)

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### PROJECTED UNIT SALES GAINS FOR SPRINGSTEEN ALBUMS AT RECORD STORES SELLING TO 100 SPRINGSTEEN ALBUMS PER WEEK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Markets</th>
<th>Moderate High Interest</th>
<th>Moderate Low Interest</th>
<th>Average Interest</th>
<th>Strong High Interest</th>
<th>Strong Low Interest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Projections based on the same sales model used for previous pre-Super Bowl studies. Each DMA is designated as high- or low- interest market, with strong and average sales gains for high- and low-interest markets, respectively.)
What is it about coffee and music that always seems to bring the two together? Local cafes have long served as welcoming venues for musicians. Even after scaling back its earlier music retailing ambitions and pulling out of day-to-day management of its Hear Music label, Starbucks remains an important outlet for music sales.

Then there's Rowland Coffee Roasters' Café Bustelo brand, which has been aligning itself with music for the past few years. Last year, Café Bustelo had a presence at high-profile music events including Lollapalooza, South by Southwest and the Winter Music Conference, where it gave away free coffee and merchandise.

This year it will return to those festivals and it's eyeing additional events, such as Coachella and Burning Man. More important, it's close to finalizing a marketing partnership with a major label, according to J.P. Souto, VP of marketing at Rowland.

Souto says options under consideration for the partnership include showcasing music acts on Café Bustelo packaging in exchange for Bustelo-branded inserts in their forthcoming CDs, hosting live performances at the recently launched Café Bustelo lounge at the Gansevoort South Hotel in Miami Beach, sponsoring song giveaways at iTunes and setting up Café Bustelo signage and tastings at an act's shows.

The branding campaign would be timed around the release of an act's new album. Souto envisions doing such a program with a rotating roster of performers every month from a variety of major and indie labels. He says it wouldn't cost much to change its packaging to accommodate different artist campaigns.

The campaign may feature a promotional seal on the packaging to encourage consumers to visit the Web sites of featured artists and Café Bustelo, he says. By tying a call to action to a Web site, Rowland would be able to track how many consumers visit the site, how many people download a song and whether they buy any coffee at Café Bustelo's online store.

The first beneficiary of this partnership is expected to be a Latin artist whose next album is due in the spring. But Souto says Café Bustelo doesn't want to limit itself to one genre.

"Probably the next act would be another Latin artist, but I would love to have a DJ, a dance artist or a soul musician," he says. While Café Bustelo is only sold in the United States, Rowland is considering taking the brand into Latin America, which would give it a wider range of artists to work with.

The first artist deal would likely be a barter transaction. "Probably at the onset we wouldn't pay," he says. "If it goes really well and we find an artist we have to have, I think we would be very open to looking at that. If I could put Amy Winehouse, who I love, on the packaging, I'd pay anything."

Given Café Bustelo's recent moves, would the company consider starting a record label similar to what such brands as Starbucks, Mountain Dew and Bacardi have done?

"It's something that I've thought about, but I don't know how you would go about doing that," Souto says. "I don't know how much money record labels are making these days—I think it's none—but it would be a cool little project. I'm definitely open to it."
Lux Interior, 60

Cramps frontman Lux Interior died Feb. 4 at a Glendale, Calif., hospital due to a pre-existing heart condition. He was 60.

The Cramps formed in 1976 and were part of the now legendary downtown New York punk scene. Their lineup shifted through the years but always included Lux and his wife, Poison Ivy. Such bands as the White Stripes, Pearl Jam and the Jon Spencer Blues Explosion have credited the Cramps' rockabilly-infused punk as an influence.

Interior was born Erick Lee Purksner Oct. 21, 1948, in Stow, Ohio. He met Ivy (whose real name is Kristy Mariana Wallace) in 1972 and started the band shortly thereafter. The Cramps released 14 albums during their career. Their latest, 2004’s “How to Make a Monster,” sold 11,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Their best-selling album, 1984’s “Bad Music for Bad People,” has sold 95,000 copies.

—Cortney Harding

DEATHS
Billy Powell, 56
Lynyrd Skynyrd keyboardist Billy Powell died Jan. 28 at his home in Orange Park, Fla. He was 56.

According to the Associated Press, Powell called 911 around 12:55 a.m., saying he was having trouble breathing. Rescue crews were sent to his home, but Powell was pronounced dead just before 2 a.m. Orange Park Police Lt. Mark Corsetti told the AP that the day before his death, Powell had missed an appointment for a cardiac evaluation.

Powell—whose fluid piano runs spiced such classic Skynyrd songs as “Freebird,” “Call Me the Breeze” and “Sweet Home Alabama”—and founding guitarist Gary Rossington were the only two current band members aboard the 1977 plane crash that killed singer Ronnie Van Zant, guitarist Steve Gaines and backup vocalist Cassie Gaines.

Since then, guitarist Allen Collins and bassist Leon Wilkeson have also died; former drummer Artimus Pyle survived the crash but no longer tours with the band, which reformed in 1987 and still is a powerful concert draw.

Skynyrd once had it that Van Zant asked Powell, a former rodeo clown, for the band in its earliest incarnations. To join the group when he heard Powell’s keyboard take on “Freebird.”

According to the band’s publicist, a yet-to-be-determined cause of death has been ruled due to Powell’s death. Skynyrd was slated to perform Jan. 30 in Kinder, La., and the following day in Biloxi, Miss. A European tour was set to begin May 20 in Finland. —Jonathan Cohen and Ray Waddell

David “Fathead” Newman, 75
David “Fathead” Newman, jazz saxophonist/flutist and a member of Ray Charles’ band, died Jan. 20 of pancreatic cancer in upstate New York. He was 75.

Newman graduated from Lincoln High School in Dallas, where his music teacher gave him his nickname. He played saxophone and flute at local shows during his two years at Jarvis Christian College before deciding to pursue a musical career. While touring dance halls with Buster Smith, Newman met Charles. In 1954, Newman began a 12-year stint as the tenor sax soloist in Charles’ band, which also led to the 1959 Atlantic Records album “Fathead: Ray Charles Presents David Newman.”


Flying The Flags’

Wilco DVD Bolsters Record Store Day

In an effort to boost excitement for Record Store Day—April 18—Wilco is making its new Nonesuch concert DVD, "Ashes of American Flags," available early and exclusively to indie retail, Billboard has learned.

The film—recorded in Tulsa, Okla.; New Orleans; Mobile, Ala.; Nashville, and Washington, D.C., during the band’s 2008 tour—will go on sale to other retailers two weeks later. It will serve as a teaser for Wilco’s next studio album, expected this summer.

“When we learned that Record Store Day was confirmed and would even merit an industry-wide Saturday release date, it seemed like a perfect matchup,” says Nonesuch senior VP of marketing Peter Clancy. “This idea was enthusiastically received by the band and their management, who have always been supportive of the indie community—as the indies have been of Wilco for over a decade.”

Clancy adds that traditional retail remains important to Nonesuch, as about 80% of its sales are still physical.

Other labels are getting into the act with exclusives of their own. Matador is releasing a 7-inch with Sonic Youth covering Beck’s “Pay No Mind” on the A-side and Beck doing Sonic Youth’s “Green Light” on the B-side; a previously unreleased LP of a 1997 Pavement gig from Cologne, Germany; and another 7-inch with Jay Reatard’s “Hang Them All” on one side and Sonic Youth’s “No Garage” on the other. Two thousand five hundred copies of each record will be available at participating Record Store Day outlets.

Music Monitor Network president Michael Kurtz says Record Store Day exclusives include a double 10-inch pressing of My Morning Jacket’s “Evil Urges,” a series of Record Store Day EP songs on vinyl and reusable Record Store Day shopping bags produced by WEA.

Kurtz says 300 stores will participate fully in Record Store Day, with 600 more partially involved. Events will also be held at stores in England, Japan, Canada and Australia. He says the event’s organizers have issued invitations to stores carrying all genres of music to participate, including Latin, hip hop and Christian music retailers.

In the months since the last Record Store Day, Kurtz says he’s seen reports of a small, sustained increase in sales at indie stores. In this climate, he says, that equals a victory.
The Lazarus Project

Muxtape Relaunches As An Indie Alternative To MySpace Music

Much like Kozmo.com, the dot-com era messenger service that would deliver a pack of smokies and a Snickers bar to your door at three in the morning, the first incarnation of Muxtape was just too good to last.

The site, which launched in March and closed five months later under pressure from the RIAA, allowed users to upload songs to create virtual mixtapes that anyone could stream. Although it was obvious that the service wouldn’t survive without licensing deals, it quickly developed a faithful following.

"Initially, I was devastated when it shut down," says founder Justin Ouellette, who started the site with funding from his former Vineo co-worker and indie venture capitalist Jakob Lodwick. "I honestly thought we could make deals with the labels."

But Ouellette didn’t mourn for long. "Before I even started the original site, I had an idea for a site that would offer bands a service," he says. "After the site shut down, I started to regroup and work on relaunching."

With its relaunch Jan. 27, Muxtape is striving to offer bands an alternative to the major-dominated big dog on the block: MySpace Music.

"MySpace is cluttered, and there are too many ads," Ouellette says. "Music has been shoe-horned in. Aside from the simpler interface, we’re offering artists a much more advanced set of tools for targeting and networking their audience. Artists can tell where their listeners are located in order to send location-specific messages or help them route a tour."

Muxtape isn’t likely to overtake MySpace Music anytime soon. But then, that’s not really the point, given the site’s relatively modest commercial ambitions. "We’re trying to avoid advertising completely," Ouellette says. "And we won’t ever run ads on band profile pages."

Rather, he explains, the site will sell some advanced services to its client bands, such as statistical data and the ability to sell downloads and merchandise. Basic features, like posting photos and streamable songs, "will always be free," he says.

Working in the shadow of a larger competitor is something that Ouellette and Lodwick are accustomed to. Both got their start at Vimeo, which is a fraction of the size of online video giant YouTube but has developed into a viable business with the backing of parent company IAC, the online media conglomerate.

Unlike MySpace, Ouellette says Muxtape will have an open API to enable programmers to develop new apps for the site. And he says that fund raising is easier this time around. Lodwick remains involved in the site, although Ouellette declines to disclose its other investors. "The system is much smaller and easier to run now," he says. "With the first Muxtape, the hardest part was creating a viable business model, and we have one now."

Muxtape has started with a roster of 12 acts, including Of Montreal, Girl Talk and Old Gold, which will be instrumental in spreading word-of-mouth to draw other artists and users.

"We want to make sure to manage the growth well and not get too big too quickly," Ouellette says.

The artists’ labels say they’re excited to be on the ground floor with Muxtape and are grateful that someone is trying to provide indie acts with an alternative to MySpace Music, a joint venture involving News Corp. and the four majors.

Dgenetics, founder of Old Gold’s label Dgenetics Musics, says he’s pretty much given up on MySpace, which still hasn’t reached licensing parity with indie rights body Merlin but does have deals with the Orchard, the Independent Online Distribution Alliance, Network and other indie distributors, aggregators and labels.

“I’ve always wanted the ability to target fans, which is a great bonus,” Dgenetics says. "And Muxtape can really act as more of a home base for artists, because it has an embeddable set of tools."

While Muxtape faces the same uncertain prospects as any other startup music venture, labels see working with it as a no-lose situation. "We have to be open to new ideas," says Seth Hubbard, head of publicity at Polyvinyl Record, home of Of Montreal. "The marketplace is always changing, and we’d rather be ahead of the curve than playing catch-up."
Be Their Valentine?
Labels, Retailers Seek Holiday Sales Boost

It hasn't been a good year so far for Latin album sales. In fact, the third week of 2009 marked the lowest sales for a No. 1 on Billboard's Top Latin Albums chart since it began using Nielsen SoundScan data in 1993.

That week, Vicente Fernandez's "Primera Fila" sold less than 3,000 copies, marking only the second time that sales of the No. 1 album have dropped below 3,000. The first was when Luis Miguel's "Segundo Romance" did slightly less than 3,000 in the spring of 1995.

But the week ending Jan. 25 was a far happier scenario, with sales for all but nine of the top 75 albums on the chart increasing. Volume was driven in mass-merchant accounts and in soon-to-close Circuit City stores.

Now, as Valentine's Day looms, Latin labels are hoping for an even stronger sales spurt to propel them into a busy release schedule this spring. "We always see a sales spike for Valentine's and Mother's Day," says Jorge Pino, VP of music for Venevision International. Venevision isn't planning a front-line release specifically for Valentine's, but it is doing a holiday campaign around Andrea Bocelli, pushing the four-Bocelli albums and two DVDs it carries through price-positioning as well as a national TV campaign.

Bocelli is a natural choice, given that Valentine's Day sales tend to be more artist-driven than genre-driven, according to Ish Cuebas, VP of sales and new media for Trans World Entertainment. The company is doing a chain-wide Valentine's Day promotion called "Sweet Gifts Under $10" that will feature product of all genres, including Latin.

But calls to several labels yielded few front-line releases timed specifically for Valentine's Day. The most promising sets are romantic-themed compilations, notably Fonovisa's "Las 25 Más Románticas con los Supergrupos," released as part of the label's 25th anniversary. A second compilation is planned for Mother's Day. Fonovisa has also debuted February Los Temorarios month and will releaese albums by the romantic group.

Sister label Universal Music Latino is releasing the bachata compilation "Bachata Romantica," featuring a wide range of acts, from Aventura and Monchy & Alexander to Ivy Queen. The set will be supported by a TV campaign on Univision, mun2, MTV Tris and Latina as well as price-and-positioning in mass merchant accounts. Already, 30,000 copies have been shipped to stores, according to the label.

Regarding new studio albums, grupo stor- junto Primavera released a new one Jan. 27, following the act's tradition of releasing close to Valentine's Day. Newcomer Flex released his sophomore album, "La Evolución de Romantic Style," on the same day, banking on Valentine's Day marketing traction from his romantic reggaetón/reggaeton sound, which he has appropriately dubbed "romantic style.

Sony is releasing the Amila Montero studio album and a Gilberto Santa Rosa compilation Feb. 10. Feb. 14 also marks the official launch of the tour season. "Basically we work between Feb. 14 and Thanksgiv- ing weekend," says Henry Cardenas, owner of Cardenas Marketing Network, which books a broad range of acts nationwide.

Standout concerts include a Marc Anthony show at Madison Square Garden in New York, for which tickets — the most expensive were $175 — are already sold out. In Miami, Julio Iglesias plays the American Airlines Arena and Ana Gabriel plays the James L. Knight Center, while salsa stars Gilberto Santa Rosa and Victor Manuelle will kick off their La Historia Continúa tour Feb. 12 in Las Vegas.

Overall, as far as ticket sales go, Cardenas says things aren't bad, but they're not great either: "Let's just say people choose carefully what to do with their disposable income."

Curet's Comeback
Radio Fuels Late Puerto Rican Songwriter's Return To Latin Chart

After a royalty dispute kept his songs off the airwaves for nearly 15 years, the late Puerto Rican songwriter legend Catalino "Tite" Curet Alonso has returned to the island's radio outlets and to retail with a new anthology.

More than five years after his death, Curet debuted on Billboard's Top Latin Albums chart at No. 5 last week with the Fania/Emusica double-disc set, "A Man and His Songs: Alma de Poeta." The 31-track collection contains Curet compositions performed by such salas luminaries as Hector Lavoie, Cheo Feliciano, Ismael Rivera and La Lupe.

Nearly all of the album's 3,000 first-week sales originated in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Emusica director of publishing Maria Lozano says the settlement of a 14-year dispute over performance rights fees involving Puerto Rican authors' society ACEMLA allowed Curet's songs to again receive airplay on the island. The agreement covers nearly 700 Curet songs.

Emusica says sales were boosted by airplay of the tracks on Spanish Broadcasting System's Zeta network, as well as on Uno Radio's Salsoul Network. The label held a press conference Jan. 6 to announce the album, but some stations jumped the gun and started playing Curet's songs before the announcement, says Amy Roland, new-media manager for Fania/Emusica. "Since then, they've been playing it, and it's pretty much their own doing." A local TV spot also aired, counting down the days until the album's Jan. 20 release.

Curet's family and several artists, including Feliciano, Andy Montañez and Roberto Rocaia, attended the press conference, which was timed with the traditional Latin celebration of Reyes Magos. "Everyone cried," Roland says. "People pretty much know and love Tite's work.

Curet's songs tackled such political and social issues as Puerto Rican nationalism, racism and poverty, as well as timeless romantic themes. Roland and Lozano note that the lack of airplay discouraged artists from recording Curet's songs, particularly younger acts that could have brought the music to a new generation.

The label is preparing an exclusive version of the Curet anthology for iTunes, which would contain 10 additional tracks. The release is the latest feather in the cap for Emusica, which bought the Fania catalog in 2006. The company has released several titles in the "A Man and His Music" series, including the 2007 Lavoe compilation timed with the biopic "El Cantante," which sold 58,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Curet's catalog is still ripe for further revival. One idea in the works is an album of new recordings of Fania songs, possibly with some unpublished Curet material. "Ayla Ben-Yehuda, "en espanol. All the great Latin music coverage you've come to expect from Billboard in Spanish! Billboardenspanol.com"
The Parent Trap

Don't Blame Circuit City—Alliance Entertainment's Biggest Challenge Is Closer To Home

In mid-January, Circuit City revealed that its Chapter 11 bankruptcy proceeding would turn into a liquidation. A few days later, Alliance Entertainment, the doomed big-box retailer's sole music supplier, said it would shut down its warehouse in Coral Springs, Fla., in March.

Putting one and one together, plenty of label executives concluded that Alliance's troubles were wholly due to Circuit City.

But they've got their eye on the wrong ball.

Alliance's biggest problem isn't Circuit City's liquidation. Instead, it's the $1.4 billion in debt that its parent Source Interlink carries on its balance sheet. Everything that Source Interlink does between now and Aug. 1, 2014—when an $821 million balloon payment comes due—will be concerning that debt load. The shuttering of Alliance's Coral Springs warehouse was bad news for the 467 people who work there. But it'll help reduce overhead and free up cash flow, which is good news for Alliance's vendors.

Source Interlink wound up overleveraged for reasons having nothing directly to do with its music business. The company has three businesses—CD and DVD wholesaling, magazine distribution and magazine publishing. The publishing business is the source of Source Interlink's debt woes. The company entered magazine publishing in 2007 through its $1.3 billion acquisition of 76 consumer magazines, 90 related Web sites and other properties from Primedia.

Source Interlink's debt includes an $860 million term loan, $465 million in unsecured notes, converted from a bridge loan, and as of Oct. 31, $50 million drawn down from a $300 million revolving credit facility. All three lending facilities are supplied by a consortium of banks led by Citigroup, and the term loan and the revolver are secured by Source Interlink's assets. The debt carries annual interest payments of $110 million-$115 million, according to the company. So far Source Interlink has paid nearly $88 million of that in the first nine months of the company's fiscal year, which ended Jan. 31. High debt loads require over-$1.4 billion Source Interlink's total debt on its balance sheet

head reductions and Source Interlink is accomplishing that by consolidating its magazine, CD and DVD distribution businesses into one operation, Source Interlink Distribution (billboard.biz, Dec. 9). The closing of the Alliance warehouse is part of that plan.

During the nine-month period ended Oct. 31, Source Interlink lost $333.3 million, or $6.37 per share, on sales of $1.8 billion, versus a loss of $415,000, or 2 cents per share, on sales of $1.6 billion in the same period a year earlier. Much of the loss stemmed from special charges, such as a $271 million non-cash write-off related to its publishing acquisition and a $10.2 million charge due to the Circuit City liquidation.

On the plus side, the company has generated nearly $130 million in earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization for the nine-month period, which means cash flow can handle the debt service.

However, Wall Street is deeply skeptical of highly leveraged Source Interlink's prospects, given that it operates three physical distribution businesses that are expected to eventually lose out to the Internet—magazines, CDs and DVDs. In fact, investors betting against the company are having a field day: 47%, or nearly 12 million shares, of Source Interlink's float are shorted shares, according to a Wall Street analyst who follows the company. As a result, the stock is trading for pennies per share and hasn't topped the $1 mark since early October.

And you don't need to be on Wall Street to figure out that the industry-wide plunge in CD sales has hit Source Interlink hard. In a Dec. 12 conference call, company executives said fiscal third-quarter CD sales declined 21.2% from a year earlier to $107 million, while DVD sales increased 4.7% to $27 million.

The DVD and CD fulfillment operation at least remained in the black, with operating income of $9.3 million on revenue of $67.5 million, while the magazine business barely eeked out an operating profit. In a move to bolster its magazine wholesale operations, Source Interlink jumped on a gambit played by competitor Anderson News, which told publishers that it will exit the business unless they accept a new surcharge of 7 cents per copy. While some label executives were concerned that Anderson may migrate that strategy to its music business, some big magazine publishers are fighting back by not shipping their magazines to either distributor, sources say (billboard.biz, Feb. 4).

Source Interlink and Anderson executives were unavailable for comment.
The Coming Crackdown

Mexico Targets Piracy As Illegal Downloads Surge

Mexico is stepping up its fight against online music piracy, spurred by a surge in illegal downloads, as well as hopes that the country could soon get its first viable online retailer.

"Most of our anti-piracy efforts are now concentrated in the digital arena," says Fernando Hernández, director of Ampron, Mexico's labels trade group. "We're not abandoning the fight against physical piracy. But in that area we already have a routine that works. Right now, Internet piracy is more damaging."

Officials from Ampron and other media and entertainment industries are scheduled to hold their third round of talks Feb. 12 with Mexico's Secretariat of Communications and Transportation and executives at local Internet service providers to discuss possible ways of cracking down on music piracy.

Mexican ISPs send warnings to copyright abusers and eventually cancel or suspend service to repeat offenders. The aim, Hernández says, is to get ISPs to voluntarily send warnings to copyright abusers and eventually cancel or suspend service to repeat offenders. If the sides can't reach agreement on the matter, Ampron may seek legislative solutions. Legislation that would establish a similar system in France was approved by the French senate in November, and the French National Assembly is expected to adopt it by the end of March.

The efforts come amid signs of growing use of unautho-

ized peer-to-peer (P2P) file-sharing networks. About 14 million people downloaded songs illegally in 2007, nearly double the 7.5 million who downloaded in 2007, according to a monthly study of Mexican urban areas conducted by the media research firm Ipsos Media. The study estimates that those people downloaded about 4.5 billion tracks in 2008, up 73% from 2.6 billion in 2007. Wisin & Yandel were the most downloaded act of 2008.

The sharp increase in unauthorized downloading has been fueled by a rise in broadband access. Ipsos Media found that 74% of those who used the Internet did so through a broadband connection in 2008, up from 69% in 2007.

The study also found that the percentage of Internet users downloading music rose to 58% in 2008, sharply from 33% in the prior year. It also said that Internet cafes accounted for 33% of illegal downloads in 2008, down from 45% in 2007, suggesting that consumers are downloading more music from home.

Meanwhile, IFPI says that revenue from physical music sales in Mexico fell 6% during the first half of 2008 to $71.6 million. From $75.8 million from the same period a year earlier. Revenue from digital music rose 23% in the first half of 2008 and accounted for 10% of total music revenue, up from 7.7% of revenue during the year-earlier period. As is the case throughout Latin America, the bulk of digital music sales come from mobile, not online, sales.

The growth in Mexican digital music sales pales in comparison to what was seen in Brazil (93%), Argentina (111%) and Colombia (135%) during the same period. Still, Mexico's status as one of the largest markets for recorded music in Latin America makes it a key battleground against online piracy.

"We are optimistic that the moment we have a business model in place that can be applied widely," he says, "will see a reactivation of the music production business."

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U.K. GOV'T PROPOSES ANTI-PIRACY RIGHTS AGENCY

The British government has recommended the establishment of a "rights agency" to fight piracy and encourage the development of services that facilitate the legal distribution of copyrighted material. The agency would include representatives from the music industry and Internet service providers.

The recommendation was one of 22 proposals included in the government's interim "Digital Britain" report, which detailed measures to tackle file sharing on peer-to-peer networks. Requiring ISPs to pass on information to rights holders about customers sharing music on P2P networks would make it "significantly easier" for targeted action against the most significant infringers, the report said. In a statement, BPI chief executive Geoff Taylor said the recommendations were "a step forward ... but what we need is a bold stride."

The final report is due in late spring.

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EMI INCREASES REVENUE, NARROWS LOSS

EMI Group reported increases in revenue and earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA) for the six months ending Sept. 30, 2008. Group revenue was up 10% to £737 million ($1.1 billion) from £667 million ($960.9 million) during the same period a year earlier, while group EBITDA earnings were up 20% to £130 million ($187.3 million) compared with £43 million ($61.9 million) a year earlier. After restructuring charges, amortization, interest charges and taxes, EMI Group recorded a six-month loss of £18.5 million ($223.9 million), narrowing from £324 million ($468.3 million) loss during the same period in 2007. The improved operating results followed cost-cutting and restructuring measures at the recorded-music division. EMI Music reported EBITDA of £59 million ($85.1 million) during the six months ended Sept. 30, swinging from a £12 million ($17.3 million) EBITDA loss during the same period a year earlier. Digital revenue at EMI Music increased 38% to £102 million ($147.2 million), representing 21% of total sales, compared with 16% during the year-earlier period.

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CAUGHT RETURNS TO SONY AUSTRALIA

Sony Music Entertainment Australia has appointed Mardi Caught GM of touring, events and artist management, effective April 14. Caught returns to Sony Music Australia from Sony Music in the United Kingdom, where she was GM of Columbia Records for the past two years. She reports to Sony Music Australia chairman/CEO Denis Handlin. Meanwhile, Wylie Fowler was named manager of business enterprises at Sony Music Australia. Fowler, previously a director at strategic marketing agency Freshworks, reports to Mark Flynn, director of business enterprises.

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UNIVERSAL GERMANY'S KOENIG STEPS DOWN

Thorsten Koenig, managing director of Universal Music Germany's international division, is leaving Feb. 15 after 10 years at the company to launch his own business consultancy. Dirk Baur, previously managing director of Virgin/Labels/Mute at EMI Germany, will take his place. Universal Music will be Koenig's first client.

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ALL QUIET ON THE WEST END

The Astoria's Closing Forces Adjustments In London's Live Biz

LONDON—The mid-January closure of the Astoria has left England’s capital without a recognized city center concert hall—and touring executives fearing a lack of options for midsize venues. The 2,000-capacity theater, which hosted its final concert Jan. 14, is scheduled to be demolished to make way for the Greater London Authority’s (GLA’s) Crossrail public transport project. It has also forced the closure of the Astoria’s 1,000-capacity sister venue, Astoria 2, and another smaller club, the Metro.

The Astoria opened in 1927 as a movie theater and became a live entertainment venue in 1976. Since then, it has hosted a mix of new rock acts and superstar looks for an intimate venue, and concert executives are mourning its loss.

“It position geographically and its history made it a really important part of the live music circuit,” says Matt Wooliscroft, a promoter at SJM Concerts, which booked about 40 shows annually at the Astoria. “The closure won’t affect whether shows take place in London. It does, however, limit our choices in the city for venues and also closes the only decent West End concert venue.”

Booking agent Emma Banks, co-founder of the Creative Artists Agency’s U.K. branch, agrees, saying, “If the market is as busy as it has been for the last few years, then it is going to be tough to find enough quality and well-located space at the 2,000-cap level.”

The Astoria was leased by London property developer/investor Derwent Valley Central to Festival Republic, whose investors include Live Nation subsidiary Hamsard. Despite the venue’s popularity and concerts by everyone from the Rolling Stones to Amy Winehouse, Festival Republic managing director Melvin Benn says the venue “was not very important to our overall business, as it did not overly contribute to profit.”

Festival Republic has no immediate plans to invest in another central London venue and will focus instead on its festival business, Benn says. He downplayed the impact of the Astoria’s closing on London’s live music scene, saying that the business “has always had to contend with such changes.”

While the Academy Music Group, a leading U.K. venue operator part-owned by Live Nation, doesn’t have a site in central London, Benn believes its venues are accessible enough to compensate for the Astoria’s closure.

But Feargal Sharkey, CEO of music-industry lobbying group U.K. Music and former chairman of the Live Music Forum, believes the absence of central London venue has deeper implications. “The disappearance of the Astoria creates a stress point in that part of London,” he says. “For emerging acts, it was the type of venue to go through to get to Wembley Stadium. There was an impact on local businesses as well. Anyone passing by could see the fans going to nearby pubs, kebab shops and pizza parlors.”

Former Mayor Ken Livingstone pledged last year to replace the Astoria with a new venue as part of the Crossrail project. The administration of Livingstone’s successor Boris Johnson says it will honor the pledge, although it has declined to provide further details.

The Crossrail project isn’t due for completion until 2017. In the meantime, existing venues are jockeying to fill the gap. A representative for venue operator the MAMA Group says the Forum is already taking Astoria-booked acts, including U.S. rock act Staind, which played Jan. 26. “We expect to have fewer dark nights,” she adds.

Gerry Seymour, director of operations at the Mint Group, which owns the Koko venue, says the Astoria’s demise “may open up more opportunities, given that it represents a further reduction in the number of venues operating in the capital.”

But Machine Management’s Iain Watt, the U.K. manager of Mika, says a replacement venue is still needed.

“There will be plenty of empty property shells in central London as the economic downturn bites,” he says. “Whether the mayor or private investors will have the desire to invest in such a project now, I couldn’t say. But they should, as people still have a huge appetite for a great live venue in central London.”

ASTORIA ALTERNATIVES

Acts Planning A London Date Have Other Venue Options

THE CORONET

Location: Elephant & Castle, southeast London
Capacity: 2,160
Owner/operator: Elephant Music
Selected future bookings: Breakin Science (Feb. 14), Nev-ereland featuring Afrika Bambaataa (March 14)

The art deco Coronet has been irregularly used for live music, hosting mostly club nights and one-offs. “Possibly, the Coronet will become live-focused,” Mika’s U.K. manager Iain Watt says. “But it needs to make small amendments to its structure to make it easier for bands to play there.”

HMV FORUM

Location: Kentish Town, north London
Capacity: 2,350
Owner: Mean Fiddler Group
Operator: MAMA Group
Selected future bookings: Magazine (Feb. 12-13), Late of the Pier (Feb. 17), Children of Bodom (Feb. 19)

An institution on the London live scene since its days as the Town & Country Club, the Forum was popular with alt-rock bands in the ’80s and early ’90s. Despite being located further out of town than some venues, it could soon be back in favor. “The Forum has been underused over the last few years,” says booking agent Emma Banks of Creative Artists Agency. “This is a massive opportunity for them.”

INDIGO2

Location: Greenwich, southeast London
Capacity: 2,400
Operator/management: AEG Europe
Selected future bookings: Billy Ocean (Feb. 20), Boyz II Men (June 12)

Launched in 2007 as a cozy alternative to its hugely successful sister venue, the O2 Arena, Indigo2 has so far concentrated on older acts and one-off special events. Although located some distance from the city center, “it proves we’re well-served in the different parts of London,” Radiohead manager Brian Message says.

KOKO

Location: Camden, north London
Capacity: 1,500
Owner/operator: The Mint Group
Selected future bookings: The View (Feb. 10), Simian Mobile Disco (Feb. 12)

Formerly known as the Camden Palace when it helped spawn the early-’80s New Romantics movement, Koko is well-suited for intimate gigs by big stars. Lily Allen launched her new album there Jan. 28. It benefits from being located in the live music hub of Camden. “Koko will definitely be seeing some more business,” one promoter notes.

O2 SHEPHERDS BUSH EMPIRE

Location: Shepherds Bush, west London
Capacity: 2,000
Owner/operator: Academy Music Group
Selected future bookings: Candi Staton (Feb. 24), Nitin Sawhney (Feb. 26), Lily Allen (March 26-28)

Already “getting booked so far in advance these days,” according to booking agent Peter Elliott of Primary Talent Agency, the Empire has a similar feel to the Astoria, although it is notably less grungy. It’s not in the most accessible location, but that hasn’t stopped the likes of Kylie Minogue and Iron Maiden from entertaining there.

—JK

The day the music died: The Astoria on its closing night, Jan. 14.
Biz Digs Mix Picks

Could Playlists Become A Business?

Everyone wants to be a DJ.

It all started with the mix-tape, which music fans recorded to impress girls (or boys) with their eclectic taste. Tapes eventually gave way to CD-R compilations, which in turn are giving way to online sites.

In the midst of the digital revolution, however, a practice that label's once viewed as a recommendation tool became a threat. Since then, almost every online playlist service has found itself under industry legal pressure. imem was sued and made licensing deals with the labels. Project Playlist is the subject of an RIAA lawsuit. MixVit shut down late in June. And Mixtape just relaunched as an indie music discovery platform after failing to reach agreement with the majors.

Numerous studies show that the top two ways people discover new music is through radio play and peer recommendations. Online playlist services combine elements of both, which seems like a tremendous opportunity.

Take a look at the results. Project Playlist counts more than 40 million users. MixVit, built by Justin Ouellette as a hobby, attracted more than 200,000 users and one million monthly page views in less than six months.

Labels certainly understand the potential of these services. But they need to ensure they can profit from them. And too many of the services don't want to play ball.

At least not at first. In December Project Playlist deal-ized a licensing deal with Sony M usic Entertainment but remains in a legal tussle with the other three major labels, which forced MySpace Music and Facebook to block the popular playlist sharing app. But with former Face-

book COO Owen Van Natta as CEO and former MySpace exec Shawn Gold as chief marketing officer, it's likely only a matter of time before more deals are worked out.

Of course, striking deals with the majors isn't exactly easy. Ouellette knew he'd need to make deals and claims he sought to do so right from the start. But the labels' demands—which he says included such marketing considerations as letting them promote certain artists on the site's homepage—doomed that process.

"Initially the conversation is just about money and the business side of it," Oue-

llette says. "But it's not just a price per song. Doing a deal would mean giving up control, and that wasn't something I was willing to do."

Some newcomers are trying different strategies. Rather than letting users create a list of tracks that can be played on demand, which incurs the priciest license, 8Tracks treats user-generated playlists as customized Internet radio stations. By complying with the same limitations put on webcasters—such as staggering songs by the same artist during a certain period of time and letting users skip songs only six times per hour—8Tracks pays SoundExchange the same compulsory license used by Internet radio services like Pandora.

"If you trust that DJ and you're happy with what they're creating, there's really not much need for on-demand," founder/CEO David Porter says. "With the model for on-demand licensing based on what the majors are willing to offer right now, which is about a half-cent per stream at best, there's no way that rate can be supported under an ad-supported model. It's not even close."

Launched in August, 8Tracks still has to prove its model will resonate with music fans. Porter says the service has attracted about 130,000 users, with some 4,000 registered "DJ's" posting some 10,000 playlists.

On Feb. 2, the service added "buy" links to all songs through an affiliate relationship with Amazon. Porter says that this spring he'll start charging $30 for a six-month subscription to DJs who want to post more than eight songs to each playlist and supplement the streams with audio ads.

Whether it's through creative licensing like 8Tracks, licensed deals like imeem or testing the limits of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act like Project Playlist, one thing for certain is that music fans will still want to put their own stamp on the music they love, even if it's not used to compile a list of songs they like. "It's an idea that is not going to die," Ouellette says. "People like to make mixes, so it's going to exist in one form or another. It's hard to see how that's going to play out given the way the industry is, but it's not going to go away."

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

GET LOUD

Those who like to make a statement with their audio equipment may want to consider Aerial's Street series headphones. Audio-wise, they're pretty standard. But two of the models—the Tank and the Matador—evoke thoughts of tangerine trees and marble-making skies on looks alone.

The Tank features a cable and mic for use with mobile phones, allowing users to take incoming calls while jamming out. If you're more the type who likes to blend into a crowd, tamer color options are also available.

The Tank retails for $80, the Chopper for $60 and the Matador for $50. —AB
As he prepares to take a new position at Harvard, the legal scholar explains why he thinks the music industry should embrace copyright reform.

Lawrence Lessig

The industry needs to think about other ways to facilitate compensation that don’t actually force us into totally unwinnable wars.

To many people in the music industry, Stanford law professor Lawrence Lessig is the enemy. As founder of the Creative Commons licensing structure and author of such influential books as “Free Culture: The Nature and Future of Creativity,” Lessig is in many ways the standard bearer of the “Copyleft” movement, which seeks to weaken laws that restrict the modification or remixing of copyrighted work. Lessig, however, sees himself as an ally. He says his ideas for copyright reform could help record labels, publishers and artists reap greater profits from new digital platforms rather than sound their death knell.

In his most recent book, “Remix: Making Art and Commerce Thrive in the Hybrid Economy” (Penguin Press), he argues that copyright law must be reformed to account for new technologies and the way fans use them to interact with content. Rather than make criminals out of fans who mash up songs or mix tracks into videos, the music industry should embrace them with new copyright laws that help monetize that activity, Lessig says. But he has far less to say about exactly how rights holders are supposed to harvest these potential digital riches.

This summer, Lessig will become director of Harvard University’s Edmond J. Safra Foundation Center for Ethics, where his academic focus will shift to corruption at public institutions. Before he makes the move, Billboard caught up with the academic/activist for his thoughts on the state of what he calls “the copyright wars.”

The industry needs to think about other ways to facilitate compensation that don’t actually force us into totally unwinnable wars.

What are some of the bigger misconceptions that people have about your ideas for copyright reform?

The first big mistake is that people confuse my work with the growing copyright abolitionist movement that is out there. I’m fundamentally not a copyright abolitionist. I believe copyright is an essential part of the creative industry and culture. It’s richer both in the money sense and in the diversity sense with copyright than without it. My objective is to find ways to update copyright and make it make sense in a different technological context, and that should be an objective shared by people who are in the industry.

The second thing is the industry is focused on the problem of an enormous number of people illegally accessing copyrighted material not paying for it. That’s a significant problem, but there are other problems in copyright that we need to think about systematically to figure out how best to update it for the 21st century. Copyright law purports to regulate an enormous range of activities that there’s no good reason to regulate.

For example, I do a home movie of my kid learning to walk that I synchronize some music with and share it with my friends. That triggers copyright law in all sorts of ways today. There’s no reason it should. We should be focused on encouraging the professional creative work that the industry has focused on and authorizing and enabling this amateur creative work that technology is encouraging.

So how do your ideas about a hybrid economy or remixing apply? The hybrid is a business that tries to leverage value out of a sharing economy. A hybrid is a business like Flickr where there’s a commercial objective but the value is being produced by creating an environment where people produce things of value that they share with other people. I obviously think that the music industry could gain an enormous amount of money if it didn’t have such a tin ear on how best to produce a hybrid economy.

Remix is just the idea of someone taking and building upon someone else’s creative work. Now if I take a song and I remix it and I upload that to YouTube and YouTube starts making it available in a way that they’re profiting from it, I have no problem with copyright law being updated so that YouTube is responsible for some fee for the public performance of this work on their network. I think that’s appropriate. What I criticize is a copyright system that right now basically says YouTube goes scot-free because they get notice and takedown immunity, while the remixer is alleged to be a pirate by remixing work without clearing the rights from the original copyright owner. That’s the inversion of common sense that I think we should be figuring out how to correct.

What is the motivation for labels, publishers and artists to reform the current system when it’s the foundation of how they make money?

From my perspective, the law professor’s perspective, I don’t care so much about the industry. I care about the fact that a whole generation is being raised living life against the law. And I think we are a weaker democracy when that’s the way in which our kids relate to the law. We need to move into a place where people respect the law again, and to get there I think the industry needs to cut back on claims that really don’t matter in order to have a moral ground to stand on when making claims that do matter.

The industry needs to think about other ways to facilitate compensation that don’t actually force us into totally unwinnable wars. The motivation should be, “Let’s get to a copyright system that actually works and doesn’t radicalize a whole generation against copyright.”

But is seems unlikely that the music industry will just voluntarily dismantle the current copyright ship it’s sailing on and build a new one.

Well, that’s funny, because when I hear people in the industry talk about copyright law, I hear them say the system is not working. I hear them saying they’re losing (because) the existing system doesn’t actually compensate them. So I agree: if everything were going great, there would be no reason for anybody to talk. But what I’m saying is, it’s not going great for the industry. It’s not going great for a whole generation of our kids. The system doesn’t make sense for the existing structure of technology. So let’s sit down and find a system that would make sense, that would actually create the kind of freedom that people would be able to agree is necessary, while on the other hand making sure artists get compensated when their work gets used.

Would you rather see this as an issue debated in Congress or in a courtroom?

Unfortunately, I think it’s got to happen in both places. I think the most important thing right now is for some sensible map to be developed by credible stakeholders that can begin to educate Congress. Fundamental reform of the way that copyright law functions is not going to happen through the courts, nor should it. The things I’m talking about—voluntary collective licenses, or exempting amateur remixing, or setting up a mechanical license for remix rights—are the things that involve legislative solutions.

When are we going to get to a picture of a proper legislative solution? When we have a sensible map drawn by people who have taken it seriously and who have done something credible with it...
AXL ROSE
THE GUNS N' ROSES FRONTMAN RANTS ABOUT HIS OLD BANDMATES, RAVES ABOUT HIS NEW ALBUM AND ExplAINS WHY 'I HAVE NO SYMPATHY FOR THE RECORD COMPANIES'

BY JONATHAN COHEN
It's been nine years since Axl Rose gave a substantial print interview. For all that time and more, he's been working on the album “Chinese Democracy,” which finally arrived in late November. It was an arduous process, to say the least. Guns N' Roses haven't released a new song since 1999 or an album since a 1993 set of covers. Since then, Rose has toured sporadically, worked with a rotating cast of musicians—he owns the Guns N' Roses name, according to his attorney, Laurie Soriano—and recorded numerous versions of the same new songs. According to a 2005 article in the New York Times, Universal Music Group had spent $13 million on “Chinese Democracy” by then. The album came out in the United States as a Best Buy retail exclusive and debuted at No. 3 on the Billboard 200 with first-week sales of 261,000, according to Nielsen SoundScan. To date, it has sold 537,000 copies in the States, far fewer than the 1.3 million that Best Buy bought upfront, according to the Wall Street Journal. But the album has sold 2.6 million copies worldwide, according to Universal—a number that counts only retail purchases—and the company plans to start promoting another single soon. Some industry executives have blamed the album's disappointing sales on Rose, who hasn't made a video, announced a tour or given interviews. Others point to Best Buy, claiming the chain didn't make the album as visible as last year's other major retail exclusive, AC/DC's “Black Ice,” which was sold only at Wal-Mart. Until now, Rose himself has remained silent, except for a series of postings on some Guns N' Roses fan Web sites. That doesn't mean he doesn't have plenty to say—about his new album, his former bandmates and his label, Interscope, a subsidiary of Universal. (The label declined to comment.) Rose answered two series of questions via e-mail, in which he discussed for the first time the events surrounding the release of “Chinese Democracy” and his frustrations with Interscope. In a separate phone interview, longtime Guns N' Roses (and former Replacements) bassist Tommy Stinson echoed Rose's sentiments. Rose's answers appear here almost exactly as he sent them, edited only for grammar, length and clarity. The obvious question: Why talk now? Rose says he “felt it was a good time to address some of these issues publicly.”
Some people thought ‘Chinese Democracy’ would never come out. Were there times during the making of the album when you felt that way yourself?

Not so much that it wouldn’t come out but that we could in some way legally be forced to release it either incomplete or with so many business areas unresolved that the beginning would be the end as well.

Without sounding presumptuous, what took so long to get the album out?

And without sounding facetious, what didn’t? There aren’t too many issues of the hundreds [we ran into] that happened as quickly as anyone would have preferred, from building my studio, finding the right players, never did find a producer, still don’t have real record company involvement or support, to getting it out and mixed and mastered.

All that aside, it’s the right record and I couldn’t ask for more in that regard. Could have been a more enjoyable journey, but it’s there now. It comes first. It dictates if not the course [then] the destination artistically.

For me, once the real accompanying artwork is there with a few videos and some touring, the package was achieved and delivered. And to do so at this level in terms of quality, both artistic and performance-wise, both on record and live, is something that’s a miracle at minimum and something that wouldn’t have happened, no matter how anyone tries to convince others, with old Guns, regardless of anyone’s intentions. It was just as ugly in old Guns, regardless of our success.

What were your expectations in terms of what Best Buy would do to promote the album?

Best Buy has been great. Going with Best Buy was a way to work out a deal with Universal and we were fortunate enough to work with Irving [Azoff, as manager] and deal more directly with Universal. I’ve asked for information regarding their role in working the record but that hasn’t come yet so I’m not able to tell what Universal has or hasn’t done, although Zach [Horowitz, Universal Music Group president/COO], or whoever’s behind the international efforts, is doing great. It’s more than appreciated and a welcome relief.

Unfortunately going with Best Buy didn’t change us having to rely on Interscope as much as we’d hoped. The opinions expressed or ‘jumped’ on publicly regarding promotion seem to be about my or our involvement with mainstream media—talk shows, rock magazines and dot-coms—which have generally held negative public stances toward myself or the band for years, and they unfortunately have not been resolved. Efforts are being made to understand the relationships and evaluate how best to proceed.

Our focus was in getting the record deal done while finishing the album, which hit many an unexpected bump or sinkhole in the road right up until the actual release. We never intended a huge public rollout, especially with resolving certain issues, and no one ever suggested us doing so, though Interscope’s communications with Best Buy in these areas may not have been as clear as anyone would have preferred.

Our approach, for better or worse, has always been to work the record over the course of the following tour cycles, with attempts to forge new or better and hopefully redefined relationships with the different forms of media that may be interested along the way. In regard to our promotion, it was based around certain agreements with Universal, Interscope, our management and legal teams that unfortunately never happened.

I won’t get into specifics but am beginning to address some of those issues in my own way as opposed to “working together,” and we’ll see how that plays out.

What are your thoughts on how Universal has handled the album?

Unfortunately I have no information for me to believe that there was any real involvement or effort from Interscope. I’m not saying there wasn’t. But in my opinion, without [Interscope Geffen A&M chairman] Jimmy Iovine’s involvement, it doesn’t matter who anyone talks to or what they say—virtually nothing will happen from their end.

I do know that I’ve been asking for a marketing plan for over five years and still haven’t got anything. We’ve asked for a complete breakdown of promotion expenses and efforts from all parties but unfortunately I’ve received very little information, if anything, so far. On another note, the draft booklet leaking and, I believe, the early shipping of preorders and the inclusion of the early draft booklet for the release was through involvement with Interscope, which was a mess. That’s not to say they don’t work for other artists and make things happen. I feel they work very hard for whatever it is they truly want to sell, whether it’s good or . . .

I can say how the band feels, and that is that to a man they hate the record company

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WHAT’S CLEAR IS THAT ONE OF THE TWO OF US WILL DIE BEFORE A REUNION.

—AXL ROSE, ON HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH SLASH
other than Universal International with a passion. And that’s with me talking to them about the record company negatively hardly ever, if at all. They’re not blind: They hear the talk and see the results. Our involvement wasn’t good—and has been more than frustrating for them. It’s not like anyone here wants to have any negative views, impressions or opinions. They don’t go around bitching about things all the time and they don’t let it get in the way of whatever they’re supposed to do here, but it is what it is.

Here’s how things worked until they were no longer involved—that is, until recently. Jimmy [Iovine] and whoever would come down to the studio. Things would be good for a month. Then, according to whoever was involved at the time from their side, someone above Jimmy would start putting pressure regarding us on him. Jimmy would start pressuring others at his label [and they] would begin doing the same with us. We get that it’s just how business—and perhaps especially this business—tends to work, but after a month of this the whole thing would get ugly and extremely interfere with getting anything productive done, and near the middle of the third month we’d arrange for Jimmy to come down again. They’d go away happy and the entire process would repeat itself over and over and over.

[Former Interscope Geffen A&M president] Tom Whalley brought in Roy Thomas Baker to produce and [A&R executive] Mark Williams suggested Marco Beltrami, among others, to play strings on the album. And Jimmy had an idea for low guitar in a track and the EQ on a drum part. That’s as far as I’m aware. They were all good things, but in all sincerity, that’s it. Now, what efforts were made to help keep Universal or Vivendi off us for as long as possible could very well have been extensive, and in that regard either would have been or would be most appreciated. I like Jimmy, but I’ve never understood him in regard to us or this album. Everything’s always been, “That’s easy,” or “We can fix that, no problem,” but unfortunately rarely added up to any kind of reality for us until [he found] Bob Ludwig for mastering.

We’d love to have their and Jimmy’s support after this. But to continue at this juncture feeling as we do, keeping things so behind the scenes, unfortunately feels like the same ‘ol same ‘ol for all of us and, at least momentarily, a bit much to digest. Jimmy did point us in the right direction for mastering, and I believe he’s sincere in his appreciation of our record but still for whatever reasons gave up pretty early in those areas. We feel that, unfortunately, we’ve never been really anything all that much more than a throw it at the wall, see if it sticks, no real end work, something to take advantage of, last quarter, cook the books, write-off, fuck this headache, hop ing to get lucky scam. And, unfortunately, for all their nice words and assurances, nothing that’s happened so far the release has shown us much of anything to the contrary. So at least in regard to the U.S., for the most part I don’t look at it like we have a record company—I look at it for the most part like we have friendly but otherwise cutthroat loan sharks, and we were lucky to get what we got but feel we could have done more if they were at least, especially with some of their backgrounds, a bit more involved creatively. So in light of pirating and the mess the major labels are in, I have no sympathy for the record companies, based on our experiences in the U.S.

The last time Guns N’ Roses had a new album out, the Internet was barely a reality. What was your response to the nine-song leak this summer? Having someone jeopardize your efforts so cavalierly is pretty much a nightmare. I don’t know that it hurt us though, at least as one might think. Hard to say. That’s not to imply leaks don’t hurt artists, but that they were earlier roughs and the level of sound quality is much higher with the finals. That said, you have those with the consternationally attached to how the leaks sound, which, for better or worse, usually isn’t so great to contend with. And it seems that those who often do so and complain publicly, oddly and coincidentally, have a history of basically being detractors as well even if they’re somehow considered part of a “fan” base.

What’s your take on the media response to the album? It’s been a mixed bag. Some has been great, others a blood bath. That said, most of the nonsense has been from the same or the latest batch of negative idiots, so it was to be expected and really doesn’t mean much. [I] did see some jump ship, and that’s always funny. Watching some douche waving a flag and then being the first punk in the water’s always great.

Observers are interpreting some of the songs on “Chinese Democracy” as being about the process of making the album. Is this valid? I’d say there’s a lot in the lyrics regarding the journey to make the album, even if not in so many words.

Can you give an example of a song that the band nailed on an early take and didn’t change that much? The basic concept of most songs stayed the same. “Rid [N’ the Bedouins],” “Sorry,” “Better” and “Prostitute” are probably closer to their original demos in ways than others.

How many other songs were completed and considered for “Chinese Democracy”? There are rumors that there are two full albums done. We’d like to get another album out at some point, but for now our focus is on “Chinese.”

Some artists like to test out their new songs in their car stereos or invite friends to the studio to hear playbacks. How did you listen to the album when it was a work in progress? My studio, car stereos, a CD Walkman, computers and different speaker setups, clubs, iPods. Actually, our first leaks were from using a sound system in a strip club in the early hours when it was basically empty. I went there to play the tracks for someone I was interested in working with. I’d gone there with a guy who worked band security, who was allegedly connected to the owners, feeling it was a bit more of a protected environment than it turned out to be.

Are you planning to tour? No plans, but there’s talk. Management and our promoters are really excited with the offers coming in both here and worldwide.

Are you planning to make videos? We’re finalizing a video for “Better” and writing a couple others now. Over time different ideas have been tossed around, written up or submitted but that was then. Nothing we have came with—or at least the approaches so far—felt right. We have been discouraged from making a video all along by Interscope, up until Best Boy requested one after the release, and in a manner by Interscope then of, “So where’s the video?”, taking everyone more than off guard.

There was talk of a “Guitar Hero” or “Rock Band” download of “Chinese Democracy.” Is either going to happen? There is talk about a “Rock Band” release, and they felt the record—based on the nature and complexity of the depth of instrumentation—deserved a bit more attention and some more involved elements than they’ve generally dealt with. I have no idea what that means but it’s my understanding they were very enthusiasm tic. We’re looking at a Feb. 28 release, according to [executives at MTV responsible for] “Rock Band.” [“Rock Band” has since changed the release date to spring.]

Is there any chance you’ll work with the former members of Guns N’ Roses in the future? I could see doing a song or so on the side with Izzy [Stradlin] or having him out [on tour] again. I’m not so comfortable with doing anything having more than one of the alumni. Maybe something with Duff [McKagan], but that’s it. And not something I’d have to really get down into, as I’d get left with sorting it out and then blamed on top of it. So, no, not me.

In regards to Slash, I read a desperate fan’s message about what if one of us were to die and looking back I had the possibility of a reunion now, blah blah blah. And my thoughts are, “Yeah, and while you’re at the show your baby accidentally kicks a candle and burns your house down, killing himself and the rest of your family.”

Give me a fucking break. What’s clear is that one of the two of us will die before a reunion and however sad, ugly or unfortunate anyone views it, that’s it. Those decisions were made a long time ago and reiterated year after year by one man.

There are acts that, once committed between individuals, they are what they are. To add insult to injury almost day after day, landing into year after year, for more than a decade, is a nightmare. Anyone putting his own personal entertainment above everything else is sickening.
ONE WOULD EXPECT THE LABEL THAT RELEASED ONE OF LAST YEAR’S MOST CRITICALLY ACCLAIMED TITLES WOULD BE HEADQUARTERED IN AN AIRY BROOKLYN LOFT, OR PERHAPS AN ECHO PARK ART SPACE.

In fact, the offices of Secretly Canadian—the label behind Bon Iver, Antony & the Johnsons and Jens Lekman—can be found in a three-story building that used to be an electric dog fence factory in Bloomington, Ind. Nearby there’s a casket factory and a decrepit house that seems to pump out an endless supply of cats, some of which have been adopted by label employees. Antony Hegarty of Antony & the Johnsons refers to the area as “the chicken village.”

Despite their downbeat surroundings, Secretly Canadian, and its sister labels Jagjaguwar and Dead Oceans, have become a global powerhouse, with albums on the charts in the United States and Europe. Jagjaguwar released Bon Iver’s “For Emma, Forever Ago,” which has sold 136,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan, and popped up on pretty much every best of list in 2008. “I Am a Bird Now,” the album by the androgynous torch singer and Lou Reed disciple Hegarty, won the United Kingdom’s Mercury Prize in 2005 and has sold 76,000 copies. In the first month of 2009, the label debuted Bon Iver’s “Blood Bank” EP at No. 16 on the Billboard 200 with 32,000 copies sold, and Antony & the Johnsons’ “The Crying Light” topped Billboard’s European Albums chart.
year's release schedule for the three labels includes albums from Brooklyn indie-rock band Bishop Allen, singer/songwriter Richard Swift, alt-country act Magnolia Electric Company and recently signed South African rock band BLK KS.

Hegarty says that he was initially attracted to the label because "they seemed really honest and enthusiastic, and I respected their integrity." He adds, "We did a lot of growing together; there were lots of times both of us were doing things for the first time."

Secretly Canadian has gone from a small, college-town cottage business to a mini-empire, with two affiliated labels, a distribution company and a production plant. Brothers Ben and Chris Swanson founded the label in 1996 with their friends Eric Weddle and Jonathan Cargill, initially launching the enterprise as a vehicle for releasing local bands. But even with a number of successful albums under its belt, the label still signs artists to the same deals it did with its fledgling acts.

"Bands on this label can expect an annoying level of transparency," Ben says. Chris adds that "all the deals are 50/50, and we co-own the masters. Partnership is the most important thing for all of us."

For Secretly Canadian, the partnership with Bon Iver (aka Justin Vernon) includes holding back on some licensing opportunities in order to help his album grow organically. "We didn't want to be everywhere at once and doing all these sponsored tours only to cost the record its dignity," Vernon says. "We could have sold a few more copies, but I think it would have hurt us in the long run."

When they first started, the founders didn't imagine they'd be in the top 20 one day. "In the mid-90s, plenty of people were saying Bloomington was the next Seattle," Ben says. "There were lots of smaller, artier bands around and a thriving basement-show scene that wasn't really being captured. We saw an opening and went for it."

The Swansons and their co-founders put out a 7-inch by Songs: Ohia, followed by an album by the band in 1997. They tried the established distribution channels for indies but were disappointed by their experience. "It was really hard to get paid by the distributors if you only had a few records out," Ben says. "At the same time, the price of putting out CDs was dropping. We started the distribution company in 1997 and pulled in a lot of other peer labels."

Around the same time, Darius Van Arman was living in Virginia, working at a record store, booking a club and writing for an alt-weekly. He started Jagajuguwar to release an album by a friend's band, and then, he says, "We just kept putting out records, until at some point, it became a real label." After running the operation on his own for three years and releasing mostly local acts, he met Chris and the two became fast friends.

"At that point, I was looking for a partner," Van Arman says. "I moved to Bloomington in 1999 and that was it."

Secretly Canadian quickly expanded again, launching Bellwether Manufacturing in January 1999. The operation does CD and DVD replication and contracts out vinyl pressing and custom CD packaging design, as well as printing posters, stickers and postcards.

"Like the distribution company, Bellwether is an economy of scale," Ben says. "We were working with lots and lots of smaller acts, and that all added up."

Bellwether might have even kept the label afloat for a period of time. "From 1999 until 2005, I'd say Bellwether was 60%-80% of the revenue," Ben says. "In 2005 and
2006, the distribution began to be a much bigger part of the pie. Then the [Antony & the Johnsons] record hit, and between that and the catalog we had built up, we started to see the label department grow significantly.

The labels were doing so well, that, in 2006, it decided to add a third one to the mix. Phil Waldorf had been managing Misra Records, but was looking for a change and approached the owners of Secretly Canadian about a possible partnership.

"Misra was distributed through Secretly Canadian, and I had a good relationship with all the partners," Waldorf says. "We approached things in a very similar way, in terms of the ambitions we had and the strategies we used. When Misra was absorbed into Absolutely Kosher, I started Dead Oceans under the Secretly Canadian umbrella."

When asked to explain how the three labels relate to one another, Waldorf cites the Beggars Group as an example. "Secretly Canadian, Jagajuwars and Dead Oceans are all unique brands, but there is some interchangeable work," he says. "The A&R for each of the labels feels distinct."

As far as the management structure, Chris and Van Arman oversee Jagajuwars, while Chris, Ben and Cargill manage Secretly Canadian. Dead Oceans is Waldorf's project. (Waddle several years ago left the organization and has since founded the label Family Vineyard.) Van Arman also oversees Bellwether, although the manufacturing plant and distribution warehouse have separate staffs. Thirteen people work for the labels, 10 are at the distro, and seven are at Bellwether. Two full-time accountants are employed for the entire operation.

"The labels pretty much share everything," Waldorf says. The office staff is shared among the three labels. All have their own bank accounts and split the overhead, although not on a strictly one-third-each basis. Labels with more developed catalogs pay a greater share than Dead Oceans.

"We have a very similar way. We all have fairly similar taste, although there has never been a battle for a band," Waldorf says. "We might decide to sign a band to a certain label because they are a more developed band and that label has the space and budget for them, where the others might not."

Van Arman says he feels Jagajuwars is "accidentally perceived as being more noisy and experimental, which I don't think is accurate. It's hard to characterize what is different from label to label. None of the labels defined their brands from day one. If I had to say what sets Jagajuwars apart, I'd say maybe we're a little darker and more mystical."

"I just had this gut feeling about them," Vernon says. "I was meeting with all these labels during the 2007 CM [Music Marathon] and just not feeling any of them. I was leaving and I pulled my car over to the side of the road and called Chris and told him I wanted to do it." Vernon signed with the label for many of the same reasons as Hegarty. "We've become good friends and they work so hard at the label," he says. "They're just solid, solid people." Hegarty says he found the fact that the label is based in Bloomington "a little unnerving," but the Midwestern pedigree was a bonus for Vernon: "I think they have built a quiet and stunning empire."

The principals at the label generally consider their unusual location a bonus. "We couldn't afford to have the distribution company and the manufacturing plant in New York or L.A.," Van Arman says. Chris adds that being in Bloomington means they avoid "the group think in the bigger cities. If someone can sell out in New York or L.A., that's great, but it's amazing if they can fill a room in Bloomington."

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THE SECRETS OF THEIR SUCCESS

The Swanson Brothers Offer Helpful Hints On How To Grow A Small Label

TAKE ACCOUNTING 101

Or found a label with someone who has, Ben says. "We won the Future Business Leaders of America accounting contest in high school, which included prizes like a $200 scholarship to a North Dakota university. He takes care of all that, and it means the rest of us never have to think about accounting."

LEARN WEB SITE DESIGN

It's tempting to hire the nerd down the block, but Ben warns against it. "You just have to learn by doing," he says. "If you get someone else to do it, they almost always go away to school or get busy, and you're left with a broken site that you don't know how to fix."

VOLUNTEER AT A COLLEGE OR COMMUNITY RADIO STATION

Working at a small station is a great way to make industry contacts and meet like-minded music fans. "You're also exposed to a lot of great music and might even find some of the bands you end up signing," Ben says.

BUY THE EQUIPMENT YOU REALLY NEED

Ditch your "money-saving policy" of saving printing for days when you can bring it to campus or the office. It's not worth it.

EUROPEANS DELINIEATE THOUSANDS WITH PERIODS, NOT COMMAS

"Early on, we got a lot of attention from a glossy Swedish magazine, sort of a European version of the Fader," Ben says. "They were writing a feature and asked us if we wanted to buy an ad. They quoted us $50,000 kr; which is about $6,500. We thought the extra zero was a typo and we would get it for $650, just some token amount because they were writing a nice feature about us. We were totally excited so we bought the ad and paid six zillion when we got the invoice, only to receive a very confused message asking why we'd only paid a small percentage of the cost. They were cool to us and let us settle it for less, but not everyone will be so nice." —CH

Blame Canada: clockwise from top, BISHOP ALLEN, BON IVER, Magnolia Electric Company singer JASON MOLINA and Antony & the Johnsons' ANTONY HEGARTY.
Even in a down economy, state-of-the-art facilities of various capacities continue to open across North America. Times may be tough, but after a year that brought major buildings including the BOK Center in Tulsa, Cincinnati’s Bank of Kentucky Center and the K-Rock Centre in Ontario, those in the live entertainment business remain hopeful that new buildings in 2009 will also be successful.

“The anticipation and excitement,” says SMG senior VP of arenas Hank Ahate, whose company has landed several contracts for new buildings this year. “We’re doing the best we can to hold the line on costs, because we know we’re entering into a difficult period. But so far, we haven’t hit the wall yet.” Following are new venues that recently opened or are planning to open later this year.

SOUTHEASTERN KENTUCKY AGRICULTURE AND EXPOSITION COMPLEX (CORBIN, KY.)

Music fans in Corbin, Ky., and the surrounding areas will have a new midsize arena in their backyard, when the 7,000-seat Southeastern Kentucky Agriculture and Exposition Complex goes live March 7.

“I’m concentrating on letting everyone know it’s an untapped market,” complex GM Cliff Clinger says, noting that the closest city to see a concert is one hour-and-a-half away. “Basically, the need for it came about because nothing existed.”

Clinger expects to draw concertgoers from a 50-mile radius to the SMG-managed arena. Within that distance, “we’re figuring there’s a population of about 500,000 that we’ll be attracting from,” he says.

So far, the city-owned, $25 million facility’s schedule includes Bill Gaither & Friends (March 26) and Larry the Cable Guy (April 24). “We’re in part of the Bible Belt,” Clinger says. “We’re focusing mostly on rock, country and gospel.”

THE SHOW AT AGUA CALIENTE CASINO (RANCHO MIRAGE, CALIF.)

Southern California residents looking to mix gambling with entertainment have a new place to see concerts. The show at Agua Caliente Casino in Rancho Mirage, Calif., which opened Feb. 12 with a sold-out concert by Billy Joel, “will be the finest 2,000-seat concert theater of its kind on the West Coast,” director of entertainment Steve Macfadyen says.

The $76 million venue is owned by the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians and part of a $400 million expansion of the casino, resort and spa.

Macfadyen says that in light of the weakened economy, he will attempt to keep ticket prices at a reasonable level. “Just because we’re presenting [artists] in this type of atmosphere doesn’t mean that automatically everything is more expensive. We’re not trying to be Las Vegas.”

Concerts booked through November include Matchbox Twenty, Martina McBride, Chicago, Tony Bennett, Puddle of Mudd, Trace Atkins and Big & Rich. Macfadyen hopes to book about 40 concerts in the Show’s opening year.

He doesn’t expect the theater’s proximity to Los Angeles to have an impact on bookings. “But you still have to be careful about where you promote and how you advertise so you’re not butchering one another’s opportunities,” he says.

CITI FIELD (NEW YORK)

Billy Joel helped shutter Shea Stadium in New York with a pair of sellout concerts last July that grossed nearly $12.9 million and drew 115,000 people, according to Artist Group International. Dave Howard, Mets executive VP of business operations, hopes to have the same success with live music at the Mets’ replacement stadium: the 45,000-seat Citi Field, set to open in April.

The Mets’ new $800 million home sits directly across from Shea, which is being demolished.

Citi Field will host “several concerts per year,” says Howard, who adds that the new stadium was “designed with the intention of doing concerts.” Part of that includes large loading docks for multitruck touring productions and easy access onto the field for concertgoers.

Fans who experienced concerts at Shea should be pleasantly surprised with the new field. “Shea Stadium, with the circular design, pulled the seats higher and farther away from the stage,” Howard says. “Citi Field is more intimate, and everything is drawn in closer. So we think it will be a terrific concert venue.”

Although no acts had been confirmed to play Citi Field at press time, Howard says the first concert will likely take place around July when the Mets are on the road. “We’ve had some preliminary discussions with promoters and other representatives of some pretty significant talent about folks wanting to be the first act here,” Howard says.

DALLAS CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS (DALLAS)

Following its completion this fall, the $135 million Dallas Center for the Performing Arts in downtown Dallas will boast five venues, including two—the Margot and Bill Winspear Opera House and Annette Strauss Artist Square—that will host 10-15 concerts annually.

Along with opera, ballet and Broadway performances, the 2,300-capacity Winspear venue will host a wide range of live music events, according to Michael Rilley, Dallas Center for the Performing Arts senior VP/COO. “The Dallas Opera will perform in the venue about 44 nights per year, but Rilley says the facility will have plenty of...
The 12,000- to 15,000-seat shows aren’t there as much as the 6,000- to 7,000-seat events,” Higgins says. “A lot of the venues have installed an upper curating system and are downsizing their venues to meet 6,000- to 7,000-seat demand.”

VisionOne, which owns ticketing company ShoWare, has paid $3 million for a 10-year naming rights deal at the city-owned building, according to Higgins. ShoWare will also serve as the venue’s official ticketing company.

“The ticketing company wanted to get their product into the industry,” Higgins says, “and what better way to do that than get into a brand-new arena and show their product off?”

The $84.5 million arena already has 25 Seattle Thunderbirds hockey dates on the books through mid-March. But we’re “out there pursuing all kinds of concert dates,” Higgins says. The ShoWare Center also hopes to land an arena football tenant in the near future.

The only show booked at press time was Chris Tomlin on March 8.

THE JOINT (LAS VEGAS)
Hard Rock Hotel & Casino VP of entertainment Paul Davis wants to make one thing clear about the new Joint in Las Vegas, which is scheduled to open in late April.

“ ‘It’s not a remodel or a refurbishment of the original joint,” he says, “It’s a brand-new building.’

As part of Hard Rock’s $800 million expansion in Vegas, the new 4,007-capacity joint will be twice the size of the old venue and feature state-of-the-art lighting and sound, along with seven VIP suites. Hard Rock’s expansion includes two new hotel towers, as well as new restaurants, retail and entertainment space.

‘We needed a bigger venue to accommodate the type of acts that this property has an appetite for,” Davis says, noting that the new Joint will maintain the same feel of the old club. “It just makes it a lot more palatable to do those acts in a room that has arena-level production capabilities and a bigger capacity.”

The old joint, built in 1995, will be turned into casino space. The new $60 million project will be erected in a parking lot on the east side of the property along Paradise Road. "Ironically, in that parking lot, we had done multiple outdoor concerts," Davis says, citing such acts as Linkin Park, the Killers, Incubus and Bon Jovi.

Some acts have been confirmed to perform at the new joint, but Davis declined to reveal any names as of press time.

AEG Live will continue to exclusively book and promote concerts at the new joint, Davis says.

ABBOTSFORD ENTERTAINMENT & SPORTS CENTRE (ABBOTSFORD, BRITISH COLUMBIA)
When the $66 million Abbotsford Entertainment & Sports Centre in British Columbia opens this spring, Philadelphia-based management company Global Spectrum will add yet another venue to its crop of recently opened buildings in the region.

Last year in British Columbia, Global Spectrum opened the South Okanagan Events Centre in Penticton and the EnCana Events Centre in Dawson Creek.

The company also manages the 10,000-seat Comcast Arena at Everett Events Center in Washington.

Abbotsford GM Trey Bell believes the 7,000-seat arena will create easy routing for touring acts in the region. "It creates a portion of a routing for any act heading to the Pacific Northwest. They’re all Global Spectrum, so promoters and producers know how they’re going to be treated.”

The Abbotsford center is scheduled to open in late March, but programming at the arena won’t begin until May, says Bell, who hopes to host up to 10 concerts annually. "When we open and the promoters start to see us selling tickets, I think we’ll actually do better than that," he says. The only live music event booked at press time was Third Day on May 9.

In addition to concerts, the arena will host ice shows, family entertainment, rodeos, motor sports, trade shows/conferences and other private events. The facility is also looking to land a professional hockey tenant from the American Hockey League or United Counties Hockey League.
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Season  John Prine  Eddie Izzard  Merle Haggard  Return to Forever
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Billboard's Best Bets '08 - Venues

Performing Arts Centers Streamline,
Get Creative In Face Of Economic Challenges
BY RAY WADDELL

Performing arts centers, many of which rely heavily on public and private donations, are facing the dual challenge of selling tickets and raising funds in a down economy. And both depend on the public and private sectors.

"Like everybody else in the industry, we're coping with tighter budgets, softer revenue streams and increased costs for services," says Bob Papke, national booking manager of SMG Theater Network and director of the Times-Union Center for the Performing Arts in Jacksonville, Fla. "And, unlike arenas and other types of venues, many of our presenting organizations have been hit with major funding cuts from state, municipal and charitable sources, along with a downturn in sales. That's a double hit to their budgets.

Even so, Kathleen O'Brien, president/CEO of the Tennessee Performing Arts Center (TPAC), says her Nashville venue is "pretty much on target" for fund-raising, but she expects the impact of the economy to be felt in fiscal 2009, which begins in July. "We have actually picked up some new donors this year, and we've implemented some new techniques, especially with our e-mail database," O'Brien says.

It seems the corporate sector may be harder to tap going forward than the private sector. "Corporate donors are dying out," says Margaret Lake, director of the Gusman Center for the Performing Arts in Miami. "Many of our clients depend on corporate donors to sponsor music tours and events. It is really impacting the ability for many promoters to make the equation work. I think it is all about private donors at this point."

Much of the talent buying for the current PAC seasons began well before the current economic downturn. According to O'Brien, at TPAC, the only shows that would be added to the datebook now would have to also add to the bottom line, as well as have strong artistic merit. TPAC's 2009-10 season is anchored by "Wicked" (fortuitously booked two years ago) and is tracking well in ticket sales.

"In times like these, historically, people continue to go out and buy tickets for entertainment, but they may purchase less frequently and stick to the familiar," O'Brien says. "This affects those lesser-known artists and sometimes the more mission-driven offerings."

Gusman is a rental-only building, and Lake says fewer promoters are renting the space and taking the risk. In response to that trend, Lake is trying to cut deals that make the venue more promoter-friendly. "We are lowering the costs and proposing three-year deals to our regular promoters," she says.

"I want to ensure the future business while cutting a short-term break to the promoter who may have lost a few sponsor partnerships this year. I am all about cutting custom deals to keep the live industry alive."

The Gusman team is also creating community events that bring in new patrons. "We just presented a live broadcast of the presidential inauguration in partnership with our local PBS station," Lake says. "With the inauguration presentation, production costs were low. "Because of the unique nature of the event, we estimated that about 30% of the audience was new to the venue."

In tough times, Lake says she's willing to try new ideas that can maximize an artist's tour market. "What about doing large shows in arenas paired with small, high-ticket fan shows in neighboring performing arts centers? Then the PAC could give percentages back to the arena to be able to participate," she says. "This way the artist gets a sweet gig, the fan can go to two shows and the arena is only out 1,500 tickets."

Papke says that SMG, as a private venue management firm, is cooperative with other venues by nature. This can allow SMG PACs to tap into a wealth of information and resources. "everything from operational best practices to sophisticated financial analysis to real-time block booking via daily contact between SMG Corporate, major agencies and promoters/presenters, and individual venues."

Regardless of management, a tight economy could be a good time to tighten up staff and expenses. "Do a top-to-bottom analysis, involving all staff, on ways you can do things more effectively," O'Brien advises. "Look at those initiatives and programs that align most closely with your core mission. Constantly monitor cash flow and identify triggers that you can pull if revenues don't make budget. And send very sincere thank-you notes to those who stand by you and help you."
### BOXSCORE Concert Grosses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTIST(S)</th>
<th>GROSS/TICKET PRICES</th>
<th>Venue, Date</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
<th>Promoter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MADONNA, PAUL OAKENFOLD</td>
<td>$15,462,855</td>
<td>electric Factory, Los Angeles, Calif., Dec. 18-20</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>Live Nation Global Touring, 74F-Time For Fun</td>
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<td>$33,22,269</td>
<td>The Forum, Inglewood, Calif., Dec. 26-27</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>Live Nation Global Touring, 74F-Time For Fun</td>
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<td>NELLY YOUNG, EVELYN, WILCO</td>
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<td>Madison Square Garden, New York, Dec. 13-15</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>Live Nation Global Touring</td>
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<td>METALLICA, MACHINE HEAD, THE SWORD</td>
<td>$2,243,799</td>
<td>Nokia Theatre, Los Angeles, Calif., Dec. 27-29</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>Jam Productions</td>
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<td>$1,55,556</td>
<td>FedExForum, Memphis, Jan. 10-11</td>
<td>13,613</td>
<td>11,200</td>
<td>Beaver Productions</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHEECH &amp; CHONG</td>
<td>$460,437</td>
<td>Gibson Amphitheatre, Universal City, Calif., Dec. 1-3</td>
<td>10,488</td>
<td>Live Nation</td>
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<tr>
<td>THE DISCO BISCUITS</td>
<td>$468,532</td>
<td>Nokia Theatre Times Square, New York, Nov. 29-30</td>
<td>10,453</td>
<td>AEG Live</td>
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<tr>
<td>LIL WAYNE, T-PAIN, KEYSHIA COLE &amp; OTHERS</td>
<td>$455,961</td>
<td>Time Warner Cable Arena, Charlotte, N.C., Jan. 2</td>
<td>8,942</td>
<td>Live Nation, Haymon Entertainment</td>
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<td>LIL WAYNE, T-PAIN, KEYSHIA COLE &amp; OTHERS</td>
<td>$463,698</td>
<td>Hampton Coliseum, Hampton, Va., Jan. 27</td>
<td>7,425</td>
<td>Live Nation, Haymon Entertainment</td>
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<td>TRANS-GERMAN ORCHESTRA</td>
<td>$462,972</td>
<td>Civic Center, Rochester, Minn., Dec. 10</td>
<td>10,129</td>
<td>Live Nation</td>
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<tr>
<td>JOHN MAIER, ADELE</td>
<td>$461,480</td>
<td>Virginia Theatre, Champaign, Ill., Dec. 28</td>
<td>6,882</td>
<td>Goldenvoice/AEG Live</td>
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<td>ROBIN WILLIAMS</td>
<td>$460,304</td>
<td>Paramount Theatre, Seattle, Wash., Dec. 4-6</td>
<td>5,654</td>
<td>Live Nation, Larry Magid Touring, AEG Live, in-house</td>
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<tr>
<td>NELLY YOUNG, EVELYN, WILCO</td>
<td>$455,961</td>
<td>Nokia Theatre Times Square, New York, Nov. 29-30</td>
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<td>AEG Live</td>
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<td>OASIS, RYAN ADAMS, MATT COSTA</td>
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<td>Live Nation</td>
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<td>NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK, NATASHA BEDINGFIELD, LADY GAGA</td>
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<td>Moda Arena, Edmonton, Alta., Nov. 17</td>
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<td>Live Nation</td>
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<td>DURAN DURAN</td>
<td>$343,049</td>
<td>Coliseu dos ACs, Sao Paulo, Brazil, Nov. 21-22</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>2 shows</td>
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<td>TONY BENNETT</td>
<td>$342,040</td>
<td>Central Maine Civic, Augusta, Maine, Dec. 3-4</td>
<td>5,700</td>
<td>Live Nation</td>
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<tr>
<td>ALAN JACKSON, TRACE ADKINS, JAMES OTTO</td>
<td>$248,071</td>
<td>State Farm Center, Champaign, Ill., Nov. 30</td>
<td>6,091</td>
<td>Another Planet Entertainment</td>
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<td>TRANS-GERMAN ORCHESTRA</td>
<td>$247,796</td>
<td>Thompson-Boling Arena, Knoxville, Tenn., Dec. 10</td>
<td>10,004</td>
<td>Live Nation, in-house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHRIS BROWN</td>
<td>$245,548</td>
<td>B&amp;L Arena, Hartford, Conn., Dec. 6</td>
<td>7,785</td>
<td>Live Nation, in-house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALICIA KEYS, JORDIN SPARKS</td>
<td>$244,392</td>
<td>Vector Arena, Auckland, New Zealand, Nov. 6</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>Frontier Touring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEVIE WONDER</td>
<td>$243,000</td>
<td>Nokia Theatre, L.A. Live, Los Angeles, Calif., Nov. 20</td>
<td>6,630</td>
<td>Goldenvoice/AEG Live</td>
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<td>POWER 106 CALI CHRISTMAS: KANYE WEST &amp; OTHERS</td>
<td>$241,555</td>
<td>Nokia Theatre, L.A. Live, Los Angeles, Calif., Nov. 18</td>
<td>9,785</td>
<td>Live Nation, Haymon Entertainment</td>
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<td>Prudential Center, Newark, N.J., Dec. 2</td>
<td>10,176</td>
<td>Live Nation</td>
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<td>OASIS, RYAN ADAMS, MATT COSTA</td>
<td>$240,659</td>
<td>The Forum, Inglewood, Calif., Dec. 12</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>Jam Productions</td>
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<td>DAVE DUNHAM</td>
<td>$408,567</td>
<td>Civic Center, Hervey Bay, Australia, Dec. 5</td>
<td>9,496</td>
<td>Live Nation</td>
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<td>TRANS-GERMAN ORCHESTRA</td>
<td>$406,585</td>
<td>Orpheum Theatre, Boston, Mass., Dec. 20-21</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>Live Nation, Larry Magid Touring</td>
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<tr>
<td>CLIFF RICHARD</td>
<td>$406,345</td>
<td>Odyssey Arena, Belfast, Northern Ireland, Dec. 3-4</td>
<td>6,802</td>
<td>Aiken Promotions</td>
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**Fingers Crossed**

PACs Stay Frugal, Hopeful; New Venues Thrive in First Year

To the sound of knocking on wood, Ray Williams, president of the International Assn. of Assembly Managers and director of the Portland ( Ore.) Center for the Performing Arts, says the economy hasn't negatively affected funding for her venues as of yet. As a whole, though, "the nonprofits are severely hurting as donations are dramatically down," Williams says. "I'm a tad worried about some of my clients being able to pay their bills. We are seeing less hall usage for meetings and receptions from the corporate sector. Fortunately that is not a huge piece of our business."

But the impact of the recession can have an effect beyond charitable donations. "We are nervously watching a lodging tax, as that makes up around 24% of our operating budget," she says. "The lodging industry is seeing some weakness; we just don't know how bad it is going to be."

Even so, business at times defies logic. "Ticket sales remain strong—for virtually everyone [here], whether arts, nonprofit or commercial promoter," Williams says. "We've had several recent sellouts. The shows you expect to sell well are still selling well and those you expect to be soft aren't any more soft than normal,—yet. We continue to hold our breath and just hope we can continue business as it has been."

Like other buildings (see story, page 30), Williams is putting capital improvement projects on hold. "We've postponed any unnecessary spending in case later cuts are needed," she says. "We're lucky in that we have a pretty lean, efficient operation and not a lot of programs that are a drain to our bottom line."

Just as it's a good idea for private citizens to have a "rainy day fund," the same holds true for performing arts centers. Williams says, "We have a six-month operating reserve, which wasn't fun to build, but boy, are we glad we have one so we don't have to immediately slash and burn our way to solvency. That's what it's for, to get us through the lean times. Let's just hope the lean times don't last out my reserve."

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**THAT FIRST FULL YEAR**

Prudential Center in Newark, N.J.; Sprint Center in Kansas City, Mo.; UFC Arena in Orlando, Fla.; and Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre in Northwest Atlanta all enjoyed their first full years of operation in 2008 and lived to tell about it.

In fact, they all thrived. For example, the 2,750-seat Cobb Energy Centre, from September 2007 through September 2008, presented 119 performances to 187,340 audience members at its John A. Williams Theatre.

Sprint Center senior VP/GM Brenda Tinnin says the arena hosted 1.4 million guests at 140 events in its inaugural year. "Most importantly, guests, artists, managers and promoters have established Sprint Center as a special place for memorable, world-class live entertainment," she says.

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If you ask Neko Case why her 2006 album "Fox Confessor Bring the Flood" sold so many copies—194,000 in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan—she'll tell you that she didn't have much to do with it.

To Case, her success in sales didn't come from her incessant touring or her longstanding membership in indie rock heavyweights the New Pornographers. Her label was a bigger factor.

"I would have to give a lot more credit to Anti- than anything else," she says. "And they never did something they said they were going to do. They really followed through." Chicago indie Bloodshot released Case's first three solo albums. The last, 2002's "Blacklisted," wound up outselling the New Pornographers' next album, 2003's "Electric Version," 113,000 to 11,000.

After some major-label courting, Case signed with Anti in 2004. "I've learned how to take it to a certain level," she admits. "But there are certain things, like marketing, that I don't understand." Enter Anti- GM Dave Hansen, who cites the label's strong relationship with indie retailers as the initial focal point for "Fox Confessor." The album started selling better after it got positive reviews, Case made several TV appearances and Starbucks began carrying the title five months after its release.

Case is now in the rare position of straddling two niche markets. The music she makes as a solo artist is rootsy and twangy, attracting followers of acts like Wilco and Neil Young. But her work with the New Pornographers appeals to a younger, college-age crowd that favors pop hooks and Case's trademark harmonies with Carl Newman.

Dipping her musical pen in many inks seems to have influenced "Middle Cyclone," which is due March 3 and stands to become Case's most high-profile album to date. The artist is joined throughout the project by guest musicians such as Calexico's Joey Burns and John Convertino, M. Ward and the Band's Garth Hudson, and she dips into the covers well with versions of Nilsson's "Don't Forget Me" and Sparks' "Never Turn Your Back on Mother Earth."

Other highlights include the winding piano ballad "Vengeance Is Sleeping," where Case examines unrequited love from a male perspective; "Prison Girls," which has a Tex-Mex arrangement; and "Magpie in the Morning," which showcases her crystal clear voice.

"It's heavily influenced by being in the New Pornographers," Case says. "I'm sure I wouldn't have made those poppy choruses if I didn't have that addiction feeling of singing harmonies with other people."

The first single, "People Got a Lotta Nerve," is the focus of a download campaign that aims to raise awareness for the Best Friends Animal Society. Through Feb. 3, each time a blogger posted the track for free download from his or her site or an iLike user added it to his or her profile, Anti- made a donation to the organization. According to the label, the song has been downloaded 25,000 times from Anti.com, generating a 25% increase in traffic to the site.

At retail, Anti- will extend its heavy presence at indie stores, encompassing a poster campaign and contests for employees who create the best displays. The label is also working to bring digital and physical pricing in line with one another through partnerships with Borders, Barnes & Noble and iTunes. "We just want to even the playing field for everyone, so we're trying to make sure indie can compete," Hansen says.

This spring, Case will return to the road, playing a mix of clubs and 2,000-capacity theaters in North America.

But as Case's audience has grown, so she says she has the difficulties in the recording process. "Your vocabulary and your ability to recognize sonic differences is greater, because you have that experience," she says. "I used to think that if you had that experience, it would get easier. But it's like 'Donkey Kong.' The levels just keep going up and up and up."
It Ain’t ‘Easy’
Owen Looks To Convert Radio Success Into Record Sales

Jake Owen wants country fans to know his name. “I don’t want to be a guy with a song on the radio that no one knows,” he says. With the launch of his sophomore album, “Easy Does It,” due Feb. 24 on RCA Nashville, he’s taking steps to help those fans make the connection.

Florida native Owen charted three singles from his 2006 debut, “Startin’ With Me.” The first single, “Hey Hey,” reached No. 16 on Billboard’s Hot Country Songs chart August 2006, the title cut spent 41 weeks on the chart and peaked at No. 6 in July 2007, and “Somethin’ About a Woman” reached No. 15 in May 2008. The album sold 270,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Owen was also part of the field hit “Life in a Northern Town” with Sugarland and Little Big Town in 2008. The three acts close the 50th Dream Academy Tour to close shows on the 2007 CMT tour. CMT began playing a low-budget video, which was only meant to be a thank you for its tour sponsorship, and radio subsequently picked up the audio. The collaborators are nominated for a Grammy Award in the country collaboration category. “None of us even imagined it would turn into what it has,” Owen says.

Owen, who has opened for Kenny Chesney, Brooks & Dunn and Alan Jackson, among others, will spend most of the year flying solo on the road. “It’s about building my own brand,” he says. “I don’t want to be opening act anymore.”

Heather McBee, VP of digital business for Sony Music Nashville, says the label is “in the same place with Owen: ‘Our mission on the digital side is about connecting the dots and getting the music heard earlier.’” She says “It’s time to tell Jake’s story.”

Equipped with a Flip cam-

POPP BY CHUCK TAYLOR

‘House’ Warming
After Broadway Bonanza, Duncan Sheik Goes Conceptual

Duncan Sheik is breathing just fine these days, thank you.

In 1996, his first single on Atlantic, “Barely Breathing,” reached the top 10 at top 40, adult top 40 and AC; spent a then-record-setting 55 weeks on the Billboard Hot 100; and earned a Grammy Award nomination for best male pop vocal. Despite this auspicious opening, radio turned its back on Sheik, and it took more than a decade for the perplexed singer/songwriter to regain footing in the business.

In 2007, Sheik transitioned to Broadway as composer/arranger of “Spring Awakening.” It won the Tony Award for best musical and two trophies for him personally: best orchestration and best original score.

“I’m the first to admit that my career as singer/songwriter and recording artist was in a very tenuous place,” Sheik says. “Between my first album until ‘Spring Awakening’ hit on Broadway, it was hard to keep the faith and feel like my work was connecting. Culture was in a completely different direction from where I was going. I was thinking that maybe it was time to transition to a career in home inspection.”

Now, Sheik is returning to his own music with “Whisper House,” released Jan. 27 on Victor Records/Sony. The set is not only his first pop CD since 2006’s “White Limo sine,” it’s also the score for his next theatrical endeavor.

The concept was born out of a visit to Maine with “30 Rock” actor Keith Powell, where the pair was inspired by locating a spooky light-house. Playwright Kyle Jarrow was charged to write a script, while Sheik retreated to an island off Charleston, S.C.—itself a renowned region of mystery and spirits—to compose the music.

The 10 pieces Sheik crafted have a narrative approach to songwriting, with elements of chamber pop, rock and folk. As the tracks unfold, a story emerges of a child’s grief and a spinner’s longing as seen through the eyes of ghosts that haunt a remote, World War II-era lighthouse where they live.

“I’m singing in the persona of one of the ghosts,” says Sheik, who is accompanied on many of the songs by his 21-year-old protege Holly Brooke. “We drowned at a Halloween party in 1912, so we’re dressed in fancy dress costumes of the day.” He is an illusionist, she a geisha.

While there are stranger elements in the eerie instrumentation and lyrics that might be described as cautionary tales, Sheik insists there’s plenty of eye-wining in “Whisper House.” On “In the Tale of Solomon Snow,” for instance, ghosts are advising young protagonist Christopher that one can live their entire life in fear—and despite every precaution, despite always trying to play it safe, you can still end up foiled—so why obsess? “I call that the Bush doctrine,” Sheik says with a laugh. “There are many of these kinds of funny themes, with these whimsically malevolent ghosts singing to Christopher.”

With the songs outlined in South Carolina, Sheik came home to New York, where he fleshed them out instrumentally and passed them along to his manager. To his surprise, the response was, “These are finished songs. You’ve got your next record. Why would you not want to put this out?” Actually, since I was caught up in the musical, the idea hadn’t even occurred to me.”

Sony snapped the album up and is now marketing it “To Duncan’s core fan base as well as to Broadway fans that have embraced Duncan and his music” since the success of “Spring Awakening,” says John Ingrasia, president of Sony Music’s Commercial Music Group. “The main destination for fans” is duncan sheik’s whisper house, which Ingrasia says introduces the characters and features video vignettes about the back story.

Meanwhile, “Whisper House” the musical is still in workshops, as Sheik hits the road with a career retrospective across the United States through March. The theatrical version will premiere later this year in a regional workshop in Delaware. Sheik is also working on two other theater projects: “Nero (Another Golden Globe)” about the decadent life of the Roman emperor, and “The Nightingale,” a fairy tale based on Hans Christian Andersen, slated to open this year in San Francisco at the American Conservatory Theatre.

And “Spring Awakening” keeps rolling. It launched Jan. 23 at London’s Lyric Hammersmith Theatre and is opening in Helsinki in Finnish. “It’s the gift that keeps on giving,” Sheik says.

GLOBAL PULSE
EDITED BY TOM FERGUSON

JAPANESE VARIETY-HIT TAKES COUNTRY STAGE

It wasn’t until 2006 that the Western music industry began to take notice of the Japanese rock band Dir en Grey. But that didn’t stop the band’s success from spreading, as the band’s 2007 album "Dreams in Red" became Japan’s highest selling album of the year. Now, the band’s first album to be released in the United States, "Only the Beginning," is available nationwide on May 5. The album features the hit single "Innocent," which has already sparked a trend in Japanese music in the United States. The album’s success is a testament to the growing popularity of Japanese music in the West.

MONSTER HITS

Japanese visual-kei act Mix Speaker’s, Inc. (MSI) is turning up the volume on its international career. One of the buzz acts at the MIDEM conference last month in Cannes, it recently completed a successful three-date European tour, booked by Dortmund, Germany-based Twisted Talent Concerts.

MSI has been a hot indie act in Japan since its first single in December 2006, claiming that every domestic gig — where the band is booked by Disk Garage/Sony Music Japan — since spring 2007 has been a sellout. Audiences love every second of the outlandish visuals and driving music,” says Sony international marketing manager Yuie Yamamoto.

“For us, our creative process starts with a story,” says the act’s bassist, known only as Seek. “Based on that, we create the characters, the music, the image and our performance.”

Owen will have an "intense presence" on CMT and GAC, TV, radio, online and mobile, says Sony Nashville VP of marketing Toni Balfrica. The artist has also been providing fans updates about the progress of his new record. "That community, especially on the social networking side, is so hungry to be fed information and we wanted to start early getting the word out there," McBee says.

Balfrica admires Owen's work ethic and willingness to participate in the process. "He knows it is all about the connection to the fans, and he works at making more of them every day," she says.

Like the debut, the new set was produced by Jimmy Ritchey, and Owen co-wrote eight of the album's 10 tracks. First single "Don't Think I Can't Get You," which Owen calls "a total love song," is No. 13 on Hot Country Songs. John Shomby, PD for WGOH Norfolk, Va., says the song is poised to be a hit at his station. "The bluesy sound to it hit us right off the bat. Audience reaction has been super."

WGAR Cleveland PD Brian Jennings calls the song "the best-performing single of his career for us."

Despite the good start, Owen knows his goals won't be easy to accomplish. "People aren't going to know who you are overnight. It's a growing process," he says, remembering a bit of advice that Chesney once shared. "You just got to stay on the radio." Chesney told him. "That's a great way to look at it. I want to make a sound that people recognize."

On Oct. 22 in Japan, with a European release to be scheduled. The act is published by Sony Music Japan.

—Rob Schwartz

>>THE COLOR OF MONEY

Rather then being the limit, Sky could be just the beginning for Norwegian indie folk singer Ane Brun, after her stripped-down version of Cyndi Lauper's "True Colors" was used in a high-profile TV advertising campaign for the broadcaster's high-definition service.

"The song was actually recorded for a Scandinavian commercial involving [tennis star] Björn Borg, but that didn't happen," says Mikaal Gustavsson, international marketing manager at Brun's Stockholm-based booking agent/promoter/management company Headstomp Productions. "[Publisher] Sony/ATV pitched it to Sky and they loved it."


"In terms of exposure you can't beat having a song on TV," Gustavsson says. "But we needed to make sure people knew who was actually singing." Brun has already released five albums in Norway and Sweden and has also performed in the United States (where "Seasons" was released last October on Sheep Ludluff's Brun plays U.K. shows — booked by Headstomp—at the end of February, with European dates in April and May. American bookings are handled by the Agency Group.

—Steve Adams

>>SAXON AND ON AND ON

Almost 30 years after its debut album, veteran U.K. metal act Saxon is celebrating another hit with its 18th studio set, "Into the Labyrinth.

Released Europe-wide Jan. 12 and a day later in the United States by Hanover, Germany-based Steamhammer/SPV, the album gave Saxon some of its strongest chart placements in years in several European territories, including Germany, where it debuted at No. 23. The record hit No. 72 on Billboard's Independent Album charts.

"Bands like Metallica and Iced Earth are influenced by Saxon and now the kids want to know where the roots are coming from," says Olly Hahn, international product manager for rock/metall at Steamhammer/SPV.

Hahn says Saxon's previous album, 2007's "The Inner Sanctum," sold 60,000 copies, but his confident "Labyrinth" will exceed that figure.

"This [album] ranks up there with our best," says Saxon singer Biff Byford, whose band is touring Europe with labelmates Iced Earth throughout February, booked through London-based X-Ray Touring. A 10- date U.S. trek is next, April with an appearance Aug. 20 at the Rock Gone Wild Festival in Algona, Iowa. "We're just going to keep going until we come up against a brick wall," Byford laughs.

Saxon is published by Warner/Chappell.

—Richard Smirke

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Saxon is published by Warner/Chappell.

—Richard Smirke
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ALYSSA GRAHAM

Over the last decade, as Alyssa Graham traveled through Brazil, India, China and Europe, she saw dozens of local performances and soaked in different musical cultures. The singer’s adventurous spirit also helps explain why she decided to leave Blindman’s Holiday, a successful rock group on the college circuit, after six years to explore something she knew very little about: jazz.

“I woke up and said, ‘There’s so much more I want to learn,’” says Graham, who ended up studying jazz at the New England Conservatory of Music. “It was difficult going back to basics and into this cutthroat, tight-knit world. But I wanted to be a better musician ... immersing myself in this world was definitely worthwhile.”

Graham’s second album, “Echo,” debuted at No. 24 on Billboard’s Top Contemporary Jazz Albums chart in August. The startlingly mature set of sumptuous jazz/pop covers and originals was influenced by Brazilian rhythms and vocal patterns that Graham says “don’t give away too much. While her graceful voice guides the album, much of “Echo” centers on the backing band and arrangements, produced, arranged and co-written by Jon Cowherd (Lizz Wright, Brian Blade Fellowship). Graham didn’t mind taking a back seat to the studio talent, who have also recorded for acts like Cassandra Wilson, John Patitucci and the Emerson String Quartet.

Graham will play a handful of U.S. shows this spring, including an April 27 performance at New York’s Lincoln Center, before beginning work on a new album with the same group that helped make “Echo” a success.

—JASON LIPSHUTZ
Contact: info@alyssagraham.com

WHISKEY FALLS

Whiskey Falls describes its musical style as a mix between “Hotel California” and “Sweet Home Alabama”—Calibama, in shorthand. If that combination sounds like a commercial winner, that’s because it is.

Without the support of a label, the country quartet has sold 41,000 copies of its self-titled album in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Whiskey Falls has garnered major exposure opening for acts like Montgomery Gentry and Alan Jackson and has played pre-race concerts for NASCAR, with agency support from William Morris. More recently, it has been omnipresent at the Toughest Cowboy rodeo events across the country, which are being filmed for the newly launched Mark Burnett reality TV show of the same name on Spike TV. Whiskey Falls’ track “HellBilly” serves as the theme song.

“That song says everything we are as a group. When people hear that song, they think, ‘Those are our kind of boys,’” says guitarist/vocalist Damon Johnson, formerly of Southern rock group Brother Cane.

Johnson was the last member to join the crew, which already featured Buck Johnson (no relation), Wally Brandt and Seven Williams. Brandt and Williams had long worked together at their own California-based music production house and publishing company We 3 Kings, where they’ve crafted tracks for projects like “The Simple Life” (the theme song) and an AAMCO commercial. Buck, who is also a studio keyboardist, wrote the track “Just Feel Better,” which Steven Tyler performed on Santana’s 2005 album “All That I Am.”

After an up-and-down experience as a rock artist in the late ’90s, Damon Johnson was happy to find a new project that better fit his lifestyle.

“Buck called me to join while I was on the road playing guitar with Alice Cooper,” he says. “I had dreams of being a rock star my whole life and when I finally had it, I found that you had to feed everybody’s demand for attention. I just found I was more blue collar than rock is. Country music supports family and performs for audiences on a Thursday through Saturday schedule. Whiskey Falls was so special, considering all four of us were lead singers, and I could sing my guitar all I wanted to. We put my rock background together with the music we all grew up on.”

The band was signed to Midas Records briefly before “the wheels came off,” as Hartley puts it, and the group opted out. Now, as Whiskey Falls adds the finishing touches to its new album this spring, the crew hopes to find a label with radio connections or a radio promotions group to fill the last gap in its well-oiled marketing machine.

—KATIE HASTY
Contact: Nick Hartley, manager, nick@fitzhart.com

LIGHTS RESOLVE

For modern rock troupe Lights Resolve, destruction is creation. If the trio’s former group, Last Week, hadn’t disbanded after the singer left to pursue a solo career, singer/guitarist/keyboards Matt Reich might have never discovered he could sing. Really sing.

“I always sang backup. It never even occurred to me then to try,” he says.

In 2006, after auditioning new singers and coming up short, Reich spent weeks practicing and taking voice lessons, ultimately taking over as the lead singer. Since then, the New York-based group, which also consists of drummer Neal Saini and bassist Luke Daniels, has found an audience on Smart Punk and Purevolume and is averaging 6,000 spins per day on MySpace.

Between online marketing and spending three-quarters of the year on tour, the group has sold more than 10,000 copies of its two EPs, “Prelude” and “Currency.” Songs from those efforts have been featured as bumper music on MTV and MTV2 and scored the act features on Fearless TV.

Though Lights Resolve has been tapped to support Rock Band Live dates with Shiny Toy Guns and Straitlight Run, Reich attributes a big growth in the band’s fan base to its stint opening for the Used, which he describes as “the perfect match.”

According to Reich, the band has been able to stay on the road in part because of its fragility, limiting the lineup to three people and piggybacking on acts with agents who’ve offered to take it on the road.

The group also crashes in its van or with fans, bringing it that much closer to its audience. Lights Resolve will perform at South by Southwest next month.

—KH
Contact: Dayna Ghiroldi, publicist, dayna@bigpicturemediaonline.com

www.americanradiohistory.com
R&B

RYAN LESLIE
Ryan Leslie
Producer: Ryan Leslie
Next Selection/Universal Music Group
Release Date: Jan. 20

What took Universal Motown so long to release this attractive body of work? That’s the question R&B aficionados may find themselves asking after one listen to Leslie’s much-delayed self-titled debut. With its smooth melodies (“Just Right”), fresh beats (“Diamond Girl”) and effortlessly suave lyrics (“Quick-Step”), the album satisfies from beginning to end. Leslie isn’t too macho to admit he’s sprung over a girl on “Addiction,” or that he still thinks about a past love on the thumping “How It Was Supposed to Be.” On “Valentine,” he croons about having his heart stolen by a woman, while confessing his fondness for a woman who doesn’t speak his language on “I’ll Be N.A.” And even when he ventures into new territory, as on “You’re Fly,” which finds him rapping, or on “Gibberish,” where he literally sings about rubbish over a sleek piano pattern, Leslie proves it was worth the wait.—MC

BOBBY VALENTINO
The Rebirth
Producer: Various

INAPPLICABLE

LILY ALLEN
It’s Not Me, It’s You
Producer: Greg Kurstin
Capital
Release Date: Feb. 10

If you liked Bobby Valentino’s first two albums, you’ll appreciate the thoroughly on-the-mark “The Wait.” Like his previous releases, the set features uncomplicated, yet-effective production and lyrics about matters of the heart. In fact, the album is so consistent that Valentino even recycles a flute-y Tim and Bob beat that was used on “Special Occasion,” his sophomore album, for “Make You the Only One,” about leaving his player ways behind. Elsewhere, Valentino cautions a lady about breaking his heart on “My Girl,” against the backdrop of a repetitive guitar riff, while Rashael Saqig guests on the commitment ode “Just Me & You.” This wouldn’t be a Valentino project without the bedroom tracks, which include the suggestive “3 Is the New 2” and the lead single “Beep,” where Valentino compares sex to riding in a car.—MC

ROCK

VAN MORRISON
Astral Weeks Live at the Hollywood Bowl
Producer: Van Morrison
Listen to the Liam/EMI
Release Date: Feb. 10

“Astral Weeks” has always been a mystery as much as a milestone, with lyrics that reflect an innocence lost, transcendence just out of sight and a figure named Madame George who many listeners assume is transvestite (wrongly, Morrison says). The stream-of-consciousness narrative seems to come from Morrison’s desire to lose himself in a musical moment. But he never performed these songs with full orchestration until last year—four decades after their release—for a concert at the Hollywood Bowl that featured original guitarist Jay Berliner. And although much of the album is about saying goodbye to the past, Morrison uses the performance to breathe new life into the songs with a band that can follow anywhere he leads—jazz, folk or soul. He even changes the song order so “Madame George” arrives at the end, still full of mournful, mysterious images to puzzle out long into the night.—RL

BON IVER
Blood Bank EP
Producer: Justin Vernon
Jagajoguer
Release Date: Jan. 20

Almost as important as the sound of Bon Iver’s music is the story behind mastermind Justin Vernon’s self-imposed recording exile. By making it well known that he wasn’t interested in making his stunning 2008 debut, “For Emma, Forever Ago,” he conjured a visual image of bleakness and isolation that will follow him forever. This four-song EP, which debuted at a career-best No. 16 on the Billboard 200, doesn’t exactly play to that myth. The Vocoder on the a cappella track “Woods” puts forth a robotic wooziness that’s more about technical expression than personal sentiment. With full-band backing, Vernon also seems more social on the title track and “Babys.” What remains from “For Emma” is a dizzying and ethereal beauty.—LJW

RED

INNOCENCE & INSTINCT
Producers: Rob Grapes, Jasen Rauch
Essential/Red Ink
Release Date: Feb. 10

“Innocoence & Instinct” is as confided and adroitly produced as Red’s 2005 debut, “End of Silence,” with Rob Grapes again overseeing the balance of bunt, hoaky riffs and commanding strings. Snappy lead single “Death of Me” signals the textured, more aggressive direction the quartet is following, like the nearly identical sawing guitars that herald “Confession (What’s Inside My Head)” and the uplifting “Shadows.” Anguished love tracks like “Mystery of Me” and “Start Again” have alluring melodies that are elevated to perfectly timed climaxes, although a surprise cover of Duran Duran’s “Ordinary World” doesn’t come across equally gut-busting, and a few, like the poseur reggae tune “Ras Trent,” are made much funnier by the in-context video. But the lonely island has certainly found its bearings.—BN

LIZA MINNELLI
Liza’s at the Palace
Producer: Phil Ramone
Hybrid
Release Date: Feb. 3

Liza Minnelli’s recent stint at New York’s Palace Theater was more than just song and showbiz triumph. It was a declaration of showbiz survival. And the audience, which showered her with ovations, knew it. So it’s disappointing—and odd—for the accompanying double-CD to be a studio rather than a live recording. The daughter of the iconic Judy Garland, now her own legend at 62, willed herself through the demanding set of American Songbook classics, including showstoppers like “Cabaret” and “But the World Goes Round,” despite two hip replacements, a history of addiction and a public life that would cause other stars to go into hiding. Her voice cracked, her movements were abbreviated, but the veteran carried on and brought the house down. What could have been a warts-and-all testament to Minnelli’s true grit is instead a glossed-over memento for fans.—KM

DAN AUERBACH
Keep It Hid
Producer: Dan Auerbach
Nonesuch
Release Date: Feb. 10

Dan Auerbach has veered off the garage-rock path now and then throughout the Black Keys’ career, and this solo debut reaffirms that he’s no one-trick pony. As on Black Keys discs, there’s plenty of greasy guitar grooves and songs with more Southern swagger than a white guy from Akron, Ohio, should be capable of conjuring. On those, Auerbach’s voice sounds ancient, lifted from a thrift store 78, his guitar moaning like a ghost. Elsewhere, the material has the transporting quality of Auerbach’s writing, dropping listeners off in Appalachia, the pre-war South, Skydny-erda Gainesville, Fla., and the psychedelic ’60s. Had this been the next Keys disc, he and his band-mate Patrick Carney would have been well-served for it. As it is, “Keep It Hid” doubles Auerbach’s cred and upstages the anti for anything he tries in the future.—WO

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THE BILLBOARD

SINGLES

JENNIFER HUDSON

The Star Spangled Banner
Producer: Rickey Minor
Writer: Key, J. Smith
Publisher: not listed

Arista

Whitney Houston’s recording of "The Star Spangled Banner" was an enigma when it reached No. 20 on the Billboard Hot 100 in 1991, after the singer performed it at that year's Super Bowl. (Fun fact: the national anthem's lyrics come from a poem written in 1814 by Francis Scott Key, set to the tune of a popular British drinking song scrawled by John Stafford Smith.) Who better to fill Houston’s shoes a generation later than Jennifer Hudson. Seeing the Academy Award winner heave a deep breath as she began was the real dramatic peak of the four-hour Super Bowl spectacle. The performance is available on iTunes, with proceeds going to the Hudson-King Foundation, aiding families that have lost relatives to violent crimes. If public reaction to her return is any gauge, this is destined to become a musical keepsake, which, in turn, could propel it up the chart, an appreciable reward for a job well done.—CT

50 CENT

I Get It In (3:23)
Producer: Dr. Dre
Writer: C. Jackson, A. Young
Publisher: not listed

Shady/Aftermath

The postponement of "Before I Self-Destruct" from December to March seemed unfortunate at first, but the music continues to prove it will be worth the wait. The second single, "I Get It In," is a sonic triumph. The boom-bap of drums and synthesizer make it an upbeat song guaranteed to be a smash hit at radio. And based on the reception given by WQHT (Hot 97)/New York's DJ Funkmaster Flex, it is clearly off to a great start. Between 50's catchy lyric and Dr. Dre's excellent production, this record has the potential to connect like their 2002 classic "In Da Club." And what better way for 50 to end his current deal at Interscope than the way he started on top.—SR

50 CENT

50 Cent
Producer: Street King

Def Jam

The title track from his upcoming album, "The Young Blood Chronicles," is a solid R&B ballad. The song's strong vocal delivery and catchy beat make it a standout track on the album. The lyrics are about the rapper's journey to success and his determination to stay true to his roots. The production is a blend of hip-hop and R&B, which adds to the depth of the track. Overall, this is a strong effort from 50 Cent.—MM

50 CENT

Go (3:51)
Producer: The Neptunes

Def Jam

This track features a prominent sample of Biggie Smalls' "Juicy," which was released in 1994. The song is about the rapper's rise to fame and success. The lyrics are about his past struggles and how he made it to the top. The production is a blend of hip-hop and R&B, which adds to the depth of the track. Overall, this is a strong effort from 50 Cent.—MM

JENNIFER HUDSON

The Star Spangled Banner
Producer: Rickey Minor
Writer: Key, J. Smith
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THE BILLBOARD REVIEWS

MIRANDA LEE RICHARDS

Light of X
Producer: Rick Parker

Nettwerk

Release Date: Feb. 10

Miranda Lee Richards is the unlikely product of underground comics (her father is pioneer Ted Richards), High Times (her mom Teresa is a contributor), guitar lessons from Metallica’s Kirk Hammett and a brief tenure in the Bran Janostown Massacre. Whatever you might expect from that mix is likely not the gorgeous and tuneful singer/songwriter craft on her second album. On “Light of X,” Richards sounds like a Southern California incarnation of ethereal Canadian Sarah McLachlan and Lorenna McKennitt, dressing these 12 tracks with warmly swelling melodies, poetic, melancholy lyrics; carefully nuanced arrangements; and smooth dynamics that ebb and flow in a low-key manner. She can carry most any song with her voice and piano or acoustic guitar (check out “Hidden Treasure”). And while “Light of X” seldom soars, it certainly cruises at a pleasant altitude.—GG

CHANGO SPASIUK

Pyrandi—Los Descalzos
Producer: Bob Telson

World Village

Release Date: Feb. 10

Horacio “Chango” Spasiuk is a native of Misiones, the northeastern most province in Argentina. He grew up with an accordion in his hands and the 6/8 rhythm of chamame dance music in his head. This 15-song album is a generous sample of Spasiuk’s chamame, a mix of musical nuggets that, like tango, sounds anything but quaint when interpreted by a master. Spasiuk’s music has a grace and a romanticism that make it irresistible. standalone numbers “Señor O” and “Tristeza” are beautifully colored, moody pieces, animated by not only Spasiuk’s accordion but also Marcelito Delamae’s guitar and Victor Renauade’s violin. “Aulver Onila/Estancia Santa Maria” has the lively feel of a ranchera. The last six songs on the album, the Duos, are among the best—elemental arrangements played with tremendous passion.—PVV

BLUES

GUY DAVIS

Sweetheart Like You
Producer: John Platania

Red House

Release Date: Feb. 10

Guy Davis’ last record for Red House, 2006’s “Skunkmello,” was one of the best blues albums released that year. It’s a difficult act to follow, but Davis is back with “Sweetheart Like You,” an album that’s essentially a continuation of the country blues brilliance that has become his special province. He covers several great tunes here, including a fairly zesty version of Willie Dixon’s “Hoochie Coochie Man,” a gutbucket take on “Baby Please Don’t Go” and a stirring rendition of Lead Belly’s “Ain’t Goin’ Down.” Among Davis’ numerous original numbers, “Words to My Mama’s Song” is a modern man’s talking blues that will reach out and grab the listener, while “Sweet Hannah” is a gentle love song. Another inspired moment comes as Davis lays a five-string banjo on the rockabilly “Can’t Be Satisfied”—PVV

LEGENDS AND CREDITS

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

CONTRIBUTORS: Mariel Conception, Gary Graff, Robert Levine, Kevin Natoli, Michael Menachem, Gail Mitchell, Evie Nagy, Wes Orshoski, Sud Reid, Michael Speckman, Chuck Taylor, Christa L. Titus, Philip Van Vleck, Mikael Wood, Lavinia Jones Wright

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

CRITICS’ CHOICE: A new release, regardless of chart potential, highly recommended for musical merit.

All albums commercially available in the United States are eligible. Send all album review copies to Jonathan Cohen and singles review copies to Chuck Taylor (both at Billboard, 770 Broadway, Seventh Floor, New York, NY 10003) or to the writers in the appropriate bureaus.
HAPPENING NOW

MUSIC

DA JUICE IS LOOSE!

OJ Da Juiceman may be a strange name to those north of the Mason-Dixon line, but the rapper has crafted one of the most popular songs in Atlanta’s club scene. His track “Make Tha Trap Say Ay” featuring Gucci Mane is No. 66 on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart after seven weeks. The artist’s Asylum debut, “The Otta Side of the Trap,” was released Jan. 27.

Born Otis Williams Jr. in Atlanta, Juiceman began rapping in high school with the Never Again Entertainment company in 2002. When the group split the following year, he went solo and formed his own company, 32 Entertainment. Soon he was recording his own music, burning 10,000 of his own mixtapes and personally distributing his CDs everywhere from Atlanta clubs to gas stations.

Juiceman’s profile got a big boost after he met fellow rapper Gucci Mane, who offered him a spot on his 2007 tour through the Southeast and Midwest. At those shows, Juiceman continued to distribute his music, which numbers 15 different mixtapes with help from DJ Holiday and DJ Drama, among others.

All of this brought him to the attention of Asylum, which Juiceman opted to sign despite interest from bigger labels. “He was making $6,500 per show and no one knew who he was,” Asylum/Warner Bros. product manager Deston Bennett says. “The momentum just started building and all the DJs started supporting him, so it was a no-brainer for us to sign him.”

Juiceman begins a two-week promo tour in late February and is hoping to shoot a video for “Make Tha Trap Say Ay” in the coming weeks with director Mr. Boomtown, but the schedule depends on a cameo from Mane.

Mane was incarcerated in 2008 for a parole violation stemming from an assault charge and he may be released within the next few weeks. In the meantime, Juiceman is already working on his next album and hoping to outgrow his regional fame.

“My next album will be out in May or June,” he says. “I want to be a national artist, so I have to stay focused.”

—Hillary Croslie

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COUNTRY

BY KEN TUCKER

Big Green Machine
Country Veteran Notches Lofty Debut With New Album

Pat Green’s latest album is titled “What I’m For,” but it could just have easily been called “Pat Green: 3.0,” since it features both an attitude update and a new producer.

The RIAA Records album debuts this week at No. 2 on Billboard’s Top Country Albums chart, selling 16,000 units, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The first single, “Let Me,” is No. 12 on Hot Country Songs and is his highest-charting song since “Wave on Wave” reached No. 3 in 2003. After recording with Lloyd Maines (Dixie Chicks) and Don Gehman (John Mellencamp) on earlier albums, Green decided it was time for a change. “I want to feel that uneasy edge in the studio so that I’m conscious all the time,” he says.

As he did with Gehman, Green found some- one who could produce a “big guitar record” in Dann Huff. “I knew I might get some flack from my diehard Texas guys for using somebody that is so much part of the system, but I didn’t really care,” Green says. “If I have an opportunity to work with a guy like Dann, I’m going to take it.”

“It’s the difference between just a regular movie and a big Hollywood blockbuster with all the bells and whistles,” he adds.

While Green is comfortable with the change, some in the fiercely independent Texas music community where he got his start have decried his move away from the more acoustically ori- ented Maines. “When I started making big elec- tric guitar records, I had sold out,” Green says with a laugh. “I had lost my brain and moved to Nashville in search of the money tree.

Despite the fact that it’s been eight years since he first signed to a Nashville major, there are still those who bemoan what they see as his betrayal. Green insists that he made the right move. “I’ve gained a national audience and that’s what I love. I can tour coast to coast,” he says. “Some nights aren’t going to be that great, but most nights are going to be a thousand people or more.”

In addition to partnering with Huff, Green ap- proached the recording process differently. “For a long time I was making recordings by showing up to the studio with three songs in hand and a bottle of booze,” he admits. “We’d get through the three songs on the first and second day and then I’d get the bottle of booze and go write more songs.

While he claims to have no regrets about the old way of recording, he says “What I’m For” is the best record he’s made. “Mentally, I was pres- ent. I have a lot more ownership in it and I was a lot more sober. Everything that I wanted to be on this record is there.”

Green, who believes that male artists come into their own when they are in their mid-to late 30s, decided it was time for a change. “I had to start respecting life and my life. I didn’t want to be dragging my big old fat ass around looking like hell. There’s nothing written in stone that just because you were the party guy for a long time that you’ve got to keep doing that.

“Now, it feels much better to me,” he says. “It doesn’t hurt in the morning. It’s just a breath of fresh air.”

ABOVE ‘AVERAGE’

For a label whose motto is “old-school values, new- school vision,” 785 Records is employing a time-honored tactic to help break two-artist Tiffany Giardina. Just like the original tween star Tiffany, who had back-to- back No. 1 hits on the Bill- board Hot 100 in 1987, Giardina will be touring malls in the spring.

She’s already off to a good start. Her album “No Average Angel” debuted last week at No. 8 on Billboard’s Heatseek- ers chart with 2,400 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Her singles “No Average Angel” and “Hurry Up and Save Me” were featured on the “Another Cinderella Story” soundtrack, and an- other track, “Shine,” ap- peared on the soundtrack to Disney’s “Tinkerbell.”

785 president Mark Eicher says Giardina’s success has been several years in the making. “I met her when she was 12,” he says. “She’d been doing local theater since she was 5 and had done commercials. She’s a wonder- ful example of an artist development story, because we saw raw talent in her and gave her voice lessons and connected her with some really great songwriters.”

Those great songwriters weren’t too far away; 785 Records was founded by ac- claimed songsmith Denise Rich. Giardina co-wrote two of the songs on the record and plans on writing more for her upcoming projects.

But before she can write more songs, Giardina will hit the road, touring middle schools and shopping centers. Her first tour, which was last summer, took her to sleep- ily camps in the Northeast.

She then spent part of the fall playing at schools. “I really love connecting with the kids,” she says.

She also connects with the kids through an elaborate MySpace page, something that comes as second nature to the 15-year-old. “I’m always on the computer anyway,” she says. “People can reach me in all sorts of ways.”

Giardina uses a pro- gram called Broadcaster to send text messages to fans, and an application called SayNow lets listeners leave her voicemails.

Despite her embrace of new technology, Giardina claims that her music influences are “old stuff” like Pat Benatar. And while she’s a fan of Selena Gomez, the teen star of “Another Cinderella Story,” she’s not look- ing to copy her hero. “I believe everyone has their own path,” she says. “I want to keep writing and focus on music.” —Courtney Harding

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Back In The Saddle

Jessica Andrews Has Country's Ear Once Again

Jessica Andrews is all grown up. Ten years after hitting the charts at the ripe age of 15, she’s back on country airwaves with a new single, “Everything.” The passionate, pleading song, written by her single-named boyfriend, Marcel, is No. 48 on Hot Country Songs.

Andrews first charted in 1999 with the top 30 hit “I Will Be There for You.” She had her biggest success with “Who I Am,” which spent three weeks at No. 1 in April 2001. Her album of the same name sold 737,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Andrews’ next DreamWorks Nashville album, “Now,” didn’t fare as well, selling 205,000 units and spawning one top 20 hit, “There’s More to Me Than You.”

When DreamWorks folded in 2005, Andrews decided it was time to take a break. “I didn’t want to jump back into a deal. I didn’t want to grab the first thing I could,” she says. “I wanted to sit back and write songs until someone came to me and said, ‘I’ve been hearing your songs and I love them and I want to be a part of it. I didn’t care how long it took.’”

The person who finally spoke those words—or something like them—was Jay DeMarcus of Rascal Flatts.

After writing with James Otto (who is DeMarcus’ brother-in-law), Andrews went to DeMarcus’ studio to demo the songs. While she and DeMarcus knew each other, he hadn’t heard her sing in years. “I had no idea how much your voice has changed,” he told her. “I don’t know if you’re interested in doing another record right now, but I’m really interested in hearing your songs. I’d love the chance to work with you.”

It was music to Andrews’ ears. She remembers thinking, “Maybe I am ready to do this again.”

Back in the studio now, gearing up for a summer album release on Lyric Street Records, Andrews has benefited from her break from the business and the maturity that time brings. “I feel like a completely different artist,” she says. “It’s all me now. I’m the one carrying this whole thing. I know what I want. I want to be part of every single aspect of this record.”

“When you’re younger, it’s natural to be more carefree about things,” she adds. “Now I’m vocal about what I want. It’s part of the growing process of an artist. I’m evolving.”

Finding material for the new album hasn’t been a problem, Andrews says. “I’ve been writing a lot in the last couple of years. I had many songs to pick from. It’s not like we’re searching to find songs at the last minute.”

Thai said, there will be cuts from other writers on her album. “As much as I’ve written, I still hear songs that come across the table that I think are amazing,” she says.

Cindy Spicer, assistant PD/MD at country KUSS San Diego, says she wasn’t hesitant to play “Everything” even though it had been a while since Andrews’ last hit. “This was a great song, and if anything, the fact that she did have success before was a plus,” Spicer says, noting that the station still plays “Who I Am.”

Joe Kelly, PD at country WPUR Atlantic City, N.J., agrees. “Just because she hasn’t had a national hit in a few years means absolutely zero to me. We were lucky to have her reaction to it. The requests have been pretty consistent.”

MILKING IT

Getting an album to crack the charts is difficult even when a band tours nonstop and talks to the media daily. When it has only played one live show and done very few interviews, it should be impossible. But Corinthian Records, the recording project of actor Jason Schwartzman, has managed to beat the odds. His second album, “DaVe,” debuted last week at No. 10 on Billboard’s Heatseekers chart, with 3,100 copies sold.

“We didn’t do all that much in terms of a sound,” Schwartzman says. “We put the first single, ‘Microphone,’ up as a download on Amie Street, with all the proceeds going to charity. About a week before the record came out, I put a banner on my MySpace page to let people know about the record, and then we put it up on iTunes.”

Ben Patterson, president of indie digital distributor DashGo, says that “Microphone” was added to the iPhone application Tap Tap Revenge as a game track, and MP3s were offered on a number of blogs. The song also got some airplay on non-commercial KCRW Santa Monica, Calif., which had supported Coconut Records’ previous effort, “Nighttiming.” That album has sold 24,000 copies.

“Nighttiming” benefited from exposure on several TV shows, including a prime placement for the track “West Coast” on “The OC.” “I hope to do more licensing for this record,” Schwartzman says. “I was very thankful for the placements I had with the last record, and I meant a lot to me to have those songs played. TV and film are like mega-amplifiers, in terms of the number of people you can reach. For someone like me who doesn’t tour, it’s the most crucial part of letting people know about the record.”

“Everything we do to promote the record, we tie it into the tour,” says Dan Fields, Schwartzman’s manager and the head of his label, Young Baby Records. “At first he just wanted to put it on iTunes, but gradually the effort grew.” —Courtney Harding
SPRINGSTEEN

his recent Wal-Mart exclusive "Greatest Hits" a "mistake"?
That's a tough one. Springsteen's arrival at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 gives the Boss his ninth chart-topper. He is now tied with the Rolling Stones for the third-most No. 1 albums. Only the Beatles (with 19), Elvis Presley (10) and Jay-Z (also 10) have more.
But, the debut of "Working" with 224,000 sold is 33% lower than what his last set, "Magic," bowed with in 2007 (335,000). Still, a No. 1 is a No. 1 and in these dreary economic times, it's a cause for celebration when an album moves more than 200,000.
How did Springsteen's Super Bowl halftime performance affect his album sales? Not by a lot. Yet.
Since the game was on Sunday, Feb. 1, most of the sales impact won't be felt until next week's charts, since Nielsen SoundScan's tracking week ends at the close of business on Sunday.
Springsteen's catalog of albums (not including "Working") sold 29,000 for the week ending Feb. 1, a gain of just 19% compared with the previous week.
The biggest beneficiaries are the aforementioned "Greatest Hits" at No. 74 on the Billboard 200 with nearly 8,000 (up 42%) and a same-titled (but different track list) set on Top Pop Catalog at No. 16 (5,000, up 10%).

CREEDENCE'S CATALOG: Stop me if you've heard this one before: Sale pricing at a digital retailer yields big increases on the Billboard charts.
This week, the most eye-popping jump belongs to Creedence Clearwater Revival's "Chronicle: The 20 Greatest Hits," which claims its first week at No. 1 on the Top Pop Catalog Albums chart.
The album sold 24,000 last week (a gain of 386%) following home-page placement at the iTunes Music Store, where the set was advertised for just $4.99 as part of a multi-artist greatest-hits promotion.
And—get this—even the 24,000 that "Chronicle" sold, 87% were digital downloads. (How much of that you do want to be came from iTunes sales?)
As an astute observer pointed out to me, however, to the extent that the "Chronicle" release was not floored with ultra-cheap albums.
In the promotion, only the Creedence set was marked down to $4.99, while the rest of the advertised albums were reduced to $7.99. The Creedence package—which included an alluring $4.99 graphic—was clearly the draw to get people to take a gander at the rest of the sale-priced offering.
It's like when I'm at the mall and I notice a sign in the window of a store announcing a big sale with items marked down "up to 70%." That what that really means, of course, is that there's one item somewhere in the store for 70% off, while everything else is discounted more modestly. Either way, the consumer will likely click on a button or walk into a store and perhaps buy more than just the deeply discounted item.

GRAMMY'S GREATEST: The "Grammy Nominees" album series continues its yearly appearance on the Billboard 200, as the 15th volume of the series debuts at No. 6 with 33,000.
That represents the lowest opening sales week for the regular "Nominees" albums since the 1998 edition started with 29,000 at No. 55. Last year's set started with 50,000 at No. 5. (For comparison purposes, we are only looking at the main series and are not counting Grammy's occasional genre-specific spinoff release.)
Collectively, the main series has sold slightly more than 7 million copies in the United States since it launched with "1995 Grammy Nominees."

FRAY'S THE WAY: Next week's Billboard 200 might house a new No. 1 in the form of the Fray's self-titled Feb. 3 release. It led Nielsen SoundScan's Building chart that was released Feb. 4. Other significant debuts will come in the form of Dierks Bentley's "Feel That Fire" and the Red Jumpuit Apparatus' "Lonely Road."

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**Market Watch**

**Weekly National Music Sales Report**

**Weekly Album Sales (Million Units)**

**Album Sales**

**Digital**

- **Q1**
  - 31,928,000
  - 19.9%
  - 1.5 million

**Physical**

- **CD**
  - 6,124,000
  - 7,817,000
  - 27.6%

- **Cassette**
  - 15,000
  - 4,000
  - 74.1%

- **Other**
  - 137,000
  - 220,000
  - 50.6%

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**Over the Counter**

**KEITH CAULFIELD**

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Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data.
THE BILLBOARD 200 ARTIST INDEX

ARTIST

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The album of remixes from her last studio set includes work from some of our favorite producers as Soul Seeker, Wildhorses and Not Just a Daydream. It debuts on Top Electronic Albums at No. 4.

This four-track live set, recorded at Los Angeles' Amoeba Records, now gets a CD and digital release after having previously only been available as a CD exclusive to indie retailers.

The set also reenters Top Jazz Albums at No. 2, following its 2004 self-titled album, which spent two weeks at No. 1 and 66 weeks on the chart.

The comedian's DVD of the same name hit No. 10 in the DVD Sales chart. This year, the audio companion gives the performer his Best No. 1 on the Top Comedy Albums chart.

The two-time Tony Award winner (for "Spring Awakening") uses his new album, which was originally intended to be a stage musical, start with 5,000 (see stores, page 34).

www.americanradiohistory.com
### Top Pop Albums

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>DIGITAL WEEKLY</th>
<th>TOTAL WEEKLY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bruce Springsteen</td>
<td>Working On A Dream</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Michael Bublé</td>
<td>Mamma Mia!</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Franke &amp; The Souls of Soul</td>
<td>Better Days</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Taylor Swift</td>
<td>Fearless</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Pink</td>
<td>Need You Now</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Eminem</td>
<td>Recovery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Beyoncé</td>
<td>I Am...Sasha Fierce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Nicki Minaj</td>
<td>Pink Friday... Roman Reloaded</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Kanye West</td>
<td>My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Adele</td>
<td>21</td>
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### Top Internet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>DIGITAL WEEKLY</th>
<th>TOTAL WEEKLY</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bruce Springsteen</td>
<td>Working On A Dream</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Michael Bublé</td>
<td>Mamma Mia!</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Franke &amp; The Souls of Soul</td>
<td>Better Days</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Beyoncé</td>
<td>I Am...Sasha Fierce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Adele</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

### Top Compilations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>DIGITAL WEEKLY</th>
<th>TOTAL WEEKLY</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>American Reunion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Very Best Of Christmas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ultimate Christmas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Greatest Christmas Hits</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>A Christmas To Remember</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Grammy Nominees 2009

1. Michael Bublé - Best Pop Vocal Album
2. Adele - Best Pop Solo Performance
3. Beyoncé - Best Contemporary R&B Album
4. Eminem - Best Rap Solo Performance
5. Taylor Swift - Best Country Album
6. Pink - Best Pop Vocal Album
7. Nicki Minaj - Best Rap Album
8. Adele - Best Pop Solo Performance
9. Eminem - Best Rap Solo Performance
10. Beyoncé - Best Contemporary R&B Album

### Top Christian Albums

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>DIGITAL WEEKLY</th>
<th>TOTAL WEEKLY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Reunion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Shallows</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Ultimate Collection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Greatest Hits</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The Collection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Between the Bullets

The Gaither Vocal Band lands its first No. 1 on Top Christian Albums and occupies the top two spots on that list with dual volumes "Reunion." The group's prior best rank on the chart is shared by a pair of No. 4 starts, "God Is Good" (1999) and "Together" (2007). A staple on the Southern gospel circuit since 1980, the project reunites frontman Bill Gaither with such prior members as Gary McSpadden, Larnelle Harris, Michael English and Steve Green. "Reunion Vol. 1" and "Reunion Vol. 2" sold more than 9,000 copies apiece and open on the Billboard 200 at Nos. 53 and 60, respectively. —Wade Jessen

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data

---

Data for week of FEBRUARY 14, 2009

www.americanradiohistory.com
### Hot 100 Airplay

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist/Label/Production Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Just Dance/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Live Your Life/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Love Story/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Mad/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Circus/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Dead and Gone/Polydor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Miss Independent/Ultra Pink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Whatever You Like/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>SOBER/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Womaneizer/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>DIVA/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>POP CHAMPAGNE/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>TURNIN ON/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>SNOWFALL/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>I'M YOURS/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>I NEED YOU/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>BEAUTIFUL/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>RIGHT NOW (H.A. NA NA)/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>GET IT ROCK/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>CRACK A BOTTLE/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>ONE MORE DRINK/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>LIGHT ON/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>REHAB/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>SECOND CHANCE/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>KISS ME THRU THE PHONE/Atlantic Records (No. 1)-2009-02-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>SELFISH/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>LIVIN ON A PRAYER/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>MORE LIKE HER/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>WHEN I GROW UP/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>WHEN YOU LOVE ME/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Hot Digital Songs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist/Label/Production Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>I TOLD YOU I'D REMEMBER YOU/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>I NEED YOU/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>I DON'T THINK IT'S OVER/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>FREE YOUR LOVE/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>THAT'S NOT MY NAME/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>TURNIN ON/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>BILLIE JOE YEAGER/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>I'M A PRINCESS/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>VIVA LA VIDA/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>AM I IN LOVE/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>BANG BANG/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>LUCKY/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>LION/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>I GAVE UP/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>I'M NOT THE ONE/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>I DON'T KNOW/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>I'M NOT HIV/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>I'M NOT THE ONE/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>I'M NOT HIV/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>I'M NOT THE ONE/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Hot Country Songs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist/Label/Production Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>The Fray/Madonna/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Big &amp; Rich/Sony Music/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>The Band Perry/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Reeza/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Jo Dee/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Joe Nichols/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Tim McGraw/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Joe Nichols/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Blake Shelton/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Brad Paisley/Atlantic Records</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Hot Adult Contemporary

- **ALBUM CHARTS**
  - Albums with the greatest sales gain this week.
  - Where included, this award indicates the title is among the chart’s largest unit increases.
  - Where included, this award indicates the title had the greatest percentage growth.

- **PRICING/CONFIGURATION/AVAILABILITY**
  - Co-branded products are ushered into Hot 100 chart and Hot 100 Airplay chart, which are prepared from wholesale prices. 
  - After price indicators, album-only or ringtone-only CD/DVD/CDV bundles are available. © Quazar Available. © CD/DVD bundle available. © CD Vinyl LP available. 
  - Ratings are not included on all charts. EX offer catalog number/album title is exclusive to one account or has limited distribution.

- **SINGLES CHARTS**
  - Radio Airplay Singles Charts
  - Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs, Hot Rap Songs, Hot Latin Songs are compiled from a national sample of data supplied by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems. Charts are compiled by number of gross impressions, computed by cross-referencing existing lists of grosses with Arbitron listener data. Mainstream top 40, Contemporary, Adult Top 40, Modern Rock, Marquee, Dance, Triple A Airplay, Adult R&B/Motown, Hot Dance Airplay, Hot Christian AC Songs, Hot Gospel Songs and Smooth Jazz are ranked by total weekly audience.
  - Songs showing an increase in audience or detections over the previous week, regardless of format.

- **RECURRENT RULES**
  - Songs are removed from the Top 100 and R&B/Hip-Hop charts if they have not been on either chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below No. 50. Songs are removed from the R&B and Hot Rap charts if they have not been on either chart for more than 10 weeks and rank below No. 50. Songs are removed from the Hot Latin Charts if they have not been on the chart for more than 10 weeks and rank below No. 10. Songs are removed from the Hot Current Non-Current Charts if they have not been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below No. 50. In both charts, a song may be removed after 20 weeks if they fall below No. 20 in both audience and detections. Delivering songs are removed from Adult Contemporary if they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below No. 40 if they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below No. 50 if they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below No. 50 if they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below No. 50. In both charts, a song may be removed after 20 weeks if they fall below No. 20 in both audience and detections. Delivering songs are removed from Adult Contemporary if they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below No. 50 if they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below No. 50 if they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below No. 50. In both charts, a song may be removed after 20 weeks if they fall below No. 20 in both audience and detections.

- **CONIFICATIONS**

- **HITPREDICTOR**
  - Indicates title earned HitPredictor status in that particular form.
  - If a title is marked as F.R., it is a Flock-Rated title.

- **AWARD CERT. LEVELS**
  - **ALBUM CHARTS**
    - RIAA certification for net shipment of 500,000 albums (Gold).
    - RIAA certification for net shipment of 1,000,000 albums (Platinum).
    - RIAA certification for net shipment of 1,000,000 albums (Diamond).
  - **SINGLES CHARTS**
    - RIAA certification for net shipment of 50,000,000 digital tracks (Platinum).
    - RIAA certification for net shipment of 100,000,000 digital tracks (Diamond).
  - **MUSIC VIDEO SALES CHARTS**
    - RIAA certification for net shipment of 25,000 videos (Gold).
    - RIAA certification for net shipment of 50,000 videos (Platinum).
    - RIAA certification for net shipment of 100,000 videos (Diamond).
  - **DVD SALES/VIDEO RENTALS**
    - RIAA certification for net shipment of 5,000,000 copies or more (Platinum).
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Pop/Rock</th>
<th>Mainstream Top 40</th>
<th>Adult Contemporary</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>POP100</strong></td>
<td><strong>TOP 2</strong></td>
<td><strong>TITLE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>JUST DANCE</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>SINGLE LADIES (PUT A RING ON IT)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>LOVE STORY</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>THE MAN</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>PARADISE</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>DON'T STOP BELIEVING</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>PROMISE TO Remember</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **POP100** | **TOP 2** | **ARTIST** |
| 1 | JUST DANCE | 1 | 51 |
| 2 | SINGLE LADIES (PUT A RING ON IT) | 2 | 52 |
| 3 | LOVE STORY | 3 | 53 |
| 4 | THE MAN | 4 | 54 |
| 5 | WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS | 5 | 55 |
| 6 | PARADISE | 6 | 56 |
| 7 | DON'T STOP BELIEVING | 7 | 57 |
| 8 | BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY | 8 | 58 |
| 9 | PROMISE TO Remember | 9 | 59 |
| 10 | WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS | 10 | 60 |

| **POP100** | **TOP 2** | **DEBUT WEEK** |
| 1 | JUST DANCE | 1 | 61 |
| 2 | SINGLE LADIES (PUT A RING ON IT) | 2 | 62 |
| 3 | LOVE STORY | 3 | 63 |
| 4 | THE MAN | 4 | 64 |
| 5 | WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS | 5 | 65 |
| 6 | PARADISE | 6 | 66 |
| 7 | DON'T STOP BELIEVING | 7 | 67 |
| 8 | BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY | 8 | 68 |
| 9 | PROMISE TO Remember | 9 | 69 |
| 10 | WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS | 10 | 70 |

| **POP100** | **TOP 2** | **PEAK WEEK** |
| 1 | JUST DANCE | 1 | 71 |
| 2 | SINGLE LADIES (PUT A RING ON IT) | 2 | 72 |
| 3 | LOVE STORY | 3 | 73 |
| 4 | THE MAN | 4 | 74 |
| 5 | WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS | 5 | 75 |
| 6 | PARADISE | 6 | 76 |
| 7 | DON'T STOP BELIEVING | 7 | 77 |
| 8 | BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY | 8 | 78 |
| 9 | PROMISE TO Remember | 9 | 79 |
| 10 | WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS | 10 | 80 |

| **TOP 40** | **TOP 2** | **ARTIST** |
| 1 | JUST DANCE | 1 | 81 |
| 2 | SINGLE LADIES (PUT A RING ON IT) | 2 | 82 |
| 3 | LOVE STORY | 3 | 83 |
| 4 | THE MAN | 4 | 84 |
| 5 | WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS | 5 | 85 |
| 6 | PARADISE | 6 | 86 |
| 7 | DON'T STOP BELIEVING | 7 | 87 |
| 8 | BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY | 8 | 88 |
| 9 | PROMISE TO Remember | 9 | 89 |
| 10 | WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS | 10 | 90 |

| **TOP 40** | **TOP 2** | **DEBUT WEEK** |
| 1 | JUST DANCE | 1 | 91 |
| 2 | SINGLE LADIES (PUT A RING ON IT) | 2 | 92 |
| 3 | LOVE STORY | 3 | 93 |
| 4 | THE MAN | 4 | 94 |
| 5 | WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS | 5 | 95 |
| 6 | PARADISE | 6 | 96 |
| 7 | DON'T STOP BELIEVING | 7 | 97 |
| 8 | BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY | 8 | 98 |
| 9 | PROMISE TO Remember | 9 | 99 |
| 10 | WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS | 10 | 100 |

| **TOP 40** | **TOP 2** | **PEAK WEEK** |
| 1 | JUST DANCE | 1 | 101 |
| 2 | SINGLE LADIES (PUT A RING ON IT) | 2 | 102 |
| 3 | LOVE STORY | 3 | 103 |
| 4 | THE MAN | 4 | 104 |
| 5 | WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS | 5 | 105 |
| 6 | PARADISE | 6 | 106 |
| 7 | DON'T STOP BELIEVING | 7 | 107 |
| 8 | BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY | 8 | 108 |
| 9 | PROMISE TO Remember | 9 | 109 |
| 10 | WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS | 10 | 110 |

| **ADULT CONTEMPORARY** | **TOP 2** | **ARTIST** |
| 1 | WHERE I STAND (WITH U2) | 1 | 111 |
| 2 | THINKING OF YOU | 2 | 112 |
| 3 | LIGHT ON | 3 | 113 |
| 4 | SOMEONE LIKE YOU | 4 | 114 |
| 5 | HONEST (WITH MAIKO) | 5 | 115 |
| 6 | JAMBOREE | 6 | 116 |
| 7 | DON'T TRUST ME | 7 | 117 |
| 8 | GIVE ME SOMETHING | 8 | 118 |
| 9 | MICROSOFT | 9 | 119 |
| 10 | COLD HARD TIMES | 10 | 120 |

| **ADULT CONTEMPORARY** | **TOP 2** | **DEBUT WEEK** |
| 1 | WHERE I STAND (WITH U2) | 1 | 121 |
| 2 | THINKING OF YOU | 2 | 122 |
| 3 | LIGHT ON | 3 | 123 |
| 4 | SOMEONE LIKE YOU | 4 | 124 |
| 5 | HONEST (WITH MAIKO) | 5 | 125 |
| 6 | JAMBOREE | 6 | 126 |
| 7 | DON'T TRUST ME | 7 | 127 |
| 8 | GIVE ME SOMETHING | 8 | 128 |
| 9 | MICROSOFT | 9 | 129 |
| 10 | COLD HARD TIMES | 10 | 130 |

| **ADULT CONTEMPORARY** | **TOP 2** | **PEAK WEEK** |
| 1 | WHERE I STAND (WITH U2) | 1 | 131 |
| 2 | THINKING OF YOU | 2 | 132 |
| 3 | LIGHT ON | 3 | 133 |
| 4 | SOMEONE LIKE YOU | 4 | 134 |
| 5 | HONEST (WITH MAIKO) | 5 | 135 |
| 6 | JAMBOREE | 6 | 136 |
| 7 | DON'T TRUST ME | 7 | 137 |
| 8 | GIVE ME SOMETHING | 8 | 138 |
| 9 | MICROSOFT | 9 | 139 |
| 10 | COLD HARD TIMES | 10 | 140 |
## HOT COUNTRY SONGS

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<thead>
<tr>
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## TOP COUNTRY ALBUMS

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Data for week of FEBRUARY 14, 2009. For chart reprints, call 646.654.4633.
### HOT DANCE CLUB PLAY

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<th>Title</th>
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<th>Chart Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>#1</strong></td>
<td><em>Baby One More Time</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>#2</strong></td>
<td><em>Vogue</em></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td><strong>#3</strong></td>
<td><em>Like a Virgin</em></td>
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<td><strong>#4</strong></td>
<td><em>Waterfall</em></td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
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<td><em>Love Don't Live Here Anymore</em></td>
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### TOP JAZZ ALBUMS

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<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>#1</strong></td>
<td><em>Jazz</em></td>
<td>The Jazz Musicians</td>
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<td><strong>#2</strong></td>
<td><em>Blues</em></td>
<td>blues brothers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#3</strong></td>
<td><em>R&amp;B</em></td>
<td>r&amp;b artists</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>#4</strong></td>
<td><em>Soul</em></td>
<td>soul artists</td>
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### TOP ELECTRONIC ALBUMS

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<tr>
<td><strong>#3</strong></td>
<td><em>Tech House</em></td>
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<td><em>House</em></td>
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### HOT DANCE CLUB PLAY

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<td><em>Vogue</em></td>
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### TOP JAZZ ALBUMS

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<td><em>Tech House</em></td>
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### HOT DANCE CLUB PLAY

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### TOP JAZZ ALBUMS

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<tr>
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<td><strong>#5</strong></td>
<td><em>Country</em></td>
<td>country artists</td>
<td>5</td>
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### TOP ELECTRONIC ALBUMS

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<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>#1</strong></td>
<td><em>Dubstep</em></td>
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<td><strong>#2</strong></td>
<td><em>Dancehall</em></td>
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<td><strong>#3</strong></td>
<td><em>Tech House</em></td>
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**Note:** The table above provides a snapshot of the top 10 songs in Japan, the United Kingdom, Germany, the Euro Digital Songs chart, and the Euro Singles Sales chart for February 14, 2009. For detailed song information and chart rankings, please visit the Billboard website.
| A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z |
| **ADDED** | **BLESS THE RAINFALL** | **CASTLE** | **REALLY REAL** | **LAWRENCE DE ENTITYAC** | **MADONNA** | **JEAN** | **HOLD** | **VIVA** | **WILD** | **LE SLIDE** | **LOTUS** | **BONNIE** | **WYATT** | **LE SLIDE** | **REED** | **WALK** | **WHERE** | **BEN** | **WE** | **WELL** | **WENT** | **WIND** | **WON** | **WHERE** | **WILL** |
| **ADD** | **BLESS THE RAINFALL** | **CASTLE** | **REALLY REAL** | **LAWRENCE DE ENTITYAC** | **MADONNA** | **JEAN** | **HOLD** | **VIVA** | **WILD** | **LE SLIDE** | **LOTUS** | **BONNIE** | **WYATT** | **LE SLIDE** | **REED** | **WALK** | **WHERE** | **BEN** | **WE** | **WELL** | **WENT** | **WIND** | **WON** | **WHERE** | **WILL** |

| **ADDITIONAL** | **JACKY** | **CAMAROSA** | **SUGAR** | **LADY** | **HICY** | **MARK** | **HEART** | **WILL** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** |
| **ADDITIONAL** | **JACKY** | **CAMAROSA** | **SUGAR** | **LADY** | **HICY** | **MARK** | **HEART** | **WILL** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** | **WILLIAM** |

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RECORD COMPANIES: Epic Records appoints Amanda Ghost president, effective Feb. 16. She is a Grammy Award-nominated songwriter, who has worked with Beyoncé, James Blunt, Jordin Sparks, Kanye West, Shakira and Jay-Z, among others.

The RIAA names Jennifer Pariser senior VP of litigation and legal affairs. She was senior VP/associate general counsel of litigation and anti-piracy at Sony BMG.

Sony Music Entertainment Switzerland in Zurich appoints Julie Born GM. She was director of marketing and promotion.

PUBLISHING: Bug Music Publishing in Nashville appoints songwriter/independent publisher Roger Murrah senior VP. He was chairman of Murrah Music.

TOURING: APA taps Corrie Albright as an agent and VP of its concert department. She was an agent at the Agency Group.

Ticketmaster elevates Tawn Albright to GM and VP of Echo, the company’s direct-to-consumer digital marketing firm. He was VP of corporate development.

Live Nation announces three new appointments within its International Music Division: Paul Latham has been promoted to COO, Phil Bowdery has been appointed to president of touring, and Shane Bourbonnais has been elevated to president of talent. Latham was president of U.K. operations, Bowdery was executive VP of touring, and Bourbonnais was president of Live Nation Canada.

AEG names Lee Zeidman senior VP/GM of downtown Los Angeles’ $2.5 billion L.A. Live. Live sports and entertainment project. He will continue in his role as GM of Staples Center and Nokia Theatre L.A. Live.

GOOD WORKS

WHITFIELD IS THA’ HIP HOP DOC
When Rani Whitfield used to DJ parties in high school and college, he recalls “how effective music was in bringing people together.”

Now as Tha’ Hip Hop Doc (aka H2D), the Baton Rouge, La.-based physician is using spoken word/rap to educate youth about health.

“I’d been wanting to do something like this for a while,” the Meharry Medical College graduate says. “Too many young people are dying of preventable and treatable illnesses like diabetes, HIV/AIDS and high blood pressure.”

By 2005, Whitfield had launched H2Doc.com and the comic book series “The Legion of Health,” starring a group of superhuman health advocates. But it was patient Lil Boosie who ultimately inspired Whitfield to add a CD to his hip-hop culture-saves-health campaign. The Baton Rouge artist is a Type 1 diabetic who must inject himself with insulin several times per day.

Teaming with schoolteacher David Augustine (aka Dee 1), the bass-playing Whitfield wrote and recorded “Tha’ Hip Hop Doc Presents State of Emergency” (10). Released in late 2008, the CD examines health issues like high cholesterol (“Walk Tha’ Walk”) and obesity (“Gouch Potato”).

Whitfield will take his show on the road in April when he embarks on a college tour in conjunction with the American Heart Association, for which he is an ambassador. Then he will tackle the issues of drinking and drugs on his next CD.

—Gail Mitchell
RAPPIN’ WITH RODNEY

Country artist Rodney Atkins is eyeing a late May release for his next Curb album, “Simple Things.” It will be the follow-up to his runaway 2006 hit, “If You’re Going Through Hell,” which has sold more than 1.4 million copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

“I love the songs I grew up on, the Alabama ‘Dixieland Delight’ things that anybody who plays can pull out a guitar, sit on the front porch and play along,” Atkins says. “It’s sort of that front-porch stompin’ kind of music. You just tap your foot and play. ‘If You’re Going Through Hell’ has a lot of that feel. It’s not complicated and that’s what this [new] stuff is.”

New songs receiving stage time on Atkins’ current tour include the upbeat title track, “Best Things” and the current single “It’s America.” “Of course you’re always nervous when you release a single because there’s no guarantee,” Atkins says. “Fortunately with ‘It’s America,’ it’s the fastest-rising song I ever had, and that’s a pretty good sign.”

Atkins’ recent success has propelled him to Music City stardom, and the soon-to-be 40-year-old artist says the entire experience is still surreal. “Basically, ‘If You’re Going Through Hell’ felt like a debut album, really,” Atkins says. “It kind of started at zero, and I had no idea. ‘Hell’ was out for seven or eight months before it went No. 1 for four weeks.”
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