SEE SPOTIFY RUN: BUT CAN IT MAKE MONEY?

'ONCE AGAIN? The Swell Season Warms Up And Rocks Out

BABBS BEATS MIMI What's At No. 1? Barbra's 'Love Is The Answer'

THAT'S THE TICKET Kia Revs Up Music Marketing With Concerts

DISTRO INFERNO? Layoffs And Evolution At The Orchard

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Chart Heat PARAMORE ALICE IN CHAINS SELENA GOMEZ

ALEJANDRO FERNANDEZ Latin Music's Favorite Son Captures The Best Of Both Worlds With Ranchero And Pop Albums
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THE INCOMPARABLE BARBRA STREISAND ON HER
UNPRECEDENTED ACCOMPLISHMENT.

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CO-PRODUCED BY TOMMY LIPUMA
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: BARBRA STREISAND
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Events

FILM & TV
This conference, set for Oct. 29-30 at the Beverly Hilton in Los Angeles, will feature a keynote by Mary J. Blige. For more information, go to billboardevents.com.

TOURING
At the Billboard Touring Conference—Nov. 4-5 in New York—Ozzy Osbourne will receive the Legend of Live honor and Kevin Lyman the Humanitarian Award. For more information, go to billboardevents.com.

MEDIA AND MONEY
This conference—Nov. 12-13 in New York—brings together leaders in media, entertainment and finance for keynote interviews and panel discussions. To register, go to mediaandmoneyconference.com.

www.americanradiohistory.com
Working Together To Save The Music

Internet Services Present A Challenge—And An Opportunity

BY JASON TURNER

Record labels took another shot to the gut Aug. 21, this time from the Second Circuit Court’s ruling in Arista Records, et al. v. Launch Media. The court held that Yahoo!’s Launchcast wasn’t an interactive service as defined by the Copyright Act.

Unfortunately, for labels, this means that one more potentially significant source of revenue has been dashed. Launchcast, as well as other similar Internet radio services like Pandora and Last.fm, must now pay the minimal statutory licensing fees set by the Copyright Royalty Board through SoundExchange to the owners of the recordings.

This ruling is well-reasoned despite the labels’ sensible displeasure with it. But when coupled with the continuing failure of Congress to pass a Performance Rights Act, it makes it more important than ever for everyone in the music industry to work together to keep this a viable, profitable business.

When Congress enacted the first U.S. copyright law with the Copyright Act of 1790, it intended to establish an incentive for authors to share their works with the public by protecting their creations. Recall that Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution gives Congress the power to establish laws to promote the progress of science and useful arts. (Granted, it wasn’t until 41 years later through the Act of 1831 that music was first recognized as a “useful art.”) As the Internet became popular in the 1990s, the recording industry quickly began publicizing its concern that existing copyright laws couldn’t protect it from piracy. But the industry and Congress soon recognized that the shift in the evolution of the Internet and the advent of true “on-demand” services, which allow end users to decide exactly what songs they hear, called for a change to the definition of “interactive service” in 1998 to include services “that enable a member of the public to receive a transmission of a program specially created for the recipient, or on request, a transmission of a particular sound recording.” Up until then, nearly all the services on the Internet were deemed noninteractive, since the content was chosen for the listener.

There’s no doubt that college students and younger children these days are listening less to terrestrial radio. With the advent of social networking sites and noninteractive Internet radio sites like Pandora and Live365, the millennials are finding ways of exploring new music without the involvement of traditional radio. Does this mean that traditional radio will soon disappear? I doubt it—but only if traditional radio doesn’t make the same mistake that labels did in the late ’90s when they ignored the rise of the MP3 format. Radio programmers must tap into these social networking sites to connect with the next generation. Perhaps there are ways for terrestrial stations to implement Pandora-like programs on their station Web sites, which will generate revenue while helping introduce young listeners to the new music being marketed by labels.

The labels must also pitch in, however. It’s reasonable to feel empathy for them, since record sales continue to plummet at staggering rates. It seems that full albums are disappearing into the sunset. The attention span of the millennials is but a few seconds, if you’re lucky. Texting, tweeting, Facebooking and other such forms of communication are the waves of the now, not the future. If we’re going to sustain a record industry that can reward labels for investing in the “useful art” of music, everyone needs to recognize that we are all in the same boat and help find a solution.

None of us can afford to ignore the perceived problem. Especially because it may actually be an opportunity.

Jason Turner is an attorney with Laster, Tidwell, Davis, Keller & Hogan in Nashville and an adjunct professor at Belmont University’s Mike Curb College of Entertainment & Music Business.

FEEDBACK

SPEAK UP

Congratulations to Leila Coelho on her Latin Notas column titled “It Takes a Village” (Oct. 3). Almost everyone knows why radio stations aren’t playing the music, but no one wants to talk about it. If everyone starts speaking about this issue, radio stations will have to change their way of doing business and start playing good music. This is the way it was before.

Thanks for the well-written article.

Alfredo G Arce

Writing Together To Save The Music

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www.americanradiohistory.com
Most of the time, test-driving a car results in nothing more than a sales pitch, a mobile envy and a brief sample of that new car smell. But for music fans in select markets, taking a Kia Soul out for a spin gets them something more: a free concert.

The shows are part of an ambitious marketing effort launched by Kia in hopes of attracting a younger audience to its Soul marque, which launched in March.

Dubbed the Kia Soul Collective, events are held on weekends in 10 different cities: so far, six have taken place, with four planned for Atlanta, Boston, New York and Los Angeles. Recent gigs have featured acts like Never Ever, DMBT and Against Me. Future shows will include sets from Atlas Sound, the Pains of Being Pure at Heart and Silversun Pickups.

The campaign also includes a website that features a download of an original track by Janelle Monáe, brandied cell phone and computer wallpaper designed by Jeff Staple and a short film by music video director Jonas and Francois.

“This is the first time we’ve done something like this,” says Kathryn Cima, manager of sponsorships and events at Kia Motors America, adding that the brand’s only other musical venture has been a Vans Warped tour sponsorship. “We didn’t start off thinking this would be a music initiative, but as we looked for ways to connect with the target audience, we found that music was a good way to reach them.”

Cima says the Soul Collective events have resulted in more than 1,000 test drives. “We don’t really have the data to do one-to-one match in terms of test drives pegged to the events and sales,” she says. “But we are seeing a great response, especially in the social media space. People are blogging and Twittering about Kia being cool and the Soul being a cool car.”

Even though car sales were strong in September, Jeff Tammes, senior VP of strategic marketing for Cornerstone, says now is the perfect time for Kia to start building relationships with younger consumers. “The purpose of these events is to introduce the Kia Soul to kids,” he says. “Since it’s a new brand, many of them are finding out about it for the first time. While they might not be ready to buy a car right now, when they are, they’ll think back to this event and remember the Soul.”

Kia isn’t the only car company using music to reach younger consumers. Scion and Yaris, both Toyota marques, have each run music-based campaigns for the past few years, and both say they’ll continue to use music to build their brands. But they add that they’ve had to cut back on some of their more ambitious initiatives recently.

Scion sales promotions manager Jen Yoshizu says that the company continues to sponsor concerts in various markets. “We’re doing a garage rock festival in Portland (Ore.) soon, and we’ll be sponsoring a metal festival in Atlanta again,” she says. “We also do monthly parties and we sponsor the tour of dubstep DJs in third-tier markets.”

Yoshizu says that she’s focused on keeping up the face of the brand while also keeping an eye on the bottom line. “We’re doing cheaper events,” she says. “Touring a group of dubstep DJs is a lot cheaper than getting a big-name rapper with a full band to play a show.”

Chad Harp, a marketing communications strategist at Harp, says the car brand’s “Free Yr Radio” campaign also has evolved. “In the first year of the program, we were partnering with Urban Outfitters and local independent radio stations, putting on shows and giving away a free car to the stations,” he says. “The second year we were bombarded with requests and had to scale back. Now, we’re partnering with the local stations at music festivals and helping them broadcast the show. We’re also running shuttles around the festival as a way to get people in the car.”

Harp adds that, like Kia, his focus is on building a long-term relationship with the consumer. “We don’t think people will run home from a festival and buy a car,” he says. “What we are looking for with these initiatives is consideration in the future. I want people to see a Yaris and relate it to a positive experience.”
Fertile Ground?

Orchard Layoffs Call Into Question Future Of Indie Digital Distributors

In the wake of layoffs last month, Danny Stein, chairman of the executive committee at the Orchard, says the company will be OK. “We are doing well, and a number of the layoffs came as a result of our investment in new technologies and the resulting efficiencies,” he says. “Most of the layoffs were highly predictable, and we will still be able to provide the same level of service to our clients with fewer people.”

But the restructuring also raises larger questions about the strength of the digital distribution sector as a whole.

All told, the Orchard laid off 16 staffers, five consultants and an unspecified number of temps Sept. 29, according to a recent filing with the S. Securities and Exchange Commission. CEO Greg Scholl also handed in his resignation; so far, a replacement hasn’t been announced.

While an examination of the Orchard’s quarterly report reveals the company has never posted dramatic losses, it has consistently lost money. While the Orchard is cash-flow positive from operations, the company had a net loss of $2.2 million in 2008 and is on track to surpass that loss in 2009. Additionally, layoffs so late in the year probably won’t do much to improve net income until 2010.

Others in the sector are bolstering their financials by teaming with others. In July, the Independent Online Distribution Alliance announced a partnership—which included an investment—with Sony; it provides digital services for RED and is allowed to use Sony’s physical distribution resources.

“The layoffs at the Orchard speak to the difficulty of operating in this segment,” IODA CEO Kevin Arnold says. “For us, I definitely think partners with Sony was the right move.”

At present, all four major-owned indie distributors either require or “strongly prefer” that labels use them for physical and digital distribution. Digital distribution companies also face competition from services like TuneCore, which charges a flat fee rather than a percentage of money earned from sales.

The Orchard says part of its strategy has been to grow beyond being just a digital distributor. To that end, it acquired ownership of most of the assets of MTV Records in 2008. Even though Michael Buell, who headed MTV’s distribution at the Orchard, was laid off, executive VP/GM Brad Navin says the physical distribution business is still important. So much so, in fact, that a recent press release about a deal with the German distributor Ingroove started off with the line, “Is there life after digital?”

“We’ve never viewed it as a digital vs. physical divide,” Navin says. “They are complementary retail channels, not competitors. We are finding that our clients want everything in-house, and we think there is a big difference between the ability of digital experts to add physical services.”

In addition to building its physical distribution arm, the Orchard says it’s concentrating on strengthening its marketing platforms. In the case of the recent release of Volume Records act the Raveonettes, the Orchard handled not only the distribution of the music, but arranged song premiers on music blogs and focused on raising the band’s profile on social networking sites.

“With something like TuneCore, all they do is put a song up,” says Richard Gottehrer, who co-founded the Orchard in 1997. “We can do setup and promotion and get the most out of an audience.”

Gottehrer adds that despite the recent turmoil, he feels the Orchard is still strong. “We’re a publicly traded company, so I shouldn’t really be making forward-looking statements,” he says jokingly. “But we are not on the way out. Greg [Scholl] did a fantastic job, and this company has a great soul. It has a soul that will live on beyond any of us.”

Additional reporting by Glenn Peoples.

After-Hours Airplay

SBS Offers Infomercial Time To Artists

The limited playlist slots available to Latin acts on the radio may soon expand thanks to a unique programming strategy launched by the radio network Spanish Broadcasting System.

Beginning as early as this month, artists who want to get airplay on SBS stations can circumvent the network’s programming department by purchasing infomercials that feature one of their tracks played in full.

“The Monthly Rotating Infomercials” will be sold in packages with costs varying based on the number of spins per month.

“The idea responds to a marketplace need,” says SBS Entertainment senior VP Lucas Piña. “The company wanted to open a space for new artists.”

The novel programming idea—which may be unique for radio overall—works like this: Developing and established artists alike can buy packages of infomercials that will air on SBS stations between 11 p.m. and 6 a.m. Monday through Friday and 11 a.m. and 10 a.m. Saturday and Sunday. The infomercials consist of an entire song preceded by an introduction that announces the artist, the title and the presenting sponsor.

That sponsor can be the artist himself, the label or a third party or brand, however, the sponsor must be named in the infomercial for the infomercial to run. Infomercials air at a network level by genre; a tropical track, for example, will run on all of SBS’ tropical stations nationwide. There are no other programming—or ads—during the infomercial slots. “It will be like an iPod playing continuous music,” Piña says.

While the idea of radio infomercials promoting singles or albums isn’t new, the purpose here is that unlike a 30-second commercial, the track plays in full. The drawback, of course, is that the infomercials’ air time is with the lowest audience—and it’s not clear if these plays will count toward chart positions.

Still, Piña says, because SBS has stations in major markets like New York, Los Angeles, Puerto Rico and Miami, the program provides a window of opportunity that might otherwise never open for new artists.

“SBS has stations in major markets where the population is active at night,” he says, noting that many Latin listeners work at night. In these big markets, the night programming not only exposes the music to a new audience, it also functions almost as a real-time research system that allows programmers to evaluate if a track has traction before adding it to the regular rotation.

While labels and artists are taking a wait-and-see attitude on the infomercials’ effect on exposure and sales, slots for November are nearly full, says SBS director of new business development Manny Mora, who will run the program. Approximately one-third of the slots have been purchased by indices and two-thirds by major labels.

“If we were in small markets, the reaction would be different,” Mora says. “Here, artists who could never dream of playing in a major market have an opportunity for success.”

Although the infomercials are for sale, SBS can decline tracks that don’t fulfill production quality or standards. “This is an uncharted territory for us,” Mora says. “We hope to create a new business model that will help new artists and reinforce established ones.”
Phoning It In

Mobile Entertainment Live Attendees App It Up

Although the importance of mobile music is growing, it has a long way to go before it becomes a meaningful revenue driver for the overall music industry, according to speakers and attendees at Billboard's Mobile Entertainment Live conference.

Experts at the event, held Oct. 6 in conjunction with the CTIA Wireless I.T. & Entertainment Conference in San Diego, said that the industry needs to realize that over-the-air full-song downloads never took off the way ringtone sales did. Many added that labels now need to look to the new music application market to reverse that trend.

"The explosion of apps is a real thing to focus on, and it's something we're optimistic about," said EMI senior VP of digital marketing Syd Schwartz during a keynote session.

Stores like the iPhone's App Store, BlackBerry App World, Android Marketplace and the new Windows Marketplace for Mobile have captured the interest and imagination of the music industry, but according to Ngrooves CEO Robb McDaniels, it will take 12-18 months before buying music on mobile devices becomes noticeable.

Still, record labels attending the CTIA conference found themselves meeting more with app developers and other technology companies than with the mobile operators that would traditionally dominate their time at these kinds of events.

"If there are app developers in the room and have ideas, we would like to talk to you," Schwartz told the crowd.

Labels aren't the only entities with something to gain, either. Keynote speaker Alan Brenner, senior VP of BlackBerry platforms for Research in Motion, said a strong app environment is critical to help smart-phone manufacturers compete in today's post-iPhone world.

The key, he said, is to create a next generation of smart-phone apps that can be more than a fad. According to a recent report from the mobile analysis firm Flurry, only 25% of music apps are used more than 90 days after they're downloaded.

While the iPhone still receives the lion's share of attention, app stores like BlackBerry and Android devices are growing quickly. According to mobile music provider Thumbplay, the number of subscribers to its monthly ringtone and full-song download service who own smart phones grew from 5% 18 months ago to 50% of the total base, and the majority of that growth came from new BlackBerry and Android phone users.

But others warned labels not to view apps as a saving grace. "There's no silver bullet," said Interscope executive VP of digital Ted Mico. "Apps are one of many solutions. But they've already proved to be a viable force."

OTHER NEWS FROM THE EVENT

- Verizon and Google have teamed to co-develop a range of Android-based devices onto which developers can preload approved applications. The partnership also extends to mobile services and software, allowing developers access to Google's technology as well as Verizon's network data when creating new apps.

- Android devices are expected to explode this year, with 20 new models coming to market by the end of 2009. A Gartner Group forecast expects phones based on the Android operating system to capture 14% of the global smartphone market by 2012, beating the 13.7% share the iPhone is expected to have at that time.

- Tapulous released "Tap Tap Revenge 3," the next installment of its popular mobile music game "Tap Tap Revenge." Users can now purchase new music to add to the game, similar to the downloadable content available on console-based franchises like "Rock Band" or "Guitar Hero." More than 40 track bundles are available at launch from acts like Blink-182, Foo Fighters and the Killers. Bundles will consist of six tracks for $3 and two-track bundles for 99 cents. "Tap Tap Revenge 1" will now cost 99 cents instead of being available as a free download.

- After bringing a version of the "Rock Band" franchise to mobile phones through a partnership with Verizon Wireless Sept. 14, EA Mobile unveiled an iPhone version of the game that allows users to buy and download new content. It will ship with 20 songs, with five two-song bundles available as downloadable content. Details on pricing aren't yet available, pending Apple's approval of its addition to the App Store. EA licensed the "Rock Band" rights from MTV/Harmonix, but had to strike its own music licensing deals with labels and publishers. The game uses songs already available in the existing "Rock Band" franchise in order to use the same song stems as the building blocks for its game play, which has a similar look and feel.
Could U.K. Nix Merger For Tix?

Provisional Ruling May Not Matter Much In U.S.

On Oct. 8, the United Kingdom's Competition Commis-

sion issued a provisional ruling that the proposed Live Nation-

Ticketmaster Entertainment merger would hinder competi-

tion in the U.K. ticketing market. But this isn't the death knoll for the deal, and the commis-

sion's concern—which involves the German concert giant CTS Eventim—may not be a major factor when the U.S. Depart-

ment of Justice (DOJ) weighs the deal.

There are specific factors relating to the U.K.—the fact that Ticketmaster is so big—40%-50% of the market, according to the Competition Commis-

sion—and the fact that there is somebody (in CTS Eventim) that's set itself up to enter the market but who potentially is going to be scuppered from doing so because of this deal,” says Simon Barnes, counsel for competition and European Union law at the London-based law firm Lovells. Even CTS Eventim execu-

tives have previously expressed confidence that they wouldn't suffer as a result of a merger. Live Nation cut a deal with CTS as it positioned itself to launch its own ticketing company after splitting from Ticketmaster this year. "CTS Eventim and Live Na-

tion will fully honor their commitments under the 10-year agreement they concluded in December 2007," said CTS Eventim CEO Klaus-Peter Schu-

lenberg in March after the Ticket-

master Live Nation merger announcement. Schu-

lenberg insisted that the merger would not have "detrimental impact" on the partnership.

"It is quite unusual in this sort of situation that [the Com-

petition Commission is] trying to protect somebody who's not even on the market, but they must feel confident that CTS legibly can be seen as a new entrant who will do well," Barnes says. "If Live Nation had not happened to have done a deal with CTS, I don't think this issue would have arisen." CTS Eventim, based in Bre-

men, Germany, is moving into the U.K. market as part of its relationship with Live Nation, The European promoter/ticket-

ing company runs ticketing for Live Nation in Sweden, Fin-

land, Poland and the Nether-

lands, and the agreement was in the process of extending into the Czech Republic, Hungary, the United Kingdom and Nor-

way. The deal also gave Live Nation a license to use CTS Eventim's ticketing software in North America, where CTS hadn't made inroads. "As the second-largest ticket agent in the world after Ticket-

master, with considerable ex-

perience and expertise in other countries, CTS [U.K.] entry would have increased compe-

tition in ticket retailing to the benefit of customers," said Christopher Clarke, Com-

petition Commission deputy chair-

man and chairman of the inquiry group, in a statement. Clarke added, "We believe that if the merger proceeds, Live Nation will seek to limit its relationship with CTS, with the
effect of putting CTS' future prospects in the U.K. in consid-

erable doubt."

The Competition Commis-

sion estimates Ticketmaster's 2008 U.K. market share at be-

tween 40% and 50%; it also operates in Ireland, Finland, Sweden, the Nether-

lands, Germany and Spain and has affiliates in France, Hungary, Poland, Portugal and Slovakia.

Live Nation's business in Eu-

rope is broad and includes a string of independent European promotion and management companies acquired when Live Nation predecessors SFX and Clear Channel Entertainment rolled up the European promo-

tion industry beginning a decade ago. Live Nation is the largest festival promoter in Eu-

rope and books and manages a wide range of venues. The Competition Commis-

sion listed several possible remedies, including the divest-

ment of either Ticketmaster or Live Na-

tion—probably a distasteful op-

tion for either company—or measures to ensure that CTS or another ticket agent can sell Live Nation's tickets.

"In this case the obvious be-

havioral remedy would be some-

sort of commitment from Live Nation that it will continue to supply tickets through people other than Ticketmaster," Barnes says. But competition authorities are "quite wary" of behavioral remedies. Presumably Ticketmaster and Live Nation would prefer that the DOJ focuses on this part of the Competition Com-

mission statement: "The commis-

sion has not found any ad-

verse effects on competition affect-

ing other ticketing agents, promoters and venue operators that arise from the merger." The merger is also being in-

vestigated by the DOJ, which is consulting with the Competi-

tion Commission. The commis-

sion is an independent public group that investigates markets in regulated industries. The consulta-

tion on its findings will run until Oct. 29 and a final report is expected by Nov. 24, follow-

ing an examination of ways to address the loss of competition. Ticketmaster and Live Nation could appeal its decision.

In response to the provi-

sional ruling, Live Nation and Ticketmaster issued a joint statement that said in part, "During the course of this merger process, Live Nation and Ticketmaster have listened to our fans, artists and other stakeholders. We've heard a range of views regarding the issues and challenges facing the live music industry. We firmly believe that our merger achieves an important and much needed public interest and remain op-

timistic that it will ultimately be approved."
The Royal Split

RIAA, NMPA Reach A Settlement For Withheld Funds

The major labels have reached an agreement that will provide a windfall of more than $264 million in mechanical royalty payments to music publishers, but the details of how the funding will be distributed are still needed to be filled in.

The deal—negotiated by the RIAA, acting on behalf of the four majors, and the National Music Publishers’ Assn.—will also set up a system to make sure labels will get proper mechanical licenses in a timely manner and eliminate the label practices of withholding all royalty payments for an album when the royalties for a single track are the subject of a dispute among songwriters.

The system should reduce the buildup of pending and unmatched funds. Until now, major labels have paid advances on mechanical copyrights to the Harry Fox Agency to compensate for their practice of issuing advances before songwriting share disputes are resolved.

From now on, disputes over the split on a song will no longer result in labels withholding royalty payouts on an entire album, and labels will not withhold royalties from digital sales or albums where the CD version is involved in songwriter share disputes. By law, controlled composition rates can’t be applied to music sold digitally because that format must be paid at the full statutory rate for all songs on an album, thanks to the Digital Millennium Copyright Act.

Publishers that agree to the settlement will resolve disputes among songwriters and will wait until the conclusion of a legislative fix at the end of 2012. That’s looking forward toward, let’s say, that settlement.

A special master—Kenneth R. Feinberg, who administered the September 11 Victim Compensation Fund and is currently administering TARP bailout funds for the U.S. Department of the Treasury (Billboard.biz, Sept. 16)—will take charge of disbursing the pending and unmatched funds.

In the first stage, about $164 million in royalties that accumulated before 2007 will be paid out to publishers, according to a market share formula that is in dispute among the four majors. (For 2007 and later, the split will depend on other factors.)

Each major will supply Feinberg’s team with information about airing and payoffs from 2000 to 2006—even if some of the funds accumulated before that period—and Feinberg will audit the data. Using the data from each major, he’ll determine what percentage of each major’s mechanical royalty payments that each publisher received. While each publisher’s royalty payment share will be the corresponding dollar amount dispute will be determined for each major, the publisher will only get to see the total market share and the corresponding amount of the $164 million it will get from all four major labels.

After seeing their amount, publishers can challenge Feinberg and his team on their overall market share; if they can prove their case, the payout would be adjusted accordingly.

“You don’t know who ought to be paid by definition,” RIAA chairman Mitch Bainwol says. “So you are trying to come up with an alternative method in an objective fashion and make payments that are fair, consistent and objective.”

In phase two, the major labels will use the new system to pay out the $165 million in pending and unmatched funds for 2007-08. After a year, whatever funds are left will be distributed according to publisher market share for the 2007-08 period.

Whatever is left unchanged from both phases will be returned to the majors so that they can pay royalties to publishers that didn’t participate in the settlement.

The process doesn’t govern how publishers or administrators will then disburse these funds to songwriters. Depending on their client contracts, publishing administrators may have to ask each publisher whether it wants to participate in the settlement. Once they receive the settlement funds, administrators and publishers will have to figure out how to share the funds with publishers and songwriters, respectively. “All of that is done outside the scope of the settlement,” NMPA president/CEO David Israelite says. “But administrators and publishers are bound by contract law and have to fulfill fiduciary duties.”

The Songwriters Guild of America, which has more than 3,500 members, will be “extremely vigilant” about whether the money passes through to the songwriters, SGA president Rick Carnes says. “It’s a problem because it’s a dump bin. But that puts the onus on the publisher, which has to look at that period of time and figure out who gets what from the settlement.”

Overall, Carnes calls the settlement a “win,” adding, “The fact that it is an opt-in settlement where you get to look at your options allows people to make a decision.”

Feinberg won’t resolve ownership disputes, Israelite says. So if one publisher bought a catalog during the period in question, the special master will pay whomsoever has the legal right to receive payment and let those parties resolve any disputes themselves.
Another Chance For Ad-Supported Music

Imeem Is On Life Support From Labels—But Don’t Count The Service Out Yet

Let’s not engrave a tombstone for imeem just yet. Conventional wisdom had the company going out of business before the end of the year. The deathwatch began this spring after it underwent a round of layoffs and struggled to pay its licensing obligations to record labels. Following the demise of other ad-based services like Spiralfrog and Rockus, analysts began to question the viability of the company and the entire ad-supported music business model.

Yet both are still around, suggesting that the failure of previous ad-supported music services was caused not just by flaws in the nascent model, but by defects in its execution. One of the biggest criticisms against using advertising to fund free music is that the cost of licensing the music is too high for the revenue that can be gained from advertising to support the model. Certainly a key element to imeem’s continued survival is the fact that it won concessions from all major-label partners to reduce licensing costs. But the labels can’t carry imeem and other ad-supported services forever. At some point, the services have to be accountable for their own strategies.

Most of the failed ad-supported services tried to offer a basic model in which each song streamed or downloaded was attached in some fashion to a display or video ad that was solely responsible for paying for the licensing cost of that song and generating profits for the service. It was an easy model to explain to advertisers, but didn’t create enough value to work. From the beginning, imeem has focused on the harder-to-explain strategy of selling expensive, custom ad campaigns that paired brands with artists in unique ways. For example, it teamed Dr Pepper with Flo Rida for a campaign that let imeem users remix the track “Sugar” and share the resulting song with the imeem community. In another example, it matched the Truth anti-smoking campaign with Epitaph Records to provide a free concert to imeem members that signed the company’s online petition.

Imeem also creates custom playlists for the likes of Fuse Energy Drink, breast cancer organization Susan B. Komen for the Cure and Kiu. Rather than simply slapping a plain banner ad against songs an advertiser thinks its target audience is listening to, imeem lets the brand present those songs to users through playlists that appear in members’ search results. So if a fan was looking for Sting, the search result would include the brand’s playlist that includes songs from Sting as well as more music Sting fans might like.

The trick for imeem has been to stay aloof long enough for this model to take hold. According to the company’s VP of national sales David Wade, it took a few years for advertisers to understand the more complicated model it was offering. In 2007, imeem executed only 30 such custom advertising campaigns. Last year, that figure grew to 130, and so far this year it has done more than 175 custom campaigns. It has several more lined up through year’s end.

As a result, imeem’s revenue for the first half of the year was 50% higher than for the same period last year, and it’s up 30% year over year so far for the entire year. It recently scored a new $30 million round of funding and expects to reach profitability next year.

And imeem’s not alone. MySpace Music has a similar model of brand engagement and artist interaction, and the Vevo music video joint venture among Universal Music Group, Sony Music and YouTube is expected to let advertisers sponsor hit music videos on the Vevo platform. And many eyes are watching how the European streaming music sensation Spotify will bring its model of ad-supported and premium music services to the United States.

Meanwhile, ad-supported music services are becoming more complicated, which could help attract more advertisers as the model evolves further. Imeem claims 20 million unique visitors streaming “billions” of songs per month. MySpace Music’s unique users have increased by 169% since it launched last September, and more than 90% of Spotify’s 6 million users opt for the ad-supported free service over the premium tier.

Does any of this mean that the ad-supported music model has legs, or that imeem has a bright future ahead of it? Not just yet. The revenue that ad-supported music services bring to the music industry remains slim compared with paid downloads of full songs and ringtones. Arguments rage over whether the model does more to discourage sales or reduce piracy. And imeem is far from comfortable financially.

“I know ad-supported can work,” imeem’s Wade says. “It’s just that you’ve got to execute correctly. And that’s where it gets interesting. I’m not saying we have the right approach, but we’re getting close to finding it.”

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

READER MUSIC

It can’t all be about smart phones. Verizon Wireless just introduced the new Razzle, which it hopes will add just that to its lineup of devices. Positioned as a text and music device, the Razzle has a full QWERTY keyboard and music controls on an adjustable bar that users can tilt and turn to their preferred position. The device comes with a 1GB microSD memory card to store downloads from the VCast Music Store, which its Bluetooth capability can use to stream music to compatible headphones or speakers.

The Razzle is available now from Verizon Wireless locations for $70.

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BITS & BRIEFS

KIDZ BOP GETS COMPETITIVE

Kidz Bop is launching a new program where fans can create their own online video contests on the Web site KidzBop.com. The Super Contest Maker lets kids aged 5-12 design a contest where other users upload videos around a theme of their choice and provide the tools to set their own rules, monitor voting and entries, pick winners and award virtual prizes. The program will debut with a video dance contest created by Kidz Bop performer Dana. KidzBop.com is a social networking site geared toward young children. The company says users were already creating their own contests on the site, which led to the process being formalized.

PROMO MOTION

The mobile marketing firm Mozes introduced a free iPhone app that lets fans browse through the more than 150,000 promotions offered on its mobile text messaging service used by 5,000-plus artists, labels and others. Fans can search for the newest or most popular promotions, those offered by specific artists and types of promotion, such as sweepstakes. It also allows them to send text messages and pictures, participate in real-time votes and polls, receive news updates, and content from participating bands.

PETITION

The European streaming music service Spotify keeps adding new features—most recently, the ability for users to store a limited number of songs on the computer for listening even when not connected to the Internet. This offline mode is similar to the cached streaming feature of its mobile app for the iPhone and Android phones, but applied to a home computer instead. It’s available only to those paying for the premium subscription service.

RECORDING

Awards for the week: Grammy nominations will be announced on December 3.

OUT OF THE WOODS

1. R. MIKES AND THE GONER

1. DONNA BRYCE

2. KIRK STEINER

2. BILLIE JOE ARMSTRONG

3. BRIAN WRIGHT

3. JASON DAVIS

4. RYAN BROWN

4. BENJAMIN Mc Race

5. ROD SELLER

5. JUSTIN MAXWELL

9. GENESIS

9. LINDSAY HARRIS

10. ALEX AND CHIP E

10. ANNA JANE

15. BOB SNYDER

15. JACOB JONES

20. STEVE RIGGS

20. MATT WICKHAM

25. JIMMY SMITH

25. JIMMY SMITH

FOR MORE RISING ARTISTS, SEE www.americanradiohistory.com
Shop ’Til You Drop

U.K. Labels Mine Early Catalog For Hit Compilations

LONDON—Britain’s pre-rock and early rock ’n’ roll recordings are enjoying a revival, thanks to clever marketing.

After The No. 1 success of wartime sweethearts Vera Lynn’s Dec 4 Universal-released “We’ll Meet Again” (Billboard, Sept. 26), Britain’s first rock ’n’ roll star, Tommy Steele, 72, is back on the Official Chart Co. albums listing for the first time in 51 years with “The Very Best Of” (Spectrum/UMTV). Released Sept. 21, it debuted at No. 22 on sales of 8,500 copies, according to the OCC.

Brian Berg, managing director of Universal’s UMTV, has been leading the monetization of pre-rock ’n’ roll ’s hit records and has recently discovered that a one-off sale of 32,000 copies in its first week to debut at No. 6, according to the OCC.

The success of the Wilde release inspired the UMTV compilation series “Dreamboats & Petticoats.” It was so successful that it spawned a stage musical, the first such Universal venue since ABBA’s “Mamma Mia!” in 1999. The musical, in which Universal is a partner, is on a second national tour alongside a London run, with international shows planned.

The first “Dreamboats & Petticoats” album, released in November 2007 and featuring British artists alongside Buddy Holly and Chuck Berry, has sold 677,000 copies, according to the OCC. Volume two has sold 382,000, a third volume is due Nov. 2. Berg notes that downloads account for less than 2% of sales.

Berg says a TV campaign is crucial for reaching the older demographic, and UMTV will spend up to £500,000 ($792,000) on a prime-time TV family/detecive shows like “Pointed” and “Heartbeat,” as well as breakfast show “GMTV.”

“Regionally, we get an indication where it’s selling in the first couple of weeks,” Berg says. “So it’s quite easy to target that audience.”

With sales of compilations hitting hard by the demise of mass merchant Woolworths, Berg says supermarket attendances are now crucial outlets, as well as Amazon and entertainment retailer HMV.

HMV head of music Rudy Ostorio says such heritage releases “sell consistently well for us,” particularly around gifting events like Christmas, Mother’s Day and Father’s Day. The interim’s anniversary CDs and releases of copyright-free material. UMTV says it’s “The Very Best of Buddy Holly and the Crickets” compilation sold 100,000 copies around the 50th anniversary of his death in December, despite numerous other releases.

Meanwhile, Berg is planning further albums in 2010, including some slightly later recordings.

“The gray brigade are still buying physical CDs,” Berg says. “We are looking to pick up catalogs and license recordings from that period.”

Digital Dividend

Australian Download Sales Surge

BRISBANE, Australia—Download sales are up Down Under, with digital growth more than compensating for declining physical sales for the first time during the first half of 2009.

While wholesale sales of physical formats slumped by $10.5 million Australian ($9.2 million) to $41.5 million Australian ($32.6 million), according to the Australian Recording Industry Assn. Overall, the recorded music business grew 0.4% to $178.6 million Australian ($156.9 million). Results for the whole of 2008 showed a 7.9% drop to $425.6 million Australian ($367.3 million).

“The results are exciting,” says Ed St John, ARIA chairman and president. “We’ve seen the digital album taking off,” says Aria Australia music manager Karen Farrugia, who spearheaded the March 20 Comes With Music project. Industry sources say Australian consumers have warmed to comes With Music, contributing to a 15% gain in value to $63.3 million Australian ($53.5 million) for ARIA’s “digital other” category, which includes subscriptions.

Farrugia says 25% of Australian Comes With Music customers are downloading full-length albums, compared with 4% at its a la carte download store.

The No. 1 digital album of 2009 is Lily Allen’s ARIA-certified triple-platinum (200,000 copies) “It’s Not Me, It’s You” (EMI Music Australia), with digital accounting for 13% of sales.

EMI invested heavily in marketing the album online, driving footfall to download stores including its own Musicmatch MP3 site. In its first week, digital accounted for 60% of sales, according to EMI Australia director of consumer marketing Karen Timman.


“Flexible pricing gives us the ability to meet demand and encourage people to sample,” St John says.

Digital-retailer market share figures aren’t available, but a survey by the Sydney-based publisher/events organizer Immediate saw 69% of respondents name iTunes as their favorite download destination. Second was telco Telstra’s BigPond Music with 8%, followed by Bandit FM with 4%.

Bandit FM is a label-agnostic store owned by Sony Music Australia GM of digital and brand communications Gavin Parry. He’s confident the digital boom can be sustained, as long as labels don’t rest on their laurels.

“If we continue to work with [Internet service providers] to reduce piracy and provide incentives to bundle digital music services with broadband accounts,” he says, “the future is a bright one.”

UPFRONT

GLOBAL BY ANDRE PAINE

60 ALBUMS GET IMPALA AWARDS

The veteran Cuban act Buena Vista Social Club tops the latest list of European sales awards issued by the independent labels trade group Impala. The 1997 set “Buena Vista Social Club” (World Circuit) is certified double platinum (1 million shipments across Europe), while the act’s latest vocalist Ibrahim Ferruy’s 1999 World Circuit set “Buena Vista Social Club Presents: Irias Infinity” (World Circuit) is platinum (500,000 shipments). Impala’s 60-strong list also includes platinum certification for the Prodigy’s February album “Invaders Must Die” (Take Me to the Hospital/Cooking Vinyl) and diamond (250,000 shipments) for Placebo’s “Battle for the Sun” (PIAS/Dreambotters).

MYSSPACE IRKS AUSCUNDIE INSIDERS

The independent music community is raising against MySpace Music for launching in Australia without a licensing deal covering the members of the digital licensor operation Merlin, which represents more than 6,000 indie labels, including the News Corp-owned music service launched in Australia Oct. 1.

WILLIAMS FOR FREE

Robbie Williams is issuing a free compilation titled “Songbook” with the Nov. 1 issue of the weekly Mail on Sunday newspaper. The album contains 12 songs in live or studio versions, including international hits “Angels,” “Let Me Entertain You” and “Feel.” The Mail on Sunday is Britain’s second most popular Sunday newspaper (behind News of the World), with a circulation of slightly more than 2 million in August, according to the Audit Bureau of Circulations. It has previously carried full-page ads by Paul McCartney, Prince and Mike Oldfield.

Reporting by Lars Brandle and Tom Ferguson.

DREAMBOATS & PETTICOATS THREE

Back in time, TOMMY STEELE: the third volume of Universal's Dreamboats & Petticoats compilation series

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Back in time, TOMMY STEELE: the third volume of Universal’s Dreamboats & Petticoats compilation series
The Digital Continent

Broadband Comes To Africa At Last

JOHANNESBURG—Africa’s music business hopes a new online infrastructure and music services will finally ignite digital sales in South Africa and beyond. While physical sales were still growing in South Africa as recently as 2007, the expansion has leveled off and started to drop recently. Recording Industry of South Africa data for the year to Aug. 31 shows a 7.2% year-on-year drop in value across all physical formats from 478.4 million rand ($63.9 million) to 444 million rand ($59.3 million).

Nokia Music Store.

With broadband becoming quicker and cost-effective, we will see real returns on our digital strategies.

While sales of ringtones and ringtones are falling in most major markets, the presence of so many entry-level phones in Africa means such formats remain strong sellers. Johannesburg-based independent digital music monitoring company Aquiedi estimates total monthly digital sales of 4 million across Southern Africa (South Africa, Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Swaziland, Tanzania and Zambia), with ringback tones the most popular format.

Mobile music presents "a wonderful growth opportunity," Scholsberg says. "We are working with different partners to exploit our catalog and are starting to see income flowing."

While many labels are optimistic that new platforms will kick-start the business, others point to recent high-profile launches like online media store Prefueled and mobile entertainment platform Getmo, which have both struggled to make an impact.

"In Africa, if there are too many steps involved, music consumers just won't buy," says Arthur Goldstuck, founder of Johannesburg-based technology research company World Wide Worx. "Complexity of platform equals failure, which is why you’ve had several operators enter the market and achieve very little."

Meanwhile, others fear an explosion in broadband access could lead to a parallel increase in online piracy. RISA has moved to head off such concerns by arranging an October meeting with the Internet Service Providers’ Assn. to broker an agreement on dealing with file sharing.

"It’s a start to what we hope will be an achievable way forward on illegal downloads," Scholsberg says.

Broadband brothers’ Execs GOLDSTRUCK, SCHLOSSBERG and LARSON (from left) are hoping South Africa’s digital market will take off in the coming months.

True ‘Fanatic’

Music Promo Company Partners With EMI/Caroline To Launch Label

Starting a new label in 2009 would appear to be a dicey enough proposition. But starting one with a full-time staff of three while tending to a thriving marketing business seems like an impossible task.

Josh Bloom is a true believer, though. He founded Fanatic Promotion in 1995 and has since worked with My Morning Jacket, the Decemberists, Sufjan Stevens, Girl Talk, Mirenda, July, Of Montreal, Daniel Johnston, Kings of Convenience, Dirty Projectors and VHS or Beta, among others. He dabbled in management and started a studio, Art Farm. But through it all, he had one bigger goal—a real record label.

Bloom and his partner, Sean Boyd, are betting that Fanatic’s brand name will help them in the sales arena. Boyd adds that the crushing economy helped force their hand after years of talking about whether to start a label. "We were forced to downsize," Boyd says, "and we now have a smaller roster, which Josh is managing personally, and we are developing deeper relationships with our contacts and getting better results than ever because of it."

For Bloom, the label represents a natural outgrowth of his core goals. "My biggest interest has always been artist development," he says. "I’m at a point where I can look at a picture of a band and immediately start thinking of ways it can be translated to an audience. I’ve always been frustrated by situations where great bands hit a wall and no one can figure out how to cross them over to the mainstream and build a bigger audience."

Bloom, who says that Fanatic Records has yet to sign any artists, has partnered with EMI Label Services and Caroline Distribution in order to bring his acts to a wider audience.

"I’m old school," he says, explaining the decision to partner with EMI. "Part of my goal is to find bands that transcend the indie rock niche and reach the wider audience of people who are still buying CDs and have more traditional listening habits. EMI is really proactive and they have a deep understanding of the music business."

Dominic Pandiscola, senior VP/GM of EMI Label Services, says that teaming with Fanatic was a no-brainer, despite its lack of a roster. "Fanatic has great platforms, and they know how to maximize revenue," he says. "When you couple that with everything that EMI Label Services has to offer, including our synch licensing and branding opportunities, it’s a great deal all around deal."

In terms of which bands might get to take advantage of the deal, Bloom says he’s looking for acts from a wide range of genres, but has a few guidelines.

"I want to sign undiscovered artists," he says. "This could change, but right now, I’m looking for artists to sign with us before anything else has happened.

To be able to focus on building careers and artist development, Bloom says he will sign bands to multi-record deals. Artists will also have a provision in their contracts where if they use our studio and use Fanatic to do marketing and PR, the expenses associated with that will not be recoupable," he says. "If an artist does want to go outside of Fanatic and use someone else, they can, but those expenses will be recoupable."

Bloom says he’d like to start releasing albums at the top of 2010 and has ambitious plans for his schedule from there on out. "Ideally, we’d do one priority release a month," he says. "And then we’d supplement with some digital-only releases, or something by an artist we are already working on the promo side.

One of the artists hoping to be part of that schedule is Shunda K of the hip-hop act Yo Majesty. "Josh helped Yo Majesty and me for two years," she says. "I want to sign to Fanatic and put out a record in February or March. I trust Josh, and he has such a natural ability to find great artists."

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www.americanradiohistory.com
Max Gousse made the unlikely transition from sports law to A&R early in his career, and from all indications, he seems to have hit a home run.

The new senior VP of A&R for Island Def Jam Music Group attended St. John’s University in New York and Florida International University in Miami in the early ’90s, where he planned to study his love of sports—particularly baseball—and interest in law into a career as a sports attorney.

But he was drawn to music when he started working at the interactive music video channel Jukebox Network led by Les Garland while still in school. The job led to meetings with key industry figures, including Sylvea Rhone and Irving Azoff, and Gousse was eventually offered a New York A&R post at the Azoff-led Giant Records.

He segued from Giant to his own label, Mecca Don Records, before moving to MCA Music Publishing as senior director in 1998. Joining Epic as senior director of A&R a year later, Gousse signed 21K before being recruited by Mathew Knowles at Sanctuary Management in 2002 and then moving to Music World Entertainment in 2004. During his four-year stint, Gousse served as senior VP of A&R before advancing to executive VP of A&R and new business development, where he supervised Beyoncé’s multitalented “B’Day” and “I Am... Sasha Fierce” albums.

The Los Angeles-based Gousse now oversees the entire range of A&R activities for Island Def Jam on the West Coast, signing new talent—artists, producers, songwriters—as well as working with acts already onboard. One of the first projects completed under Gousse’s watch: Amerie’s new album, "In Love & War," due Nov. 3.

Why did the label decide to increase Island Def Jam’s West Coast presence? IDJ hasn’t had an A&R presence here for a while: not since early 2008. We’ve beefed up the West Coast significantly, adding senior A&R directors Angelo Sanders, formerly with Aftermath, and David “Touch” Wright, who was with the production team the Underdogs.

My plan is to bring in four to six new acts from the Western region who are culturally relevant to Def Jam, who can help shape and make the label into more of a lifestyle entity on the West Coast. To do that, we have to sign younger acts and push some of the music trends that are developing up and down the coast.

What are some of those developing music trends? There’s a new energy here that’s different from the rest of the country: a movement of young kids who don’t necessarily buy into traditional hits. They’re actually more in tune with what’s going on in underground hip-hop to the point where they create their own style of dress and speaking. If we can tap into that youth culture, we can make significant gains.

Is an example of this the Jerkin’ Movement, which is being popularized by acts like the New Boys? Yes, it’s definitely a trend. Not just a music thing but a culture and lifestyle thing in terms of the jerking. The style of dress [multi-colored skinny jeans and footwork] and the artists these kids are listening to.

The New Boys kind of opened the gate and had a big single (“You’re a Jerk”). They were able to get on local radio, then the song blew up and spread nationally—that speaks volumes for this trend. I think we’ll see other artists here continue to develop along those lines.

Have you signed any acts yet? We just signed YG, a 19-year-old rapper from Compton, Calif. He’s a very talented kid with a large following he’s gotten through MySpace. He speaks to that audience. Although he has no radio play yet, they go to his club shows and know every lyric to every one of his songs. YG isn’t a dancer per se, but he’s kind of an OG who’s at the forefront of the jerk scene. They’ve danced to his music for the past three years.

Is Los Angeles becoming a creative hotbed again? I definitely see that. The quality of the facilities here has a lot to do with it, and there seems to be more of a collaborative feeling between producers and songwriters here versus other cities, where there tends to be more camps and cliques.

There’s a concentration of producers here that songwriters can work with without necessarily having a No. 1 record. These producers include Wayne Wilkins, who co-produced Beyoncé’s “Sweet Dreams”; there’s also Soulsjock & Karlin, Harvey Mason Jr., the Stereotypes, the Co-Stars, Dr. Luke and RedOne. You also have Tricky Stewart and the Dream working here a lot along with Sean Garrett, Jim Jonsin, and Rico Love.

What do you look for when considering an act? I look for confidence, even some cockiness. If you’re asking me to invest in you, you have to be able to carry the ball once we make that investment. And if you can write, that’s all the better. But it’s not necessarily required because A&R [rep] are supposed to bring songs. I also look for stage presence: Are you an artist who’s out gigging and building a fan base? If this is going to be your craft, you have to be working on it every day.

The marketability of the artist is important too. My team and I have to quarterback the artist’s project, so that artist must be able to convey what his vision is and then together we can convey that to the rest of the company so they can help execute it.

How much time do you devote to development? It depends on the level of development the act has already reached. If it’s someone with a great voice and confidence but who has never really recorded, it could be a six- to 12-month process as far as helping them perfect their sound. You want to be able to present the artist along with a vision and not just a bunch of random songs. You want to paint a picture for the label.

Is radio still relevant to breaking new acts? I definitely see radio station playlists opening up; radio is experimenting with different sounds. The barriers that were once at pop have definitely fallen: A lot of urban records are turning into pop records, and pop stations are playing country songs. You have more consumers who are into different genres. And you’ll find as that trend continues, radio stations will have to adjust their playlists.

What will be the final outcome of the singles vs. albums battle? You have a segment of the audience who still loves to buy albums. But you also have a younger segment of the audience for whom it’s all about the single. Basically, the industry will continue to adapt but cater to both types of consumers—and that won’t change. The top 20 artists will sell a lot of albums and everyone else will sell a lot of singles.

There’s a new energy here that’s different from the rest of the country; a movement of young kids who don’t necessarily buy into traditional hits.
Two months ago, Mexican superstar Alejandro Fernández stood before a crowd of nearly 200,000 in his hometown of Guadalajara, performing one of two massive free concerts he organized to spur tourism to Mexico following the swine flu.

If there was ever any doubt about Fernández's status as one of Mexico's favored children, it was quelled here. A slew of stars, including Gloria Estefan, Enrique Iglesias and Luis Fonsi, took the stage with Fernández in an impressive show of support. As far as free shows go, it was unprecedented in the annals of Latin pop.

And then, the coup. Fernández took the stage dressed in charro garb, the traditional mariachi outfit of tight, adorned pants and jacket and wide sombrero and invited his father, icon Vicente Fernández, onstage for a mariachi set. In an instant, Fernández went from pop star to ranchera symbol, a dual role that has been a constant in his nearly two-decade-old recording career.

From Pop To Ranchera Alejandro Fernández's New Project Bridges Genres And Two Of Universal's Labels BY LEILA COBO
Now, Fernández is preparing to simultaneously release a ranchero album and a pop album, each with different tracks, different producers and different marketing and sales teams. Titled "Dos Mundos Evolución" and "Dos Mundos Evolución," the project is set to hit stores Dec. 8, with the pop album out on Universal Music Latino and the ranchera album out on Fonovisa, both sister labels under Universal Music Latin Entertainment (UMLE)—although Fernández has signed to both labels independently.

Being split between two genres “is what I’ve lived,” he says. “I started in Mexican music and later went on to pop, and did very well. But I hadn’t released a ranchero album in a long time. This has been a game, in a way: We’ve brought ranchera music closer to pop and pop closer to Mexican music.”

Ranchera music, the dramatic, gut-wrenching Mexican songs that are usually performed with a mariachi band, is a subgenre of regional Mexican music that couldn’t be more different from the more subtle, romantic leanings of pop. Although a handful of artists, most notably Marco Antonio Solís, Pepe Aguilar and Ana Gabriel, have tackled both genres (see story, below), having two completely different albums be released simultaneously has never been done in the Latin realm, in any genre. But it’s a move Fernández thinks will benefit his career.

“Alejandro lives, sings, enjoys the two worlds—ranchero and pop,” says Jesús López, chairman of Universal Music Latin America/Iberian Peninsula, who also heads UMLE, Universal’s Latin music operation in the United States. “From the onset, Alejandro and I said that if the two worlds coexisted on a daily basis in his life and in his concerts, why not have them also coexist on his albums?”

The two albums are titled “Dos Mundos Tradición” (Two Worlds Tradition) and “Dos Mundos Evolución” (Two Worlds Evolution). Save for one track penned by Solís, the traditional album was written and produced by regional Mexican star Joan Sebastian, who also wrote an album for Vicente Fernández last devoted to Cro-Mega. The pop album brings together producers and songwriters, including Kike Santander and Aureo Baquero, with whom Fernández had worked before on previous albums.

Both albums sound, of course, like Fernández, whose trademark voice—a potent tenor that’s one of the most distinctive and down-right beautiful in the genre—can go from pop crooning to bra-vado mariachi with equal conviction. But the arrangements run the gamut from the familiar to total departure, with the traditional album often veering into country and Tex-Mex territory while the pop album goes from the acoustic to what Fernández’s manager Carlos de la Torre calls “Mexican soul,” given its mix of contemporary and tradition.

This mix is at the heart of “Dos Mundos,” de la Torre says. “Alejandro has that duality. He can put on an Armani suit and ranchera boots. And because he has those very Mexican roots, you believe it.”

That paradox, de la Torre adds, will be present in every phase of the two albums’ promotion. Different singles, for example, are being worked to each genre. The promise of dual support was important to Fernández, who signed to Universal late last year after a lifetime on Sony Latin, and who was anxious to release a ranchera album after years dedicated to expanding his career overseas.

To date, Fernández has sold more than 2.3 million albums in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan. And while most Latin acts talk about crossing over from Spanish to English, Fernández is one of a handful of artists who have managed to become superstars by crossing over from traditional ranchera music to pop. That duality began in 1997 with “Me Estoy Enamorando,” a collaboration with producer Emilio Estefan Jr. that sold more than half a million copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, and 3 million copies worldwide, according to the label, and established Fernández as an international star. And Fernández has been equally successful in regional Mexican music.

“He represents what is traditional and contemporary in Mexican music,” López says. “That’s what makes him unique. No one else can live in those two worlds so easily and with such artistic quality.”

In this case, it may be Fernández battling for himself with a No. 1. On Oct. 5, Fernández’s two singles were sent simultaneously to radio. The pop track, “Se Me Va La Voz,” was written by Tabaré and produced by Baquero while the ranchero song, “Fatuve,” was written and produced by Sebastian. Fernández previewed both tracks for fans on his Twitter account. Both albums will be promoted digitally on iTunes’ Countdown feature. “The marketing will be done jointly between Fonovisa and Latino,” says Universal Music Latino president Walter Kolm. “The entire marketing strategy goes hand in hand. Even when he performs on television, he will sing both singles.”

The albums will be sold separately and as a set. In a second marketing phase, Kolm says, both albums will probably be launched together with exclusive bonus content.

“We have a unique situation here,”

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**DOUBLE PLAY: Latin Artists Who Cross Over To Pop Can Get A Sales Boost**

With its vast array of subgenres and styles, Latin music has long been a breeding ground for artists to record in multiple genres. And because the vast majority of Latinos in the United States are of Mexican descent, Mexican music has been the most visible genre to appear in the repertoire of pop artists, with multiple acts through the years traveling between the two genres.

Today, Alejandro Fernández is not the only Latin artist with a dual personality. Marco Antonio Solís, Pepe Aguilar and Pedro Fernández are all well-known in the world of mariachi—and, Ironically, Fernández, Solís and Aguilar have garnished their biggest single album sales in the United States from pop releases. Fernández sold more than half a million copies in the United States from his pop albums, “He Está En Amorano,” according to Nielsen Soundscan.

Aguilar, established as a romantic ranchero singer, garnered his biggest sales—250,000 copies—from “Por Míeres Como Tu,” an album that blended pop and ranchero sensibilities. And Solís had his best sales, 455,000, with “Tres de Mi Alma,” his first all-pop album.

The phenomenon isn’t confined to the present: Linda Ronstadt, the top-selling female rock singer of her day, made history when she recorded an all-mariachi album, “Canciones de Mi Padre,” and the late Tejano singer Selena recorded both Tejano and pop, and in Spanish and English. Beyond those two genres, in 2003, Shakira released her “Fijación Oral” and “Oral Fixation” albums in Spanish and English, within months of each other, features record a few blended tracks. And Marc Anthony records not only in English and Spanish but also in salsa and pop. In 2004, he released the pop set “Amar Sin Mentiras” and, within weeks, its counterpart, “Valió la Pena,” featuring salsa versions of many of the same tracks. Both albums reached No. 1 on Billboard’s Top Latin Albums chart.

Singing in English and Spanish and in pop and salsa is like “having two arms,” Anthony once told Billboard. “It was born and raised in East Harlem. The music my mother and my grandmother heard at home wasn’t what I heard with my friends. But my parents took the time to expose me to that culture. And when I had to express that music, I understood it. It was part of me. I am both things, I am both. I am both.”

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Kolm says, "An artist with this duality with a company like Universal that has two separate labels."

On the Mexican end, says Disi Fonovisa president Gustavo López, "the regional production is the most anticipated album this fall in the Mexican music arena. The combination of Alejandro Fernández and Joan Sebastian producing is a dream come true."

The fact that Fernández has been recording more in pop than ranchera in the past few years has no bearing on the album's possibilities, Gustavo López says. "He was a huge regional star before breaking in pop."

Fernández is the youngest son of Vicente Fernández, widely considered the most prominent living ranchera singer and one of Latin music's biggest icons. As Vicente's son, Alejandro was pushed into the limelight early; when he was barely 3 years old, he took the stage with his father for the first time, panicked and began to cry. The younger Fernández went on to study architecture but eventually found his way back to music, releasing his self-titled debut album in 1992 and launching one of the most prolific, successful and memorable careers in the Latin realm.

Fernández traverses pop and ranchera with ease beyond his recordings as well. In his shows, he performs pop and ranchera sets, first dressed in jeans or a suit and accompanied by a pop band, then clad in a full charro outfit and accompanied by a mariachi. While he can easily play theaters in Spain and arenas in the United States and Latin America, in Mexico, Fernández performs during traditional celebrations across the country and in palenques, the circular theaters found in many Mexican cities that can seat up to 15,000. In these settings, he always performs dressed in Mexican garb.

Capturing the duality of both worlds in all marketing material was important, de la Torre says, and although each album has its own identity, both the videos and the albums' art and concept will come together at some point. "The album's art, for example, which is still in the planning stages, may depict Fernández divided between his two worlds, dressed as an international artist in a traditional Mexican hacienda or as a Mexican charro in front of a modern building. But while in the past Fernández had pictures taken in different cities and countries, this time everything will come in Mexico, specifically in his home state of Jalisco. It is, de la Torre says, the contrast of something very modern with something very Mexican.

Universal is still in the process of aligning sponsors and media partners for the album releases, including partnerships with mobile carriers in different Latin American countries. Fernández, however, has never been big on sponsorship deals, and those he strikes hit close to home, as in the case with Grupo Modelo, the maker of Corona beer, which sponsored his last tour and with whom conversations are beginning for his next tour.

Although sales are down and the economy is ailing, de la Torre says that securing a sponsor still isn't essential to Fernández's project. "I think we have to show fans that we stand by who we are and we will continue to record good songs," he says. "Our commitment to the fans has to continue, and times like this are when you most have to concentrate in releasing great songs. We have to continue to think positive. They say winners aren't those who do things differently. Winners are those who do different things. That's what we're doing."

THE BILLBOARD Q&A:
ALEJANDRO FERNÁNDEZ

As Alejandro Fernández prepares to release "Dos Mundos Tradición" and "Dos Mundos Evolución," he's doing double duty as a singer of ranchera music and one of Latin music's leading pop stars.

Why release two albums simultaneously? We planned it to attack the two markets and the two targets. Normally, when you release an album in one genre, it takes at least three years to return to it, and you could lose your other audience. What we wanted to do was reach both markets at the same time. I hadn't recorded a Mexican album in almost six years and I had that need to do it—and I think the fans were anxious for it as well. Although I've done very well with pop, and in a way, the pop that we do sounds very Mexican.

Doing such a release has never been done. Are you nervous? No. On the contrary, I think it will be excellent for my career. Universal is in love with the project, the album, the songs. Jesús López, chairman of Universal Music Latin America (Iberian Peninsula and head of Universal Music Latin Entertainment) has made me feel at home.

You're working on the album imaging now. What's the idea? We're playing a little with the album concept. It will bring you close in a way to the two worlds that I've lived: the countryside, the farm, the animals, but I've also lived an urban life in the city. It's the first time we're working with the photographer and the art designer at the same time.

Your Mexican concerts in your home state of Jalisco to promote tourism were a huge success. Did their planning have anything to do with your albums? No. That was about supporting the secretariat of tourism, particularly because Guadalajara was going through a very rough time. And then, with the swine flu, no one really knew what could happen. What we wanted to do was tell the world that everything was OK.

You play almost every weekend, and you play many shows during Mexican festivities around the country and in palenques, but you also perform in arenas and theaters. Are the shows completely different? The theatrical presentations have far more production value, but the vibe that you have live in a palenque is incomparable. It becomes alive. Those concerts are more relaxed, more bohemian. You can tell that people are really there to enjoy themselves. We also play pop in the palenque shows, but we don't have any changes. I perform dressed in charro garb the entire time. But we do have great lighting production, screens, that kind of thing.

Initially you were thinking of releasing only a pop album, and then you had an encounter with producer/songwriter Joan Sebastian. What can you say about that? We knew we wanted to record a ranchero album. In fact, we thought about Joan Sebastian (to produce it), but then he did the album for my father and we shaved that option. As we were looking for a ranchero producer, Joan came up to me during a show in a palenque and said, "Alex, I've come to say hello and to tell you I want to do an album with you. It's something I've been planning for a long time." And I said, "Oh, come on!" Because we didn't want to repeat [what my father had done]. And he said, "No, no, no, Alex. I have 11 songs. Let me play them for you and tell me if they sound like your Dad's." And he brought a CD player and he played the songs, and my jaw dropped. They were totally different from what he'd done with my dad. So I had to do it. And on the other hand, the pop album was already well on its way.

Some of the songs aren't traditional ranchera. Some tracks sound almost country. It's a universal mix. That's why I say that what we did was bring pop closer to Mexican music and Mexican music closer to pop. But there are songs that are totally ranchera. And you do hear the mariachis in full, but performed in a different way and with different instruments.

When you record pop and ranchera, do you have to be in a different mindset to do each? You sing them in a completely different way. They are two completely different genres. Ranchero is stronger, more passionate, it has more energy. If you sing a pop song in that manner, it doesn't sound well. You really have to change your mental channel when you go from ranchero to pop. But with this album, doing two sets of material, truth is, I'm exhausted.

Could you live, say, in Miami? For a bit. Maybe on vacation for four, five months. But leave behind Mexico, my home, my roots and all my culture? That would be hard. —LC
HAIR APPARENT

TOKIO HOTEL HAS ALREADY CONQUERED EUROPE. CAN THE ELABORATELY COIFFED GERMAN BOY BAND GET BIG IN THE U.K. AND AMERICA?

BY MARK SUTHERLAND
PHOTOGRAPH BY OLIVER GAST

Sometimes, much weirder things happen at the MTV Video Music Awards than Kanye West interrupting an acceptance speech. Take the 2008 VMAs ceremony, for example, when the A-list glamour of Hollywood’s Paramount Studios red carpet was upset by the entrance of four teenage cyborgs with preposterous hair that stood atop an enormous monster truck. Embazoned with their band name in foot-high letters, the truck was the cyborgs’ not-particularly-subtle way of telling America what the rest of the planet already knew: Tokio Hotel had arrived. So far, so Eurotrash gatecrasher. Tokio Hotel—a curious electro-Goth-glam-emo boy band that had climbed no higher than No. 39 on the Billboard 200—had what seemed a token nomination in the fan-voted best new artist category. It was up against the crème de la crème of U.S. female pop: Miley Cyrus, Katy Perry, Jordin Sparks and—oh, the irony—Taylor Swift. The likelihood of Tokio Hotel winning seemed about equal to that of Satan ice skating to work the next day. “We were at the awards watching it outside on a massive screen,” recalls Martin Kierszenbaum, chairman of Tokio Hotel’s U.S. label, Cherrytree Records, as well as president of A&R for pop/rock at Interscope and head of international operations for Interscope Geffen A&M. “I was half-distracted because I didn’t really expect them to win—it just seemed a little . . . hopeful. But they announced it and suddenly [Interscope marketing executive] Bob Johnsen just punched me as hard as he could on the arm. Boom!” The band and most of the audience were similarly dumbstruck. Yet no one saw the need to interrupt singer Bill Kaulitz—the one who looks like a cross between a Bratz doll and a cocktail—during his incredulous acceptance speech. “To be honest, it would have been a good moment if someone had come onstage,” Kaulitz reminisces a year later. “I was onstage at the VMAs and I was speechless.” “We got very drunk,” says his guitarist twin brother Tom with a laugh—he’s the one who looks like a cross between Predator and a Jonas Brother. “Even though we can’t drink in the U.S. until we’re 21.” The next day, they weren’t the only ones suffering. “Man, I had a charley horse from that night,” Kierszenbaum says with a laugh. “But I’ll take a charley horse any day if it means winning an award.”

SPEAKING THE MOTHER TONGUE

One suspects many in the Tokio Hotel camp have been sporting similar injuries in the last four years. The band acknowledges the VMA win as “the biggest thing in our entire career,” but in truth it was just another moment in a career trajectory that has defied conventional wisdom, international boundaries and, at times, logic.

Formed in the East German town of Magdeburg, the band—which also features bassist Georg Listing and drummer Gustav Schäfer, the two who look like they’ve come to fix the Kaulitz brothers’ car and computer, respectively—began playing under the name Devilish in 2001.

A deal with Sony BMG followed. But Tokio Hotel was dropped in 2005 when the members were just 15—a decision that, in pure commercial terms, is starting to compare to Decca’s rejection of the Beatles. Undeterred, the twins signed with Universal Music Germany and quickly became a hot property with their 2005 German-language debut, “Scherz.”

And there, frankly, the story should stop. German-language pop music is right up there with English cuisine and American diplomacy as concepts that shouldn’t travel and usually don’t. At all. Not since Nena’s 1983-84 hit “99 Luftballons”—cited by Bill as a formative influence—had songs with umlauts made it beyond the Maginot Line.

Yet “Scherz” didn’t just reach No. 1 in Germany and Austria and top three in Switzerland. It hit the top 10 in Greece, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Poland and, almost unprecedentedly, No. 12 in France—a country that traditionally regards German pop music in much the same way it looked at George Bush—while peaking on Billboard’s European Top 100 Albums chart at No. 5. The follow-up, 2007’s “Zimmer 483,” did even better, peaking on European Top 100 Albums at No. 4. It hit No. 1 in Germany and No. 2 in France; went top 10 in Austria, Switzerland, Greece, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Poland; and charted everywhere from Finland to Italy. The band even performed in Tel Aviv—a rarity for German-speaking artists—after Israeli fans launched a petition demanding a concert. “It was strange,” Tom says with a shrug of acrylic shoulders. “But cool. Our fans started to learn German so they could sing along.”

At the same time, however, executives and band members alike were at something of a loss to explain the group’s appeal. Bill cites the band’s formidable online presence as a factor, while executives cite Bill’s exotic look as crucial in attracting media attention and a vocal female fan base.

Any time that might have been used to contemplate this puzzle the twins spent learning English in a bid to conquer the countries that hadn’t yet embraced the group’s cyber-Goth persona.

In 2007, Tokio Hotel released their first English-language album, "Scream," featuring songs from the first two German albums sung in English. It has sold 175,000 U.S. copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan, spending 21 weeks on the Billboard 200. It was also a hit across Europe, bringing the band’s first top 10 success in Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden and Finland. The French sent it to No. 6. They’re eating English cheese next. Tokio Hotel’s new album, “Humoroid,” came out almost simultaneously around the world—Oct. 2 in Germany and continental Europe, Oct. 6 in the United States—in both German and English versions.

“It’s necessary we stick to the German-language origins in some markets,” says Cornelius Ballin, the Berlin-based director of international exploitation at Universal Music Germany. “But English is the international language of music and the band wants to be heard in that language as well. Each territory will focus on one version but as they have fans who want to get their hands on everything, [most countries] will put both out.”

In the United States, a Best Buy-exclusive version of the album will feature the German album alongside the English one in a two-CD package. This time the band recorded two versions of every song at once.

“It’s not a one-to-one translation this time,” Tom says. “The songs are around the same topic but we had to view them as different things really.

“We’re working twice as hard as any other band,” Bill says with a laugh. “I feel comfortable with the English versions this time. I’m a perfectionist, so the first English record was very hard for me. I don’t want to sound like a German guy trying to sing in English.”
"Humanoid," which is more electronic than previous albums, is heavy on the science fiction (think "Terminator" or "District 9"). The first single is "Automatic" (or, if you prefer, "Automatisch"), a brilliantly ludicrous techno-rock anthem with a video featuring fast cars, robot sex and Bill looking like Björk if she had played the Tina Turner role in "Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome." The rest of the album is almost equally over the top, and the fist-punching rock of "Noise" and the Depeche Mode-style electronics of "Human Connect to Human" are catchy enough to appeal to teens from Berlin to Boise, Idaho.

For the album release, Universal has partnered with Media Markt, a Pan-European consumer electronics and entertainment retailer. The chain will give an item of band merchandise to consumers who preorder the album at stores in Germany, France, Spain, the Netherlands, Austria, Switzerland and Belgium. It will also set up displays dedicated to the act, and 13 outlets across the seven territories will present 3-D broadcasts of the band performing tracks from the new album. The band will play a live showcase at the opening of Media Markt's new flagship store in the Paris suburbs at the end of October.

"We need [entertainment] specialists in the market in Europe because that's how we break acts," says Romain Delmaur, the London-based director of operations for commercial affairs at Universal Music Group International. "Media Markt have an international presence that allows us to coordinate the campaign across the markets."

The deal could help Media Markt as well. "Tokio Hotel is a good fit for us," says Wolfgang Kirsch, chief procurement officer of Media-Saturn Group. "Both of us started our career in Germany and expanded into other countries very successfully. The combination of music, innovative technique and a live experience is a perfect fusion."

The band members might also want to look at alternative uses for the 3-D technology if it can help them be in more than one place at the same time. Such is the devotion of the group's rabid fan base—either hyperventilating teenage girls or more intense emo types, depending on the territory—that the Kaulitz brothers can no longer have a quiet drink anywhere in Europe.

"It's not a job for me," Bill says with a shrug. "It's my life. Tokio Hotel is an extension of my personality and the whole look comes from that."

"It's totally cool that he gets all the attention," jokes Tom, who lacks—good-naturedly rather than violently—with his brothers. "As long as I get more girls than him."

WORLDWIDE SUCCESS COULD BE "AUTOMATIC" Tokio Hotel's global sales are now at 3.5 million copies, plus 1 million DVDs, according to Universal. The international scope of the band's marketing campaign is obvious, and the act's official Web site is available in 11 languages. "Automatic" is a worldwide MTV video priority. The band will appear at the network's European Music Awards Nov. 5 in Berlin and headline MTV Day 09—broadcast worldwide as an MTV World Stage presentation—Oct. 9 in Athens. Regular European tour dates will follow early next year.

The band will be in the United States Oct. 10-19, and Kierszenbaum expects to confirm appearances on major TV shows. (One already confirmed is MTV's "It's On With Alexa Chung.") With early media support from Rolling Stone, Seventeen and the New York Times, he intends to delay a major radio push to top 40 formats until "we've got real traction in the marketplace."

"The sky's the limit," Kierszenbaum says. "The band has turned in a great record, we did a lot of groundwork last time, and people are opening up to new kinds of music. Bill's an absolute worldwide superstar—it's just a matter of time and we're going to make sure it happens."

Universal Music Germany's Ballin says South American markets are also a priority this time around, and an initial push in Asia is planned for next year. Even the United Kingdom, which now stands alone in declining to embrace the band, will receive the full Tokio Hotel treatment in 2010.

"Success is like a drug," Bill says. "We want to be successful everywhere. But if not, at least we can go on vacation to London."

Best not to look that holiday just yet, though. If anyone can make the Brits love German pop music, it's Tokio Hotel. Nothing—not even Kanye West—can stop them now.

Additional reporting by Wolfgang Schäfer in Hamburg.

Back in black: Tokio Hotel's GUSTAV SCHÄFER, TOM KAULITZ, BILL KAULITZ and GEORG LISTING (from left)
I think we have a better experience and a better offer. We wouldn’t do it if we thought we were going to lose.

—GUSTAV SÖDERSTRÖM>
See Spotify Run

The Swedish Streaming Service Has Taken Europe By Storm.
Can It Translate That Buzz Into Popularity—And Profit—in The U.S.?

BY ANTONY BRUNO  |  ILLUSTRATION BY PETER HOEY

MTV Urge ... Yahoo Music Unlimited ... Virgin Digital ... Since 2003—when iTunes launched in the United States—all of these digital music services have come and gone, without challenging Apple's market dominance, despite the backing of resource-rich parent companies.

Add in all the startups that have crashed and burned in the same time period and it starts to look like no service could ever rival iTunes' traction with customers and critics. Until now.

The Sweden-based startup Spotify, launched for public access in October 2008, has momentum like no other digital music service of the last six years. It offers on-demand music streaming, in both free and premium services, and now claims to have more than 6 million users in Sweden, Norway, Finland, the United Kingdom, France and Spain. At one point it reported signing up new members at a rate of 50,000 per day, although that figure has fallen since September, when the service restricted its free version to invited guests in the United Kingdom.

Spotify has won high marks from reviewers for the ease with which it provides access to a catalog of more than 6 million tracks from majors and indies alike and the unobtrusive way it delivers advertising.

Spotify’s recently launched mobile version—available for the iPhone and Android-powered devices in Europe to premium subscribers who pay the equivalent of around $15 per month—has won similar praise. Although Spotify doesn’t comment on its fund-raising activity, it has reportedly won $50 million worth of backing from investors—at a valuation of $250 million, an almost unheard-of sum for a music venture in today’s stingy venture capital environment. The European service also has the full support of the major labels, which reportedly negotiated a collective 18% stake in the company.

Yet this momentum will be tested severely as the company prepares to enter the United States—the No. 1 music market in the world—with a launch expected either late this year or early next, depending on how fast it completes its negotiations with the majors.

“It’s been talked about so much I don’t think it can meet everyone’s expectations,” says Forrester Research analyst Sonal Gandhi. “If the Spotify experience can be as good as hype, it has a lot of potential.”

With negotiations ongoing, U.S. labels are reluctant to comment on the service. According to music industry sources, the labels are impressed with Spotify’s achievements but want the service to start generating real revenue. To do so, it must take care not to let the usage model outpace the business model.

There are certainly early signs of success. In August, Per Sundin, managing director of Universal Music Sweden, told the Swedish press that his company now earns more revenue from Spotify than iTunes. But that’s in Sweden, where the service was born and where it doesn’t have the dominant hold on the digital music market it does elsewhere.

“We’ve seen income from Spotify follow a steep growth curve since launch,” says Paul Smernicki, director of digital and direct-to-consumer at Universal U.K.’s Polydor Records. “Excluding mobile, they are pretty high up the list as a revenue stream for us. But we’re certainly not in the same position as Sweden.”

Scott Cohen, the London-based founder/VP of international at the digital distribution and marketing company the Orchard, says Spotify is already boosting income for labels in two ways.

“First, the more tracks are streamed on Spotify the more downloads occur on other services,” he says. “We are not seeing any cannibalization. Second, revenue streams from advertising have been steadily increasing and have overtaken many niche stores in Europe.”

But the ad-supported free service alone can’t generate the revenue Spotify needs to pay for the music it plays. The company reported a net loss of $4 million last year, and its decision to limit its free service in the United Kingdom to invited guests implies a high burn rate.

That means Spotify has to increase the number of users for its premium service. So far, however, music subscription services like Rhapsody and Napster haven’t been able to reach a mass audience. In its most recent quarterly earnings report, RealNetworks said Rhapsody has about 750,000 subscribers. Napster had 700,000 subscribers when Best Buy acquired the company last year, but hasn’t released updated figures since.

While Spotify plans to make mobile access a key element of its conversion strategy, the mobile music market has also yet to take off. Spotify has confirmed it will launch in the United States with a “slightly different model” than in Europe, although it has yet to disclose details.
THE AD-FUNDED MODEL
Calling Spotify a free ad-funded music streaming service would be accurate but unfair. The company has paying customers, but they number less than 10% of its user base, according to comments from CEO Daniel Ek at a recent London conference. And company executives say that’s unlikely to change.

“We expect the large majority of our customers to stay with free,” says Gustav Söderström, who left his job as director of business development at Yahoo to join Spotify as its head of mobile. “We’re monetizing it through ads and through selling downloads (through its partnership with 7digital), so it’s a significant revenue source.”

So far, no ad-funded service has been able to turn a profit from advertising and download revenue alone. Which is why Spotify doesn’t intend to. Using the “freemium” model, the company hopes to convert a portion of its free user base to the premium tier.

The free Spotify service could be seen as a customer acquisition play—and perhaps the most expensive one out there. Napster once estimated its customer acquisition cost at $100 per user, due to all the advertising needed to explain its subscription model.

“It makes the [customer acquisition] process easier than it would be if you start with no users,” Söderström says. “You have to put a lot of marketing dollars into getting users’ attention to even consider signing up. We don’t have to do that.”

Free access to any song on demand is powerful bait and Spotify offers what amounts to an indefinite trial period. Rhapsody and Napster usually limit their trial periods to about a week, after which users either need to pay or use only 30-second samples. (Rhapsody allows non-paying users to stream 25 free songs per month.) That may not be enough time to get users hooked on the access model.

Despite the popularity of Spotify’s free tier in Europe, Rhapsody—America’s VP of business management Neil Smith—dubs it will roll out the same way stateside.

“The reason Spotify blew up so big and so fast was it was free,” he says. “This model isn’t going to happen in the U.S. anytime soon, maybe ever. The U.S. is the market where the labels make all their money. They can’t afford to have a service that doesn’t generate substantial revenue such as all the usage. If it was $15 (per month) out of the gate, it wouldn’t have a million users. Once you take the free piece away, we compete pretty well.”

So Spotify will have to ensure its ad-supported service remains worthwhile and not degrade it in order to push users to the paid version. Devaluing the free service would risk losing users, which in turn would threaten its function as a customer acquisition tool as well as limit any hopes of generating revenue from it.

THE SUBSCRIPTION MODEL
For all the hype Spotify gets for the popularity of its free tier, there’s no guarantee it can match that success as a paid service.

Until its mobile option launched, Spotify’s premium tier only offered the elimination of ads—which weren’t very intrusive to begin with—and slightly better audio quality. The iPhone and Android apps add portability to that mix, but it’s still not much different in price or function to portable subscription offers from Rhapsody and Napster.

“The value proposition of subscription has to change,” Forrester’s Gandhi says. “There has to be ownership. There has to be something besides just renting music.”

Gandhi specifically points to subscription plans that allow users to keep a certain number of songs per month, such as the five tracks Napster gives away as part of its $5-per-month streaming plan and Zune’s five free downloads.

Another option comes from Pali Capital analyst Richard Greenfield, who recently suggested that mobile operators and Internet service providers should bundle the Spotify premium service into their data plans. The idea of bundling is nothing new, but Spotify’s ability to synch content across the different platforms makes it a more viable option.

Söderström says Spotify would consider such options, but only if they weren’t exclusive.

THE MOBILE MODEL
Spotify is hanging its hopes of converting free users to paid users on the mobile application. But it doesn’t want to position itself as a mobile service.

“I wouldn’t say Spotify is a mobile service first,” Söderström says. “You’re going to do the majority of your browsing and discovery on your desktop, at least for some time. But if you want to use Spotify as your primary music service, then you’re going to need the mobile option.”

Previous portable subscription options required transferring tracks from desktop to portable device, which users needed to sync with an online service at least once per month to refresh the licenses. Services were based on digital rights management technology from Microsoft that had a reputation for being unreliable—and the dominance of the iPod had made them irrelevant.

Spotify gets around this by using mobile phones to stream the music rather than download it. Since mobile networks are notoriously unreliable, it created a way to temporarily cache more than 3,000 songs on supporting mobile phones, without using the 10 GB of storage normally required to do so—although users must still connect to Spotify every 30 days to verify their premium subscriber status.

Mobile options have already paid huge dividends for music services like Slacker, Pandora and Clear Channel’s iHeartRadio. Pandora, for example, says more than 45,000 of the 65,000 new registrations it gets every day come from its various mobile apps.

“Our future is going to be more mobile-centric than I had even thought, and sooner,” Pandora founder Tim Westergren says.

But there are free applications. Rhapsody beat Spotify to the U.S. market with an iPhone app that lets users paying $15 per month stream any song from the service’s catalog as well as their playlists and Internet radio stations, but to date it doesn’t have a local caching option.

The U.S. mobile music market is also much tougher than that of Europe, where Spotify launched its mobile service in early September. According to a Forrester Research study, 27% of U.S. mobile subscribers with Internet access use their phone to play music at least monthly. In the United States, that figure is only 10%. U.S. mobile operators and labels alike hope Spotify will help goose these figures.

“There’s definitely potential there,” says one mobile operator. “I think we’ll get the typical technology hype curve—lots of hype going into market, pause and then either decline or hype again based on reality. Spotify has a chance to be a big deal.”

THE EUROPEAN MODEL
Spotify’s European success is impressive, but the U.S. market can be more competitive—and more fickle.

“Spotify has a great advantage there,” says one analyst. “The States if they can make the right distribution partnerships, the Orchard’s Cohen says. “But it will require a different strategy than in Europe.”

And a win stateside would do much more than just cement Spotify as a legitimate player in the global digital music game. It will finally broaden the digital music market beyond iTunes and add a new usage model beyond track sales.

“Spotify is not the first streaming service in the world, just like iTunes wasn’t the first digital download store,” Cohen says. “What it does that is so special is make a fairly complex model seem easy to execute. They have a great team running the company and I wouldn’t bet against them.”

And while other U.S. music industry sources remain only cautiously optimistic, Spotify has confidence.

“There are certainly more music services in the U.S. than there are in Europe,” Söderström says. “So, yes, it’s more competitive. But I still think we have a better experience and a better offer. We wouldn’t do it if we thought we were going to lose.”
Campus Concerts Adjust To Tight Economy

BY MITCHELL PETERS

Live entertainment is still a major draw at university venues across the country, but the challenged economy in 2009 has forced some schools to cut back on student activities budgets designated for bringing musical acts and comedians to perform in campus buildings. As a result, many colleges are reviewing the types of acts they book as well as the frequency of campus concerts, industry observers say.

"The upper administration at colleges is definitely paying attention to budgets a little more due to this recession," says Todd Erickson, an agent at the More Music Group, a company that serves as the middle agent between colleges and talent. "I think things will change back in the spring."

Jamie Kelsall, a booking agent at the Agency for Performing Arts, says campus entertainment committees are spending their money more wisely. "They'll do two or three of the small [bands], rather than putting all their money into one act," Kelsall says, noting that the events are then transformed into a more festival-type environment. "It's certainly no surprise, because their budgets have definitely been cut."

In light of tighter entertainment budgets at many colleges, some developing artists have agreed to lower performance fees to play campuses and build stronger student fan bases, according to Jon Shyer, director at StarPolish Presents, another middle agent that assists colleges with booking concerts.

"They're definitely flexible on their numbers," Shyer says, declining to name specific acts. "[Booking agents] don't want you to express that initially—because of negotiation reasons—but we get one e-mail a week saying, 'This band is looking to fill these dates.'"

Kelsall says that the challenged economy has forced some artists who rely heavily on touring as their primary source of revenue to re-evaluate how much they charge for shows.

"The smarter bands realize that in order to remain on the road, they have to work as much as they can with the buyers," says Kelsall, who books college-friendly acts like Jack's Mannequin, Eric Hutchinson, Three 6 Mafia, Flo Rida, Flogging Molly and the Gaslight Anthem.

In addition to being more flexible with guarantees, many artists offer additional services to colleges, including lectures and afternoon performances.

"Numerous artists are willing to come to schools early and promote their show by playing a small acoustic performance to bring more students to the show," Shyer says. "And from our roster, the Kicks and Craig Cardell use their experience in the music business to teach students in a two-part lecture and performance on college campuses."

Adam Tobey, senior VP at the middle agent company Concert Ideas, says more colleges are booking comedians because their material is viewed as a sure bet, compared with hit-driven music acts.

College events featuring comedians from popular TV shows usually result in successful ticket sales, because students are more likely to attend events that are tied to something they're familiar with, according to Erickson.

"For marketing purposes, if [the act is] from a TV show, everybody will know that show and they'll be drawn to it, whether it's someone from 'Saturday Night Live' or a half-hour comedy special on Comedy Central," he says, citing a recent show with "SNL" comic Kenan Thompson.

Booking comedy is also sometimes a safer move because it has a wide appeal to students from all walks of life. "Everybody loves to laugh," Erickson says. "So with comedy, it's not like you're trying to appeal to a certain person who may like hard rock or hip-hop and R&B."

Even top-priced comics are considered a safer economic play. The 17,000-seat Frank Erwin Center at the University of Texas in Austin saw recent success with such top-name comedians as Robin Williams, George Lopez and Jeff Dunham. "Those major comics seem to play pretty well in this environment," says center director John Graham, who also cites upcoming shows by Dane Cook and Larry the Cable Guy.

Even in a tough economy, campus is an attractive target for top music acts, such as Jay-Z, whose 20-plus-date fall tour will primarily play college arenas.

Frank Russo, senior VP of business development and client services at the facility management firm Global Spectrum, says business is growing at the 10 university venues the company manages. But digital marketing is key, "as opposed to radio, TV and newspapers," he says. E-mail blasts for events are effective, he adds, noting that students "live in their own world" and are difficult to reach through traditional forms of advertising. So Global Spectrum often works with student entertainment committees to find alternative methods of spreading the word. "You have to sort to different ways to get them aware of shows, which might even be putting chalk on the sidewalk on the paths from dorms to classrooms," Russo says.

Other colleges are taking a similar grass-roots approach to reaching students on campus. At Clemson University in South Carolina, concert organizers have moved the box office for the 10,000-seat Littlejohn Coliseum to various hubs on the school's campus. "They don't even have to get in the car—we're where they want to be," coliseum GM/director of major events Marty Kern says. To help sell tickets to shows, Kern advises her students to "get in front of the library late at night where we know the students are," she says. "It's in your face, old-school marketing."
The booking agent's job has always been complex. Efficiently routing tours; choosing the correct time, promoter, venue, capacity and market; and cutting intricate deals with talent buyers, buildings and producers are painstaking tasks in the simplest of times. Despite the old joke about agents, this has never been about throwing darts at a map. But in today's concert industry, when one asks agents what the most pressing issues are that they face, the answer is more likely to be about mergers, 360 deals, new models, dynamic pricing and secondary-market ticketing than moving the act from point A to point B.

Like promoters and management companies, agencies have evolved into multilevel entertainment companies. The major agencies are making moves into the label business and other areas of the content world beyond live performance. Many agencies are more involved in marketing than ever. Ultimately the agents' biggest concern remains building lineups and “selling tickets,” according to Marsha Vlasic, senior VP at International Creative Management and head of ICM's contemporary rock department.


Marc Geiger, contemporary music head at William Morris Endeavor, says that ticket pricing, the “altering of the secondary market” and the proposed merger of industry giants Live Nation and Ticketmaster/360 Entertainment all loom large as important issues today.

The Agency Group agent Ken Fermaglich cites the economy and 360 deals as concerns, particularly as the latter relates to labels entering the concert business. “As labels sign more bands to 360 deals, and therefore have a small piece of the touring, the label being the promoter, too, could be an issue,” he says.

Other agents echo that sentiment. “I'm really concerned how labels are involving themselves in touring,” ICM agent Dennis Ashley says. “I'm not sure that this would always be in the best interests of the artist.”

Vlasic thinks the trend toward multirights deals will “filter out,” but she's not as quick to dismiss the impact of a Ticketmaster/Live Nation merger. “It's something we really need to be concerned about,” she says.

Rob Beckham, Nashville-based agent for William Morris, agrees that artist development is a concern. “The biggest problem I see in the country business is the lack of developing headliners,” he says. “We had Taylor Swift blow up and take the world by storm. She is an amazing star and has worked very hard to become the headliner she is.”

But Swift is the exception rather than the norm. “Because record sales have come down so far, and singles take much longer to be hits, we just have a very difficult road ahead in developing those arena-type headliners,” Beckham says. “There will be others that emerge, but nothing like we have seen in the past 10-15 years.”

Like other agents, Bruce Houghton, president of the Skyline Agency, sees ticketing as a very issues. “Less-than-transparent ticketing fees that drive
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up prices are frustrating consumers and destroying efforts by artists, managers and agents to create value for the fans,” Houghton says.

Joey Lee, president of the 360 Artist Agency, says fees are particularly an issue with “bubbling headliners”—acts moving up to larger venues that don’t yet have the clout to negotiate a break with ticketing companies, venues and advertisers.

Paradigm agent Aaron Pinkus says the live business overall hasn’t done a good job in developing new acts to back up the heritage artists that have been the core of the touring industry for years. “So the onus on the agency side is to develop new talent at an affordable cost that will get butts transferred from couches into stadium seating,” he says. “To that end, we are getting killed by ticketing service charges.”

While he understands the costs of rolling out a new ticketing system or operating an existing one, “I still can’t understand how it costs $8.35 to process what was originally a $10 general admission ticket for a 500-capacity club show,” Pinkus says. “And as the venue sizes increase, so does the ticket price, and consequently the service charge.”

When it comes to high ticket prices in general, “as agents, we have had a large hand in creating this problem,” Pinkus says. “We have driven guarantees to the point where promoters could not break even on a show solely based on ticket sales. Promoters were forced ‘underground’ into making their money through ancillary means; hot dogs, beer and ticketing service charge rebates. So we don’t back down from guarantees, and promoters don’t back down from ticketing fees, because everyone needs their money, and we’re effectively in a stalemate.”

That status quo has to change, especially at the developmental level, Pinkus asserts. “Maybe that means we don’t push for the same guarantee in exchange for lower ticketing charges; but I can tell you something has to be done to prevent the first concert by any new band in any given market to have more than 50% of their ticket price going towards service fees,” he says. “It’s killing the goose before it’s out of the egg, and there are a ton of talented bands that will not get the chance to turn into the proverbial golden goose if we out-price them in the market as they try to plant their flag in your town and in your mind.”

Industry cuts have led to less effective promotion of artists, Houghton believes. “Who is left to market the shows is more than a cookie-cutter fashion?” he asks before answering his own question. “No one—promoters, managers or agents—has been willing to fill that void.”

Though attendance largely held its own, the summer of 2009 did see an industry-wide trend of consumers waiting longer to buy tickets. William Morris agent Kirk Sommer would like to see advance sales stimulated through premium inventory incentives with presales and such old-school but effective messaging to the public as “only area performance” or “last area performance” if these statements are in fact true. Sommer says increasing demand by being more conservative in choosing venue capacity, earlier on-sales and keeping ticketing programs to a minimum could also help advance sales.

One of the most pressing issues for 2010 will continue to be ticket scaling for new and established touring artists, according to agent David Zedeck of Creative Artists Agency.

“It is important that we take the lessons learned from this past year, which was arguably the toughest economy in 30 years, and understand what worked and what didn’t—for the artists, the promoters and fans,” Zedeck says. “We need to continually work to market and sell tickets to the fervent fan, as well as the casual fan.”

Brian Jones, VP at the Bobby Roberts Co., sees today’s market as “too many artists looking for work and not enough ticket buyers who will pay the amount for a ticket it takes to cover promoting the show,” he says. “Like many products in today’s economy, it’s a buyer’s market. The fans are in control.”

Still, Jones says he’s not overly concerned about the long-term viability of live entertainment. “People will always go to live shows; it’s just finding the right formula to make it affordable for the promoter, artist and the ticket buyer,” he says. “We’ve all adjusted, and we will adjust some more.”
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TAKING IT TO THE CLUBS

Live Nation Debuts Strategies for Smaller Venues

Clubs and small venues are the lifeblood of the concert business. It’s where acts create buzz, hone their chops and build the foundation of a touring career. Historically, promoters were willing to make less or even lose money on an act at the club level with hopes that the artist will stay loyal as it climbed the ladder to larger venues, reaping more profits in the process.

Live Nation is now following its summer promotion schedule for its amphitheaters with two new club-level promotions.

The first, which the company describes as more of a “product” than a promotion, is the Club Passport. For $49.99, including fees, music fans who purchase a passport can see every show at Live Nation clubs in their city for the rest of the year, subject to availability. A source at Live Nation says sales of the Club Passport are “solid.” On Oct. 5, Live Nation announced a second club-level price promotion—a “two-for-one” deal that will encompass 200,000 tickets to 350 concerts in 29 U.S. Live Nation venues. The company says its No Service Fee promotions at amphitheaters saved fans about $14 million on nearly 800,000 tickets during the first half of the year. The Live Nation source says the club programs are a response to requests from agents and managers for the promoter to offer similar inducements for small venue tours. Both programs are available at Live Nation’s House of Blues and Fillmore clubs across the country, as well as Live Nation clubs like Bogart’s in Cincinnati, the Tabernacle in Atlanta, the Gramercy in New York and the Hollywood (Calif.) Palladium.

Among the acts playing venues covered by the Passport, according to LiveNation.com, are the Black Crowes, the B-52s, Tesla, Gov’t Mule, Hanson, Andrew Bird and others. Meanwhile, the club sector seems pretty healthy, even in tough economic times.

Seth Hurwitz, president of independent promoter I.M.P., which owns and books the 9/3 Club in Washington, D.C., says he hasn’t seen a downturn. "The shows that people want to see do well and the ones that don’t, don’t," he says. "And it’s not that bands and their representatives like to blame the economy. Sorry, that ain’t it."

Hurwitz says he doesn’t spend much time developing price promotions. "I’ve never seen price promotions turn a dog show around. They are usually done to placate someone who refuses to believe that their act isn’t selling out or to create cash flow for reasons other than net business."

It’s more about "promotion" in the true sense of the word, according to Hurwitz. "Our responsibility as a promoter is to get the band’s image and music represented as they intend and to make sure everyone is aware and reminded about the show," he says. "After that, the campaign has been run and the votes come in."

There are plenty of acts to "vote" for, certainly. Kirk Sommer, the William Morris Endeavor agent for acts like the Killers and Paolino Nutini, says the clubs are “completely oversaturated at the moment.” The current economy means people have less discretionary income and more entertainment options, Sommer says. And he observes that there isn’t any signs of less traffic in the future.

“People need to pay particular attention to packaging, timing, size and ticket pricing,” Sommer adds. “There must be value.”

Red Ryder Entertainment agent Erik Selz (Andrew Bird) says he isn’t seeing the artist development at the club level is he once did, or even consistency. “A few years back, one could rely on a sold-out show in March, on the heels of a new release, translating into a sold-out show at a larger venue in September,” he says. “Here today, gone tomorrow has never been more true, and I’m seeing that September shows, on the second lap through a market, suffer badly. The saturation doesn’t help, and it’s only getting worse.”
When Flyleaf chose to call its second album "Memento Mori," it wasn't a tossed-off phrase or an attempt at pretension. After a spate of tragedies and illnesses, the band's mindfulness of death is a constant theme on the album, which will be released Oct. 20 on Octone/A&M.

"Memento Mori" was very fitting, given everything we've been through over the past seven years," singer Lacey Mosley says. "We've seen a lot of everything."

Certainly, the band has seen plenty of success. Its self-titled debut was released in 2005, spawning the hit singles "I'm So Sick," "Fully Alive" and "All Around Me." The album stayed on the Billboard 200 for 133 weeks and sold 1.2 million copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. In 2006, the Texas band released the four-song EP "Music As a Weapon," and the following year it issued a limited-edition two-disc version of "Flyleaf."

Rather than rush to release new music, the band (Mosley, guitarists Sameer Bhattacharya and Jared Hartman, drummer James Culpepper and bassist Pat Seals) focused on touring. Mosley says the primary reason the band took so long between albums was that the group wanted to tour heavily and get to know its fans.

The delay was also exacerbated by members coping with personal tragedies. Bhattacharya's 22-year-old cousin battled cancer, Culpepper lost his mother and his aunt, and Mosley had a health scare.

"There was a possibility that I might have cancer. I don't want it to be a big deal."

But in the next breath, Mosley reveals that the scare affected her lyrics. "It was just a situation that shook me and made me think, 'Is this what I want to live my life for?,'" she says. "Am I living my life for the right thing? If I died tomorrow, would I be satisfied or would God be satisfied if I met him tomorrow? That's the whole point behind 'Memento Mori.' I hope it's not too depressing."

"The things that are so phenomenal about getting to record music or write a story or take photographs or whatever it is that you can look back and remember that time and be filled with that purpose again," she adds. "I'm so glad we got to do that."

When the band decided to head back to the studio, it again turned to producers Howard Benson. "He's always looking for ways to make a song a pop song," Mosley says, "and we're always looking for a way to push that boundary so that it makes him happy but it also makes us happy creatively as artists and rock lovers. I think you could hear both of that."

To promote the new album, Flyleaf took its usual "fans first" stance and let them decide the cities where the band would perform before the release. "There's so much more to these shows than just the band playing an acoustic set," Octone/A&M marketing director Val Pensa says. "Fans will get to see the video premieres of the two videos for the first single, "Again," and a track called "Beautiful Bride." Before anyone will ever be able to see them online or on TV, they'll be able to listen to six or seven songs from the new record, and they'll have a chance to preorder the album.

Pensa says there will be a deluxe edition available, with four additional tracks, and an iTunes special release. "Fans who preorder will get an instant free track, 'Beautiful Bride.'" Pensia says, "and they'll also have the opportunity to get a digital booklet, the video and a cover of 'Stay' by U2."

"Again" is being promoted to active rock and alternative radio and is No. 28 on Billboard's Alternative chart and No. 21 at Active Rock.

Though not generally categorized as a Christian band, the members are Christian and have attracted a Christian fan base. Therefore, Octone has enlisted EMI Christian Music Group to market and distribute the album to the faith-based market.

Mosley is confident that both believers and nonbelievers will be able to relate to the message of "Memento Mori." The album is about recognizing that our life is short and precious and the people's lives around you are short and precious as well," she says. "It might be your last opportunity to talk to them and it might make you choose your words more carefully."
Trading Up

Devendra Banhart And Warner Take Fake Folk To The FM Masses

"I can see my songs in a movie," Devendra Banhart says, "as long as it's a movie no one will watch." The singer/songwriter, who says his eclectic, world-influenced folk rock is still considered more "exotic, esoteric or idiosyncratic" than commercially focused, will release his major-label debut, "What Will We Be," Oct. 27 on Warner Bros. Records.

After releasing five studio albums and several EPs on independent labels, Banhart says the transition to a major occurred for almost counterintuitive reasons. "They were the only ones who offered to let me do what I want," he says, adding that "What Will We Be" was nearly completed before it was shoppped, and it was important to sign with a label that wouldn't make changes to the music. "You think an indie, yeah, they just let you do anything and you're in control, that's the heart of it, that's the point," says Banhart, who released previous albums on Young Gods and XL Recordings. "But I think with the birth of a new business model in the music industry, it's led the majors to actually be kind of humbled, so I was shocked they were treating me like the indies when I was meeting with them and the indies were talking to me like a major."

Warner Bros. executive VP of marketing Dianne Quinn says that signing Banhart was as much about "having him in the family because of his sensibilities" as the specific material he brought to the table. "There are some artists who are more commerce-driven than others, who have more mainstream success, and then there are some artists who are just brilliant who we need to have here to keep a certain artistic sentiment thriving, and Devendra fits that perfectly," Quinn says. "He's a true artist, his music is genius, his visual art is incredible."

Visuals were a key issue for Banhart in his deal with Warner. A visual artist as well as a musician, he designed all of his own album artwork and insisted on the right to approve all images associated with the release. "It's funny, because on the smaller labels, so much media would leak out that I had no control of and didn't approve," he says.

Banhart's manager Elliott Roberts was instrumental in the pairing, as he also manages Neil Young, a longtime Warner artist. "He's like an interpreter who speaks the label's language very well, and that's a helpful thing because it's a language I just don't understand," Banhart says.

While the marketing plan will focus on the album as a whole, the radio campaign will focus on the lead track, "Baby," a breezy love song that, according to Quinn, "everybody felt was a pretty accessible step for him, while maintaining what he does so well and his identity. The song will go to triple A, noncommercial and college radio stations Oct. 13, a video for it will follow the album release. Touring plans include major-market dates in November, as well as a European press tour in December, due to "fantastic international feedback to the music," Quinn says.

As for Banhart, it's clear that marketing isn't his primary concern. "Whether I'm on a major or an indie, I don't think this is important, but at the same time I do," he says. "I thought that the minute I was on a major's roster, I got a key to everyone's house and we all had dinner once a week... it kind of wasn't so true and it was disappointing, but I still believe there's a connection to those people and you feel like a part of something."
copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan—built plenty of buzz among media tastemakers. The campaign begins in earnest this month when Welch makes her first major U.S. trip to play Creative Artists Agency-booked shows at New York’s Bowery Ballroom (Oct. 27) and Los Angeles’ Troubadour (Oct. 30). Appearances on “Late Show With David Letterman,” “Jimmy Kimmel Live!” and MTV’s “It’s On With Alexa Ching” have also been booked for release week.

At radio, sessions are scheduled for KCRW, Los Angeles and New York’s WFLU and WXPX. “Rabbit Heart” has gone to triple A radio while “Kiss With A Fist” has been serviced to alternative—a two-pronged approach that Garner says will maximize exposure for the artist. “She’s not a pure pop artist,” Garner says. “She’s a little left of center, yet her record is accessible enough that a wide demographic of people will really like it once they’ve exposed it.”

At retail, Best Buy will carry an exclusive deluxe version of “Lungs” featuring a bonus DVD, while iTunes will launch a different deluxe version of the album Oct. 20.

Garner cites Florence & the Machine’s “phenomenal” live show as a key piece of her arsenal. Welsh wrapped her latest U.K. tour with a three-night stand Sept. 27-29 at London’s Shepherd’s Bush Empire. She plays European dates throughout October before further U.K. dates in December, and a full U.S. tour in spring 2010.

“I’m just surfing the wave of whatever is going on here,” Welch says. “What I’m really happy about with this album is that people have really listened to it objectively, felt something from it and taken it to heart.”

Irish folk-rock duo the Swell Season is perhaps more commonly known as the duo from “Once,” the 2007 indie musical that won critical acclaim and a number of awards, including the Academy Award for best original song. But Glen Hansard, who also fronts Irish rock band the Frames, and his partner Marketa Irglova are determined to move past their film notoriety with the release of their follow-up to the “Once” soundtrack, “Strict Joy.”

Out Oct. 27 on Anti-, the album features the soulful single “Low Rising,” which sounds more like Van Morrison than the delicately melancholy acoustic songs that first made the duo famous.

1. You weren’t originally cast to act in “Once” and only did so after Cillian Murphy dropped out. Would you try acting again?

“I’d be very happy to act again—I really enjoyed “Once”—but me, (director) John Carney and Marketa were pals. I wonder to myself if I would be able to act otherwise because I was pretty much playing myself. It was very natural for me to take out a guitar and play on the street and hang out with Mat, who was already a friend of mine. As proud as I am of “Once,” it doesn’t give me much confidence as an actor because we are just drinking beers and bluffling. I’ve had a few offers to be in films, but all of them have been for me to play a charming Irish guy who plays guitar, which I wouldn’t do again.

2. “Strict Joy” shares its title with a James Stephens poem. Did his writing influence the album?

James Stephens just hit me between the teeth on “Strict Joy” with the idea that the poet makes grief beautiful. When you really care for your grief and channel it in through song or through art, if you do it right, oftentimes the art that you make doesn’t emit sadness but it emits beauty. I’ve often battled with the idea that I go on stage and sing about stuff that’s wrong with me and people pay money to hear those songs.

3. On the new album you worked with producer Peter Katis, who’s known for working with indie rock acts like the National and interpol. Did he push “Strict Joy” in that direction musically?

Peter has a very strong personality, but he knows when to step down from a fight. He’s definitely an indie rocker, and we did have a little trouble with that initially. I wanted to make an Elton John record and was influenced by early ’70s stuff. There were times when Peter’s eyes glazed over for sure, but there were times when he would get really excited.

4. You’ve worked on two soundtracks. Is writing for that medium something you particularly enjoy?

I completely stumbled into working on soundtracks. One of the first questions I was asked after “Once” got big was, “So when are you moving to L.A.?” You’ve got to move to L.A. to write songs for movies.” I was like, “No, no. I’m a guy in a band.” Then I was invited to move to Nashville to be involved with one of those songwriting circles—to be a part of Tin Pan Alley, essentially—writing songs for famous people. I was asked to write for Miley Cyrus and to me that was hilarious. I was delighted to be asked, but of course I didn’t. It doesn’t feel natural to the path I’ve always seen myself on as a musician.

5. Were you just in Africa. What were you doing there?

Edward Norton is running this conversation camp for the Maasai Tribe in Kenya. Among many of the great people that we’ve come across in this whole madness of what happened to us after “Once,” there were a couple of people that stuck and became pals. I’m very happy to say that he’s one of them.

6. The Swell Season won an Oscar for the song “Falling Slowly”—and has been immortalized in an episode of “The Simpsons.” Which was more surprising?

“The Simpsons,” of course. “The Simpsons” is the one thing that binds the world together in a way. People don’t watch the Oscars necessarily in India, but they watch “The Simpsons.” What really struck me was that they were doing a little bit of a joke on “Once,” but “Once” was a tiny film in the world. It did OK in America, but in the world of cinema, it hardly got recognized. I said this to the people at “The Simpsons” and they said, “We don’t care. If we like something, we’ll parody it. It’s up to the rest of the world to figure out what we’re parodying.” When you’ve been on “The Simpsons,” you know something has shifted.
ALBUMS

R&B

N’DAMBI

Pink Elephant
Producer: Leon Sylvers III
Stax Records
Release Date: Oct. 6
Singer/songwriter N’Dambi

has been a darling of the indie-soul movement since the release of her 1999 debut, “Little Lost Girls Blues.” With the arrival of her major-label debut, “Pink Elephant,” the mainstream audience can finally hear her gut-rumbling brand of soul. A former backup singer for Erykah Badu, N’Dambi possesses a rich, earthy voice that grabs the listener from the very first note. Coupled with lyrics that keenly observe life’s frequent ironies, her vocals add a striking depth to each song. Helping the singer pleasantly bridge her contemporary and classic soul influences is R&B veteran Leon Sylvers. Whether discussing on pursuing your dreams (“Nobody Jones”), reaffirming the bonds of love (“What It Takes”) or sarcastically be-moaning the inability to sever a bad relationship (“Can’t Hardly Wait”), N’Dambi proves she’s every bit the real deal—one of the talented few who can truly make the listener feel a song.—GM

LIGHTS

The Listening
Producer: various
Warner Bros. Records
Release Date: Oct. 6
Canadian singer Valerie Poxleitner looks like a pop star and writes songs like a pop star, but her name didn’t make her sound like much of a pop star. A quick change to the snappier moniker “Dambi,” the mainstream debut, “The Listening,” Building on a well-received EP and some low-budget, space-age videos, the new album comes on like a more accessible version of the current buzz-worthy wave of U.K. electronic artists including Little Boots and La Roux. Energetic vocoder vocals pepper the album, most notably on the current single “Savior,” which is reminiscent of the U.K. act Saint Etienne. Most tracks on the set are irresistibly catchy, from the “I tried to do right” refrain of “Ice” to the danced-up beats of “Lois!” The singer’s early Canadian radio hits—“Drive My Soul” and “February Air”—also appear on the album, along with the gorgeous ballad “Pretend,” which is presented in both frosty electronic and warm piano versions.—MS

BRANDI CARLILE

Give Up the Ghost
Producer: Jason Lader
Columbia Records
Release Date: Oct. 6
Brandi Carlile knows how to wring every last emotion from a lyric. On her third studio album, “Give Up the Ghost,” the singer/songwriter channels heartache, fear, nostalgia and joy in nearly the same breath, creating a vivid pastiche of alt-folk pop. The best evidence of this is found on the song “Before It Breaks,” a haunt ing post-breakup ballad full of Robert Frost-like imagery, where she sorrowfully sings, “Will the collar on my coat, Lord help me, kill off the cold/Will the rain drop sing my eyes or keep them closed?” By contrast, the upbeat track “Caroline” soars merrily, with a welcome cameo on vocals and piano by Elton John. Meanwhile, the cut “Touching the Ground” is more subtle but no less arresting as Carlile sings over simple guitar strums, “Why do my troubles turn true/Whenever I rest my eyes on you?” “Give Up the Ghost” is another rich offering from this distinctive female talent.—MH

COUNTRY

LUKE BRYAN

Doin’ My Thing
Producer: Jeff Stevens
Capitol Nashville
Release Date: Oct. 6
Luke Bryan’s recent single “Do I” (which first appeared on his latest EP and is now on his second album, “Doin’ My Thing”) is a bona fide three-hanky lost-love ballad. But the listener won’t be sniffing through the spirited Ti-song “Doin’ My Thing,” which begins with the winking witticisms of the Brad Paisley-like song “Rain Is a Good Thing,” followed by the buoyant pop of the title track. “Welcome to the Farm” is kind of a contemporary take on “Green Acres” that blends Bryan’s country and rock sides, and the cover of OneRepublic’s “Apologize” allows the singer to explore more soulful territory. Meanwhile, “Drinkin’ Beer and Wastin’ Bullets” is a hard-driving Southern rocker about deer hunting, while “Every Time I See You” and “Chuggin’ Along” should keep Bryan’s country credentials in good standing.—GG

TIM MCGRAW

Southern Voice
Producers: Byron Gallimore, Tim McGraw, Darran Smith
Curb Records
Release Date: Oct. 20
Tim McGraw is one introspective SOB, or so it seems on his latest album, “Southern Voice.” He doesn’t reveal any new sides to his personality on the mostly down-tempo set, but he does prove that when it rains, it pours. On the song “If I Died Today,” the singer wonders who would or wouldn’t miss him after death, while “I Didn’t Know It at the Time” ponders the knowledge that life brings, “You Had to Be There” is a reflection of living without a father and “Love You Goodbye” is more of the same. Standout tracks include “Ghost Town Train,” which echoes the work of Glen Campbell, and “Good Dark,” a dark tale of cheating with an unexpected twist. On “I’m Only Jesus,” McGraw offers an interesting take on personal responsibility while singing from the perspective of Jesus Christ. “Southern Voices” is done well overall, but listeners may want to keep close a copy of McGraw’s upbeat hit “I Like It, I Love It” to lighten the mood.—KT

JOSS STONE

Colour Me Free
Producers: various
Virgin Records
Release Date: Oct. 20
On “Free Me,” the lead single from Joss Stone’s fourth studio album, “Colour Me Free,” the U.K. singer indirectly addresses critics who’ve suggested that her sound isn’t wholly original. “There’s nothing that you can’t do/’Cause it’s all about your attitude/Don’t let them get you to;” she growls assertively on the track. The notion that swagger trumps all seems to have guided Stone throughout her career—and it’s no different on “Colour Me Free.” She continues to hit each note with the precise amount of retro pomp that one would expect, and there are again moments when the ’70s soul love affair gets a little carried away. The arrangement of the song “Parallel Lines” is every bit like Stevie Wonder’s “Higher Ground,” and the protest “Gover nmental” (featuring rapper Nas) may as well be about Vietnam. Elsewhere, the sublime track “Big Ole Game” (featuring fellow soul revivalist Raphael Saadiq) almost sounds like an old Al Green record. But what’s the harm in that?—MH

DEAD BY SUNRISE

Out of Ashes
Producer: Howard Benson, Chester Bennington
Warner Bros. Records
Release Date: Oct. 13
There’s a question that lingers when listening to the debut album from Dead by Sunrise, the new project from Linkin Park’s Chester Bennington: What can he do musically in this setting that he can’t in his day job? The answer, apparently, is quite a bit. Bennington’s emotive vocals and a similar quiet-to-loud dynamic identify Dead by Sunrise with Linkin Park, but “Out of Ashes” is grittier and more punk-driven. This is best displayed on the punchy groove of “Crawl Back In,” the blistering cadence driving “Inside of Me,” the three-chord attack of “My Suffering” and the butt-kicking rock of “End of the World.” Bennington and his Dead by Sunrise bandmates (who hail from the electronic rock band Julien-K) also display a deft touch with atmospherics and textures on tracks like “Too Late,” “Give Me Your Name” and the goth-tinged “Let Down,” among others. On the opening track, “Fire,” Bennington searches for “a way to keep my pain from burning down to the bone.” But his agony is the listener’s sonic gain, so let it burn.—GG
Travel" finds Perry following up his self-titled 2005 album with 10 songs that travel happily and energetically, from the sinewy synthesizer groove of "We've Got a Long Way to Go" to the blues-rooted shuffle of "Slingshot" and "No Surprise." "Do You Wonder" is a rootsy number, while the instrumental "Wooden Ships" is a dedication to the late Les Paul. Perry gets strong backing from a cast that includes German singer Hagen (a YouTube find), periodic Aerosmith fill-in bassist David Hull and drummer Ben Tkelton. Perry tosses out a few lyrical memories in tracks like "Free-doom," the hymn-like "Oh Lord (21 Grams)" and the epic "Heaven and Hell," but the star here is the title guitar, which is as enjoyable unleashed as it's ever been on any Perry project. —GG

BUILT TO SPILL

There is No Enemy
Producer: Dave Trumfio
Warnor Bros. Records
Release Date: Oct. 6

Three years after the release of its last album, "You in Reverse," Built to Spill returns with its seventh release, "There is No Enemy," which finds the band exploring new influences outside of the familiar indie-rocker territory while still indulging in the transcendent guitar solos it's become known for.

Country rock-flavored single "Hindsight," frontman Doug Martsch sings in a wistful tenor over a mix of languid and urgent guitar riffs, while "Life's a Dream" features an extended guitar solo against horns that provide a soulful demeanor. The haunting "Oh Yeah" opens with Martsch singing, "If a dog does exist, I am sure he will forgive me for doubting," whereas the frantici-sounding "Pat" offers a dose of punk rock to its fraternal brothers. Built to Spill declared that "There Is No Enemy" would be the band's final album. If that's the case, the set's multifaceted melodies and experimentation would have been an inspired vendetta. —KP

LATIN

GUSTAVO CERATI
Fuerza Natural
Producer: Héctor Castillo
Santo Music/Latin
Release Date: Sept. 29

"I never felt so fine," Gustavo Cerati sings on the title track to his new album, "Fuerza Natural," and then proves it with a set of intricately crafted and introspective folkies, psychodelic splashes and power pop. Cerati's storied past as frontman of the seminal Argentine pop-rock trio Soda Stereo hasn't overshadowed his solo career. On his first album after the group's successful 2007 reunion tour of Latin America and the United States, he echoes the sound of Soda and honors the Beatles ("He Visto a Una" or "Naturalmente Muerta"), while moving forward with a pared-down acoustic sound incorporating subtle beats and occasional strings. From a sort of galactic country song ("Convierto") to a more typical driving guitar track ("Domino") to a perfect rock ballad ("Cactus"), Cerati's musical sophistication reaches for beyond your average Latin pop fare. But his South American heart and soul come through in the lyrical beauty of the hypnotic songs on this set. —ACN

LEGEND CREDITS

EDITED BY MITCHELL PETERS
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Benjamin Sheehan, Mark
Schererand, Ken Tucker

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

R&B

CHRIS BROWN FEATURING LIL WAYNE AND SWIZZ BEATZ
I Can Transform Ya (3:50)
Producer: Swizz Beatz
 Writers: various
Publishers: various

Producer: Dann Huff
Writers: D. Hall, J. Oates
Publisher: not listed

Valory Music

Analogous to what has followed Jimmy Wayne's career knows the North Carolina native has history with "Sara Smile." His resurrected version of this '70s Hall & Oates classic helped him land his first record deal and has been a favorite during his live shows and radio promo visits. Now the song is for the here, and it's gorgeous. Easily the most soulful of today's young country crooners, Wayne delivers an earthy, sensual performance. Song originators Daryl Hall and John Oates land their background vocals, and producer Dann Huff remains true to the R&B-flavored essence of the original, while interacting subtle fiddle and steel touches that make it a solid fit for country radio. "Sara Smile" has strong hit potential and is a great launch pad for Wayne's new album of the same title, due Nov. 24.—DEP

ROCK

SHINEDOWN
If You Only Knew (3:45)
Producer: Rob Cavallo
Writers: B. Smith, D. Bassett
Publishers: Driven by Music/EMI Blackwood Music (BMI), Two of Everything Music/Music of Windswest (ASCAP)

Shinedown follows up its biggest hit to date ("Second Chance") with another modern rock gem. "If You Only Knew" is the first love ballad that singer Brent Smith wrote for the band—the song was inspired by the day Smith found out he was going to be a father, and his powerful vocal excudes a sense of pure joy. He and songwirtter Dave Bassett have crafted relatable, yet open-ended lyrics that are colored with affecting guitars and a stadium-ready sound, bringing to mind some memorable rock ballads by Bon Jovi, Aerosmith and Goo Goo Dolls. Centering on Smith's vocal, Grammy Award-winning producer Rob Cavalio (Green Day, Paramore) blends a lively drum kick with equally spirited guitars and emotional string instrumentation, making "If You Only Knew" a sure bet for success. —MM

COUNTRY

JIMMY WATNEY
Sara Smile (3:40)

Producer: Dann Huff
Writers: D. Hall, J. Oates
Publisher: not listed

Valory Music

The band's final album, "We've Got a Long Way to Go" is a testament to the group's ability to balance their musical output against the odds.

FOO FIGHTERS

Wheels (4:38)

Producer: Butch Vig
Writers: Foo Fighters
Publishers: various

Roswell/RCA

Dave Grohl quietly rails against all things monotonous on "Wheels," one of two previously unreleased tracks that appears on Foo Fighters' upcoming "Greatest Hits" album. The song has a Weezer-meets-the-Fray vibe, and it flies out of the gate with feedback-laden riffs, well-timed stutter stops and a gentle balance of electric and acoustic guitars. Four-chorus loops nicely underscore Grohl's frustration as he mourns life's failure to meet his expectations. Foo Fighters' sly, ever-present self-awareness is still at play on "Wheels," though not quite as cleverly as it appears on the band's classics like "Everlong." "Times Like These" and "My Hero." Grohl sings during the opening verse, "I wanted something better, man/I wished for something new." For an act of this stature and talent, it's hard not to agree just a little. —BS

www.americanradiohistory.com
**Brain Power**

**Breaking Benjamin’s ‘Dear Agony’ Debuts At No. 4**

“Dear Agony,” the fourth full-length album from the Pennsylvania post-grunge band Breaking Benjamin, enters the Billboard 200 at No. 4 with 134,000 copies sold, according to Nielsen SoundScan. While the act’s last two Hollywood Records albums have gone platinum, this is the group’s best sales week—the result of savvy marketing and a commitment to change that starts with lead singer Benjamin Burnley.

Since forming in 1998, Breaking Benjamin’s pummeling alt-rock has earned heavy airplay on modern rock radio. The singles “So Cold” and “Sooner or Later,” from the 2004 set “We Are Not Alone,” each peaked in the top 10 of Billboard’s Alternative chart. Meanwhile, the 2006 disc “Phobia” debuted at No. 2 and led to a successful joint tour with Three Days Grace in the fall of 2007.

While the band—whose lineup includes guitarist Aaron Fink, bassist Mark Klepaski and drummer Chad Szeliga—was gaining a sizable following and sales momentum, Burnley was living as a “functional alcoholic” and had developed neurological problems. “I’ve suffered permanent brain damage through alcoholism,” says Burnley, who has been sober for more than two years. “I don’t want to say that I’m proud to have stopped, but I’m glad I realized that I wanted to stick around for a while.”

After he quit drinking and started writing material for “Dear Agony,” Burnley decided to use his struggles with alcohol and subsequent recovery as recurring themes. The first album Breaking Benjamin recorded sober with the band is also his most personally revealing and features a scan of the singer’s brain on the album cover. “All the tests and hospital visits stick with you, so I thought: the scan was an effective image to use,” he says. “It was a dangerous situation to be in. Thankfully, I was able to reflect what was going on in my life within the music.”

Produced by David Bendetti, “Agony” draws on Burnley’s emotional experience to create an 11-song set of anthems with blistering lyrics. The lead single, “I Will Not Bow,” is No. 40 on the Billboard Hot 100 and features stirring lines like "Take the path that leads to nowhere/All is lost again, but I’m not giving in" over chugging guitars and cymbal crashes.

Aside from its affecting content, the new album’s success can also be chalked up to Breaking Benjamin’s unique marketing strategy. “I Will Not Bow” has received exposure from its placement in the Touchstone release “Surrogates,” while three tracks from “Agony” have been made available as downloadable songs for “Rock Band.” A deluxe edition of the album is available exclusively at Best Buy. It comes packaged with a bonus DVD that includes all of the group’s music videos.

“We’ve tried to find a balance between traditional marketing tools and new media,” says Hollywood director of marketing Lincoln Wheeler. “The industry might look at a follow-up record and see a fallout, but the band has been eager to embrace new ways of getting closer to fans, especially through new technology.”

In September, the group released “Altered Benjamin,” an online flash videogame that was designed and submitted by a fan. The parody of the arcade game “Altered Beast” features Burnley as a character and the other band members as bosses. The game, along with the band’s fan-run website, demonstrates the act’s online interaction with its followers and that Burnley believes helps keep the act grounded. “Musically, we’re a serious band,” he says. “So it’s cool for stuff like the game to show that we have a sense of humor and are open to fan contributions.”

Starting Nov. 29 in San Antonio, Breaking Benjamin will hit the road on a bill that includes Sick Puppies and Rev Theory. While Burnley says that pressure used to hamper him onstage, now he focuses only on having fun. “Nowadays, bands are a dime a dozen,” he says. “At this point, I’m just very thankful we’ve lasted this long and can continue to perform.”

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**Hooray for Hollywood**

With a pair of top 10 debuts on the Billboard 200 from Breaking Benjamin (No. 4, 134,000 copies sold) and Selena Gomez & the Scene (No. 9, 66,000) joining Miley Cyrus “The Time of Our Lives” at No. 11, Hollywood Records owns three of the chart’s top 15 for the fourth time in two years. Breaking Benjamin has its best sales week yet, as “Dear Agony” surpasses the rock band’s previous best week, when its 2006 album “Phobia” launched with 125,000 sold. Gomez is the latest Disney Channel actor to transition from a starring role on the network (“Wizards of Waverly Place”) to a position behind the microphone. Additionally, Breaking Benjamin and Gomez give the label a pair of concurrent top 10 debuts for the first time since Oct. 16, 2004, when Rascal Flatts’ “Feels Like Today” (Lyric Street/Hollywood) came in at No. 1 followed by Hillary Duff’s self-titled set at No. 2 (Hollywood).

---

**MILEY CYRUS**

“Breakout” (Hollywood/Walt Disney) 1

**ATREYU**

“Such Small Prices” (C&D/C&D) 4

**SELENA GOMEZ & THE SCENE**

“The Time of Our Lives” (Ep/Ep) 9

**JONAS BROTHERS**

“Jonas Brothers” (Hollywood/Walt Disney) 12

**BREAKING BENJAMIN**

“Dear Agony” (Hollywood) 11

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*Cover image: www.americanradiohistory.com*
Father's Day

Ricky Skaggs Nets Fifth No. 1 With "Songs My Dad Loved"

Who knew that 50 plus years after he began singing and playing music, Ricky Skaggs would be celebrating his fifth straight No. 1 debut on Billboard's Top Bluegrass Albums chart? Perhaps his father, Hobert Skaggs.

After all, it's the inspiration behind "Ricky Skaggs: Songs My Dad Loved" (Skaggs Family Records/Fontana), which recently topped the bluegrass tally and is currently No. 4.

Skaggs' parents recognized his talent at an early age. "I'd been singing since I was 3," says the 14-time Grammy Award winner. "I knew the harmony parts; just knew them in my head. I would hear my mom singing with my dad and I would sing what she sang."

The Kentucky native received his first musical instrument at the age of 5. "My dad went to a pawnshop and bought a mandolin," Skaggs recalls. "It was in my bed when I woke up one Saturday morning. My first real touch of metal and wood together, strings and wood. That electrified me."

When Hobert returned from working out of town to find young Ricky making chord changes and singing along, he was so excited by his son's progress that he bought himself a new guitar. (He'd lent his old one to a family friend.) And the rest, as they say, is history.

"My dad introduced me to good music," Skaggs says. "Everything he liked had class and quality to it."

He adds that there also might be a sequel. "After I got the record cut, all these other songs came to mind," he says. "If there's a volume two, I'll have to bring my mom in [who died in 2001]. She was an equally important influence."
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Streisand Leads A Record Eight Debuts In Top 10

Barbra Streisand triumphed with her ninth No. 1 on the Billboard 200 as "Love Is the Answer" debuts atop the chart with 180,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The achievement extends her lead as the female artist with the most No. 1s in the history of the chart.

The opening sum is also her best sales week and highest-charting album since 1997, when "Higher Ground" started at No. 1 with 207,000 sold. All told, the debut sum of "Love Is the Answer" is the artist's second-biggest opening week since SoundScan began tracking data in 1991.

"Answer" beats the arrivals of Paramore's "Brand New Eyes" at No. 2 (with a career high 175,000 sold) and Mariah Carey's "Memoirs of an Imperfect Angel" at No. 3 (with 118,000). They join Breaking Benjamin's "Dear Agony" (No. 4, 134,000) and Alice in Chains' "Black Gives Way to Blue" (No. 5, 126,000) in an all-debut top five.

It's the first time five current albums have each sold at least 100,000 copies in a week since Christmas week of 2008.

And those titles are just five of the record-breaking eight entries in the top 10. Until now, seven top 10 debuts were the most the chart had seen. It most recently happened on the June 6 Billboard 200, when Eminem's "Recovery" led the debut party at No. 1. How much would you bet that we'll have an entire top 10 full of debuts before the year is over?

STREISAND SUPERSTAR: Barbra Streisand is the only artist to collect No. 1 albums in each of the past five decades. Her first came in 1964 with "People," then she returned to No. 1 three times in the '70s with the 1974 "The Way We Were," the 1976 soundtrack to "A Star Is Born" and the 1978 "Greatest Hits, Volume 2." In the '80s, she reached No. 1 with the 1980 "Guilty" and the 1985 "Broadway Album." Finally, in the '90s, she claimed a pair of chart-toppers with the 1993 "Back to Broadway" and the 1997 "Higher Ground.

"Answer" was produced by Diana Krall and features Streisand accompanied by Krall's jazz quartet on classics like "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes" and "In the Wee Small Hours." The album's handsome opening-week sales sum was powered by a half-hour sittdown on "The Oprah Winfrey Show." Sept. 24 and interviews on CBS' "Sunday Morning" Sept. 27 and NBC's "Today" on the album's release date, Sept. 29. The set was also stocked in Starbucks stores and sold through QVC and Streisand's official Web site.

Many industry prognosticators—myself included—focused on what was thought to be a battle for No. 1 between Paramore and Mariah Carey. Those who look into their crystal balls to project first-week sales figures had estimated that Paramore would finish ahead of the two divas. As it turns out, Streisand surprised many with how well her album sold in nontraditional ways—Starbucks, QVC and her Web site—and that a wrench was inserted into forecasting sales.

I thought Streisand was going to debut strongly, although No. 1 seemed somewhat unlikely. When I heard about "Love Is the Answer" and how it was being introduced into the marketplace, I knew this was going to be an event album. I suspect sales will remain strong as the holidays approach.

DIVA DISCUSSION: Mariah Carey's "Memoirs of an Imperfect Angel" begins its Billboard 200 life with 168,000 sold—a drop from the 463,000 opening of her last set, 2008's "E-MC2." The latter album bowed at No. 1 with her biggest first-week ever.

The stunning opener of "E-MC2" was powered by the singer's release-week stop on "The Oprah Winfrey Show" and two nights on "American Idol." Additionally, the album's lead single, "Touch My Body," was an across-the-board radio smash. It peaked at No. 10 on the all-format Hot 100 Airplay chart, reaching a one-week high of 125 million audience impressions.

"Memoirs" didn't have release-week visits to "Oprah" and "Idol" to help it, though Carey did perform on the Sept. 18 edition of "Oprah." And its first single, "Obsessed," isn't a runaway radio hit like "Touch My Body." "Obsessed" has so far peaked at No. 60 on the Hot 100 Airplay tally, with a one-week high of 84.7 million in audience.

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STREISAND

Over The Counter
KEITH CAULKFIELD

Market Watch Weekly Unit Sales National Music Sales Report Year-To-Date

For the week ending Oct. 4, 2009, Billboard chart data is compiled from national sample of retail store and rack sales, as well as streaming, downloading and satellite radio data. For more information, read "About Billboard Chart Data," which appears at the end of the chart section each week. Data is compiled by Nielsen SoundScan, which samples a national cross-section of 1,200 retail outlets on a weekly basis. Among the outlets are stores, Internet sites, radio stations and kiosks. Data is rounded to the nearest hundred. For the week ending Oct. 4, 2009, national U.S. retail sales (including sales from online retailers and direct-to-consumer sites) for all products were $1.2 billion.

For more information, read "About Billboard Chart Data," which appears at the end of the chart section each week.

See www.billboard.com/chartdata.
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**THE BILLBOARD 200 CHART DATA**

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<td>34</td>
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<td>Nothing Personal</td>
<td>Nothing Personal</td>
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<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>BROTHER ALI</td>
<td>Us</td>
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<td>Us</td>
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<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>EARNEST PUGH</td>
<td>Live In Houston</td>
<td>Live In Houston</td>
<td>Live In Houston</td>
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<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>55 DEGREES</td>
<td>Return</td>
<td>Return</td>
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<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>STRONG OUT</td>
<td>Chapter Two (June 2009)</td>
<td>Chapter Two (June 2009)</td>
<td>Chapter Two (June 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>THIRD EYE BLIND</td>
<td>Una Major</td>
<td>Una Major</td>
<td>Una Major</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>VOLCANO CHOIR</td>
<td>Unfrom</td>
<td>Unfrom</td>
<td>Unfrom</td>
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<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>EVERY TIME I DIE</td>
<td>See You Next Monday</td>
<td>See You Next Monday</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>VICKIE WINANS</td>
<td>How Is It Going?</td>
<td>How Is It Going?</td>
<td>How Is It Going?</td>
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<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>KRS-ONE &amp; BUCKSHOT</td>
<td>Survival Skills</td>
<td>Survival Skills</td>
<td>Survival Skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>CHILDREN OF BODOM</td>
<td>Sketches In The Closet</td>
<td>Sketches In The Closet</td>
<td>Sketches In The Closet</td>
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<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>THE THIRTEEN</td>
<td>Beggars</td>
<td>Beggars</td>
<td>Beggars</td>
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</table>

### Billboard Top Digital Albums

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>Distributing Label (Independent Label)</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>PARAMORE</td>
<td>Brand New Eyes</td>
<td>Brand New Eyes</td>
<td>Brand New Eyes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>BREAKING BENJAMIN</td>
<td>One Angry</td>
<td>One Angry</td>
<td>One Angry</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>MARIAN CUMMINGS</td>
<td>Memoirs Of An Imperfect Angel</td>
<td>Memoirs Of An Imperfect Angel</td>
<td>Memoirs Of An Imperfect Angel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>JAY-Z</td>
<td>The Blueprint 3</td>
<td>The Blueprint 3</td>
<td>The Blueprint 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>MUSIC BOX</td>
<td>The Resistance</td>
<td>The Resistance</td>
<td>The Resistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>SELENA GOMEZ &amp; THE SCENE</td>
<td>Kiss And Tell</td>
<td>Kiss And Tell</td>
<td>Kiss And Tell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>BRAND NEW</td>
<td>Day We Broke</td>
<td>Day We Broke</td>
<td>Day We Broke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>PETER, PAUL, &amp; MARY</td>
<td>The Very Best Of Peter, Paul &amp; Mary</td>
<td>The Very Best Of Peter, Paul &amp; Mary</td>
<td>The Very Best Of Peter, Paul &amp; Mary</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>MONSTERS OF FOLK</td>
<td>Monsters Of Folk</td>
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### Billboard Top Internet Albums

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>ARTIST</th>
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<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Love Is The Answer</td>
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<td>Brand New Eyes</td>
<td>Brand New Eyes</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>ALICE IN CHAINS</td>
<td>Black Gives Way To Blue</td>
<td>Black Gives Way To Blue</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>MARK KNOPFLER</td>
<td>Get Lucky</td>
<td>Get Lucky</td>
<td>Get Lucky</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>MARIAN CUMMINGS</td>
<td>Memoirs Of An Imperfect Angel</td>
<td>Memoirs Of An Imperfect Angel</td>
<td>Memoirs Of An Imperfect Angel</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>JACOB AVERNTHORPE</td>
<td>Heart &amp; Love</td>
<td>Heart &amp; Love</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>DETHKLOK</td>
<td>Dethalbum II (Soundtrack)</td>
<td>Dethalbum II (Soundtrack)</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>HARRY CONNICK, JR.</td>
<td>Your Songs</td>
<td>Your Songs</td>
<td>Your Songs</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>FRED HAMMOND</td>
<td>Love Unstoppable</td>
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Data for week of October 17, 2009
**HOT 100 AIRPLAY**

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<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist (Empire / Promotion Label)</th>
<th>N.</th>
<th>POS</th>
<th>ART</th>
<th>Discs Sold</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>I'M DOING ME (WILLIAMS / SINGS OF AMERICA)</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>NEVER SAY NEVER</td>
<td>2.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>FALLING FOR YOU</td>
<td>3.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>WELCOME TO THE FUTURE (LR)</td>
<td>4.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>PLEASE DON'T LEAVE ME (WILLIAMS / SINGS OF AMERICA)</td>
<td>5.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>SMALL TOWN USA (STORRIE, JONES / MCA)</td>
<td>6.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>EMPIRE STATE OF MIND (PLAYS / SONY)</td>
<td>7.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>MEET ME HALFWAY (DAYTON / SONY)</td>
<td>8.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>I WANT YOU TO MEET ME (JACKSON / SONY)</td>
<td>9.</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>BOOM BOOM POW (THOMPSON / SONY)</td>
<td>10.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>39</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**HOT DIGITAL SONGS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist (Empire / Promotion Label)</th>
<th>N.</th>
<th>POS</th>
<th>ART</th>
<th>Discs Sold</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>I'M DOING ME (WILLIAMS / SINGS OF AMERICA)</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>NEVER SAY NEVER</td>
<td>2.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>FALLING FOR YOU</td>
<td>3.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>WELCOME TO THE FUTURE (LR)</td>
<td>4.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>PLEASE DON'T LEAVE ME (WILLIAMS / SINGS OF AMERICA)</td>
<td>5.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>SMALL TOWN USA (STORRIE, JONES / MCA)</td>
<td>6.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>EMPIRE STATE OF MIND (PLAYS / SONY)</td>
<td>7.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>MEET ME HALFWAY (DAYTON / SONY)</td>
<td>8.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>33</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>I WANT YOU TO MEET ME (JACKSON / SONY)</td>
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<td>60</td>
<td>36</td>
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<tr>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For full chart data, [go to www.billboard.biz](http://www.billboard.biz).
After being honored as Billboard’s Rock Star and Woman of the Year, respectively, Oct. 2, Lady Gaga and Benoist each make milestone moves at Mainstream Top 40.

Lady Gaga’s “ Paparazzi ” pushes 11-7 to become her fourth top 5 on the chart. She is the fifth female in the chart’s history to reach at least four top five hits from a debut domestic album, joining Dave Matthews Band (five, 1999-2000), Christina Aguilera (1999-2000), Gwen Stefani (2004) and Beyoncé (five, 2009).

Benoist concurrently scores her fifth top 10 on Mainstream Top 40 with “Sweet Dreams” (No. 9-5), scoring an 11-6 rise. The ascent makes “116” a Sub Zero’s first entry, and yields four top 10s on the chart. “ I’ll Have a Boy ” reaches the Hot 100’s Top 30 (No. 29-26) with 5-3. (For sales data, see Page 40.)

Additional information on sales, radio airplay and streaming, and more is available on www.billboard.com.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>R&amp;B/HIP-HOP ALBUMS</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>LABEL (PROMOTION LABEL)</th>
<th>AIRPLAY PERFORMANCE</th>
<th>SALE(SKYS COMPARE TO SBCS)</th>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>RHYTHMIC</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>LABEL (PROMOTION LABEL)</th>
<th>AIRPLAY PERFORMANCE</th>
<th>SALE(SKYS COMPARE TO SBCS)</th>
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<th>ADULT R&amp;B</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
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<th>LABEL (PROMOTION LABEL)</th>
<th>AIRPLAY PERFORMANCE</th>
<th>SALE(SKYS COMPARE TO SBCS)</th>
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</thead>
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## CAREY CLAIMS FIFTH NO. 1

Mariah Carey coasts into second place for the most No. 1s by a female on Top R&B/Hi-Hop Albums in the Nielsen SoundScan era as "Memories of an Imperfect Angel" leaps 7-1. In its first week following street-date violations, "Memories" becomes Carey's fifth chart-topper and lifts her past Alicia Keys and Jeezy, each of whom have four. Mary J. Blige is in first place with seven. "Memories" is Carey's third consecutive studio set to reach the summit, a first for the singer.

At No. 6, Ghostface Killah lands his first top 10 in his last three attempts with "GHOSTDINI: Wizard of Poetry in Emerald City." It's his eighth top 10 overall and first since 2007's "The Big Doe Rehab." The Paseetter honor goes to "Silk Soul Music"... an All-Star Tribute to Maze Featuring Frankie Beverly (67-14). The set was available in August at select retailers before its wider Sept. 29 release.

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Rhyahd George

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*www.americanradiohistory.com*
**HOT LATIN SONGS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Airplay Sales</th>
<th>Chart Peak</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><em>Lo Mejor Sin Lora</em></td>
<td>LORAIN</td>
<td>PROFESSIONAL MUSIC LATIN</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><em>Sanos Al Aire</em></td>
<td>RICKY WILLIAMS</td>
<td>BMG LATINO</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><em>Hoy Mejor Silvio De Sus Besos</em></td>
<td>SILVIO DE SUSBES</td>
<td>BMG LATINO</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><em>En El Refugio</em></td>
<td>MIAMI SOUND GARDEN</td>
<td>BMG LATINO</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><em>Quien Sabe</em></td>
<td>MIAMI SOUND GARDEN</td>
<td>BMG LATINO</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
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**TOP LATIN ALBUMS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
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<th>Label</th>
<th>Airplay Sales</th>
<th>Chart Peak</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>LORAIN</td>
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<td><em>Sanos Al Aire</em></td>
<td>RICKY WILLIAMS</td>
<td>BMG LATINO</td>
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</tr>
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<td><em>Hoy Mejor Silvio De Sus Besos</em></td>
<td>SILVIO DE SUSBES</td>
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<tr>
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<td><em>En El Refugio</em></td>
<td>MIAMI SOUND GARDEN</td>
<td>BMG LATINO</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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**REGIONAL MEXICAN AIRPLAY**

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<th>Title</th>
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<th>Label</th>
<th>Airplay Sales</th>
<th>Chart Peak</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><em>Lo Mejor Sin Lora</em></td>
<td>LORAIN</td>
<td>PROFESSIONAL MUSIC LATIN</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><em>Sanos Al Aire</em></td>
<td>RICKY WILLIAMS</td>
<td>BMG LATINO</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><em>Hoy Mejor Silvio De Sus Besos</em></td>
<td>SILVIO DE SUSBES</td>
<td>BMG LATINO</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td><em>En El Refugio</em></td>
<td>MIAMI SOUND GARDEN</td>
<td>BMG LATINO</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><em>Quien Sabe</em></td>
<td>MIAMI SOUND GARDEN</td>
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**LATIN POP AIRPLAY**

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<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<th>Label</th>
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<th>Chart Peak</th>
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<tr>
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<td><em>Lo Mejor Sin Lora</em></td>
<td>LORAIN</td>
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<td>BMG LATINO</td>
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<td><em>En El Refugio</em></td>
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<td>BMG LATINO</td>
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<td><em>Quien Sabe</em></td>
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**TROPICAL AIRPLAY**

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<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Airplay Sales</th>
<th>Chart Peak</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><em>Lo Mejor Sin Lora</em></td>
<td>LORAIN</td>
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<tr>
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<td><em>Sanos Al Aire</em></td>
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<td><em>Hoy Mejor Silvio De Sus Besos</em></td>
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<td>BMG LATINO</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><em>Quien Sabe</em></td>
<td>MIAMI SOUND GARDEN</td>
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</table>

**LATIN RHYTHM AIRPLAY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Airplay Sales</th>
<th>Chart Peak</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><em>Lo Mejor Sin Lora</em></td>
<td>LORAIN</td>
<td>PROFESSIONAL MUSIC LATIN</td>
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**BETWEEN THE BULLETS**

The Bronx bachata act continues to heat up the charts as "Su Veneno" jumps 2-1 on Tropical Airplay to become its sixth No. 1 on the chart (2.8 million in audience, up 16%). The group is now tied with Juan Luis Guerra & 440 for the second-most No. 1s by an act in the chart's history. Wisin & Yandel are first with seven. On Latin Rhythm Airplay, "Su Veneno" rises 6-2 (2.8 million, up 21%) to become the group's ninth top five, matching its entire output of charting singles.

—Raúl Ramirez
### Japan Albums

**Week Ending October 12, 2007**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>AYAKA</td>
<td>History of My Life</td>
<td>WEA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>MADONNA</td>
<td>Hard Candy</td>
<td>Warner Bros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>MADONNA</td>
<td>Hard Candy</td>
<td>Warner Bros</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### United Kingdom Albums

**Week Ending October 12, 2007**

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>DAVID GUETTA</td>
<td>Hey Ya</td>
<td>Universal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>U2</td>
<td>No Line on the Horizon</td>
<td>Warner Bros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>PEARL JAM</td>
<td>Lightning Bolt</td>
<td>ISO</td>
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### Germany Albums

**Week Ending October 12, 2007**

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<th>Label</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>PINO DANIELE</td>
<td>La Ragazza Di Pietrasanta</td>
<td>BMG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>MIND</td>
<td>He's Got the Whole World in His Hands</td>
<td>Sony Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>MHT</td>
<td>Not Enough Eyes</td>
<td>Sony Music</td>
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</table>

### European Hot 100

**Week Ending October 12, 2007**

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<tr>
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<td>Warner Bros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>MADONNA</td>
<td>Music</td>
<td>Warner Bros</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>MADONNA</td>
<td>Music</td>
<td>Warner Bros</td>
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### Euro Digital Singles

**Week Ending October 12, 2007**

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<td>MADONNA</td>
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### Europe Airplay

**Week Ending October 12, 2007**

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<td>Music</td>
<td>Warner Bros</td>
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New to the UK chart for two weeks was the single "My Boy" by JAY-Z featuring LIL' WAYNE, which debuted at No. 7 this week after debuting at No. 10 two weeks ago.
BILLBOARD'S WOMEN IN MUSIC

Billboard's annual Women in Music event, presented by Macy's and in association with International Creative Management, took place Oct. 2 at New York's Pierre Hotel. Billboard honored the top 30 female executives in the music business, celebrating the success of these industry leaders during the past year, as well as their overall career achievements. Lady Gaga—who had to No. 1 singles on the Billboard Hot 100 from her debut album—received Billboard's Rising Star honor and sat down for an onstage Q&A with "Today" host Hoda Kotb. Beyoncé was named Billboard's Woman of the Year, having had a No. 1 album—her seventh in a row—and a No. 1 movie in the past 12 months. Beyoncé was interviewed onstage by "The Oprah Winfrey Show" correspondent Gayle King, and the event closed with a special performance of Beyoncé's "Halo" and "Single Ladies (Put a Ring on It)" performed by Staten Island grade schoolers, the PS 22 Chorus. Event sponsors also included the USO, ASCAP and Skin Benefits. Photos courtesy of the USO, ASCAP and Skin Benefits.

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MOBY TAKES STAND AGAINST CALIF. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BUDGET CUTS

Electronic artist Moby understands better than most the importance of domestic violence shelters for women in need, having grown up with a mother who was involved in several abusive relationships.

"At the age of 8, "I had to stop her from being stabbed to death by a boyfriend of hers," Moby recalls. "I have to say this, but almost half of the women I know who are friends of mine have been in abusive relationships of some sort or another." So after reading a recent New York Times article about California domestic violence shelters closing as a result of statewide budget cuts, Moby decided to use his current tour as a platform to spread awareness. The artist will donate the revenue from his mid-October California concerts to the California Partnership to End Domestic Violence, which will distribute funds to shelters and communities most affected by the budget cuts.

The tour stops include the House of Blues in San Diego (Oct. 12), the Wiltern in Los Angeles (Oct. 14) and the Warfield Theatre in San Francisco (Oct. 15). Moby also plans to host a press conference in San Francisco with state senators and members of CPEVD to raise additional awareness.

"I’ll be giving around $85,000, which is a decent amount of money, but not really enough to make a dent in the $20 million that has been cut," he says. "So at all the shows there will be the ability for people to donate directly. I’m also hoping that by talking about it, more people will go online to donate money and help repeal this legislation."

Moby hopes funding for the shelters will be reinstated, and he plans to support the cause until that happens. "There are a lot of worthy causes," he says, "but closing shelters really does become a death sentence for a lot of people."

The artist is touring in support of his latest album, "Wait for Me." which was released June 30 on Mute.—Mitchell Peters
ADJAM

The House of Blues Sunset Strip was packed with more than 900 concertgoers for THINK!ADJAM, presented by Digital Broadcasting Group. The ninth annual event, a battle of the bands between Los Angeles-area advertising agencies, Veterans of the media, marketing, advertising and entertainment industries left work early to see who would capture the winner’s trophy, the AdJam Axe. A panel of music industry veterans selected the top four bands and the crowd crowned the winner. Agencies participating included TBWA/Chiat/Day (the winner in 2018), Movie Interactive, Mediavest, Avatar Lebits, BLITZ, David & Goliath and the Phelps Group. The event was sponsored by DBR, Metacafe, SHAP办好啦, Billboard.com, Ecast, Pandora, Turn, Giant Realm, and TimeAxcess. Media buying support was provided by Digital Broadcasting Group.

ABOVE: Movie Interactive's band A.S.P. (Auto Sound Play) claimed the top spot.From left: Universal McCann campaign optimization specialist Andrew Taylor, Movie Interactive media planner Adam Shnout, associate traffic manager Calvin Ashley, assistant media planner Amy Lipeidlo and media supervisor Nick Mariano. Giant Realm account executive Theo Yang, Movie Interactive media planner Brian Lee and senior media planner Jeannette Tramp.

BELOW: BLITZ Agency's BLITZzen KANE channels its inner Van Halen. From left: BLITZ executive creative director Mark Cohen, CEO Ken Martin, associate creative director "Emerald" Eddie Herbe, senior project manager Lee Matsumi, operations manager Andrea Amaro and director of technology Noah Gedrich.

BILLBOARD'S WOMEN IN MUSIC

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INSIDE TRACK

GIRLS BACK IN ACTION

Brazilian Girls, the New York-based art-rock-party band whose last album was nominated for a Grammy Award, went on an extended hiatus last year when lead singer Sabina Scubba decamped to Paris for the birth of her first child. The band then had its early-October return to action sidelined by a snag in immigration red tape. Scubba, a German national living in France, had problems obtaining her visa to return to the United States, and the band was forced to cancel two shows, including an Oct. 2 appearance on Governor’s Island, just off the tip of Manhattan.

Fortunately, Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., helped by expediting the visa process. "Musicians from overseas who perform in New York add tremendous value to the city’s vibrant cultural and tourist economy," Gillibrand says. "I am thrilled that these shows will go on and the U.S. tour can proceed on schedule." The Girls will play Oct. 17 at San Francisco’s Treasure Island Music Festival and Oct. 19 at Avalon in Los Angeles before returning to New York to begin recording their fourth album, tentatively titled "The Great Big Unknown." The band hopes to release the album on a yet-to-be-determined label next year.

Scubba has also been writing songs on her own, some of which she’ll debut at a solo performance Oct. 26 at New York’s Joe’s Pub. "I wrote these in the last 12 months," she says. "A style I baptized EuroNova ... I will sing and play them on my baby guitar."
Congratulations To

The 2009 Billboard Women in Music Power Players,
Beyoncé, Billboard Woman of the Year & Lady Gaga, 2009 Billboard Rising Star

Photos Courtesy of A. Turner Archives

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