WITH SANTA'S LITTLE HELPERS Paramore
AND 90-PLUS RELEASES TO SWEETEN THE FOURTH QUARTER
It's about music discovery

July 2009
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MOBILE ENTERTAINMENT LIVE
This conference, set for Oct. 6 at the Omni Hotel San Diego and presented by Logic Wireless, will feature a keynote from BlackBerry creator Research in Motion's Alan Bremer. More at billboardevents.com.
FILM & TV MUSIC
This gathering offers the opportunity to learn from network and share music with the best in the business. The 2008 event sold out, so don't miss this year's: Oct. 29-30 at the Beverly Hilton in Los Angeles. Details: billboardevents.com.
TOURING
Set for Nov. 4-5 at the Roosevelt Hotel in New York, this premier industry event gathers promoters, agents, managers, venue operators, merch companies and production professionals. For more, go to billboardevents.com.
REGIONAL MEXICAN
The only summit dedicated exclusively to Latin music's top-selling genre will take place Oct. 8-9 at the Hyatt Regency Century Plaza in Los Angeles and feature a Q&A with Alejandro Fernandez. More at billboardevents.com.
The Trickle-Up Economy

Credit the friend, blog or radio station online or off for introducing the artist to the listener. The streaming service is just the delivery mechanism.

Music pundits and technology bloggers say that on-demand access to music is promotional—and that bands sell more downloads, concert tickets and merchandise by giving away music. But industry reports show that even royalty-paying services like LaLa and MySpace Music aren’t seeing sustainable rates of conversion from streams to downloads or other sales. Revenue is demonstrating that streaming music doesn’t promote a product—it is the product.

Concerts predate recorded music, and T-shirts existed before the Internet. Selling concert tickets and merchandise isn’t the new model—it is the old one. Availability does not equal promotion. Look at the avalanche of failed online businesses and a self-evident truth emerges: Ad-supported content isn’t working for advertisers who pay renegade rates for branded ads and still see no increased sales for their products. Not for musicians who take home minuscule royalties even when they own their own copyrights. And not even for consumers who are faced with shuttered sites they spent hundreds of hours customizing.

Even if labels got together and created a single powerful service—as NBC and Fox did when they founded Hulu—the winners would be large catalog owners who can demand upfront catalog fees that don’t trickle down to artists, while indie labels and artists would be competing for plays at still-abysmal rates. For example, the knowledge that a band has 500 fans in Cleveland is worthless if the group in question lives in Los Angeles and faces a two-day drive on $3-per-gallon gas to get there. That’s 6,000 streams to the gallon at today’s rates.

Both artists and streaming services need to ask more from fans. Artists deserve the right to decide how their music is distributed and how they’re compensated for it. They should be free to give away their music and equally free not to.

I’ve worked with great services that have demonstrated value for indie artists. Amie Street’s demand-based pricing sells popular music for more money, and fans can choose to buy hits or search for inexpensive, undiscovered gems. But they can’t license music in Exchange for visibility in an editorial setting like Spinner or a game like “Tap Tap Revenge,” where music is curated and limited, encouraging fans to discover new music and then actually buy it.

There are other innovations I’d like to see. Right now, the shuttered Seepod is trying to sell its remaining assets, including users’ email addresses, for $150,000. Why wasn’t sharing those email addresses with the bands that users signed up to watch for preferences to listen anonymously, charge a subscription fee as Rhapsody does. DashGo is developing a shopping cart for Twitter called TwoTweet that allows fans to package music directly from a band’s Twitter messages using a credit card and PayPal.

We’re adding the ability for artists to set discounts for fans who introduce music to friends, so a fan who re-tweets about a band’s music gains money off every fan who clicks through to the merchandise.

We’ve already seen how the Internet can disrupt traditional methods of music distribution and discovery—often to the benefit of fans and artists. TTunes and Pandorla stand out. Now it’s time for other artists to ask for value from the other services built around their music, just as consumers, advertisers and to too few venture capitalists do.

Ben Patterson is the founder of DashGo, a digital music distribution and strategy firm serving indie artists and labels. Prior to DashGo, he served as executive VP of GMG Entertainment and was the VP of digital music and strategy at management company Firm.

FOR THE RECORD

■ In May 2 story, Nobuya Kida, deputy GM of the Japanese Society for Rights of Authors, Composers and Publishers, was misidentified in a photograph as Fair Trade Commission investigation director Hiroo Iwanari.
Sound Of A Crescendo

Retailers See Sustainable Gains On Michael Jackson Catalog As Sales Keep Soaring

As music fans continue mourning the passing of Michael Jackson, the resulting grief and reflection is fueling a surge in sales that doesn't appear likely to end soon.

Retail sources say Sony Music Entertainment pumped about 2 million copies of Jackson-related music products into the U.S. market during the week ended July 5. The replenished supply of CDs helped sales of the late superstar's solo albums soar to 794,000 copies, up 88% from the previous week's total of 422,000, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

U.S. brick-and-mortar retailers enjoyed a steady flow of product during the week, reflecting Sony's effort to make almost daily shipments to each account. A dramatic shift in the ratio of physical-to-digital sales of Jackson's most popular albums suggested that the expanded physical supply was a key contributor to the sales gain.

During the week ended July 5, digital sales of the top-selling Jackson solo albums — "Number Ones," "Thriller," "The Essential Michael Jackson" and "Off the Wall" — accounted for only 16.8% of those copies' total U.S. sales of 673,000 copies. In the previous week, digital downloads accounted for 56.6% of those same albums' total sales of 341,000 copies, according to SoundScan.

As impressive as that gain was, some believe that physical sales of Jackson's catalog still have room to grow.

"This week [ending July 12] may top last week because retail is in better shape with Jackson inventory," says the head of music purchasing at one large retail. And the massive TV and online audience for the July 7 memorial service honoring Jackson at the Staples Center in Los Angeles, as well as continuing press coverage of legal wranglings over his estate, are expected to lend sales a further boost.

Meanwhile, digital track demand remained strong in the week ended July 5, albeit dipping slightly to 2.1 million downloads in the United States, versus the 2.4 million scanned in the prior week.

Sony's Jackson catalog, which encompasses all of his post-Motown recordings, accounted for the vast majority of U.S. sales. Universal Music Group's catalog of Jackson 5 and early solo Jackson albums continued to reap far more modest results. During the week ended July 5, UMG's combined Jackson album sales totaled about 24,000 copies, while digital track sales reached 258,000.

On July 1, UMG rushed released to stores a Jackson boxed set called "Hello World: The Motown Solo Collection," a three-CD compilation of hits and rarities that had previously only been available through its direct-to-consumer operation Hip-O Select. The title was originally scheduled for a July 21 retail release.

"Hello World" sold fewer than 1,000 copies in the United States during the week ended July 5 and isn't expected to be a major seller. But a new single-disc compilation that was in the works before Jackson's June 25 death appears poised to resonate better with consumers, the result of a fortuitously timed sync deal with State Farm Insurance.

During the week ended July 5, the best-selling Jackson 5 digital track was "I'll Be There." It scanned nearly 50,000 copies, helped by State Farm's use of the song in a TV ad that it began airing in May.

The insurance company began planning a new TV ad campaign in January with the ad agency DDB Chicago and considered a variety of music options before settling on "I'll Be There," according to the company's assistant VP of advertising, Mark Gibson. "This song meant so much to the overall campaign," Gibson says. "It's a timeless piece of music and from a generational standpoint, many [age groups] could relate to it."

Rather than license the original version of the Jackson 5 hit, State Farm asked UMG for a new remix that removed much of the instrumental backing to focus attention on Jackson's vocals. "We felt that the stripped-down 'minus mix' gave an even extra level of emotion and matched up with the images showing on the screen," Gibson says.

State Farm debuted the ad May 20 during the season finale of "American Idol" and ran it until shortly before Jackson's death. UMG was so pleased with the remix that it uploaded the track to iTunes June 9 and decided to prepare additional stripped-down remixes of other Jackson 5 and solo Jackson tracks for a new compilation.

UMG had three remixes in the can at the time of Jackson's death, according to Universal Music Enterprises executive VP/GM Mike Davis. In the ensuing days, the label began remixing other songs, coming up with a total of 11 tracks. "Michael Jackson: The Stripped Mixes" debuted on iTunes July 7, just a week-and-a-half after Jackson's passing. A U.S. physical release is scheduled for July 21.

State Farm, which eventually expects to air the "I'll Be There" TV spot again, is streaming a version of the ad on its Web site, accompanied by a link to iTunes to buy the track.

"It has a deeper meaning now that Michael Jackson has passed away," Gibson says.

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Allen Klein, 1931-2009
The Famed Manager’s Hard-Nosed Biz Savvy Won Him Admiration And Enmity

ABKCO Music & Records founder Allen Klein died July 4 in New York after a lengthy battle with Alzheimer’s disease. He was 77.

Klein, whose career in the music business spanned more than 50 years, first broke into the industry by aggressively auditing record labels on behalf of recording artists who weren’t being paid proper royalties. He went on to manage such heavyweights as Sam Cooke, the Beatles and the Rolling Stones.

Known for his hard-nosed business practices, Klein was blamed by some for contributing to the breakup of the Beatles. Others remember him as a person who helped shape the modern-day music industry. “Allen changed the business in the respect that he was fighting for the underdog,” says longtime friend and music industry veteran Don Kirshner. “He was fighting for the proper royalty count and he wanted [record companies] to pay properly. He was one of a kind and an iconic figure.”

Born Dec. 18, 1931, in Newark, N.J., Klein worked several jobs during his teenage years while attending classes in the evening, learning the basics of distribution while working at the Essex County News. After graduating from Upsala College in East Orange, N.J., with a degree in accounting, Klein did a stint in the U.S. Army and then worked as a clerk at the New York accounting firm Prager and Fenton.

Klein first broke into the music business after Kirshner introduced him to entrepreneur Bobby Darin. “I said, ‘Why don’t you try accounting in the music publishing business?’ And then I introduced him to all my acts,” recalls Kirshner, who served as an early mentor to Klein. “I started him in the music business and showed him the value of copyrights and master recordings. I always tried to tell him that the key was the song. And if you had the song and the artist, the record company was basically your distributor.”

Klein’s first noteworthy management client was Cooke. In 1963, Cooke hired Klein not only as his manager but also as his personal manager Cooke’s contracts and other related entities. That same year, the singer signed an innovative deal with RCA under which an imprint established by Klein called Tracey Records would release Cooke’s future recordings and distribute them through RCA, giving Cooke control of his recorded work. (RCA’s right to distribute Tracey—a division of Klein’s ABKCO Records—expired in 1991.) Klein owned and managed Cooke’s masters and copyrights on behalf of Cooke’s widow, Barbara, his daughters, Linda and Tracey, and other family heirs.

Klein also served as the business manager for the Animals, the Dave Clark Five, Donovan and Herman’s Hermits, among others. In the mid-’60s, he worked with Stones manager-producer Andrew Oldham to negotiate a new contract for the band with Decca in the United Kingdom. Klein went on to manage the Stones and purchased the band’s master recordings from Oldham, acquiring the rights to all of the group’s ’60s albums and the 1970 live set “Get Yer Ya-Ya’s Out.”

By the late ’60s, Klein was also managing the Beatles, despite the objections of Paul McCartney, who reportedly wanted the expertise of his father-in-law, New York attorney Lou Eastman. Klein represented the Beatles during renegotiations between Apple Corps and EMI. The deal yielded the highest royalty rate that had ever been paid to an artist, according to ABKCO spokesman Bob Merlis.

Following the Beatles’ split, Klein continued to work with John Lennon and Yoko Ono. In his 2005 book “The Beatles: The Biography,” Bob Spitz reported that Lennon called Klein “the only businessman I’ve ever met who isn’t gray right through his eyes to his soul.”

Although Klein was known for ruthless business practices that sometimes put him at odds with artists, Kirshner believes that’s what kept him on top. “Most people who are successful have got to be strong,” he says. “That’s the world we live in. And if you’re on the wrong side of a deal, most of the time people are disgruntled.”

In his 2005 book, “Dream Boogie: The Triumph of Sam Cooke,” Peter Guralnick described how famed R&B DJ Jocko Henderson viewed Klein, who had helped Henderson secure income from publishing interests he held. “Allen Klein was a right kind of guy,” Guralnick wrote. “a sort of Robin Hood figure with a side role who simply by virtue of his disconnecting ability to shout out everything but the problem at hand could make powerful industry figures kneel under—he was the kind of person you definitely wanted on your side.”

Klein is survived by his longtime girlfriend, Iris Kelt; his estranged wife, Betty; his children, Robin, Jody and Beth; his sister, Naomi; and his grandchildren, Jeremy, Julian, Jade and Zachary. A funeral service for Klein was held July 7 at the Riverside Memorial Chapel in New York.
**SPREAD THE WORD**

WMG's Christian Music Division Acquires Nashville Booking Agency

In its latest move to expand its array of in-house services, Warner Music Group's Word Entertainment division has acquired the Breen Agency, a booking operation that represents such Christian acts as Point of Grace, Cindy Morgan and Plumb.

The two sides declined to release financial details of the sale. The Nashville agency's founder David Breen and agents Ronda Esterday and Russ Russell will remain with Word and have moved into the company's Music Row offices.

"Instead of just having somebody and starting to book in-house," Word Entertainment COO Rod Riley says, "we chose to acquire a company with a roster of 30-plus artists because the momentum we could bring in-house with Breen was very attractive to us."

The deal is part of Word's efforts to become a full-service Christian entertainment company, Riley says. The acquisition of the Breen Agency comes three years after Word Entertainment launched a merchandising division to handle the design, production and sale of artist-branded merchandise like T-shirts and hats.

"What we're doing at Word is offering active solutions through merch, e-commerce and now the booking side," Word Entertainment president/CEO Mark Bright says. "We're trying to be an artist, "You can come in and we'll provide a solution."

Breen says he has been looking for a partner that could help grow his agency. Joining forces with Word "really offers an opportunity for growth through their resources and relationships in a time when a lot of agents can't put money into marketing and can't put a lot of focus on growth, he says. "It was exciting for me to branch out, and they assured me that they loved what I had built and just wanted me to continue."

"They assured me that they loved what I had built and just wanted me to continue," Breen says.

Word was founded in 1991 as a record label specializing in Christian music and through the years has grown to encompass several divisions including Word Distribution, Word Music Publishing and Word Label Group's Word Records. Current Records, CCM Records and Myth Records. Warner acquired Word Entertainment in 2002 from Gaylord Entertainment for $4.1 million, and later that year Curb Records acquired a 20% stake in Word.

Word Entertainment's various labels are home to such acts as Diamond Rio, BarlowGirl, Mark Schultz, Randy Travis, Big Daddy Weave and Francesca Battistelli.

Some of Breen's clients are already part of Word's roster, including pureNRG, Sidewalk Prophets and the Dove Award-winning Point of Grace, a trio that includes Breen's wife, Shelley.

"As a Word artist for our entire career, we are very excited about the immediate synergy created by this move," Point of Grace's Denise Jones says. "There has long been a stronger bond between labels and booking agencies, but now, for the first time ever our team is under one roof working side by side to make the best decisions for our business."

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**BOXSCORE Concert Grosses**

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**July 18, 2009 | www.billboard.biz | 7**
When Scott Borchetta signed then-15-year-old Taylor Swift to his fledgling Big Machine Records label in 2005, the former DreamWorks Nashville executive ignored the prevailing view that teen acts don’t work in the adult-oriented country format.

Now, Borchetta is charting a new path and partnering with Universal Republic president/CEO Monte Lipman to form Republic Nashville (billboard biz, June 5). It’s Borchetta’s third new business venture in less than four years, a bold move at a time when the recording industry is in the midst of a historic contraction.

Borchetta launched Big Machine, whose roster also includes Trisha Yearwood and Jack Ingram, in September 2005. Two years later, he started Valory Music, signing Jewel to do her first country album, “Perfectly Clear,” which debuted at No. 1 on Billboard’s Top Country Albums chart. After scoring a No. 1 country single in September with Jimmy Wayne’s “Do You Believe Me Now,” Valory signed superstar Reba McEntire, who had just ended her 25-year association with MCA.

At Republic Nashville, Borchetta has reunited with Jimmy Harnen, a former senior VP of promotion at Capitol Records Nashville who had worked with him at DreamWorks. Borchetta is the new imprint’s CEO, with Harnen serving as president.

Borchetta has even stepped out from behind the scenes to become a judge on CMT’s “Can You Duet.” In an interview with Billboard, he talks about his new ventures and Swift’s breakout success.

Why are you expanding when other labels are trimming back? Universal, Monte Lipman in particular, and myself have been trying to find a way to do more business together. He’s been my partner on the top 40/crossover side (for Swift’s records). I wasn’t looking to take on another label. But I thought if I could get somebody that I could trust and that I knew could do the job and who was the right person, then maybe we could combine this momentum and this interest and have another opportunity. So I spoke to Jimmy Harnen about it and he’s like, “My God, that is the only move I’d consider making right now.” He was very happy at Capitol. It all came together.

You had a great thing going with Big Machine, so why add a second label? Why add a third? Let’s start with Valory. At that moment for Big Machine, we had Taylor Swift just starting to take off. Jack Ingram has been on the radio nonstop, Trisha Yearwood had a record out. Garth Brooks had a record out, Danielle Peck had a record out. There was no way we could have been able to work with Jewel and me have to say to Jimmy Wayne and Justin Moore, “You got to wait, and I’m not just talking another month, you got to wait another six months.” And there was an opportunity for me to get [promotion execs Jon] Loba and [Chris] Loss, and then suddenly [promotion exec George] Briner became available. So that launched and it gave us the opportunity to get Reba McEntire to put her front and center and let her be the flagship for Valory.

I’ve got so much pride in what’s happened for Valory in the first year-and-a-half. Then why another label? The chance to get Jimmy Harnen and the chance to satisfy our conversations with Universal makes all the sense in the world. With Jimmy, he and I always have had positive sparks with the things that we do.

How will Republic Nashville differ from Big Machine and Valory? We have the addition of the power of New York’s team. It expands our universe of knowledge and opportunity. They have a very healthy online/new-media staff that will be working with us. We’ll be utilizing the publicity office on the street in New York, we have backroom opportunities, we have more marketing muscle. Being in business with them exposes us to a lot of things that only [major] labels have access to. It’s hopefully the best of all worlds.

Swift has done very well in the United Kingdom and Australia. Is there potential for more country artists to do well outside the United States? We get really small when we don’t think bigger about the rest of the world. To begin with, there’s a lot of business in Canada. You don’t have to go all the way to Australia to sell another quarter of a million units. Canada is a fantastic market. There’s a great scene in Australia and there’s a nice support system there. It’s a big place and you sell a small amount of music, but the bigger opportunity is building up a touring base. When Taylor goes back, hopefully in 2010, it’s likely that she’ll be able to play arenas. She’s not the rule. She’s an anomaly. “Love Story” has been No. 1 in 22 territories as a pop hit. But if you ask Brooks & Dunn or Dierks Bentley or Gary Allan, who have been out there in the last year-and-a-half, they think they’ll tell you that Australia is a great market.

The U.K.—is there a big country market over there? No. Is there a big music market over there? Hell, yes. When we launched Taylor over there, we didn’t hide the fact she still wore sun dresses and cowboy boots, we didn’t go over there and say she’s a rock act or a pop act or anything else. We just said, “Here’s this great, young artist. She’s a media magnet, and we think you’re going to like her.” And they fell in love with her.

Swift’s 2008 album, “Fearless,” has had strong digital sales, but overall, country music still lags behind other genres. What does country have to do to accelerate digital sales? I think they are accelerating. We sell a lot of tracks. Reba’s selling a lot of tracks all of a sudden. We’ve always been an older-age demographic target, so with the success of Taylor and other young artists that are family artists . . . the parents become more aware. And the iTunes experience in particular is a great music experience.

And what Verizon does on the touring level for Taylor, for Keith Urban, that’s the Cadillac right now to get that power on your tour. They have a mobile recording bus that Taylor has used to cut on. Taylor is at 17 million tracks sold at iTunes. Jimmy Wayne’s “Do You Believe Me Now” is almost at 300,000. You’re going to see a lot more gold- and platinum-selling singles. If you can sell a quarter of a million singles and you’re still doing a quarter of a million albums, that pays for your [single] campaign. Selling a couple hundred thousand downloads a week—for a small company like us, that’s significant.

Where are you in terms of Swift’s “Fearless” album, and where do you see it going? If I haven’t said it yet today, thank God for Taylor Swift. We’re just hitting our stride. We may go as deep as six singles on this. We’re going to catch up to her first album, which is at 4.2 [million]. It’s not outside the realm of possibility that by the end of the year, or at some point within the next 12 months, we’re going to be looking at 10 million albums sold before we get to album three.
As retail stores close, Christmas might not be so merry. But there are reasons for hope, including music-based videogames (Page 21), a new album from Paramore (Page 12) and a slate of fall releases (Page 15) that could put anyone in a cheerful mood.
While retailers expect that music sales will be better during the Christmas shopping season than the rest of this year, most are still anticipating a case of the holiday blues.

"Last year was such a bad Christmas for music sales, that if we can't top that, then we've got a serious problem on our hands," says a purchasing executive at a retail chain who asked to remain anonymous because he isn't authorized to speak about sales projections.

The executive expects year-end sales to be up from last year, which would be the first time since 2003 that fourth-quarter U.S. recorded-music sales haven't posted a year-on-year decline.

But that's one of the more optimistic forecasts. Others say they assume year-end recorded-music sales will slide in line with the rest of 2009, when year-to-date sales have dropped 14.3% from the same period last year, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

A strong release schedule could help slow the decline. High-profile releases expected this fall include albums by Jay-Z, 50 Cent, T-Pain, Leona Lewis and Shakira (see page 15). But merchants and distribution executives say it's too early to assess the impact of this year's slate.

"Overall, [U.S. CD sales] are down about 20% this year," says Universal Music Group Distribution president/CEO Jim Urie. "It may get better due to a strong release schedule, but it won't provide a major improvement."

Most industry executives say the distressed economy, weak CD profit margins and the increasing displacement of physical music product in brick-and-mortar stores by other entertainment products will make it difficult for holiday sales to remain steady over last year, much less show an upswing.

The CFO at a leading retail chain says that while he expects some U.S. economic indicators to show improvement in the fall, "it will be 2011 before we see any serious spending out of consumers, and it won't be at previous levels."

The wild card is U.S. monetary policy, according to the executive. "If they don't focus on strengthening the dollar, I worry that hyper-inflation will kick in," he says, adding that hopes for a near-term economic recovery will be dim "if the dollar is not strong and foreign investors start pulling out."

Bruce Ogilvie, co-owner of music and video distributor Super D, says he doesn't expect the current rate of decline
Blue Yule

AS FOURTH-QUARTER U.S. MUSIC SALES KEEP FALLING, THEY'RE ACCOUNTING FOR A SHRINKING SHARE OF ANNUAL SALES

<table>
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<th>Year End</th>
<th>Q4</th>
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<td>1999</td>
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| 33.8% | 33.4% | 32.5% | 32.5% | 32.1% | 33.0% | 33.2% | 32.6% | 30.5% |

**Year**

**Q4**

in U.S. physical music sales to accelerate during the rest of the year, following a 21.2% fall in CD sales during the first six months of this year from the same period in 2008. "If the economy got better, it would help things," Oglvie says.

Other problems include tightening trade credit, declining marketing funds and slowing product turns, according to the president of a retail chain.

"The music industry has kept trade credit on an even keel, but the other ancillary product lines have increased credit restrictions," he says. "In the old days, we could sell a deep catalog title in six months, but now we need a year, which creates financing needs in order to be able to carry the product for a longer period of time."

That means that business has become more capital-intensive, the chain president says. Since retailers have to maximize gross margin profits, that means that they have to factor in how long it takes to sell, he says, cautioning that chains will be very conservative with their music budgets in the fourth quarter. These issues will contribute to a further shrinking of the music footprint in many stores, the chain CFO says.

Making matters worse, DVD sales have been much weaker this year, retail executives say. But they are divided on whether the poor sales have been due to a weak schedule and tough economic conditions or a secular decline in the DVD format's popularity among consumers, many of whom have already stopped buying CDs.

Whatever the answer, DVDs have supplanted music at the front of most home entertainment superstores, thanks to aggressive marketing by film studios. This year, studios are being just as aggressive with DVD catalog, merchants say. But they may be bucking off from releasing big DVD titles close to Thanksgiving weekend, due to fears of a possible price war, says a Wall Street analyst who follows movie studios. The analyst notes that intensive promotional pricing last year led to a pricing battle, triggered by pressure from big-box retailers on the studios to provide them with unusually large promotional budgets.

Alliance Entertainment president Alan Tuchman says he assumes that floor space dedicated to music will continue to dwindle right through the holiday shopping season. "The labels have made it very clear to me that they want to manage the CD down... because they fear it is cannibalizing potential digital sales," he says. "The labels see it as a declining business and will no longer invest in it beyond the big-box merchants.

But Tuchman says labels should view the CD as a different business from digital downloads, and one that targets a different demographic. If the labels look at it from that perspective, and cut prices and invest in other music merchandisers, then the CD can be incremental business for them, he says.

"Christmas depends on how much real estate we have left," Tuchman says. "We don't see much of a change in pricing from the label side so we think music will continue to fade. By Christmas merchants will have a much smaller music section, so I am not bullish."

CHART SOURCE: Nielson SoundScan

DO YOU HEAR WHAT I HEAR?

NEW DIGITAL, MOBILE MUSIC SERVICES WILL VIE TO DELIVER HOLIDAY CHEER

By ANTONY BRUNO

While iTunes continues to dominate the digital music market, a number of new services expected to go live by this holiday season could help diversify how fans access music online.

One of the more buzzworthy of the new sites is Spotify, an on-demand streaming music service that's already popular in Europe. Like other streaming sites, it subsidizes free music with advertising. But the key to Spotify's success in the United States will lie in its ability to persuade some of its users to subscribe to a monthly service without ads.

Central to this uphill will be giving paying customers access to downloadable mobile applications that will enable them to stream music on an Apple iPhone or a handset using Google's Android platform. Internet radio streaming services like Pandora, Slacker and Clear Channel's iHeartRadio have all launched popular iPhone apps, but they don't let users pick specific songs to listen to. Spotify's app, which would enable on-demand streaming, has the potential to shake up the mobile music market.

Another new service is Nokia's Comes With Music, which offers a one-year music subscription with the purchase of select music phones, enabling users to download as many tracks as they like during the course of the year and keep the songs even after their subscription expires. The offer has been a tough sell so far in Europe, but Nokia says it will apply what it has learned in other markets to its U.S. launch. Also expected in time for the holidays is a revamped Project Playlist, which is striking major-label licensing deals. In its original incarnation, the playlist-building-and-sharing service simply streamed music hosted on other sites across the internet, much of it illegally. Project Playlist is now converting to a hosted model, armed with the assets of Total Music, which it acquired earlier this year, and licensing deals it has reached with Sony Music Entertainment and EMI Music.

While Universal Music Group and Warner Music Group haven't dropped their copyright infringement lawsuits against the company, sources say negotiations with these holdouts are at an advanced stage. MTV co-founder John Sykes, who in April was named Project Playlist's CEO, doesn't intend to use any unlicensed content. Once it has signed up all four majors, the re-launched service will include links to buy individual songs, a premium subscription tier and other enhancements.

Amid all this activity, the iPhone will maintain its prominence. New apps are expected to come out later this year to take advantage of new features that Apple has made available to developers---such as the ability to add recurring charges or sell content from within a given app. Selling custom content within the app itself will provide artists and labels another potentially valuable sales platform.

Already, music-based iPhone games like Tapulous' "Tap Tap Revenge" and EpicTilt's "TapStar" let users buy new songs for use within those respective games, thanks to licensing deals with Universal and Sony. Come Christmas, they're sure to be joined by others looking to get in on the holiday festivities.
NOW, 'MORE AGAIN

THANKS TO A 360 DEAL WITH FUELED BY RAMEN, PARAMORE IS GETTING READY TO SHINE WITH 'BRAND NEW EYES'

BY CORTNEY HARDING PHOTOGRAPH BY SARA RUBINSTEIN

When Paramore frontwoman Hayley Williams is asked about her plans after the Sept. 29 release of her new album, "Brand New Eyes," she simply says, "We're going to be on tour—forever.

Williams, 20, isn't being terribly hyperbolic. Since Paramore started in 2004, the band members have risen to the top the old-fashioned way—by touring nonstop and building relationships with fans. They seem pretty seriously about their group of bona fide rock stars barely out of their teens. They're not features in gossip pages, are rarely sighted drinking or smoking and seems more interested in playing shows than hitting clubs.

The band is still young but its road to success has been long. "We started working with Hayley when she was 14," says one of Paramore's managers, Mark Mercado. "She was 14, Josh (Farro, guitar) was 16, and Zach (Farro, drums) was 11." Pretty much everyone involved with the band agrees that it wouldn't be where it is today without the benefits of the 360-degree deal the act signed with John Janick's Fueled by Ramen label. The band signed the deal in April 2005, before "360" was an industry buzzword, and attracted a flurry of coverage when it started to sell more records in 2007. And while the band's success will surely not end the debate about the contract model, its long, slow but ultimately fruitful trajectory does help the case of those who argue that 360 deals allow a band to grow and develop organically.

THE LONG ROAD

Janick had a feeling about Paramore. The first time he saw it play the rock festival Taste of Chaos in Florida, he wasn't immediately taken with its music, but he was sold on the band's vision. "The first time I saw them, they had these really poppy songs, but I could tell it wasn't really what they wanted to do," he says. "It's like, you know where they wanted to go, but they weren't quite sure about how to get there. But even though they were very young, I could see there was something special there, and I could look down the road and see them playing much bigger venues.

Janick signed the band to a deal that not only included recorded music but an interest in touring, merchandising and fan club fees. The band's other manager, Dave Steinbrink, points out that "everyone talks about the 360 model like it's this brand-new concept, but in reality, indie labels have all developed through being 360 concepts from the get-go—and when you look at it, those were the labels that really allowed bands the room to grow and develop."

Paramore put out its first album, "All We Know Is Falling," in the summer of 2005. The album went on to sell 437,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan—far from a failure, but certainly not a smash. During the summer of 2005, the band played the Shira Girl stage on the Vans Warped tour, a second stage that was so secondary the bands had to tear it down themselves at night and rebuild the next day. Janick says Paramore wasn't paid for its appearance on the tour, but it allowed the members to work on their live show and build a support base.

They stayed on the road for most of 2006, playing eno package tours and again playing Warped, having moved up to the Volcom and Hurley stages—not the main stage, but at least a second stage that was assembled by a crew and not a drummer. "We were building up as we were going along, so it was a good strategy for us to go out and support people and build our base and get people from other band's bases," Janick says. "It wasn't always easy to get people to take us out, because they were so young and still not a known commodity, but we wanted to position them to be thought of as a touring band."

When the band released "Riot!" in June 2007, it entered the Billboard 200 at No. 20 and sold 44,000 copies in its first week, according to Nielsen SoundScan—not a flop, but again nothing to indicate the band was poised for bigger and better things. But Paramore's nonstop touring was beginning to pay off in other ways—it was getting traction at MTV and scored a spot on the Warped tour's main stage. By the fall of 2007, the band had two singles on the Modern Rock chart, and the album was steadily climbing the Billboard 200. The singles were selling well, too: "Misery Business" has sold 1.6 million downloads to date, and "Crushcrushcrush" has sold 986,000 copies.

"There were a lot of similar-sounding bands getting big at that time, like Panic at the Disco and My Chemical Romance. But they were all male-fronted," says James Montgomery, rock editor at MTV. "When Paramore first came up, people were saying, 'You have to see this girl with the bright red hair.' She's a firecracker."

The band was also making in-roads at retail through a partnership with mall staple Hot Topic (see story, page 14). "We presented 'Riot!' to them right before it came out, and they gave us some cool opportunities," Williams says.

Paramore partnered with the store to create promotional hangtags on exclusive T-shirts prior to the release of "Riot!" Customers could download exclusive digital content only when they purchased the T-shirt; the content was redeemable online through unique codes on each T-shirt's tag. The band set up specially priced music and merch bundles with Hot Topic where customers can purchase a Paramore T-shirt and an album for a discounted, "bundle only" price of $20.

The relationship with the retailer has grown since then. To promote its contribution to the "Twilight" soundtrack, Paramore did an in-person appearance with the film's cast and a live perform-
BRAND-NEW DAY

As 2009 dawned, Paramore stood atop the charts as part of the "Twilight" soundtrack. The band's involvement in the hysteria-provoking vampire flick was a direct result of Williams' love for the soap series of novels on which the movie is based. "I got all the books for Hayley to take to London with her, because I'd been hearing so much about them," Janick says. "These 1 things are huge. I thought they would keep going for a while. And a week later she called me and said that she absolutely had to do a song for the movie. I think she said she read the first book on the plane, and she just devoured them. We sat down with Atlantic & music supervisor Alex Pasavans and made it happen."

"It was out of the blue for us," Williams says. "And then the next thing we know, 'Decode' [from the soundtrack] was charting really high on iTunes and the soundtrack went platinum. So they gave us a plaque for 'Twilight.' Then it went double-platinum, so they had to change the plaque. We were kind of like, 'Really? This is awesome!'. The track has sold 850,000 downloads, according to SoundScan. And while the band's "Twilight" track hit the bull's-eye with the teen market, Paramore's camp knows that the band will have to put in plenty of work for the new album.

The group is currently on the road, opening for No Doubt and trying out new material. "We're playing two new songs, 'Ignorance' and 'Where the Lines Overlap,'" Williams says. "Our fans know all the words to them, so they're singing along and having a good time every night."

But the carefully chosen opening slot is more than a chance for Paramore to test out some new tunes. "I've learned that there is a much bigger audience for Paramore than I had previously thought," Janick says. "I went to the show at PNC [Bank Arts Center in Holmdel, N.J.] on Friday and went to the show Saturday [at Long Island's] Jones Beach. It's a different crowd because you have No Doubt—they were huge about 12 years ago, and their core audience is a little older. It was massive; it was probably between 15 and 20,000 people."

According to Billboard Boxscore, shows on the tour from May 16 through June 17 have grossed $7,343,609, with a total attendance of 196,410. Of 12 shows during that period, three were sold out.

"I just couldn't believe the entire crowd knew not just the singles, but knew the other songs off the records," Janick says. "When you go to a Paramore show, it's nonstop from beginning to end—3, 4, 5,000 people singing every song. It's like a love fest; they love that Paramore is on the Internet that streamed our music, listened to our music, whatever. I think, hopefully, people have gotten to know Paramore now and will make the leap and buy the album, and I think that's going to expand it. I don't think I need to go find a 40-year-old woman or a 40-year-old man to expand my band."

For her part, Williams also thinks going to a whole new crowd would be a mistake. "I've learned that there is a much bigger audience for Paramore than I had previously thought," Janick says. "I went to the show at PNC [Bank Arts Center in Holmdel, N.J.] on Friday and went to the show Saturday [at Long Island's] Jones Beach. It's a different crowd because you have No Doubt—they were huge about 12 years ago, and their core audience is a little older. It was massive; it was probably between 15 and 20,000 people."

"Ignorance," which Williams says bridges the gap between "Riot!" and the new album, will serve as the first single. The song mixes the more gothic elements of the band's "Twilight" track with the bowling that was so prevalent on "Riot!"; it's been characterized as a breakup track.

MTV's Montgomery says that he sees Paramore's new album as the MySpace generation's version of Fleetwood Mac's "Rumors."

"When I mentioned that to the band, they laughed, because they told us that's what they were going for," he says. "With less drugs, of course, and without the romantic entanglements. But it's definitely a breakup record on some level."

Williams also says that the album was a way for her to work through Paramore's sometimes-public feuding, including one argument that led to a string of canceled tour dates.

"It was tough for me to say some of the things I say in it, because I knew some of the guys were going to read it, and it was about our band," she says. "I was kind of embarrassed and didn't know how they would take it. But once all those words were out on the table, it gave us the opportunity to hash through our problems and internal struggles that we had been facing. At one point we were hanging on by a little piece of thread. We had to rebuild things and we're still rebuilding things. This record is a log of that."

Janick says that for "Eyes" the band will sell a T-shirt and CD single through its partnership with Hot Topic and will follow up with a 7-inch and another T-shirt a month later. There will be three versions of the album: a standard album, an album with five acoustic bonus tracks and a deluxe package with a poster, DVD and color vinyl that will sell for $39.99. The band's Web site, Paramore.net, will relaunch, and the band will shoot a video for "Ignorance."

And then, of course, the band will go right back out on the road. "We're going to start playing smaller venues than normal, 1,500- to 3,000-seaters in 2013, as the fall, Mercado says.

Or, as Williams puts it, "Even if the record doesn't sell anything, I still want to go out and know I can play for kids every night."
FOURTH AND GOAL

As the final quarter approaches the stars will hit the field: There are dueling divas (Mariah Carey, Whitney Houston), lovely Latin ladies (Shakira, Nelly Furtado) and the biggest names in rap (50 Cent, Dr. Dre and Jay-Z, at least one of whom will have an album come out). Look closer, and you'll also see that the traditional playbook has been thrown out: Pearl Jam is releasing an album on its own label, Alice in Chains has a new singer, and the once-unknown "American Idol" finalists may beat them all. But whether you've got money on Leona Lewis or Adam Lambert, one thing is certain—the industry would love to close out the year with a touchdown.

BY CORTNEY HARDING

SEPTEMBER

MARIAH CAREY, 'MEMOIRS OF AN IMPERFECT ANGEL'
(Island Def Jam, Aug. 25)
The multiplatinum singer says the album's title reflects how "each song is almost an intimate conversation or entry in a private diary. A lot of the songs reflect a different time in my life than where I am right now, inspired by actual events in my life, movies or stories from my close friends." Carey calls the album a tribute to the late R&B singer Minnie Riperton, whose own multi-octave range was "so influential in my singing style." "Obsessed," the first single, already set another record for the singer: Its debut at No. 52 on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart marked Carey's best bow on that list in 10 years. In addition to the Dream ("We love having fun with lyrics") and Tricky Stewart ("One of the most underrated major producers"), who wrote and produced most of the album with Carey, she worked with Jermaine Dupri and Timbaland.

INGRID MICHAELSON, 'EVERYBODY'
(Cabin 24 Records/Original Signal, Aug. 25)
Two years after her sophomore album, "Girls and Boys," charmed critics and received a spotlight on "Grey's Anatomy," Ingrid Michaelson returns with a new batch of lovely quirky tunes. "Everybody," set for release on the singer/songwriter's Cabin 24 record label, takes advantage of Michaelson's knack for wordplay by focusing on the possessive power of a relationship. While the joyful title track should delight fans of her breakout single "The Way I Am," introspective songs like "The Chain" channel the soft-spoken power of Joni Mitchell over swelling arrangements.

BLK JKS, 'AFTER ROBOTS'
(Secretly Canadian, Sept. 8)
After an EP attracted the attention of the indie label Secretly Canadian, the four-piece band BLK JKS (pronounced "black jacks") left its native South Africa in January and headed for Bloomington, Ind., to record its debut. The band says it put its Johannesburg roots front and center as it crafted a collection of dub-based prog rock tracks. Following the success of American acts influenced by African rhythms, such as Vampire Weekend and Ra Ra Riot, "After Robots" marks the culmination of the trend, with songs like "Lakeside" and "Molalatladi" offering spastic percussion and multilingual vocal chants.

JAY-Z, 'BLUEPRINT 3'
(Roc Nation/Atlantic Records, Sept. 11)
On the eighth anniversary of the release of the first "Blueprint" album, Jay-Z will release his 11th studio album, "Blueprint 3," on his new venture between his own Roc Nation label and Atlantic Records. Although details are scant, Jay-Z says the album was produced by Kanye West and himself, with added production from Timbaland and No I.D. It will have 10-14 tracks, and, unlike 2001's more soulful "The Blueprint," the new effort will have a more classic sound. "The people of my generation like the Ushers and the Kanyes and the Justin Timbalakes are becoming all those artists that we looked up to—the Marvin Gayes and the Sinatras," he says. "The music is new and fresh, but I approached it in a classic sense." While it is too early to say who will make the final cut, Jay says he has collaborated with MGMT, Kid Cudi, Drake, Rihanna and Mr. Hudson.

MUSE, 'THE RESISTANCE'
(Warner Bros., Sept. 14)
Muse's 2006 studio set "Black Holes and Revelations" sold almost 3 million copies worldwide, but John Reid, the London-based CEO of Warner Music U.K. and Continental Europe—and one of the few
people to have heard the album—says the follow-up will do even better. Recorded at singer Matt Bellamy’s home studio in Como, Italy, the self-produced set retains the U.K. band’s penchant for heavy guitar rock, soaring falsetto-pitched vocals and grandiose orchestration, Reid says, but is “more ambitious” in scale and scope. Bellamy has said “The Resistance” is heavily influenced by classical music, while Reid describes it as “a big rock record with electronics and strings.” A track listing isn’t yet confirmed, although the band announced through Twitter that the song “United States of Eurasia” would appear on the record.

DAVID GRAY, ‘DRAW THE LINE’
(Mercer Street/Downtown Sept. 22)
After a four-year hiatus, the British singer/songwriter David Gray is back with a new set, his first on the indie label Downtown Records. Gray waited until after he finished recording to sign a label deal. “I feel completely bulletproof with this,” he says. “It shines the light on facets of me as a performer, a writer and a singer that I haven’t perhaps illuminated as brightly enough for a long time.” The album retains the slow, melancholy, atmospheric tone set on earlier albums, best represented on the lovelorn piano track “Fugitive.” Elsewhere, “Nemesis” tells the story of a man fighting with himself, while “Draw the Line” exerts the narrator to take a stand. Annie Lennox guests on “Full Steam Ahead,” and Jolie Holland lends vocals to “Kathleen.”

MONSTERS OF FOLK, ‘MONSTERS OF FOLK’
(Shangri-La, Sept. 22)
After touring together and dubbing their tour the Monsters of Folk tour, Conor Oberst, My Morning Jacket’s Jim James and M. Ward decided to head to the studio and lay down a collection of collaborative tracks. There’s lots of harmony and lots of songs where we trade verses,” James says. “It’s pretty fun for us to get in that beginner’s frame of mind again. You can feel a lot of that energy on there—trying to keep the wheels from flying off the car.” James also credits producer Mike Mogis with mixing the three diverse voices together. Standout tracks include “Dear God,” which recalls early ‘80s adult standards radio and the country tinged “The Right Place.” The harmonies on “Man Named Truth” sound straight from the ‘0 Brother, Where Art Thou?’ era, and “Magic Marker” is a stunning and tragic portrait of an alienated youth.

LYFE JENNINGS, ‘SOONER OR LATER’
(Jesus Swings/Asylum/ Warner Bros., Sept. 22)
Lyfe Jennings says his first project for Asylum/Warner Bros. is his “greatest album and also my last.” He says he needs to play a bigger part in the lives of his three children and wants “to spend the majority of my time writing and developing other artists” through his imprint, Jesus Swings. But before he goes, he’s leaving fans with a new album that’s more uptempo, but comparable to his three prior Columbia releases, which centered on life and relationships. Jennings collaborated with producers Polow Da Don, Mario Webber and the Trackboyz, the last of whom produced the album’s first single, the midtempo groove “Haters.” In discussing the title, Jennings says, “I’m just letting the haters out there know that they can waste their time hating on me. But I’m not about that. Everything is still all right with me, I’m moving forward.” Guests on “Sooner Or Later” include Keyshia Cole, Ludacris, Anthony Hamilton, Fabolous and Bobby Valentino.

NELLY FURTADO, ‘MI PLAN’
(Universal Music Latino, Sept. 29)
Nelly Furtado’s previous Spanish-language albums have included duets with Juanes and Calle 13. She’s charted twice on the Hot Latin Songs tally, once with the Juanes duet and once with her hit “Promiscuus.” For her new all-Spanish album, she’s collaborating with Josh Groban, pop/regional Mexican star Alejandro Fernández, tropical star Juan Luis Guerra, alt-pop singer/songwriter Julieta Venegas, Spanish rapper Mala Rodríguez and jazz/flamenco act Concha Buika. Alex Cuba, a Cuban singer/songwriter living in Canada, co-wrote the soaring, high-energy first single, “Manos Al Aire,” with Furtado and James Bryan. “Mi Plan” was executive-produced by Andres Reocin and produced by Furtado along with Cuba, James Bryan, Denniz Cabeltiz, Lester Méndez, Salama Remi and Michael Anthony.

ALICE IN CHAINS, ‘BLACK GIVES WAY TO BLUE’
(Virgin, Sept. 29)
Alice in Chains hasn’t released a full-length album of new material since its self-titled 1995 effort, but listening to the forthcoming “Black Gives Way to Blue,” it feels like 14 years are passing. Singer/guitarist Layne Staley, bassist Mike Inez, drummer Sean Kinney and singer/guitarist William DuVall filling the position of late vocalist Layne Staley to make up one.”

MIRANDA LAMBERT, ‘REVOLUTION’
(Columbia Nashville, Sept. 29)
Despite having sold a combined total of 1.8 million copies of her first two albums, Miranda Lambert doesn’t feel like she’s broken out just yet. But she has high hopes for her forthcoming effort. “It will be my biggest album—I mean, you never know commercially how it will do and I don’t want to jinx it—but for me and for making statements and being creative and going out of the box, this is my biggest project so far,” she says. Lambert, who famously sang about burning her boyfriend’s house down (“Kerosene”) and waiting for an abusive male with her gun cocked and loaded (“Gunpowder & Lead”), says the new album will be less about revenge and more about the maturity that being in a stable relationship brings. “It’s more grown up,” she says. “It’s not so chip-on-your-shoulder and crazy. It’s me all the way, but it’s me at 25 versus 18 or 19.” Her first single, “Dead Flowers,” which Lambert wrote solo about a dying relationship, has an all-country feel, while “The House That Built Me,” one of the few songs she didn’t write, finds the singer visiting her childhood home in hopes of easing her current pain.

THE CLIPSE, ‘TILL THE CASKET DROPS’
(REUP/Gang/Columbia Records, Sept. 29)
For its third album, the Clipse once again paired with the Neptunes, as well as collaborated with Khalil (who produced three tracks) and Sean C and I.V. (“Popeyes”, featuring Cam’ron, with a chorus of “That new Cl is fly/Outside of Popeyes/Eating chicken and fries,” over a looping, piano-based, drum-heavy production, is a perfect example of the hard-knocking street tracks that have become its stock in trade. The bell-laden “Showtime”, featuring Drake, “Champion,” with Travis Barker on drums; the motivational “Life Change” and the single “Kinda Like a Big Deal” featuring Kanye West, and the chopped and screwed lead single “Eyes on Me,” with Keri Hilson, also appear on the album.

50 CENT, ‘BEFORE I SELF DESTRUCT’
(G-Unit/Aftermath/Interscope, September TBD)
50 Cent has delayed his “Before I Self Destruct” album a few times during the past year, but now that Eminem’s “Relapse” has finally been released, the G-Unit frontman is set to present his fourth
studio album, which he’s dubbed on the Internet as his most “perfect” album to date. So far, so good. Robbie Williams’ "Real Life Killed the Video Star" (Virgin, Oct. 26) is an attempt to regexp popular consciousness and vocal appeal. His debut album, "I Saw It Happen," was written by Bryan with Babyface’s legendary songwriting partners (Warner Bros, 1998), and says, "It was a jolt to find myself listening to a guitar record for the first time in my life."

ROBBIE WILLIAMS, “REALITY KILLED THE VIDEO STAR” (Virgin, Oct. 26)

"Don’t call this a comeback," says David Enthoven, joint managing director of Williams’ handlers’ iceman management company. "He doesn’t see it that way. Maybe one album didn’t perform quite as well, but he’s still the biggest male superstar outside of America." His last release, 2009’s quirky "Rudebox" (Chrysalis/EMI), was a relative flop—although it sold 50,000 copies in the United Kingdom, according to the Official Charts Co.—but Enthoven says "Re-

DAVID BISBAL, TITLE TBD (Universal Music Latino, October TBD)

David Bisbal, best-known as Spain’s most successful real-

say, "It’s a big pop record," he says. "We’ve got four or five smash hits. And if you’re worried he’s rapping on it—he’s not.”

ALEJANDRO SANZ, TITLE TBD (Warner Music Latin, November TBD)

The Spanish singer/song-

NOVEMBER T-PAIN, ‘UBER’ (Jive, November TBD)

When Jay-Z released his latest single, “O.A.A. (Death of Auto-

TBD)”, earlier this year, many thought it was directed at T-

Pain, the proclaimed king of the vocal effect. But Jay’s barbs

DONNA RAYE, “AMYST BE LOVING” (J Records, October TBD)

The rock act Say Anything may be taking a more technical ap-

proach to the songs found on its new self-titled album, but the "experimen-
tal nature of the band remains." according to frontman Max Bemis. Pro-

duced by Neal Avon (Everclear, Fall Out Boy), the 13-track set—Say Anything’s third full-length release—features instrumen-
tal tracks that include a string of sections, horns and guitar. “Our fans will be surprised at how big and over the top the record is,” Bemis says. “Like, ‘Whoa, they actually did it.’” Full of tongue-in-cheek lyrics, the singer gets a few things off his chest with the single “Hate Everyone.” Meanwhile, on "Less Cute," Bemis tries his hand at writing from a woman’s perspective.

Idol’ Dials In

THREE ‘AMERICAN IDOL’ ALUMNI TARGET THE HOLIDAY BUYING SEASON FOR THEIR DEBUTS

BY MONICA HERRERA

Kris Allen, at 23 years old has a wealth of songwriters and producers to choose from: David Hodges (Clarence, Daugthy), Samaa 
Remi (Nas, Amy Winehouse) and Claude Kelly (Akon, Leona Lewis) have all submitted material for the record. Allen also collaborated with Joe King of the Fray in June at Timbaland’s Virginia Beach, Va., recording studio. “Each writing session has been a learning experience,” says Allen, who adds that his record will sound similar to John Mayer and Jason Mraz, with possible traces of the urban sound that he’s been exploring with some collaborators. "I think that we are trying to figure it out and that it’s going the right way and I’m really excited about it. I can’t wait.”

ADAM LAMBERT, TITLE TBD (19 RECORDINGS/ RCA RECORDS, FALL TBD)

Adam Lambert is unlike any “American Idol” contestant be-

But if you fell in love with Jason

JASON CASTRO, TITLE TBD (ATLANTIC RECORDS, OCTOBER TBD)

The original dark horse contestant on “American Idol,” Jason Castro finished in fourth place in season seven and in April

signed with Atlantic Records, marking the first time the label will work with an “Idol” alum. “If you fell in love with Jason

on the show, this is exactly the record you’d want him to make,” says Pete Ganbarg, Atlantic executive VP/head of A&R. “It’s introspective, playful and very much a combination of his in-

fluences, which range from Jeff Buckley to Jack Johnson.”

The dreadlocked singer co-wrote 11 songs on the 14-track set, which features production and additional songwriting by Evan Ross, John Fields and Kara DioGuardi. “I’m really excited about the music we’ve written,” says Castro, who also signed a deal with Universal Music Publishing Group in June. “I’m ready to get out there and show it to the world.” A debut single is expected to hit radio in August.
writer Alejandro Sanz special-
izes in literate pop, but he’s not
afraid to duet with dancefloor
divas like Shakira and Bey-
oncé. He wrote most of the
album and has been working
in his Miami studio with the
producer Tommy Torres.
Sources also say a collabora-
tion with a major English-
language artist is in the works.

ALEJANDRO FERNÁNDEZ,
TITLE TBD
(Universal Music Latino,
Fonovisa; November TBD)
The Mexican star Alejandro
Fernández will release not
one but two new studio al-
bums—one pop and one
ranchera, the genres he has
successfully straddled. The
releases also mark Fernán-
dez’s first outings with Uni-
versal after a lifetime with
Sony. The ranchero album
was written and produced by
the regional Mexican icon and
singer/songwriter Joan Se-
bastian, who also wrote and
produced “Para Siempre,” the
2007 hit album by Fernán-
dez’s father, Vicente Fernán-
dez. The pop set has tracks by
several producers and writers
and is described by manager
Carlos de la Torre as featur-
ing “pop that’s in the same
line as Alejandro’s previous
album, but far more daring.”

MARY J. BLIGE,
TITLE TBD
(Matriciash/Geffen/Interscope,
November TBD)
Mary J. Blige follows up
2007’s “Growing Pain” with
an album whose big-name
collaborators include T.I. and
Jazmine Sullivan. Rapidly
building buzz for the project
is the club-driven lead single
“The One,” which features
hotshot rapper Drake. The
song catalyzed to No. 53 on
the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs
chart after only two weeks,
and, according to producer
Rodney Jerkins, has just been
tapped as the theme song for
an upcoming AT&T cam-
paign. “Mary wanted some-
ting fast for the clubs
because she was getting ready
to do the [WQHT] New York
Summer Jam,” Jerkins says.
“I created the track while she
and the other writers got the
lyrics together. Then Mary
said, ‘We’ve got to get Drake
on this.’ Jerkins, whose part-
nership with the singer dates
back to 1997’s “Share My
World,” says Blige has played
him several songs from the
album. “It’s just classic Mary,
soulful, real big sound,” he
says. “Her vocals this time are
amazing.”

LEONA LEWIS,
TITLE TBD
(J/Syco; November TBD)
When Billboard spoke to
Leona Lewis around the time
of her Grammy Award nom-
inations, the U.K. singer was
predicting a more rock-
oriented sound for the follow-
up to “Spirit,” which sold 2.8
million copies in the United
States, according to Nielsen
SoundScan, plus a further 1.6
million in the United King-
dom. According to the Offi-
cial Charts Co. But Richard
Griffiths, Lewis’ manager
and director of the London-
based Modest Management,
says the end result “still has
an R&B tinge to it, but it’s real-
ly just a great pop rock record.”
Recorded mainly in Los An-
geles, the track listing is still
being finalized, but Lewis has
again worked with OneRe-
public’s Ryan Colder, who co-
-wrote her transatlantic No. 1
“Bleeding Love,” as well as
doing more writing herself.
“On the last album ‘Bleeding
Love’ was by a long way the
standout track,” Griffiths
says. “This time around we’ve
got something equally strong
[for the lead single], but when
it comes to the second and
third single we’re going to be
in a much stronger place.”

ESTELLE, ‘ALL
OF ME’
(Atlantic, November TBD)
The British singer Estelle
broke through internationally
with “American Boy,” the
Grammy Award-win-
ning Kanye West collabora-
tion from her 2008
 sophomore album. “Shine.”
Riding the momentum of
that success, she’s return-
ing with West for her third
album. The set will include a
duet with West protege Mr.
Hudson, who he has called
“amazing.”

FALL
CAMILA, ‘DEJARTE
DE AMAR’
(Sony Music Latin, fall)
Following the success of its
2006 debut, “Todo Cambió,”
the Mexican pop trio Camila
will release its much-
anticipated sophomore
album in October or No-
ember. The group, anchored
by singer/songwriter/pianist
Mario Domm, is known for
 acoustic pop in the vein of
the Fray or Ben Folds. On the
new album, “fans will find an
evolved Camila that experi-
ments and finds new
sounds,” says Domm, who
has collaborated with a team
of writers on many of the 12
tracks of the album, tenta-
tively titled “Dejarte De
Amar,” after a song of that
name. This album marks
Camila’s first release in both
the United States and Latin
America.

DADDY YANKIE,
‘MUNDIAL’
(El Cartel Records/Universal,
fell)
Daddy Yanke’s upcoming
album, “Mundial,” will be
his first studio set since
2007’s “El Cartel: The Big
Boss,” and this time, the reg-
gueton trailblazer will do
most of the production. The
album also will feature a
duet with Don Omar.

Beating The
Holiday Blues

INDIES BEEF UP THEIR FOURTH-QUARTER RELEASE SCHEDULES

For years, indie-label calendars looked something like this: Roll
out big releases at the first of the year, continue through the
spring, taper off in the summer and then sit out the final three
months of the year.

In the days when physical retail dominated music sales, ma-
jors controlled the fourth quarter, spending a fortune putting
blockbuster releases and buying up prime real
estate in record stores. Co-op programs jacked
their rates sky-high and smaller operators were
forced off the side while holiday shoppers
snapped up hit albums.

But as I dug through release schedules for indie labels during the course of the last few
weeks, I noticed a trend—indies are starting to
regard the fourth quarter as just another collec-
tion of possible release dates, not a blackout pe-
riod. And while I assume the shift from physical to
digital was the primary driver of this change, the labels and
distributors I spoke with say it was only part of the equation.

The fact that many former major-label acts are now going
the indie route is a major factor, according to Missy Callazzo,
cofounder/president of MRI.

“The bands we were putting out five years ago would have
perished in the fourth quarter,” she says. “But now indies are
getting bigger bands and bigger releases, and it has really lev-
ed the playing field. I find that former major-label artists do
well in the fourth quarter.”

Callazzo says that MRI is planning to release albums
by Anthrax, Living Colour
and Carly Simon after August this year.

Jack Ponti, who founded Merovingian Music, says he never
believed that the fourth quarter was off limits to indies. “If you put out good records, it doesn’t mat-
ter when you release them,” he says. “For me, it’s about an album being ready to go and the momen-
tum being strong. Radio is the primary driver for the new SunSkrack album we have coming, and
there is no way we could go to radio in late August and then hold the album until 2010.”

Kanine Records owner Lio Cerezo says he is
also relying on a band’s timeline to set release dates.

“Bands take a long time pulling together these
records,” he says. “They spend the spring and summer tour-
ing and then finish their albums in the fall and want to
get the music out quickly. A lot of indie kids aren’t paying attention to these big releases anyway, so it’s not like we’re competing with the majors in that respect.”

Besides, the competition from the majors isn’t as stiff as it
used to be. “I would say that in general it is easier to compete
with the majors in the fourth quarter because there just isn’t
as heavy a schedule in years past,” says Josh Wittman, mar-
keting director at Redeye Distribution/Yep Roc Records. “Ret-
ial is still very expensive but not at the levels it was several years ago. For most labels they don’t necessarily think about compe-
tition at retail when they release records.”

But many labels don’t see the move toward digital as a sav-
ning grace for indies. “Competition for digital space is more sat-
urated than ever before, so I don’t think that factors into the
equation at all,” Wittman says.

Dominic Pandiscia, senior VP/GM of EMI Label Services and
Caroline Distribution, says that rapid growth in the digi-
tal space has led to some of the same problems indies had with
physical retail. “We’ve seen the overall number of releases in-
crease, which has led to many of the same retail challenges as
before,” he says.

Growth in the digital sector has led indies to label release schedules
to view its release schedule in a new light. “We have a differ-
ent agenda when it comes to digital sites,” says Kevin
Day, founder of Rocket Science. “Labels that hold back are miss-
ing a huge opportunity. Think of how many kids open up new
iPods or Zunes or gift cards on Christmas morning. It’s a great
time to release new music because they’re dying to fill up their
new gadgets and you can get right in front of them.”

Speed metal cars: ANTHRAX

THE INDIES

CORTNEY HARDING

UNIVERSAL MUSIC RECORDS/ESTELLE / ANDROS RODRIGUEZ
SADE, TITLE TBD
(Epic, fall)
In May, rumors swirled that the U.K. singer Sade was back in the studio when a site claiming to be her new official Web site posted news about a Nov. 24 release. While Sony has confirmed that an album is in progress and is intended for fourth-quarter release, it insists there isn’t a set date. “She is in the studio and the album will come when it is ready,” a source says. “You don’t wait for years for one and then rush it.” Little is known about what the notoriously private singer’s new music sounds like—her longtime collaborator, Stuart Mathewman, says the work is still in its “early stages”—but the singer Maxwell recently described it as “monolithic” after hearing some instrumental.

SHAKIRA, TITLE TBD
(Epic, fall)
Shakira’s third English album, her last for Sony before going to Live Nation, is scheduled for secrecy. Adding to the mystery is a viral video campaign for the first single, “Loba,” a Spanish-language disco-infused samba that will reportedly be released in English as “She Wolf.” Videos, posted on YouTube and a dedicated Web site, SheWolfCaComin.com, show a series of “Blair Witch”-style “sightings” of victims being mauled in cities around the world. The single will be distributed and promoted in Latin America in partnership with the regional wireless carrier America Movil. Sources told Billboard earlier this year that Shakira worked with producer Pharrell Williams on the album, recorded a duet with the Puerto Rican urban- alternative act Galle 13 and collaborated with the Algerian artist Khaled.

USHER, TITLE TBD
(LaFace/Jive Label Group, fall)
Contrary to earlier reports, Ushe’s next album won’t be titled “Monstar.” In fact, the follow-up to his fifth studio album—2008’s “Here I Stand”—remains untitled as Ushe continues to record. Collaborating producers include Jermaine Dupri, Jimmy Jam & Terry Lewis, Pharrell Williams, RedOne, Jack and Jim Jonsin. A single is slated for release this month.

ONE REPUBLIC
(TBD)
OneRepublic swears it doesn’t plan to make an album this year, but even the best-laid plans can change. Fromman Ryan Tedder wrote new material while he and his bandmates were on the road, and much of it was recorded in his mobile studio in Japan, Germany, South Africa and the United Kingdom. The band is mixing the nine-track set at its home studio in Denver, and Tedder promises three or four potential hits, among them “All the Right Moves,” a marching band-meets-classical quartet song about “keeping up with the Joneses.” According to Tedder, the band’s label boss, Interscope, likes what he’s heard thus far. “He said, ‘I don’t need to mess with anything,’ ” the musician recalls. “That obviously made me happy.”

YOUNG DRO,
"POLO." (Grand Hustle/Atlantic, fall)
For his new album, the nut- tily attired Atlanta native Young Dro recruited producers like Swizz Beatz, the Runners, Mannie Fresh and Travis Barker. Rappers Lil Boosie, Young Jeezy and T.I. all make guest appearances. The lead single, “Take Off,” featuring Young J.A., was released virally earlier this year, while the second single, the Jim Jonsin-produced “In the Club,” is scheduled to hit airwaves in the coming weeks. “On Fire,” co-produced by T.I. and Jonsin, is also slated to appear on the album.

THE GAME, "THE R.E.D. ALBUM"
(Geffen Records, fall)
While the Game recently murmured about retiring from making music, his new album proves he’s not ready for a life of leisure quite yet. He claims that he’s reedi- cating himself to rap, hence the title of his fourth studio album, “The R.E.D. Album” (“the RE-Dedication”). The Compton, Calif., rapper is working with producers like Timbaland, J.R. Rotem, Cool and Dre, Mike Lynn and Drumma Boy. On the eve of the arrival of the "souful" album, as the artist describes it, he will release a slew of mixes this summer. So far he has released the single "Bang Along."

VAMPIRE WEEKEND, "CAMERA OBSCURA" (XL, fall)
In early 2008, the New York four-piece Vampire Weekend rode a wave of blog hype to a surprising No. 17 peak on the Billboard 200. For its sophomore set, the band holeed up in Brooklyn’s Treefort studios, enlisting keyboardist Rostami Baman- gjli to produce. Vampire Weekend gave fans a taste of “Camera Obscura” in March, when it unveiled the sparkling new cut “White Sky” on “Late Night With Jimmy Fallon.” The track, along with the Velvet Under- ground-inspired “Taxi Cab,” has the same whimsical vibe as the band’s self-titled debut but hints at a maturation in songwriting.

BEST OF THE REST

SEPT. 1: Black Crowes, "Before the Frost..." (MNR) Whitney Houston, "I Look to You" (Arista) Pitbull, "Rebellion" (Polo Grounds/RCA)
SEPT. 8: Polvo, "In Prismo" (Merge Records)
SEPT. 15: Uncle Kracker, "Happy Tour'" (Atlantic Records) Beastie Boys, "Hot Sauce Committee" (Capitol) Jack Johnson, title TBD (Universal Motown Records Group)
SEPT. 22: Pearl Jam, "Backspacer" (self-released) Islands, "Vapours" (Anti) Sean Kingston, "Tomorrow" (Sony)
SEPT. 28: Dizzee Rascal, "Tongue 'N' Cheek" (Definitive Jux)
SEPTEMBER TBD: Heartrevolution, title TBD (Hearttrombi) The Flaming Lips, "Embryonic" (Warner Bros.)
OCT. 6: The Clientele, "Bonfires on the Heath" (Merge Records) The Raveonettes, title TBD (Vice) Lou Barlow, "Goodnight Unknown" (Merge Records) A Place to Bury Strangers, "Exploding Head" (Mute Records) various artists, "New Moon" (film soundtrack) (Atlantic Records) Mr. Hudson, "Straight No Chaser" (IDJ)
OCT. 13: Ryan Leslie, title TBD (Universal Motown Records Group) The Whips, title TBD (ATO)
OCT. 20: Florence & the Machine, "Lungs" (Universal Republic)
OCT. 27: Sting, "If on a Winter’s Night..." (Deutsche Grammophon)
OCTOBER TBD: Jason Castro, title TBD (Atlantic Records) Rod Stewart, title TBD (J Records) Toby Keith, title TBD (Show Dog Nashville) Ozmottoli, title TBD (Downtown)
NOV. 3: Steel Panther, "Feel the Steel" (Universal Motown Records Group) Tori Amos, "Christmas" (Universal Motown Records Group) Taylor Swift, title TBD (19 Recordings/Arista Nashville)
NOV. 24: Toni Braxton, "Pulse" (Atlantic Records) Lil Jon, "Crunk Rock" (Universal Motown Records Group)
NOVEMBER TBD: Diddy, "Last Train to Paris" (Atlantic Records)
DEC. 29: Soulja Boy Tell 'Em, "The DeAndre Way" (Interscope)
DECEMBER TBD: Lupe Fiasco, "Lasers" (Atlantic Records) Stone Temple Pilots, title TBD (Atlantic Records)
BLACKBERRY TOUR
The Tour offers access to MySpace, Flickr and Facebook and is one of several BlackBerry devices that will feature content from U2. Good seats not included. $200

YUBZ MOBILE
This retro handset reportedly reduces cell-phone radiation by 80%. But most users will be more interested in making a fashion statement straight out of the '70s. Coppola on line! Available now. $45

HTC MYTOUCH
Call it the GPhone if you must. It uses Google's Android OS. Like its icousin, it has a touch screen and an app store. T-Mobile only. $200

IFROGZ CUSTOMIZABLE HEADPHONES
These noise-canceling cans offer good sound, but they also make a fashion statement, allowing buyers to customize colors, designs and fabrics in 200,000 combinations. Watch out that they don't become more interesting than what you're listening to. Headphones: $35; earbuds: $20. Knowing your ears attract attention: Priceless.

ZUNE HD
This Zune could cure iTouch envy with a touch-screen interface, Wi-Fi and a sharper screen. Pricing not yet available.

SEASON'S GEEKINGS
A LOOK AT WINTER'S SHINIEST STOCKING STUFFERS—AND HOW THEY MIGHT AFFECT THE SOUND OF MUSIC
Sleigh Bells Ringing

CHRISTMAS-THEMED ACTS PREPARE TO HIT THE ROAD

There it sits on Billboard’s midyear touring chart, perched at No. 10, between Metallica and Fleetwood Mac.

No, it’s not just another rock band. It’s the holiday tour veteran Trans-Siberian Orchestra.

With an annual gross of about $50 million and yearly attendance of 1 million from two touring units, TSO has become a bona fide arena headliner that’s a perennial among the top 25 tours of the year, despite the narrow time frame of its touring season (Billboard, Dec. 13, 2008).

TSO won’t be alone plying live audiences with a one-of-a-kind spin on holiday music. Mannheim Steamroller, another WMG client, will be on the road again, as will Radio City’s Christmas Spectacular, the king of Christmas shows, which last year launched a touring arena production.

The holiday-themed touring business has been a consistently solid performer. Artists who have released successful Christmas recordings in the past, such as Martina McBride, Kenny Rogers and Josh Groban, are in demand every December. Then there are local concerts, charity events and radio shows, such as the multi-artist Jingle Ball concerts staged by top 40 stations KIIS-FM Los Angeles and WHHT, New York.

Despite the recession’s impact on consumer spending, two things bode well for live holiday entertainment events in 2009: First, the concert business in general has held up quite well, and second, people might give up a lot of things, but they won’t give up Christmas.

Conventional touring wisdom dictates that similar shows, either by genre or target demographic, try to achieve 30-40 days’ protection within a radius of a few hundred miles, contractually if possible. But the limited window for holiday-themed tours, roughly Thanksgiving through New Year’s Day, makes radius clauses impractical.

Helping to alleviate such risks is the fact that people who want to see the Rockettes usually differ from those who enjoy TSO’s brand of symphonic rock ‘n roll, although you can’t always count on such generalizations given the far-reaching appeal of holiday music.

“You’ve got to look at everything in the marketplace at that time,” says Marc Geiger, head of contemporary music at William Morris Endeavor and the agent responsible for TSO. “Santa at the mall, even the college bowl games. We look at the whole marketplace of fourth-quarter holiday-based entertainment. Everybody does their best to stay out of each other’s way and not purposely be competitive.”

Geiger says the market for live holiday entertainment is growing, and the evidence suggests that he’s right. Creative Arts Agency, for example, is routing its Winter Wonder Slam with Relient K and special guests Stephanie Smith, B. Reith, Chris Tomlin, Family Force 5 and Jeff Dunham.

And the Christmas Spectacular, produced by Madison Square Garden Entertainment, remains a blockbuster at its home venue of Radio City Music Hall, taking in $75 million for its 2008-09 run, according to Billboard Boxscore. MSGE’s other holiday property, Wintuk, rang up $23 million at the Theatre at Madison Square Garden in its inaugural run.

Game Upon A Midnight Clear

MUSIC-HEAVY TITLES WILL BE AMONG THE BLOCKBUSTER RELEASES FOR THE HOLIDAYS BY ANTONY BRUNO

‘THE BEATLES: ROCK BAND’
Publisher: MTV/Harmonix
Platforms: Xbox 360, PlayStation 3, Wii
Release date: Sept. 1

This edition builds on “Guitar Hero World Tour,” which introduced drums and vocals to the “Guitar Hero” franchise in time for the 2008 holiday season. How to follow up on that? Make it more social.

This edition’s Party Play mode lets users access all songs shipped with the game without having to play through to unlock them. It also lets the songs play in the background like a jukebox, or gamers can jump in and play along at any time. Users can also play with any combination of instruments, such as all guitars or all drums.

Other new modes include Rock Fest, where up to eight players can play the same instrument track: Elimination, which drops the worst player mid-song; and Momentum, which adjusts the difficulty level based on performance. “Guitar Hero 5” will also feature new music, but details aren’t yet available.

‘GUITAR HERO: VAN HALEN’
Publisher: Activision/Red Octane
Platforms: Xbox 360, PlayStation 3, Wii
Release date: Sept. 2

This third artist-specific “Guitar Hero” title will include hits by Van Halen, as well as tracks by bands like Queen, Weezer, Blink-182, the Offspring and Queens of the Stone Age. The game will feature original frontman David Lee Roth instead of his successor Sammy Hagar.

‘DJ HERO’
Publisher: Activision/Freestyle
Platforms: Xbox 360, PlayStation 3
Release date: Fourth quarter

In an effort to expand the rhythm-game business into new musical genres, Activision will release the hip-hop-heavy “DJ Hero” later this year. Featuring more than 100 tracks, the game replaces the plastic guitar controllers of “Guitar Hero” with a fake turntable. Like those other games, users must press the proper color-coded button at the right time based on screen prompts. But “DJ Hero” includes the ability to add special effects through scratching, use of a fader and other improvisations. Gamers with “Guitar Hero” guitars will be able to join in as well.

But the star here will be the music, which will include a mix of hip-hop, electronica, rock and soul. A playlist wasn’t available at press time, but the likes of DJ Shadow, DJ AM and DJ Z-Trip are all expected to appear in the game as playable characters along with their mixes.

‘BRUTAL LEGEND’
Publisher: EA/Double Fine Platforms: Xbox 360, PlayStation 3, Wii
Release date: Oct. 13

Setting itself apart from the music-game field is the highly anticipated “Brutal Legend,” an action adventure game based on the imagery and lore of Nordic metal culture. Created by the legendary videogame designer Tim Schafer, the game features the voice acting of Jack Black as the lead character Eddie Riggs, a roadie who travels to a world ruled by heavy metal gods and demons. In addition to a headbanging soundtrack, “Brutal Legend” features the voices and likenesses of such stars as Lemmy Kilmister, Lita Ford, Ozzy Osbourne and Judas Priest’s Rob Halford.

Activision was set to publish the game but dropped it after its merger with Blizzard Entertainment. Electronic Arts has since picked it up, but Activision has filed a lawsuit to prevent the game’s release. The case remains pending.
The Ghost Of Christmas Past

U.K. RETAILERS LOOK TO FILL THE VOID LEFT BY WOOLWORTHS BY TOM FERGUSON

LONDON—The U.K. music market is facing up to its first Christmas without “the Wonder of Woolworths.”

That tag line promoted the retail giant until it founder last December and finally closed all its stores in January—leaving the music business without 800 stores that had traditionally been key seasonal gift-buying destinations.

For retailers like the U.K. music market leader HMV, Christmas 2009 now represents “a tremendous opportunity to try and win over former Woolies’ ‘once-a-year’ gifters,” HMV head of music Rudy Osorio says.

Last year, the simultaneous collapse of the Woolworths-owned wholesaler EUK also meant key albums from Take That and Britney Spears were in short supply at EUK clients like mass merchants Asda and Sainsbury’s, as well as the music specialist Zavvi, which also folded in January.

However, Osorio says, “it was evident customers still wanted to buy and gift CDs—we saw strong volumes on titles like Take That.”

In 2008, Woolworths accounted for 8% of all album purchases by value, according to the BPI, which means a considerable slice of the market is up for grabs. Total album sales last year were worth £979.6 million ($1.3 billion), down 5.7% from 2007.

Earlier this year, Entertainment Retailers Assn. director general Kim Bayley suggested that non-specialist retailers could step in and “mop up those sales” (Billboard, May 9). But as yet, no such white knight has appeared.

“People in the fashion and discount retailing businesses have looked at it,” ERSA spokesman Steve Redmond says. “But nobody’s jumped yet. They’ve been put off by low margins, the possibility of high shrinkage and difficulty of maintaining stock without the appropriate staff.”

However, Redmond adds, “I can’t believe that in the fourth quarter there won’t be people who decide to stock a small selection of impulse buys.”

HMV, which the BPI says accounted for 24.1% of all album purchases in 2008, is stepping up to the plate. Although unwilling to reveal figures, Osorio says the chain has enjoyed some of its strongest sales this year around Valentine’s Day, Mother’s Day and Father’s Day.

“We’ve been focusing more of our marketing and in-store campaigns on the calendar gift giving events at which Woolworths was so strong,” he says.

The challenge is now to hang on to those gift buyers in the vital fourth quarter. BPI figures show that the average retail price of a CD fell to £7.53 ($12.30) in 2008. “In the shadow of recession,” Osorio says, “the £10 ($16.40) entertainment gift has a chance to grab a much greater share of the gifters’ purse.”

Accordingly, Osorio says HMV’s advertising in the fourth quarter will be family-oriented in tone and media placement. HMV is clearly “fixated on attracting the Woolies consumer,” says Steve Keresley, managing director of Proper Music Distribution, which distributes some 400 labels.

“But I’ll be interesting to see if they or the supermarkets win that market. The jury will be out until Q4.”

Among other U.K. mass merchants with a large share of album sales, Tesco (10.5%) didn’t return requests for comment and Asda (7.3%) declined to comment. Amazon also declined to comment, but Keresley suggests the online market leader has benefited from Woolworths and Zavvi’s demise.

“For us,” he says, “where retailers have shut, the business has much pretty much all transferred to the Internet—primarily Amazon.”

But, with key releases from Leona Lewis and Arctic Monkeys on the horizon, not to mention the much-anticipated reissue of the Beatles catalog, Osorio remains optimistic.

“The product will be out there this Q4, that’s for sure,” he says. “Consumers may still be cautious this Christmas, but they also know what tremendous value music represents—and we’re confident they’ll respond.”

A Christmas Resurrection?
HIGH RATINGs FOR ITS HOLIDAY SPECIALS SPUR CALLS FOR THE RETURN OF ‘TOP OF THE POPS’ BY ANDRE PAINE

LONDON—Three years after the BBC canceled “Top of the Pops,” it’s likely to be the most-watched music show on U.K. TV this Christmas.

The weekly chart countdown show’s final broadcast on July 30, 2006, ended a 42-year run for an institution that had become a global brand. Yet “TOTP” lingered on, with strong ratings for its seasonal specials fueling calls for its return as a weekly show from industry insiders like Simon Cowell. But in October 2008 the BBC rebuffed his offer to buy the rights and air “TOTP” on rival broadcaster ITV.

“Bring it back,” says Kevin McCabe, VP of promotion and press at EMI’s Parlophone label, calling the annual Christmas edition a “great promotional platform.”

The BBC initially announced it wouldn’t produce a 2008 “TOTP” Christmas show, triggering protests from the music industry and the U.K. media. The public broadcaster ultimately relented to popular demand, airing two year-end holiday specials featuring Coldplay, Take That, Leona Lewis and the Pussy Cat Dolls.

McCabe says the 2008 ratings showed that “with the correct scheduling, it could easily be a hit again as a weekly show.”

According to BBC viewership data, the “TOTP” Christmas special drew an audience of 3.7 million, 30.6% of all viewers in its time slot. A Dec. 31 year-in-review show attracted 4.1 million viewers, for an audience share of 20.8%, while a March 2009 special during the “Comic Relief” telethon—featuring Oasis, U2 and Flo Rida—attracted 6.7 million viewers (32%).

Although far below the show’s 70s peak of 19 million viewers, the audience totals substantially outstripped the 3.2 million viewers it averaged in 2006.

Now, U.K. promotion veteran Dylan White claims to have 1,000 signatures on an industry-wide petition to revive “TOTP” for an early evening slot, including U.K. chart-toppers Dizzee Rascal and Calvin Harris and Sony Music U.K. chairman/CEO Ged Doherty.

So far, the BBC remains unmoveable, although head of music entertainment Mark Cooper expects the Christmas special to return and says that a year-end review show remains a possibility.

Cooper describes “TOTP” as “a great old brand that’s dormant, but isn’t dead.” The 2008 shows, he says, were great. “The talent really turned up, and [the shows] felt like they belonged in their places in the schedule. It’s great to be reminded of a year in pop, and it’s all hits.”

However, he cautions, producing holiday specials is different from producing the show “in the third week in February when you’re on the third singles from a couple of [artists’] albums.”

Robbie Williams’ manager David Entwistle on the London-based label: music would welcome the show’s return, saying it’s “a huge brand and it was fantastic for Robbie.” However, he favors rewording its format to be less reliant on the singles countdown.

But EMI’s McCabe believes the show’s traditional focus on hit singles could make it “more relevant than ever,” now that digital tracks dominate the singles market.

That has “revitalized” the Official Charts Co.’s listing, White says. “You have a [genuine] ‘Top of the Pops’ artist each week.”

While Cooper says he would “love to make [“TOTP”] again,” he adds, “That doesn’t mean enough of an audience are committed to it for it to work as a weekly show.”

Local versions previously aired in five European markets, New Zealand and the Middle East. Salim Mukaddam, head of commercial affairs in the music division at the broadcaster’s commercial arm, BBC Worldwide, says, “We’re talking to some of the producers and broadcasters who did [those shows] about tailored versions for their territories.”

Practically, however, a U.K. version of the show would have to return to produce content for broadcasters unlikely to regularly attract international talent to their own studios.

Mukaddam says international partners are hankering for the weekly show’s return.

“If [“TOTP”] came back tomorrow,” he says, “they would take it.”

Additional reporting by Mark Sutherland in London.
Watered Down

AUSTRALIAN FESTIVALS PROTEST PROPOSED ALCOHOL RESTRICTIONS BY LARS BRANDEL

BRISBANE, Australia—December Down Under marks the start of summer and the festival season—but festivalgoers looking to escape the heat with a cold beer this year may be in for a surprise.

Festival promoters in the northeastern state of Queensland are up in arms over anti-binge drinking proposals from the state government's Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing that could convince drinking to designated areas, set limits on consumption and even ban serving full-strength beers.

The new regulations—which do not require approval by parliament and could be implemented as early as this month—would affect festival brands including the Big Day Out, Good Vibrations and the V Festival, which all usually stage events in the state. The OLGR says it is responding "to growing concerns of excessive alcohol consumption and unacceptable alcohol-fueled behavior at community events, especially those targeted at young adults."

But while many promoters acknowledge the need to address such problems, there's widespread concern that the crackdown could damage the local festival circuit. Failure to comply with the guidelines could see an event denied the necessary permit.

"My concern is that we're becoming overregulated," says one Queensland promoter, who asked to remain anonymous. "The alcohol crackdown is just another factor working against us. They'll kill it if they keep going."

The moves come at a time when the Australian festival circuit is doing robust business. According to Live Performance Australia, festivals sold 753,000 tickets in 2007, steady on the previous year, generating $26.9 million Australian ($21 million) in revenue. While that figure was down $9.6 million Australian ($7.5 million) from 2006's bumper year, sources close to the organization say that 2008 figures will show a modest rise in ticket sales and a huge leap in revenue, due to higher ticket prices.

In a submission to the OLGR, Creative Festivals Entertainment, the organizer of the all-ages Big Day Out festival, warned that the proposed alcohol limits might mean it can no longer afford to stage the traveling event in Queensland.

"In the long term," the festival's organizers say, "ticket sales will be affected, impacting our ability to maintain a commercially sound event and damaging the event's reputation, brand and goodwill."

Big Day Out's 2007 event, held Jan. 18 at Gold Coast Parklands, featured Neil Young, the Prodigy and Arctic Monkeys and was a 35,000-capacity sellout.

Promoters also warn that festival organizers could face tens of thousands of dollars in additional costs to enforce the alcohol regulations and that the new rules could trigger a sharp decline in bars' receipts, which can account for more than 10% of total revenue at some events. Many also believe the measures could prove counterproductive, encouraging fans to drink heavily before arriving.

Jam Music, the organizer of February's Good Vibrations festival on the Gold Coast, surveyed its 20,000-plus Queensland member base to get feedback from drinking-age festivalgoers. More than 90% of respondents said they would be more likely to consume alcohol before attending a music festival if these conditions were put in place, while 95% felt they were responsible enough to self-regulate their drinking.

"The conditions should not be applied statewide," Good Vibrations director Jane English says, "but should be judged on the experience and expertise of the event organizers and other relevant considerations."

While the OLGR says it will take account of all submissions before finalizing the regulations, many believe a clampdown is inevitable—and not just in Queensland.

"Binge drinking is a real problem," says Bill Hamilton, organizer of December's 20,000-capacity Woodford Folk Festival in southeast Queensland. "I expect these sorts of solutions will come in worldwide. Unfortunately, we've got a culture which celebrates getting pissed."

Silent Night

LATIN CHRISTMAS ALBUMS STRUGGLE TO FIND AUDIENCES

Most Latin Americans and U.S. Hispanics are Catholic, so you'd expect Christmas albums to be a natural fit for the Latin music market.

And yet, the track record for Christmas album sales in the U.S. Latin market has been pretty dismal.

With the exception of Luis Miguel's 2006 album "Navidades," which sold 145,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, no other Spanish-language Christmas album has come close to cracking the 100,000-unit mark. (Gloria Estefan's "Christmas Through Your Eyes" has sold 74,000 copies since its 1993 release, but it's in English.)

Christmas albums can be a challenge in any genre because labels have a narrow window to promote and sell their releases. But the challenges are even greater in the Latin market, given the difficulties in securing radio airplay and the limits of having only three major Spanish-language TV networks.

"For a label it makes no sense to release a Christmas-only album because they don't sell enough to cover the costs," says Tony Moreno, GM of the indie J&N and MP Records.

During the last several years prominent Latin artists have released Christmas albums that failed to find an audience. Raphael's 2004 album, "Vuelve Por Navidad," has sold only about 1,000 copies in the United States, while Jon Secada's "The Gift" (2001) and the Christian star Marcos Witt's "Tiempo De Navidad" (2004) have sold only 3,000 a piece, according to SoundScan.

"It's like a double-edged sword," says Pedro Guzmán, director of A&R for Universal Music Latino. "Christmas is so traditional that it's very difficult to create new classics or new trends."

Moreno takes it a step further: "You need standard repertoire and standard acts," he says.

The sales of Miguel's "Navidades" set, which includes Spanish-language versions of "Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas," "Santa Claus Is Coming To Town" and other seasonal favorites, seem to suggest that traditional songs work best. But some what surprisingly, the Latin genre that has enjoyed the most recent success with Christmas songs is tropical music, fueled perhaps by the prevalence of carnavals throughout Latin America around Christmas time.

For example, the salsa star Gilberto Santa Rosa's 2006 set, "Una Navidad Con Gil- berto," has sold 29,000 copies in the United States, according to SoundScan. Victor Manuel's "Navidad A Mi Estilo," released in 2007 and re-released in a deluxe edition in 2008, has sold 49,000.

Sony plans its release and promotion of "Una Navidad" around Santa Rosa's hectic tour- ing and recording schedule.

"It worked because we started very early on in the process," says Ruben Leyva, managing director of U.S. Latin for Sony Entertainment/Day 1. Leyva adds that Santa Rosa also had a history of recording successful Christmas dance tracks with the likes of El Gran Combo de Puerto Rico, so there was a track record in the genre.

"The stuff we've seen that works the best is dance-oriented, tropical music," he says, noting that markets where Latin Christmas releases seem to do best are typically Puerto Rico, Miami and New York, where Christmas dance parties are more common. But even Leyva cautions that releasing Latin Christmas albums "doesn't work every- where." And while overall Latin music sales declining sharply in the United States (Bill- board, July 11), the likelihood of Spanish-language Christmas albums finding a significant audience—or even being released—is diminish- ing. "It was always risky [to release a Christmas album]," Moreno says. "But now it's highly improbable."
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READY FOR LIFTOFF

Cobra Starship Taps Hot Topic, Leighton Meester For 'Hot Mess'

Cobra Starship frontman Gabe Saporta knows he shouldn't be talking this much—let alone recording a new album, touring nonstop and doing interviews—but he just can't quit.

"I haven't really given my voice a rest," says the singer, exasperated and still recovering from a December surgery that removed a cyst from his vocal cords. "I went to a vocal therapist who said I have to whisper so that I don't put stress on my voice box, but I'm not doing it. There's no way."

It's easy to excuse Saporta for disobeying doctor's orders. The 29-year-old and his bandmates—Ryan Blackinton, Alex Suarez, Victoria Ashler and Nare Novarro—have bigger concerns. Their third album, "Hot Mess" ( Decaydance/Fueled by Ramen/Atlantic Records), will be released Aug. 11, and their new single "Good Girls Go Bad," which features "Gossip Girl" actress (and recent Universal Republic signee) Leighton Meester, is climbing the Billboard Hot 100, where it's No. 36 this week.

Cobra Starship's second album, 2007's "Viva La Cobra," has sold 119,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. It solidified the band's fan base that the band first attracted with its 2006 album, "While the City Sleeps, We Rule the Streets," as well as Saporta's previous band, Midtown. Now, the group wants to keep the momentum going.

"The thought process for this album was to stick with how we built the band and appeal to the fans," fueled by famous producer John Janick says, "and also to make sure we have some great songs that would work for radio. We're trying to balance all that out."

The band wrote some material on the road last year but felt that the songs weren't gelling. In January Saporta and his bandmates held up in a rented house in rural Pennsylvania to flesh out the songs without distractions. "I was like, 'We've got to get away from here and be a band for a little bit, let these songs come to life.' " Saporta says. "It was kind of like a science lab."

The songs that emerged from that exclusive writing session, and subsequent studio work with Kevin Rudolf and Kari Dio-Guardi, aren't unlike the tracks on the band's first two albums. "Hot Mess" features more anthemic dance-punk with bombastic lyrics, and Saporta points to the title track and "Nice Guys Finish Last," which features a horn section, as evidence.

But he also says that one song, "The Scene Is Dead. Long Live the Scene," is introspective, as the frontman addresses his role as a showman. "I started Cobra with the intention of having it be fun and not heavy," Saporta says, "but this album is definitely more revealing on a personal level than any other Cobra record."

To set up the release of "Hot Mess," Cobra Starship leaked the track "Petewentz Is the Only Reason Why We're Famous" in April, then hit the road with Fall Out Boy through May. It also launched a new Web site in April, CobraCam.tv, where a new "episode" premieres every Monday until the album's street date. The clips, which garner 80,000-100,000 views each and are also available as free podcasts on iTunes, range from behind-the-scenes tour antics to scripted sketches, like a fake commercial for a new fragrance called "Deliciousness."

"We started to get a really good response from kids, so we thought, 'Let's just keep doing it as long as we can,' " says lead guitarist Blackinton, who has taken the lead on conceptualizing the videos.

Along with "Hot Mess," plenty of exclusive Cobra Starship content will be available in the coming weeks. Starting July 21, Hot Topic will sell a T-shirt that includes a physical hangtag that purchasers can use to redeem a free download of a "Good Girls Gone Bad" remix at Shockhound.com. And at its own Web site, the band will offer limited-edition merch items, like a Cobra Starship necklace and bonus DVD, free with every purchase of the deluxe version of "Hot Mess." Fans will also get a trial membership to the Cobra Crew, the band's new official fan club.

As is no surprise for a band with song titles like "Snakes on a Plane (Bring It)") and "Kiss My Sass," Cobra Starship isn't worried about losing any street cred over its collaboration with Meester. "Our real fans know already that I love 'Gossip Girl,'" Saporta says. "It's nothing new. That's been the point of Cobra Starship from the beginning. We're an amalgamation of all these different things and we're just fascinated by pop culture. To be able to take a bite out of it ourselves is great."
Fedora askew, bandana peeking out beneath it, Kermit Ruffins is a presence seen and felt throughout New Orleans, playing trumpet, singing and leading his Barbecue Swingers before packed houses every week at Vaughan's Lounge and Bullet's Sports Bar. He also presides over his own new joint, Sidney's Saloon, even tending to a grill full of sausages or a pot of turkey legs, right out on the street.

With his new CD, "Livin' a Tremé Life" (Basin Street Records), Ruffins honors the neighborhood he discovered in his teens—a hothouse for jazz culture that still inspires him. And when David Simon's HBO series "Treme" (airing in 2010) captures that life in fictional form, Ruffins will be among the principal cast, playing himself: Who else could embody his style and spirit?

1 What does the "Tremé life" mean to you?
I grew up in the Lower Ninth Ward. But around 15, I went to school in Tremé. I met tuba player Philip Frasier and we started the Rebirth Brass Band. I never went back. In Tremé, it was Mardi Gras every day, a celebration, with great musicians hanging out, playing, teaching you things. I learned traditional jazz from guys like [Antony] Tuba Fats Lacen]. He was the one who got me barbecuing on the street too.

2 How do you relate that on the new CD?
I just tried to start from where I started, with songs like "Didn't He Ramble" and "Red Dress," some of the first tunes I played with Tuba Fats and "Apple Tree," which I can remember hearing the Dirty Dozen play as they marched up and down the street. And all the way through to when I was watching the Democratic convention in Tremé, and I heard someone sing "I Can See Clearly Now," and I knew Obama would get elected.

3 Do you remember those first gigs after Hurricane Katrina, while the city was still in ruins?
I remember playing at Vaughan's. They had electricity, and they were burning wood outside to kill the awful smell in the air. There were tears in some people's eyes. Before the storm, the spiritual aspects of the words to each tune were strong for me. But after, they quadrupled. That was the saddest gig I ever played but in a sense also the happiest because we were coming back.

4 How did your acting in David Simon's HBO series come about?
One day my manager said, "David Simon wants to come to your house and talk to you." We sat and talked for a few hours, and he told me that he was going to have some writers follow me around and that he'd mail me a script in a year. When that script arrived, I couldn't believe it. The part—I guess it's got to be about the easiest thing to do: Stand up, be myself, smoke weed and barbecue, and hit my lines.

5 Will it change the public perception of New Orleans?
People are going to finally get it. David's team is not taking anything for granted. They really want to get it right, and they went to the right people. David is not the kind of cat who's going to give people what they think New Orleans is, he's going to give them what New Orleans really is—the brass bands, the second-liners, the Mardi Gras Indians. All of it.

6 With your raspy voice, your bright trumpet tone and your way with a crowd, it's hard not to think of Louis Armstrong. How did he affect your music? 
Pops was the best thing that ever happened to America. When I first heard him on the radio I was a teenager already, but I didn't know who Louis Armstrong was. I heard that trumpet and I couldn't believe it. Soon after, I was ordering a sandwich and I looked at a jukebox and it said "Louis Armstrong." I played "When You're Smiling," and before I bit into a hot sausage sandwich, I heard that solo and I was hooked.

I got a bunch of videos. I knew right away that I wanted to put on a suit and have a band like Louis did. I said to myself, "That's what I'm going to do."
Having managed the veterans Strunz Rodrigo and finally coming to the road where the last one used his first album, the young and Ireland, "111" will appear Sept. 8 on ATO in the United States, where "Rodrigo y Gabriela" has sold almost 300,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

The two guitarists promoted the flamenco-tinted acoustic instrumental release of that 2006 sophomore set with relentless global touring, finally coming off the road in December 2008 to record "111" at their studio in Mexico. They also have a home in Ireland.

"It's 11 pieces inspired by 11 musicians, past and present, who've been important to us," Rodrigo says. Several of them guest on the album, including Los Angeles-based acoustic veterans Strunz & Farah and Alex Skolnick of the U.S. metal band Testament.

"The new album retains their core sound," Quail says. "But whereas the last one was recorded live in the studio in 10 days, this time they've developed their ideas and used the studio itself as an extra instrument."

The duo is published by Elevate Music and managed by Rubyworks owner Niall Muckian, who started the label specifically to release the duo's recordings. Summer festival appearances will precede extensive touring through North America and Europe this fall, booked by Creative Artists Agency. —Nigel Williamson

**NEW YORK BY WAY OF MUNICH**

The German alt-rock trio Sportfreunde Stiller has joined an exclusive club that includes names like Eric Clapton, Nirvana and Bob Dylan as the latest act to release a successful "MTV Unplugged" album. The band's "MTV Unplugged in New York" has been in the top five of Germany's Media Control chart since its May 21 release, including two weeks at No. 1.

Founded in 1996, Sportfreunde Stiller has enjoyed consistent success in Germany, Austria and Switzerland since its 2000 debut album, "So Wie Ein Real Madrid." Despite its title, the band recorded the set in January in Munich, in front of a 60's New York street set on the Bavaria Film Studios lot. The show—including guest spots from veteran German pop singer Udo Jürgens and U.K. alt-rock band the Subways—was broadcast May 21 by MTV Germany, which claims it attracted an audience of 1 million viewers.

The album is available as a 13-track standard version and a 26-track limited deluxe edition. "We have clad old songs in new clothes, used different instruments and rearranged everything," drummer Florian Weber says.

The band is published by Edition Sportfreunde/Universal Music Publishing and booked through Munich-based Blickpunkt Pop. —Wolfgang Spahr
ALBUMS

ROCK
LEVON HELM
Electric Dirt
Producer: Larry Campbell
Dirt Farmer/Vanguard
Release Date: June 30
Much like Bob Dylan’s “Together Through Life,” Levon Helm’s “Electric Dirt” is less a collection of songs than a fully formed little world. A sprightly, worthy sequel to 2007’s Grammy Award-winning “Dirt Farmer,” which represented Helm’s remarkable comeback from throat cancer, “Electric Dirt” is pegged to stories of the land and its attendant details. It’s driven by Helm’s warm, incredibly rich moonshine vocals and decorated with bluesy guitar sprinkles, angelic violins and lovely harmonies by his daughter Amy of the folk-rock outfit Ollabelle. The album’s opener, a hardcrabbable cover of the Grateful Dead’s “Tennessee Jed,” would be worth the ticket price alone. But Helm also stretches the scope of his previous album, including a joyous revival number (“When I Go Away”); a swelling, gospel-kissed tale of a farmer’s struggle (“Growin’ Trade”); and an Allen Toussaint-arranged cover of Randy Newman’s “Kingfish.” –JW

MAXWELL
BLACKsumber’snight
Producers: Hod David. Maxwell Columbia Records
Release Date: July 7
The adage goes: Time gone, time lost. But for R&B singer Maxwell, who has been on a hiatus from music since 2002, it’s as if he never left. Full of heart-pounding melodies and true-to-life love stories, “BLACKsumber’snight” is the first installment of a trilogy by Maxwell. Over xylophone and guitar riffs, the lullaby-like lead single, “Pretty Wings,” finds the Brooklyn native bouncing, “I had to let you free, to see clearly/The way that love can be when you are not with me.” On the humanitarian “Fist Full of Tears,” he pleads atop marching band drums, “Help me be the helping hand/And make a dream come true.” Other tracks include “Cold,” about a cold-hearted lover; “Love You,” on which Maxwell pleads for his lady to let him love her over an upbeat groove; the inspirational “Help Somebody”; the jazz-tinged “Stop the World”; and the second single, “Bad Habits,” a midtempo track with big horns and layered voice-over. “BLACKsumber’snight” is a testament that Maxwell hasn’t lost a beat. –MC

METAL
KILLSWITCH ENGAGE
Killswitch Engage
Producer: Brendan O’Brien
Roadrunner Records
Release Date: June 30
The Massachusetts metalcore band Killswitch Engage wants neither talent nor fans. But the band’s new album (and second self-titled set) reveals that it could use a helping hand to introduce some diversity to its songwriting. Strangely, the first-time presence of an outside producer (Brendan O’Brien) results in an album that’s business as usual instead of the group being encouraged to stray from its established strengths. As an act that forsakes breakdowns and unintelligible screaming in favor of focused aggression and predictable melodic swells, you can’t help but enjoy such quintessential Killswitch Engage tracks as “Never Again” or the Metallica-esque choruses that open “The Forgotten.” But aside from a few unique moments (“The Return,” “Take Me Away”), there’s not much new to report here. –CT

AMERICAN
JOHN MELLANCAMP
Life Death Live and Freedom
Producers: John Mellencamp.
Mike Wanchic
Hear Music
Release Date: June 23
Recorded live in 2008, “Life Death Live and Freedom” is a companion piece to John Mellencamp’s acclaimed “Life Death Love and Freedom.” That said, “Live” stands on its own. The eight-song album is an honest-to-goodness testament to Mellencamp’s longevity, artistry and ability to connect with his audience. When “Live” was being recorded, the tunes were new to the audience, which responds enthusiastically nonetheless. Longest Days,” with its stripped-down acoustic guitar and trademark Mellencamp growl, is raw and real. In fact, the album wasn’t overpraised or tweaked in any way—something exceedingly rare these days when it comes to so-called “live” sets. But we wouldn’t expect any less from Mellencamp. Other highlights include the driving “If I Die Sudden,” “Troubled Land,” “Don’t Need This Body” and “Young Without Lovers,” which turns into a crowd singalong. –KT

GOSPEL
VICKI YOHE
Reveal Your Glory—Live From the Cathedral
Producer: Kendall Duffie
Shanachie Entertainment
Release Date: June 30
“Reveal Your Glory—Live” represents a couple of firsts for the gospel artist Vicki Yohe: It’s her debut album for Shanachie (following two releases on CeCe Winans’ PureSprings label) and her first live CD. Recorded at Word of Family Worship Cathedral in Atlanta, this collection perfectly captures Yohe’s soulful voice and compelling presence. For believers looking to lose themselves in a wonderful worship experience, this is the next best thing to being in a pew. “The Lord Is Good” kicks off the project with an upbeat urban edge. “Continually” is a high-energy praise song. “Because of Who You Are” finds Yohe reprising one of her proven hits. And the potent ballad “One Moment,” featuring special guest Anthony Evans, is an album highlight. As is the prayerful “I’m Not Asking for Anything.” The combination of Yohe’s strong voice backed by the Cathedral choir makes for a memorable live recording that ranks high among the best worship albums issued this year. –DEP

VICENTE FERNÁNDEZ
Necesito De Ti
Producer: Manuel Cázares
Sony Music
Release Date: July 7
Following the extraordinary success of his 2007 studio set “Para Siempre” and the subsequent live album “Primera Fila,” the ranchera icon Vicente Fernández returns to the studio with “Necesito De Ti.” With the title track standing at a relatively modest No. 21 on Billboard’s Regional Mexican Airplay chart, one might feel tempted to downplay the album’s potential. But pretty much anything Fernández releases sells. In this case, after teaming with fellow singer Joan Sebastian, who wrote and produced his past album, Fernández turns to the songwriting skills of Manuel Toscano and Manuel Monterrosas. The album has a feeling of bittersweet love that alternates in tone from the crooning found on “Me Tienes Mimado,” to the uptempo, almost danceable twirl of guitars, trumpets and strings of the title track. The latter song is a contemporary take on traditional mariachi, but overall this album is vintage Fernández, showcasing an enthralling signature voice that can infuse a single track with dynamics and nuance. For particular poignancy, listen to “Camino Al Cielo,” a song about a successful son who now yearns for the father and mother whose dreams he wasn’t able to fulfill in life. –LC

POP
JONAS BROTHERS
Lines, Vines and Trying Times
Producer: John Fields
Hollywood Records
Release Date: June 16
An about-face from last year’s dancefloor-ready “Last Night,” Moby’s ninth studio album, “Wait for Me,” is a study in melancholy. Listeners won’t hear reverberating 4/4 kick drums, hokey chorus-es or cooing club girls. And, unlike 1999’s groundbreaking “Play,” there aren’t any gospel-blues samples dressed in pretty electronic clothing. This is Moby without his usual bag of tricks; the material rings truer than any of his previous work. From the opener “Division”—two earnest minutes of tremulous strings—into “Pale Horses,” which sounds like a Moby remix of a P J Harvey/John Parish collaboration (tragic lyrics and operatic synth swirls), Moby sets a path through cinematic territory. R&B/soul singer Leela James lends vocals to “Walk With Me,” which recalls the expansive work of the Brit outfit Cinematic Orchestra. The title track references Tori Amos, with urgent grand-piano arpeggios. “Hope Is Gone,” a muted ’50s ballad toward the end of the album, has the same chilling effect that Nancy Sinatra’s “Bang Bang (My Baby Shot Me Down)” had in the 2003 film “Kill Bill: Vol. I.” Like the indelibly hard stop of the otherwise elegant album closer “Isolate,” “Wait For Me” continually surprises. –KM
**THE BILLBOARD REVIEWS**

**SINGLES**

**LATIN**

**NELLY FURTADO**

Manos Al Aire (3:28)

Producers: Nelly Furtado, James Bryan

Writers: N. Furtado, J. Bryan, A. Cuba

Publishers: various

Universal Music Latino

Nelly Furtado’s “Manos Al Aire,” the first single off her upcoming Spanish-language debut, “Mi Plan,” is a mix of gritty acoustic guitars and dance beats. At a succinct three minutes and 28 seconds, the track grabs the listener’s attention with its sparse intro, then holds it with an up tempo chorus laid over samba cool lines. “Manos Al Aire” talks about surrendering to love—ergo its title, which means “hands up” in English—but it opts for a rhythmic approach instead of a ballad. The result is a danceable, anthemic dirty younger listeners will love.

Though some fans might be thrown off-balance by Furtado’s Spanish singing, the lyrics are simply enough to allow quick memorization. Don’t look for in-depth musings here; just straight-to-the-point words over catchy beats.—LC

**ROCK**

**POLVO**

Beggar’s Bowl (5:02)

Producer: Brian Paulson

Writer: Polvo

Publisher: Half a Loaf Music (BMI)

Merge Records

After a 12-year hiatus from recording, the Chapel Hill, N.C., noise rock band Polvo is building upon the success of its 2008 reunion tour with a new album, “In Prism,” due Sept. 8 on Merge Records. From the sound of the first single, “Beggar’s Bowl,” Ash Bowie and his bandmates seem like they’ve picked up right where they left off with their old label. The song merges the cost-punk melodie of “Today’s Active Life-styles,” Polvo’s second studio album released in 1993, with the darker, Middle Eastern tinged angularities of its two albums for Touch and Go Records. The result is a fine representation of Polvo’s cumulative two decades together and a strong indicator of what to expect from its first album since 1997’s “Shapes.” “Beggar’s Bowl” is available as a free download on the Merge Records Web site.—RH

**JIMMY WAYNE**

I’ll Be That (3:36)

Producer: Mark Bright

Writer: Wayne, B. Regan, K. Paige

Publishers: various

Valory Music

The latest single hitting country radio from Jimmy Wayne’s current album, “Do You Believe Me Now,” is another solid outing from the talented singer/songwriter. Penned by Wayne, Kevin Paige and Bob Regan, it’s a terrific uptempo tune with a sensual lyric that will resonate strongly with listeners, especially women. Who wouldn’t want a man to declare his readiness to please with such unfettered emotion? Blessed with a warm and soulful voice, Wayne puts it to good use, delivering directions for what every woman wants and managing to sound sexy and sincere at the same time. Along with his high-profile opening slot on Brad Paisley’s American Saturday Night tour, “I’ll Be That” should keep Wayne’s star on the rise.—DEP

**MARY J. BLIGE FEATURING DRAKE**

The One (3:57)

Producer: Rodney “Darkchild” Jenkins

Writers: various

Publishers: various

Matriarch/Geffen/Interscope

Mary J. Blige joins Auto-Tune nation on her new single “The One,” tapping the much-hyped Canadian rapper Drake for the first single on her upcoming fall release. Unleashing her “crazy,” the R&B siren sings a warped vocal that enhances the song’s vibe of controlled chaos. Drake, who has his own hip-hop/R&B hit “Best I Ever Had,” adds a punch of confidence that matches the intensity of Blige’s snappy lyrics. Producer Rodney Jenkins, who has been churning out hits since the ’90s, provides a forceful rhythmic structure for Blige in the form of a constant pulse underlying his pounding beats. Whether she’s demanding exclusivity from her man or touting drama-free single life, Blige always sounds strong.—MM
Mom's The Word

Diane Birch Targets Online Forums To Support 'Bible Belt' Debut

During the past month, S-Curve artist Diane Birch has been quietly separating herself from the crowded field of aspiring female singer/songwriters—thanks primarily to a viral campaign targeting “mom blogs.” While Birch's debut album, “Bible Belt,” last month peaked at No. 87 on the Billboard 200, the strategy has helped the single “Nothing but a Miracle” gain momentum. The song is No. 51 on the Triple A chart.

The label opted for a more viral marketing strategy to promote “Bible Belt,” as it lacks what S-Curve founder Steve Greenberg calls a “novelty single.” Capitalizing on a perceived enthusiasm from adult women, Greenberg began reaching out to online forums called mom blogs and letting the groups listen to and discuss Birch's music.

The positive reactions led to blog posts, Twitter recommendations and the spread of a widget that donates $1 to charity for every “Bible Belt” purchase. The music media soon noticed Birch's online popularity. iTunes made the motivational track “Rise Up” its free single of the week in May, while VH1 added “Nothing but a Miracle” to its rotation last month. As Birch's songs received more airplay, her nascent vocals and soulful lyrics have gained her a seat of mind among the taste of Bosnia Stone and Norah Jones.

“It's pretty hard to define my taste, but there's always that common thread of songwriting,” Birch says of the album's lived-in feel. “It's not anything that's never been done before, but that's OK. All I want is to tell my story.”

Her story begins in Zimbabwe, where Birch moved with her parents at a young age because of her pastor father's missionary work. As her family continued to migrate to South Africa, Australia and eventually America, Birch began to feel at odds with their irregular lifestyle.

“I constantly had to adapt to new environments,” she says. “While I let me discover different genres of music, it was also so alienating. I found a lot of things wrong with that way of life, but it gave me something to push against.”

Birch, who started playing piano at age 7, moved to Los Angeles on her own and played regular gigs at venues like the Beverly Hills Hotel and L'O caffe while honing her songwriting skills. On the strength of several stripped-down MySpace demos, she signed a publishing deal with EMI in 2007 and later signed a recording contract with New York's S-Curve Records. During a 10-month span in New York and New Orleans, Birch recorded “Bible Belt” under the guidance of Greenberg, who helped define Stone, Hanson and the Jonas Brothers to the mainstream.

To capture Birch's potential in the studio, Greenberg brought in veteran collaborators, including Meters bassist George Porter Jr. and five singer Eugene Pitt, and gave the emerging artist the time to craft a solid front-to-back album. “Lots of records these days are just a collection of singles,” Greenberg says. “We decided that we needed to get the right people and let Diane work on a wide canvas to make a great album.”

To further spread the word about “Bible Belt,” Birch will appear on “Late Show With David Letterman” and “Jimmy Kimmel Live!” this month. Then she will tour throughout August before embarking on a fall trek that's still in the planning phase.

For Greenberg, Birch's mesmerizing talent has always been the album's selling point. “We understood that the key way to promote this album was to just get people to hear it and not worry about a big first-week number,” he says. While he recognizes the effect of appealing to the mom bloggers, Greenberg also points to Birch's growing pull in the college-age demographic and the prospect of the singer “becoming an important mainstream voice for a younger crowd.”

WILCO

Wilco's seventh studio album, “Wilco (The Album),” lands on the Billboard 200 with style, jumping in at No. 4 with 99,000 copies sold. That marks the act's best sales week, surpassing its previous high-water mark when 2007's “Sky Blue Sky” bowed at No. 4 with sales of 87,000. The new release was also the week's best-selling vinyl album, selling 6,000. That total, combined with some early street-date violation sales, pushes its vinyl sum to nearly 7,000-making it the No. 8-selling vinyl set of 2009. (The year's best-selling vinyl remains the Beatles' "Abbey Road," with 13,000.) More than half of the first-week sales for "Wilco" come from nontraditional retailers, racking up 53,000 sales from such sellers, which include digital download services, Internet retailers and other stores like Starbucks. It's estimated that the coffee chain sold nearly 10,000 copies of the album.

Keith Caulfield
Crazy Like A Fox

Rodney Carrington To Follow Hit Comedy Album With Holiday Set

Comedian Rodney Carrington, whose "El Nino Loco" (Capitol Nashville) is No. 3 on Billboard's Top Comedy Albums chart for the second straight week, is a man with a plan. He describes his latest album as "a way to write novelty songs that could potentially get played on the radio and also make music videos."

The comedian is no stranger to virtual media. His 2004 sitcom, "Rodney," ran for two seasons on ABC. Since then he has appeared in a music video for Trace Adkins' 2007 single, "I Got My Game On," and starred alongside country superstar Toby Keith in the 2008 film "Beer for My Horses." (Carrington co-wrote the movie with Keith.)

"El Nino Loco," produced by Keith and Steve Dorff, is Carrington's eighth album. He has sold 2.2 million albums, according to Nielsen SoundScan, with 2000's "Morning Wood" his best seller at $17,000.

The new album is decidedly less "blue" than earlier releases. The video for the lead track, "If I'm the Only One"—about a cheating spouse—stars Carrington and Keith with guests Jennifer Aspen and Nick Searcy, who are both from the "Rodney" show. The album is also an indication of Carrington's maturation. "I think differently as I get older," the 40-year-old says. "I've done 'Letter to My Penis' and 'I Think I'm Dancing With a Man.' How many songs can you write about your dick? At some point you realize you're 40 and you have teenagers now. I don't think that way anymore. That's what they think about.

Carrington's immediate plans include releasing a Christmas CD in August. "It ain't go no funny song on it," he says. "It's a big band, Frank Sinatra-type Christmas record; something I've always wanted to do.

"Make It Christmas," which includes the holiday classics "Mary, Did You Know?," "O Holy Night" and "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," was recorded earlier this year in Los Angeles with Dorff. And while Carrington knows people might be surprised when they hear it, he says he's "never pigeonholed what I've thought about doing. I've just said, 'I'll try that.'"

That said, Carrington notes that a straight singing career isn't in his future. "The Christmas record is as serious as I'm going to get," he says. "I'm still touring, still telling jokes, still doing my thing."

The Christmas album will be his last for Capitol Nashville. "You're never going to own your own stuff unless you hang on to it," says Carrington, who has been with the label since 2000. "I'm going to do a stand-up record again but not until I can own it myself. I own the first record I ever did and it's very valuable to me."

However, touring and live performances remain at the heart of Carrington's plan. "Records, TV, books: They're all just kindling on the fire. I've always wanted to build my career brick by brick. I have a simple plan. I want a million people who really like what I do to give me $10 a year for the rest of their lives. I'm not greedy."

Love Jones: AL B. SURE & TINA GUO

GROWN AND SEXY

It's been 17 years since Al B. Sure recorded a studio album. But with the June 23 release of "I'm Home" (Hidden Beach Recordings), the singer/songwriter joined a current wave of R&B vets—including Ginuwine, Teena Marie and Charlie Wilson—notching strong comebacks on Billboard's Top R&B/Hi-Hop Albums chart.

Debuting at No. 16 on that chart, "I'm Home" comes in at No. 49 this week. Meanwhile, the sexy slow jam "I Love You (Papi Aye Aye Aye)," featuring celiste Tina Guo, is No. 26 on Adult R&B.

Working with songwriter/producer Mike Kent and Michael Mani on "I'm Home," Sure stays true to the romantic lane he navigated in the late '80s when he helped usher in the New Jack Swing era. "This was a fun, creative process of writing and finding songs; no rushing effort," Sure says of the album's gestation. "It allowed me to be me through solid compositions reflecting my feelings."

Focusing on the central themes of love, romance and relationships, the album features 10 original songs written and co-produced by Sure. Also included are two covers: Sting's "Fragile" and Michael Jackson's "The Lady in My Life." Of the latter, Sure says, "I'm just truly in love with the feel and fabric of that song."

"I'm Home" opens with a little deja vu: an interlude version of Sure's No. 1 R&B/Pop hit, 1988's "Nite and Day." The song marked the first of five No. 1 R&B singles for the Boston-born singer, including a cameo on Quincy Jones' 1990 R&B chart-topper "The Secret Garden." Sure also claimed three top five R&B albums: 1988's "In Effect Mode" (No 1), 1990's "Private Times...And the Whole 9!" and 1992's "Sexy Versus."

Downsized after a two-year stint as the midday air personality on Clear Channel's R&B oldies station KHHT Los Angeles, Sure also spent the last few years writing and producing recordings by David Bowie, Faith Evans and Usher. He's also signed to Willliam Morris for film and TV projects.

Describing "I'm Home" as "In Effect Mode" on steroids, the silky-voiced singer concentrated on striking the right balance between contemporary and old school. "I'm not Usher or Justin Timberlake," he adds with a laugh. "I'm a 40-year-old man sharing my thoughts on love." —Gail Mitchell

FREEDOM SONG

Years in the making and featuring several of the biggest names in the genre, reggaeton artist Tempo's new album, "Free Tempo," was released June 30. But without a radio hit or its namesake star to promote it, this release is relying on hardcore Tempo fans to trumpet its message.

It's being heard. The album debuts this week at No. 6 on Billboard's Top Latin Albums chart and No. 3 on Top Latin Rhythm Albums.

Rapper Tempo, a.k.a. David Sanchez Badillo, had already recorded vocals for a new album when he was sentenced to 24 years in prison in 2005. He had been convicted of conspiracy to possess more than 30 kilograms of heroin with intent to distribute. Maintaining his innocence, Tempo filed an appeal June 19.

Tempo's label, Urban Box Office, went out of business in 2006. But UBO's former president/CEO Adam Kiddon and ex-head of operations and marketing Bruce Henderson licensed the tracks from Tempo's family and business partners. Producers Echo and Diesel added vocals by such marquee names as Wisin & Yandel, Daddy Yankee, Tego Calderon, Fat Joe and Arcangel, as well as instrumental backing by the London Symphony Orchestra. Kiddon says the artists weren't paid an upfront fee for recording but will receive publishing royalties.

Released through a pressing and distribution deal with Sony Music Latin, "Free Tempo" is available as a CD, a CD/DVD package with a four-minute documentary about Tempo's legacy and as a special edition with an "evidence kit" containing dog tags and other Tempo merchandise.

Kiddon says radio hasn't jumped on the first single "Impresioname," featuring Jowell y Randy, because it isn't considered poppy enough. To fill that void, Tempo's camp has turned to the Internet and TV. The Telefominbo show "Al Rojo Vivo" recently investigated the mysterious origins of a video set to "Impresioname." It was purportedly shot from Tempo's federal prison cell, although his face isn't clearly visible.

Kiddon doesn't expect "Free Tempo" to recoup all its costs. But he says advances from Sony have paid for Tempo's appeal. "This album is as close as you'll get to a $20 record in Latin music," he adds. "It's uncompromising, the beats are huge, and the collaborations are heartfelt." —Ayala Ben-Heredia

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Jackson's Chart Achievements Prove Provoking

On May 25, 1991, Billboard introduced its first charts powered by Nielsen SoundScan's point-of-sale data: the Billboard 200 and a new Top Pop Catalog Albums list. Both were revolutionary, because for the first time, Billboard was able to base album charts on actual sales data, instead of having to rely on rankings obtained from record stores, over the telephone or by fax machine.

Industry executives were concerned at the time that the new SoundScan system would allow older albums to prevent newer releases from reaching the Billboard 200. To address those concerns, Billboard's then-publisher Howard Lander wrote, "Because the new system measures actual sales of all albums, a major objective was to ensure that older albums, which might be strong sellers, would not crowd current titles, and especially titles by developing artists, off the charts. Billboard has a historic commitment to fostering development of new talent. We believe the solution is the creation of catalog charts, which are being launched in this issue."

The following week, former director of charts Geoff Mayfield wrote in his Over the Counter column that the catalog chart "is proving to be a great tool for identifying strong older titles. Point-of-sale information places many of these recordings among the nation's best sellers. In fact, if the catalog albums were included in the Billboard 200, all 50 would show up on the 200-position chart."

At that time the thought of a catalog album outselling the top current album was unimaginable. How could an old album possibly do better than a new release? But, it happened.

In the wake of Michael Jackson's June 25 death, his "Number Ones" last week climbed to No. 1 on the Top Pop Catalog Albums and the all-encompassing Top Comprehensive Albums chart with 188,000 copies sold. This week, sales for "Number Ones" increased (339,000, up 215%) in the first full week of sales after its passing, and the album is again No. 1 on the Comprehensive tally (see page 36).

How historic is this? In the 948 weeks that Billboard has been using Nielsen SoundScan data to power the Billboard 200 and Top Pop Catalog charts, only twice has a catalog album outsold the top-selling current or new album. And only Jackson could have done it.

He has a history of altering Billboard's chart landscape. He was the first to chart seven top 10 Billboard Hot 100 singles from one album, with "Thriller." He was the first to have five Hot 100 No. 1s from one album, with "Bad." He was the first to debut at No. 1 on the Hot 100, with "You Are Not Alone." And he continues to reign as the artist with the longest-running No. 1 on the Billboard 200, with "Thriller."

It has spent 37 nonconsecutive weeks atop the chart. All these feats were seemingly impossible to achieve—until Jackson did it. And he continues to break records. No one is denying that he has had the best-selling album in the United States for the past two weeks. Last week he had the top three titles on the Top Comprehensive Albums chart (which includes current and catalog titles). But, since Jackson's top sellers are absent from the Billboard 200—long considered the albums chart of record in the United States—it gives one pause.

Perhaps this is an opportunity to ponder what the Billboard 200 would be like if it included catalog albums.

In a shifting landscape where every day brings a new way to buy and sell music, we must consider how to properly chart and reflect industry change. Billboard prides itself on providing the most accurate charts possible to the industry, consumers and fans, and if we were to consider altering our chart rules, we would do so with a measured approach and much thought. We must be open to new ideas and change as we move forward.

With this in mind, we continue to closely monitor our charts and how they reflect the marketplace.

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**Market Watch**

**Weekly National Music Sales Report**

**Weekly Unit Sales**

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<tr>
<th>Albums</th>
<th>Catalog Albums</th>
<th>Digital Albums</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This Week</td>
<td>6,962,000</td>
<td>1,502,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Week</td>
<td>6,220,000</td>
<td>1,599,000</td>
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<td>Change</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
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**Digital Tracks Sales**

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<th>Year-To-Date</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>CHANGE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Digital Tracks</td>
<td>563 million</td>
<td>636.2 million</td>
<td>73 million</td>
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**Sales by Album Format**

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>2009</th>
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<td>32,825,000</td>
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<td>Other</td>
<td>865,000</td>
<td>1,293,000</td>
<td>49.5%</td>
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**Current Album Sales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>CHANGE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catalog</td>
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<td>98,931,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deep Catalog</td>
<td>92,457,000</td>
<td>82,509,000</td>
<td>-10.8%</td>
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For the week ending May 8, 2009. Figures are rounded to thousands. The term "album" refers to any sound recording and no sales report contains unreported activity. Nielsen SoundScan is the world’s largest retailer of sales data, providing daily sales and weekly sales reports. Nielsen SoundScan is an affiliate of Nielsen Entertainment.

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5. KILLSWITCH ENGAGE
6. LINES, VINES AND TRYING TIMES
7. RELEAS
8. THE FAME
9. FEARLESS
10. HANNAH MONTANA: THE MOVIE
11. REVERE: REVERE
12. BIG WHISKEY & THE GROUPO KING
13. THE FOUNDATION
14. WIDE OPEN
15. GREATEST HITS II
16. DARK HORSE
17. COUNTRY MOBY
18. waiting for love
19. LEARN TO LIVE
20. IF TOMORROW COMES...
21. UNSTOPPABLE
22. THE SOUND OF MADNESS
23. TULIGHT
24. I'M SASHA FIERCE
25. NO TIME TO BLEED
26. FUNHOUSE
27. AMERICAN IDOL: SEASON 8
28. A MAN'S THOUGHTS
29. ELECTRIC DIT
30. WHAT'S UP VOL. 2
31. THE LOST
32. IN A PERFECT WORLD...
33. LITTLE BIT OF EVERYTHING
34. LOVE ON THE INSIDE
35. MONUMENTS AND MEMORIES
36. BLACK CLOUDS & SILVER LININGS
37. THE FRAY
38. CHAMBER MUSIC
39. ABOVE AND BEYOND: VIDEO COLLECTION & DANCE MIXES (EP)
40. THE SUMMER OF '69
41. THE E.N.D.
42. THE FALL
43. THE SUMMER OF '69
44. THE SUMMER OF '69
45. THE SUMMER OF '69
46. THE SUMMER OF '69
47. THE SUMMER OF '69
48. THE SUMMER OF '69
49. THE SUMMER OF '69
50. THE SUMMER OF '69

Chord

1. C
2. E
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Notes

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THE BILLBOARD 200 ARTIST INDEX

ARTIST

1. ADELE
2. THE BLACK EYED PEAS
3. JASON ALDEAN
4. TAYLOR SWIFT
5. CARRIE UNDERWOOD
6. BRAD PAISLEY
7. KACEY MUSGRAVES
8. BAREFOOT BLUES
9. ADELE
10. SHINEDOWN
11. KEITH URBAN
12. LADY ANTEBELLUM
13. NICKELBACK
14. ZAC BROWN BAND
15. KENNY CHESNEY
16. AMERICAN IDOL
17. KONNIE CHEN
18. THE WHITE STRIPES
19. TAYLOR SWIFT
20. THE BLACK EYED PEAS
21. CARRIE UNDERWOOD
22. BRAD PAISLEY
23. THE BLACK EYED PEAS
24. TAYLOR SWIFT
25. THE BLACK EYED PEAS
26. KACEY MUSGRAVES
27. CARRIE UNDERWOOD
28. KACEY MUSGRAVES
29. TAYLOR SWIFT
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35. THE BLACK EYED PEAS
36. THE BLACK EYED PEAS
37. THE BLACK EYED PEAS
38. THE BLACK EYED PEAS
39. THE BLACK EYED PEAS
40. THE BLACK EYED PEAS
Albums chart.

JUL 18 2009

Top Pop Catalog

**ARTIST**

MICHAEL JACKSON

**Title**

Thriller

1

2

Thriller

3

The Essential Michael Jackson

4

Greatest Hits

5

Bad

6

Thriller

7

Dangerous

8

BAD: Greatest Hits

9

BAD

10

Thriller

11

Our Greatest Hits

12

Greatest Hits

13

BAD:

14

BAD

15

Thriller

16

BAD

17

BAD

18

BAD

19

BAD

20

BAD

21

BAD

22

BAD

23

BAD

24

BAD

25

BAD

26

BAD

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BAD

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BAD

91

BAD

92

BAD

93

BAD

94

BAD

95

BAD

96

BAD

97

BAD

98

BAD

99

BAD

100

BAD

For the full story (since Christmas week, the top 10 best-selling albums in the country all sell more than 100,000 copies each). On Top Comprehensive Albums, Michael Jackson's "Number Ones" leads with 359,000, while "Thriller" and "The Essential Michael Jackson" sold 257,000 and 217,000, respectively. The three remaining 100,000-plus sellers are new entries from "Now 31" (No. 9, 399,000), Brad Paisley (No. 5, 100,000) and Rob Thomas (No. 6, 125,000).
### HOT 100 AIRPLAY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Airplay</th>
<th>Previous Week</th>
<th>Week Ending</th>
<th>Airplay Change</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knock You Down</td>
<td>Drake feat. Trey Songz</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bring Me to Life</td>
<td>Evanescence</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>We Are Young</td>
<td>Fun</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hollaback Girl</td>
<td>Katy Perry</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Can't Hold Us</td>
<td>Macklemore &amp; Ryan Lewis feat. Ray Dalton</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where Is the Love?</td>
<td>The Weeknd</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counting Stars</td>
<td>OneRepublic</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We Will Rock You</td>
<td>Queen</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18/2</td>
<td>Justin Bieber feat. Big sean</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We Are Never Ever Getting Back Together</td>
<td>Taylor Swift feat. Kendrick Lamar</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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### HOT DIGITAL SONGS

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I Feel It Coming</td>
<td>The Weeknd feat. Daft Punk</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beautiful</td>
<td>Eminem</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunburn</td>
<td>Afrojack feat.∇</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>We Found Love</td>
<td>Calvin Harris feat. Dua Lipa</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secret</td>
<td>Florence + The Machine</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everytime</td>
<td>Britney Spears</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love Me Again</td>
<td>The Weeknd</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep on Truckin'</td>
<td>Sam &amp; Dave</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's On</td>
<td>Future</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wake Me Up</td>
<td>Avicii</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CHARTS

**ALBUM CHARTS**

Data from Billboard Charts. Sales for R&B/hip-hop retail chart. This is a compilation of core artists that specialize in those genres.

**Pricing/Configuration/Availability**

CDs and digital versions are not included on all charts. EX: After cataloging, indicates if release is limited to one record or one molecular level.

**Hot 100**

**Radio Airplay**

**Digital Songs**

**Additional Information**

Digital downloads and physical sales data are included.

**Hot Dance Club Songs**

**Certifications**

**Award Cert. Levels**

**Album Certifications**

**Singles Certifications**

**Music Video Sales Charts**

**DVD Sales**

**Sales**

**Digital Downloads**

**Physical Sales**

**Radio Airplay**

**Digital Songs**

**Additional Information**

Digital downloads and physical sales data are included.

**Hot Dance Club Songs**

**Certifications**

**Award Cert. Levels**

**Album Certifications**

**Singles Certifications**

**Music Video Sales Charts**

**DVD Sales**

**Sales**

**Digital Downloads**

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**Sales**

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**Album Certifications**

**Singles Certifications**

**Music Video Sales Charts**

**DVD Sales**

**Sales**

**Digital Downloads**

**Physical Sales**

**Radio Airplay**

**Digital Songs**

**Additional Information**

Digital downloads and physical sales data are included.
### MAINSTREAM TOP 40

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Don't Trust Me</td>
<td>LeAnn Rimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love Game</td>
<td>Prince</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boom Boom Pow</td>
<td>The Black Eyed Pees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please Don't Leave Me</td>
<td>The Wanted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Burning</td>
<td>Green Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Chance</td>
<td>All Time Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halo</td>
<td>Three Days</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greatest Gotta Feel Good</td>
<td>F juin</td>
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<td>I Do Not Hook Up</td>
<td>Vanilla Ice</td>
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<td>Knock You Down</td>
<td>Timbaland</td>
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<td>You Belong With Me</td>
<td>Rihanna</td>
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<td>If Today Was Today</td>
<td>Joss Stone</td>
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<td>Birthday Sex</td>
<td>TGI Friday</td>
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<td>Poking Face</td>
<td>3OH!3</td>
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<td>That's Not My Name</td>
<td>Demi Lovato</td>
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<td>Goodbye</td>
<td>Against Me</td>
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<td>The Wanted</td>
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<td>If You Seek Me</td>
<td>Skylar Grey</td>
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<td>Best I Ever Had</td>
<td>Djembe and Daughters</td>
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<td>Her Diamonds</td>
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<td>When Love Takes Over</td>
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<td>Who's Got Your Money?</td>
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<td>Love Story</td>
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<td>IF YOU DON'T KNOW ME BY NOW</td>
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<td>Lucky</td>
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<td>Just Go</td>
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<td>Light On</td>
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<td>Her Diamonds</td>
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<td>My Life Would Suck Without You</td>
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<td>Finally Home</td>
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<td>No Boundaries</td>
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<td>I Don't Care</td>
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<td>Half-Heart</td>
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<td>Close to Love</td>
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<td>Little Brides</td>
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The Mainstream Top 40 and Adult Contemporary airplay charts each sport true-taste leaders. Boulder, Con. RI, NAM, named after the club's hometown area code, incorporates the former list, as its edition name, "Boulder, Con. RI, NAM," at 2. The song's coronation lift lifts the pair into exclusive company. Before it just put the eighth week up or do this trop to top the lady in its fifth chart appearance. The ad joins Dagni Lane (2007), Hinder (2006), D.L. (2005), Excerences (2005), LeAnn Rimes and Nickelback (both in 2005) and 3 Doors Down (2005). On Adult Contemporary, Miley Cyrus' "The Climb" secures the coveted Top station LED. The station's airplay chart data: 1. Billboard 200. At the top, the seven songs of the year's 3rd quarter are the top chart artists to command the list since Ledu Times entered the top of the billboards with "How Do I Love Thee" in September 1997 just two weeks after her 15th birthday.
**HOT COUNTRY SONGS**

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**TOP COUNTRY ALBUMS**

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**TOP BLUEGRASS ALBUMS**

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**BETWEEN THE BULLETS**

"American Saturday Night," Brad Paisley’s seventh set of new songs, arrives as his fifth No. 1 start on Top Country Albums and his second No. 2 bow on the Billboard 200. Opening with 130,000 copies, ‘Night’ is Paisley’s third-largest one-week total. He had two bigger weeks when “Still Feel It” arrived in July 2007 (with 197,000 copies) and when “Time Well Wasted” bowed in September 2001 (193,000). Hot Country Songs, the lead single “Time,” is No. 8 after spending three weeks at No. 4. The follow-up "Welcome to the Future," surges 99-1 in its second chart week (2.6 million impressions). — Wade Jessen

Go to www.billboard.com for complete chart data.

Data for week of July 18, 2009 | For chart reprints call 646.654.4633
**R&B/HIP-HOP Albums Chart**

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**R&B/hip-hop Mainstream Chart**

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**R&B/hip-hop Rhythmic Chart**

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**Adult R&B Chart**

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**Hot Rap Songs**

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**Between the Bullets**

After scoring a No. 1 single on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart, newcomer Jeremih arrives at No. 1 on the Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums chart with his self-titled debut. The set’s lead single, "Birthday Sex," spent two weeks atop the songs tally earlier this year. The album also enters at No. 6 on the Billboard 200 with 59,000 sold.

The new "Now 31" compilation enters at No. 2 on the R&B chart, as more than half of the album’s 20 tracks have charted on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs tally.

Maino’s debut set "If Tomorrow Comes" starts at No. 4 on the R&B list while Ace Hood’s second album, "Russkins," matches the peak of his 2008 debut. On the Top Rap Albums list (viewable at billboard.biz/charts), Maino and Ace Hood arrive at Nos. 1 and 2, respectively.

—Keith Caulfield
### Hot Latin Songs

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### Top Latin Albums

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<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Week No.</th>
<th>No. of Weeks</th>
<th>Play</th>
<th>Audience Impression</th>
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<td>Luis Fonsi</td>
<td>Sony Music Latin</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
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<td>72</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.0</td>
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<td>73</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>74</td>
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<td>4.8</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>** comercio**</td>
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<td>Sony Music Latin</td>
<td>75</td>
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<td>4.7</td>
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</tr>
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<td>4.6</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
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<td><strong>Dicho y Hecho</strong></td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
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<td>79</td>
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### Regional Mexican Albums

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<td><strong>El Camino Que Digo</strong></td>
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### Tropical Albums

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</thead>
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<td>25</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
HITS OF THE WORLD

JAPAN

UNITED KINGDOM

GERMANY

EUROPEAN HOT 100

EURO DIGITAL SINGLES

FRANCE

CANADA

AUSTRALIA

ITALY

SPAIN

BRAZIL

SWEDEN

IRELAND

NEW ZEALAND

FLANDERS

Ola Sweeney, known as Ola, was a contestant on Sweden’s 2005 "Hit" TV competition and went on to chart his seventh top five hit on the Swedish Singles Chart.

www.americanradiohistory.com
EXECUTIVE TURN TABLE
Send nominations to: exec@billboard.com

RECORD COMPANY
Kazu Kolke to pre president/COO.
Veteran Latin indie a new label, Zamora.
Zamora was a major director of promotion at RCA Records.
Arista Nashville manager. He was count

PUBLISHING: Ole president at EMI Music Publishing.
Ole says. "The
music administration assistant.

TOURING: Live Nation booking for the

RELATED FIELDS: public relations/artist
Karas was senior VP at
Hagan was VP/GM
MTV Networks VP of creative for film/TV
Design Studio in South Europe.

—Edited by Mitchell Peters

GOO DO WORKS

PORTLAND, Ore.-based will take a percent of the year and past—let the bands
"What's going to be the money I make says Pauls, who remains firm Bridge C & D, a lot of money, d.
For bands on his will give the more
ment, which provides the expense (Syrentha.org) Beemer, "comes fr
says, "He's a good man." Beemer star
Syrentha, who died.

IT FROM PAULES' BANDS' booking agent/manager Chris Pauls of money he earns from clients at the something a little different from years side where it goes.
people is that I'm going to give away 10% of my bands to the charity that they choose," he says. "It opened the booking agency/management. "It could be a couple bucks ninding on who does this year."
iter that don't have a preference, Pauls gives the nonprofit Syrentha Savo Endowment financial assistance to women who can't fight breast cancer. Pauls chose SSG as the organization's founder. Mark the same punk rock world that I do," he says. "He's a good man." Beemer star Syrentha, who died. Pauls says his received a percent of the year and past—let the bands
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INSIDE TRACK

CRACKER JAXX
Basement Jaxx members Felix Buxton and Simon Ratcliffe took a slightly different approach to the recording for "Scars," the British electronic group's fifth full-length album. Instead of hooking up in their London studio, "we went to Berlin and New York. That was just to not be in Brixton and go out into the world a bit," Buxton tells Track during a break in the final mixing of the record.
Along the way, Jaxx picked up some new vocalists and collaborators. "I wanted to record Yoko Ono," Buxton says. "That was the reason we went out to New York," and then Yoko Majesty and Santigold fell into place along with that." Other guests on the record include new blue-eyed soul boys Eli "Pa-

BASEMENT JAXX
"Feelings Gone" track now, so that's going to be done tomorrow," he says. "It will be done this week, which is a massive relief. It's baking hot here, and I don't want to be in the studio anymore, and we've got gigs this week-end, so I'm looking forward to some days off at the moment."
'HOUSE OF VINYL' BET AWARDS POST-EVENT

The 'House of Vinyl' 2009 BET Awards post-show event, hosted by Busta Rhymes with sponsor Carley Motor Club, took place June 28 at the Greek Door in Los Angeles. The event included performances by Electrik Red, Niki Y, Big Sean and Eve to salute all the nominees for the 2009 BET Awards. Photos courtesy of“, "Naomi Allen

RIGHT: Naomii Allen

BELOW: Retired NBA basketball player John Salley

ABOVE: Retired NBA basketball player John Salley
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