WAYNE'S WORLD TOUR
HOW RAPPERS ARE BECOMING ARENA ACTS

WEEZY TALKS ROCK AND 'REBIRTH'
HIP-HOP HITS THE ROAD GLOBALLY

'THIS IS IT'
How The Concert Disaster Became A Hit Film
A Look At What's Next For AEG
Orianthi Emerges As A Guitar Star

WILL GOOGLE DEAL BE MUSIC TO LABEL EARS?

Dashboard Confessional Goes Both Ways (ELECTRIC AND UNPLUGGED)
ALEJANDRO SANZ FINDS FANS WITH WEB PROMO

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ON THE COVER: Lil Wayne photographed by Jonathan Mannion

MEDIA AND MONEY
This conference—Nov. 12-13 in New York—brings together leaders in media, entertainment and finance. Also, AOL chairman/CEO Tim Armstrong will participate in a keynote Q&A. Register at mediaandmoneyconference.com.
Celluloid Heroes

Music Documentary Filmmakers Deserve A Break On Licensing Fees

BY STEVE GORDON

I believe in copyright and the right of artists and songwriters to make a decent living. But as a lawyer who represents the makers of music documentaries, I also believe that the owners of music copyrights should exercise greater flexibility when dealing with my clients.

Unlike feature films, which license music to enhance scenes, my clients often license the music itself, and usually shoot their documentaries on limited budgets. Examples of recent projects I’ve worked with include “Big Fun: The Legacy,” a documentary about the first Latin rapper to go platinum; “Let Freedom Sing,” a movie celebrating the music that inspired the civil rights movement; “Punk Attitude,” a survey about the punk era; “And You Don’t Stop,” a multiverse history of hip-hop; and two documentaries about Elvis Presley for network TV, “Elvis Lives” and “Elvis by the Presleys.”

Because music documentaries can be an effective means of introducing new generations of audiences to legacy artists, labels and publishers should recognize that they’re good for business. When I worked at Sony Music, Ken Burns’ “Jazz” series on PBS spurred sales of our jazz catalog titles. For “Elvis by the Presleys,” what was then known as Sony BMG released a companion CD because the label recognized the power of the documentary to move product.

But too often, owners of music copyrights fail to recognize the promotional value of such works, forcing producers of music documentaries to always weigh the value of using as much music as possible against the cost of doing so. Generally, labels and publishers charge

FOR THE RECORD

An Oct. 3 review of Alicia Keys’ latest single, “Doesn’t Mean Anything,” listed the incorrect title for that song as well as her previous hit, “Superwoman.”

Ashley Jex is director of new media at Bill Bell Silva Entertainment. A photo caption in the Oct. 24 issue misspelled her last name and listed an incomplete name for the company.

A story in the Oct. 31 issue listed incorrect song titles for Mario’s new album, “DN.A.”
LATEST placement opportunity
Nation's majority of sponsor of earlier this sponsorship multiyear Live TASTE TEQUILA platforms.

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According to the sharp decrease Gone Foundering, Where "With provider of according to recovering to global file piracy dis-rated

disrupted in

DtecNet, Google's first advertising service of music search comes from Google. That's three times more than the second ranking source, Yahoo Search, at 8%.

That explains why labels are excited about the Google initiative. While they've grappled with years without unauthorized music search engines like SeePod, only a relative handful of music fans knew about those music-specific search services. Google takes it to the mainstream, and it pays.

"Google is the biggest possible partner in search," says Syd Schwartz, EMI Music senior VP of global digital marketing. "There's a terrific commerce element involved here. Google's partnership with some of the more innovative online services, in addition to making sure there are buy buttons next to the streaming buttons, means we can address the fact that there are many different types of consumers out there that are interested in acquiring music in different ways. Removing any friction from the acquisition process works to our advantage." Hand in hand with facilitating music discovery, the new search tool is expected to ease consumer awareness of the participating digital music services. According to Hitwise, Google is already responsible for driving 30% of the traffic on average to various digital music services. Heath Dougherty, director of research at Hitwise, says he expects that figure to increase.

"You would expect to see that they would get an even higher share, because of the obvious placement," Dougherty says. "A lot of folks are going to Google looking for music or music content to begin with, so it serves as a natural aggregator for these services."

Lala ranks 70th among online music destinations, with 12% of that traffic coming from Google already, according to Hitwise. Lala founder Bill Nguyen predicts the combination of its Google and Facebook partnerships will drive its monthly unique visitor figures from 15 million per month to 140 million per month in a matter of weeks. So what's in it for Google? It won't receive a cut of the transactions that result from music searches, nor is it requiring participating services to pay for being listed in search results.

Instead, Google expects to make money the way it always does: through text ads. By creating the best music search tool on the Internet, Google hopes to draw the lion's share of Web surfers searching for music online, as well as advertisers looking to reach those fans.

Expect to see labels and concert promoters to be among those lining up for ad buys. EMI's Schwartz says, "Given this new opportunity, we certainly will be taking a close look at how we can leverage this to maximum advantage."

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U2 TO PLAY FREE CONCERT FOR MTV EUROPE AWARDS

U2 will play a free concert in front of Berlin’s iconic Brandenburg Gate as part of a star-studded bill for the 2009 MTV Europe Music Awards. Other acts confirmed to perform at the EMAs include Jay-Z, Green Day, Robbie Williams, Tokio Hotel, Leona Lewis, Foo Fighters and Shakira.

U2’s outdoor concert will be beamed live into the awards ceremony, which takes place Nov. 5 at Berlin’s O2 World Arena.

LILITH FAIR TO RETURN

Lilith Fair will relaunch with a tour in 2010, according to an announcement from Nettwerk Music Group.

The festival will visit cities including New York, Los Angeles, Vancouver, Toronto and Chicago. Dates for the shows haven’t yet been announced. The 18 cities that the tour will visit can be viewed at LilithFair.com, and more cities will be announced in the coming weeks. Acts that played Lilith Fair in the past include Sheryl Crow, Christina Aguilera, Erykah Badu, Dixie Chicks and Missy Elliot.

ZUNE TUNES IN KIDZ BOP

The kid’s genre in the Zune Marketplace has been rebranded Kidz Bop as part of a five-week promotion between the two brands. Kidz Bop GM Liz Nealon says she hopes the partnership will help teach kids ages 5-12 about downloading music “since the kids’ business tends to be more physical than digital.” Consumers can download tracks from the Kidz Bop catalog as well as a free weekly track and other exclusive content.

Synch And Branding

Downtown Music Launches Licensing And Branding Agency

Downtown Music, the parent company of Downtown Records, Downtown Music Publishing and Downtown Music Studios, is launching a strategic marketing agency to provide synch licensing and branding services to independent labels.

Downtown Music Services, the agency will seek out licensing opportunities for indie music in film, TV, advertising, videogames and online communities.

"The genesis for all of this was that we noticed a gap in the licensing world," says Justin Kalifowitz, president of Downtown Music Publishing and co-founder and head of DMS. "We were having a lot of success licensing our own artists [which include Kid Sister, Mos Def and Santogold], and our partner labels [including Dim Mak, Fool’s Gold and Mad Decent] started to have an interest in working with us on this, and then the artists we publish wanted to have us handle their masters. We recognized this was a separate business and started working on the plan for DMS.”

Kalifowitz adds that indie music has lacked a central licensing hub. "It’s a fairly disparate community," he says. "A lot of small labels don’t have the staff to pitch their music, and niche labels often don’t do much licensing. DMS can offer both sides of the coin, doing both pitching and admin."

DMS has already had some success placing tracks, including licensing the use of the Prodigy song “Stand Up” in trailers for the upcoming Universal Pictures release " Repo Man," securing synch in "Gossip Girl" for "Something We’re Becoming" by Glod in the Dark Records artist Time Machine and licensing “Hello My Love” by Bonded Records’ Cindy Santini for a Reese’s ad campaign.

DMS’ catalog includes more than 40,000 masters, including recordings by Charlie Parker, Frankie Goes to Hollywood and Motley Crue. Additionally, DMS represents a number of independent labels, including Downtown partner imprints and other labels like Eleven Seven and Cooking Vinyl. Finally, the catalog includes 10,000 song copyrights for tracks recorded by such acts as the Black Eyed Peas (“Meet Me Halfway”) and Miley Cyrus (“See You Again,” “Fly on the Wall” and “7 Things”).

Kalifowitz says he envisions DMS serving as a one-stop-shop for music supervisors and ad agencies. "This is possible," he adds, because in some cases DMS controls both the master recording and the underlying publishing rights. "And in January 2010, DMS plans to launch an online platform that will let users license pre-cleared tracks with one click."

Convenience is only part of the reason why Gabe McDonough, senior producer of music and integration at the ad agency DDB Worldwide, is excited about DMS. "Previously, I would go to Downtown Publishing for one thing, which was very cool, contemporary stuff," he says. "But with DMS, they’re going to a whole other level. Now I can go to them for everything — Motley Crue, zeroes, name it.”

McDonough says the DMS process is "very simple and very streamlined, with really quick turnaround. I never hear about any drama or ruffles."

Downtown Music Publishing executives Jedd Katanach and Chad Green have taken on additional duties at DMS as VP of strategic marketing and VP of creative services, respectively.

DMS also plans to add staff as its catalog grows, Kalifowitz says.

"We just brought in another executive," he says, "so the labels will have a central contact in the DMS office.”

OBITUARY

DEE ANTHONY

1926-2009

Dee Anthony, an artist manager who shepherded the careers of Peter Frampton, Tony Bennett and Peter Allen and helped bring ‘60s U.K. rock acts to prominence in the United States, died Oct. 25 in Connecticut. He was 83 years old.

Born Anthony D’Addario, Anthony grew up in the Bronx and served in the U.S. Navy submarine force before returning home to pursue a career in the music industry. From 1949 to 1962, he served as personal manager to Bennett and then transitioned to managing U.K. artists in the United States, during which time he helped achieve stateside success for Traffic, Jethro Tull and King Crimson.

In 1968, Anthony leveraged that success and founded the global management company Bank-
dana Entreprenes with his brother, Bill. The two worked with acts including Joe Cocker, Humble Pie, the J. Geils Band, MC5, Ten Years After and Emerson, Lake & Palmer.

However, it was Frampton—a member of Humble Pie who went solo—who would become Anthony’s greatest success story. Anthony began managing Frampton when he was just 18; when the singer/songwriter left Humble Pie in 1971, Anthony guided him through his first two albums.

Anthony emphasized to his acts the importance of developing their live performance to become a viable touring entity. In Frampton’s case, a performance also became the key to album sales, in the form of the breakthrough 1975 double-album “Frampton Comes Alive.” The set topped the Billboard 200, where it spent 10 weeks at No. 1, and also went to No. 1 on the year-end Top Billboard 200 albums chart. The success of “Frampton Comes Alive,” which has sold 6 million copies, according to the RIAA, led to Anthony being honored as Billboard’s manager of the year in 1976 and 1977.

In a “Day in the Life” profile in the Nov. 26, 1997, issue of Billboard, Anthony spoke of his and Frampton’s bond. “Everyone says it’s a father-son relationship. I don’t know, maybe it is. Maybe he’s the son I never had.”

After survived by his wife, four daughters, two brothers and six grandchildren. His eldest daughter, Michele Anthony, followed in his footsteps to become president/COO at Sony Music and is now a consultant for acts including Pearl Jam, Prince and Björk.

“He guided and influenced my career enormously,” Michele says of her father. “He instilled in me a passion and respect for artists and their music. . . . from the age of 5 I was constantly by his side, whether at the Copacabana, then later the Fillmore East or on the road with him and his bands. I had an education that money just can’t buy.”

Anthony continued to manage several top acts in the ‘80s, including Devo, Peter Allen and Basia, before retiring from the music business in the mid-‘90s.

“Unless you can offer a performance, people will just come to hear your last hit record and you’ll always be only as strong as that record,” Anthony told Billboard in 1977. “An act has to get to the point where his worst performance still has the audience captured.”

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Mobile Comes Alive

Still Early Days For Touring Business’ Embrace Of Wireless Applications

Once upon a time, artists and live venues flirted with the idea of banning mobile phones from concerts, fearing that their ability to capture video and photos would undermine the exclusiveness of the event. That idea never materialized.

Today, mobile phones are recognized as essential tools that have transformed the live experience.

But it’s time to expand the capabilities of mobile handsets. Artists, sponsors and promoters could all benefit from a more creative approach to mobile integration at live events, and not just with advanced devices like the iPhone.

For example, sending text messages to an outing screen was a cute novelty at first, but there are other ways for artists to use texting beyond letting the audience express how much the band rules. The band Umphrey’s McGee is one example: The group holds special Steal Art Series shows limited to 50 fans, where attendees can influence the playlist by texting ideas for the act to incorporate during an extended jam session.

According to Umphrey’s sound man Kevin Browning, who helped conceive and now manages the process, the group received more than 400 texts from fans before the first Steal Art Show Oct. 3 in Milwaukee. Next up are performances in Portland, Ore., and Washington, D.C., after which the band will assess what it learned and consider applying the concept to regular shows in the year ahead.

“A lot of our success today we owe to the fans, and mobile technology helps us better understand their wants and communicate in an intimate way,” Browning says. “Using a mobile platform in this kind of circumstance gives fans a sense of inclusion and involvement that’s never been possible before. It really connects the band and an audience in a way that texting ‘I love you, I don’t really do.’

Aces could use the same feature to let fans submit requests or influence encore, or even create an ad hoc music video from the action in the crowd.

Mobile technologies also enable sponsors to go beyond simply placing a banner near the stage and hosting a look at a venue’s entrance. In today’s economy, brands are seeking a return on investment that they can track. Incorporating mobile communications into their campaigns allows them to track engagement as well as build their mobile contact lists—just like artists do.

For example, during Keith Urban’s Escape Together world tour this year, sponsors KC Masterpiece and Kingsford Charcoal hosted a sweeps on where fans could win a barbecue featuring a performance by Urban by sending a text to the act’s service mobile fan club. Each venue on the tour was decked out with banners and posters detailing how fans could get involved.

Such campaigns get fans to choose up for alerts and news from the sponsoring company as well as the artist. Based on data collected from five nationwide tours for which Mozes provided texting messaging services, 17% of attendees responded to sponsor messages, while 9% opted to receive texts from the sponsor after the event.

“The engagement rates at shows are quite remarkable, so there is a proven desire on the part of the fan to participate,” Mozes CEO Derrian Porter says. “I don’t believe you will be able to go to a concert in two years where mobile is not integrated into the show for the benefit of the artist, fan and sponsor.”

And then there’s mobile ticketing. The ability to send a ticket alert to fans’ phones, allow them to buy a concert ticket through their handset and then scan that code that can be scanned on the phone’s screen the day of the event still accounts for only a tiny niche of the ticket market. For example, Derek Palmer, chief commercial officer at the online vendor and ticketing service provider Tickets.com, estimates that mobile ticket accounts for only a single-digit percentage of the company’s ticket sales. But Palmer says he expects a sharp increase in the next 12 months as more venues embrace the technology.

“It’s been rather slow adopting,” he says, “but we’re starting to see more traction with the prevalence of smartphone devices in the marketplace.”

In the last year, Tickets.com has experienced a sevenfold increase in traffic to its mobile Web site, with about one-third of those visits resulting in the purchase of a ticket through a mobile phone on the day of an event. But Palmer says it’s up to innovative venues like the Royal Oak (Mich.) Music Theatre—which has a separate entrance for mobile ticketholders and grants them early entry—to help push the use of mobile ticketing beyond its 10% usage share.

These examples show that technology is no longer an impediment to adding new and creative mobile initiatives to the live experience. The challenge now is for the artists, managers, promoters and sponsors to embrace more innovation with the technology available to them. If touring is to make up for the decline in recorded music revenue, then creativity shouldn’t be limited to the music alone.

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All table-top Internet radio boasts access to thousands of online stations. But the NPR Radio by Livio stands apart from the pack with an exclusive menu that makes it easy for even non-techies to access NPR programming from 1,000 member station streams and 800 podcasts. Users can access on-demand content from NPR programs, search by topic, location or music genre and even record and store up to two weeks of programming.

The NPR Radio costs $200 and is available at the NPR and Livio Web sites. —AB

BITS & BRIEFS

MP3LYRICS, GRACENOTE INK LICENSING DEAL

MP3Lyrics, which is going legit, signing a lyric-licensing pact with Gracenote. Previously, the site had displayed lyrics uploaded by users without obtaining permission from songwriters and publishers. Under the licensing agreement, user-uploaded lyrics will pass through Gracenote’s system to ensure accuracy and compensation to artists, songwriters and publishers. Gracenote is a subsidiary of Sonic Corp.

PANDORA ADDS SHARING TOOLBAR

The online music streaming service Pandora has added a toolbar to its onscreen player that enables users to share a song or a station with friends on Facebook and Twitter. When a Pandor user posts a song to Facebook, friends can stream a sample of the song straight from their news feed. When a song is posted to Twitter, Pandora provides a shortened URL to a page featuring the song or station. The tool bar also features a gifting feature that lets users create a Pandora station and send it to a friend in an e-mail.

NEW IPHONE APP OFFERS STREAMS, RECOMMENDATIONS

A new iPhone app called Panel compiles weekly music recommendations from industry veterans and lets users stream two albums in their entirety each week. Panellists at launch include Under the Radar magazine founders Mark and Wendy Redfern, Sonic Boom Records owner Jason Hughes, music blogger Justin Gage and producer Matt Bayles. Additional panelists will eventually be added.

HOT MASTER RINGTONES

The electro-pop act Owl City appears on a host of Billboard charts this week: *Fireflies* moves 7-1 on the Hot 100, 2-1 on Digital Songs and 15-8 on this chart. It’s from the album “Ocean Eyes,” which just a Lady Gaga at No. 1 on Dance/Electronic while rising 20-8 on the Billboard 200.
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THE BILLBOARD Q&A?

Although Omara Portuondo’s Latin Grammy Award-nominated “Gracias” (Produciones Montuno) was released in the United States in 2008, she wasn’t able to tour stateside in support of the album until now. Like other Cuban singers, Portuondo, best-known as one of the stars of the “Buena Vista Social Club” album, had been barred from performing in the States since 2003, when the administration of President George W. Bush tightened visa regulations. Her recent shows in Los Angeles and San Francisco mark the start of what is expected to be a new wave of Cuban artist performances in the United States. The 79-year-old singer recently spoke with Billboard about “Gracias” and her tour.

Was it upsetting for you to be kept out of the United States?
Yes. The first time I came here to perform was in 1951, and I came many times after that. In Cuba, I also met so many American artists, like Nat “King” Cole. Sarah Vaughan, Stan Kenton. I used to sing “Stormy Weather,” and later I met Lena Horne. For musical reasons that don’t hurt anyone and only make people happy, I wanted to come here again.

Is “Gracias” a retrospective of your career?
I tried to include styles that people who only know me from “Buena Vista Social Club” might not know I sing and that are part of our Cuban culture, like Cumbia, Latin rock, African rhythms, songs by Pablo Milanés and Silvio Rodriguez. Jorge Drexler wrote the song “Gracias.”

Is there a song on the album that’s particularly special for you?
I recorded a Cuban lullaby, “Drumbe Negrita.” My father sang it to me when I was a baby, and I sang it to my children and granddaughter.

You’re best-known in Cuba as a member of the film movement.
It was started by a group of young people in Havana who were influenced by the traditional Cuban trova folk and also Tommy Dorsey and other big bands who would play in Havana. When we heard a good song we’d say, “Hey, that song has feeling,” and that’s how the movement got its name.

Most of the musicians who recorded “Buena Vista Social Club” have passed away in recent years. Do you worry about the legacy of Cuban music?
No, young people in Cuba are interested in what came before them, like we were. Today, the most popular music is raggaton, but the young artists are mixing it with Cuban rhythms from the past.

What’s ahead for you?
I think I still have a lot left to do. If an interesting project comes up and they invite me, I’ll do it. Music gives you peace, it gives you happiness. And through music, you can remember all of the interesting things that happened to you in your own life.

—Judy Carter-Navas

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Though sales of ringtones appear to have peaked, they remain a multibillion-dollar business globally.

So it isn’t surprising that record labels, music publishers, mobile carriers and ringtone aggregators are still vying for a large slice of the pie as they can grab. And that has led to inevitable fights over how copyright law, written decades before ringtones ever existed, applies to this technology.

The performing rights society ASCAP—and the publishers, composers and songwriters it represents—lost a key round in this battle when a federal judge in New York ruled Oct. 14 that the use of a ringtone that plays copyrighted music doesn’t count as a “public performance” for which a license fee is required.

Much of the press coverage of the decision portrayed publishers as greedy Luddites seeking to stick their fingers in the pockets of consumers every time their phones ring. But as with all digital music licensing, the issues are a lot more complicated than they appear.

Mobile carriers like Verizon Wireless and AT&T sell ringtones directly to their subscribers. When customers purchase a ringtone, the song file is downloaded onto their handsets, where it remains as long as they keep paying their monthly bill. Then, when the subscriber receives a call, the provider sends a signal to the handset, telling it to play the ringtone, which anyone within earshot can hear.

So who gets paid and how much? Upon the initial download of a ringtone there’s no question that the publisher is entitled to a mechanical royalty of 24 cents per song for use of the composition—a huge premium over the 9.1-cent mechanical rate for a full-track download. For “masterstone” ringtones that use a snippet of an actual master recording, the label gets paid as well, these rates are individually negotiated.

The ASCAP case addressed related but murkier questions: Is the publisher also entitled to a performance royalty when the song file is transmitted to the handset? And is it entitled to yet another performance royalty when the phone rings, thereby playing a snippet of music?

U.S. District Court Judge Denise Cote answered “no” to both questions. Regarding the initial download from the cell provider to the handset, Cote relied heavily on a 2007 decision (now on appeal) by a different federal judge involving a music download service operated by AOL, which held that a transmission doesn’t qualify as a performance unless it is designed for “contemporary perception” by the listener. Thus a radio broadcast and playing music in a nightclub are public performances that require payment to performing rights societies like ASCAP, BMI and SESAC. The download of a song file to a computer or a cell phone, where the consumer doesn’t simultaneously hear the music, is not, Cote ruled.

“Trickier still is the question regarding whether a mobile carrier must pay when a phone rings playing a song snippet. ASCAP argued that music playing in a public place fits the standard definition of a public performance, no different from when a song plays in a restaurant or a store. As an amicus brief filed by BMI and SESAC argued, when a ringtone plays, “members of the public are momentarily entertained, and the songwriter is entitled to be compensated for that performance of his or her work.” But Cote held that even when a ringtone plays in a public place, it isn’t a public performance because of a provision in the U.S. Copyright Act exempting performances where there isn’t a “purpose of direct or indirect commercial advantage.” Because the mobile carrier doesn’t receive any additional fee each time the ringtone plays, Cote ruled that the rings themselves are non-commercial and that the carrier doesn’t owe any additional royalties to the publishers.

Most mobile carriers paid performing rights societies for ringtones until the 2007 download decision. And unless Cote’s decision is overturned on appeal, it will likely shut off the performance spigot for good. In a music world full of shrinking pies, that’s not news the industry wanted to hear.

Ben Sheffner is a copyright attorney who has represented music studios, TV networks and record labels. Sheffner currently works as an attorney in the NBC Universal Television Group, which is 20% owned by Viacom, the parent of Universal Music Group. He is also the author of the Copyrights & Campaigns blog (copyrightandcampaigns.blogspot.com).
Complete Control
China's Online Crackdown Could Boost Anti-Piracy Efforts

TAIPEI, Taiwan—China's online music community is racing to meet new government requirements that could help fight piracy but also raise the specter of increased censorship.

In September, China's Ministry of Industry issued a circular requiring online music "distributors" to submit translations of all foreign song lyrics for approval by Dec. 31. The ministry considers international repertoire and music from Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau as "foreign."

The ministry said in the circular that it will prohibit services from offering unlicensed songs as part of measures aimed at addressing "vulgar content" and the industry's "lack of supervision and regulation."

The requirement covers search engines like Baidu and Yahoo China, which "deep-link" to unauthorized music files. Gary Chen, chief executive of the digital music retailer Top100.cn, calls that "a very positive move."

Previously, the Chinese government had said that "if an online service links to music on illegitimate sites, it's fine," Chen says, adding that under the new directive, "whether you've a search engine or a download music site, you must link to legitimate sites."

The requirements will affect vast swathes of catalog. Top100.cn has deals with 7,600 labels—including the majors—for international and domestic repertoire and provides streaming content to Google China.

The Chinese government has "drawn a line in the sand," says Mathew Daniel, VP of the digital music distributor R2G.net. "Now it's a question of how strongly they impose it."

R2G.net operates China's Wawawa online music store, which has deals with the aggregator the Independent Online Distribution Alliance and what Daniel describes as "thousands" of international and domestic indie labels.

According to the IFPI, China had 298 million Internet users in 2008. But while physical releases faced censors' checks, online music was largely unregulated. That's because "the government doesn't know whether to classify it as commerce or content," says analyst Tian Hou at Pali Research in New York.

Under the existing system, albums can be banned for political content, sexual references and obscenity.

"Everyone in Taiwan knows how far you can push the limit in China," says Sam Duann, president of the Taipei-based independent label Rock Records, which claims to have the most extensive catalog of Mandarin hits in the region and operates a music download site in China (RockMobile.com).

He singles out the rapper MC HotDog, renowned for explicit lyrics and hit song "Clear Sky," as an artist unlikely to gain clearance. He says, "I've very much given up on him [there]." Duann says.

Representatives at the Ministry of Culture didn't respond to requests for comment. In a reflection of the sensitivity surrounding censorship issues in China, major labels declined to comment.

If enforcement efforts reduce the number of links to unauthorized product, it could level the playing field between Baidu—widely credited as hosting 70% of China's search engine traffic—and Google, which has an estimated 24%.

"Google is really good at searching for music," she says, "but Baidu's better at connecting users with a wide variety of free entertainment."

The music industry has several clashes with Baidu, but Hou says it's unlikely to end its deep-linking practices despite the circular.

"This is really difficult to enforce," she says. "What the culture ministry wants is for corporations to self-censor."}

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KEYNOTE Q & A WITH

- PAUL GONGABARN, Co-CEO, AEG Live/Concerts West
- JOHN MEGLEN, Co-CEO, AEG Live/Concerts West
- RANDY PHILLIPS, CEO, AEG Live
- LEE ZEIDMAN, Sr VP/GM, Staples Center/Nokia Theatre/LA LIVE

Key players discuss how the Michael Jackson "This Is It" saga played out behind the scenes in what is sure to be a fascinating and revealing session. Hear in detail how AEG turned what some labeled the biggest disaster in live music history into a record-breaking tribute to the King Of Pop's legacy.

MODERATOR:
PAY WADDELL, Executive Director, Content and Programming, Touring and Live Entertainment, Billboard

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Nameless' best male artist award, revived memories of "Ninonko" ("Ogopop DJ's), the enduringly popular duet the pair released in 2002. "Amani is all about fun," Kamau says. "She gets Kenyans dancing and smiling with upbeat and infectious songs." Like Wahu and Nameless, Amina sings in a mixture of Swahili and English. "I want to represent African pop music all over the world," she says. "Because it has such a different flavor that people are really starting to relate to."

**STL**

Based: Nairobi/Oslon
Current release: "Living for Music" (STL MUSIC)
Booking agent: Self-booked (Africa); Norway-based Artist Partner (outside Africa)
A best new act nominee at the MAMAs, the Queen Latifah-inspired rapper Stella Mwangi—aka STL—moved to Norway with her parents in 1991 but has retained an intimate connection with African roots. She has recorded with the Senegalese hip-hop group Wallep, rapped about the joy of going back to Kenya on "Take It Back" (from her debut album, "Living for Music") and released "Bacara Ni Bi Bacara," her first song in Kenya's Kikuyu dialect, in June. "I'm so glad STL was nominated for a MAMA," says Corrine Onyango, a DJ at the Nairobi-based Homeboyz Radio. "She hit the scene here with force about a year ago and really represents a new generation of Kenyan music." —DC

**THREE KENYAN ACTS TO WATCH**

**WAHU**
Based: Nairobi
Current release: "Sweet Love" (Alternative Concepts)
Booking agent: Self-booked
Singer Wahu Kagwi confirmed her standing as a standard-bearer for her country's pop scene by becoming the sole Kenyan winner at the inaugural MTV Africa Music Awards (MAMAs) ceremony last year in Abuja, Nigeria. Nominated this year for best video (for "Little Things You Do," featuring Uganda's Bobi Wine), Wahu performed at the ceremony with Amani and Tanzanian artist A.Y. "Her ability to connect emotionally and personally with her fans" is what ensures Wahu stands out, says Nairobi-based music TV producer Arthur Kamau. She further enhanced her celebrity status with her 2005 marriage to fellow artist David Mathenge, aka Nameless. Both record for Nameless' Alternative Concepts label and are keen to move their careers into new territories on the African continent and beyond.

**AMANI**
Based: Nairobi
Current release: "Tamani" ("Ogopop DJ's"
Booking agent: Self-booked (Kenya); Kampala, Uganda-based Talent 256 (outside Kenya)
A string of urban/dance-leaning pop songs from her album "Tamani" have scored Amani major radio chart action in Kenya. Her best female artist win at the MAMAs, together with

KENYAN Artists Look To Capitalize On MTV Africa Music Awards Wins

NAIROBI, Kenya—When Kenya's Nameless picked up the best male artist award Oct. 10 at the MTV Africa Music Awards, even the security guards whooped along with the other wireless fans filling Nairobi's Mii International Sports Complex.

Then, when the pop singer's track "Sunshine" also won the Listener's Choice Award and Kenya's Afro-pop singer Amani was named best female, the audience's celebration was unrestrained. "I was praying for a win because of the home crowd," Nameless says. "Really went out there, cried on Facebook to motivate people to vote—to be the host (country) and have no wins would have been disastrous."

The three wins at the MTV Africa Music Awards—or MAMAs, as they're known—provided a welcome diversion for the former British colony, which suffered violent political upheaval following disputed presidential elections in December 2007. They also provided a moment in the spotlight for Kenya's piracy-ravaged recording industry, which is hoping to capitalize on the visibility to reach a broader audience. Nameless says he's looking to record material that appeals to audiences beyond East Africa—"less Swahili, less focus on local issues but still keeping the Nameless sound." And Amani says she's already fielding increased offers for endorsements and live work. "The most important thing for me right now is to market myself more in Africa," she says. "Winning means it's much easier to maximize radio play or live bookings on the continent and seek distribution in countries like South Africa."

Bahrain-based Norman Moyo, group marketing director of strategic programs at MAMAs headline sponsor Zain, says the mobile phone operator is working on plans to improve access to award winners' music through its portals. Zain, he says, is considering a pan-African MAMAs tour and has also struck a deal with the aggregator-Inmobia for MAMAs-associated music content.

MTV claims a potential audience of 1 billion for the MAMAs through its global network and terrestrial TV partners in Africa. Nameless' "Sunshine" and Amani's "Tonight" have just been added to the Pan-African channel MTV Base's "hot recurrent" playlist and both have tracks featured in the channel's new drama series "Sing."

MTV is also concluding a distribution deal for a MAMAs winners CD release in Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa, giving the Kenyan acts on the discs a rare opportunity to be heard outside their homeland.

At home, the MAMAs have generated "an unprecedented buzz around our artists," says Nairobi-based Homeboyz Radio presenter Corrine Onyango. She reports a change in listener requests from the likes of Lil Wayne and Juicy J to artists like the Kenyan female rappers (and best new act nominee) STL.

Arthur Kamau, a Nairobi-based independent TV producer who has helped the music shows "The Stomp" and "The Beat" for the Kenyan channel, NTW, says domestic acts benefited from sharing a platform with international stars like Akon and host Wycef Jean, who spoke during his visit of his interest in collaborating with African artists.

Although international acts remain popular in Kenya, they rarely perform here. But, Kamau says, "Wycef and Akon's good experience here is likely to open doors for international acts to visit Nairobi."

Kenyan artists estimate that about 90% of domestic music sales are of pirated product in street markets. Kenyan artists typically self-release their music, which is also available through some stores in major metropolitan markets. "It's been a while since I recorded a full-length album," Amani says. "The high piracy rate means it's just not worthwhile putting albums out. I'd rather focus on recording new songs that can be played on radio or turned into videos—driving the endorsements and live work."

Nameless runs his own label Alternative Concepts and, like most performers, handles his own publishing and mobile deals. "We're finally seeing income flow from ringtone and ringback sales," he says.

Meanwhile, live shows are a key source of income for local artists. Kenya's live circuit centers around club shows and occasional festivals, where hip-hop and urban music are hugely popular, as are dance genres like Swahili pop. Acts like Wahu, Nameless and Amani incorporate Swahili pop elements into their songs, mixing Swahili and English-language lyrics.

Demand for young, urban-based home-grown artists has grown steadily in the past decade, says Nairobi-based magazine columnist/broadcaster Olivia Oriano. That, she says, has fostered the development of "world class" artists like Nameless and Wahu. "Now's the time," Oriano says, "for the rest of the world to experience our music."
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Matt Murphy

The manager of the iFund, which invests in iPhone app developers, discusses music's appeal in the surging mobile app market.

What sparked your interest in Shazam?

If you think about what companies have been around for the year and a half since the App Store launched and are really popular, there’s really only a handful because so many come out, and people find them interesting for a few days, and then disappear. But Shazam has been one of those consistently high-ranking apps like Pandora and Facebook that everybody seems to love. People love the action of tagging a song in real time, the delight of seeing what it is and then the ability to buy it in real time or share with friends. As much as anything, they defined a widely used use case that people are loyal to. To build an iconic brand around that is very hard to do and very few companies have done it.

So what’s the future opportunity for Shazam?

It’s basically getting into a more holistic experience around music. Broader forms of discovery, recommendation, music management and even moving beyond music into all different forms of entertainment.

How important are the new in-app purchase and subscription capabilities for the iPhone in terms of driving new business models for mobile apps?

It’s terrific that Apple has listened to its constituents of developers who said they need more ways to monetize. This free-to-pay model we’ve seen as being very successful. You need to make it so the masses can do whatever they want for free, but those who want additional or more functionality will be able to pay. Maximizing the number of ways that this vibrant developer community can make money is really important, and Apple has responded. In 2010, we’re going to see a lot of much more scalable companies emerge from a revenue perspective, and that has us really excited.

You’ve only invested in one music-related service. Why?

You take a look across the categories we think are important—social networking, communications, games, entertainment, utilities—there’s a wide landscape of things to invest in. Frankly, our model generally is to invest in one company in a category and go really long on that and make that the biggest winner. So if we feel there’s an adjacent opportunity in music, instead of funding another company to do that, we try to make it so Shazam can subsume that opportunity as well. That’s how you build the largest company, by carving off as much of the value proposition as you can.

As the music industry focuses more on mobile apps, what features should they focus on?

Partnering with Tapulous for “Tap Tap Revenge” and coming out with artist-specific versions of that. There’s the “T-Pain app with Smule. I think we’re going to see a lot of artist-centered apps. You can get some short-term hits and monetization out of that. It probably breaks down if you have 50 versions of the same app, each with different art. But we’re in a stage right now where everybody is trying to experiment. The music industry is trying to monetize all these digital assets on mobile, and mobile developers are basically experimenting with their apps by bringing content into it. So it’s early days.

I kind of like the fact that people on both sides are being experimental. And ultimately things will shake out of that where people are doing things that are more strategic, durable and long-lasting. I can’t predict what that will be right now, but I do believe the combination of applications, functionality and content is here to stay. Doing in ways that increase the value of the application is good for the app developers and good for the music industry.

Are venture capital dollars starting to loosen up again for music services?

It would be hard for me to say that dollars are loosening up for music, but they are being loosened up for mobile. You look within mobile and ask what one of the absolute hit use cases on mobile is going to be. People love music and people love to take music with them wherever they go. They like to discover music and socialize around music. So that’s going to be a hit area. If I think of the big five application opportunities, music is one of them.

Are developers then better off focusing on a mobile app than on an Internet-based service?

Mobile is the new platform. When there are platform disruptions, there’s always opportunity. For the companies that are there first as the platform evolves and come up with a hit use case and application that creates a large audience, the rewards will generally accrue to that class of company. Music on the Internet is a minefield that has been battled for several years. So any time you’re thinking about a new service, think about the green field opportunity. The one benefit of the Web, of course, is that it has 10 times the users of the mobile Web right now. That’s going to change meaningfully in the next couple of years. But in that environment, you have to have something that’s just so different from everything that’s out there. Mobile is an easier platform to win that initial audience.

Do you have any plans to launch a fund for the app stores from iPhone competitors like Android and BlackBerry?

The way we’re looking at it right now is that the best entrepreneurs and the most popular applications will be built on the iPhone and then look to expand their distribution to other platforms. We don’t dictate what platforms companies are on, but I do think the iPhone will be the best experience.

If you could give one piece of advice to labels as they look to monetize digital music, what would it be?

I would say be really flexible and be really experimental. It’s early days. We don’t want to cut off any thing that would stifle the innovation we’ve seen all around us. This platform is set to explode two to three times a year on the iPhone alone, four to five times a year across all platforms. The mobile pie is going to be so much bigger. Right now, we should all maximize our learnings, and we can tighten up the models over time. Unless we’re all more open and experimental, we’re not going to learn what’s going to work and what’s not going to work.

People love music and people love to take music with them wherever they go... That’s going to be a hit area [for app developers]. If I think of the big five application opportunities, music is one of them.
LIL WAYNE’S LAST TOUR GENERATED $39 MILLION— AND SET THE STAGE FOR HIP-HOP ACTS TO BOOST TOURING REVENUE

BY MITCHELL PETERS

The week after the June 2008 release of “Tha Carter III,” Lil Wayne performed a sold-out concert at the 1,000-capacity House of Blues on the Sunset Strip in Los Angeles.

Along with the sellout, the New Orleans rapper had something else to celebrate—he had just become the first artist since 50 Cent in 2005 to sell more than 1 million copies of an album in a single week. Those who attended the House of Blues concert remember it as a “madhouse,” says Paul McGaughan, the club’s talent buyer. “I’ve never seen anything like that.”

The rousing scene included crazed fans attempting to get into false windows on the rooftop—and by scaling the fences next door. “I turned away tons of people,” McGaughan says. “Everybody wanted to be inside and part of the show that night.”

At the time, Lil Wayne was no stranger to the stage. But even through the rapper had performed live since his early teenage years, he had traded in a heavy touring schedule for sporadic—but lucrative—club dates or one-off radio show concerts. So it was a surprise to some when Lil Wayne returned to L.A. seven months after the House of Blues show and sold more than 73,000 tickets to back-to-back concerts at the Gibson Amphitheatre. The shows grossed $877,345.

Historically, hip-hop artists have relied mostly on album sales to sustain their careers; rap acts that release platinum-selling albums rarely see the same success in concert. For example, since 2006, T.I. has released two albums that have sold more than 1 million copies, but only eight of his concert grosses have been reported to Billboard Boxscore.

But as sales continue to decline—through the week ending Oct. 18, album sales were down 13% in 2009 compared with the same point last year, according to Nielsen SoundScan—more rappers are taking a serious look at touring as part of their long-term strategy. “They don’t have the income coming from big record labels,” says Peter Schwartz, a looking agent at the Agency Group who represents acts like Method Man, Redman, De La Soul, Raekwon, Ghostface Killah, Immortal Technique and Del Tha Funky Homosapien. “So they go on the road, play live and sell merch.”

McGaughan has seen this firsthand at the club and theater level. “There’s far more hip-hop touring now than there was even two years ago, and 100 times more than there was 10 years ago,” he says. “Ten years ago, hip-hop acts just didn’t tour.”

Fueled by the success of “Tha Carter III”—it has sold 3.3 million copies in the United States, according to SoundScan, and spawned seven Billboard Hot 100 hits, including three top 10s—Lil Wayne put on what became the most lucrative rap tour in the history of Billboard Boxscore. And it’s clear that the tour—especially the decisions to focus on his showroom and present diverse supporting acts, could be useful to anyone in hip-hop.

“You have to perform every night and you have to execute every night,” Lil Wayne says. “You build it and they will come.”

In 2008 and 2009, Lil Wayne’s I Am Music and America’s Most Wanted arena and amphitheater tours grossed $39 million in North America and drew more than 724,000 fans to 68 concerts, according to Billboard Boxscore. Ticket prices for the I Am Music trek cost $40-$159, and tickets for the America’s Most Wanted jaunt ranged from $29.99 to $50.

“I received positive feedback on the grosses, but more so on the amount of shows that we played,” says Sports & Entertainment Financial Group president Shawn Gee, who also serves as Lil Wayne’s tour producer and tour business manager. “It was amazing that we did the amount of shows that we did domestically over a short period of time.”

The numbers will likely earn Lil Wayne a spot on Billboard’s year-end list of the top 25 grossing tours, a rare feat for a hip-hop artist. The most recent rap act to land on the year-end tally was Jay-Z, whose 2008 co-headlining trek with Mary J. Blige ranked No. 7.

The tour is Lil Wayne’s tour (which started Dec. 14, 2008, and wrapped Sept. 6) tops Jay-Z’s jaunt with Blige, which grossed $34.5 million and drew 310,694 concertgoers to 27 shows, and Kanye West’s 2008 Glow in the Dark tour, which pulled in $30.8 million from 49 concerts that attracted 507,853 fans, according to Billboard Boxscore.

After seeing how well West and Jay-Z did on the road, Lil Wayne’s management team knew the rapper would be taken at face value from concerts, especially given the momentum behind “Tha Carter III.” Unlike those acts, however, Wayne hadn’t yet established himself as a large-scale venue headliner in the eyes of concert promoters.

So last fall, the rapper’s camp recruited Gee, who is no stranger to ambitious rap tours. His first step was to book a support act that would appeal to all musical segments of the rapper’s fan base, including devotees of R&B, pop and alternative rock. He divided the tour into three legs that featured support on various dates from Keyshia Colle, T-Pain, Gym Class Heroes, Keri Hilson, Young Jeezy, Drake, Soulja Boy Tell’ Em, Jeremih and Pleasure P.

“It was a challenge (of musical genres) that allowed for the package to work, because Wayne has a potpourri fan base,” Gee says. “You have to make sure the consumer not only connects with the headliner in the package, but the entire package as a whole.”

The same strategy worked for West’s Glow in the Dark tour, which included Rihanna, N.E.R.D. and Lupe Fiasco. Eminem and 50 Cent’s 2005 co-headlining jaunt featured support from Lil Jon & The East Side Boyz, G-Unl, D12, Obie Trice and Stat Quo. The latter tour cracked Billboard’s year-end list of the top 25 tours, grossing $21.2 million and drawing nearly 326,000 fans to 21 shows, according to Billboard Boxscore.

Gee also found Lil Wayne an experienced road crew. During the tour’s planning stages, Gee says venue execs and promoters had a “negative perception” of Lil Wayne as a touring act. To put their minds at ease, he surrounded the rapper with veterans who previously worked on outings for West, Eminem and Beyoncé.

“They were experiencing moving large tours from a production side, a security side and a tour management side,” he says. “So much is needed to make a meal what it needs to be, but it also helped with the efficiency of the tour as well.”

Lil Wayne’s success on the road may not have been possible without the accomplishments of Jay-Z, whose decade-plus touring career is “the blueprint of what we wanted to do with our own clients,” according to Hip-Hop Since 1978 CEO Gee Roberson, who manages West and co-manages Lil Wayne.

Jay-Z, now signed to a multimillion-dollar deal with Live Nation, is the only rapper headlining arenas without the support of another big act. He is currently playing North American college arena through November, with openers N*E*R*D, Wale and Method Man, Redman. Additional dates are planned for February and March 2010, according to Live Nation senior VP of touring Faisel Durrani.

Jay-Z has paid his dues on the road since the ’90s, teaming up on various tours with Biggie, DMX, R. Kelly, 50 Cent and others. “I can’t ignore his history,” Gee says. “Jay-Z’s team has been great at developing him as a live artist, and he’s reached the point where he can go out and headline without a big package.”

Lil Wayne’s team hopes to bring their artist to the same level. But Gee admits they may not get there on the rapper’s next tour. “Packaging will always be important,” he says. “Will you need as many artists to support, or is a high-profile artist to support? Obviously, the goal is no. The goal is to provide a great show where you don’t have to overspend or support.”

Lil Wayne’s future now holds some uncertainty, since the rapper in late October pled guilty to attempted weapon possession—that could land him a one-year prison sentence. Gee and Roberson have yet to comment on how that would affect touring plans, but Gee believes Wayne’s next tour will again visit large-sized venues in North America (see story, page 22). Lil Wayne is expected to be sentenced in February, two months after the planned Dec. 15 release of his new album, “Rebirth.”

Wayne, West, Jay-Z, 50 Cent and Eminem are among the few hip-hop artists who have graduated to arena-level status, since tours at this level require heavy radio play and a marquee co-headliner or support package. Industry executives also blame the lack of visible hip-hop headliners on artists’ decision to cash in on lucrative one-off gigs instead of developing a touring base.

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"Some of these acts are knocking down $20,000-$50,000 to do a club—they roll in, walli, onstage, do 30-40 minutes and they're done," says Jeff Sharp, VP of urban touring at AEG Live/Atlanta Worldwide Touring. "They can afford to do two shows a week and they end up netting more than they could ever do going out and doing the writing business.

Gee says that "most hip-hop artists don't necessarily know how to tour what level of commitment it takes to build a touring career." Others say the genre's singles-driven nature makes it hard for acts to stay in the spotlight long enough to cultivate a fan base that can support arena tours. "The guy who's hot today might not be hot at all three months from now," McGuigan says. "It's hard to plan five years from now when you have a single that's currently hot on the radio and that's how you're getting booked.

Most executives agree that nonstop touring is the only way to build a lasting live career, which could require sacrificing attractive one-off paychecks for lower-paying support slots. "That takes a certain mentality of saying, 'I'm going to take this hit, because I know I'm performing in front of 30,000 plus people per night and that in turn is going to open the door for me to have my own tour one day,'" Roberson says. Early on in West's career, he notes, the artist was turning down attractive single-show engagement offers to open concerts for Mos Def, Usher, and the Rolling Stones.

The Honda Center
That's currently to be hot at for acts to stay in going done," a "Some 22 tour 1 can Others— they're performing rap: JAY-Z says Jeff of these support arena Angeles. years live acts are the spotlight long radio and Sharp, at the tion according to the 7,000- capacity Zenith as (Sentencing isn't expected until 2018.) But (in Snoop is the 7,000- capacity Bercy venue in 2008, but "the demand for U.S. acts is not growing in France," says Angelo Goeppe, production director for Nous Productions, which has booked shows for West and JAY-Z. But domest ic rappers like NTM, Diam's, lam, Rohff and Booba are consistent sellers at the box office.

Meanwhile, some German promoters aren't willing to pay the fees that top American hip-hop acts demand, according to Four Artists managing director Michael Sand. "There are so many strong national acts," he says, "that U.S. acts are not necessarily the be-all and end-all. They also have wrong ideas about what can be paid and the number of [fans] they can attract."

The core rap touring market in Japan is weakening, says Naoki Shimizu, president of Creatiseman Productions, Japan's primary promoter for major international hip-hop acts. "There used to be many club tours by U.S. hip-hop artists around four or five years ago, but it's quite hard to find now," he says. "Tickets don't sell these days."

Some popular American rappers occasionally play dates in Australia, but recently canceled or postponed dates—sometimes at the last minute—by hip-hop artists like Pitbull, Busta Rhymes, Coolio and Timbaland have hurt the genre's reputation among fans. "I've seen more cancellations of hip-hop tours than I have seen tours go through," says Frontier Touring tour coordinator Michael Harrison. As a result, he adds, "over the years, there has been a lot of mistrust of hip-hop acts amongst Australian audiences. That doesn't generally happen with local rappers, such as Hilltop Hoods and Bliss n Eso."

"That's a rap: JAY-Z performs at KPWR Los Angeles' Powerhouse concert Aug. 8 at the Honda Center in Anaheim, Calif. right: DRAKE performs at the BET Awards June 28 in Los Angeles."

Will the success of Lil Wayne's tour encourage up-coming rappers to hone their live shows? For now, Roberson and Gee are focusing their efforts on newcomer Drake, who will promote the release of his upcoming album next year with a North American headlining tour of small clubs and theaters. "The good thing about Drake is that he loves to perform live and he's willing to put in the necessary work to build a touring career," Gee says. "He understands that it's a grind—it's a marathon, not a sprint.

Drake will also attempt to build a live fan base overseas in a way few rappers do. "We're going to work the international angle from the beginning, because that's a mistake I think a lot of artists make—they wait until they're hot in the U.S. before they start looking at the rest of the world," Gee says.

Roberson has big ambitions for Drake, who has already been exposed to thousands of concurrent opening for Lil Wayne: "He's been cultivating on the arena level already and we don't even have an album out," he says.

Gee and Roberson have even bigger plans for hip-hop tours—"I can't speak on it right now," Roberson says. "But we will absolutely be on the phone within a year or year-and-a-half talking about the model of hip-hop stadium tours. A single-artist stadium tour could be hard to sell, but the pair has also been taking meetings with other artist representatives about organizing one-off events.

"If we don't do that, who will?" Roberson asks rhetorically. "We're not stopping, we're only starting."

that in turn is going to open the door for me to have my own tour one day." Roberson says. Early on in West's career, he notes, the artist was turning down attractive single-show engagement offers to open concerts for Mos Def, Usher, and the Rolling Stones.

IS U.S. HIP-HOP LOSING ITS PLACE ON THE WORLD STAGE?

Lil Wayne's looming legal issues will no doubt put a damper on his 2010 worldwide touring plans. But the good news is that the rapper has already laid the groundwork for a promising overseas live career in the coming years. In late October, Lil Wayne was forced to give up his passport after pleading guilty to attempted weapon possession that could land him a year in prison. (Sentencing isn't expected until February.) But two weeks prior to the guilty plea, the rapper sold out three makeup concerts at the 5,000-capacity HMV Hammersmith Apollo in London, as well as shows at the 5,000-capacity Heineken Music Hall in Amsterdam and the 7,000-capacity Zenith in Paris, according to his representatives.

Those involved with the London shows say Lil Wayne could've moved up to a larger venue if the proper production had been in place. "If Wayne had been ready and had the production, we could've done [London's 12,500-seat] Wembley Arena," says AEG Live president of international touring Rob Hallett, whose company co-promoted the shows with SJM Concerts.

Sports & Entertainment Financial Group president Shawn Gee, who also serves as Lil Wayne's tour producer and tour business manager, says the ballroom and theater stint was meant to expose the rapper's live prowess to European audiences.

"Although a lot of them purchased his record, they didn't know Lil Wayne the live performance artist," he says. "From an international perspective, you truly have to go and develop those markets."

Prior to the guilty plea, Lil Wayne's team had planned for the artist to perform internationally in 2010, including dates in Europe, Japan, Australia and New Zealand. Gee declined to comment on how Lil Wayne's legal troubles could hinder those plans, but he notes that the rapper will likely perform in larger European venues on his next tour. If all goes as planned, Lil Wayne could someday achieve arena-level headlining status in certain parts of the world, as seen in recent years with superstar artists Kanye West, Jay-Z, Eminem and 50 Cent. But while they are certainly capable of playing bigger venues in select international markets, concert promoters throughout Europe, Japan and Australia seem to agree that the demand for midlevel hip-hop is decreasing and generally concertgoers prefer home-grown rappers who deliver shows in their own language—or at least in their own accent.

For example, West may have nearly sold out Paris' 17,000-capacity Bercy venue in 2008, but "the demand for U.S. acts is not growing in France," says Angelo Goeppe, production director for Nous Productions, which has booked shows for West and JAY-Z. But domestic rappers like NTM, Diam's, lam, Rohff and Booba are consistent sellers at the box office.

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WEENEY RAPS ABOUT ROCK, 'REBIRTH' AND LIFE ON THE ROAD
BY GAIL MITCHELL

Lil Wayne always keeps it moving. That's the one absolute you learn about the rapper after talking with him.

When Billboard caught up with Lil Wayne—real name Dwayne Michael Carter Jr.—it was a couple of days after he had finished a set of shows in London, Paris and Amsterdam—and a week before he plead guilty to attempted weapon possession for an incident that occurred in 2007. Having barnstormed his way through 68 stateside shows during his top-grossing 1 Am Music and America's Most Wanted tours in 2008 and 2009 (see story, page 21), he deserved a few days off. Instead, the Miami-based rapper was busy completing his free "No Ceilings" mixtape—"A big thank you to fans for coming out and showing me love every single night" of the tours.

Several leaks from the Halloween release feature Wayne rapping over beats from Jay-Z's "Run This Town" and Fabolous' "Throw It in the Bag." Slated for release just after the mixtape, on Nov. 23, is the "Mr. Carter" EP, exclusive to Best Buy.

It's all in anticipation of Wayne's "Rebirth." While his Universal Motown publicist didn't respond to several requests for comment, another source at the label says that Wayne's legal issues—the rapper faces a one-year sentence in February—will not impede the often-delayed album's Dec. 15 release. But one question looms: Can Lil Wayne keep it moving when it comes to maintaining his sales and touring success?

How has touring helped shape your success thus far?
It's played a big part in my career. I've been on the road since I was about 14. Since then there's never been one city that I've been stable in for six months. Honestly, touring is just another part of my day. The stage comes at 9 p.m. OK, I eat at 12 [laughs]. It's natural for me, not a preparation. And I thank God for that every day.

Whether it's a club or arena, I perform my ass off. I go out there and give it my all every single night. I would die onstage. Some people like to just go out there and have their song played with five people onstage, and you don't even know who four of them are. You've got to go out there and perform. Once that works, people will come. And as long as people keep screaming when I step out there, I'll keep giving them me.

Do you have a sense of withdrawal when you're not on the road?
As soon as you start to develop that sense of withdrawal, you get a call from your manager [in Wayne's case, Corez Bryant] telling you that you've got 60 nights coming up somewhere so you'll be all right [laughs]. Honestly, the way my schedule is, my days—when I'm not on tour—are still full. I'm in the studio every single night. There's really never a moment for me to actually sit and breathe and even notice if I'm having withdrawal symptoms because I have to keep it moving. I just turned 27 on Sept. 27, so I'm not in a rush to take any downtime.

Speaking of keeping it moving, "Rebirth" is finally coming. Given earlier leaks from the project, did you make many changes to the final version?
As of now "Rebirth" is coming out as a double-disc with a [list of songs] by Young Money. I had to add new cuts because a lot of things leaked, making people think they had an idea of what I was doing with "Rebirth" and what it would sound like. And I hated that because I never want anybody to think they know what I'm doing until I present it. So what I did was make it totally different—I flipped it.

Does the album still lean toward rock?
Yes, the album is still rock. I play guitar on 80% of the songs and there's a lot of rock influences and rock beats. I also have Travis Barker on the album.

But I don't want people to think I'm trying to do something I can't do. Don't think you're going to put on the album and hear me screaming and singing. . . Don't worry about that [laughs]. When people hear me say rock, they may get a little scared like, "Oh, God, What is he going to do?"

When I said I was doing a rock album, it was about doing a freedom thing. This album isn't hip-hop. When I do my "Carter" albums, I know I've got to rap, I know I've got to spit—I know the words. I've got to say and the subjects I've got to talk about. I also know the things I shouldn't say, the things I shouldn't talk about.

There's none of those limits on this album. I say what I want, how I want. That's what this album is: a freedom album. And rock is the avenue that gives you that freedom.

I'm just having fun, that's all. Trust me: People will like these songs. It's my job to make them love them, but I know for a fact they like them.

What can we expect from the second disc by Young Money?
The expectations for Young Money are great. But I think they'll meet them because everybody—Drake, Nicki Minaj, Lil Chuckee, Shaneil, Lil Twin, Tyga, Jae Millz, Gudla Gudda, Mack Maine and T-Streets—they're all doing well. Every song is great, which creates a dilemma because we don't know what to pick as singles.

Any truth to rumors that "The Carter IV" is coming this year as well?
No, no. "Carter IV" is coming next year at a proper time like it's supposed to.

You recently did a guest feature on the new Weezer album. Any more rock projects on the horizon?
Weezer gave me a vivid picture of what they were trying to accomplish and it was wonderful to be a part of that. I also worked with Kid Rock and with Fall Out Boy—Pete Wentz and I are real tight. Other than that, I've worked with Gym Class Heroes. And I've been kicking it with Green Day, but I'm not sure if we'll get anything done real soon. You know me—I've been out there doing things with everybody.

Including working with Chris Brown, Madonna and Shakira. Do you get concerned about overexposure?
I just don't understand the whole point about using yourself too much or doing too many features. This is work; this is a job that we're doing and you want to work as much as you can. I've been wanting to ask people, "You know, I get paid for those features. Right? So do you think I'm getting paid too much or do you think I'm working too much? Is that what you're asking me?" I don't get it. All I'm doing is putting in overtime [laughs].

How is Drake's solo album coming along?
He's one of those guys who needs no help [laughs]. I don't do anything but say, "Let me hear that song." And I'm blown away with every song. I'm honored to have him. Knowing Drake, I want to say he's probably finished with the project. But he's one of those guys who keeps going back to put more icing on the cake.

Is a Hot Boyz reunion still in the works?
I still agree with it—let's put it like that. There are four sides to this, and it's hard getting four sides to come to the table. But I still agree.
That Was That
And 'This Is It'

The Inside Story Of How The Biggest Disaster In The History Of The Concert Business Turned Into The Most Anticipated Music Film Of The Year BY RAY WADDELL
"The film answers a lot of questions," says Rob Stringer, chairman of Sony Music. "I can't comment on a lot of issues that were going on with Michael, nor can anyone else, it's very difficult. But you want to know that he was still a fantastic entertainer, that he still cared, that he was still musically amazing, and all those things are just obvious in this film."

The saga began with the announcement last March of Jackson's string of shows at the O2, the result of two years of talks between Jackson and AEG Live, spearheaded by AEG Live CEO Randy Phillips. The ideas discussed included a tour, a few shows and, finally, a residency. "It took a while for [Jackson] to get comfortable with this, but when he finally made the decision that he wanted to do something, we were in the unique position where London was obviously the perfect place to do it," says AEG CEO Tim Leiweke.

Ticket sales for the initial 10 shows blew up at the box office, and the number of dates was raised to 50. Although all parties were taken aback by the demand, Leiweke says Jackson was fully committed to 50 shows, despite reports to the contrary. "We've heard all of the speculation and opinions out there, but the reality is this is something Michael wanted to do," he says.

Conceptually, Leiweke says the production was "all Michael's" vision—and that vision was expensive. "It was budgeted to be $12 million, but Michael had big dreams and big vision," Leiweke says. "By the time we were ready to go to London we were at $35 million."

In March Jackson reached out to Frank DiLeo, who managed him during a spectacular ‘80s run that included the star's most successful albums and tours. "Even though he fired me, Michael was still my friend. We never lost the friendship," says DiLeo, who had "no hesitation" about coming back to work for Jackson. "I was extremely excited about being back with him, because we were a magical team in the '80s. He missed it. I missed it."

As rehearsals got under way, public skepticism turned into anticipation. Even the rehearsals two nights before Jackson's death "were extraordinary," Leiweke says. "Everyone came out of there talking about how incredible it was."

The June 24 rehearsal didn’t run as long, Leiweke says, and Jackson spent much of that time reviewing video production elements. "He wasn't taking his voice that night. because he was getting ready for London," Leiweke says. At 12:30 p.m. June 25, Leiweke received a call informing him Jackson had been taken to the hospital. "Like the rest of the world, we were on the outside," he says. "Randy [Phillips] didn't know specifics until he got to the hospital, and by then, unfortunately, it was our worst scenario. It was shocking because what we knew was he was healthy—of that we were certain."

As word of Jackson's death spread, AEG had no time to mourn. The company shifted from preproduction to damage control. "A lot of decisions were made between Tim Leiweke and myself on cell phone while I was standing outside the emergency room," Phillips says. "The first thing we did was have our security close off Staples Center, shut down the production and put all of our intellectual property into the vault at Staples Center so nobody could get near it or leave with it."

As Jackson's death became a media circus, Leiweke ordered Staples Center GM Lee Zeidman to turn the arena into a fortress. "We locked the building down and said, "no one goes in and no one goes out," " Leiweke says. The instructions were clear: No pictures of the set, no one in Jackson's dressing room, no one touches anything. "We fired a couple of employees because they took pictures of the stage and we thought that was inappropriate."

Jackson died on a Thursday, which meant AEG executives in London and the company's Los Angeles headquarters had a marathon meeting. Amid their grief, AEG executives started trying to figure out what to do about their investment, even as the words "financial disaster" started to creep into news reports. "We weren't thinking that way," Leiweke says. "We knew we were in a bad spot and dealing with a crisis, but we believed eventually we'd work our way out of this. Needless to say, those were really difficult, long days—bad days—but I don't think we ever panicked. We had faith that we would eventually find a way to come out of this and recoup the investment."

The decision that saved "This Is It"—as both AEG's investment and Jackson's legacy—had been made weeks before. Rehearsals had been filmed, and it is that edited footage that became the Sony Pictures film. "I said, 'We've got to archive your comeback because this is going to be historical, and [Jackson] agreed," Phillips says. "We never expected it to be a movie. This was really for his personal archives—and also to be B-roll and behind-the-scenes footage that probably would have been a DVD concert film."

Within days of Jackson's death, AEG started editing the rehearsal footage into a narrative at AEG's L.A. Live facilities. "Under armed guards we had the editors working for three weeks collating, 130 hours of footage and distilling it down to three and a half hours in the first pass," Phillips says. "And then we took 12 minutes of that and used it as a demo."

Up until longtime Jackson associates John Branca and John McClain, who had been named executors in Jackson's will, were officially named administrators July 6, AEG had been able to act unilaterally. There was some doubt about who would control Jackson's estate, and "we didn't know there was a will for over a week," Phillips says. As those details were resolved, however, AEG began negotiating with the executors—Branca and McClain, and attorney Joel Katz and Howard Weitzman—to determine how to proceed.

Fortunately, AEG's corporate cousins in-
**Welcome To Paradise**

**Alejandro Sanz Steps Up His Marketing Game On ‘Paraiso Express’**

**BY LEILA COBO • PHOTOGRAPH BY RUBEN MARTIN**

**Alejandro Sanz knows** his fans have different definitions of paradise. For some, it’s a walk in the rain; others, one child’s love of running; and others, a group of friends frolicking at the beach. Sanz’s fans captured these moments, and hundreds more, in home videos they’ve uploaded to Sanz’s YouTube channel. In the videos, which range from 10 seconds to a minute in length, they illustrate what paradise means to them in an allusion to Sanz’s new album—“Paraiso Express”—and the single “Looking for Paradise,” featuring Alicia Keys.

The campaign is as whimsical as it is brilliant, and it’s part of a broad marketing effort that seeks to bring the usually reticent Sanz closer to his fan base as he prepares to release “Paraiso” Nov. 16 on Warner Music Latina.

Sanz’s total world album sales surpass 25 million, according to Warner. In the United States, he’s collectively sold 1.5 million albums, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

But three years after his latest studio set, Sanz returns to find a challenging marketplace, one where traditional promotion no longer applies. In response, Sanz and his label are consciously trying to get closer to his broad and widespread fan base in ways they hadn’t done before.

They include the “Looking for Paradise” promotion, a one-hour special and TV spot campaign with DirecTV, a Verizon TV campaign and the launch of an interactive TV page, administered by Warner, where Sanz and fans comment and blog almost nonstop.

A key factor in the effort was the Web site, whose entire setup invites direct communication between Sanz—who is constantly tweeting and uploading content—and his fans, who are invited to do the same and then comment. The result is a page that is almost live and whose content changes literally by the hour, with Sanz chronicling every single step of his promotion. While the notion of big acts actively blogging is common place in the mainstream market, few Latin names do the same (although tweeting is becoming far more commonplace). Blogs vary from videos and photos to press releases to content that is uniquely Sanz: prior to a visit to Mexico, for example, he posted a poem dedicated to the country, clearly penned by him.

“We’re working very hard on our Web page and it’s exciting because people are responding,” Sanz says. “They’re delighted with this new way of promoting the music. Because when the industry no longer has the power to fill up the streets with posters or TV ads, there is a need for imagination and creativity. And for me, this promotion is far more effective and thrilling.”

The most unique piece of Sanz’s online promotions may be the “Looking for Paradise” campaign, which stemmed from the single’s title.

He liked it so much, in fact, that he asked several of his artist friends—including Shakira, Laura Pausini and Paula Rubio—to tape 10-second video segments of what paradise meant for them. The videos were posted on Sanz’s YouTube channel and garnered enough traffic that he then asked fans to upload their own clips. Of the approximately 800 submissions, 30 were chosen for inclusion in one long video that runs the length of the song and is also posted on Sanz’s Web page and YouTube channel.

But the notion of bringing Sanz closer to his fans transcends the home video campaign.

DirecTV also chose Sanz to be the first Latin musician featured in an extensive promotional campaign that includes TV spots and a one-hour special.

“He fits perfectly with our brand,” DirecTV PR senior manager Naomi Rodriguez says, noting that Sanz is the first Latin musician with a promotional campaign on DirecTV (although the channel has featured other Latin celebrities) and the first Latin name to get a one-hour special on DirecTV’s proprietary, noncommercial 101 channel, which has featured artists like Beyoncé and Katy Perry in the past and reaches 18 million DirecTV subscribers.

“When the industry no longer has the power to fill up the streets with posters or TV ads, there is a need for imagination and creativity.”

—ALEJANDRO SANZ

In the spots, Sanz is sitting in his living room, talking about his music and tastes as “Looking for Paradise” plays in the background. While viewers are urged to subscribe to DirecTV to get the same soccer channels Sanz likes to watch, they’re also urged to purchase “Paraiso Express.” The spots began airing this week on all Spanish-language TV stations and will be shown throughout the year.

The second component, the TV special “Más Allá del Paraiso: Un Encuentro con la Musica y la Pasión de Alejandro Sanz,” will air Nov. 23 on 101 and feature interviews with Sanz and performances that haven’t appeared before on TV. The campaign was negotiated purely for its promotional value, with no sponsorship fees involved. A similar agreement was reached with Verizon, which launched a TV campaign timed with the Latin Grammy Awards.

The spots, which began airing Oct. 16 on Univision-owned stations, will run through the first week of November and feature a Sanz fan who wants access to the artist.

“He’s doing promotion he hadn’t done in a long time,” says Gabriella Martinez, VP of marketing for Warner Music Latin America. “For example, he’s in Mexico now visiting radio stations, something I don’t think he’s done in the last two albums.”

Warner has also negotiated several radio promotions, including a private Univision Radio show for fans only in Las Vegas later this year.

Sanz will reach out to the masses with a Nov. 5 performance at the Latin Grammys, then perform eight shows at Madrid’s Compac Gran Via Theater, which seats 8,000. The shows—which will take place between the last week of November and the first week of December—were promoted under the tag line “Sit down and feel next to him and sold out in less than an hour. (By comparison, Sanz’s last U.S. tour took him to 28 cities, grossed $6.7 million and had an attendance of 161,000, according to Billboard Boxscore.)

Sanz, a soulful vocalist with a distinctive raucous voice and complex compositions, is regarded worldwide as one of Latin music’s top singer-songwriters. His songs, which blend pop with traditional Spanish rhythms, funk and jazz, were first showcased on his 1997 breakthrough album “Más,” which yielded the hit “Corazón Paraiso” and sold 3.2 million copies worldwide, according to Warner.

“Paraiso Express” is a departure from the more moody and ruminative “El Tren de los Momentos” (2006) and showcases Sanz’s airy, more melodic side. And, maybe more than any other Spanish artist (save perhaps the recent exception of David Bisbal), Sanz, who lives in Miami, has been able to effectively erase the boundaries between Spain and Latin America. He’s seen by fans as a continental artist who belongs to everyone.

This is charmingly evident in the “Looking for Paradise” promotion, since the videos hail from every possible place imaginable, from Argentina to Germany. The impetus for the promotion came from the track itself, a song Sanz co-wrote and performed with Alicia Keys, whom he’d met several years before at Rock in Rio in Lisbon, Portugal. The two ran into each other again in New York this year and Sanz asked her to sing on his album. Keys agreed based on the music and isn’t using the track for her album.

The song, which this week is No. 3 on Billboard’s Hot Latin Songs chart, is an up-tempo, almost bubbly track that features the singers trading verses in English and Spanish and singing about what they’re looking for in paradise.

It’s the first stab at English for Sanz, although there was talk of him doing so years ago. In this instance, all involved say, the decision wasn’t motivated by crossover appeal but was merely an artistic one that came about through Sanz’s meeting with Keys. The track isn’t being promoted to English-language radio. But this does mark the first time that Sanz’s first radio single is a duet.

In the meantime, Sanz’s longtime manager, Rosa Laguna, is concentrating on putting together Sanz’s 2010 world tour and negotiating sponsorships; Sanz’s last tour, in 2007, had 76 stops worldwide. Conversations are also ongoing to release “Paraiso Express” in non-Spanish-speaking territories, including European countries where Sanz’s albums haven’t been released before. For the time being, “Paraiso” will be released simultaneously in Spain, Latin America, Brazil and Portugal.

“Everyone is so motivated, I honestly haven’t given it much thought,” he says. “I think people will like it, and we’ll see what happens with sales. Today, sales are not a reflection of success. I only think I have a great record that can reach many people. And fortunately, ours is an industry that markets emotions, and this is an album that excites people.”
How do the biggest names in the concert industry spell “Atlanta”?

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Concert contenders: Billboard Touring Award finalists include (counterclockwise from top) U2, TAYLOR SWIFT, MADONNA, KENNY CHESNEY and LIL WAYNE.
Despite all the forecasts of doom and gloom floating around last January, the concert industry survived just fine in '09. In fact, many tours, venues, live entertainment companies and events actually thrived this year, as the finalists for the 2009 Billboard Touring Awards demonstrate. Unlike most other industry awards, the Billboard Touring Awards are primarily based on actual numbers, real business being done, real butts in seats and actual turnstiles spinning.

The exceptions: The recipients of the Legend of Live and Humanitarian Awards each year are chosen by Billboard editors, and the honorees for the concert marketing and promotion award and the Eventful Fans' Choice Award are selected through online voting by members of the touring industry and by fans, respectively. The nature of the business and the prep time involved in tabulating finalists and winners sometimes doesn't neatly match up with tour schedules, which means that some tours have to be broken up between different years. Still, for a given year, the Billboard Touring Awards showcase which acts, venues and firms were doing the greatest level business in the preceding months.

The awards are based on numbers reported to Billboard Boxscore from Oct. 1, 2008, through Sept. 30, 2009.

The big enchiladas are the top tour and top draw awards, which acknowledge the top grossing and ticket-selling tours, respectively. The same three acts occupy the upper echelons in both categories: a pop diva that has transcended her genre, four guys from Ireland who are rewriting the stadium tour paradigm and a hard-rocking Aussie band that returned after a lengthy absence from the road to a jubilant global reception.

Two of the three finalists in the top draw and top tour categories are produced by Live Nation and steered by Live Nation global music chairman Arthur Fogel. The second leg of Madonna's Sticky & Sweet tour solidified the artist's stature as having the highest-grossing solo tour of all time and one of the biggest tours ever. Madonna previously captured the top tour award for Re-Invention in 2004.

For its part, U2 notched Europe and about half of North America under its belt on its record-shattering 360° tour by the cutoff point. The innovative "in-the-round" staging of the tour is allowing U2 to shatter box office records without pricing tickets in the stratosphere. U2 won top tour and top draw for Vertigo in 2005.

AC/DC joins Madonna and U2 as contenders in the top tour and top draw categories.

For Fogel, it has been another monster year in a career of monster years. His tours by the Police, Madonna and U2 have been previous winners at the Billboard Touring Awards.

To have both the biggest band in the world in U2 and the biggest female artist in Madonna as finalists is really fantastic," Fogel says. "It is a true testament to their global appeal, ticket-selling power and brilliant talent. I am truly privileged to be involved with these great artists who are at the top of their game."

It's likely that Fogel and Live Nation will be in a similar position in the coming years, as both U2 and Madonna are in the early stages of 10-year multiplists deals with Live Nation. "The successful partnership with Live Nation [with U2 and Madonna] demonstrates the true potential that exists in the live business," Fogel says.

PROPERLY PACKAGED

The top package award, which goes to the top-grossing tour with three or more artists on the bill, is designed to reward synergetic packaging and value offered to consumers. This year's diverse mix of finalists includes tours headlined by a familiar country superstar, a teen-pop sensation and a mainstream rock juggernaut.

Five-time top package winner Kenny Chesney is back again among the finalists with the Sun City Carnival tour. Promoted nationally again by TMG/AEG Live, Chesney played a mix of arenas, amphitheaters and NFL stadiums and included Miranda Lambert, Lady Antebellum, Sugarland and Montgomery Gentry on the bill. Chesney has pretty much taken ownership of this award, and TMG/AEG Live president Louis Messina says Chesney's focus on providing value dates back to the artist's own days as a fan.

"Kenny knows that buying a ticket and going to a show is expensive, so he always wants his fans to have a great time from the opener until his set," Messina says. "He does not need to spend the money (on support), but he does.

Jonas Brothers continue their upward trend as finalists this year in the top package category following their World Tour 2009 with Jordin Sparks. Maker
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from p.32

Society and Wonder Girls. Sparks and Honor Society are both managed by Jonas Brothers' co-managers Phillip McIntyre and Kevin Jonas.

"This year was about Jonas Brothers making the leap of playing in the round to deliver as many seats as possible, selling 97%-98% of every seat available, keeping the ticket price under $90 and going to work every day." Live Nation VP Brad Wavra says. "The packaging happened to be self-servin' in one sense, with Honor Society and Jordin managed by the same management company and on the same label. But the guys also took a leap of faith on a little band from South Korea called Wonder Girls. They believed in them and wanted to cultivate another touring act."

And Nickleback, the 2006 winner of the breakthrough award, is also a finalist for top package for its Dark Horse tour, with Hinder, Papa Roach and Saving Abel on board for most of the run. The Dark Horse outing is also a finalist for the concert marketing and promotion award for the band's tour partnership with Nikon and Internet Explorer 8.

### TOP BOXSCORE

The top boxscore award recognizes the top-grossing single engagement for the time period, the biggest of the big gigs. Two of these came from U2: July 24-27 at Croke Park in Dublin (U2's dates at Croke Park won this award in 2005) and July 11-12 at Stade de France in Paris.

The third finalist is also from Ireland, but is a festival: the sixth annual Oxegen Fest held July 10-12 at Punchestown Racecourse in Naas, Ireland. Produced by Dublin independent promoter Denis Desmond, director of MCD, Oxegen featured Kings of Leon, Snow Patrol, Blu and the Killers as headliners.

MCD owner Desmond says he is delighted that Oxegen has been named a finalist: "We pride ourselves on getting the best lineups. We have a great, appreciative audience, and being named a finalist is a huge credit to all the staff involved in the organization of the festival," he adds.

### TOP FESTIVAL

In addition to being a top boxscore finalist, Oxegen is a finalist for the top festival award, along with a four-time winner—the Bonnaroo Music & Arts Festival in Manchester, Tenn.—and a frequent finalist, the Coachella Valley Music & Arts Festival in Indio, Calif.

Coachella headliners included Paul McCartney, Leonard Cohen, the Killers, and the Cure. "Coachella is in good company with the other festival finalists," says Paul Tollett, producer of Coachella for Goldenvoice/AEG Live, who says professionally produced and promoted festivals lift the entire festival business. "We feel the other promoting teams take their events as seriously as we do ours. This has elevated the festivals in this country, and it’s only going to get better."

At Bonnaroo, the lineup of 125 acts included Bruce Springsteen & the E Street Band, Phish, Wilco, Elvis Costello, the Decemberists and Merle Haggard. "Each year we try to raise the bar in every facet of the festival," says Jonathan Mays, president of Superfly Presents, co-producer of Bonnaroo with A.C. Entertainment. "You have to keep evolving. You don’t want to stay static, or you go backward. Every year you want to look back and say, ‘Wow, this was better than the last year.’"

### TOP PROMOTERS

The global concert mega-promoters Live Nation and AEG Live are joined by Motion Leisure Entertainment, Live Nation’s division for festivals in the U.S.

For Live Nation, tours by U2, Coldplay, Jonas Brothers, Nickelback, Dave Matthews Band, Fleetwood Mac, Rascal Flatts, New Kids on the Block and many others helped drive the year, along with a massive promotion schedule at the amphitheaters and a wealth of European festivals and tours.

AEG Live did very well with Chesney, Britney Spears, Tina Turner and American Idol. With festivals like Coachella, Rothbury, Stagecoach, Mile High and All Points West, AEG lost what would have likely been the top boxscore of the year with the death of Michael Jackson, who would have played 50 sold-out shows at London’s O2 Arena.

Four-time winner Jam Productions in Chicago, the 2007 winner of the top promoter award, is also a finalist for the top independent promoter, U.S.

"Jam has continued to operate our business with the same business ethic that we’ve always had: service, loyalty and treat people like they want to be treated," Jam co-founder Arny Granat says. "That does not mean we get any kudos or love back in today’s world, but [co-founder] Jerry [Mickelson] and I choose to continue on this path.”

Rock did the trick for Frank Brothers, who did well with tours in secondary markets from Buckcherry/Avenge Sevenfold, a Disturbed package and a Mudvayne/Black Label Society package, along with several Metalli-date dates. "We look at ourselves as being very fortunate," partner Fred Frank says. "There are not a whole lot of independent promoters left. They’ve either been bought out or squashed out. But we continue to fight for our niche, and we feel like we’re in a pretty good spot right now. And we’re trying to stay a little under the radar.”

### TOP MANAGER, TOP AGENCY

The top manager award recognizes the management firm with the combined highest-grossing clients among the top 50 tours. This year’s finalists are Maverick Management (Madonna), Principle Management (U2) and Front Line Management with a strong list of affiliated acts, including Cheesney, the Eagles, Fleetwood Mac, New Kids on the Block, Neil Diamond, Kings of Leon and Luis Miguel.


The top agency finalists have the highest-grossing combined tours among the top 50, with William Morris Endeavor Entertainment, Creative Artists Agency and Artists Group International being the top three this year.

CAA’s tours that ranked in the top 50 include Bruce Springsteen & the E Street Band, AC/DC, Jonas Brothers, Fleetwood Mac, Il Divo, New Kids on the Block, Kings of Leon, Eric Clapton and top comedy tour finalists Robin Williams and Dane Cook.

The list is considered to be favorites to win at the 2009 Billboard Awards, with the two most prominent names being Lorne Michaels and the famous agency head, who have been at the top of the chart for years.

The lone independent agency in the group, Artists Group International, has been a perennial finalist among the top agencies. “It is proud of my team and the tremendous work ethic that exists at AGI,” president Dennis Arfa says. Among the tours fielded by AGI in 2009 were treks by Billy Joel & Elton John (with the Howard Rose Agency), Metallica, Motley Crue and Def Leppard.

### TOURING CONFERENCE & AWARDS

LIVE NATION AND AEG ARE JOINED BY BRAZIL'S TIME 4 FUN AS FINALISTS FOR THE TOP PROMOTER OF THE YEAR AWARD

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The issues facing the touring industry are growing increasingly complex, and the most pressing ones will be addressed Nov. 4–5 with provocative panels and intimate round tables at the sixth annual Billboard Touring Conference in New York. Taking on these topics will be a diverse lineup of industry players, ranging from innovative up-and-comers to savvy veterans, all of whom are playing a unique role in reshaping this critical part of the music business.

Ticketing, marketing and promotion, new models, artist development, sponsorships, festivals, the evolution of management companies and the big-picture landscape will all be discussed on in-depth panels. Also, AEG Live CEO Randy Phillips will lead a behind-the-scenes look at the aftermath of the world’s largest tour, following Michael Jackson’s death in June.

LOWDOWN FROM LIANA
Artist development remains one of the most critical issues in the music business, and a panel on this topic has opened every Billboard Touring Conference since year one. In what has become a remarkable two-year session, this group of managers, promoters and agents will delve into key building components. They’ll offer insights on what acts should be on everyone’s radar and how the next generation of arena headliners is being fostered. MSG Entertainment VP of concert marketing Lia Farnham will again moderate the panel.

Onboard are C3 Presents partner Charlie Atal; William Morris Endeavor Entertainment (Rascal Flatts, Brad Paisley) agent Rob Beckham; Cornerstone co-founder Jon Cohen; Bowery Presents partner Jim Glancy; Harvey Leeds, president of the artist-management firm Headquarters and a talent buyer for Live Nation; and Brian Manning, agent at Creative Artists Agency (Jonas Brothers, Maroon 5).

Farnham is known for calling outpanelists on their past breakup picks and says panelists keep her informed as to how their picks are performing.

CONTROLLING THE KEYS
The “Let ‘Em In” panel takes on what is arguably the most controversial topic in live entertainment today: ticketing. The ticket and the fan connection it carries is the key to the kingdom before, during and after an event. At the forefront of just about any discussion of ticketing is the question of harnessing the secondary market.

Moderated by Carla Varriale, partner at the sports and entertainment law firm Hawkins Rosenfeld Ritzer & Varriale, “Let ‘Em In” will break down ticketing with a panel that includes reps from the two (at this point) biggest ticket seller in the world. Live Nation Ticketing president Nathan Hubbard and Ticketmaster: North American president David Butler, along with Jeff Kline, president of Veritix, a pioneer in the world of paperless ticketing; Chris Tsakalakis, CEO of StubHub, the leader in online secondary-market sales; Don Vaccaro, CEO of TicketNetwork; a leading ticketing ag- gregator; Michael Maron, GM of the Verizon Arena in North Little Rock, Ark.; an arena on the front line of ticketing issues; and a rare appearance from one of the country’s leading ticket brokers, Barry Rubin, president of Barry’s Tickets.

THINGS THAT WORK
Live music weathered the storms of a brutal economy quite well in 2009, and the “Good Vibrations” panel looks at some of the most successful concert and tour promotion concepts of the year. Eventful CEO Jordan Glazer will find out what worked, and why, with the decision-makers who helped make these initiatives happen.

Panelists include Shawn Gee, president of music and entertainment at Sports & Entertainment Financial Group (Lil Wayne); Ticketmaster Entertainment senior VP of music services Vito Iaia; C3 Presents partner Charlie Jones (Lollapalooza, Austin City Limits Music Festival); Rockstar Mayhem/Taste of Chaos co-founder John Reise; Live Nation senior VP Brad Warav; and Progressive Global Agency owner/agent Buck Williams (Widespread Panic, R.E.M.).

Each of these panelists was involved in winning tender this year, tours and events sponsored by cutting-edge promotions. Vwar, for example, was part of Live Nation’s successful amphitheater promotions for tours like No Doubt’s. Warav oversees Ticketmaster Entertainment’s music services division, which runs paperless ticketing programs and successful VIP tour packages and promotions. Widespread Panic booked and co-managed with Williams, teamed with the Allman Brothers Band as an inspired co-headlining bill. And moderator Glazer’s Eventful, a music-oriented social networking site that lets fans “demand” artists come to their city, worked with Kiss in routing the band’s current Alive 35 tour.

NEW MODELS
This is the era of new models, and artists, managers, labels and promoters are finding unique methods to reach fans. “Brand New Key” will explore some of the novel and exciting ways the stakeholders are taking control of their own destiny in breaking acts, selling tickets and building careers.

Moderated by direct-to-fan trailblazer J3 Omnimedia president Larry Perver, the panel’s speakers include Paradigm (Coldplay) agent Marty Diamond, Crystal Math Management co-founder Mathieu Drouin, Roadrunner Records VP of touring marketing/artist development Harlan Frey, Cut Merch president Steve Gerstman, Artist Nation president Steve Ahramz and Donna Santidri, sister company of Greenlight Marketing & Media, the company president of Red Light Management.

“This panel features a cross-sectional view of wise old hands and young up- and-comers who all have one thing in common: the desire to innovate, tweak and push the boundaries in pursuit of methods and models,” says Pever.

SIGNS OF CHANGE
Corporate sponsorships are playing a major role in the touring industry, as companies increasingly turn to live music to reach coveted consumers. Returning in his role of moderating this panel, IEG Sponsorship Report senior editor Bill Chippewill engage an A-team of innovators in uniting hands, brands and fans.

Panelists are 411 Productions director of tour sponsorships/marketing Sarah Bares, William Morris Endeavor Entertainment agent/sponsorships Straud Conover, Virgin Mobile senior director of brand marketing and innovation Ron Faris, Atlantic Records director of brand partnerships and sports marketing Jonathan Feldman, Clorox senior group manager of PR sponsorships Drew McGowan and Live Nation Alliance VP Russell Wallach.

The explosion of the festival business is one of the most important developments in the concert industry in recent times. The top festival producers and talent buyers in the business will discuss how artists, agents, venues, managers and others can maximize these events and where this market is headed. Moderated by industry veteran Jim Lewis, head of live events at the Agency Group, the panel includes Buddy Lee Attractions (Country Music Assn. Music Fest) president/CEO Tony Conway, Superfly Presents (Bonnaroo, Outside Lands) president Jon Mayers, Top Artist Productions (moe.) president Jon Topper, C3 Presents (Lollapalooza, Austin City Limits Music Festival) promoter Hunter Powell and Rehearse Entertainment (Voodoo Fest) president Steve Rehearse.

CAPTAINS COURAGEOUS
Power and leverage belong to the artist manager, and all revenue streams flow through the offices of consolidated mega managers and fierce independents alike. But will the managers who run these companies be as savvy as the influential and creative managers in the business will provide their take on the new paradigm during “Every Breath You Take.” Moderated by Billboard editorial director Bill Werde, the panel includes a stellar group of visionary artist managers: Will Botwin, manager at Red Light Management (Dave Matthews Band, Ben Harper); Dave Holmes, manager at 3D Management (Coldplay); Mathew Knowles, president/CEO of Music World Entertainment (Beyoncé); Allen Kovac, president of 10th Street Entertainment (Mötley Crue, Buckcherry); Ken Levitan, co-president of Vector Music Management (Kings of Leon, Ross Jovi) and Mike Martinovich, manager of Flattroman Entertainment (My Morning Jacket).

The touring industry has reacted to a challenging environment with innovation and remarkable resiliency. In a panel that has become known for its visionary ideas, candid exchanges and insightful opinions, some of the key stakeholders in the industry discuss where the concert business is today and where it may be headed in an era when the very future of this industry is being shaped.

Moderated by high-powered music attorney Elion Goldberg, the “Masters of Swing” panel includes Coran Capshaw, owner/manager of Red Light Management (Dave Matthews Band, Phish, Tim McGraw); Live Nation Midwest president Rick Franks; Chip Hooper, president of Paradigm Talent & Literary Agency (Dave Matthews Band, Coldplay, Phish); 411 Productions president Kevin Lyman; Concerts West/AEG Live CEO John Meglen; and C3 Presents partner Charles Walker.

“Whether independent entrepreneurs like Kevin Lyman, Charlie Walker, Chip Hooper or Coran Capshaw, or the big corporate guys like John Meglen and Rick Franks, we can look forward to a spirited discussion about how businesses such as how to fight the threat of devastation of the live business in the face of ticketing giveaways, the need to meet consumer demand for good packages and interesting alternative venues and of course, the ongoing battles over pricing.”
Alabama's largest venue, the Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex Arena, recently completed major acoustic upgrades that will dramatically change your next event experience. Plus, you'll find a renovated concourse and backstage area. Big name tours such as the Jonas Brothers, Taylor Swift, the Eagles, Miley Cyrus and more have already hit the stage, playing to sold-out crowds. Combine that with events like the Davis Cup First Round Tie, and the BJCC Arena has seen record attendance numbers in recent months. It's a don't-miss stop on your next tour.

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Four diverse acts are vying for this year's Breakthrough Award at the Billboard Touring Conference & Awards, to be held Nov. 4-5 in New York. The finalists—IL DIVO, Kings of Leon, Lil Wayne and Taylor Swift—may attract decidedly different demographics, but all have proved to be equally passionate about building their touring careers in 2009. The Breakthrough Award goes to the top-grossing act that cracks Billboard Boxscore's top tours recap for the first time in its career and is based on ticket sales reported to Boxscore from Oct. 1, 2008, through Sept. 30, 2009. Previous winners include Miley Cyrus, Josh Groban, Linkin Park, Rascal Flatts and Justin Timberlake.

IL DIVO

Three primary factors played into the success of classical pop act IL DIVO's international touring success in 2009: playing the right-sized buildings, heavy TV marketing and appearances, and nonstop press from group members, says Live Nation senior VP of global touring Mark Norman.

Following arena dates throughout Europe earlier this year, IL DIVO supported its latest album, "The Promise," with a 40-plu-date. Live Nation-produced North American arena and theater tour that ended in late July. In markets that didn't have large theaters, the group chose to book scaled-down arenas.

Going into the trek, the group gained momentum stateside by performing on TV shows like "Live With Regis and Kelly" and "Good Morning America," says David Zdeck, IL DIVO's booking agent at Creative Artists Agency.

In addition to appearances on popular programs, the group benefited from Live Nation's advertising budget, about 60% of which was spent on TV marketing. The final piece of the puzzle was the willingness of the members of IL DIVO—David Miller, Sebastien Izambard, Urs Bühler and Carlos Martin—to promote themselves with nonstop press.

KINGS OF LEON

The rock act Kings of Leon sent a clear message to the concert industry that it's there to stay following a sold-out performance Jan. 29 at New York's Madison Square Garden. The band followed that concert with another run of North American arena shows that ended in late October.

"We were hoping for the explosion that's occurred," says Ken Levitan, Kings of Leon's manager at Vector in Nashville. "But we also wanted to take chances and set it up by playing places like Madison Square Garden."

Prior to playing arenas, Kings of Leon were selling out large theaters, including New York's 6,000-seat Radio City Music Hall. "We booked [the Garden concert] really early on, thinking that was the next level of where we wanted to go everywhere," Levitan says.

The band's recent North American run supports its latest album, "Only by the Night," which has sold 1.4 million copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

After a brief break from touring, "we'll play the U.S., then run over to Europe. Then we'll come back to the U.S., then go to Australia. We've just tried to build it."

LIL WAYNE

After his 2008 album "Tha Carter III" sold 3.2 million U.S. copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan, Lil Wayne took his success on the road. He ranked No. 15 on Billboard's 2009 midyear list of the highest-grossing tours, earning $23.8 million from 40 shows that drew more than 364,000 concertgoers, according to Billboard Boxscore.

In September, Lil Wayne's tour producer/tour business manager Shawn Gee told Billboard that the rapper's 2008-09 tour drew nearly 804,000 fans to 78 concerts. The numbers made it the most lucrative rap tour that Billboard has ever tracked, topping Jay-Z's 2008 jaunt with Mary J. Blige, which grossed $34.6 million and drew 310,694 concertgoers to 38 shows, according to Boxscore.

Gee, who serves as principal/manager of music and entertainment at Sports & Entertainment Financial Group, says the initial strategy was to "prove that Wayne was a real headline arena artist." To accomplish that, he and management hired touring professionals who've previously worked with artists like Beyoncé. The other key component was "overdelivering" to fans. Lil Wayne's 2008-09 tour—promoted exclusively by Mayhem Events/Live Nation—split into three legs and featured support on various dates by Keyshia Cole, T-Pain, Gym Class Heroes, Keri Hilson, Young Jeezy, Drake, Soulja Boy Tell 'Em, Jeremih and Pleasure P.

TAYLOR SWIFT

Before her arena headlining tour this year, 19-year-old country artist Taylor Swift opened shows for top-tier acts like Rascal Flatts and Brad Paisley. Propelled by the success of her album-cracking top, "Fearless," which sold nearly 4 million copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, Swift recently completed the first leg of a sold-out U.S. arena tour, promoted by TMG/AEG Live.

"We knew she could do the arena business based on the way that the album was performing," says Greg Oswald, Swift's booking agent at William Morris Endeavor Entertainment in Nashville. While supporting Rascal Flatts in 2008, Swift tested the headlining waters by performing a handful of one-off dates in 6,000- to 9,000-seat venues in various markets.

Her Fearless arena tour started April 23 in Evansville, Ind., and sold solidly through its last reported date on June 12, according to Billboard Boxscore. Beginning in February 2010, the singer will play arena dates in Australia before performing 37 arena shows across North America. "It's meteoric, plus some," Oswald says, "especially when you consider that it's global."
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Driven by road warriors like Madonna, AC/DC, Tina Turner, Britney Spears and Green Day, 2009 was another strong year for business at venues across the globe. At the Billboard Touring Conference & Awards, to be held Nov. 4-5 at the Roosevelt Hotel in New York, the awards will recognize the top-grossing venues for the 2009 touring season. Here's a look at the finalists, based on Billboard Boxscore results from Oct. 1, 2008, through Sept. 30, 2009.

**TOP ARENA**

Despite a difficult economy, "2009 proved to be a strong year for concerts and special events at Madison Square Garden," says Melissa Ormond, COO of MSG Entertainment (MSGE), whose New York building has captured the top arena honor for the past five consecutive years.

"From rock to pop to country, the biggest names in music made the Garden a stop on their tour, including Taylor Swift, the Killers, Green Day, Britney Spears, Beyoncé, Pink, Rascal Flatts, the Dead and Kings of Leon," she says, noting that all of the concerts were sellouts.

Among the year's highlights, Ormond notes, was the opening of the recent tour by the Dave Matthews Band at the Garden in April. Another was Jay-Z's sold-out Sept. 11 benefit performance in support of the New York Police and Fire Widows' and Children's Benefit Fund.

While honored to be among the top-grossing arenas in the world, London's O2 Arena staffers were saddened by the sudden death of Michael Jackson, whose planned 50-show run at the venue would've been the highest-grossing single-concert engagement. "It is tragic that the world did not get to see what would undoubtedly have been a series of groundbreaking shows from the King of Pop," says Caroline McNamara, head of sales at O2 Arena.

Aside from the loss, the O2 Arena has presented major talent during the past year, including concerts by Turner, Spears, Madonna, AC/DC, Beyoncé and Pink. "We are up 25% ahead of last year on the number of shows in the arena, bringing our total up to 175 by the end of the year," McNamara says.

At the Acer Arena in Sydney, "the global financial crisis seemingly has not had much of an impact on the level of concert and entertainment product coming to our part of the world," says Tim Worton, group director of arenas at AEG Ogden, which oversees the operation of Acer Arena. "And even more significantly, the fans seem largely unaffected by it."

Worton says that some of the highlights at Acer Arena during the past year included multiple-show engagements by Coldplay (four), Simon & Garfunkel (three), Beyoncé (two), Pink (two) and the Pussycat Dolls (two) and single-night concerts by Fall Out Boy, Kings of Leon, Brooks & Dunn and the Who.

**TOP AMPHITHEATER**

On the strength of the summertime outdoor concert business, three Live Nation amphitheaters are again finalists in this category: Comcast Center in Mansfield, Mass.; Susquehanna Bank Center in Camden, N.J.; and Molson Amphitheatre in Toronto.

"This award belongs to the artists, fans and our great local teams that make these venues successful," says Jason Garner, CEO of global music for Live Nation. "These amphitheaters enjoyed a great summer featuring the best artists in the world and promotions like No Service Fee Wednesday that brought fans out in record numbers."

With a 2009 schedule that included such longtime venue favorites as Phish, Jimmy Buffett, Aerosmith and the Allman Brothers, the Comcast Center "met the challenge of an uncertain economy," says Live Nation Boston senior VP Dave Marsden. "Headlining the venue for the first time were Bruce Springsteen & the E Street Band, Slightly Stoopid and Kings of Leon, who played to over 18,000 fans." The Comcast Center won last year's top shed award.

One of the highlights at Susquehanna Bank Center was "watching how young, diverse and strong the audience was for our country shows," says Geoff Gordon, president at Live Nation Philadelphia. "Country touring does an amazing job of building headliners, which makes you feel great about the future of the business."

The Camden shed's annual radio shows were another highlight, he notes. "We have four yearly radio shows with stacked lineups that are either free or extraordinarily reasonably priced," Gordon says. "These dovetailed really nicely into all of the smart packaging this summer, which gave fans a lot of bang for their buck."

This year marked the 15th season at Molson Amphitheatre, and the venue's '09 lineup "continued on >p44"
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DEBUTED AT #5 ON “THE BILLBOARD 200” ALBUM CHART

THREE #1 SINGLES ALREADY...
(“POR UN SEGUNDO” – “ALL UP 2 YOU” – “SU VENENO”)
**USA TOUR DATES**

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TOP VENUE, 10,000 SEATS OR LESS
As the winners of last year’s top award in this category, New York’s Radio City Music Hall management team understands firsthand that venues with 10,000 seats are the sweet spot of the concert industry.

“Diverse event bookings” contributed to Radio City’s continued success in 2009, including a political speakers series, a sold-out run of Dora the Explorer: performances and sellouts by Leonard Cohen and Flight of the Conchords, according to MSG’s Ormond. “Award shows also contributed to our success with the return of the MTV [Video Music Awards] to New York City, as well as the annual Tony Awards,” she says.

Proving that MSG remains a dominant force in New York, the company’s WaMu Theatre at Madison Square Garden is also competing in the category, boosted by a year that heralded multiple-night bookings by such talents as comedian Kathy Griffin (four) and Van Morrison (two). Other highlights included performances by Keyshia Cole, Jennifer Hudson and a number of family shows, Ormond says.

“We have great flexibility in booking the WaMu Theatre due to its size and expansive stage, while still providing the intimate feel of a smaller venue,” she says. “In the current economic environment, promoters tend to seek out venue sizes such as the WaMu Theatre or Radio City where they have a greater opportunity to sell out and add shows based on additional demand.”

The Auditorio Nacional in Mexico City will attempt to regain the top award in November. (The venue won this honor in 2007.) In addition to family fare, the building hosted shows by Luis Miguel, Il Divo, Gloria Trevi, Chicago, Alanis Morissette, Backstreet Boys, Enrique Iglesias, Sarah Brightman, Yanni and Gloria Estefan.

“We have tried to diversify our talent for 2009 to include every type of entertainment to help maintain our programming for 2009,” says Maria Cristina Garcia Cepeda, CEO of Auditorio Nacional. “This has greatly helped our tickets sell over the year.”

TOP VENUE, 5,000 SEATS OR LESS
Last year, with the help of residency stars Cher and Bette Midler, the Colosseum at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas experienced solid business that helped it earn the top venue award for 5,000 seats or less. (The building also nabbed a top venue award in 2007, thanks to the final year of Celine Dion’s five-year residency.)

Between January and September 2009, the Colosseum “maintained its status as one of the busiest houses in the industry with 139 program nights,” says Harrah’s Entertainment VP of entertainment Scott Schecter.

In addition to performances by Cher, Midler, Jerry Seinfeld, Jeff Dunham and Luis Miguel, Elton John’s “The Red Piano” run drew to a close with the final 22 engagements in February and April. “It was a fantastic run that closed very strong and with great fan enthusiasm,” Schecter says.

The programming at the Fox Theatre in Atlanta “remains fairly diverse and routinely includes Broadway, concerts, comedy, family shows, arts and events and film,” GM Allan Vella says, noting that the venue’s primary Broadway clients are Broadway Across America and Theatre of the Stars.

Along with Broadway, the theater also hosted a number of comedians and musical acts including Il Divo, Larry the Cable Guy, George Lopez, Death Cab for Cutie, John Legend, Ryan Adams, George Jones, Celtic Woman, Robin Thicke and Jennifer Hudson.

Meanwhile, following a seven-month restoration, the Beacon Theatre in New York reopened in February with two sold-out shows by Paul Simon. “The momentum continued with the Allman Brothers Band igniting the Beacon with 15 sold-out shows in celebration of their 40th anniversary,” Ormond says.

The Beacon’s primary focus in 2009 was to leverage MSG’s partnerships to give artists performing at the theater national TV exposure. “The Beacon hosted a sold-out performance by the Dave Matthews Band that was televised on Fuse,” she says. “The Beacon also maximized MSG’s relationship with Fuse and MSG Network to attract an eight-night run of Steely Dan.”

TOP CLUB
Clubs are perhaps the concert industry’s most important venues, because they foster developing acts and help build healthy fan bases that ultimately allow artists to move into larger-sized buildings as their careers progress. As such, the top club award is based on attendance and not gross.


At House of Blues Boston, “we are on track to do more than 200 shows in our first 10 months in business,” says John Innamorato, the club’s talent buyer. “So it’s been a whirlwind year for the entire HOB team, and we are all honored to be recognized in our very first year of operation.”

The Fillmore and House of Blues Boston will compete against the 9:30 Club in Washington, D.C., which had another steady year, according to venue co-owner Seth Hurwitz.

“We’re doing as well as we ever say,” says Hurwitz, who’s also chairman of I.M.P. Productions. “I believe that it comes from day-to-day hard work and trying not to book shows we shouldn’t and being saddled with having to sell them later. Every show should be looked at as a single show and a single date.”
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Unlike most rock music tall tales, stories about Ozzy Osbourne contain more truth than myth. But beyond the diary of this madman is the story of one of rock's most unique and enduring frontmen, with fan appeal that transcends generations and popular trends. And for nearly 40 years and countless shows, Ozzy has won his fans over from the stage, often with a fire hose in hand, wielded with love. “I love my fans more than they’ll ever love me,” Ozzy says. "I’m not one of those guys that would ever say that they’re privileged to see me. To be honest, and I’m not trying to be slurpy, it’s a privilege for me to see them. My job is to give them the best fucking night out they could possibly have—that’s what we’re there for. There’s no sex, drugs or rock’n’roll that could compete with a great gig. It’s fucking awesome.”

continued on >>p49
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OZZY’s whole thing has always been touring and performing live."

—SHARON OSBOURNE, WIFE AND MANAGER

was just trying to make it out: ‘What is this?’ " Sabbath fired Ozzy in 1979, reportedly for his legendary excesses. Once again, his prospects didn’t look good. In the wake of leaving Sabbath, Ozzy did what Ozzy did in those days. ‘I remember staying in an apartment in Los Angeles ordering alcohol from the local liquor store and having a single-minded party on my own, a last blast,’ he says. ‘And one day Sharon came round and I remember her saying to me, if you get yourself together, I want to manage you.’ I was knocked out. Why would anybody want to manage me? I was an alcoholic fucking drugged-out wreck at that point.”

But Sharon saw Ozzy’s potential as a solo artist. ‘Before the Sabbath shows would start, they were just screaming his name over and over. So we knew Ozzy had this huge fan base.’

Sharon might have seen the potential, but the music business didn’t, even if Sabbath had been a hit for Warner Bros.

“We still have a letter from [then-Warner Bros. president] Mo Ostin saying, ‘Nice try, Ozzy, but we’re going to have to pass on the record,’” she recalls. ‘That would have been [the 1980 album] Blizzard of Oz that went on to sell probably 6 million worldwide’.

Meanwhile, for Ozzy, his legendary onstage behavior came naturally, including spraying the audience with a hose. ‘I threw a bucket of water into the audience one night. I don’t know who,’ Ozzy says. ‘I love all that stuff. It’s a bit fucking hokey, it’s a bit fucking slapstick, but getting the people off is what it’s all about. I’ve had some memorable shows when I worked the audience and it’s been sort of a giant party for me. I love that.’

GOING CRAZY Touring was always a key in the strategy of Ozzy’s solo career, beginning with the Blizzard tour in 1980. ‘We stayed on the road the first three years of his solo career, touring and touring,’ Sharon says. ‘With Ozzy’s music and what Ozzy represents, that’s the way to do it. That’s what kept Ozzy different from all these other groups; we didn’t rely on whether the radio was playing the lead track from his..."
from >>p49 album, because Ozzy just sold tickets on Ozzy. People wanted to see him perform, people wanted to wear his merchandise.

Both in the studio and on the road, Ozzy was backed by top-flight musicians, initially including the late guitar hero Randy Rhoads, who died in a 1982 plane crash. Ozzy's bandmates since Sabbath have been among hard music's best, including Metallica bassist Robert Trujillo and Black Label Society guitarist Zakk Wylde. Ozzy's criteria for bandmates begins, obviously, with the songs. "A lot of musicians want to rewrite the fucking songs, and that ain't right for me—you've got to do the songs as they were written," he says. "They'll say, 'If you change the key to C, I'm saying]' No, no, what key is the fucking song in? Play it in fucking D."

The songs from Ozzy's solo career remain staples of his live shows. "Those first two Ozzy albums were magic," he says, referring to "Blizzard" and the 1981 set "Diary of a Madman." "Then Randy got killed and the band broke up and so on and so on."

Despite this setback and many other well-chronicled struggles, Ozzy's popularity "never missed a beat," according to Sharon. "He's gone through flower power, disco, pop, grunge; he survived," she says. "Ozzy wasn't one of those people that had one huge record and spent the rest of his career trying to get that hit again."

Along the way, "I've done my fair share of bad concerts as well as good concerts, and you kind of remember the good ones more than the bad ones," Ozzy says. "When I first played Madison Square Garden with Black Sabbath, when I first played the L.A. Forum with Black Sabbath, those memories are good. Then in my solo career I did Castle Donnington, the festival; I did that one time and had a great time."

THE OZZFEST
Ozzfest was launched first as a couple of one-off events in 1996 after Ozzy was rejected from the lineup of what was then the top touring music festival, Lollapalooza.

"Lollapalooza at that time was very experimental, taking different genres of music and mixing it all together, which I thought was brilliant," Sharon says. "So when they refused Ozzy because he wasn't perceived as being cool enough, I was like, 'OK, we'll do something on our own, with our own genre of music, stick to what we know. We'll do our own harder-edged festival.' And we outlasted others, we opened the doors for similar tours, and it's been great."

Ozzy says a lot of luck was involved. "When we tried to get on Lollapalooza, they said, 'Ozzy's a dinosaur, there's no room for him,' so Sharon said, 'We'll do our own Ozzfest,' " he says. "A very lucky person, I am."

Ozzfest became the most financially successful of all touring festivals, taking in nearly $205 million and drawing attendance in excess of 5 million to 313 shows since debuting in 1996, according to Billboard Boxscore.

Virtually every hard rock band that has broken through in the past decade spent time on the Ozzfest stages, which is a source of pride for Ozzy. "I'm proud of the fact that we've given a platform for other bands to have a go, because it's getting harder and harder," he says. "I always tried to be fair with the people we were working with. I'm not one of those guys [who says], 'You're on my show. You've got to fucking bow when you see me.' That's bullshit."

In 2007, Ozzfest became Freefest, a free version of Ozzfest, moving more than 428,000 tickets, which producer Live Nation said at the time was the largest number of free tickets distributed in the United States in the history of the concert business. In 2008, Ozzfest was staged as a one-off show, with Metallica and Ozzy as headliners, grossing nearly $3.5 million with attendance of 30,000 at Dallas' Pizza Hut Park, according to Boxscore. The festival took a break in 2009, but Sharon says they're looking at reviving Ozzfest as a tour, and Ozzy says he's in.

"Ozzy loves doing [Ozzfest]," Sharon says. "He moans about it all the time, but that's Ozzy, he loves to moan. But he really misses Ozzfest, and that's why we're going to do it again, hopefully next year, because I think the economy will be a little better next year and we won't have to worry so much whether people will show up."

WORKING WITH THE OZZMAN
New York promoter Ron Delsener says solo Ozzy was an arena-level attraction from the beginning. Sometimes, much patience was required when working with the Prince of Darkness. "In those days if the crowd wasn't going nuts, he'd throw his hands up in the air and scream, 'Go crazy, go crazy.' It was mostly guys in the audience at that time, all young guys, and they would go crazy by taking the cushions and carving them out of the seats and flipping them through the air like Frisbees toward the stage."

Lou Messina, president of TMG/AEGI Live, has worked with the Osbournes for decades and was continued on >>p53
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Ozzy: "The wizard of Oz," he says. "I love Ozzy both on and off the stage. There is never a dull minute, it’s a 24-hour show. Working with him and Sharon is definitely one of my career highlights."

Other promoters express their affection for the Osbournes. "Ozzy’s devotion to his audience, as well as his family, is unmatched and a standard which all others should strive to achieve," says Danny Zelisko, president of Live Nation Southwest. "I always look so forward to seeing him and Sharon. They were both there for me all I battled colon cancer, right after Sharon was getting over the same disease. [It is] just one of the wonderful examples of how our lives have intertwined."

Promoters love working with Ozzy, and seemingly not just because he makes them money.

"We don’t break their balls," Ozzy says. "Some bands go, ‘The guarantee is the guarantee, I don’t care if you had four people there, that was our guarantee.’ We cut them slack. It’s always a crapshoot, really. Sometimes you win, sometimes you lose.”

Mostly they win, and Ozzy has also won respect as a performer. "No one turns it on like he does when he hits that stage," says Randy Phillips, CEO of AEG Live, producer of last year’s Ozzfest. "And remember, with Ozzy, it’s the ‘Ozzie and Harriet’ show—you get Ozzy and Sharon, and they’re an incredible team together. She’s a great manager for him and he is iconic. He invented metal in a lot of ways."

Along the way, Sharon has earned a reputation as a savvy, tough-as-nails manager, a reputation she sheds off. "It’s expected to be a hard businessperson when you’re a man, especially in this genre of music that we deal in," she says. "We’re not like the Philharmonic Orchestra, where people are gentle. But when a woman's hard, it’s like, ‘Whoa, she’s a bitch.’ Women are not supposed to tough, but you have to be.”

Being married in both career and life has its own dynamic. "Sometimes I wonder, ‘Is she telling me this as my wife or is she telling me this as my fucking manager?’" Ozzy says. "Sometimes it’s great, sometimes it ain’t. But you know what? She ain’t done such a bad job with me over the years.”

Ozzy recently moved his booking responsibilities to William Morris Endeavor Entertainment, where his responsible agent is contemporary music head Marc Geiger, ironically one of the founders of Lollapalooza.

"WME is thrilled that we get to work with Ozzy," Geiger says. "I don’t even know what to say, as he has accomplished so much in so many areas, let alone his influence on thousands of rock musicians and fans. We are just lucky to be able to work with him. He will show us all how it’s done live again next summer. Ozzy rules.”

Ozzy rules, sure, but he would be the first to admit he’s not perfect, and the road can become a grind these days. "I want to give the audience my heart and soul every night, but sometimes I pull it off, sometimes I don’t," he says. "We’re human, I don’t use any tricks. I don’t lip-sync my voice. What you see is what you get. I’ve done my fair share of fucking bad gigs. I’m not embarrassed to say that.”

Such honesty is typical of Ozzy, who’s clearly in a good place these days. "People ask if I have any advice to give them, [but] the only thing I could say really is, ‘If you’ve got any dreams of a better life or you want to do something, hold onto the dream because sometimes they come true,’" he says. "That’s the case for me. My prospects for the rest of my life weren’t that good when I was a kid. The whole journey for me has been magical.”

---

Festival fever: ‘Ozzy really misses Ozzfest, and that’s why we’re going to do it again, hopefully next year,” says manager SHARON OSBOURNE, shown below with OZZY at the 2007 announcement that Ozzfest would be staged that year as a free event.
**BOXSCORE**

**CONCERT GROSSES**

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**VANS WARPED TOUR FOUNDER HONORED**

Kevin Lyman Recognized For Social Activism

Vans Warped tour founder Kevin Lyman, who marked the traveling festival's 15th anniversary this summer, has long been known for innovative touring concepts. His projects, including Taste of Chaos, Rockstar Mayhem and others, focus on creative partnerships, direct-to-fan marketing and succeeding with rising bands in a tough artist development environment.

"What's less well-known is that Lyman's tours always carry a heavy focus on humanitarian and environmental issues."

For considering the needs of others along with the need to produce profitable tours, Lyman will receive the 2009 Humanitarian Award Nov. 5 at the Billboard Touring Awards in New York.

The award recognizes the philanthropic efforts of a touring professional. Lyman's recognition as the 2009 honoree reflects his involvement in a wide range of humanitarian and environmentally conscious efforts.

"After 15 years of working together and six years as partners on various projects, there is no one more deserving than Kevin for this award," says John Reece, Lyman's partner on the Mayhem tour. "Kevin consistently thinks of others first. It is an honor to work with him on a daily basis and I am proud to have the opportunity to enjoy his humanism daily."

The portfolio of Lyman's humanitarian efforts is deep. This summer, the Vans Warped tour began working with MusiCares, the foundation created by the Recording Academy, to assist musicians in times of financial, personal or medical crisis. On Sept. 6, warped's 15th-anniversary show in Los Angeles, Lyman presented MusiCares with a check for $50,000. A theatrical film, CD and DVD of the event will further benefit MusiCares.

Since the inception of the Warped tour in 1994 (Vans came on as title sponsor a year later), 25 cents from every ticket goes to Los Angeles-based Hollywood Heart, which provides recreational and educational opportunities to at-risk youth.
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Best Of Both Worlds
Dashboard Confessional Releases Two Versions Of The Same Album

Dashboard Confessional's founding singer/songwriter, Chris Carrabba, was having a hard time deciding whether his new album should be a full-on electric rock project or a stripped-down acoustic affair when he came up with a novel solution. On Nov. 10, when the band releases its sixth album, "Alter the Ending" (Interscope), fans will be able to buy both versions of the same collection of songs.

While the regular edition of the release contains electric versions of songs, the deluxe version comes with a second recording of the same songs done acoustically, for an extra $3. "If you're a Dashboard fan, it either gives you insight into how these songs began or is a stripped-down version of these songs," says Dennis Dennehy, head of marketing and publicity at Interscope. "It's just something different—a broader exploration into what Dashboard is, both the acoustic and the electric sides."

Carrabba says the acoustic set still features the full band, but with a minimalist approach more reminiscent of when the group was mostly a solo project in the early 2000s. "I can even point to one track, and I won't tell you which it is, that was my least favorite track once completed on the full-band version of 'Alter the Ending,' even though other people love it," Carrabba says. "And the acoustic version has become my favorite song on the record."

Dennehy adds that he hopes the double album will expose the band to a broader audience. "It brings a value to somebody who might first be getting into the band and knows that Dashboard Confessional started with an acoustic lean to it," he says. "And it think it showcases both sides of Dashboard Confessional, which is important to the people who have been fans for years."

The two versions of "Alter the Ending" strike a balance between Carrabba's 2007 release, "The Shade of Poison Trees" (Vagrant)—which his manager and Vagrant Records founder Rich Egan calls a "fans-only" record—and the 2006 "Dusk and Summer" (Interscope). "The Shade of Poison Trees" was kind of a between-records record for the fans. It was an acoustic record that we decided to put out on six weeks' notice and we didn't involve our partners at Interscope," Egan says. "We weren't doing for big sales debuts, we weren't playing the chart game. It was really more of a solo record."

"Poison Trees," which didn't have a commercial single or extensive promotion, still reached No. 18 on the Billboard 200 and has sold 152,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Dashboard's two records prior to that, "Dusk" and "A Mark, a Mission, a Brand, a Scar," both debuted at No. 2 on the Billboard 200 and sold 559,000 and 922,000, respectively. "Poison Trees" was meant for the diehard fans that had been with us from the get-go, and I was confident that they would find out about it without a lot of gregarious marketing," Carrabba says.

Dennehy says that in the past, Dashboard has also benefited from using songs in other outlets, which has included placements in "Spider-Man 2," the MTV show "Laguna Beach" and the videogame "Madden NFL 07." The band currently is featured on the soundtrack to "Jennifer's Body," and Egan says its music also will be featured in upcoming episodes of "One Tree Hill" and "Melrose Place," as well as on the "Tap Tap Revolution." As for the band's upcoming tour with New Found Glory, Never Shout Never and Meg & Dia, Carrabba says the performance style of the new songs will be decided on the fly. "We made an agreement the other day that we were going to do very little planning now for this tour," he says. "I guess we'll just take our temperature in how we feel about the music that night and decide. He says fans can also expect Dashboard and New Found Glory to play some of each other's music and, according to New Found Glory guitarist Chad Gilbert, the two bands will release a covers album.

Carrabba, who says his interaction with fans has traditionally been one on one, has also been active on Twitter. Although he says he's "very late" to the microblogging site, he becomes a prolific tweeter with more than 13,500 followers. (After this conversation, he posted, "The wait here at Conan is filled with interviews billboard and spin. It starting to feel like we have an album coming out!"

"It's interesting to have that kind of access to the audience that has embraced you, and you know as well as I do that you don't get to choose the audience that embraces you," he says. "I've been lucky in that I feel that I can actually relate to the people that do listen to my music on a personal level."
**CHRIS BROWN TWEETS RELEASE DATE**

Chris Brown has announced on Twitter the long-awaited street date for his upcoming album, "Graffiti." "Official album date: December 15. Graffiti. Now blog about this. Lol," Brown tweeted in all caps about the Jive Records release, the label confirmed the date. As previously reported, Brown will embark on a 10-city, small-venue Fan Appreciation tour starting Nov. 4. His latest single, "I Can Transform Ya," featuring Lil Wayne and producer Swizz Beatz, is No. 7 on Billboard’s R&B/ Hip-Hop songs chart.

**TRAIN BACK WITH ALBUM, TOUR**

After a two-year hiatus following a support tour for the 2008 "For Me It’s You," Train is back with its fifth album, "Save Me, San Francisco," which arrived Oct. 27. To reintroduce fans to the band, Train stripped its lineup back to the three remaining founding members, along with a few additional musicians; brought in new management and a new producer (Martin Terefe); and wrote dozens of songs with writers like OneRepublic’s Ryan Tedder and Better Than Ezra’s Kevin Griffin. The group is touring North America with Uncle Kracker and expects to tour abroad in 2010.

**ALICIA KEYS’ ALBUM DELAYED**

On the heels of presenting her latest single, “Try Sleeping With a Broken Heart,” during a lecture and performance for New York University students, Alicia Keys announced Oct. 25 on her Twitter page that her upcoming album was pushed back two weeks. Originally slated for a Dec. 1 release—which is World AIDS Day—"The Element of Freedom" will now be available Dec. 15. “Luv having the freedom to create beautiful music, so I’m pushed the album back to DEC 15th. So many more amazing songs,” she tweeted about the J Records release. Label reps confirmed the new date.

**SHIRLEY BASSEY’S BACK TO MUSIC**

With global career sales estimated at 135 million by her label and a legacy as one of Britain’s most beloved entertainers, Shirley Bassey hardly needs to make albums.

But on Nov. 9 in the United Kingdom, Geffen/Universal will release “The Performance,” produced by James Bond soundtrack master David Arnold and featuring songs predominantly custom-written for her by Take That’s Gary Barlow, the Pet Shop Boys, Rufus Wainwright, KT Tunstall and others.

Bassey’s manager, album executive producer Paul Carey, suggested the project after the “incredible” reaction to Bassey’s 2007 Glastonbury Festival performance. In July 2008, he met with the 72-year-old artist to explain the concept of “a true Bassey album: classic-sounding yet contemporary.”

Carey took the idea to Geffen U.K. president Colin Barlow and, with Arnold onboard, the album took shape. A U.S. release is under discussion.

1. You’ve had compilations and remix albums, but this is your first all-new record in more than 20 years. Is that because the material wasn’t right for you before?

Well, not only that I’d really liked to tell you the truth and was just coming out for special occasions. These writers have brought me back. Only that could have been done, it was a challenge because you wouldn’t have thought they were my songs. I took them on holiday with me, and I would say, “I can’t do that, they’re too difficult.” But I was listening to the way the writers were singing them, and trying to sing in their key, which never helps. It wasn’t until I actually went into the studio, with a piano, and put my voice on, that I started to get excited. I could hear myself. I’m always up for a challenge, and it paid off.

2. How was the experience of working with David Arnold?

He’s very gentle. He’s less nervous. He’s very easy. Then you find your own way. And I love him for allowing my music director, Mike Dixon, to be in the studio, because Mike knows me. He knows the notes I would want to hold. If I hit a note and I like it, I want to stay on it—you can’t get me off, but Mike was able to do that.

3. What are your expectations for the album?

We would all love to have No. 1s—oh, my gosh, yes. It would be great, great, great.

4. Will you tour after your Electric Proms performance Oct. 23 at the London Roundhouse?

No. It’s very tiring, it takes so much out of you, especially now in the September of my year. You wake up and the whole day is concentrated on the performance, so you have no life. You do your performance, get on your bus and go off through the night to the next town, and that’s what it’s like until the tour finishes. Then you’re in bed for two or three days. I loved it, but I doubt I’d do it again. I say “doubt,” because you should never say “never.”

5. Why do you think you still draw big crowds and have a loyal fan base after all these years?

My down-to-earthness, I think. But if I knew what makes success, I’d bottle it. That’s the magic of this business—you don’t know why you’re successful. Those critics who say it’s small-guys audience... not all. There’s mums and dads, and there’s their children, so it’s a family audience.

6. Do you have a favorite song on the album?

I love all of them. But the Pet Shop Boys’ song, ‘The Performance of My Life’ got right into my head and made me sob, and not many songs do that. You can get too carried away with a song, especially on stage, but you can’t be crying during every one. When I heard that, after doing all the other songs, it was just too much for me. I don’t need to write a book. The record is my autobiography.

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**GLOBAL ARTIST SERENA RYDER**

Not only was Serena Ryder blessed with a remarkable voice and a gift for live performance, but the Canadian native also apparently received a generous helping of patience.

Ryder needed all of that fortitude while she awaited the Nov. 3 U.S. arrival of her third full-length studio album, “Is It O.K.,” on Atlantic Records, almost a year after its Nov. 11, 2008, release on EM! Music in Canada. The album’s rootsy, soulful pop was a solid success in Ryder’s home country, peaking at No. 22 on Billboard’s Top Canadian Albums chart and selling 35,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The album also picked up the 2009 Juno Award for adult alternative album.

Ryder spent the wait setting up the album in the United States with numerous tours—including sharing stages with the likes of Paolo Nutini, Eric Hutchinson and Marc Broussard—visits to radio stations and press in publications including USA Today and the New York Post. It’s an approach that perfectly suits the record: a collection of gutsy, bittersweet songs that showcase the impressive range of Ryder’s voice but take a few listeners before revealing their full charm.

“I keep thinking, ‘Wow, I haven’t seen a record set up like this for a long time,’” Ryder says. “Over that time—and it has been a while—I’ve found a lot of my success has come organically through meeting people and developing relationships.”

According to Atlantic U.S. GM/executive VP Livia Tortella, the label delayed the release to allow Ryder to build her live fan base. Meanwhile, fueled by that touring, the album’s lead single, the gruffly emotional “Little Bit of Red,” peaked at No. 8 on Billboard’s Triple A chart.

“We were set to release the record a little later than Canada, but she was creating a lot of traction with her live show,” Tortella says. “She comes from a very cool indie pedigree and we thought it was important she live in that space a little longer.”

The album was further delayed to tie in with Ryder’s selection for MySpace’s “Introducing” program, designed to spotlight new artists. That saw the U.S. video for the second single, “All for Love,” premiere on the site Oct. 16, and the album streamed Nov. 2, alongside other exclusive content.

Atlantic now hopes to crack AC radio formats as well as Triple A with the chiming, stardom anthem “All for Love,” which goes to radio Nov. 3.

“This is where time and patience works well,” Tortella says. “We know Triple A is about music lovers and we know they’ll love Serena. But they also like to be first and it can take time.” She’s taken the time to play their shows, getting to know the programmers, and that takes time.

Ryder has further U.S. and Canadian dates, booked by the Toronto-based Paquin Entertainment, through Dec. 5 before heading out for more touring in 2010. And while Ryder’s early recordings may have been issued on indie labels in Canada, she has nothing but praise for the way in which Atlantic has developed her U.S. career.

“You hear tons of things about how it doesn’t work out with major labels,” Ryder says. “But I feel very blessed to have worked with Atlantic. All the little steps have worked out ideally.”

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Fela Kuti's Music And Legacy Find A New Audience

Starting Nov. 23, musical theater fans visiting New York won't just be angling for tickets to Broadway productions of "Chicago," "Mamma Mia!" and "Rock of Ages." They'll also have the chance to see "Fela!"—a new musical at the Eugene O'Neill Theater about the influential Nigerian artist Fela Anikulapo-Kuti—and choose Afrobeat music over show tunes, Disney songs and ABBA hits.

What's at stake in this Broadway venture, however, is much more than recreational tourist dollars. The show will help find a larger audience for Kuti, who pioneered Afrobeat from the sounds of James Brown and West African high-life music, became a political icon in his native Nigeria and earned the admiration of everyone from Paul McCartney to the Brazilian singer Gilberto Gil before dying in 1997. Rikki Stein, Kuti's former manager and the executor of his estate, plans to capitalize on this exposure to cement his legacy as one of the greatest artists of the 20th century.

"I have an abiding regret that Fela never achieved the recognition he deserved during his lifetime," Stein says. "We have a long row to hoe in terms of general knowledge and acceptance."

In addition to greenlighting "Fela!," Kuti's estate has licensed his catalog to the newly revived Knitting Factory Records. The well-timed deal will result in the reissue of Kuti's complete catalog—45 albums—during the next 12 years.

"The industry always talks about who the next big legacy artist will be," says Ian Wheeler, label manager of Knitting Factory Records. "It should have been Fela years ago. We're really trying to bring a new audience around the world, and particularly in the U.S., to his music."

Up first is the Oct. 27 release "The Best of the Black President," a compilation of Kuti's best-known material. The set is being sold at previews of "Fela!" and at Felabration, a series of Afrobeat DJ parties organized by Knitting Factory Records and its marketing partner, Giant Step.

"We're a conduit for raising awareness of Afrobeat," says DJ Rich Melina, who founded the Kuti tribute party Funk N' Funk in 2001 and headlined four of 18 Felabration nationwide. "It's a way of helping the cause."

The first thing we're doing is galvanizing the core base of Fela fans," Giant Step founder/CEO Maurice Bernstein says, "then using the messaging to make him relevant in a universal way. You can live in Detroit and understand what the famous Kuti saying! 'Music is the weapon.'" The set includes Bob Marley's 'One Love' or Marvin Gaye's 'What's Going On?'

The first batch of reissues, to be distributed by Sony RED, arrive Feb. 2, 2010. "The '69 Los Angeles Sessions." "Live With Ginger Baker." "London Scene"/"Shakara." "Zoododoorojo Fight." "Open & Close"/Afrodiasiac and "Gentleman"/Confusion." It's not only the first time Kuti's early London recordings with Koola Lootah will be reissued but also the debut of his catalog on vinyl, which Knitting Factory hopes will attract a new generation of music collectors who listen to African-influenced bands like Vampire Weekend.

"Every day there are traces of new people discovering Fela's music," Wheeler says. "But there has never been a swell of activity around him like this." Though MCA reissued Kuti's catalog in 2001, Bernstein, who also helped market that series, says its potential wasn't fully realized. "MCA was a major label, and no manner how much they said they loved Fela and how important he was, he was definitely lost in the shuffle," he says.

Stein is all too familiar with labels' conflicted admiration for Kuti. In the mid-'80s, he says he met with every major about the prospect of a deal. "They all received us respectfully and saw Fela as a new Miles Davis or any of the jazz greats," Stein recalls. "But they'd say: 'Rikki, which three minutes of this 18-minute song do you want me to put on the radio?'"

"I'd ask Fela to write me a small tune," Stein adds. "'He used to say, I'm writing African classical music. Don't mess with Tchaikovsky.'"

A deal nearly came to fruition in 1993, when then-Motown Records president Jheryl Busby offered Kuti a five-album deal under his new Africa-oriented label, with a $1.3 million advance for each album and another $1 million for full ownership of Kuti's catalog, Stein says. But after talking to his spirit advisers, Kuti refused to sign until April 1995. Busby left Motown the week of the scheduled signing, and Andre Harrell's first action as Motown's new president was to axe the African label. "(Andre) came from Uptown Music, we needed downtown music," Stein jokes.

In Knitting Factory Records and the producers of "Fela!," Stein has found partners who are more faithful to the cause of growing Kuti's legacy. "Fela! re-creates the Shrine—the Lagos, Nigeria, nightclub where Kuti played multiple nights each week with his band, Africa 70—in startlingly accurate detail. A collective of singers, dancers and musicians perform Kuti songs including "Shakara." "Zombie" and "Teacher Don't Teach Me Nonsense" behind lead actor Sahr Ngaujah, who has already won an Obie Award for his spot-on portrayal of Kuti in the show's Off-Broadway run last year. The effect is less stuffy theater and more a quasi-concert—just as its creators intended.

"The Broadway experience can be like sitting with blinders on," "Fela!" director/choreographer Bill T. Jones says. "This is a show you enjoy as much with your body as with your mind. It's free and communal."

"There was a constant struggle between keeping Fela's music pure and deconstructing it for the audience," says the show's musical director Aaron Johnson, who translated Kuti's Yoruba and pidgin lyrics and is also the conductor/programmer of the acclaimed Afrobeat band Antibalas. "I've been very pleasantly surprised with the response so far."

Nor have the most controversial aspects of Kuti's life been smoothed over, from his simultaneous "wedding" to 27 women to clashes with the Nigerian government that led to a brutal 1977 attack on his Kalakuta compound. "It's all out there," Stein says. "Fela has not been sanitized."

That hasn't done anything to quell the show's hype, due in no small part to the fact that tastemakers musicians like the Roots' Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson have sung its praises. Jay-Z called it "fantastic" after attending a show, fueling reports that the rapper will become involved with it in an official capacity. "There's going to be an enormous incentive for people to investigate Fela when they know that Jay-Z, Will Smith and Alicia Keys are all rabid fans," Stein says. "It's a sign that the underground is moving overground."

And there's even further proof that a Kuti revival of sorts is under way. A screenplay for a biopic is in the works, to be directed by the U.K. filmmaker Steve McQueen ("Hunger"). "I believe that with the show, the film and the reissues, a lot is going to change," Stein says. "We'll see a much wider audience for Fela. There were a million people at his funeral shouting, 'Fela will live forever.' Of course, they were right."
ALBUMS

SOUNDTACK

VARIOUS ARTISTS
The Circle Saga: New Moon Original Motion Picture Soundtrack
Producers: various
Atlantic/Capitol Records
Release Date: Oct. 16

Given that last year’s “Twilight” soundtrack sold more than 2 million copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan, it’s not surprising that the sequel’s companion album largely reproduces the first set’s alt-rock gran-bag approach—albeit with bigger names, elevating the higher profile of “New Moon.” Music supervisor Alexandra Petras landed top-shelf exclusives from the Killers (the spacey, piano-led “A White Demon Love Song”), Thom Yorke (“Hearing Damage,” a tense piece of digital electro-funk) and Death Cab for Cutie (“Meet Me on the Equinox,” guitar-guy melancholia at its prettiest). But Petras’s real accomplishment is using “New Moon” to introduce mainstream listeners to hipster-beloved indie acts: Grizzly Bear contributes a typically gorgeous psych-folk incantation called “Slow Life” (with guest vocals from Beach House’s Victoria Legrand), and Bon Iver’s Justin Vernon duets with St. Vincent on “Roslyn,” which could warm even a vampire’s heart.—MW

POP

KRISTINA TRAIN
Split Milk
Producer: Jimmy Hogarth
Blue Note Records
Release Date: Oct. 20

Sorrow over a breakup rarely sounds as exalted as it does on singer/songwriter Kristina Train’s debut album, “Split Milk,” where her lyrics are often awash in isolation. “I start out each morning full of good intentions,” she belts on “You’re Still Going to Lose,” over sparse acoustic plucks that soon give way to exuberant strings. “And watch all those people go home with happy endings/I’ll keep on pretending.” The album draws from Train’s background as a church singer in Savannah, Ga., which would account for the gospel-informed “Call in the Maker” and the soulful “No Man’s Land,” where a post-breakup Train laments, “I’m so ashamed you’re still living rent-free in my brain.” The songs on “Split Milk” have a tendency to rely on lush orchestration from friends like Terre Roche and Steve Addabbo. But it’s hard to improve on the unbridled joy of Train doing his thing alone that the rest of this set so arrestingly captures.—GG

STEVEN CURTIS CHAPMAN
Beauty Will Rise
Producers: Steven Curtis Chapman, Brent Milligan
Sparrow Records
Release Date: Nov. 3

There’s no denying that songwriting is among the most cathartic professions. And never has a writer’s pain sounded more achingly real than on Steven Curtis Chapman’s new album, “Beauty Will Rise,” a collection of songs written about the death of his 5-year-old daughter. (Mia Sue died in 2008 after her brother accidentally hit her with a car in the family’s driveway.) The new set examines unfathomable grief, but also celebrates an extraordinary young life. On the song “Heaven Is the Face,” Chapman looks forward to seeing his daughter someday in heaven, while on “Just Have to Wait,” he sings, “I can’t wait to watch your brother’s face/When he can finally see with his own eyes/That everything’s OK.” The track “Questions” asks, “Who are you God?/Cause you are turning out to be so much different than I imagined/And where are you God?/Cause I am finding life to be so much harder than I had planned.” The lyrics are heartbreakingly hopeful. Though he’s been tested, Chapman’s faith remains strong and shines through songs like “Our God is in Control!” “Faithful,” “I Will Trust You,” and the comforting “Jesus Will Meet You There.”—DEP

TINY TIM
I’ve Never Seen a Straight Banana: Rare Moments, Vol. 1
Producer: Richard Barone Collectors’ Choice Music
Release Date: Oct. 20

Consider this a 16-track wake-up call to those who consider Tiny Tim—tip-toeing through the tulips with his ukulele—little more than an entertaining novelty act. Recorded by a 16-year-old Richard Barone at a motel and nearby studio in 1976, “I’ve Never Seen a Straight Banana: Rare Moments, Vol. 1” showcases the late Tim as an ace musician. He rips through a variety of early-20th-century ragtime, Dixieland and folk tunes. The most mind-blowing of the lot is the “Tiny Meets Dylan” medley, a recreation of a dialogue with Bob Dylan for which Tim performs “Like a Rolling Stone” a la Rudy Vallee and Vallee’s “Vagabond Lover” in Dylan’s nasal cadence. Barone took the title track back into the studio for some overdubs from famous friends like Terre Roche and Steve Addabbo. But it’s hard to improve on the unbridled joy of Tim doing his thing alone that the rest of this set so arrestingly captures.—GG

R&B

MARIO
D.N.A.
Producers: various
Release Date: Oct. 13

Mario has a broken heart and he’s pouring it all out on his latest set, “D.N.A.” Over simple violin strings on “Stranded,” he sings, “All that we had gone is soon/And I’m sad baby/What am I gonna do now?” Accompanied by a drum machine on “I Miss My Friend,” Mario belts out lyrics about feeling despair since his lady friend left him, while “Get Out” finds the artist cursing the woman who ripped a hole inside his chest. Even up-tempo songs like the first single, “Break Up”—where guest collaborator Gucci Mane raps. “Swag so stupid, still the bitch straight dumped me”—touch on heartache. But the best representation of Mario’s desolation comes courtesy of the appropriately titled “Soundtrack to My Broken Heart,” where he grips over a piano-based beat. “This is how it sounds when my heart cries/You won’t even come to my rescue.”—MC

LATIN

CONCHA BUIKA & CHUCHO VALDES
El Ultimo Trago
Producer: Javier Limon Warner Music Latin
Release Date: Oct. 20

It’s not surprising that the Afro-Spanish singer Concha Buika is a favorite of the film-

VARIUS ARTISTS
Glee: The Music Volume 1
Producers: Adam Anders, Ryan Murphy
Columbia Records
Release Date: Nov. 3

The great thing about “Glee”—Fox’s new glamy musical comedy series—is that while you see the cast has covered “Somebody to Love” on the show’s first soundtrack, you know straightaway that they’re doing the hit by Queen instead of Jefferson Airplane. Co-created by Ryan Murphy, who put together the high-camp cult fave “Popular,” “Glee” speaks to the same constituency that recoiled in horror when Kris Allen beat Adam Lambert on this year’s season of “American Idol.” And as on “Tidal,” that aesthetic is most appeasingly expressed here in the material that seems the least suited for it—i.e., mushy heartland rock ballads like Journey’s “Don’t Stop Believin’ “ and REO Speedwagon’s “Can’t Fight This Feeling,” both of which these kids transform into stylish jazz-hands anthems. Spirited glee-club versions of Rihanna’s “Take a Bow” and Jazmine Sullivan’s “Bust Your Windows” are nice, too, but they lack a certain revenge-of-the-nerds triumph.—MW

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SINGLES

ROCK

THE FLAMING LIPS

Embrocic
Producers: various
Warner Bros. Records
Release Date: Oct. 13

A New York underground jazz scene mainstay, bassist Ben Allison has broken away from traditional jazz into crossover hybrids and developed a distinctive voice. Allison's latest release, "Think Free," is a seamless follow-up to last year's "Little Things Run the World" and delivers sensual-to-mystical lyricism with subtle grooves. His easy-flowing quintet includes the trumpeter Share Endsley and violinist Jenny Scheinman, who is a remarkably imaginative leader in her own right. But it's the contributions of guitarist Steve Cardenas that help shape and color "Think Free." Case in point: his slow solo through the poignant "Broke." Larger-than-life monsters lurk in Allison's music, with the word "Godzilla" appearing in two song titles. But the sweet-sounding closer, "Green Al," perhaps Allison's strongest and most alluring composition to date—disperses all fear.—DO

CHRIS BROWN

Crawl (3:55)
Producers: Adam Messinger, Nasri Atweh
Writers: various
Publishers: various

It's probably no coincidence that Chris Brown premiered his new single—a ballad that departs significantly from his recently released "I Can Transform Ya"—on the same day Rihanna debuted hers. While both songs obligingly refer to the demise of their relationship, Brown's is all about his hope for reconciliation. "Where do we go from here/With all this fear in our eyes?" Brown wonders. "And where can love take us now/We've been so far down, we can still touch the sky if we crawl." "Crawl" might be the most straightforward pop song Brown has ever recorded, with a production that's missing the rhythmic appeal of "With You" and "Forever." Removed from the context of his real-life troubles, its lyrics feel cliché, but Brown still displays a deft ability to convey passion and sincerity in his delivery, ultimately selling his message of redemption.—MH

ELECTRONIC

LADY GAGA

Bad Romance

Producer: RedOne
Writers: Lady Gaga, RedOne
Publishers: various

Lady Gaga's new single, "Bad Romance," is a dance-pop-cum-metal fusion that is sure to please her fans. The song features a huge chorus and catchy hooks that are sure to stick in your head for days. The music video for the song is also impressive, with Gaga dressed in a series of elaborate outfits. Overall, "Bad Romance" is a fun and exciting track that is sure to keep listeners of all ages entertained.—DO

LEGENDS

EDITED BY MITCHELL PETERS (ALBUMS) AND MONICA HERRERA (SINGLES)

CONTRIBUTORS: Judy Cantor-Najaca, Maris Conception, Gary Graff, Ron Hart, Monica Herrera, Michael Henrichem, Dan Ouellette, Deborah Evans Price, David J. Prince, Mikael Wood

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

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

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RIHANNA

Russian Roulette (3:44)

Producers: Chuck Harmony, Ne-Yo
Writers: S. Smith, C. Harmon
Publishers: various

DeJ Frees

Rihanna has yet to publicly discuss the February altercation with her ex-boyfriend, Chris Brown. But on "Russian Roulette," her first single since the incident occurred—she seems to touch upon the agony it caused her. "Say a prayer to yourself/He says close your eyes, sometimes it helps," Rihanna sings over a steady pulsing beat. "And you can see my heart beating/You can see it through my chest/That I'm terrified, but I'm not leaving/Know that I must pass this test." The song recalls Rihanna's previous dark ballad, "Unfaithful," but it's far grittier in tone—it ends with a sound of a gun being cocked and fired—and her vocals are heavier with emotion. When Rihanna takes this moment of universal fear and makes a final, dramatic breath before the song's haunting conclusion, the listener instinctively braces, too, wondering what will happen next.—MC
‘Hurricane’ Sighting
Switchfoot Prepares First Release For Atlantic Records

Best-known for the hits “Dare You To Move” and “Meant To Live,” San Diego's Switchfoot is back with its first single in three years: “Mess of Me.” It’s also the lead single from the alternative rock band’s seventh album—and first for Atlantic—“Hello Hurricane” (Nov. 10).

During the three years that Switchfoot has been off the commercial radar, the group has made a dramatic shift from the aforementioned romantic ballads from their 2003 multiplatinum album, “The Beautiful Letdown.” The shift is most evident on “Mess of Me,” whose raw, forceful sound and edge, introspective lyrics reveal Switchfoot's darker side on an album that deals with life's stormy side.

“I am my own affliction/I am my own disease/There ain't no drug that they could sell/There ain't no drugs to make me well,” vocalist/guitarist Jon Foreman sings. “I made a mess of me/I wanna get back the rest of me.”

Foreman notes the “shock element” of “Mess” is what originally drew the group to the song. “We wanted to do something that was a drastic change from anything we'd done before.” In addition to Foreman, Switchfoot's members include his brother Tim Foreman (bass), Chad Butler (drums), Jerome Fontamillas (keys/guitar) and Drew Shirley (guitar).

While “Mess” and another track, “Free,” showcase the group's expanded musical range, other songs like “Enough to Let Me Go” are reminiscent of the original Switchfoot. Another song, “The Sound,” has been selected by Verizon Wireless for its national ad campaign for the Blackberry Storm 2.

Signed to Columbia until 2006, Switchfoot’s last album for the label was “Oh! Gravity.” However, the band (left the label) because it wasn’t in tune with its restructuring. “Our music is very communal and to assemble a new team of people to represent it every few months was very counterproductive,” Foreman says. “We also wanted the autonomy to explore and rediscover what we love about what we do.”

After leaving Columbia, Switchfoot built its own studio in San Diego. During the next three years, the band tracked 80 songs before narrowing the list down to the 12 that appear on “Hello Hurricane.” Atlantic approached the group after listening to the project, recorded with noted producer/bassist Mike Elizondo (Dr. Dre, Eminem, Pink). Although Foreman says the band was leery about dealing with another major label, “it was a dream to have people who are passionate about songs that you've spent months and months working on.”

After a busy summer—co-headlining with Universal Motown’s Blue October on the Crazy Making Summer Tour and opening for Dave Matthews Band—Switchfoot is gearing up for an even busier fall. The group will kick off its headlining tour Nov. 8 in San Diego. Ending Dec. 9 in Boston, the 18-city trek includes stops in Los Angeles, Houston, New Orleans and New York. Along the tour route, Switchfoot will collect donations for local food banks.

In addition to a Nov. 12 appearance on “Jimmy Kimmel Live!,” Switchfoot is relaunching its new Web site: TheWorldYouWant.com. Fans are being asked to contribute stories about people who are making the world a better place. The band plans to read some of those contributions onstage during the tour. Upcoming appearances include Yahoo Music’s new live concert program, “Maxim Performance Guitar Hero 5.” Fans who preorder “Hello Hurricane” will immediately receive a free download of “Mess of Me” and four videos. They have five preorder options: a standard CD; a deluxe CD/DVD, with 60 minutes of special footage; vinyl with a CD; a collector’s edition (CD, DVD, an additional CD with studio outtakes, a limited-edition poster and a 84-page hardcover book); and digital download.

Switchfoot isn’t worried that fans may dislike its change in sound. “There’s a moment when we come across something beautiful,” Foreman says. “Maybe it’s a sunset or we’re reminded just how fragile life is. These moments remind us that we’re alive. I want this album to be that for people.”
Girls Aloud singer Cheryl Cole's U.K. profile couldn't be much higher. But that's still not enough for Polydor U.K. president Ferdy Unger-Hamilton. "We're not selling her profile," he says. "We're selling her music."

Cole is a twofold fixture in the United Kingdom, thanks to her marriage to the soccer star Ashley Cole and her role as a judge alongside Simon Cowell on the TV ratings-topper "The X Factor." She's also a model for the cosmetics brand L'Oreal and still a member of Girls Aloud, which has enjoyed 20 U.K. top 10 hits singles since 2002.

At the moment, though, the focus is firmly on Cole the solo star. Her debut single, "Fight for This Love" (Fascination/Polydor), entered the Official Charts Co. listing this week at No. 1 with sales of 293,000 copies, according to the OCC. Cole performed the track Oct. 18 on "The X Factor," with ITV claiming an audience of 9.3 million viewers. The biggest-selling single of 2009 to date, it set up the Oct. 26 release of Cole's debut album, "Three Words." Unger-Hamilton expects first-week sales of 120,000-150,000 copies.

Unger-Hamilton handled A&R chores on the album himself and expects to produce "at least four" U.K. singles. The next one, due before Christmas, is the title track. It was co-written by Cole with session guitarist George Pajon and the Black Eyed Peas' William, who also produced and dueted on it: "That's a really astounding track," Unger-Hamilton says. "It feels like the next step for pop music."

The title track will be followed in early 2010 by a third single, "Parachute," helmed by the production team Syience. The album will roll out internationally early next year as well, starting with Europe. Unger-Hamilton says a U.S. release through Universal will follow at an as-yet-unspecified date.

"Globality, this music has a place," Unger-Hamilton says. "The writers and producers all have enormous track records."

The U.K. campaign involved a heavy online factor: Cole conducted a live video Web chat on MySpace; Belo users were offered a chance to interview the singer using Twitter to ask her questions. Polydor also targeted online retailers with exclusive content.

At the market-leading retailer HMV, head of music Ruddy Osorio reports the album has been "out-selling its closest rival by a margin of nearly two to one" this week. Cole, he says, "has a fantastically broad demographic appeal — kids, moms and dads all like her, as do guys and girls. We always feel this would be one of the best sellers of the Christmas period."

DRAMA LOVER

Four years and as many albums after taking second place in a televised reality competition, the Mexican pop star Yuridia's magic number is still one. Her latest Sony Music release, "Nada Es Color De Rosa," topped Mexico's album sales chart this month. It's also No. 4 on Billboard's Top Latin Pop Albums chart and No. 14 on the overall Latin albums tally, although her single "Irremediable" has yet to be promoted in the United States. (The song is in the top 10 on Mexico's pop airplay chart.)

Yuridia rose to fame as the breakout star during the 2005 season of TV Azteca's "La Academia," a Mexican singing competition/reality show that was also broadcast in the States.

Her first two covers albums have sold more than 1 million copies; her first album of original material, 2007's "Entre Mariposas," went platinum on sales of more than 100,000 copies in Mexico.

Yuridia has ramped up her touring by tapping into her "La Academia" experience. "I've performed over a hundred shows in the last year," says Yuridia, who grew up in Arizona and now lives in Mexico City. "I consider myself a very shy person, I used to get embarrassed about everything. But I've grown out of all those things that kept me from doing what I do now."

Possessing a voice both big and sultry, Yuridia is known for her soaring power ballads. And "Nada Es Color De Rosa" is shock-full of them. Italian producer Ettore Grenchi's sophisticated, string-laden production lends a more elegant touch. Collaborating songwriters include pop star Julio Ramirez of the band Reik, Monica Velez, backup singer Cecy Leos and Yuridia herself on a duet with the Italian act Sonohra.

"People think of me as the girl who sings power ballads," Yuridia says. "I enjoy them a lot but I've also been trying to grow professionally and do other things. Still, she confesses she'll always connect with "songs that dig inside your heart and make you cry. I really love the drama." —Ayala Ben-Yehuda
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'Moon' Rises, WEA Rules, Jackson's On Deck

The "Twilight Saga: New Moon" soundtrack rises to No. 1 on the Billboard 200 with 153,000 copies sold (up 33%) in its first full week of release. The Summit/Chop Shop/Atlantic album debuted on last week's chart with 115,000 sold after an early release on Friday, Oct. 16, pushed it onto the list with just three days of sales. Meanwhile, Tim McGraw's 10th studio album, "Southern Voice," arrives in the runner-up slot with 137,000 copies.

"New Moon" is the second soundtrack this year to top the Billboard 200, following "Hannah Montana: The Movie." "New Moon" is the sequel to "Twilight," whose soundtrack debuted at No. 1 on the Nov. 22, 2008, Billboard 200 with 165,000 sold. McGraw's opening frame of 137,000 sold for "Southern Voice" is off a bit from the 325,000 first-week copies sold of his last studio set, the 2007 "Let It Go." The new album's arrival in the smallest debut sales week for a studio set from the country artist since his 1995 album "All I Want" began with 110,000 sold at No. 4.

Sales for "Southern" are enough to give McGraw the No. 1 slot on Top Country Albums--his 12th chart-topper on that list. All 13 of McGraw's Billboard 200 entries--10 studio albums and three greatest-hits sets--have reached the top 10.

FANTASTIC FOUR: With the "New Moon" soundtrack, Tim McGraw, Michael Bublé and Jay-Z tied for Nos. 1-4, respectively, on the Billboard 200. WEA Distribution holds down the top four slots on the chart for the first time since the Sept. 7, 1991, list. That's when the company held court with Metallica's "Metallica" at No. 1 followed by Natalie Cole's "Unforgettable," Color Me Badd's "C'Mon Baby" and Van Halen's "For Unlawful Carnal Knowledge." It's also the first time a distributor has claimed the top four spots since the June 30, 2007, chart. That's when Universal Music Group Distribution ruled with Toby Keith's "Big Dog Daddy," Fabolous' "From Nothin' to Somethin'" and Paul McCartney's "Memory Almost Full" and Maroon 5's "It Won't Be Soon Before Long."

This is really it: Next week the Billboard 200's Hot Shot Debut will likely be Michael Jackson's "This Is It," the companion set to the music film of the same name. Industry prognosticators say the Epic Records album--which was released on Monday, Oct. 26--could shift 275,000-300,000 copies. With numbers like that, Jackson could be a sure thing for the No. 1 slot on next week's Billboard 200. If the King of Pop hits No. 1, it will be his sixth chart-topper following "Thriller," "Bad," "Dangerous," "History" and "Invincible." Jackson already owns the best-selling album of the 2009 calendar year with "Number Ones," with 2 million-plus sold and counting. "Thriller" is the year's 13th best seller (1.1 million) and "The Essential Michael Jackson" the 15th biggest (965,000). "Number Ones" is the only album to sell more than 2 million copies in 2009, though Taylor Swift's "Fearless" (with 1.9 million) is nipping at that threshold. And, with the expanded "platinum" edition of "Fearless" impacting the chart next week, expect the album to sail past the 2 million mark.

A year ago this week, only one album had sold more than 2 million copies: Lil Wayne's "Tha Carter III," with 2.6 million through the week that ended Oct. 26. All told, only 13 sets had sold 1 million copies at this point last year, compared with the 14 to do so this year. Of those 14, two are catalog sets from Jackson.

Take a Bow: This week, our still-young Top Cast Albums chart (viewable at billboard.biz/charts) turns 200 weeks old. At No. 1 for the 50th non-consecutive week is the original Broadway cast recording of "Jersey Boys," which spent its 1980s straight week on the 15-position chart. The album arrived on the list two weeks after the tally bowed in the Jan. 14, 2006, issue. Two sets have stayed on the tally since bowing in the chart's premiere week: the original Broadway cast recording of "Wicked" and the original cast recording of "Mamma Mia!," which are now Nos. 2 and 3, respectively.
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**Data for week of NOVEMBER 7, 2009 | CHARTS LEGEND on Page 71**
## Sales Data

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## Sales Data

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Go to [www.billboard.biz](http://www.billboard.biz) for complete chart data.
TOP POP CATALOG

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TOP DIGITAL

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TOP BLUES ALBUMS

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<td>Reprise</td>
<td>&quot;Me and Mary&quot;</td>
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<td>Columbia</td>
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<td>&quot;The Best Of John Lee Hooker&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;The Best Of Howlin' Wolf&quot;</td>
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Data for week of November 7, 2009.
HOT 100 AIRPLAY

1. "I'm Not the Only One" - Sam Smith feat. John Legend
2. "The Middle" - Zedd feat. Foxes
4. "Hello" - Adele
5. "Thinking Out Loud" - Ed Sheeran

June 2015

ALBUM CHARTS

Singles data compiled from a comprehensive pool of U.S. music merchants by Nielsen SoundScan. Sales data for R&B/hip-hop retail charts is compiled by Nielsen SoundScan from a national subset of core stores that specialize in those genres. Albums with the greatest sales growth percentage.

WHERE INCLUDED: This award indicates the title with the chart's largest unit increase.

PRICING/CONFIGURATION/AVAILABILITY:
CDs are available in various formats, including deluxes, enhanced, limited editions, and more. Digital versions are available in various stores, including Amazon, Apple Music, and more.

SONG CHARTS

See legends on respective chart pages for the Billboard Hot 100 and Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs.

RADIO AIRPLAY CHARTS

Hot 100 Airplay, Rock Songs, Hot Country Songs, Hot Rap Songs, Christian Songs, Hot Latin Songs and Latin Airplay charts are compiled from a national sample of radio stations and are representative of the airplay that these songs receive.

SONG PROJECTIONS

The Hot 100, Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs, Hot Rock Songs, Hot Adult Contemporary Songs, Hot Country Songs, Hot Latin Songs and Latin Airplay charts are compiled from a national sample of radio stations and are representative of the airplay that these songs receive.

APPROXIMATE DATE OF DISC SALE:

The approximate date of disc sale is indicated for every song that is available. Songs that are still available at retail are indicated with the symbol "•". Songs that are no longer available at retail are indicated with the symbol "-". Songs that have been removed from Mainstream Radio are indicated with the symbol "-R". Songs that are still gaining enough audience points to bullet or re-bullet are indicated with the symbol "••". Songs that are not still gaining enough audience points to bullet or re-bullet are indicated with the symbol "-••". Songs that are still gaining enough audience points to bullet or re-bullet are indicated with the symbol "•••". Songs that are not still gaining enough audience points to bullet or re-bullet are indicated with the symbol "-•••". Songs that are still gaining enough audience points to bullet or re-bullet are indicated with the symbol "••••". Songs that are not still gaining enough audience points to bullet or re-bullet are indicated with the symbol "-••••". Songs that are still gaining enough audience points to bullet or re-bullet are indicated with the symbol "•••••". Songs that are not still gaining enough audience points to bullet or re-bullet are indicated with the symbol "-•••••". Songs that are still gaining enough audience points to bullet or re-bullet are indicated with the symbol "••••••". Songs that are not still gaining enough audience points to bullet or re-bullet are indicated with the symbol "-••••••". Songs that are still gaining enough audience points to bullet or re-bullet are indicated with the symbol "•••••••". Songs that are not still gaining enough audience points to bullet or re-bullet are indicated with the symbol "-•••••••".

rawl ratings are compiled from Arbitron Data Systems. Charts are ranked by detections or non-detections on the Adult Contemporary, Mainstream Top 40, Top 40, Adult Contemporary, Adult Top 40, Alternative, Triple A, Active Rock, Heritage Rock, Mainstream R&B/Hip-Hop, Rhythm, Adult R&B, Hot Country AC Songs, Hot Gospel Songs, Hot Dance Airplay, and Smooth Jazz charts.

THESE SONGS ARE NOT CURRENTLY being broadcast on any of the top 20 adult contemporary radio stations in the United States.

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### Mainstream Top 40

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<td>The Climb</td>
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### Adult Contemporary

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<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>You Belong with Me</td>
<td>Epic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Falling in Love</td>
<td>Epic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Beautiful World (We're All Here)</td>
<td>Epic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Advice</td>
<td>Epic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The Fixer</td>
<td>Epic</td>
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### Rock Songs

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Whatever It Takes</td>
<td>Atlantic/Old 97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Prague</td>
<td>Atlantic/Old 97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>One in a Million</td>
<td>RCA/RMG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Country Girl</td>
<td>RCA/RMG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Use Somebody</td>
<td>RCA/RMG</td>
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### Alternative

<table>
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<th>Label</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Fixer</td>
<td>Epic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Use Somebody</td>
<td>RCA/RMG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Somebody That I Used to Know</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
</tr>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Somebody That I Used to Know</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Somebody That I Used to Know</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Mainstream Top 40**

Miley Cyrus celebrates her first chart-topper on Mainstream Top 40 with the title’s 20th No. 1. The hit launched in the Oct. 1, 1996, issue (seven weeks before Cyrus was born).

*Party in the U.S.* is the second No. 1 on the chart for Hollywood Records, which has appeared on the survey since 1999, previously peaking in 2000 with Jessi McCann’s “Leaving.”

**Adult Contemporary**

On Mainstream Top 40, Kelly Clarkson notches her 10th career top 10, as “Already Gone” advances 11-10.

---

**Rock Songs**

Pepper of Meat previews its fourth studio set, “Volume 4: Songs in the Key of Home Music,” due Dec. 6 with “Spaceman.” The track launches on Rock Songs at No. 54 with the Greatest Gabber honor, exploring an audience of 2.4 million (4.4%) on hit stations.

---

**Alternative**

Data for week of November 7, 2009

---

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data
WELCOME TO THE FUTURE

Do You Know Where You're Going To?

Ready Set Home (The Black Dress Song)

NED YOU NOW

American Ride

Do I

I'm Alive

Fifteen

All I Ask For

They're Just Like Us

Southern Voice

Honky Tonk Stomp

History in the Making

Just Call Me Mine

Mama

Runaway

Gone

Hurry Home

ARTIST

TIM McGRAW

TAYLOR SWIFT

ZAC BROWN BAND

TOBY KEITH

MIRANDA LAMBERT

LADY ANTEBELLUM

LILY LOVETT

SOUNDTRACk

JASON ALDEAN

ROSANNE CASH

GEORGE STRAIT

BROOKS & DUNN

TAYLOR SWIFT

DARIUS RUCKER

SUGARLAND

JAMEY JOHNSON

ZAC BROWN BAND

GLORIA BANANARES

KELLY PICKLER

COLT FORD

TIM McGRAW

PATTY LOVELLESS

ERIC CHURCH

VARIOUS ARTISTS

TOBY KEITH

DIERKS BENTLEY

RANDY Houser

TERRI CLARK

VARIOUS ARTISTS

RASCAL FLATTS

KONY CHESNEY

SUGARLAND

BRAD PAISLEY

JUSITN MOORE

BILLY CURRINGTON

KACEY MUSGRAVES

JAMEY JOHNSON

SUGARLAND

KELLY PICKLER

TIM McGRAW

TOBY KEITH

RASCAL FLATTS

KERY CHESNEY

SUGARLAND

ARTIST

TIM McGRAW

TAYLOR SWIFT

ZAC BROWN BAND

TOBY KEITH

MIRANDA LAMBERT

LADY ANTEBELLUM

LILY LOVETT

SOUNDTRACk

JASON ALDEAN

ROSANNE CASH

GEORGE STRAIT

BROOKS & DUNN

TAYLOR SWIFT

DARIUS RUCKER

SUGARLAND

JAMEY JOHNSON

ZAC BROWN BAND

GLORIA BANANARES

KELLY PICKLER

COLT FORD

TIM McGRAW

PATTY LOVELLESS

ERIC CHURCH

VARIOUS ARTISTS

TOBY KEITH

DIERKS BENTLEY

RANDY Houser

TERRI CLARK

VARIOUS ARTISTS

RASCAL FLATTS

KONY CHESNEY

SUGARLAND

BRAD PAISLEY

JUSITN MOORE

BILLY CURRINGTON

KACEY MUSGRAVES

JAMEY JOHNSON

SUGARLAND

KELLY PICKLER

TIM McGRAW

TOBY KEITH

RASCAL FLATTS

KERY CHESNEY

SUGARLAND

TITe

Southern Voice

Fearless

The Foundation

American Ride

Revolution

Open

Wide Open

The List

Keep on Loving You

One

Come On Home

The Man I Want to Be

Greatest Hits Volume 1

Greatest Hits Volume 2

Greatest Hits

Greatest Hits II

Love On the Inside

American Saturday Night

Little Bit of Everything

Live on the Inside

Bigger Than the Game

Empty Rooms

Toes

That's How Country Boys Roll

Girls Like You

I Love You More Than You'll Ever Know

Lucky

Mountain Man

Feel That Fire

Greatest Hits Limited Edition

Cowboy Capital City

Greatest Hits Volume 1

Unstopabble

Greatest Hits II

I Love On the Inside

BILLY CURRINGTON

ERIC CHURCH

VARIOUS ARTISTS

TOBY KEITH

DIERKS BENTLEY

RANDY Houser

TERRI CLARK

VARIOUS ARTISTS

RASCAL FLATTS

KONY CHESNEY

SUGARLAND

BRAD PAISLEY

JUSITN MOORE

BILLY CURRINGTON

KACEY MUSGRAVES

JAMEY JOHNSON

SUGARLAND

KELLY PICKLER

TIM McGRAW

TOBY KEITH

RASCAL FLATTS

KERY CHESNEY

SUGARLAND

'STOES' HITS TOP

Up 1.1 million audience impressions, Zac Brown Band claims its second Hot Country Songs No. 1 as "Toes" advances 2-1. With 36.4 million audience impressions in its 19th chart week, it led No. 2 peak of "Whatever It Is" on the July 11 chart. The band's debut single, "Chicken Fried," spent the last four straight weeks at No. 1 on the Dec. 6, 2008 chart. No. 1 now scores two chart-toppers out of its first three singles on Hot Country Songs since Doo-Cocks in 1999. Concurrently, Tim McGraw opens at No. 1 on Top Country Albums with "Southern Voice" (see Over the Counter, page 65).
### Hot Latin Songs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Week(s) at No. 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Te Vaya Mejor Sin Mí&quot;</td>
<td>Larry Hernandez</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Adios&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Watagatapitusberry&quot;</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;LAVENTURADIEPOSITOS&quot;</td>
<td>Josiah Stockett</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Looking For Paradise&quot;</td>
<td>Alejandro Sanz</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Loba&quot;</td>
<td>Lobo</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Lo Intentamos&quot;</td>
<td>Jorge Luis López</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Manos Al Aire&quot;</td>
<td>Baby Rasta</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Mi Cama Huele A Ti&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Darwin&quot;</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Te Vas Fatal&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;El Fuego&quot;</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Su Fruta&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;El Fuego&quot;</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Te Vaya Mejor Sin Mí&quot;</td>
<td>Larry Hernandez</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Amena&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Watagatapitusberry&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;DIA&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;DIA&quot;</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;My Destiny&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Turno&quot;</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Promiscu&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Gloria&quot;</td>
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</table>

### Top Latin Albums

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Week(s) at No. 1</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;The Tigers of the North&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;LOS TIGRES DEL NORTE&quot;</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Coco&quot;</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;The Last Band&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;LOS TIGRES DEL NORTE&quot;</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;El Colpa&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;LOS TIGRES DEL NORTE&quot;</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;El Trono De Mexico&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;VARIOUS ARTISTS&quot;</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Espinoza Paz&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;VARIOUS ARTISTS&quot;</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Tito El Bambino&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;VARIOUS ARTISTS&quot;</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;El Trono De Mexico&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;VARIOUS ARTISTS&quot;</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Grupo Monte De Dangolo&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;VARIOUS ARTISTS&quot;</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Amanecer&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;VARIOUS ARTISTS&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;El Mismo Bandido&quot;</td>
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### Regional Mexican Albums

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<td>&quot;La Quinta Estación&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;VARIOUS ARTISTS&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;El Trono De Mexico&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;VARIOUS ARTISTS&quot;</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Los Príncipes Del Norte&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;VARIOUS ARTISTS&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;Mi Cielo&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;El Fuego&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;El Mismo Bandido&quot;</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>&quot;La Quinta Estación&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;VARIOUS ARTISTS&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;El Trono De Mexico&quot;</td>
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### Tropical Albums

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<th>Week(s) at No. 1</th>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Aventura&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;VARIOUS ARTISTS&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;Mi Cielo&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;El Fuego&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;El Mismo Bandido&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Mi Cielo&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;El Fuego&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;El Mismo Bandido&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;VARIOUS ARTISTS&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;La Quinta Estación&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;VARIOUS ARTISTS&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;El Fuego&quot;</td>
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### Latin Pop Albums

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<th>Week(s) at No. 1</th>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;El Bambino&quot;</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;El Trono De Mexico&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;VARIOUS ARTISTS&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;El Trono De Mexico&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;El Mismo Bandido&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;VARIOUS ARTISTS&quot;</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Mi Cielo&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;El Fuego&quot;</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;El Mismo Bandido&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;VARIOUS ARTISTS&quot;</td>
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<tr>
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<td>&quot;El Fuego&quot;</td>
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### Latin Rhythm Albums

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<th>Week(s) at No. 1</th>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Mi Cielo&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;El Fuego&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;El Mismo Bandido&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;VARIOUS ARTISTS&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Mi Cielo&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;El Fuego&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;El Mismo Bandido&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;VARIOUS ARTISTS&quot;</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Mi Cielo&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;El Fuego&quot;</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;El Mismo Bandido&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;VARIOUS ARTISTS&quot;</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Mi Cielo&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;El Fuego&quot;</td>
<td>13</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Between the Bullets

David Bisbal is having his best chart year as his new album, "Sin Mira Arriba," debuts atop Top Latin Albums and Top Latin Pop Albums (selling 4,000,000 copies). This is the Spanish singer's best ranking on either chart—a feat he's also accomplished on the airplay charts with "Exceso De Su Besos." On Latin Pop Airplay, "Exceso" rises 2-1 (93 million in audience impressions, up 5%) to become his first No. 1 on the list, while the song spends a second week atop Hot Latin Songs. — Randy Alvarez

---

Following the success of the 2001 "Te Pareces" (15 weeks at No. 1), Band B Re Dos return with "Me Gusta Toda De Ti," debuting at No. 15 at Regional Mexican Airplay (4.8 million impressions). It's the act's first new single since "Calé la Noche" (End Session) opened at No. 1 in the March 10, 2011, issue.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Chart Name</th>
<th>Week of Release</th>
<th>Top 10 Songs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Billboard Japan Hot 100</td>
<td>October 23, 2009</td>
<td>1. BOUJIN KIMI NO KOKORO SURI 2. HISTORICAL JAPAN 3. FRANCE 4. ROAD TO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
JAWBOX HELPING ITS OWN

When Callum Robbins was born in 2006 with spinal muscular atrophy, doctors didn’t expect him to live past the age of 2. But Callum, the son of Jawbox guitarist/vocalist J. Robbins, defied the odds and will celebrate his 4th birthday in January.

Since Jawbox disbanded in the late ’90s, Robbins has played in other groups and opened a recording studio. But the income from those projects was little match for the mounting doctors’ bills.

“J. and his wife were in a tight financial bind,” says Jawbox bassist Kim Coletta, who formed DeSoto Records. To help her bandmate, Coletta posted a PayPal link on her label’s Web site (desotorecords.com) requesting small donations to the Robbins family. She noticed a spike in donations after sending an e-mail to about 3,000 of the band’s fans and friends.

Coletta says, “Even when people didn’t have a lot of money, they brainstormed creative ways to do some fund-raising. It makes me understand even more that J. is a really beloved figure in the independent music scene.” She adds that the efforts have also helped spotlight a lesser-known disease. According to Coletta, enough money has been raised for the Robbins family to afford a wheelchair ramp for their Baltimore home.

Meanwhile, Jawbox will perform for the first time in 12 years Dec. 7, at the 11th Annual Righteous Fuzztone NYC benefit, “Late Night With Jimmy Fallon” to help promote the reissue of the band’s 1994 album, “For Your Own Special Sweetheart,” which will be released Nov. 24 through a partnership between DeSoto Records and Discord Records.

—Mitchell Peters
INSIDE TRACK

COUNTRY DUO RETURNS

After spinning off a couple of No. 1 country singles from the 2008 “Back When I Knew It All,” Montgomery Gentry is finishing work on the duo’s seventh studio album. The set is due in early 2010, with a first single expected to be released shortly.

“We’ve got all the songs cut and four or five of them mixed,” Troy Gentry says of the currently untitled 10-song set, which will have a bonus song for digital buyers. He says the album’s sound is “a little bit of everything from the past.” He adds that one song, with the working title of “Shotgun Wedding,” “sounds like a never version of ‘Hillbilly Shoes,” “first of the duo’s 17 top 20 country hits.

The album is produced by Blake Chancey and recorded in Nashville, and Gentry says he and Eddie Montgomery “wrote a little bit more on this project than they did in the past,” including a patriotic-themed “Freedom Never Goes Out of Style” with Gary Hannan and Phil “Philbilly” O’Donnell. Neil Thrasher, Ira Dean, Rivers Rutherford and Tommy Karlas also wrote for the album, and there aren’t any guest spots planned.

Gentry says the duo and Columbia Nashville are in the midst of determining a first single from the album, which should be out in time to be considered for next spring’s Academy of Country Music Awards.
THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS TOO MUCH GLEE

GLEE DOMINATES ITUNES CHARTS WITH OVER 2 MILLION DOWNLOADS

“From ‘Cabaret’ to Kanye, songs of Glee are a hit” – New York Times
“I don’t know how Glee keeps topping itself - it just does!” – LA Times

Cover of Entertainment Weekly 10/23

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Original cast recordings of 17 tracks from the hit FOX TV show
Including the GOLD single “Don’t Stop Believin”, “Somebody to Love” and “Take a Bow”

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Glee: The Music, Volume 2 In Stores 12/8
Glee Volume 1: Road to Sectionals available on DVD 12/29

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February 19

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