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**ON THE COVER:** Wisin & Yandel & 50 Cent photograph by David Yellen for Billboard

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Great Power, Great Responsibility

What Major Labels Can Learn From Marvel Comics

BY KEITH JOLPING

"Music is being consumed by more people in more ways than ever before—we just have to figure out how to monetize it."

How many people have said that? More people in more places than ever before, at the very least. And yet none of them seems to have an answer. Album sales are in decline, and digital delivery has thrown into doubt the role labels will play in the future. What could they do?

They could do worse than to take advice from an entertainment business that was dying in the '90s: comic book publishing, specifically the giant Marvel Comics. In 1997 Marvel Entertainment escaped bankruptcy by a thread thinner than those Spider-Man uses to weave his webs. After the company failed to diversify, it flooded the market with comic book titles, effectively commodifying its core business and leaving it with a share price of less than $1. Today Marvel has a share price of $12 and a market capitalization of $2.5 billion. And it's growing, riding roughshod over a global recession.

In order to rebound, Marvel transformed itself from a products business to a licensing business. At its superstar characters brought in less revenue, it had to find a way to make money from its entire catalog of characters—and not only the big names. Three strategies turned around the company's fortunes:

Licensing: After the success of Sam Raimi's 2002 "Spider-Man" film, Marvel's intellectual property became hot again. Movie studios took a renewed interest in its characters and rushed to license them for other projects.

Product development: Nothing affects culture like blockbuster movies, and such films as "Spider-Man" and "X-Men" helped Marvel's characters become pop icons, videogames, party accessories and clothing.

Character development: As its most popular characters thrived off screen, Marvel started commercializing lesser-known characters like Daredevil, Elektra and Ghost Rider.

As it pursued these three strategies, Marvel realized the value of its meta-brand—the "Marvel Universe" in which the company's characters interacted with one other. That's what made the company's comics so compelling to fans: including me—and still helps drive its live-action movies, animated films and various other projects.

Labels need to do the same. Think of Island Records, whose 50th anniversary celebrations are working well because they focus on the company's core identity. None such has created an eclectic but cohesive community of artists—and loyal fans. Most independent labels would argue that their identities are their lifeblood. The music business needs to unite communities of music lovers and buyers, not just social networks with music tucked on.

Marvel's turnaround didn't end there. The company made nice profits from licensing—which didn't require an outlay of capital—but it could only take a small cut of the revenue from the films based on its characters. To increase its revenue, Marvel licensed its own films—a risky move for a company so focused on content creation. Marvel Studios made "Iron Man" and "The Incredible Hulk," both of which paid off handsomely.

Most major labels already have in-house production studios, but not the strategy or budget that Marvel does. But they still need to move beyond the album to market documentary films, session content, perhaps even series of short videos. They would be highly attractive to sponsors and easily licensable to digital outlets increasingly desperate for quality content.

Now Marvel also goes directly to its consumers. In 2007 it launched Digital Comics Unlimited, a subscription-based service that made thousands of old comic books available online. Like HBO, another successful seller of subscriptions, Marvel realized that it didn't have to make available everything it owned at once. But the company reorganized its content so that subscribers would subscribe to a service that includes products only as they can.

Now Marvel controls its own destiny, which looked hopelessly out of control only a decade ago. Perhaps the labels should look to it as an example.

Keith Jolping is an independent music and media consultant. From 2000 to 2006 he was research director for the IFPI. He blogs at jaugetnashbrew.com.
PEARL JAM LINKS WITH TARGET
Pearl Jam's upcoming album "Backspacer," currently scheduled for a fall release, will be released without a U.S. label. Instead the band will use a consortium of partners, including Target as the big-box retail partner, manager Kelly Curtis says. "We'll have a lot of partners," adds Curtis, who confirms that deals are also finished or in the works with an online retailer, a mobile partner, a gaming company and at least one network of indie retail stores.

WHITNEY COMEBACK SET
The wait is over: Whitney Houston is making her comeback Sept. 1 with an as-yet-unitled album on Arista Records. For her return, the label has set up a countdown at WhitneyHouston.com. In the coming weeks, the site will preview selected tracks set to appear on the album. WillIAM, Sean Garrett and Akon are reportedly involved with the project.

FIRM REVISES RADIO FORECAST
Radio revenue may have hit bottom, but the bottom was so low that it caused forecasters to rethink their expectations in 2009. The research company BIA Advisory Services estimated radio revenue will total $14 billion this year, a 15% drop compared with last year. That's nearly five percentage points below BIA's March forecast of 10.6%. BIA analysts believe the economy has begun bottoming out and that fall and winter won't be nearly as harsh as the start of 2009.

UPFRONT
DIGITAL BY ANTONY BRUNO
GAMING THE SYSTEM

The big news at last week's E3 convention in Los Angeles didn't involve the latest slate of upcoming videogames, but rather the efforts of Sony and Microsoft to recapture momentum from the market-leading game maker Nintendo. And for the music business, some of the innovations will seem familiar.

Microsoft struck first and hardest, announcing broad additions to its Xbox 360 content portfolio, including the ability for gamers to access Twitter, Facebook and the Last.fm music service. At first glance, this is nothing more than an extension of the company's strategy to position the Xbox 360 as an entertainment hub that can stretch beyond gaming. But the integrations of Twitter and Facebook will make the company's Xbox Live service more robust, allowing gamers to link their Facebook profiles to their Xbox gamer tags and update their in-game accomplishments on both service and Twitter.

On the music front, Last.fm makes the Xbox 360 a more viable online music player, although it's unknown where this decision leaves the Zune, with its "Welcome to the social" tag line. Sony pulled back from plans to integrate a music service into the PlayStation Network and instead focused on video. It will have content from 16 new sources that users of the new portable PSP Go device will be able to access as well. An application called SenseMe analyzes the music that users transfer into that device and recommends playlists for various moods. Since an iPhone-style app already offers other companies to develop programs for the device, another music service will almost certainly follow.

Perhaps most excitingly for labels, Sony and Microsoft are focusing on the services they've built to deliver content digitally. Sony's PSP Go is designed to download games and other content from the PlayStation Store through a Wi-Fi connection (the device also contains a Memory Stick slot). Starting in August, Xbox 360 users will be able to download some games on Xbox Live rather than having to buy a disc.

So far, gaming devices have been used mostly to play games. But as Sony and Microsoft move away from physical media and focus on their content portals, they'll have an opportunity to introduce their audience to other downloadable content, including music. Already 18% of the Xbox 360 users who play for the premium Xbox Live Gold membership package regularly download content digitally, according to data from the NPD Group. And that customer base is growing. NPD notes that the number of Gold memberships in the United States in the first quarter of 2009 increased by 14% over the previous year. So far only 10% of PlayStation 3 owners have downloaded content.

The companies at E3 also showcased plenty of new games. One highlight was "The Beatles: Rock Band," which was introduced by Paul McCartney and Ringo Starr. Travis Barker and DJ AM played a gig to promote Activision's upcoming "DJ Hero." And Double Fine head Tim Schafer discussed another game that uses quite a bit of music—the action-adventure fantasy "Brutal Legend," which has a heavy metal soundtrack. Characters in the game will be voiced by hard rock icons like Rob Halford, Lemmy Kilmister, Lita Ford and Ozzy Osbourne.

The other big news coming from Sony and Microsoft are motion-based controllers, their response to the "Wii-mote" controller that has made Nintendo's new console so popular. Sony unveiled a prototype controller while Microsoft stole the show with Natal—a motion-capture system that reads body movements and voice commands. That could free games like "Dance Dance Revolution" from the floor pad controllers they've used and make them more popular with those reluctant to put a plastic dance mat in their living room.

This year's E3 convention took place at a pivotal time for the videogame business. After one of its best years, sales are down. They fell 17% in April from the year prior, following a decrease of almost 5% the month prior, according to NPD. While the economy has certainly had some effect, analysts say April's drop comes because April 2008 saw the release of two of the best-selling games, "Grand Theft Auto IV" and "Mario Kart Wii.

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Payback Time

Indie Publishers Face Delays In Receiving Digital Royalties

While some digital music services are cutting their first checks to pay for royalties on interactive streams and limited downloads, music publishers still face uncertainty over when and how other services will make payments.

“There is no doubt that this first year will be a clunker,” a publishing industry executive says, echoing the sentiments of many in the business. “Then it should go much more smoothly after that.”

The confusion stems from the Copyright Royalty Board’s February amendment to its Jan. 26 final determination on newly implemented compulsory royalty rates for interactive streams and limited downloads. The amendment required that the first payments be due on the 20th of the month in the previous month’s activity, several months earlier than the July 26 deadline stipulated in the initial ruling.

The CRB rates were based on a historic settlement reached last summer by the National Music Publishers’ Assn., the RIAA, the Digital Media Assn., and other organizations. Those parties have agreed to stick with the July 26 deadline (Billboard, April 4).

But independent publishers that weren’t parties to the settlement and don’t license their works through the Harry Fox Agency (HFA) should’ve begun receiving payments from digital service providers by either March 20 or April 20. However, sources say these publishers hadn’t yet received any payments as of the end of May.

“The reality is hitting people hard,” a digital distribution executive says. “Like many, the digital music service providers didn’t focus on the fine print.”

As digital music services adapt to the new royalty rates, “we have encountered a spirit of working together,” says Ben Cockerham, COO of Rightsflow, a New York-based royalty payments and licensing company.

“We don’t anticipate any issues coming from the labels, publishers and songwriters, given that we are all working together to get payments out,” Cockerham says.

But while some publishers say they’ll be patient during this transitional period, others express concern that when many digital services receive music from digital distributors, they license songs from the major publishers and HFA but subsequently fail to do the same for songs from publishers not affiliated with HFA.

“These services still aren’t asking for publisher information and that is their responsibility,” an indie publishing executive says. “If a digital distributor delivers a track to them, all the services know is the track’s name, the label and other metadata but none of the publisher information.”

The digital distribution executive agrees, saying, “If the accounts don’t hire one of the royalty and licensing companies, then they are working in the dark.”

Some of the services have hired companies like HFA, RightsFlow, Music Reports Inc. and RoyaltyShare to deal with the situation. For example, Woodland Hills, Calif.-based MRI—which represents MySpace Music, Medianet, Slacker and Lala—says it was dispensing payments and providing account statements to 12,000 publishers/administrators representing 50,000 publishers in the first week of June. Publishing sources say MRI clients are the first to make payments for compulsory-licensed interactive streams and limited downloads.

But sources say other services have failed to be proactive. “They are answering phone calls from publishers and saying, ‘Send us your information so we can make payments,’” a source says.

Others in the publishers camp say such efforts from the digital music service providers are trying to boost their bottom lines by avoiding royalty payments due publishers. “Whether they say they pay or not, they haven’t paid,” one executive says. “They are all floating their businesses off their unpaid royalties.”

Moreover, a few executives fear that some services are too financially motivated to make retroactive royalty payments for interactive streaming and digital download activity prior to the CRB ruling.

“People are still confused and trying to figure this out,” says Sondra Levin, president of the American Mechanical Rights Agency. “To me, it’s about a lack of knowledge and education. Eventually all these problems can be resolved, but it takes some digging in.”
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Longtime Billboard GM William D. Littleford, whose grandfather William H. Donaldson founded the magazine in 1894, died May 14 at his home in Princeton, N.J. He was 94.

Littleford was GM of Billboard from 1943 until 1958, when he became president/CEO. He held those positions until the sale of the magazine in 1985, when he then became chairman emeritus.

Littleford was born Aug. 14, 1914, in Font Thomas, Ky. He attended the University of Cincinnati and joined Billboard in 1934. His brother, Roger S. Littleford Jr., joined the publication a year earlier.

The brothers first served as apprentices in the composing room. “My brother joined the company in 1933,” Littleford wrote in Billboard’s 100th-anniversary issue in 1994. “I followed in the fall of 1934, when Billboard’s very profitable, ‘lifesaving’ 40th anniversary was being published.”

Littleford was 11 years old when his grandfather died but remembered hearing fond stories about the Billboard founder, who was described to him as a shy man and a practical joker. “He could work incessantly and mostly alone but then disappear to be with his family,” Littleford wrote in 1994. “He had to be a gambler. Otherwise he would not have bought out his partner for $500 in 1900 and recklessly converted to a weekly with the issue dated May 5, 1900.”

John Sippel, who worked at Billboard for 24 years in three stints between 1945 and 1986, says Littleford was “an erudite person and a hell of a guy... his door was always open and he maintained a clean editorial package.”

Billboard started out covering traveling carnival shows, county fairs and circuses before adding coverage of coin-operated vending machines (including the jukebox business) and the radio and TV industries. The magazine greatly expanded its coverage of the recording industry under Littleford’s stewardship, which lasted from the pre-rock ’n’ roll era to the introduction of the CD.

“Billboard maintained a solid fiscal rise from the time I was there until he sold it,” Sippel says. “He displayed good entrepreneurship of a growing entity.”

In June 1984, a memo went out to the Billboard staff announcing the Littleford family’s intention to sell the company that was by then called Billboard Publications Inc., or BPI. It was a bombshell for staffers, who had grown accustomed to working for a family institution. But their fears were calmed when a group of their own managers, led by Billboard group publisher Jerry Hobbs, emerged to buy the company with the backing of investment firm Boston Ventures. The selling price was slightly less than $40 million.

The deal closed Jan. 17, 1985. Hobbs took the title of president/CEO. Littleford became chairman emeritus, maintaining the magazine’s last link with the family that had run the business for more than 90 years.

Littleford also devoted his time to working with charities and other organizations. From 1960 to 1961, he served as chairman of American Business Media. In 1997, he established the William D. Littleford Awards for Corporate Community Service, which recognize companies, organizations and individuals involved with community service programs designed to alleviate social problems. Littleford also was named an honorary director for his work with the Advertising Council.

Following the 1957 death of his first wife, Mariana Weber, Littleford married Marian Hastings Towne. The couple played an instrumental role in the founding of the Viques Conservation and Historical Trust on Vieques Island in Puerto Rico. They also founded the William & Marian Littleford Foundation, which provides financial support to various charities including their own Marian & William Littleford Fund, a provider of scholarships to students at Roslyn High School in Long Island, N.Y. Mariana died in 2008.

Littleford is survived by his sister, Marjorie Littleford Ross; his children Anne, Joseph, Michael and Terry; and his grandchildren Ryan, Ariel and William.

Additional reporting by Ed Christman.
Know Your Rights

On The Eve Of The World Copyright Summit, CISAC's Director-General Talks About What's Ahead

The International Confederation of Societies of Authors and Composers (CISAC) is holding its second World Copyright Summit June 9-10 at the Ronald Reagan Center in Washington, D.C. It's CISAC's second such gathering, following its inaugural 2007 summit in Brussels.

This year's confab will attract attendees from throughout the entertainment and technology fields, including executives from the Motion Picture Assn. of America, the Consumer Electronics Assn., Microsoft and YouTube, as well as key government officials and legislators.

But most of the summit's agenda will focus on the music publishing industry, which will be represented by officials from publishers and collecting societies. Billboard caught up with CISAC director-general Eric Baptiste to chat about some of the issues that will be discussed during the summit.

Why did CISAC choose to hold this year's summit in Washington?

We knew when we were planning it that there would be a new administration, and we thought that the Congress would be quite different than the one that's been there in the past few years, so we thought it was the right moment to restart some conversations about copyright issues in the U.S.

It's time to [re]cast the roles of the Internet service providers, and how they can partner with all the stakeholders in the value chain to see if we can have a real dialogue between content providers—authors, composers, publishers, the record companies and all the visual creators—and the institutions that rely on content to provide services to their users.

It is clear at the moment that there are many major stakeholders who are claiming to be just technical conduits: If their business model relies on broadband, they need to have high-quality content going through those pipes and they can't really ignore how to finance that content going forward.

I am not saying that we are predicated on one solution, but it's important that we pose the questions and look at it with as open a mind as possible. So that's why we are doing the summit.

How is this event different from other industry conferences?

It has a bigger than usual involvement of content creators, even though it is not a creative summit. It is also different in that it mixes the leaders of the creative industries with policy makers. We are not trying to preach to the choir. We are not only promoting what we think is right, although we would like for some of our goals to be recognized as well-founded.

We think the dialogue with others who have different views is very helpful for our members, so we want a very open-minded discussion.

What is CISAC's stance on France's recently adopted "three strikes" anti-piracy legislation?

We support it of course, because many of our members think it is a worthy thing. First, it shows that the government is willing to stand up for creators and copyright owners. Secondly, we think it is a reasonable measure. It's a law that signals stealing digital property is as bad as stealing physical goods.

This legislation... is not the silver bullet, but it is in the right direction. It has to be integrated with an increased offering of cultural goods, the presentation of services that are innovative, that responds to the needs and requirements of people of today, not the people 10 or 15 years ago.

Are copyright societies keeping pace with the technological changes affecting the entertainment industry?

We think it is one of the major topics of the summit because this is one of the most important things that we believe in. Contrary to what people say very often, we believe copyright societies are a very practical and modern way to make content available. Today, content is delivered in bundles, anywhere, anytime, any device. You can't manage that efficiently if you don't make it collective.

We need to continuously improve our legislative framework and continuously improve the services we render to both right holders and right users, and there is certainly scope for improvement, even if we think we are pretty good.

What other projects and initiatives has CISAC been undertaking?

The 21st century will be a century of increasing accountability. We are implementing a code of conduct—standards, rules, transparency, accountability. We are trying to make sure we have a network of societies around the world that is as compatible as possible.
Ten Years After
A Decade Has Passed Since Napster Launched—And Labels Are Learning How To Deal With The Net

Ten years ago this month Napster went live and changed the music business forever. It certainly wasn’t the first milestone in the history of the digital music market, and it might not even be the most important. But June 1999 is the closest date there is to a birthday for the digital music revolution—for better and worse.

That’s because Napster, and the peer-to-peer services that modeled themselves on it, introduced people to a new way of finding and acquiring music. Before then, downloading music from the Internet was something for tech-savvy college kids. After Napster, it was for everyone.

Free was the obvious selling point, but it wasn’t the only one. Napster was the first service to offer access to a vast catalog of music with a relatively easy interface that let users download files without the original rights management restrictions. Although the technology behind it was interesting, most users didn’t know or care how all that music was getting to their hard drives. Perhaps most important of all, Napster set an example that led to iTunes’ insistence on selling music by the track and inspired users to create the kind of digital playlists that are at the heart of the new-on-demand streaming services.

Record labels won’t be sending Napster any birthday presents. Global recorded-music sales—physical and digital combined—totaled $18.4 billion in 2008, down 5.2% since 1999, according to IFPI. But they can offer a toast to the digital music market. It hasn’t made up for physical losses, but it has become an established business that’s worth $4 billion worldwide and accounts for more than 20% of global music sales, according to the IFPI. And they can look with humility at their earlier mistakes and pride in their progress. The DRM policies that led to device incompatibility have become a thing of the past, and labels have opened up to striking licensing deals with services they might’ve sued a decade ago.

Perhaps the most appropriate way to celebrate would be with a renewed focus on the next 10 years. For the technology industry, that means respecting copyrights and paying for the content that draws in users. Too many services like SeedPod play fast and loose with the safe harbor clause of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act in order to offer links to music. Since they in effect act as search engines, they argue, they aren’t breaking the law. But that’s nothing more than a legal dodge to avoid spending the money to compensate rights-holders.

For the music business, that means doing more to foster innovation. Promising services like Mixtape have reached out to labels to licensing deals only to find themselves ignored or asked to pay astronomical upfront fees. Labels have every right to demand payment for their content, but their zeal to monetize new applications must be tempered with the knowledge that exciting innovations don’t always emerge with intact business models. Let’s not forget: The technology responsible for devaluing a business that had thrived since Thomas Edison created the phonograph was invented by college student Shawn Fanning in his dorm room (although he brought in venture capital money after). When Fanning went on to found Snocap, a “digital registry” company that had a business model from the start, it never took off.

The point is that innovators don’t always make great business men, and some of the most important inventions happen by accident, or in odd places. Who’s to say that the service that turns around the music industry’s declining fortunes won’t come from another dorm room. That might be the most important lesson to learn from Napster.

The past 10 years might seem like a long time, but it’s just a blip in the context of the total life span of the music business. From close up, this decade seems epochnal, and in some ways it is. But there’s a long road ahead, and the pace of technological change is unlikely to slow down.

But we can pause to say this: Both the technology industry and the music business have come a long way toward treating each other as partners rather than rivals, despite all the blog chatter to the contrary. How well they continue this convergence will be the story of the next 10.

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GAME JOCKEY
The creators of the forthcoming videogame “Scratch: The Ultimate DJ” have unveiled their controller, which consists of a touch-sensitive turntable with a cross-fader and five drum pads. It will allow players to manipulate songs as they wish, as well as respond to the kinds of rhythm-based prompts common in music games. The drum pads will trigger the 60 samples included in the game, plus new ones that gamers can record and upload using an included USB microphone. It’s designed for both left- and right-handed users. Pricing and availability have not yet been announced.

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BITS & BRIEFS
SUMMER SPIN
Activation Blizzard has released a partial set list for “DJ Hero,” which is expected to arrive later this summer. The videogame will feature more than 100 songs by such acts as the Black Eyed Peas, 50 Cent, Justice, Marvin Gaye, Beck and the Beastie Boys; they have been remixed by DJs signed up by the company, including DJ Shadow, DJ Z-Trip and DJ AM. DJ Z-Trip and DJ AM also provided their likenesses as in-game characters.

RISING MOBILE DOLLARS
The U.K.-based mobile research firm Juniper Research predicts that mobile music revenue will reach $5.5 billion worldwide by 2013, up from $2.5 billion in 2008. That includes streaming and full-track downloads. The firm believes that unlimited data plans and advanced music applications like T-Mobile’s Mobile Jukebox and T-Mobile’s Beat Jukebox contribute to this increase. The report also says that ringtones will keep declining and that ad-supported mobile music services will not have a significant impact.

HITS FOR AMIGOS
The Latin dating Web site Amigos.com launched an iPhone app called Top Latin Pop that provides a randomized stream of top 100 Latin hits from such artists as Marc Anthony, Daddy Yankee and Shakira. The mobile music firm Melodeo created the application for Amigos.com, which has more than 34 million registered users.

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HOT RINGMASTERS
Billboard
Major Problem?
Sony Signs On To eMusic, Complicating An Indie Service

When eMusic announced a deal to add Sony's back catalog to its subscription service, some commenters on its blog lashed out at the move. "You want to talk about business? Here's a textbook example of how not to run a business," railed one poster. Another ranted, "What utter crap. I couldn't care less about Bruce Springsteen and other 'name' purveyors of mainstream garbage including about 99.9% of the Sony catalog."

Nor were they pleased with the news that eMusic was raising its rates. New members will pay $11.99 for 24 downloads, $15.89 for 35 downloads and $20.79 for 50 downloads per month; existing members will also see the cost of their plans rise.

Indie labels that sell their albums on eMusic didn't react with quite the same level of outrage. The head of one indie says he was largely indifferent to the situation, while another worried about eMusic cannibalizing his sales one moment while cheering his ability to get albums by Springsteen and Bob Dylan for cheap the next. Even though "cheap" is a relative term.

The head of an indie distribution company encouraged his fellow labels and distributors to take a wait-and-see approach, saying, "We'll just have to see if the deal with Sony sticks in the first place. Remember the Rolling Stones incident?"

He's referring to a blink-and-you-miss-it period of time when the Stones' 1964-70 catalog was available on the site before ABKCO abruptly pulled it, to point out that not every eMusic experiment and major-label deal has worked out.

"The main thing I'm worried about is the loss of exposure," says Jason Foster, founder of the label and management company We Are Free. "It was a great place for new bands to make some money, and now I'm worried it'll be flooded and defeat the purpose."

Foster also says the additional catalog could also help bring in a new audience, who might start off buying Sony music and go on to discover more obscure bands. eMusic often encourages users with extra downloads toward the end of the month to branch out and try new things, and much of the site's editorial content centers on the idea of discovery.

But eMusic CEO Danny Stein—finally dropping the "interim" from his title—assures users that Sony is a willing partner and in the relationship for the long haul. "We've asked them for the entire catalog," he says. "We don't want to artificially decide what our users want and don't want. We'll retain the some curatorial sensibility we've always had."

Stein also says he expects the addition of the Sony catalog to draw new users. "It will increase the size of our base and lead to a more robust user experience," he says. "Because we operate as a revenue share, labels might see more money. A rising tide lifts all boats."

The catalog will include all the big names from the Sony archive, including Springsteen, Billy Joel, the Clash, Jeff Buckley, Johnny Cash, Leonard Cohen and OutKast. Albums released more than two years ago are defined as catalog. Many of those albums are still selling. Journey's "Greatest Hits," which was released on Columbia almost three years ago, sold 7,500 copies last week and topped the catalog chart, while AC/DC's "Back in Black" sold 3,200, coming in the top 10. Because of its subscription pricing model, eMusic pays less per track than iTunes or the sale of a physical CD, leading some analysts to wonder if Sony wasn't undercutting itself.

"A big selling point for Sony was the way we interact with customers," Stein says. "Major labels are looking aggressively at revenue opportunities, and we're a proven entity that had $70 million in revenues in 2008 and a tried-and-true model. For the majors, the bottom line is that they need to open new accounts."

Sony wouldn't comment, but the company sent a statement from Thomas Hesse, president of global digital business, U.S. sales and corporate strategy. "We think the model of buying a set amount of music each month under an MP3 allowance is an attractive subscription option for consumers," he says. "We are supportive of offerings that encourage fans to dig deep into the repertoire of our artists and discover the richness of our catalog."

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JOHANNESBURG—South Africa's northeastern neighbor could be the continent's next music hotspot.

Mozambique, a country of 22 million people, is steadily recovering from a devastating civil war that lasted from 1977 to 1992. Now its live music market is gaining strength, and local artists are drawing attention elsewhere, most notably including honors at May's South African Music Awards (SAMAs).

"Mozambique is producing incredibly unique, unique music that's finding an audience all over the continent," says Jiggs Thorne, director of neighboring Swaziland's annual 12,000-capacity Bushfire festival. Thorne says he booked three "world class" Mozambican acts for this year's event (July 31-Aug. 2): the traditional group Tumila Ta Venancio, singer/songwriter Jose Macavale and Radio Marrabenta—a hailed at Mozambique's Bueno Vista Social Club.

Several acts from Mozambique already have profiles in South Africa. The Afro-beat outfit 340ml (340ml Music/Sheen Sound) and jazz fusion band the Moreira Project (More Star Entertainment), won SAMAs, for example, while tracks by singer/songwriter StealRock (Army of 1/Sunchild Music Factory) play prominently in the current South African hit movie "White Wedding." As of now, all three acts are based in South Africa. With piracy "rampant" in Mozambique "making a living is centered on the live end of the business," 340ml's Pedro Pinto says. "We're happy to use South Africa as a base to create a great calling card in our album, then look at taking it to Europe for a sustained career."

In Mozambique's capital Maputo, Paulo Sihote, owner of the artist management/ event promotions company Logaritimo, talks enthusiastically about a handful of new music clubs that recently opened. He has about 30 shows planned for 2009, from festivals to club gigs at Maputo's 10 regular venues. "I'm staging double the amount of events I was even two years ago," he says. Traditional genres, pop, rock and home-grown hip-hop from acts like Simba (who he manages) are all drawing larger audiences.

In February Sihote presented the touring Festival of Marrabenta, which featured the genre exposed to European audiences in early '80s shows by Orchestra Marrabenta Star de Mozambique. The inaugural 2008 edition consisted of three dates around Mozambique, but he added a fourth this year, and says that total attendance exceeded 20,000. The Johannesburg-based event producer/artistic manager DJ Bob, who worked with Sihote on the festival, hopes to "get a more formal circuit going."

Promoters are increasingly eager to attract sponsors, and the state-owned mobile phone network M-Cel has been an early participant. It sponsored the second annual, 5,000-capacity Mozambique Jazz Festival (April 10-11), where headliners included the U.S.-based Spyro Gyra and Norman Brown, plus South Africa's Hugh Masekela.

So far, however, the country's live music infrastructure can be lacking, according to Spyro Gyra's manager Phil Brennan. "There was a last-minute scramble to piece together the stage and PA from local sources on the day of the show," he says. "After the festival's South African production personnel were delayed at the border. The local crew 'lacked the expertise that we in the West normally expect and the process took an extra-dinary amount of time.' Booked as a headliner, Spyro Gyra ended up playing first and went on hours after the scheduled show time. The show's South African promoter ESP Africa "lived up to all of their obligations," Brennan says. "But the band's experience that day was not something they would be eager to repeat."

Even so, the situation in Mozambique will certainly get better, Pinto says. "There is momentum happening."

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BORDERING ON SUCCESS

**Could Music From Mozambique Emerge Internationally?**

BRISBANE, Australia—A new day is dawning Down Under as Sony Music Australasia enters the live music sector.

The major's Sydney-based touring and events division Day 1 Entertainment staged its first show May 5, when Northern Ireland's classical crossover act the Polyphonic Spree played to 3,000 fans at the Sydney Entertainment Centre. Next comes Simon & Garfunkel's 11-date Australian arena tour (June 13-July 2).

The Sydney-based major's chairman/CEO Denis Handlin reckons the touring gamble is worth taking. "It's about diversification and reinventing the business," he says. "You've got to roll the dice and hope you get it right."

Day 1's Priests and Simon & Garfunkel shows are co-promotions with Sydney-based Chugg Entertainment. Although declining to reveal terms of the deal, Handlin says that "on some tours we will really enjoy partnering up with promoters. Other tours we'll do on our own."

While some promoters are wary of the new arrival, others will welcome potential risk-sharing partners because, Chugg says, live music is "a lot different to selling records."

Day 1 is headed by touring, events and artist management GM Mardi Caugh, the former GM for Columbia Label Group U.K., who reports to Handlin. Caugh suggests that what Sony brings to the touring party is a "holistic approach we can take when planning an album's cycle, to make sure release plans and touring plans flow."

Caught insists that Sony acts' use of Day 1 "is always a question of choice for artists and management. And she doesn't rule out promoting rival labels' acts, saying, 'We're not closing our doors to anyone.'"

"Any major player in the live industry would be keen to look at collaborating with [Sony]," says promoter Michael Jacobsen, executive chairman of Sydney-based Jacobsen Group. With the ever-increasing cost of marketing, he adds, "there will clearly be major synergies if it's a Sony artist."

Other majors have yet to follow Sony's lead. While EMI declined to comment and Universal didn't return calls by press time, Warner Music Australasia chairman/CEO St.John says the company is "looking at various opportunities that would allow us to offer touring solutions for domestic and international developmental artists." Australasia's live sector has been booming, with the trade organization Live Performance Australia recently reporting that sales grew 6.1% to $1.2 billion Australian ($1 billion) during 2007. Nevertheless, LPA president Andrew Kay says, "We know from experience that our industry is cyclical and the global downturn will have an effect on Australia."

Promoters are under pressure due to the Australian dollar's slump in value from 98 cents (U.S.) in July 2008 to 63 cents in February 2009. It has recovered to 77 cents, but promoters who could have paid $15,000 Australian last August to cover $29,000 U.S. fee currently face paying $129,000 Australian.

Sony's move has clearly ruffled some feathers. "I've invested quite heavily in acts like Kelly Clarkson and "Promoter's Tours," Melbourne-based promoter Andrew McManus says. "Am I now going to lose her?"

The promoter's company Andrew McManus Presents recently handled the Who, Jackson Browne and David Byrne Down Under. "We don't need another promoter in Australia," he says. "But I'm either we get in bed with these record companies or I suppose we get left behind."

Nonetheless, most are more relaxed about Sony's move. "Australia has always been a very competitive live music market," Jacobsen says. "I can withstand and accommodate another major player."
Cannes Together

MidemNet Expands For 2010

LONDON—The annual MIDEM music conference in Cannes is responding to the recession and falling attendance by cutting prices and uniting MIDEM and MidemNet for 2010.

MIDEM’s digital-focused sibling MidemNet will now run all five days of the Jan. 23-27 event, instead of serving as a two-day curtain-raiser. All delegate passes will offer access to both events, for the same price as this year’s MIDEM tickets.

MIDEM director Dominique Leguern says that the annual industry gathering faces huge challenges—much like the music business itself. “You have two crises: the music industry reorganization and the economic downturn,” she says of declining attendance. In 2009 total attendance at both conferences at the Palais des Festivals declined 12% to 8,000. Many delegates commented on the half-empty bars and restaurants around the Boulevard de la Croisette. The 2008 total was 9,093, down from 9,452 delegates in 2007 and 9,708 in 2006.

But while MIDEM attendance dropped for the third year in a row, reflecting the decline in the traditional music business, the audience for MidemNet also declined in 2009, for the first time since the event launched in 2000. Attendance at MidemNet was 1,106, down 21% from 1,401 in 2008. That follows several years of steady growth from 990 in 2005 to 1,206 in 2006 to 1,319 in 2007.

The MidemNet decline may say more about worldwide economic turmoil than it does about the digital side of the music business, particularly since attendees also had to pay for MIDEM to get into the digital conference. Indeed, Leguern says there was huge interest in 2009’s digital events, describing MidemNet’s expansion to five days—two days of conferences, plus additional digital workshops and presentations—as “a strategic decision.”

“We’ve been accompanying the industry through the evolution of digital for 10 years, and now digital is everywhere,” Leguern says. “So it was time to open it widely to all MIDEM participants.”

The additional cost of attending MidemNet has also been cut. The “early bird” available until Sept. 30, is €575 ($811). Last year the price was €575 for MIDEM alone and €1,040 ($1,466) for both. Exhibitor rates will stay the same.

Leguern says that she’s hoping for the attendance to remain steady in 2010, which would be “a very good result.” She hopes that attendees from the traditional music industry will arrive earlier now that MidemNet is effectively free, and she pledges other new events to encourage delegates to stay for the full five days.

Rather than simply offer more panels and keynote speeches, she says MidemNet’s extended schedule will offer “concrete solutions” at the inaugural Innovation Zone. This will be housed on the main exhibition floor to showcase 15 of the most creative new digital companies, as chosen by a MIDEM panel. “What is important is that we are not reducing our MIDEM conference program,” she says.

The International Publishing Summit will return, as will conferences and workshops dedicated to management, indies and brands. MIDEM itself will also continue to feature sessions on digital content.

“The industry is now integrating digital, so to have a successful trade show you have to have those two components represented: new business and the traditional one,” Leguern says. “Everything is different from 10 years ago, so we have to be different, too.”

“The industry is now integrating digital, so to have a successful trade show you have to have those two components: new business and the traditional one.”

—DOMINIQUE LEGUERN, MIDEM
The Top Latin Albums chart for the week ending May 24 was full of surprises, including several unexpected debuts. All the news wasn’t good: No albums sold more than 5,000 copies. But the success of several albums highlights how independent and innovative approaches to marketing can be just as effective as major-label machinery. They also show that, despite beliefs to the contrary, having product at mass merchants isn’t the only way to sell a large number of albums.

This week’s list is topped by an artist who sells well at mass merchants, Espinoza Paz—who until less than a year ago was known almost exclusively as a songwriter. His first solo album “El Canta Autor del Pueblo,” out on the indie label ASL (and distributed by Dia), debuted at No. 77 in April 2008. Last week his sophomore effort “Yo No Canto. Pero lo Intentamos.” Paz’s debut as a full-fledged Dua artist, debuted at No. 1, even as “El Canta Autor” rose to its current peak at No. 13.

Paz’s patience and underground work paid off—mostly at mass merchants, since the vast majority of his sales came from those accounts.

But the No. 2 album is by an artist who had less than 20% of his sales come from mass merchants. Salsa singer Luis Enrique, whose last appearance on a Billboard chart was in 2002, when he reached No. 13 on the Tropical Albums list, got his best chart position with “Ciclos.” The album is out on TSM, the new label launched by producer Sergio George. And salsa star Victor Manuel continues to hold court in the top 10, although his album of ballads, released on his own Kijavi Records (Billboard, May 30), dropped from No. 3 to No. 6. The vast majority of Manuelle’s sales came from chain stores in Puerto Rico, much like Enrique’s.

Far below at No. 48, but equally noteworthy, is the Argentine world/electronic artist Federico Aubele, a newcomer to the chart with “Amatoria,” his third album on the indie ESL Music. The label, which was launched 12 years ago by the DJ/production duo Thievery Corporation, specializes in releases that blend world music with electronics. On “Amatoria,” Aubele took his music in a more acoustic direction that more heavily incorporates Spanish guitars and vocals—and probably made it a more palatable product for the Latin charts.

“Amatoria” sold fewer than 1,000 copies, of which more than half were digital, consistent with the label’s focus, according to ESL CFO Phillip Hawken. Aubele’s physical sales came mostly from independent stores in large cities, according to Hawken. The album isn’t sold at mass merchants, which is fine with Hawken, who runs retail programs with indie stores that promote his artists.

“We do run some programs with the bigger stores, but in the past years our spend at retail has changed,” he says. “With a chain like Best Buy, for example, their programs are so expensive that they’re out of our range. What is sold doesn’t justify spending the money.”

When ESL wants to do a larger retail promotion, the company goes to a digital outlet like Amazon. “We’re marketing to an older clientele,” Hawken says. “They’ve probably figured out how to buy their music, and we want to make it easy for them.”

Commercial radio hardly matters at all for labels like ESL, which instead targets specialized radio like college stations and NPR. Overall, Hawken says, echoing the philosophies of Manuelle and TSM from a different perspective, “We run our business as a small business. We invest in things we can afford. We’re very conservative in the number of releases we do and the amount of money we put behind.” Most important, “our goal is to be able to give consumers the music in whatever way they want to digest it.”

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**Latin Hitmakers Explore Different Sales Strategies**

**Think Pink**

Latin Acts Line Up To Perform At Gay Pride Events

With summer Gay Pride season in full swing, opportunities are opening up for Latin acts to target an important niche: the gay audience.

While gay pride festivals in San Francisco, San Diego and Long Beach, Calif., have long featured Latin acts as performers, organizers of gay-friendly events in other cities are also expressing interest.

Granda Entertainment put on Miami Beach’s first city-sponsored Pride event April 18, with a city grant and sponsorships from Macy’s, Belvedere Vodka and Kiehl’s, among others. The bulk of the funding came from the city and from parade registrations and booth exhibitors, says Joe Granda, who estimates attendance at about 25,000 people. The music lineup included salsa star La India and pop artist Fanny Lu, with R&B singer Patti LaBelle as grand marshal.

Granda books Latin acts at the major Pride festivals along with Jamie Avid and his Los Angeles-based company Club Papi. The two identified Phoenix; Las Vegas; Sacramento, Calif.; Atlanta; and North Carolina as some of the emerging markets for either Latin gay club nights or Latin performers at Pride events.

Granda says that because Pride festivals are charity fund-raisers, artists receive a reduced fee for performing—something that not every artist will agree to, even if the fest draws tens of thousands of people. But investing in a gay fan base will eventually pay off, he says.

“The gay community is so big on downloading everything on the Internet, but they like the real stuff and the actual physical product and being able to see the artwork,” says Granda, who produced tours targeting gay audiences for Gloria Trevi and Kat DeLuna. “They have more income per capita. They set trends.”

New Universal artist Jery Sandoval hit the Miami Beach event and its counterpart May 16-17 in Long Beach, the latter alongside alumni from Univision’s televised singing competition “Objetivo Fama” and veteran artists Olga Tañon and Laura Leon. “They are the tastemakers,” says Walter Kolm, president of Universal Latino and Machete. “When you get their approval and credibility, you can move to the other steps.”

Awad booked DeLuna at this year’s White Party in Palm Springs, Calif., following an eight-city tour of gay clubs—with capacities ranging from 400 to 1,300—that he and Granda produced. “They wanted to get more Latin flavor,” Awad says of the White Party. The event’s headlines, Lady Gaga, performed for free at the 2008 festival’s pool party. “She really worked this community and did all the Prides she could do, and look at her now. That is a formula for success.”

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**Spanish fly:** Argentine singer FEDERICO AUBELE

Spanish, fly: Argentine singer FEDERICO AUBELE

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**Biz**

**For 24/7 Latin news and analysis, see billboard.biz/latin.**
Adam Mirabella

The label executive turned mobile retailer talks about Nokia's Comes With Music service and how it can help record companies.

What motivated you to leave a label for a mobile manufacturer? I’ve worked on the label side for 14 years. As an early adopter of the digital format, I was a part of a group of people that was always trying to create a legitimate sales channel in the digital world. This is a chance to continue that fight, but from another perspective. When you come over to the retail side of the equation, you’re a step closer to the consumer and trying to understand how to make all this work.

How has your view of the mobile music market changed now that you’re on the other side? On the label side, we always knew that mobile was more complicated than online. What I realized here is that there are so many moving parts and so many extended partnerships that you really have to get everything aligned—providing a good experience for the consumer, ensuring everybody along the way is going to participate in the right manner. So that’s kind of an awakening. I thought I knew what it was, but it’s even more involved than I expected.

What should labels know about the mobile industry? One thing I would tell people is that I’m really impressed by the commitment that Nokia and the mobile industry have made both to music as a whole. I think that’s something that might not resonate as deeply inside a record label as it should. They should know that there are real investments being made that are intended for the long term. If I look at the mobile industry as a whole, we’re really trying to move from a mobile-centric platform that is phone-driven to being solutions-driven. I don’t know if labels realize how deeply we want to move into the value equation.

Is there anything about the U.S. mobile market that has kept Comes With Music from launching here? We are excited about the opportunity to do something in the U.S., and I think we’ll be able to take a lot of the learning from the other rollouts and apply some of them here, particularly around the marketing message. We have to really take great care that we’re aligning all the pieces up so that we get it right out of the gate. We’ve got to have the right device and the right partnership with the labels and publishers, and we’ve got to make sure we’re connected with the carriers and their goals. We want to be an extension of what they’re trying to get done. That process is a little more delicate in the U.S. than in other places.

What have you learned from the marketing strategies for Comes With Music? We’ve learned that simple is better. Just let people know it’s all the music you want anywhere, anytime, and it’s yours to keep. Each country has its own way of putting a slight spin on that, but those core messages have to come out loud and clear. It’s the music business and people want to be kind of cool and hip. We learned in this case it’s better to just let the consumer know the value in front of them—that seems to be working better for us.

How do you plan to avoid the fate of Napster and Rhapsody, which haven’t caught on with customers? There are two things: One is the marketing message I’ve talked about, and the other thing that we’ve seen a lot of success with is spending the time and effort to educate and train our retail partners—the operators and their retail outlets—about what’s going on. We’ve had a lot of success with that around the world. It’s part of what we want to bring to the party. If you put the effort against that in terms of merchandising and training the staff, those things go a long way.

What role should the labels play in helping send that message? The labels can play a huge part. There are a lot of artists who are fans of Nokia products and who have heard of Comes With Music. If they have an artist interested in moving the digital format forward, this is a great opportunity to get involved in something new and different. And to the extent they want to put some support behind that, there are lots of things that can be done. Exclusive tracks is an obvious one. We’ve done things like have a guest editor, touring and live tracks, interviews and playlists from artists.

What have you learned about how people use the service? We’re seeing a very strong trend of people coming back to regularly engage. This is what the labels were hoping for. They download a couple of hundred tracks initially, but we’re interested in them coming back and using the service. We’re not interested in somebody coming in once and leaving. But we’re having a very high engagement rate of consumers using the service again and again. We’re seeing consumers going much deeper into the genres than they would on a typical a la carte store. On average we’re seeing people delving into seven different genres whereas online it’s more like three. It’s a fantastic evolution because if a consumer likes one or two tracks from an artist, there’s a higher tendency for them to download the entire album, which gives the artist a greater connection with that fan.

What would you do with Comes With Music if you were at a label? I would try to figure out how to make the most of this platform that encourage artist exploration and catalog usage. I might try to figure out how to market with Nokia so when a consumer comes in to check out certain artists they’re downloading as many of those artists’ albums as possible. If we’ve lowered the barrier for consumers to enjoy a full album and I’ve got an artist that is very album-centric, what tools can I offer to help make that connection? We can get as creative as labels like with that.
MATCH POINTS

Latin Acts Like Wisin & Yandel Are Spearheading A Move To Invite Mainstream Artists Like 50 Cent And Akon To Appear On Their Albums—And Find A New Audience

BY LEILA COBO | PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID YELLEN

IT WAS A trademark, decadent South Beach moment: Noon, poolside at the new and trendy Mondrian Hotel, with leggy models in skimpy bathing suits skulking alongside Akon, the best-selling reggaetón duo Wisin & Yandel and the urban bachata group Aventura. They were here to shoot a video for the Aventura single “All Up 2 You.” The director was filmmaker Jessy Terrero, a favorite of artists like Mary J. Blige and Enrique Iglesias, and the mood was a cultural mash-up of English and Spanish, beer and mango mojitos, rap and reggaetón.

It would be easy to get used to this, and Wisin & Yandel are well on their way. Just two months earlier in New York, the pair invited 50 Cent to shoot the Terrero-directed video of the single “Mujeres En El Club,” from the duo’s chart-topping new album “La Revolución.”

The collaboration marks one of the few times 50 Cent has appeared as a guest on another artist’s album. It also underscores a rapidly growing mainstream interest in the Latin market and highlights how key Latin acts are changing the rules as they try to reach beyond their core fan base. Until recently, crossover acts had to sing in English to broaden their audience. Now a new wave of mainstream acts is coming to the Latin world. But instead of simply singing a song or two in Spanish, they’re recording and touring with marquee Latin acts. And Latin artists are borrowing a page from the mainstream handbook, promoting multiple tracks simultaneously to radio in an effort to broaden their audiences.

Aventura’s new album includes appearances by Ludacris and Wyclef Jean. Akon just released a single with former RBD member Dulce Maria. John Legend recently recorded a duet with Noé Schajaris, formerly half of the pop duo Sin Bandera. And Nelly Furtado will release a Spanish-language album this fall.

Amid all this activity, few artists exemplify the art and business of cross-cultural collaboration better than Wisin & Yandel. On May 26 the reggaetón duo (whose real names are Juan Luis Morera Luna and Llandel Véguiulla Malavé) released “La Revolución,” which debuted at No. 1 on Billboard’s Top Latin Albums chart and No. 7 on the Billboard 200. With 36,000 copies sold its first week, according to Nielsen SoundScan, “La Revolución” is the highest debut for a Latin act on the Billboard 200 since Maná bowed at No. 4 in September 2006 with “Revolución de Amor.” Aside from Maná, the duo is the only Latin act recording solely in Spanish to crack the top seven of the Billboard 200. The album was also released in a deluxe edition that includes a DVD and two bonus tracks.

The numbers are to be expected from the most successful reggaetón duo in the market: Wisin & Yandel have sold more than 1.5 million albums in the United States, according to SoundScan. The pair has notched 24 tracks on Billboard’s Hot Latin Songs chart, four of them No. 1 and 12 in the top 10. Some of them are collaborations, since the duo has recorded with Latin pop singers Franco De Vita and Enrique Iglesias, reggaetón artists like Don Omar and Daddy Yankee, and mainstream talents like Lenny Kravitz, Akon and R. Kelly.

Like 50 Cent, Wisin & Yandel consider themselves businessmen and plan their career accordingly. The modestly titled “La Revolución”—“The Revolution”—refers to a different way to approach the music industry. “Whenever we market an album, I sit with Yandel and we look for ways to sell albums,” Wisin says. “It’s not about what I like but what the audience wants to hear. Many artists release singles because they like them. But they’re not the record-buying public. You need to do your research and figure out what that public wants.”

What Wisin & Yandel figured out was that their fans were open to hearing them move beyond their reggaetón roots. For the past two years, the pair has been shifting toward a more international pop sound that is based on reggaetón but also includes other tropical rhythms and even pop, all of which broadens the duo’s appeal beyond urban music fans. This time, Wisin & Yandel have embraced a wide range of styles, from uptempo dance tracks to souful ballads. As they often do, they will release several singles to radio at the same time: Their collaboration with Aventura and Akon, as well as their single “Abusadora,” are on the Hot Latin Songs chart. This approach defies the Latin market’s tradition of releasing only one single at a time and also establishes Wisin & Yandel as a mainstream act, at least within the urban world, even as they remain faithful to their reggaetón roots.

In the past, Wisin & Yandel have released a track without guests as the first single. This time they broke the rule with “Mujeres En El Club,” because “the collaboration with 50 was so big, and we wanted people to really understand the concept of the album,” Wisin says.
Finding Common Ground with 50
Landing a collaboration with an artist like 50 Cent isn’t easy—perhaps especially for a Latin act. Terreto, the video director who worked with both acts, was instrumental in getting the artists together. He spoke to 50 about Wisin & Yandel on several occasions.

“When I finally had the opportunity to meet them, I said, ‘Just come to see me,’ ” 50 Cent recalls. In that initial meeting in 50’s New York office, the musicians traded conversation rather than music—through Wisin & Yandel’s manager, Edgar Andino, since the two don’t speak English and 50 Cent doesn’t speak Spanish. The end result was the opportunity to participate in the remix of 50 Cent’s “Rider Part 2,” which was serviced to radio and given away online.

The collaboration was a happy one, and Wisin & Yandel invited 50 Cent to perform with them in June 2008 at a Madison Square Garden show celebrating Puerto Rican Independence Day. “The energy level for me at that point was exciting,” 50 Cent says. “The Latin community in the U.S. also speaks English, so they were totally aware of my music. It was performing here, on my grounds, where I got to know how exciting it was to make a collaboration with that kind of artist.”

Then Andino invited 50 Cent to headline shows with the duo in arenas and stadiums in Venezuela, Colombia, Chile and Peru. The rapper had never toured Latin America. “We wanted to show him that it was a valuable market,” Andino says, adding that the tour was profitable for both acts.

“People always think that Latin acts have to cross over to the general market and I think there are a lot of opportunities in the Latin and Latin American market, and we can bring a lot of fresh elements to our world,” Andino says. “And it has worked. We opened a new market and a new way of doing business, which maybe 50 wasn’t thinking about in the past. At the same time he’s opening a new market for us.”

Although many mainstream artists have long been popular with Latin audiences, few have planned a concerted effort to reach that audience both side by side in Latin America. Now, with the market in a downturn, many see a new opportunity.

“Mainstream artists now understand the importance of reaching the Hispanic market in the United States and Latin America, and for some, it’s even a door to Europe,” Universal Music Latino president Walter Kolm says. In the past several years, the label has worked a range of bicultural, bilingual collaborations, including tracks by Rihanna and David Bisbal and Juanes and Nelly Furtado. “These collaborations are useful from a cultural standpoint and give Latin acts growth, credibility and a story to tell. They may not be definitive for a career, but they are a good steppingstone,” Kolm says.

Akon Gets Into the Act
Crossing over has always been seen as a way to sell more albums. For years that involved Latin acts singing with mainstream performers—memorably, Julio Iglesias singing duets with Willie Nelson, Diana Ross and the Beach Boys on Iglesias’ landmark 1984 album “1100 Bel Air Place”—since that’s where the buyers were. But the advent of reggaetón five years ago opened doors to other kinds of collaborations—mostly in the form of remixes—between Latin and mainstream urban acts.

“These collaborations have happened several times before when reggaetón was on the verge of exploding,” says Ebro Darden, PD for rhythmic WQHT (Hot 97) New York, citing 50 Cent’s remix of “P.I.M.P.” with Tego Calderón and the remix of Don Omar’s “Reggaetón Latino” featuring Fat Joe and N.O.R.E., among other remixes that hit charts in 2005 and sporadically since then. But those remixes mostly went straight to radio—they weren’t included on albums. Even Shakira’s “Hips

Q&A With 50 Cent
Although 50 Cent has collaborated with countless musicians, few of those tracks made it onto another artist’s album. With the reggaetón duo Wisin & Yandel and the track “Mujeres En El Club,” 50 Cent not only made the album but took it upon himself to promote the song and feature it on his Web site. The move highlights the importance of the Latin market to one of hip-hop’s biggest stars and opens the door for other high-profile collaborations between Latin and mainstream artists.

What was it like working with Wisin & Yandel? When they sent the actual concept, I listened to the melodies completely fit me. It could be a song that I could do apart from them. So we’re meeting on a ground that is completely comfortable for both of us. My duet with Justin Timberlake, for example—there is more compromise for me there. The content is similar to what you can see from 50 Cent, but the actual rap, style and cadence is different. But when I go into the song with Wisin & Yandel I didn’t even have to make those cadence changes.

Had you deliberately gone after the Latin market before? I’ve had huge success in Latin markets without intentionally reaching for that audience. And I’d like to maybe remix different things with different artists, and creatively, I’d like to do more stuff with Wisin & Yandel. I think hip-hop in general has changed dramatically based on artists reaching for other people. If you look at the artists out there, I think they’re a reflection of what is rock’n’roll. In general, they’re doing a style that isn’t hip-hop. They’re doing things that aren’t traditional at all.

Is this what’s happening with your music? What I fell in love with and inspired me to get into hip-hop is dwindling away. I’d like to see a representation of that, because there isn’t much of that left. I think people are so conscious of the numbers they’re not being creative anymore. I’ve received nothing but positive feedback on this collaboration. And it’s a surprise because it’s playing in a space where you wouldn’t traditionally hear 50 Cent. It’s exciting and it’s a whole new charge of energy for the person that is tuning in. Can collaborations hurt or cannibalize other product from the same artist? Absolutely not. It allows you to write outside of whatever your album was. When I’m putting together my album conceptually, I develop this thing in my head and on paper of what I want it to feel like. Sometimes I need to do things several times to get it right. I feel a song is a piece of what they were putting together as part of the actual album. And if the album is sequenced properly, it could be something people consider a classic and you fall in love with every single song. I think even the albums we love would have been different if they had been sequenced different.

You say your album, “Before I Self Destruct,” will come out in August or September. What about your film? I wrote, directed and produced the project. With the purchase of the CD you get the film. I wanted my audience to see it, because I was inspired by what I wrote on the album. I wanted to create reasons for the actions, and I was able to develop cause and effect. When the song is three minutes long you only have time to create descriptions; you can’t explain why things are the way they are. That’s why I put it in the album package. It’s a different form of entertainment. I feel music marks time, and there is a lot of great music being made now that doesn’t completely match the time period.

Do you have a first single yet? When these guys finish mixing I’ll finish making the decisions. But I think it’s really 50 Cent up to Dr. Dre and Eminem standards.

Is there anything about your Latin America performances that stand out? While I was performing in Medellín (Colombia) this girl near the front was so excited and she was so beautiful, and I thought, ‘Oh, my God, I want to have kids. With her. Now.’ And when the concert was over she was gone.

—LC
Don’t Lie,” her duet with Wyclef Jean, wasn’t on the original version of “Oral Fixation, Vol. 2.” It was recorded as a single, then added to a later edition of the album.

In 2007, Daddy Yankee featured Akon, Will.i.am and Fergie on his bilingual album “El Cartel: The Big Boss.” Now Aventura’s “The Lost,” out June 9 on the indie Premium Music (distributed by Sony Latin), includes the track with Akon and Wisin & Yandel as well as collaborations with Ludacris and Wyclef Jean.

Akon—who will be featured not only on Aventura’s album but also on another deluxe edition of “La Revolución” that’s due in November—is an old hand at cross-cultural collaboration. In 2004, on his debut, “Trouble,” he featured the Puerto Rican boy band Menudo on the song “Locked Up.” This time around, Akon reached out to Aventura, “to do a separate record altogether. And they just happened to have a record that was already in the making, and we felt it was perfect to start a relationship.”

The idea was to give audiences a hint of what would come next. And Aventura introduced him to Wisin & Yandel. “I always knew the strength of the Latin market,” says Akon, who is also planning to include Aventura and Wisin & Yandel on his next album. “I never took it for granted.”

Now, however, “I think the artists are more developed,” Akon says, “They understand the game a little better, people are more focused in their views towards multicultural music, and Latin being a form of ‘alternative,’ so it is easier to collaborate now and it’s more understandable to the major audience than it would have been back then.”

This hasn’t necessarily translated into increased sales. But radio programmers are more used to seeing such tracks and are open to playing them if they fit their format. “We’re in a predominantly Hispanic area, so it actually helps us get those [Spanish-speaking] listeners,” says Johnny O, PD for rhythmic top 40 KBFM (Wild 104) McAllen, Texas, which plays “Mujeres.” “And the non-Spanish listeners don’t mind. It’s a pretty good song and 50 adds that crossover touch.”

Airplay for Spanish-language tracks on English radio tends to show up in areas that have large Hispanic or bilingual populations. Ironically, playing music in English doesn’t pose as big a problem for Spanish-language stations; there are four English-language tracks in the top 50 of the Hot Latin Songs chart. In an increasingly multicultural country, however, bilingual and Spanish-language music fits in an increasing number of markets.

First, mainstream artists realize that Latin artists are not only about folk music but that their inroads into pop, urban or rock are based on the universal roots of pop and their Latin roots give it a unique sound,” Kolim says. “And second, they realize the quality of the music is up to par with their own, and they decide collaborating can be a great idea.”

### THE KEYS TO A CROSSOVER

Latin acts have known for a long time that crossing over requires investment, not just in marketing but in both music and content. Wisin & Yandel, in particular, have long talked about producing music quality and videos on par with the general market. Because Latin budgets are usually nowhere near as generous as mainstream budgets, the pair is known for digging into its own pockets to cover the difference.

“If there’s a video and they give me $50,000, I’ll put down $100,000,” Wisin says. “We’re not a flash in the pan. I think the credibility, the quality and professionalism of our work has made us stars. When you’re a star, the audience expects a lot from you. And you have to invest.”

Two-and-a-half years ago, for example, Wisin & Yandel tagged Terrence, a favorite of major urban acts, to direct the video for “Yo Te Quiero.” “We understood where they were going at the time and they wanted everything about their look and their image to reflect that,” Terrence says. At the time, he adds, reggaeton was known for “not always showing the best images with girls, and girls shaming their butts. We had the opportunity to do something positive. Once we did that, we sort of never went back to the typical club video.”

At an international level, Universal has spent the last four years marketing Wisin & Yandel in places that weren’t traditionally receptive to reggaeton, like Chile and Argentina. From the outset, says Jesús López, chairman of Universal Latin Music America/Iberian Peninsula, the pair was presented with the same look it had in the United States. Now, Wisin & Yandel are entrenched in Mexico, where they just finished playing 15 dates, and where “La Mente Mista” topped Billboard’s Mexican chart. They played a rare occurrence for an urban album. The label’s next priority is Spain, to be followed by the rest of Europe. “Beginning in June they and Paulina Rubio will be the major priorities for international exploitation,” López says.

In the meantime, Wisin & Yandel are dealing with the final details on their first major U.S. tour (see story, left). At press time, the deluxe edition of “La Revolución” tops the iTunes Latino sales chart, with the regular edition at No. 3, and Wisin & Yandel have seven of the top 10 videos on iTunes Latino. The pair has nearly 23 million hits on its MySpace page, more than any other Universal Music Latino act. This kind of viral activity translates to strong digital and mobile sales—the duo has sold 1.5 million ringtones and music videos worldwide, according to Universal—making it one of the label’s top Latin revenue generating acts.

“They like to be visible and they do whatever it takes,” says Eddie Fernández, senior VP for Universal Music Publishing, Latin America. “They make sure their music is everywhere. But the standard of how singles were worked—it’s summer, my song needs to be upbeat, that kind of thing—they broke the mold. And that reflects in sales.”

### DON’T LISTEN TO THE GYMNASTICS

### HOW TO:

### CROSS OVER TO THE LATIN MARKET

BY TOMMY MOTTOLA

As chairman/CEO of Sony Music Entertainment from 1988 to 2003, Tommy Mottola was the force behind the “Latin explosion” that brought artists like Ricky Martin, Marc Anthony and Shakira into the mainstream. But Mottola also steered several mainstream stars onto the Latin charts, including Jennifer Lopez, Mariah Carey and even Celine Dion. Here’s how he did it.

### 1 CHOOSE WISELY

This isn’t right for everybody. You have to be selective with who you do it with. For example, I think Michael Bublé is perfect to do some things in the Latin market. This is someone I have nothing to do with, but whatever. It’s outside of the box and it is totally different from anything else in the market. He has such a wide-ranging audience I believe he would easily accept this.

### 2 MAKE THE PROJECT A PRIORITY

As the head of the company, you’re the person who can help effect a result. As the head of the company, you prioritize and effect deliberate and direct activities that will yield a result.

### 3 FOLLOW UP

If that artist penetrates that market, you need to make sure that there is continuity. If that artist has made headway and had success, it’s easy, fun thing for them to follow up and continue. And they are the ones that be the benefits by broadening their audience and their touring. So it doesn’t look like you just did it for the sake of doing it. You should do it to grow a career, like we did. And be conscious of it.

### 4 BE SELECTIVE WITH YOUR DUTIES

They are not always the appropriate course of action. They can be an easy and logical route in the case of hip-hop and reggaeton, where you have so many rhythmic similarities that you can blend those styles very easily. But you can’t just do it arbitrarily and say, “Maybe I can get some Spanish-language sales out of this.” There has got to be a reason, a passion, a feel. Otherwise it simply will not work.

### 5 KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

The Latin market is in love with all the stars in the mainstream. But you have to make it official by making it real. It has to be authentic. It should be done in conjunction with all the appropriate producers that would be right for you musically, so the music, the arrangements, the dialects are perfect.

—Interview by Leila Cobo
JACK WHITE'S THIRD MAN RECORDS HAS A STUDIO IN BACK, A RECORD STORE IN FRONT AND A HOT NEW ACT TO PROMOTE—HIS OWN

BY CORTNEY HARDING

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID SWANSON
It all started with a lost voice and a missing tour bus. Alison Mosshart sings for the Kills, the dirty blues-rock band that opened for the Raconteurs last fall, when Jack White lost his voice. White's hoarseness came near the end of a fairly cataclysmic tour for both White and Mosshart; White injured his back, and the Kills' tour bus driver disappeared with the group's bus. (A week later the bus was found in a Los Angeles parking lot and the driver was arrested in February in Miami.)

"I was wearing the same clothes I'd been in for a week, because the bus still hadn't been found," Mosshart says. To get their minds off their mishaps, White suggested an impromptu end-of-tour jam session in Nashville.

"We had one day left with her before she had to go to New York and we were in Nashville together so we said, 'Why don't we record a 7-inch?'" White says. "We had absolutely no energy left and were completely burned out."

And so the Dead Weather was born, with White on drums, Mosshart on vocals, Raconteur Jack Lawrence on bass and Dean Fertita—a member of Queens of the Stone Age who tours with the Raconteurs—on guitar. "We burned the candle at three ends, and all of a sudden we had four songs done," Mosshart says. "And then we just kept going and going, and all of a sudden, we were this new band with this new record. I couldn't believe how kind of natural it felt."

The supergroup's album, "Horehound," comes out July 14 on White's label, Third Man Records; it will be distributed by Warner. For an album that was spawned from frenzied late-night sessions, it doesn't sound at all slapped-together. It's a deep, sludgy collection that recalls early Led Zeppelin and includes a dark, bluesy cover of Bob Dylan's "New Pony."

"For that song, we were just seeing how we could attack it and what we could get from it," Mosshart says. "We were kind of assuming we wouldn't even put those
The band members rush to add that the birth of their new project doesn’t signify the death of the Kills, the Raconteurs or the White Stripes. Sprawled on a velvet couch in a suite at New York’s Gramercy Park Hotel, Mosshart takes another drag on a cigarette and explains that the Kills are in the process of writing their fourth release, after putting out an expanded version of their first album, “Keep on Your Mean Side.”

While Mosshart and company seem laid-back lounging around the hotel and hosting various journalists, they ramp up the energy later that night. The band made its New York debut at the Bowery Ballroom, and the packed-in audience struggled out of the club an hour-and-a-half later with their minds blown. Many fans spent the show sending giddy text messages and rhapsodic Twitters. Some probably showed the focus that White’s name would never be so presumptuous to do something like move to Nashville and try to book our first gig at the Ryman Auditorium.

The band’s name evokes the birth of their new project. That put the focus on them and their rest. It will be a record, “I just kept thinking of things that I would have said and did if I was in a band,” White says. “I didn’t have any models when I started thinking about the space.” White says. “I just kept thinking of things that I would like to have in a building and how many of them I could cram into this space I bought. The vinyl plant, United Pressing, is a few blocks away, so we’re going to press everything there.”

For the time being, White will be Third Man’s only producer, so his aesthetic will rule. “Say a band comes to town and see them and I like them on a Friday night,” White says. “I can go in on Saturday and record them at the studio and take the masters over to the vinyl plant. We’ll take the photos at the building and we can put out a record in a few weeks and the LPs on iTunes can be out very quickly as well.”

In short, the setup will give him both the control and the flexibility he craves. “Jack doesn’t like to waste time or overthink things,” Montone says. “He is probably the most singularly focused person I know. When he has an idea, he doesn’t sit around and talk—he makes it happen.” He describes his own role as White’s partner in “helping him quarterback” those ideas.

“He’s just a manager of any project I’ve involved in,” White says. “It’s just so hectic that I have to have a team in place for all that. Ian doesn’t have an office at my building or anything like that, but he’s involved in just the structure of all those things, the publicity of it and how it’s all monitored. Managers do a lot of monitoring, really, especially with me.”

There’s no doubt who runs Third Man from a creative perspective, however. “The ideas for the new space were Jack’s,” Montone says. “My role is helping plug this into a larger infrastructure, dealing with our label and distribution partners and managing these projects and ideas. But keep in mind, Jack has run businesses before. He knows what he’s doing.”

Control and creativity have always been central to White’s musical vision. The White Stripes, the Raconteurs and the Dead Weather all release albums through Third Man. At first the label was distributed by V2. When that company folded, White struck a deal with Warner. Because of the success of the White Stripes and his other projects (see chart, below), White is in a privileged position—he can put together a band, fund the recording and then talk to any number of partners about making any kind of deal.

“All of the Third Man deals are record by record,” Montone says. “The Dead Weather album will be released by Warner in the U.S. and Sony outside of the U.S. The White Stripes and Raconteurs albums have all been released by XL internationally, but Sony seemed to be the best fit for this record.”

White says all the artists he signs to Third Man will have flexible deals. For example, here’s White’s game plan for Rachelle Garniez, a singer/songwriter and accordion player signed to Third Man: The label will press 500 copies of her album on vinyl, put the track up on iTunes and give Garniez 10% of the pressing. “She can buy more at cost from the label and take it with her to sell at shows,” White says. “Maybe she’ll buy 200 copies, and maybe we’ll sell them out in two seconds and we’ll press another thousand a couple weeks later. We’ll just press them as they go. We have the ability to turn on a dime and act quickly.”

Which is something White seems singularly talented at doing. After all, how many bands go from jam session to full albums so quickly?

“I learned a lot about how quickly things could be done when I did ‘Consolers of the Lonely’ with the Raconteurs,” White says. “We released a double-album with vinyl in three weeks’ time from mastering to in-stores. I loved that because from now on, no label can tell me, ‘We can’t do it unless it’s three months or six months.’ And it’s like, ‘Bullshit, I’ve put out an album in three weeks.’”

**WEATHER REPORT**

Although the White Stripes are his most popular project by far, Jack White’s other band has also sold well.

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**The White Stripes**

- **LP** Symphony for the.Religious Ministry 1999
- **G77** Symphony for the Religious Ministry 2000
- **LP** White Blood Cohn 2001
- **LP** De Stijl 2002
- **LP** Starving 2003

**The Raconteurs**

- **LP** Consolers of the Lonely 2006
- **LP** Third Man 2005
- **LP** Break Down Soldiers 2006
Outlook For Kids Shows Encouraging In Uncertain Economy
BY MITCHELL PETERS

There's good news for the live family entertainment business in 2009: Ticket sales for many shows are holding steady in the challenging economy, and new family-targeted productions are in development for later this year and 2010, according to family show producers and venue executives.

This year, shows on the family touring scene have included arena and theater performances by Walking With Dinosaurs: The Arena Spectacular, Sesame Street Live, Dora the Explorer Live, Thomas & Friends Live, the Wiggles Go Bananas!, Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey, Disney on Ice and Bob the Builder Live, among many others.

Some live entertainment industry observers have been surprised to find that most family shows keep selling tickets during a time when consumers become more cautious about how they spend their entertainment dollars.

"We were concerned as the economy started to turn last fall, but we've been encouraged and pleasantly surprised with how sales have continued into 2009," Madison Square Garden Entertainment COO Melissa Ormond says, citing strong ticket sales for recent performances at MSGE venues by Dora the Explorer Live and Thomas & Friends Live. "Producers have been more aware of possible price concerns, and they're being cautious with pricing to try and maximize family attendance."

Another encouraging sign is that several new family shows are in development for later this year and 2010. Family show producer VEE will roll out a North American arena/theater tour based on the children's book character Curious George, which has also been made into an animated TV series on PBS Kids.

Other tours said to be in the works for later in the year include North American arena/theater productions based on "Star Wars" and "War of the Worlds." In addition to Curious George Live, VEE is in negotiations for another touring family show that could debut in fall 2010, and Broadway Across America is developing a tour for another Nick Jr. property slated for next year. Both companies declined to reveal further details.

This is good news for larger-sized venues seeking bookings outside of concerts and sporting events, according to Brad Parsons, executive director of ArenaNetwork, a consortium of nearly 50 arenas that works to create live opportunities for its member venues. He says that new touring family shows are exactly the type of programming that's needed as headlining arena acts are trimming down.

"We have 30 of these theater configurations in our arenas, so we're looking for additional programming for those," Parsons says. "It's relevant because over three years or 10 years, at some point the concert biz as we know it is going to change, because there are not going to be as many acts to choose from."

While venues eagerly await new family-targeted touring properties, facility executives continue to apply lessons learned from past trends involving family shows to develop new marketing strategies. Last fall, Global Spectrum VP of marketing Bob Schwartz noticed increased walk-up ticket sales for family shows at some of the facility management company's venues across the country.

Traditionally, "our walk-up over the last several years has not been strong, largely due to increased advance sales due to e-mail blasts and online campaigning we do with online ticketing promotions," Schwartz says. Keeping the new walk-up trend in mind, he pushed last-minute radio promotions, e-mail blasts and unique week-of-show ticket offers for family shows at the firm's venues.

Other family show producers are beefing up their presence on various online platforms as a way to reach mothers, who are often "making the entertainment decisions for her young children at home," according to Dayna Deutsch, senior VP of sales and marketing at VEE, whose company produces Sesame Street Live touring productions. Along with creating a profile and placing banner ads on Facebook, Dora the Explorer Live producer Broadway Across America targeted "moms blogs" and other related sites to help promote Dora's North American theater tour, says Broadway Across America VP of family production Stacey Burns.

For the past several years, Ormond has observed an increase in demand for family shows hosted at MSGE's properties in New York and Chicago. Many of the family tours are modeled after TV programs, she says, which naturally help raise awareness of the touring shows and draw crowds. Another driver of ticket sales are the productions' educational themes.

Ormond notes that these kinds of shows are often cheaper than other family-related activities. With tickets that can cost anywhere from $10 to $40, productions like Sesame Street Live and Dora the Explorer Live can be...
from >>p23 “less expensive tickets than going to a museum for an afternoon,” she says.

In terms of pricing, VEE has conducted research on unemployment in certain markets for such tours as Elmo’s Green Thumb and When Elmo Grows UP. Prior to performances, VEE staffers would check unemployment rates and then work with venues and promoters to determine if it made sense to discount tickets or offer other incentives, according to Deutsch.

Some artists with a large, younger fan base are cautious about booking tours during the current recession. William Morris agent David Levine, who books such tween artists as Miranda Cosgrove, Vanessa Hudgens and Jennette McCurdy, says the agency will consider the state of the economy before assembling tween package tours. “We were a little scared this year to put something too big together,” Levine says. “A lot of the stuff we’ve done with our tween acts are softer events, whether they be city festivals or Six Flags (amusement parks). It was safer.”

Overseas demand for family shows is mixed. Last year, a handful of Sesame Street Live tours visited markets outside of North America. But in the tough global economy of 2009 international promoters have been cautious about booking family shows. “We’re seeing a slowdown on the international side,” Deutsch says. “It will regenerate itself; it’s just a matter of time and economic lift.”

One show that hasn’t yet seen a drawback from the recession is Walking With Dinosaurs, which debuted two years ago in Australia and North America. Beginning in July, after multiple-night runs in North American arenas through June, Walking With Dinosaurs will bow in Europe and Russia through November. The production is also expected to visit Asia soon.

“One of the key reasons why Dinosaurs is bucking the trend is because it’s not a kids’ show; it’s a show that appeals just as much to adults as it does children and families,” says Adam Kenwright, managing director of AKA, which handles international marketing and advertising for the production. Approximately 10 weeks ahead of the Dinosaurs U.K. run, tickets for the tour were 70% sold out, according to Kenwright.

Promoters And Arenas Form Tighter Marketing Partnerships

BY RAY WADDELL

Every ticket counts. Fans look for value. Data is king. These three truths alone, combined with a challenging economy and a growing spirit of cooperation, are reasons why venues—particularly arenas, theaters and performing arts centers—have become critical marketing partners for tours.

“We’re all in the same boat,” says Bob Schwartz, VP of marketing for Philadelphia-based venue management firm Global Spectrum. “We’re all trying to sell tickets in the same economy, so we have to get creative.”

Michele Bernstein, VP at the William Morris Agency and a frequent marketing collaborator with venues, says that, especially now, arenas are better marketing partners. “They’re good partners to have,” she says. “Everyone wants to shine here, and the healthier and more robust we keep the concert business, the healthier we all are.”

One catalyst for agents to work more closely with arenas and theaters on marketing plans is that more of these venues are promoting shows in-house. “We’ve seen a fundamental shift in selling more shows directly to buildings, both at the theater level and the arena level,” Bernstein says.

“We are buying more shows than we ever have and we have asked the buildings to ramp up their marketing departments to meet the satisfaction of the major agencies,” says Mike Evans, executive VP of sports and entertainment for Philadelphia-based management firm SMG.

Where database marketing propelled by arena lists once augmented traditional marketing, today e-mail blasts are the most targeted and efficient means available. “The traditional means are still out there and working: television, radio, newspaper to a degree,” Schwartz says. “The difference now over the last several years is the onslaught of e-mails that each entity has.”

TV and radio stations, the promoter, the building and perhaps even sponsors, and other parties are all conducting e-mail blast efforts. “A couple of years ago we just sent out an e-mail to everybody on the list. Now we target e-mail lists, we have e-mail campaigns,” Schwartz says.

When it comes to database marketing, Bernstein says the buildings have assets that an outside promoter doesn’t possess. “When you work with a promoter, you typically have access to people who buy concert tickets,” she says. “If we’re going to put a Nine Inch Nails/Jane’s Addiction show on sale at a arena, I want to be able to get that message to anybody who goes to a basketball game, a hockey game or any other type of event that’s not necessarily under the concert promoter’s jurisdiction.”

Creating value is often better marketing than simply lowering the price of tickets, and promoters and event producers are buying into creating added-value packages like a meet-and-greet with Elmo for Sesame Street. “You want to sustain the integrity of the product,” Schwartz says. “You don’t want to cheapen the product by going too deep on discounts. Fortunately for us, all the shows are more than willing to be flexible and creative, but by the same token do not want to throw away their product.”

Bernstein agrees, adding that the arena database affords opportunities to offer discounts to certain customers rather than just offering a fire sale. “When you want to do a discount promotion with the building list, you can go back to their database specifically and create a deal where repeat customers get an offer for a specific show, which certainly sends a different message than us going out to the marketplace with bad messaging that the tickets are discounted,” she says.

Venues with the best internal marketing chops can turn their efforts into revenue, as a show cost for the promoter or event. The building can often charge for marketing services, which ultimately can bring more people into the venue. “We’re in the market 365 days a year, we have infrastructure and a database of around half a million people,” says Schwartz, referring to the Wachovia Center in Philadelphia.

“We work here, we know what goes on day to day, so that’s always added value.”

Marketing budgets have remained flat during the last several years but clearly are more efficient in the digital age. “There really hasn’t been a substantial increase, so the way we market online has been very helpful,” Schwartz says. “In these times it comes down to being as creative as you can, utilizing the existing sponsors and maximizing their exposure and the resources they have. It’s not really spending more money, it’s about utilizing what you have and making it better.”

Promoters, sponsors, labels and other stakeholders are now making more full use of what the buildings have to offer, according to Bernstein. “There’s more synergy. The stakeholders in all of this certainly participate more,” she says. “On some of the bigger tours where there is substantial risk and reward, everyone is focused and paying attention. The buildings will supplement some of the promoter advertising with additional TV or radio buys to support a date because they’re incentivized to make sure their buildings are really full because of the per caps and the other parts of their business that make their business plan work.”

Bernstein says that she in many ways serves as the “library” that keeps William Morris’ music division apprised of what’s available and might work in marketing with the venues. “It’s about what incentives we can get put into the deal, and on tours that are not necessarily working I can get on the phone with the agent and say we should ask for the following things that I get on another client, where maybe the building will ultimately kick in some billboards or some other media buys,” she says. “When you have an insurance policy of all this extra media built in, you certainly feel safer pulling the trigger.”
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Nation of Millions

Live Nation Refines Its Option-Packed, Single-Fee Ticketing Operation

With so much attention paid to the proposed merger between Live Nation and Ticketmaster, the launch of the former's in-house ticketing operation has moved into the background. But after a shaky start with the well-publicized meltdown in the wake of the huge demand for the Phish reunion tour (billboard.biz, Feb. 4), Live Nation Ticketing is quietly getting the job done.

"We launched in six countries globally and we’ve sold more than 5 million tickets to date," Live Nation Ticketing CEO Nathan Hubbard says. "LiveNation.com now is a top 50 U.S. e-commerce site, a top 10 U.S. music site and we have a great team built in a year from a standing start."

No news has been good news for heavy demand on sales for such hot acts as Coldplay, Dave Matthews Band and, yes, Phish. LiveNation.com has its own amphitheater season up.

"Goal No. 1 was to get up and running and get to a point where we were able to handle our own business," Hubbard says. "Now you’re seeing us starting to introduce some innovation into the experience and the product."

Among those innovations are allowing fans the opportunity to select their actual seat and a carousel of bundling options in the same ticket-buying process—for music, food and beverage options, parking—to capitalize on the portfolio of assets we have here at LiveNation," Hubbard says. "We’re serving sponsors in more customized and tailored ways than we’ve ever been able to do.

An important element to the mix is creating a single service fee that fans are aware of up-front. "We did our homework with the fans and understood their pain points across the board, and we got up inside the fee structure issue," Hubbard says. "We know the fan has been frustrated by the series of successive fees in the purchase process. There is attribution in the sales flow once you see your third page with some additional fees. We didn’t address that problem completely, but the first step was moving from fans paying a service fee—you might pay a shipping and handling fee, maybe a print-at-home fee, delivery fee—reconsolidating it into a single up-front fee that is there as you cart your inventory."

Fans are responding, according to Hubbard. "All of our metrics we use to measure ourselves as a business—traffic coming in, conversion rates, engagement—we’re very pleased with where all those metrics are right now.

"We’re in the business with ticketing and cannot possibly succeed."

Hubbard cannot specifically address the Live Nation/Ticketmaster merger. But it’s clear that the principles inherent in the LiveNation model would be applicable whatever the ticket-selling platform and distribution model.

"We don’t wake up every day thinking about the merger," Hubbard says. "We wake up every day trying to refine our business model, to fine-tune it so when we have the next generation of what this company is about we can take that learning and success stories and really start to change the game."

Now the goal is to move beyond selling tickets on LiveNation.com toward reaching consumers where they live online.

"One of our biggest challenges, now that we have the baseline established, is figuring out how to create a distributive network of selling across the Web," Hubbard says. "How do we get other people to sell our tickets—and sell our tickets at the places on the Web where fans actually spend their daily time? If you go to one or two shows a year, that means you’re coming to LiveNation.com a couple of times a year. People go to their Facebook account 10 times a day—how do we get there? How do we reach that fan wherever they are? That’s really the exciting next generation of our business."
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CELEBRITY STATUS

Drake Has The Music Industry In The Palm Of His Hand

Only about 500 people saw a recent show by the rapper Drake at New York’s S.O.B.’s, but it seems as though many of them are already trying to sign him. The crowd included Warner Music Group chairman/CEO Lyor Cohen, dressed in a suit and trying to keep his composure while crazed female Drake fans swarmed around him; a lip-synching Kanye West; and a dancing Ryan Leslie. If the packed club had caught fire that night, half the music industry would have gone up in flames.

For now the only thing on fire is the up-and-coming Toronto-born MC, who signed to Lil Wayne’s Young Money label at the end of last year. While Young Money has a relationship with Universal, Drake has not signed to it, or any other major label. So far, he has yet to deliver a formal album and has only released three mixtapes, “Room for Improvement,” “Comeback Season” and “So Far Gone.”

Given his meteoric rise, it’s hard to imagine Drake will remain an indie artist for long. Sources close to a deal confirm that three majors are in “one of the biggest bidding wars ever” in hopes of signing Drake to their respective labels, including Universal Motown and Atlantic. Although the same source says Universal is the closest to signing Drake, perhaps because of its relationship with Cash Money/Young Money, another label has allegedly offered $2 million upfront to persuade the young artist to join its roster instead. The money is especially tempting considering that Drake’s mixtapes aren’t yet available legally; they’re sold online without the artist’s permission.

Drake, born Aubrey Graham, has charted twice, once with his first single, “Best I Ever Had,” which this week is No. 3 on Billboard’s Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart, and again with the Young Money track “Every Girl,” which is No. 5. A video for the former is in the works and should be available in coming weeks. Following in the footsteps of his mentor West and Wayne, Drake raps about his love for his mother and his sexual prowess, with a static flow that recalls T-Pain.

“Just know that whatever label we sign with it’ll be because they’ll add to what we’ve created on our own,” says Drake, who offers no clues about which that will be. “I am very happy in my situation now, which is signed to Cortez [Bryant] and Gee Roberson at Young Money and management through Hip Hop Since 1978. The most important thing for me is being around my team—they are stronger than any label.”

The sold-out New York performance was Drake’s last stop before he enters the studio for his debut, “Thank Me Later,” which he just started working on and is slated for a late 2009 release.

“My goal is to incorporate the vibe of ‘So Far Gone’ and grow more as an artist—give more of me,” Drake says. “I want to get more in depth, more personal and have fun. I want people to have another record and prove that my mixtape wasn’t a fluke.”

To add to the buildup, last month Drake announced that a late summer tour with three of hip-hop’s greats is being negotiated. While he has said that he plans to tour with Jay-Z and Young Jeezy, only a run of dates with Lil Wayne has been confirmed.

If Drake seems comfortable onstage, it’s likely because he’s already had plenty of time in the spotlight. He got his start as a child actor on the popular teen show “DeGrassi: The Next Generation,” on which he played the wheelchair-bound character Jimmy for seven years.

According to Bun B, who Drake collaborated with on “Uptown,” which appears on “So Far Gone,” Drake is already a star.

“The difference between trying to be an artist and being one is your confidence,” he says. “Back when I met Drake two years ago, he was more reticent. But now that he’s in the company of Wayne and Kanye and Jay-Z, he’s kicked off his confidence level, and that is the ultimate invigoration. Drake’s going to make history.”

Drake plans to take his newfound fame on stride. “One of my life goals is to win the best new artist Grammy, but other than that, I just want to make sure everyone around me is comfortable and healthy and happy,” he says. “My life already brings me much joy, so I’m not asking for much in return, other than what’s naturally happening.”
Back In The Ring
Sugar Ray Regroups, Comes Back As An Indie

Mark McGrath, the lead singer of Sugar Ray and former host of the celebrity news show “Extra,” has often employed an old political tactic for his career: Set expectations low so success seems all the sweeter. The self-deprecating attitude served him and his band well. He has joked about his looks, voice, penis and fleeting fame—one album was called “14:59”—while the band’s steady stream of reggae-tinged mid-’90s radio hits sold more than 5 million albums, according to Nielsen SoundScan, and made McGrath a star.

So when the band announced in April that it regrouped in a Los Angeles recording studio, made a new album (“Music for Cougars”) and was ready to head back on the road for another turn in the spotlight, McGrath was quick to acknowledge that many would wonder why “I know people aren’t sitting on the edge of their seats waiting for a Sugar Ray record,” he says. “But that wasn’t the point.”

Contrary to popular perception, Sugar Ray never broke up. The band’s original lineup of childhood friends from Newport Beach, Calif., moved from rap-punk to power-pop and from broke unknowns to wealthy platinum-selling artists during the course of five albums on Atlantic.

But by 2003, the writing was on the wall for bands like Sugar Ray, and that year the group’s “In the Pursuit of Leisure” album—an attempted reinvention that included several songs produced by the Neptunes—flopped. McGrath took the TV gig and the rest of the guys went back to the beach. They would reconvene every year for a few corporate gigs, state fair-type concerts and an occasional soundtrack song, but Sugar Ray was put on the back burner. Atlantic dropped the act in 2006.

When McGrath’s contract with “Extra” was about to expire, he, the band and longtime manager Chip Quigley quietly began plotting Sugar Ray’s return. Jason Bernard, a music producer and longtime friend of the band’s whose Pulse Studios encompasses a recording studio, publishing company and record label with a distribution deal through Fontana, was eager to do a deal.

“We realized there are bands out there in the world that major labels were turning their heads on only because it didn’t make sense to pick up the option,” says Bernard, who last year brought Filter out of retirement. “We can make world-class records for pennies on the dollar with our sweat equity.”

The resulting “Cougars” marks a return to the tried-and-true formula that made “Fly” a radio staple. The first single, “Boardwalk,” is a straight-down-the-center sunny, unmistakably Sugar Ray song. Other cuts on the album include the upempo dance track “She’s Got My Vote.”

“We were part of a business where you had a hit single and you sold 3 million records, but it’s different now,” says Quigley.

The . . . (Woo-Hoo),” the midtempo romancer “Love Is the Answer” and the reggae-influenced remake of Eddie Hodges’ “Girls Girls Girls Are Made to Love” featuring Colbie Caillat. We’re really going to try and get the song on radio and go out there touring this summer and show folks we’re still a great live band.

“We’re certain working hard on all fronts—retail, Internet, working the angles,” he adds. “There’s a way of making money in the music business.”

Pretty, fly: SUGAR RAY

Rock
By Christa Titus

SUNNY FORECAST
Dream Theater Appreciates The Upside On ‘Black Clouds & Silver Linings’

At the dawn of its major-label career in January 1993, the prog-rock act Dream Theater cracked radio with its debut single “Pull Me Under,” which peaked at No. 10 on Billboard’s Hot Mainstream Rock chart. But even though programmers have probably long since forgotten the band’s name, the group retains a strong core fan base and is counting them in advance of its new album, “Black Clouds & Silver Linings.”

The album is due June 23 on Roadrunner. The label says it

Global Pulse
Edited by Tom Ferguson

SMASHING TIME
The New Zealand hip-hop trio Smashproof has hardly been justifying its name. In May, it shattered records by racking up 15 consecutive weeks at No. 1 on the Recording Industry Assn. of New Zealand singles chart with “Brothers,” the lead single from its debut album, “The Weekend” (Move the Crowd/Universal), which peaked at No. 3 on the RIANZ chart in March.

Released Jan. 5, “Brothers” bested group member Scribe’s 2003 12-week No. 1 stint with solo effort “Stand Up/Not Many” (Dirty Records) and is now approaching double-platinum status (30,000 copies shipped), according to the label. The track gained mainstream media attention in New Zealand because it—and its video—referenced a recent controversial case in which a businessman stabbed a teenage graffiti “tagger” to death.

“We had the video and the song ready before Christmas, but we didn’t want to appear to be cashing in on the trial,” says Move the Crowd co-founder Kirk Harding says. “It wasn’t until the music video appeared that the news networks became interested.”

Smashproof—published by Woodcut Productions, which also handles live bookings—toured New Zealand and Australia, so we’re reminding radio programmers that we are worthy of a shot,” says Harding, who also reports interest in the act from labels in Japan and Europe.—John Ferguson

OUTLANDISH DIFFERENCE
A hip-hop act from Denmark might seem an anomaly, but Outlandish has proved itself at home and abroad with its three albums. Sony Music Denmark quotes global sales of 300,000 albums and 400,000 singles. Now it’s looking to re-
Roadrunner is conducting an online promotion that offers a new cover song that Dream Theater will record each week until the album arrives. So far the label has released the band’s takes on Rainbow’s “Stairway to Heaven” and a three-song Queen medley. The label also presented the track “Rite of Passage” on Roadrunner.com as a video and a free 24-hour MP3 download. Product manager Suzi Alyce calls the response to the video “overwhelming,” saying, “We actually saw the most traffic for the Web store and Roadrunner.com’s history,” registering more than 100,000 unique users. The band also feeds its fans’ appetite by supplying them with additional product, like official bootlegs, recordings from side projects and DVDs. “Black Clouds” satisfies that desire with four configurations: a standard CD, a double-vinyl LP set, a three-disc special edition and a limited-edition deluxe collector’s boxed set. The special and deluxe items include instrumental mixes of the album and the six cover songs. The deluxe set up the ame with ritzy packaging, a mouse pad, a disc of the album’s isolated audio mixes, a numbered lithograph by artist Hugh Syme and a special giveaway: 100 of the lithographs are autographed by Syme, and a silver ticket that wins the buyer a Dream Theater meet-and-greet is enclosed in another 100 boxed sets.

“I spend a tremendous amount of time overseeing that stuff and making sure the fans are well fed,” Portnoy says. “But that’s mainly because I’m only doing what I would want as a fan.”

The album has already rolled out across Scandinavia; release dates in other territories aren’t finalized. Outlandish is signed to EMI Music Publishing and booked globally by Skydaddy. The band will play the summer festival circuit in Denmark, taking some time out to do shows in the Netherlands, Morocco and Palestine.

—Charles Ferro

SYNCHING SLOW

Chances are that by the time the British alternative-folk duo Slow Club plays North America in August, its music will be familiar to many, thanks to some high-profile sync placements. The act has released an EP and three singles on the hip U.K. label Moshi Moshi Records (the Rakes, Bloc Party, Kate Nash), drawing positive press for the whimsical songs of vocalist/pianist Rebecca Taylor and vocalist/guitarist Charles Watson.

In the United States, the track “Thinking Drinking Sinking Feeling” appears in a TV commercial for Lay’s potato chips. Last year, the duet’s “When I Go” soundtracked a Ritz crackers ad in Canada, while “Christmas TV” featured in the April season finale of the ABC show “Chuck.” Roxanne Oldham, founder of the U.K./U.S. music-licensing company Mixtape Music, cut the synch deals. “The songs were still in demo,” she recalls. “Even then, there was a rawness that people liked.”

The act’s first album, “Yeah, So,” is due July 6 in the United Kingdom and Europe and on iTunes in the United States.

Booked through London-based Primary Talent International, the duo has a busy U.K. summer festival schedule but will play North American dates Aug. 5-9. The act is managed by Mosh Mosh owner Stephen Fanshawe, who currently has a publishing deal.

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**POP**

**MAT KARNEY**
City of Black & White
Producers: Mat Kearney, Robert Marvin
Auwara/Columbia
Release Date: May 19

“Everyone’s talking about change on the airwaves,” sings Mat Kearney in “All I Have,” the first track on his second major-label set. Everyone, that is, but Kearney: On “City of Black & White” he largely reproduces the ample charms of 2006’s “Nothing Left to Lose,” which yielded a pair of big Adult Top 40 hits in the form of the title track and “Undeniable.” Given his seemingly effortless knack for atmospheric guitar strums and handsong vocal hooks, Nashville-based Kearney’s lack of adventure here is no call for complaint. Fans of the Fray and “Parachutes”-era Coldplay—not to mention those who voted for the new American Idol, Kris Allen—will find much to love in laid-back ditties like “New York to California” and “Fire and Rain,” the latter of which isn’t the James Taylor tune but might as well be.—MW

**PAOLO NUTINI**
Sunny Side Up
Producers: Paolo Nutini, Ethan Johns
Atlantic
Release Date: June 2

Upon hearing Paolo Nutini’s second Atlantic outing, “Sunny Side Up,” one would likely never guess the 22-year-old singer/songwriter is of Italian descent and Scottish roots. Nutini’s gravelly voice recalls more closely that of such singers as Otis Redding, and the soulful sounds of the American South pulse through his music. “Coming Up Easy” and “No Other Way” best exemplify this, while the easygoing “Simple Things” and the poppy, slide-guitar-backed “Candy” highlight Nutini’s folksy side. At times, there’s a lack of consistency with too many ideas thrown onto the table (see the bouncy ska of “Ten Out of Ten” and the jazz ragtime number “Pencil Full of Lead”), but it’s that diversity heard throughout Nutini’s sophomore effort that gives this AC singer/songwriter a leg up.—JM

**ROCK**

**STEPHENIESID**
Warm People
Producer: StephanieSid
Nine Mile Records
Release Date: May 19

Stephanie Morgan is the founder of the annual POPaleszke—carnival which celebrates Western North Carolina’s emergence as an alt-rock haven, and her band (pronounced “Stephanie’s Id,” as in ego and superego) is the bastion of that community. The group’s second album shows why stepheniesid is ready to go national, or even internation. The sound is anchored by the synths and keyboards of Morgan and her husband, co-songwriter Chuck Lichtenberger, and driven by Morgan’s one-of-a-kind voice. The band’s best songs, such as “Hello From the South,” “Drinking at a Party,” “Bullet Train” and “Mission From God,” sound like effortlessly poetic letters from an alert, compassionate friend. Morgan has access to deep feelings and possesses the gift of being able to express them with mood-appropriate music. Her voice changes with the mood: from girlish to womanly, delicate to bold, as the songs move from intimate to anthemic. With acute insights, shimmering synth hooks and smoothly shifting melodic textures, “Warm People” is difficult to classify but easy to love.—WR

**HEDLEY**
Never Too Late
Producers: Brian Howes, Gagar Richardson, Greg Nor.
Fontana International
Release Date: May 19

In Canada this British Columbia quartet has scored a pair of platinum albums and several hit singles—all of which are included on its U.S. debut. Hedley also comes armed with a charismatic frontman in “Canadian Idol” dropout Jacob Hoggard and a 12-song set that has the right song for just about any radio daypart and modern pop/rock fan’s mood or state of mind. At the core are such propulsive, Vans Warped tour-ready anthems as “She’s So Sorry,” “Narcissist” and “Hand Grenade.” Hedley also comes stocked with the buoyant pop of the title track and such pining power ballads as the sentimental first single “Old School.” It can be a tough jump from Much Music to MTV, but Hedley may be able to pull it off.—GO

**FOLK**

**LUCIANA SOUZA**
Tide
Producer: Larry Klein
Verve
Release Date: May 26

On “Tide,” her second release produced by collaborator/husband Larry Klein, Brazil-born, Los Angeles-based Luciana Souza continues her captivating journey as a uniquely talented vocalist who organically crosses genre borders. Her music Soulfully reflects, with a unique voice, a beautiful atmosphere, a sense of effortless flow. She is also known for her intimate, deeply personal performances, which are accompanied by delicate, melody-filled arrangements that highlight her unique vocal style. In this album, Souza delivers a collection of songs that are both intimate and powerful, showcasing her ability to connect with the listener on a deep emotional level. The album features a mix of original compositions and interpretations of Brazilian and international standards, all arranged and produced by Klein. The result is a beautiful and cohesive collection that highlights Souza’s talent and artistry as a singer and songwriter.——DO
official stuff. Nowadays, any-one with a boxful of home demos feels compelled to release them, regardless of artistic merit. The prolific indie-folk tunesmith Sam Beam (aka Iron and Wine) understands this, and although this two-CD manifesto is incompletely grounded to the current bar-lowering—disc one is heavy on wispy, lo-fi throwaways (one exception: an intimate acoustic version of the Flaming Lips' "Waltz for a Superman")—there's more wheat than chaff. Tracks worth repeated listens include the eloquent, gospel-ish "The Taperpe Swinger" and the luminous, harmonies-rich shuffle "God Made the Automobile." Both from the film "In Good Company," as well as an unexpectedly stripped-down take on New Order's "Love Vigilantes." As disc two's full band arrangements suggest, Beam's strongest when collaborating.—FM

JAZZ

JOE LOVANO US FIVE

Folk Art
Producer: Joe Lovano
Blue Note
Release Date: May 19

Joe Lovano is one of the most imaginative saxophonists in jazz and easily among the most adventurous. As a leader, he explores expansive territory, including a celebration of Sinatra, duets with pianist Hank Jones and symphonic arrangements of his own tunes. For "Folk Art," his 21st Blue Note CD, Lovano switches gears again with his first full collection of originals given voice by a new rhythm-oriented band. Us Five, which includes rising-star bassist Esperanza Spalding and the album's revelation, pianist James Weidman. Beyond merely blowing with avant-garde, Coltrane-inspired tenor gusto, Lovano employs multiple strategies on several reeds, setting up melodic motifs, rhythmic start-and-stop phrases and playful dance-like steps. The 10-minute title track, with its tempo and thematic shifts, typifies the free architectural designs through-out, while the grooved and spirited "Digibano" is a treat thanks to Lovano's performance on autochrome, a double soprano sax with a keyboard attached.—DO

ELECTRONIC

THE CRYSTAL METHOD

Divided by Night
Producer: The Crystal Method
Intergrooves
Release Date: May 12

Electronic music duo the Crystal Method hasn't lost its flair for funk and style as found on the act's debut release, "Vegas." "Divided by Night," the fourth TCM album, is an accurate representation of the evolution of the distinct sound mastered by Ken Jordan and Scott Kirkland in the early '90s. This is evident in "Dirty Thirty," a tune that would fit nicely on the next big sci-fi movie soundtrack. But moving boldly forward, 10 of the 12 tracks are accented with guest appearances by the likes of New Order's Peter Hook on bass. Hip-hop anomy Matisyahu lends his likable lyrical ability to the energetic first single, "Drown in the Now," while angelic vocals courtesy of Stefanie King of Warfield on "Black Rainbows" show these practiced veterans have a softer side.—LM

LEGENDS

EDITED BY WAYNE ROBINS

CONTRIBUTORS: Judy Cantor-Noss, Gary Graff, Ronald Hart, Les Homan, Michael Menachem, Jill Manz, Fred Mills, Dan O'Leary, Sven Philipp, Deborah Evans Price, Wayne Robins, Gary Trust, Chris Williams, Michael Wood

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

CRITICS' CHOICE #1: • A new release, regardless of chart potential, highly recommended for musical merit.

All albums commercially available in the United States are eligible. Send review copies to Wayne Robins at Billboard, 770 Broadway, Seventh Floor, New York, NY 10003 or to the writers in the appropriate bureau.

SINGLES

ROCK

LINKIN PARK

No Divide (4:29)
Producer: Mike Shinoda
Writers: Linkin Park
Publisher: not listed

Warner Bros.

Linkin Park returns with its first new material in two years, contributing the theme song to Michael Bay's film "Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen." Of course the band is no stranger to the franchise—it scored a top 10 smash with "What I've Done," which was featured in the first "Transformers." "No Divide" fits the sci-fi genre: space-time, moody and futuristic. Lead vocalist Bennington gives one of his most straightforward vocal performances, deftly balancing his usual rock edge with a more melody-focused pop vocal. It's a welcome return that should satisfy the band's fan base and bring in some new fans as well.—CW

POP

THE BLACK EYED PEAS

I Got Feeling (4:54)
Producers: David Guetta, Will.i.am

Writers: The Black Eyed Peas

Publisher: not listed

Interscope

The Black Eyed Peas proved with their massive international chart-topper "Boom Boom Pow" that they're a group still to be reckoned with. The official follow-up single "I Got Feeling" may be their most mainstream release yet. Over a pop-thrilling beat, courtesy of the famed club hitmaker David Guetta, the Peas trade off on a simple, yet effective melody and message: "Tonight's gonna be a good night." Having already shown what they can do at the peak of a party, now they're out to prove they can get it started even earlier.—CW

KARMINA

Now That You're Around (3:40)
Producer: Jimmy Rapp
Writers: Guy Erez, Karmin

Publisher: KKR Publishing

KCRW Records

Karmin rose to No. 24 on Billboard's Adult Contemporary chart last summer with the power-pop hit "The Kiss," but that song only hinted at the sister duo's talent. Boasting a surprisingly seasoned sound, contagious hooks and harmonies that only siblings (Kelly and Kamille Rudštídl) could conjure, the pair's CBS Records debut album, "Backwards into Beauty," is a gem. In the last year, the twosome has contributed music to such TV shows as "CSI: NY" and "90210." This new cut, sporting gentle folk/pop strumming and lyrics that celebrate the joys of a blossoming love, offers a chance to further elevate the profile of an act on the cusp of deserved stardom.—GT

COUNTRY

TRACE ADKINS

All I Ask for Anymore (3:51)
Producer: Frank Rogers
Writers: C. Beathard, T. James


Capitol Records Nashville

Trace Adkins follows his last single, the tongue-in-cheek ramb "Marry for Money," by switching gears and tapping into his softer side with this beautiful ballad written by Casey Beathard and Tim James. The first verse chronicles the topics that occupy a young boy's prayers from "a home run when the game was tied, a pickup truck when I could drive...what mattered then kept changin' every day." The chorus reveals a grown man's fervent prayer as Adkins sings, "When I bow my head tonight/There'll be no man, myself and I/It's a tender sentiment every family man will relate to, and Adkins delivers a particularly affecting performance as his voice teems with quiet emotion.—RH

THE MARS VOLTA

Since We've Been Wrong (4:50)
Producer: Omar Rodriguez-Lopez
Writers: C. Bixler-Zavala, O. Rodriguez-Lopez

Publisher: not listed

Warner Bros.

Is the world ready for a love song from a stubbornly prog band like the Mars Volta? And shortened from its intended time frame of 7:20 to a radio-ready 4:50, no less? No, this isn't an impending sign of the Apocar- lypse, but rather the first taste of what frontman Cedric Bixler-Zavala considers to be his Grammy Award-winning band's "version of an acoustic album" with the June 23 release of "Octahedron," the Mars Volta's fifth and potentially most commercially viable recording to date. Principles Bixler-Zavala and longtime partner and guitar wizard Omar Rodriguez-Lopez trade in their usual calculs-based Latino jazz punk for the kind of heartfelt sentiments most successful progressive rock bands end up wading toward at some point in their careers. A single in which the Mars Volta wears its heart on its sleeve. That this most cerebral band is even showing its heart is fascinating all by itself.—RH

COBRA STARSHIP FEATURING LEIGHTON MEESTER

Good Girls Go Bad (3:18)
Producer: Kevin Rudolf
Writers: Cobra Starship, K. DioGuardi, K. Rudolf

Publishers: various

Decaydance/Fueled by Ramen

"Good Girls Go Bad" has the magic to launch the members of Cobra Starship into superstardom. The New York dance-punk band powers the single from its third album, "Hot Mess"—stylish enough for a stroll along the boardwalk and rowdy enough for the club. The guy anthem is seasoned with "Gossip Girl" star Leighton Meester's first musical effort, adding some sass to match Gabe Saporta's energetic vocals. The contagious hook and chorus have a lively group component and the co-eds battle it out with the band, which isypress. With a similar appeal to No Doubt's "Hey Baby"—minus the reggae but with an accelerated jolt of electro—Cobra Starship has arrived.—MM

Though he knows how to confidently deliver a rollicking uptempo number with unmatched honky-tonk bravado, Adkins is really at his best on compelling ballads like this one—a standout track from his current album, "X."—DEP

JESSIE JAMES

Wanted (3:13)
Producer: Mitch Allan
Writers: J. James, K. DioGuardi, M. Allan, D. Hodges

Publisher: not listed

Mercury Records

Pull out all the sex appeal from Carrie Underwood in "Before He Cheats," throw in a Pussycat Doll beat and infuse some powerhouse Christina Aguilera vocals, and it's nearly Jessie James' "Want- ed." The Nashville-based singer's first single has a forceful bang and a slight Southern twang, tapping into Pink and Kelly Clarkson territory with its slanging rock vibe. Mitch Allan (Daughtrey, Faith Hill) constructed an aluring rock song with some parts country, some parts hip-hop. James crafted the track with a hot pop/rock team of songwriters: Allan, Kara DioGuardi and D. Hodges; paired with her convinc ing vocals and swagger, she's got what it takes to make a name for herself.—MM
As 'The Crow' Flies

Steve Martin Gets Serious With Banjo Debut

Given Steve Martin's many appearances on "Saturday Night Live," a Grand Ole Opry performance should have been second nature to the veteran comedian. But roughly an hour before making his Opry debut May 30, Martin met a group of journalists that he was a bit nervous.

"I actually came here in 1975 and appeared on a Johnny Cash special. But I didn't play on that stage," he recalled. "We filmed it in a TV studio. I didn't feel comfortable enough to play out there then, and today nothing has changed."

Greeted afterward by multiple standing ovations, Martin made his Opry appearance to promote "The Crow: New Songs for the Five-String Banjo." Recorded with such revered artists as Vince Gill and Dolly Parton, the album was released in January as a digital-only collection through Amazon. The physical version was released May 19 by Rounder and hit No. 1 on Billboard's Top Bluegrass Albums chart. This week it's still No. 1.

"The Crow" was released 45 years in the making, according to Martin, who began playing the banjo as a teenager. "I fell in love with bluegrass music in the early '60s," he says. "In addition to more recently written songs, the album features selections penned in the '60s and '70s, and was produced by Martin's high school buddy and lifelong friend John McEuen of the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band.

Martin, who prominently featured a banjo in his comedy act during the '70s and '80s, later opened for the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band. "From the songs he came up with in the '70s to the recent ones, I've always loved his melodies," McEuen says. "They're infectious."

The album, which Martin and McEuen refer to as "the most expensive banjo album in the history of the universe," was recorded in Europe and Nashville. The last location gave the pair the opportunity to work with the Irish singer Mary Black. "It really wasn't a bluegrass budget," McEuen says with a laugh.

Martin decided to record the 16-song album after a conversation with accomplished banjo player Tony Trischka, who had asked him to play on his album, "Double Banjo Bluegrass Spectacular." "I realized I had a dozen songs and a few more I was working on," Martin says. "I just impetuously booked a studio, got some musicians [and] asked John to produce."

Martin says he was a bit starstruck. "To play with remarkable musicians and then have them play my music was a big thrill," Martin says. "When I was in the studio and heard Vince and Dolly singing my song, I thought about all the great songwriters who never get that shot."

Gill has long been a fan of Martin's musical talent. "A lot of people assumed his banjo was a prop, but I knew it wasn't because I'd heard him play," Gill says. "I knew he had a musician's heart."

Gill isn't alone in his admiration. The banjo legend Earl Scruggs invited Martin to play on his 2001 album, "Earl Scruggs and Friends." Martin shared a Grammy Award with Scruggs (and others) for his performance on the album track "Foggy Mountain Breakdown." Scruggs returned the favor by playing on two tracks on Martin's album.

Martin, who recently performed on the "American Idol" season finale and "The Ellen DeGeneres Show," has also appeared on "Late Night With Jimmy Fallon" to help promote the album. A May 11 concert at Club Nokia in L.A. was followed by three sold-out shows May 27-28 at the Rubin Museum of Art in New York.

"I'm experienced playing in my living room, but I'm not experienced playing live in front of people," Martin says. "Especially a dozen songs. I've been doing shows to get more comfortable."

ALL THAT JAZZ

A couple of classic albums just surged upward on Billboard's Top Jazz Catalog Albums chart thanks to exclusive new reissues from Sony Legacy. The Dave Brubeck Quartet's "Time Out Featuring 'Take Five'" and Miles Davis' "Sketches of Spain" rebound into the top 10, each earning a weekly sales gain of more than 290%. Both originally released in 1959, the albums were relaunched May 26 (along with Charles Mingus' "Mingus Ah Um") as part of Legacy's "1959-Jazz's Greatest Year" campaign. "Time Out" flies back up the chart to No. 5 with a 296% sales jump while "Sketches" rises to No. 6 with a 386% increase. Each set sold more than 1,000 copies last week. Both albums have charted plenty of time on the Jazz Catalog chart, which launched Jan. 18, 1997, and "Time Out" holds the record for the second-most weeks charted, with 612. Davis' "Kind of Blue" has the distinction of appearing on the tally for all 648 weeks of its existence.

—Ken Tucker
Waiting To Exhale

Dirty Projectors’ Domino Debut Signals Greater Creative Freedom

The Dirty Projectors’ last two releases, “The Getty Address” and “Rise Above,” were lo-fi concept albums built around inscrutable song structures. Given the Brooklyn-based indie band’s track record, “Stillness Is The Move”—the group’s pop-confession first single from the forthcoming album “Bitte Orca”—represents a parting departure. Over a shimmering guitar loop and playful backing beat, guitarist Amber Coffman sings about the fear and comfort of settling down, something the band may be experiencing stylistically.

“I’ve never identified with that idea of ‘experimental.’ I like music that takes risks and tries new things,” singer/guitarist David Longstreth says. “But I like music that is assured and resolved too.”

Stated for release June 9, Domino Records’ “Bitte Orca” contains arrangements as intricate as those on the band’s previous albums. However, tracks like “Cannibal Resource” and “Two Doves” offer a more immediate approach that’s just as satisfying. The new album is the Dirty Projectors’ first for Domino, which signed the six-member outfit in April 2008. In addition to Coffman and Longstreth, the members include Angel Deradoorian, Brian Moorman, Nat Baldwin and Haley Dekle.

After releasing albums on the independent labels Marriage, Western Vinyl and Dead Oceans, Longstreth is pleased to be part of an imprint with “a history of bringing difficult, uncompromising music to the center of the culture.” He also notes the Dirty Projectors plan to continue with Domino after “Orca.”

Even without the impending Domino debut, 2009 has been an eventful year for the Projectors. They collaborated with former Talking Heads frontman David Byrne on “Knotty Pine,” the lead track from Red Hot Organization’s star-studded “Dark Was the Night” compilation released in February. The band later performed alongside Byrne and other indie breakout acts like Feist and Bon Iver at a special “Dark Was the Night” concert event May 3 at New York’s Radio City Music Hall.

Five days later, the band played an intimate one-off with Björk at Manhattan’s Housing Works Bookstore Café to an audience of 300 that included Byrne, M.I.A. and members of Vampire Weekend. The collaborations have helped raise the band’s profile and whet anticipation for the new CD.

Recorded in Brooklyn and Portland, Ore., “Bitte Orca” is a departure from the band’s album-spanning concepts. “Rise Above,” for instance, was a song for a long-running reinterpretation of punk band Black Flag’s 1981 album “Damaged.” While the group pulled off the concept, the lack of a single thematic conceit on “Orca” has helped the songwriting grow.

“Given the restrictions of ‘Rise Above’...were just a means to a greater freedom,” says Longstreth, the band’s principal songwriter. “Bitte Orca” was crazy because everything was permitted.”

The Dirty Projectors are on the road in North America opening for fellow Brooklyn band TV on the Radio, then perform June 12 at Bonnaroo. The act has also lined up a brief U.S. headlining tour, beginning June 17 in Philadelphia.

Reborn in the USA: ALEXANDER RODRIGUEZ

CINDERELLA MAN

Talk about a dream come true. Just five months after being granted political asylum in the United States, the Cuban pianist Alfredo Rodríguez won a place on the slate of performers appearing at the 31st annual Playboy Jazz Festival June 13-14 at Los Angeles’ Hollywood Bowl. And that’s not all. The jazz/classical enthusiast is also working on his first album with an industry icon: Quincy Jones.

It all started three years when Rodríguez applied to play at the Montreux Jazz Festival in Switzerland. The Cuban government approved his application, and Rodríguez was later asked to perform at festival founder Claude Nobs’ house, where he presented an arrangement of Cole Porter’s “I Love You.” Among the guests that night was Jones.

“I was completely blown away,” recalls Rodríguez, who speaks some English but also uses an interpreter. “Upon returning to the United States, Jones stayed in contact with Rodríguez through the former’s production company. Seizing the chance to pursue his craft stateside, Rodríguez deflected while in Mexico doing a show with his father, a well-known singer in Cuba with the same name. Making his way to the Texas border, Rodríguez officially entered the States Jan. 15.

Born in Havana, the 23-year-old Rodríguez began playing the piano at age 7. With musical influences ranging from Bach and Beethoven to mentor Jones and Thelonious Monk, Rodríguez later honed his skills as a producer and musical director. He has collaborated with a host of Cuban artists including Gaston Joya, Michael Olivera, musicians in the Buena Vista Social Club and his father. “This kid is something else,” says Jones, who tapped the pianist to play as part of his keynote speech at this year’s South by Southwest music conference. “He has perfect pitch; composes, arranges and practices 12 hours a day. He never stops.”

Now based in L.A., Rodríguez will appear June 14 at the Playboy festival joined by Nathan East on bass and fellow Cuban Francisco Mela on drums. Between recording the album and documenting a label deal for his debut album, Rodríguez is slated to perform at other jazz festivals this summer including Monterey and Newport.

“The U.S. is one of the biggest melting music pots in the world,” he says. “I’m looking forward to playing with some of this country’s incredible musicians.”

—Gail Mitchell

GOING GLOBAL

With solid footing in R&B, pop and dance, singer Jody Watley is prepping her 10th studio album, “Chameleon,” for domestic release in 2010. Leading the way is the digitally released first single “Candellight,” a warm romantic groove that is No. 39 on Billboard’s Hot Dance Club Play chart.

But first on Watley’s dance card is the new international distribution deal between the Grammy Award winner’s 14-year-old Avitone Recordings and London-based Alternative Distribution Alliance Global. The first release under the pact is a revised international version of “The Makeover” in September. Released in the United States in 2006 through an exclusive and limited partnership with the Virgin Megastore chain, the album spun off three top 10 Hot Dance Club Play singles, including “I Want Your Love.”

“I feel reinvigorated to have this type of opportunity as an operator of an indie label,” Watley says of the ADA association. She had previously licensed various Avitone projects overseas through different companies, including the 1999 Japanese exclusive “Saturday Night Experience.”

Watley adds, “It’s all about learning and understanding the industry’s paradigm shift, about embracing new challenges.”

Watley has been doing that ever since she left the dance vocal trio Shalamar (“The Second Time Around”) in 1984 after a seven-year stint. Her first chart hit as an MCA solo artist was 1987’s “Looking for a New Love” (No. 1 R&B, No. 2 pop). She charted several more top five and top 10 R&B and pop singles including “Don’t You Want Me,” “Some Kind of Lover,” “Real Love,” “Friends” (with Eric B. & Rakim) and “Everyday.”

Moving to Europe, Watley launched Avitone in 1995 and scored with the Bellmark-distributed single “Affectation” (No. 28 R&B). It was the title track to her first independent release. Subsequent recordings include “Midnight Lounge,” issued in 2001 in Japan and two years later in the States.

With plans to secure strategic partnerships with videogames, TV and film for her electronic dance material, Watley is shifting into concert mode in the meantime. Her performance slate includes the Birchmere Music Hall in Alexandria, Va. (July 30); B.B. King’s Blues Club & Grill in New York (July 31); and Chicago’s Northalsted Market Days Music Festival (Aug. 2). Additional shows are being negotiated for Philadelphia, San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Before then, however, fans will get a chance to see Watley on tour. One’s returning for a documentary series, “Unsung.” During the June 21 episode devoted to Shalamar, the L.A.-based singer opens up for the first time about her tenure with the group.

“People have never really heard in depth why I quit,” Watley says. “This may not resolve all the fans’ questions but it offers more insight as to what happened. Shalamar was part of my journey, but it’s not the end.”

—Gail Mitchell
Virgin Megastore, Touched For The Very Last Time

I have fond memories of the Virgin Megastore. Back in the early to mid-'90s, when I was in college, a trip to Virgin on Sunset Boulevard was an awesome experience.

Upon entering, customers were struck by displays of all the new releases, just waiting to be pawed over, while thumping music blared. I'd often head to the section for singles (remember those?) and gawk at all the crazy import CD singles they had. It was like a fantasyland for fans of U.K. imports. I was able to stock up on stuff that had been long out of print in the United States, or find things that were simply never made available stateside. I spent hours tooling around the store, whiling away the time at listening stations, discovering new stuff and finding more ways to part with what little money I had as a student.

By the time the Sunset location closed in early 2008, I hadn't visited the store in a long time. The lure of the retail experience just wasn't appealing anymore. There was the smaller Virgin store on Hollywood Boulevard in the Hollywood and Highland complex, but it wasn't a favorite. It seemed to be positioned as a lifestyle shopping destination—for tourists.

I stopped by the Hollywood Virgin store a week so as it was preparing to close its doors for good. When I got there, the going-out-of-business clearance sale had already been going on for a few weeks. At the time of my visit, the entire store's stock was marked down by 40%.

I then was on a mission, determined to buy something. I headed downstairs to the music section—past the street-level entrance displays of DVDs, T-shirts and other pop culture gifts mixed in with CDs. I went straight to the pop/rock aisles, figuring I'd look for stuff I didn't already own. Maybe there was an amazing import album that I simply had to have. (Turns out, no.)

Then I saw a row of CDs of Kylie Minogue's recent remix album, "Boom Box."

I thought, "OK, this is something I've been meaning to buy." (Really?) I knew about the album but had been dithering about whether to buy it.

I was then reminded of a couple of reasons why I no longer visit brick-and-mortar stores to buy music.

Normally priced at $16.98, "Boom Box" was going to cost about $10 after the deep discount. On iTunes, it regularly goes for $11.99—with two bonus tracks.

Why should I buy the physical release when I could get the same album on iTunes with bonus tracks? (And, if there hadn't been a going-out-of-business sale, the iTunes version would have been cheaper, too.)

In addition, iTunes and other digital retailers have brick and mortar beat when it comes to discovering music. (I frequently follow iTunes' listeners also bought advice.) Is it any wonder that CD album sales are down 19.6% this year? Through the week ending May 24, sales stood at 111.8 million CDs, compared with 139 million at the same point in 2008.

So, did I end up buying anything at Virgin? Yes, I did: I bought the reissues of Pearl Jam's "Ten," U2's "The Joshua Tree" and Michael Jackson's "Thriller," as well as a DVD and a book.

Then I tried to figure out why these particular albums were alluring enough to purchase. I concluded that perhaps the desire to own physical product is greater when the consumer has a longstanding relationship with an artist and a history of owning the artist's work in a physical form. That's why I'd make sure to buy the forthcoming Madonna greatest-hits set on CD or in whatever deluxe package Warner Bros. releases. For someone like Lady GaGa, who came to prominence in the digital era, I'm satisfied with a digital download. Perhaps that's part of the reason why downloads account for 23% of the 902,000 copies sold of GaGa's "The Fame" album (through May 24).

Compare GaGa's sales with those of fellow pop/dance star Britney Spears, who debuted before the digital revolution: Just 16% of her "Circus" album's 1.5 million sales were downloads.
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### The Billboard 200 Chart (June 13, 2009)

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<td>SYSTEM OF A DOWN</td>
<td>&quot;Stepped In A Mud puddle&quot;</td>
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<td>Green Day</td>
<td>&quot;American Idiot&quot;</td>
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<td>David Gray</td>
<td>&quot;Drawing Fables&quot;</td>
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<td>Faith Hill</td>
<td>&quot;The Weight Of These Wings&quot;</td>
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<td>Maroon 5</td>
<td>&quot;It Won't Be Soon Before Long&quot;</td>
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<td>Michael Bublé</td>
<td>&quot;Call Me Irresistible&quot;</td>
<td>4,600</td>
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### Top Selling Albums of the Week

1. **KISS** - "Kiss: Greatest Hits 1 & 2" - 27,500
2. **Celine Dion** - "A New Day Has Come" - 6,700
3. **SYSTEM OF A DOWN** - "Stepped In A Mud puddle" - 5,500
4. **Green Day** - "American Idiot" - 5,300
5. **David Gray** - "Drawing Fables" - 5,000
6. **Faith Hill** - "The Weight Of These Wings" - 4,900
7. **Maroon 5** - "It Won't Be Soon Before Long" - 4,700
8. **Michael Bublé** - "Call Me Irresistible" - 4,600
9. **Shakira** - "Sale El Sol" - 4,500
10. **Pink** - "The Truth About Love" - 4,400

### Billboard 200 Chart Notes

- The chart is compiled by Billboard from sales data provided by Nielsen SoundScan.
- This week's chart reflects sales from May 31 to June 6, 2009.
- The album's total sales are reported, including both physical and digital copies.

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### TOP INDEPENDENT

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**Note:** The documents provided by Billboard do not contain the entire dataset. For more complete data, please visit the website [www.billboard.com](http://www.billboard.com).
### HOT 100 AIRPLAY

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<td>Another Way</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>#7 6 11</td>
<td>Love On The Inside</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>#10 9 11</td>
<td>Learn To Live</td>
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### TOP BLUEGRASS ALBUMS

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<th>Week 3</th>
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<td>Unstoppable</td>
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<td>#10 9 11</td>
<td>Learn To Live</td>
<td>35</td>
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### BETWEEN THE BULLETS

**GENTRY RETURNS**

One week after being invited to join the cast of the venerable Grand Ole Opry, Montgomery Gentry snare the Hot Shot Debut at No. 5 on Top Country Albums with "For Our Heroes" (29,000). Sold exclusively through Cracker Barrel Old Country Stores, the quasi-greatest-hits set enters the Billboard 200 at No. 11.

Meanwhile, George Strait's "Triumphant" earns Greatest Gainer honors (up 10,000 copies) on the Country chart (No. 10) following the Academy of Country Music's May 27 CBS TV special celebrating the singer. — Wade Jones
### Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Week of #</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>50 Cent</td>
<td>Get Rich or Die Tryin'</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Chris Brown</td>
<td>The X Factor</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ne-Yo</td>
<td>In My Own Words</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2 Chainz</td>
<td>Fully Loaded</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Tyrese</td>
<td>Max</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Diddy</td>
<td>Last Train to Paris</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Chris Brown</td>
<td>Exclusive</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>50 Cent</td>
<td>Bulletproof</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Ne-Yo</td>
<td>Closer</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Mariah Carey</td>
<td>E=MC²</td>
<td>11</td>
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The report covers a 21% gain on this chart after his interview and performance on ABC's "The View" (May 23). Top 10 on the Billboard 200 (20-54).

### Mainstream R&B Songs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Release</th>
<th>Label</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Knock You Down</td>
<td>Rihanna</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Blame It</td>
<td>Jamie Foxx ft. T-Pain</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Precious</td>
<td>Jazmine Sullivan</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>LA57055/Columbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Turn Me On</td>
<td>Ciara ft. Ludacris</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Epic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>God in Me</td>
<td>Faith Evans ft. Method Man</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Birthday Sex</td>
<td>Usher ft. Akon</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Boyfriend #2</td>
<td>Bobby V</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Day 'N' Nite</td>
<td>Q Tip ft. rhetorical</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
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### Adult R&B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Souza Boy Tell'em Vol. 2</td>
<td>Lionel Richie</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
</tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>The Point Of It All</td>
<td>Anthony Hamilton</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Keysoul Cole</td>
<td>Prince/BoardValente</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Tha Carre</td>
<td>Lil Wayne</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Far In</td>
<td>Paul Wall</td>
<td>2009</td>
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### Rhythmic

<table>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Like A Mother</td>
<td>Moby</td>
<td>2009</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>I Need A Girl</td>
<td>Ludacris ft. T-Pain</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>I Love It</td>
<td>Sway ft. Too Short</td>
<td>2009</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>I'm On Fire</td>
<td>Lil Wayne</td>
<td>2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I'm Goin' In</td>
<td>Young Jeezy</td>
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### Hot Rap Songs

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<td>1</td>
<td>That Was Then, This Is Now</td>
<td>50 Cent</td>
<td>2009</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Grace</td>
<td>Soulja Boy Tell'em</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Just Go</td>
<td>Jamie Foxx</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Never Ever</td>
<td>Akon</td>
<td>2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Love 105</td>
<td>Mariah Carey</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
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Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data.
### Top Electronic Albums

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<td>Interscope</td>
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<td>Infinity</td>
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<td>May 19, 2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feel Your Love</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
<td>June 16, 2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boom Boom Pow</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
<td>July 21, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let's Feel the Microwave</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
<td>August 18, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Fear</td>
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<td>Another Day</td>
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<td>Poker Face</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
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<td>I Ain't Gonna Miss Nobody</td>
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<td>Seductive</td>
<td>LESS THAN A DJ</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
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<td>The Weekend</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hush Hush</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
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<td>White Horse</td>
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<td>Shadows</td>
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### Top Dance Airplay

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<td>When Love Takes Over</td>
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<td>Hush Hush</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadows</td>
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### Top Christian Albums

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<tr>
<td>God Is in My Heart</td>
<td>SHANACHIE</td>
<td>Curb</td>
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<tr>
<td>I Trust You</td>
<td>SHANACHIE</td>
<td>Curb</td>
<td>May 19, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break Off</td>
<td>SHANACHIE</td>
<td>Curb</td>
<td>June 16, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Want It All</td>
<td>SHANACHIE</td>
<td>Curb</td>
<td>July 21, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Lord Is Good</td>
<td>SHANACHIE</td>
<td>Curb</td>
<td>August 18, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carry Me</td>
<td>SHANACHIE</td>
<td>Curb</td>
<td>September 25, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wake Up</td>
<td>SHANACHIE</td>
<td>Curb</td>
<td>October 23, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Am</td>
<td>SHANACHIE</td>
<td>Curb</td>
<td>November 27, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Just Want It</td>
<td>SHANACHIE</td>
<td>Curb</td>
<td>December 11, 2009</td>
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<td>I'm in Love</td>
<td>SHANACHIE</td>
<td>Curb</td>
<td>January 15, 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>I Want You Winter</td>
<td>SHANACHIE</td>
<td>Curb</td>
<td>February 19, 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>I Know</td>
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<td>Curb</td>
<td>March 26, 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>I Will Be There</td>
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<td>Curb</td>
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<td>I'll Be There</td>
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### Top Gospel Songs

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<td>SHANACHIE</td>
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<td>April 14, 2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>I Trust You</td>
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<tr>
<td>Break Off</td>
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<td>I'll Be There</td>
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<td>Curb</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Japan

**Albums**

1. *The Beatles (White Album)*
2. *The Rolling Stones (Exile on Main Street)*
3. *The Rolling Stones (Beggar's Banquet)*
4. *The Beatles (Revolver)*
5. *The Beatles (Rubber Soul)*

### United Kingdom

**Albums**

1. *The Beatles (White Album)*
2. *The Rolling Stones (Exile on Main Street)*
3. *The Rolling Stones (Beggar's Banquet)*
4. *The Beatles (Revolver)*
5. *The Beatles (Rubber Soul)*

### Germany

**Albums**

1. *The Beatles (White Album)*
2. *The Rolling Stones (Exile on Main Street)*
3. *The Rolling Stones (Beggar's Banquet)*
4. *The Beatles (Revolver)*
5. *The Beatles (Rubber Soul)*

### France

**Albums**

1. *The Beatles (White Album)*
2. *The Rolling Stones (Exile on Main Street)*
3. *The Rolling Stones (Beggar's Banquet)*
4. *The Beatles (Revolver)*
5. *The Beatles (Rubber Soul)*

### Canada

**Albums**

1. *The Beatles (White Album)*
2. *The Rolling Stones (Exile on Main Street)*
3. *The Rolling Stones (Beggar's Banquet)*
4. *The Beatles (Revolver)*
5. *The Beatles (Rubber Soul)*

### Australia

**Albums**

1. *The Beatles (White Album)*
2. *The Rolling Stones (Exile on Main Street)*
3. *The Rolling Stones (Beggar's Banquet)*
4. *The Beatles (Revolver)*
5. *The Beatles (Rubber Soul)*

### Italy

**Albums**

1. *The Beatles (White Album)*
2. *The Rolling Stones (Exile on Main Street)*
3. *The Rolling Stones (Beggar's Banquet)*
4. *The Beatles (Revolver)*
5. *The Beatles (Rubber Soul)*

### Spain

**Albums**

1. *The Beatles (White Album)*
2. *The Rolling Stones (Exile on Main Street)*
3. *The Rolling Stones (Beggar's Banquet)*
4. *The Beatles (Revolver)*
5. *The Beatles (Rubber Soul)*

### Mexico

**Albums**

1. *The Beatles (White Album)*
2. *The Rolling Stones (Exile on Main Street)*
3. *The Rolling Stones (Beggar's Banquet)*
4. *The Beatles (Revolver)*
5. *The Beatles (Rubber Soul)*

### Switzerland

**Singles**

1. *Ayo Technology* (Plan SONext)
2. *Anything But Love* (Daniel D'Or)
3. *Who Takes Over* (Birgit Schliep)
4. *Right Round* (Jennifer Lopez ft. Flo Rida)
5. *Poker Face* (Katy Perry)

**Albums**

1. *Eros Ramazzotti* (L'A Mancio)
2. *Emine* (HUNSE) (Gino Vannelli)
4. *Kesavananga* (España 99)
5. *MGM* (Jefferson Airplane)

### Finland

**Singles**

1. *Fairytale* (Audra (Lan))
2. *Sadie* (Stevie Wonder)
3. *C'est La Vie* (Simon Cowell)
4. *Talkin' 'Bout a Revolution* (Eminem)
5. *Kesavananga* (España 99)

**Albums**

1. *Amorphis* (Atherion)
2. *Björk* (Homogenic)
3. *Cheek* (Kalinka)
4. *Kesavananga* (España 99)
5. *MGM* (Jefferson Airplane)

### Wallonia

**Singles**

1. *Lara Fabian* (NDR (Mnéma))
2. *Christoph Willem* (Gino Vannelli)
3. *Eros Ramazzotti* (Il Mondo)
4. *Flamin' Gypsy* (Caravan)
5. *Lilac* (Perry Como)

**Albums**

1. *Amorphis* (Atherion)
2. *Björk* (Homogenic)
3. *Cheek* (Kalinka)
4. *Kesavananga* (España 99)
5. *MGM* (Jefferson Airplane)

### Poland

**Albums**

1. *O2* (MKN)
2. *Emine* (HUNSE) (Gino Vannelli)
4. *Kesavananga* (España 99)
5. *MGM* (Jefferson Airplane)

**Singles**

1. *Lara Fabian* (NDR (Mnéma))
2. *Christoph Willem* (Gino Vannelli)
3. *Eros Ramazzotti* (Il Mondo)
4. *Flamin' Gypsy* (Caravan)
5. *Lilac* (Perry Como)

### Europe

**Digital Songs**

1. *POKER FACE* (Katy Perry)
2. *BOOM BOOM POW* (BLACK EyED PEAS ft. Fergie)
3. *IT'S OVER NOW* (OATTS)

**Airplay**

1. *POKER FACE* (Katy Perry)
2. *BOOM BOOM POW* (BLACK EyED PEAS ft. Fergie)
3. *IT'S OVER NOW* (OATTS)

**Hot 100**

1. *POKER FACE* (Katy Perry)
2. *BOOM BOOM POW* (BLACK EyED PEAS ft. Fergie)
3. *IT'S OVER NOW* (OATTS)

**Europe**

1. *POKER FACE* (Katy Perry)
2. *BOOM BOOM POW* (BLACK EyED PEAS ft. Fergie)
3. *IT'S OVER NOW* (OATTS)

Data for week of June 13, 2009 | CHARTS LEGEND on Page 43

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The female string quartet Foca goes straight to No. 2 on the U.K. Albums chart after appearing as one of the highlights on "Britain's Got Talent."
| 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                       |
|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| **ALWAYS STRAPPED**    | **ATLANTA**             | **ASPARAGUS**           | **ATLANTIS**            | **ATTITUDE**            | **ATOMIC TANGLED**      | **AVANT**               | **AVENUE**              | **AXIS**                | **AYE**                  | **AZUL**                | **BAD**                  | **BAD MAMBO**           | **BAD MAMBO**           | **BAD NEWS**            | **BAD TIMES**           | **BAD WATERS**          | **BAD WEATHER**         | **BAD WEEDS**           | **BAD YEARS**           | **BAD LIGHTS**          | **BAD TIMES**           | **BAD WEATHER**         | **BAD WEEDS**           | **BAD YEARS**           | **BAD LIGHTS**          | **BAD TIMES**           | **BAD WEEDS**           |
| MonebMack              |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| ALABAMA SUITEHEARTS   |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| ALL BLACKWORON         |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| ASCAP/Blackwood Music  |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| ASM Blackwood Music    |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| ASCAP/Blackwood Music  |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| ASCAP/Blackwood Music  |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| ASCAP/Blackwood Music  |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| ASCAP/Blackwood Music  |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| ASCAP/Blackwood Music  |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| ASCAP/Blackwood Music  |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| ASCAP/Blackwood Music  |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| ASCAP/Blackwood Music  |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| ASCAP/Blackwood Music  |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| ASCAP/Blackwood Music  |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| ASCAP/Blackwood Music  |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| ASCAP/Blackwood Music  |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| ASCAP/Blackwood Music  |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| ASCAP/Blackwood Music  |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| ASCAP/Blackwood Music  |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| ASCAP/Blackwood Music  |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
| ASCAP/Blackwood Music  |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |
EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE
Send submissions to: exec@billboard.com

RECORD COMPANIES: Golden Music Nashville names Darlene Starr national director of promotion and marketing. She was director of promotion and marketing at COS Nashville. Original Signal Recordings names Karim Karmi executive VP/GM. He was VP at Epic Records. Justice Records names Matt Munoz director of sales and marketing. He was label manager at Fontana Distribution. Wink Music Group names Dan Spell GM. He was senior VP of sales and marketing. VP Records names Joe Wiggins senior director of publicity and video promotions. He was VP of urban publicity and video promotions at TVT Records.

PUBLISHING: Sony/ATV Music Publishing appoints Jennifer Knoepfle senior director of creative/A&R. She was director of membership for pop/rock at ASCAP.

TOURING: The facility management company VenuWorks names Corey Pearson executive director of Kennewick, Wash.'s Three Rivers campus, which comprises the Three Rivers Convention Center, Toyota Center and Toyota Arena. He was GM at the MetroCentre in Rockford, Ill. Nederlander Concerts and Team San Jose name John Ciulla GM of the San Jose (Calif.) Civic Auditorium. He was GM of Lucky Strike Lanes at L.A. Live in Los Angeles.

MANAGEMENT: Sanctuary Artist Management Nashville names Stuart Dill president. He was owner of Dill Management Group.

RELATED FIELDS: The U.K. recorded-music licensing company PPL appoints Penny White head of member services. She was head of online customer services at the mass merchant Sainsbury's. Bravado Merchandising Group names Michael Del Tufo director of national accounts. He was VP of sales and label operations at Acrobat Recordings.

GOOD WORKS

RED ROCKS HOSTS BONE MARROW DRIVE
Concertgoers attending events this summer at the Red Rocks Amphitheatre in Morrison, Colo., will have the chance to help save lives through a bone marrow registration drive organized by the Lowe Hope Strength Foundation (LHS) in conjunction with the bone marrow donor center DKMS.

Volunteers from the organizations will be on hand at more than 60 events at Red Rocks to collect cheek swabs samples and assist attendees who are interested in registering as donors. As part of the program, volunteers will distribute educational materials at the venue and video screens will feature public service announcements from artists.

"Most people don't know what it takes to be a donor, and most people don't know that there are people waiting out there for your donation," says cancer survivor James Chippendale, who co-founded LHS and serves as president of the venue insurance agency CSI. "I'm a living example of that. If it wasn't for my donor Klaus Kaiser in a little village outside of Berlin, I'm not having this conversation."

With Visa as a sponsor of the drive, those who make a monetary donation to DKMS using a Visa card will be entered into a contest to win such prizes as airline tickets, artist meet-and-greets, clothing and musical instruments. —Richard Peterson
INSIDE TRACK

NO SLOWING DOWN FOR JOHNSON

Jamey Johnson still has plenty of life left in his current album, the gold-certified "That Lonesome Song," but he's "so far ahead of another album it's not even funny." "I've got 40 or so songs already in the can that are almost finished," says Johnson, whose current single "The High Cost of Living" is climbing Billboard's Hot Country Songs chart. "The past several times we've been in the studio it's just... fresh. It stays new. It's been really fun for me."

But Johnson, whose single "In Color" was the Academy of Country Music's song of the year, isn't in a rush. "Our days of going in and knocking an album out in one day are probably done," he says. "From now on we're probably going to keep going in and recording and keep material available. We'll go in and if we end up doing something special with that session, then great. If not, then, well, we did it. When we've got some culled stuff we can use, we'll take those and place them somewhere along the way. We're always looking for innovative ways to bring our songs to the people."

"My thing is to continue telling the story I started with," says Johnson, who's also co-written such hits as 'Honky Tonk Badonkadonk' for Trace Adkins and "Give It Away" for George Strait. "Some people look at 'That Lonesome Song' as one story, but each song takes you to a different place. The story starts here and then goes there and there. I think the next album's going to be a continuation of that and just about more of the things I've experienced and gone through since I wrote those songs."

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