OVER $100,000,000 IN WORLDWIDE TOUR REVENUE

$69,783,461 IN NORTH AMERICAN TICKET SALES

1,559,509 TICKETS SOLD - 94 SHOWS

$18,600,000 IN TOUR MERCHANDISE SALES
WORLD TOUR 2009

Jonas Brothers

CONGRATULATIONS
Joe, Nick & Kevin on an Amazing 2009

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FEATURES

LEAVING A LEGACY After a successful 20-year career, Chayanne easily could have gone indie. But despite past disagreements with the label, he re-upped with Sony.

WISE YOUNG OWL How Adam Young went from a Minnesota basement to the top of the Hot 100.

THE BILLBOARD Q&A The Jonas Brothers’ Nick Jonas discusses his new solo album and what’s next for his sibling group.

STARS

FRONTIER TOURING TURNS 30 Michael Gudinski’s pioneering promotion firm celebrates three decades of hot shows Down Under.

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WAR AND PEACE Reformed hellraisers Daniel Merriweather takes the long road to success.

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ON THE COVER: Chayanne photographed by Robert Mora

HOME FRONT

Online

THE GRAMMYS Billboard.com looks back at past Grammy fashions, from the elegant to the atrocious. Remember R. Kelly’s black mask? Pink’s garter? That green Versace dress Jennifer Lopez wore? Go to billboard.com for all the hits and misses.

Events

MUSIC AND MONEY Join members of the music, legal and financial communities March 4 at the St. Regis in New York to explore challenges and key opportunities shaping the future of the music business. More: billboardmusicandmoney.com.

LATIN MUSIC The Billboard Latin Music Conference & Awards will take place April 26-29 in Puerto Rico at the Conrad San Juan, Condado Plaza. Don’t miss this important Latin music industry event. More at billboardlatinconference.com.
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A Road Map For Indies

Immediate Access To Consumers Doesn't Mean Immediate Revenue

BY RICH BENLOFF

There’s more music being made and released than ever before. The barriers to entry are down, the floodgates are open, and anyone who can make music that moves people has a way to get it out to the world.

But of the 150,000 albums released in the United States in 2008, the most recent year for which data is available, fewer than 6,000 titles sold more than 1,000 copies each, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Of course, there are other channels, such as concert and individual digital-track sales, that aren’t included in these tallys. But those sales don’t change the fact that greater market access has come at the cost of an avalanche of new music. It’s difficult for artists to stand apart from an ever-increasing crowd.

As a SoundExchange board member I know that there are more than 40,000 acts and 5,000-plus labels registered with the performance right organization. According to MySpace, there are more than 5,000 artist pages on its network.

So in theory, entering new artists embracing a DIY approach can launch their own careers and break out on their own. But in reality, these statistics suggest most acts going it alone will struggle to reach even a modest living without resorting to the proverbial “day job.”

These statistics and the glut of new releases highlight the importance to an artist of aligning with a label. Labels have the experience, infrastructure and industry contacts to promote music and get acts noticed by industry tastemakers and music fans worldwide.

That said, in the independent label community, we’ve recognized the need to transform business models and to create the label of the next decade by adapting to technology-driven trends and the aforementioned new consumer demand model.

Today, in addition to our legislative advocacy, commerce and member services functions, education is a top priority at the American Assn. of Independent Music (AAIM), and our detailed plan for the future is a centerpiece. We’ve met, we’ve shared ideas, we’ve tapped the expertise of the full indie community, and we’ve gone through a comprehensive road map for the new decade.

We’ve outlined the importance of creating a robust email database, the value of a thoughtful direct-to-consumer program and the power of technology to help build deep and lasting fan relationships—ones that realize a clear and measurable return on investment in new models.

Embracing this change is no longer optional. Indie labels need to expand their sources of revenue and reduce their expenses—a challenge in the best of times. But by using such technologies as out sourcing noncore functions to specialized firms like AAIM’s associate members, labels can leverage outside expertise to lower costs while sticking to their core mission of creating music that changes lives.

As a new music business emerges, labels will need to continue to evolve and change to meet these challenges. But we believe the glass is half full, and the AAIM road map not only advocates embracing the new, it explains how to do it. It covers a variety of topics from customized artist contracts to flexible expert staffs, and an aggressive and nontraditional approach to reaching fans and maximizing numerous revenue streams.

How can artists and labels accomplish this? The basics still matter: Listen to your consumer, work smart, analyze your expenses and staff production. But also tailor different products to address market segmentation and utilize traditional “down time” like the period between touring and recording. And don’t forget the importance of pursuing synch opportunities and performance royalties instead of giving music away for “promotional opportunities.” If there’s no well thought-out end monetization goal from the promotion.

In short, focus on new and nontraditional revenue and profit models. At heart, music always comes first. So for all of us who are passionate about music, moving forward requires learning how to build and maintain a strong bond between artists and labels and their fans. As we start this new decade, the AAIM Roadmap for Independent Music Labels, created in conjunction with our colleagues from the World Independent Network, is our prescription for future health and success, created by a community. And it’s just one part of an ongoing conversation so that we can learn from one another and combine all our creative ingredients during a time of upheaval and change, as we enter the next decade and meet the changing conditions that will bring to our industry.

Richard Bengloff is president of the American Assn. of Independent Music.
TERM FIRM
PROFITS DROP

EMI owner Terra Firma’s profits dropped 43% in its financial year that ended in March 2009. Profits fell to £1.8 million ($3 million), while revenue increased slightly from £47.2 million ($76.6 million) to £47.8 million ($77.5 million). According to the Financial Times, the private equity firm owned by Guy Hands moved from London to Guernsey in the Channel Islands for tax reasons, which had affected profits. The paper reported that Hands objected to recent increases in capital gains tax and income tax.

KORN, ROB ZOMBIE TO HEADLINE MAYHEM

Hard rock acts Korn and Rob Zombie will headline the 2010 Rockstar Energy Drink Mayhem Festival, a 24-date tour scheduled for July and August in the United States and Canada. Lamb of God and Five Finger Death Punch will also perform on the main stage. Last year Mayhem grossed £7.5 million from attendance of 266,653 to 23 shows reported to Billboard Boxscore.

OURSTAGE RAISES $2.6M IN NEW FUNDS

Music discovery Web site OurStage raised $2.6 million in new funding, according to a company representative. The recent funds bring the total to approximately $5.2 million of a $6 million Series B offering. A Jan. 13 Securities and Exchange Commission filing says 49 investors have participated in the recent round of funding. The company raised $17 million in Series A funding in 2008.

GLOBAL

AMERICAN SYCO
Simon Cowell Re-Ups With Sony, Plots U.S. Launch

Anyone who thought Simon Cowell’s U.S. profile would drop when he quit “American Idol” is in for a shock: His new deal with Sony is set to give his company, Syco, a much greater presence in the United States than ever before.

No one at either Sony or Syco would comment on the details of the six-year global deal (Billboard.biz, Jan. 12), which effectively means Sony Music Entertainment will map ownership of Syco for a 50% stake in the new company, a joint venture between the music major and an asset-unknowned Cowell-owned company.

That means Sony’s share of income from Syco’s hit TV formats, “The X Factor” and the “Got Talent” series, as well as blockbuster recording artists like Susan Boyle and Leona Lewis, will be greatly reduced. But sources within Sony insist that if the U.S. version of “The X Factor,” due to launch on Fox in fall 2011, is a hit, its overall pot will be considerably bigger.

“U.S. success could see ‘The X Factor’ go from a 17-country format to a 100-country format,” one Sony source says. “Securing Simon is a major result for us. He’s been wooed by everyone over the last five years.”

While no official approaches from other parties have been confirmed, it seems apparent that other major labels and rival U.S. TV networks would have been interested in securing Cowell’s services. But Cowell’s long-term relationship with Sony/BMG—which dates back almost 20 years—seems to have won the day.

“Syco is very important to us globally,” Sony Music Entertainment U.K. chairman/CEO Ged Doherty told Billboard on the eve of the new deal. “It’s a cornerstone of our company. We have an amazing relationship and I hope it will continue for many more years.”

Syco will finally have a U.S. office, with Doherty expecting or Los Angeles headquarters to open by the summer. Syco—which currently employs 28 staffers in the United Kingdom, split equally between music and TV divisions—has yet to establish staffing levels.

Syco/Sony will have first refusal on any artists discovered through the new U.S. “X Factor,” giving Cowell direct access to American talent. Almost all of the label’s recent signings have been U.K. artists unearthed through either “The X Factor” or “Britain’s Got Talent,” although it has had previous success with international classical crossover act Il Divo.


Billboard understands he will also be searching for performers outside of the talent show formats, while the label may eventually handle its own releases stateside. (It currently partners with U.S.-based Sony labels.)

Cowell will take a similar judge/executive producer joint role on the U.S. version as he does on the ETVI U.K. show, but it remains to be seen if this force of personality can overcome the inconsistent appeal music competition shows have for American TV audiences.

While the previous season of “Idol” averaged 25.1 million viewers, according to Nielsen, long-running competition like NBC’s “The Voice” and MTV’s “Making the Band” didn’t fare nearly as well in their most recent seasons. “Star” averaged 6.3 million in 2008 and wasn’t brought back while “Band” averaged 3.5 million for the season ending April 2009.

In its favor, the U.K. version of “The X Factor” has long since broken past the ratings peak of its predecessor, “Pop Idol,” and, if there are any signs of the “Idol” talent well running dry, the wider “X” format—which allows groups and those older than 25 to compete—could replenish it.

Another potential pitfall for Cowell is that both U.K. and U.S. versions of the show are due to air in fall 2011.

ITV has already insisted the U.K. version will not move to accommodate its American cousin. But with Fox likely to air the show in midweek, while ITV has it in a weekend slot, Cowell’s presence on both shows is at least technically possible.

“He goes backwards and forwards to America all the time as it is,” Doherty says. “He was filming ‘Idol’ last week, he’s up in Glasgow [Scotland] today filming ‘Britain’s Got Talent.’ He’s a busy guy and he juggles it, but we manage to fit it all in.”

Additional reporting by Andrea Paine in London.
LEGAL MATTERS

REINSTATEMENT OF ANTITRUST SUIT ILLUSTRATES PERILS OF COLLECTIVE ACTION BY LABELS

by BEN SHIFFNER

In 2003, the major labels got an early holiday gift when the U.S. Department of Justice announced two days before Christmas that it was closing its investigation into charges that the then-five majors had been engaging in a price-fixing conspiracy through Pressplay and MusicNet, two joint ventures they had set up to provide legal Internet distribution channels in the wake of Napster.

The majors breathed an additional sigh of relief in October 2008, when U.S. District Court Judge Loretta Preska dismissed a class action suit brought by private individuals seeking potentially huge damages over allegations that the labels conspired through Pressplay (Sony Music Entertainment/Universal Music Group) and MusicNet (Warner Music, EMI Music and BMG) to set artificially high prices on digital downloads, and that they agreed to deploy cumbersome digital rights management restrictions, all in an effort to keep consumers buying more profitable CDs.

But on Jan. 13, the Second Circuit Court of Appeals in New York put the cork back in the champagne bottle, reversing Preska's decision and reviving the case, exposing them to years of intrusive discovery and potentially tens of millions of dollars in potential damages.

In some ways, this case is about ancient history. Pressplay and MusicNet launched in 2002 as the labels' answer to free and illegal downloads. But both quickly foundered, victims of high prices, poor design and meager offerings that included music by major acts such as U2 and Counting Crows, but not necessarily the tracks you wanted. Still, didn't stop the plaintiffs' lawyers, who filed 28 separate lawsuits that were eventually consolidated into one.

The meat of the plaintiffs' allegations is that the labels all agreed to a wholesale price floor of 70 cents, enforced through most-favored-nations clauses in secret side letters that guaranteed each licensor would obtain the same terms as the others, effectively setting a uniform price for downloads that undermined competition. The plaintiffs also charge that the labels collectively agreed not to do business with potential licensees-like indie-focused eMusic—that wouldn't align with their terms.

It is a violation of U.S. antitrust law for competitors to agree on the price they will charge their customers, or to collectively refuse to deal with third parties. But the Second Circuit's decision to reinstate the case against Pressplay and MusicNet is still a long way from finding that the labels did anything wrong. The appeals court didn't determine that the plaintiffs had proved their case. Rather, it merely said that the allegations in their complaint were sufficient for the case to move forward.

Allegations are not evidence, and so now the case goes back to square one, with fights over whether the case may proceed as a class action and a lengthy period—possibly years—of discovery as the two sides depose executives and other witnesses and exchange of millions of pages of documents. Perhaps some day the case may even go to trial. But regardless of the eventual outcome, the case illustrates the dangers labels face when conducting any sort of business activity in conjunction with one another. While joint ventures, if done right, are perfectly legal, collective action by the dominant players in any industry will set off red flags for both government antitrust enforcers and private plaintiffs seeking damages. (Joint litigation activity, like the labels' collective lawsuits against Napster, Grokster, Aimster and individual peer-to-peer users, is protected under the First Amendment and a legal immunity known as the Nonn-Pennington doctrine.)

This case should also give pause to the major players, including names prominently author Stavros Kipper in his book "Appetite for Self-Destruction: The Spectacular Crash of the Record Industry in the Digital Age," who claim that the labels could have avoided the meltdown of the past decade if they had only struck a licensing deal with Napster in 2000 instead of shutting it down through a lawsuit.

A grand deal involving the labels and Napster may sound like a perfect Kumbaya solution, but, as the Pressplay and MusicNet experiences demonstrate, any such collective agreement would have been fraught with antitrust peril.

Ben Sheffner is a copyright attorney who has represented media studios, TV networks and record labels. Sheffner currently works as an attorney in the NBC Universal Television Group, which is 20% owned by Vivendi, the parent of Universal Music Group. He is the author of the Copyrights & Campaigns blog (copyrightsandcampaigns.blogspot.com).

HOME FRONT

360 DEGREES OF BILLBOARD

CRAIG MARKS NAMED EDITOR OF BILLBOARD

Craig Marks has been named editor of Billboard, where he will oversee the editorial operations of the print magazine, the industry-focused Web site Billboard.com and the company's digital newsletters. Marks will be based in New York and report to Billboard editorial director Bill Werde.

Marks was the founding editor of Blender and served as editor-in-chief of the magazine until 2008. In 2009, he was named editor-in-chief of music for CNET.com. Craig has served as the music editor for entertainment industry Web site InformationWeek and as editor of Spin magazine and as editor of CMJ. He has been a contributing editor to Rolling Stone, and his writing has been published in GQ, Details and the New York Times. Marks also co-managed the independent label Homestead Records. Marks graduated from the State University of New York at Albany. He lives in Brooklyn with his wife and son.

M. TYE COMER NAMED EDITOR OF BILLBOARD.COM

M. Tye Comer has been named editor of Billboard.com, where he will oversee the content programming and planning of the brand's consumer site. Comer will be based in New York and report to Billboard editorial director Bill Werde.

Comer comes to Billboard.com following a two-year stint as Nielsen Business Media's editorial director, where he helped manage the day-to-day online initiatives of several brands, including the Hollywood Reporter, Adweek and Backstage, as well as Billboard.com.

Comer's 14 years of experience as a music journalist and editor began at the CMJ New Music Report, where he held the position of associate editor until 2001. More recently, Tye served as editorial director of AOL Music, where he led the creative, editorial and promotions efforts on the content team until 2007. AOL Music's traffic grew to approximately 20 million unique monthly users during his tenure and eventually became the No. 1 music destination on the Web.

Comer is a graduate of the University of Delaware. He lives in Brooklyn.
All You Need Is ‘Love’

Angels & Airwaves Plan Free Digital Album Release Feb. 14

Blink-182 guitarist/vocalist Tom DeLonge is taking a temporary break from major-label life for “Love,” the release of the forthcoming album by his other band, Angels & Airwaves. The group’s third studio album, “Love,” will arrive Feb. 14 as a free digital download.

DeLonge and Angels & Airwaves manager Rick DeVevo agree that self-releasing the 10-song set is a financial risk, especially since DeLonge is spending up to $500,000 of his own money to fund the process. But the artist hopes to recoup through corporate sponsorships, touring, merch sales, premium exclusive tracks and videos on the band’s Web site and by selling a deluxe version of “Love” with 30 minutes of exclusive bonus material. The deluxe edition of “Love” will be available as either a CD or paid download.

“We’re redefining the music business,” says DeLonge, who finished a reunion tour last fall with Blink-182, and “I honestly think we’re going to be 10 times bigger because of it.”

Angels & Airwaves’ past two albums—“We Don’t Need to Whisper” (2006) and “I-Empire” (2007), which have sold 571,000 and 268,600 copies in the United States, respectively, according to Nielsen SoundScan—were released on Geffen. DeLonge is still personally under contract with Universal for two more albums, according to DeVevo.

DeLonge initially approached the label with the idea of releasing the album for free. But “there are certain costs they couldn’t throw under the rug,” he says. After failed negotiations, Geffen agreed to allow Angels & Airwaves to self-release “Love.”

“When you sign with a label early in your career, it’s because they have the advantage of investing in your brand,” DeLonge says, noting that he owns the masters and publishing rights for “Love.” “Now it’s changed, because the majority of the kids now get their records for free [and] the labels don’t have money to invest.”

“Love” will be available as a free download on Angels & Airwaves’ Web site, and a deluxe version of the album will be sold at stores and digital retailers, including iTunes, for about $5-$10. A final release date for the deluxe version hasn’t yet been set.

Additionally, a feature film titled “Love” will hit select theaters later in 2010, according to DeLonge. The music from “Love” will serve as the soundtrack to the film, which is about an astronaut who stranded in a spaceship as the Earth collapses.

To help market and promote the album, Angels & Airwaves partnered with Live Nation, Fuel TV and Hurley, among others, to feature the download link on their Web sites and send e-mail blasts to their customer databases. The combined lists will reach about 55 million people, according to DeLonge.

DeLonge hopes to distribute at least 20 million downloads of the free album. His intention is to expose Angels & Airwaves’ music to as many people as possible, with the idea that those new fans will return to the band’s Mod-life-powered Web site and buy merch or sign up for a premium membership, which costs $6.95 per month and gives access to advanced ticketing and digital content.

“If only 5% of that 20 million came back and interacted with the Modlife platform that powers our Web site, the revenue would far exceed anything we’d make from a major label, in any way, shape or form,” DeLonge says. “I believed that music would be like a business card that you pass out, and if people like it, they come back and buy a number of things from your band.”

According to DeVevo, artists who use the Modlife platform for their Web sites earn the following revenue: 75% of all albums and movie sales made through the site, 73% of all pay-per-view events viewed online, 50% of all advertising on the site and up to 70% of all subscription revenue based on a tiered payment scale that tops out after reaching 15,000 members.

At press time, Fuel TV was the sole sponsor of Angels & Airwaves’ spring tour, which will visit 3,000- to 6,000-capacity venues in North America. DeLonge says the band is still negotiating with other companies for sponsorship. And DeVevo believes that the free album will lure fans to the show. “We’ve decided to basically give up the fact that we’re going to sell albums and hope we’re going to get it on the ticket side,” he says.

Meanwhile, DeLonge says that Blink-182 is planning to record its new album soon and is currently talking with Interscope to release the set in 2011. The group also intends to play European festival dates this summer.

Agenda Items

Performance Royalties, Digital Licensing Top Publisher Priorities in 2010

Music publishers are eyeing an ambitious agenda for 2010, with their to-do list dominated by two key initiatives. One is pushing for U.S. legislation that requires the payment of performance royalties for compositions included in music and video downloads. The other priority is making it easier for digital service providers to license music, including the creation of a global song database.

Performance rights: During the past few years, music publishers and performing rights organizations have had a tough time advancing their cause of extracting performance rights fees from downloadable media, with federal courts denying their claims in 2007 for song downloads and in October 2009 for ringtones. Still, the issue will remain a top priority for the sector in 2010.

ASCAP Chief John LoFrumento pressed his case last year in a Billboard op-ed (Billboard, July 25, 2009), “This performance right often occurs in addition to a ‘mechanical right,’ which arises when a musical work is copied,” LoFrumento wrote, “There is nothing unfair or unusual about multiple rights existing in one work.”

Besides those instances, publishers also argue that the nonpayment of publishing performance royalties in movie and TV downloads is a growing injustice. Publishers already receive performance royalties from the broadcast of TV shows and movies that feature music. But with more consumers viewing their favorite shows and movies as digital downloads, publishers are trying to keep pace and secure what they consider to be proper compensation for use of their copyrighted works, especially since a compulsory mechanical license for the reproduction of music in audiovisual works doesn’t exist. Publishers say they hope that Congress will write legislation that would recognize a performance right in movie and TV downloads.

Dave Johnson Publishing senior VP of creative services and marketing Richard Stumpf notes that the industry shouldn’t forget about getting a performance royalty for music in movies that are screened in theaters. “Everyone [in music publishing] would like to see that happen,” he says. “We are the only country that doesn’t have it.”

Musicians, labels and artists are continuing their pursuit of performance royalties from U.S. terrestrial radio broadcasters for use of their master recordings. The music publishers are sitting on the sidelines of that battle, quietly blessing that move as long as it doesn’t affect songwriters’ performance royalties from radio.

Digital licensing: EMI Music Publishing chairman/CEO Roger Faxon says a top priority for music publishers is “to seek out ways to make licensing of music rights easier and more convenient for people who want to use music in all the ways that are now possible given the technology changes.”

Universal Music Publishing Group chairman/CEO David Renzer agrees, maintaining that “we have to sympathetic to large digital companies being faced with licensing music from [all] the different collection societies in Europe.”

Part of the answer may be to create a global database, an initiative endorsed in October by the European Commission’s Online Commerce Roundtable.

Renzer says the Pan-European licensing joint venture initiatives—all four major labels are involved—“are a start. The joint ventures enable digital service providers to license the Anglo-American works from each major publisher’s catalog throughout Europe.

But digital service providers still have to license the non-English, local-language repertoire in Europe from the respective rights organizations that oversee each territory. Other U.S. publishing executives suggest that the latter process may be simplified by mergers of the various European country rights organizations.

If licensing gets easier, it could encourage the emergence of new digital service providers, which may find innovative ways to sell music. “We are now seeing a variety of businesses of scale—like YouTube, Facebook and other social networks where music is being used in an amazing number of new areas—that may well be important monetization engines for the worldwide music business,” Warner/Chappell Music chairman/CEO David Johnson says. “We will grow our revenues as those businesses grow, which is one of the challenges that will keep coming up.”

Johnson provides some historical perspective on this trend. “The business that has always been the case for music publishing,” he says. “At some point [in the past], radio, television and cable programming were all in their infancy. And then they became major commercial enterprises that continued to use music and compensate the artists, songwriters and the industry for that use.”

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DIGITAL
BY ANTONY BRUNO

Tweets Don’t Fail Me Now
Why The Twitter Backlash Is A Good Thing—For Twitter And The Music Industry

All is not well in the Twitterverse.

Following a year marked by skyrocketing growth, Twitter began falling back to Earth toward the end of 2009. Twitter started out the year on a roll, with U.S. unique visitors in January up 1,364% from the same period in 2008 and up 33% from the prior month, according to comScore. Year-on-year growth in monthly unique visitors surged even higher during the summer, reaching a staggering 5,291% in June.

But growth cooled sharply in the fall, with the number of unique visitors in October slipping 7.9% from September, although year-on-year growth remained a still- strong 1,224%, according to comScore. In addition, Nielsen Online found in April that 60% of new Twitter users quit the service after a month. It’s also unclear how many of Twitter’s nearly 100 million accounts are still active.

A number of artists and celebrities publicly decried the service, including Lily Allen, Chris Brown and Miley Cyrus (through a YouTube “breakup video”). Even John Mayer announced he’d take a Twitter break as part of a broader “digital cleanse.”

At year’s end, the word “tweet”—virtually nonexistent in the cultural lexicon 12 months ago—made the Lake Superior State University 35th annual list of Words Banned From The Queen’s English for Misuse, Overuse and General Uselessness. It ranked No. 4 out of 15.

But none of this necessarily means that the microblogging site is destined to become the next digital bust. Twitter was the perfect storm: massive reach, low barrier to entry and measurable results. As the hype cycle winds down, it could mark the start of a more sensible approach to the service—which could help not only Twitter, but the vast portion of the music industry that has embraced it.

Twitter presents artists an unparalleled opportunity to get their message to the fans, provided 1) their fans actually use Twitter and 2) the artist is comfortable with the level of engagement that’s required.

Too many artists use Twitter as proxies to tweet for them, a practice that should stop immediately. Leaning on a publicist for blog posts and Web updates is one thing, but Twitter is far too intimate a medium to pull off that kind of subterfuge. Twitter accounts that exist only to send business-related updates should clearly state that the artist’s organization, not the artist, is behind it.

And that leads to the second point—how much to share. The most closely followed Twitter accounts are those that give fans an actual dialogue with the artist, not just an update on a performer’s next public appearance. Artists who tweet about their everyday thoughts and activities do a better job keeping fans engaged, which increases the impact when they issue business-related tweets about new products or activities.

Finding the right balance between business and personal can be difficult. Trent Reznor abandoned Twitter when the fringe elements of his fan base were getting too close to his personal life for comfort, although he subsequently resumed tweeting.

Chris Brown closed his account after posting an embarrassing and ill-informed tirade blaming retailers for poor sales of his latest album, “Graffiti” (Billboard.biz, Dec. 14, 2009). Artists are justified in their need to carve out a private space in this age of always-on, always-available social media. And there’s something to be said for those who maintain an air of mystery. Others simply prefer to make music and not be everyone’s friend. They’re not Luddites for doing so.

So separating the digital wheat from the chaff is a necessary step to making Twitter a more relevant communication tool. What’s more, it’s likely we’ll see a lot of changes to Twitter this year as the company turns its focus from building its user base to generating revenue, such as products that allow artists, brands and others to more easily track and participate in the conversations taking place about them on the service.

Twitter is like a microphone—a tool that’s used for being heard. How effective a tool depends entirely on the artist.
Shortcode To Sales

Mobile Texting Sent Millions In Charitable Donations For Haiti—Can It Also Sell Music?

In the immediate aftermath of the Jan. 12 earthquake in Haiti, the power of mobile communications quickly became apparent when the Red Cross was able to generate $5 million in donations in 48 hours through mobile-phone based donations.

By texting the word “Haiti” to the shortcode 90999, subscribers of any wireless operator could donate $10 to the Red Cross Haiti relief fund, with the charge added to their monthly bill. According to Denver-based Mobile Accord, the company that powered the campaign, users were donating up to $10,000 per minute at its peak and at press time had donated more than $37 million.

The campaign provides a vivid illustration of how U.S. wireless customers have come to accept mobile texting as not only a trusted source of communication, but of commerce as well. But there remain significant obstacles to using the same infrastructure to drive the sale of such digital entertainment content as music.

The challenge lies in delivering a digital purchase after it has been paid for, which isn’t an issue in charitable donations, where the traffic is only one way. Part of the problem is technical, as not every wireless operator has its own music download store. Sprint has its own branded service, but Verizon Wireless exclusively relies on partner Rhapsody, while neither AT&T nor T-Mobile have dedicated music storefronts, opting instead to steer their customers to partners like Napster or Amazon. There are ways around this, such as partnering with off-deck mobile content providers like Thumbplay, but that’s another partner to add to the revenue split.

Holding back the resolution of these technical hurdles are basic service issues like customer support. Even if an artist or label wanted to sell an exclusive digital track through a mobile transaction, it’s the wireless operator that would have to field support calls if customers never get the songs they ordered or the file doesn’t play.

“There is a lot more activity that needs to be undertaken in regards to content management and content delivery than is part of the overall mobile giving process,” says Michael Becker, VP of mobile strategies at mobile marketing firm iLoop Mobile and vice chairman of the Mobile Marketing Assn.

This causes carriers to ask for a huge cut of any text-initiated sale, anywhere from 30% to 50%, which they waive for mobile giving campaigns. That’s a steep cut for the content provider, which also has to absorb all the marketing costs.

This combination of technical and business issues led to the rapid demise of the few companies that tried to sell music through texting, such as Textunes and Textango. But there are solutions. Mobile fan club provider Mozes is expected to launch several text-messaging-based initiatives later this year to help participating artists sell music through text alerts and shortcode prompts during concerts. Mozes CEO Derrian Porter says the company recently struck deals with Amazon and iTunes to let fans buy music through their respective services, rather than add the purchase to their phone bills.

Such a solution would require users to have their credit cards on file with either service and likely be limited to smart phones like the iPhone, BlackBerry and Android devices. But Porter says that’s no longer as limiting a requirement as it once was.

Content providers also are working more directly with mobile operators on exclusive promotions, bypassing the technical hurdles of cross-carrier campaigns and gaining marketing support. One example is “American Idol” and AT&T’s “Live Idol Tones” initiative, through which fans can register to get text alerts when ringtones and ringback tones from a contestant’s performance are available to buy, usually the day after the show airs.

“Text-to-buy response works well when you have the proper media and awareness platform behind it,” says Mark Nagel, director of music and personalization content for AT&T Mobility.
Paradigm agent Matt Galle's phone is probably ringing right about now.

Galle (My Chemical Romance, Taking Back Sunday, Boys Like Girls) is the agent responsible for exploiting pop star Ke$ha, and as such is fielding a ton of calls regarding an artist who could be on the cusp of international stardom.

After bowing at No. 1 on the Billboard 200, Ke$ha's debut album, "Animal," slips two notches to No. 3, boosting a two-week sales tally of 219,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. In the three months since the single "Tik Tok" debuted on the Billboard Hot 100, Ke$ha has sold a combined 3.3 million digital songs. "Tik Tok" accounts for 2.9 million of those downloads, according to SoundScan.

Beyond those sales, there's huge demand to see Ke$ha in person.

"A lot more calls started coming in," Galle says, adding that it's not just a U.S. phenomenon. "There are a lot of territories reaching out, like Canada, Australia, South America, Asia, Mexico, Canada—they all want her.

"Tempting as some of those offers must be," Ke$ha's touring strategy is still coming together, as Paradigm works around other demands on her time. "I think there will be tour album promo for a while. She's a priority in every territory," Galle says. "Over the summer she'll be doing a full U.S. tour of some sort. If it keeps blowing up, maybe it makes sense for Ke$ha to do a headlining situation, and there are a lot of big artists inquiring about her supporting, too.

Ke$ha came to the attention of Galle (who also owns the Photo Finish label distributed through Atlantic) last summer when Photo Finish set 300K consultants with Ke$ha on a track produced by Dr. Luke.

"The news got back to me of how talented she was, so I checked out her songs on MySpace and got in touch," Galle says. "Ke$ha came into our offers from Paradigm first booked Ke$ha on a few select club dates in Los Angeles. A front person like Har Mar Superstar, but her first "real" show was the BMI Stage at Lollapalooza in Chicago in August.

"To be honest, I had never heard of Ke$ha until Matt Galle called me," says Hustin Powell, talent buyer for Della producer C3 Presents. "We were late in the booking process, but he said she was a lot of fun, so we took a chance.

She had a great performance and ended the set with confetti and a bunch of fans dancing with her onstage. It is fun to see new artists get their start on smaller stages and really take advantage of the opportunity.

After Lollapalooza, Ke$ha headed to the United Kingdom to do some promotion for RCA, and Paradigm booked her on a couple of shows with Calvin Harris and Mr. Hudson. (Ke$ha has since signed with Pete Nash at Holler Shelter for booking in the United Kingdom and Europe.) Then came several dates with Mickey Avalon on the West Coast and in the Midwest "just to get some tour under her belt," toward the end of that brief run, "Tik Tok" hit the airwaves, and the buzz was ignited.

Galle worked with My Chemical Romance and Taking Back Sunday from the demo/club stage to arenas, so he's no stranger to artist development. Still, he says he hasn't worked anything that happened so quickly, and a rapid rise makes caution all the more important. But Galle is quick to point out that beyond the catchy songs, Ke$ha is a charismatic performer. The live show is great, she hits all the notes, she's a fun concert experience. Fans are attracted to her," he says. "A 10- to 40-date tour hasn't happened yet, so we're trying to build it up so she doesn't get burned out. Vector [Management] and myself are thinking this doesn't need to happen overnight. We don't need to jump on all these things; they're going to be there for a long time."

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Fair Play
Portland, Ore., Artists Campaign For Equitable Compensation

Along with the usual posters advertising upcoming shows and reminding patrons to smoke outside, clubgoers in Portland, Ore., could start seeing a new sticker appear on venue doors. If an effort by the American Federation of Musicians Local 99 is successful, most venues in this music-friendly city will sport signage proclaiming that they’ve agreed to ensure fair compensation for musicians. At the core of the guidelines is a tiered pay scale, which is based on such factors as the size and type of venue.

While most concertgoers might assume the bulk of their cover charge goes to the band, that’s not always the case. High-profile local acts and many touring bands can negotiate guarantees and percentages of the door, but up-and-coming acts generally have to take what they can get. In some cases, the AFM found that, after deductions for venue expenses like sound staff, door staff, promotional fees and “house fees,” musicians’ compensation routinely gets reduced to just a fraction of what was brought in.

“There is no real standard from club to club,” Local 99 president Bruce Fife says. Some clubs can take out fees of up to $100 before the band even sees a nickel. And this is despite the fact that the bands bring their friends out, and those friends are the ones paying the cover and buying food and drinks. Many local musicians find themselves unable to make a living, between venue deductions and most clubs’ reluctance to book even those local acts that play out frequently. “This makes it really hard for bands to develop,” says bassist Sean Hudson, who plays with a number of local acts.

One Portland club booker, Jimi Biron of the McMenamins chain, says the agreements will help venues as well as artists. “I like it from a competitive stance,” he says. “It will help us be able to recruit and book top local talent, because they’ll know we pay fairly.”

McMenamins owns a number of local venues, from the 1,500-seat Crystal Ballroom and 5,000-seat Edgefield to smaller bars like the White Eagle and the Rock Creek Tavern. “This really won’t have an impact on the bigger venues, because if you’re getting booked at the Crystal, you’re already big,” he says. “And for venues like the Rock Creek Tavern, where we book duos and trios, we can almost always guarantee that the acts will hit or exceed the proposed pay scale.”

The one flaw in the agreement, according to Biron, is that the pay is calculated per musician rather than per band. “There are some nights at the White Eagle where a band might make $600 or $700,” he says. “And there are off nights when they might make less. But we always do the booking based on the band and its draw, not the size of the band. This agreement could shift bookers toward only booking duos and trios in order to make sure they comply and leave bigger bands out in the cold.”

Biron has suggested that the agreement stipulate a per-hour pay rate instead of a per-musician rate and is currently in talks with Fife and the AFM. “If it was an hourly rate, I think it would be easier to qualify,” he says. “Most people I have a hard time finding fault with fair pay, and we just want to make sure this is a win-win situation for everyone.”

Fife says that while no one has signed the agreement yet, conversations are ongoing with local venues, and a number of local acts have stepped up to support the initiative. For some Portland artists, the mere fact that people are talking about fair pay is a significant step toward educating bands and fans about the realities of trying to make a living playing music.

“When a band performs for exposure,” blues singer/guitarist Norman Sylvester says, “they expose themselves to poverty.”

Making ends meet: Blues guitarist NORMAN SYLVESTER (above); bassist SEAN HUDSON

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The Olympic Guessing Games

Labels, Retailers Struggle With 2010 Event’s Emphasis On Secrecy

TORONTO—The Winter Olympic Games are about to make Vancouver unseasonably hot for the local and international acts prepped to join the party—despite mystery surrounding the final lineup for the Feb. 12-28 event.

The games’ organizers seem determined to crank up the “wow” factor by not revealing the definitive list of artists who are involved until the last minute, while insisting music industry executives sign nondisclosure agreements about their acts’ participation.

That’s frustrating for local executives who, while appreciative of the games’ promotional opportunities, can’t get much advance marketing done.―Such secrecy extends to the widely rumored but still unconfirmed—choice of singer-songwriter Sarah McLachlan’s “One Dream” as the theme song. McLachlan’s manager Terry McBride says a “really significant” announcement will appear later in January.

Many high-profile Canadian industry figures are understood to be participating in the games’ music component. Bruce Allen, manager of Bryan Adams and Michael Bublé, confirms he’s one of them but also bound by a confidentiality agreement.

What has emerged, however, is that the games will feature nightly performances at its central venue, the 60,000-capacity BC Place stadium, following each day’s medal presentation. Acts confirmed for the nightly “Victory Ceremony” shows (Feb. 14-26) include Nelly Furtado and SNX.

The Vancouver Organizing Committee says the shows will be broadcast live on numerous networks—including CTV—carrying games coverage, but declines to reveal the full list of broadcasters.

Canadian rock act Billy Talent will perform an “Honoring Victory Ceremony” show, confirms the band’s manager Pierre Tremblay, president of Hive Management.

While Tremblay says he can’t discuss the show, he adds that his experience with Canada’s Barenaked Ladies during the 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Olympics demonstrates the games’ selling power.

Barenaked Ladies, which also gave a “Victory Ceremony” performance, were handled by Tremblay for Network Management in 2002 and played a show at the Olympics Medals Plaza, broadcast by NBC during its games coverage.

Tremblay says the U.S. album sales and live attendance climbed in the weeks following the show. “It was a high-profile gig,” he says. “Their appearance aired in prime time and had a huge impact on their U.S. career.”

International Olympic Committee research shows that the 2006 Winter Olympics in Turin, Italy, generated 10.6 billion viewing hours globally, down 19% from 2002. The IOC attributed the drop to a decline among North American viewers—partly due to prime-time competition from “American Idol,” but also because events were taking place in a European time zone.

The top viewing figures are generally for the opening and closing ceremonies, and billboard has learned that McLachlan and Nickelback will participate in those events at the BC Place. However, there’s still no confirmation about which act will play which ceremony.

Musical performances will also be a part of a two-month concert series starting Jan. 22 under the Cultural Olympiad banner, with acts including Mathew Moinet, Blue Rodeo, Phoenix and Gomez.

In terms of releases, EM! Music Canada will issue an official compilation CD, “The Sound of Vancouver,” although the label was unable to confirm the release date or content at press time.

Kevin Kirkwood, product director at market-leading music retailer HMV Canada, says that the secrecy surrounding the involvement of many acts limits its stores’ ability to preorder relevant physical stock. However, he expects a significant increase in digital sales at TV coverage airing. “Given the exposure some of those acts will receive,” he adds, the EM! CD “should also do really well for us.”

Retailers will also give a “Victory Ceremony” performance, which is involved in the Olympics can be substantial, noting that HMV’s sales of albums by Sarah Brightman rose more than 100% in the week following her televised performance at the 2008 Beijing Olympics’ opening ceremony.

Labels and publishers have also been vying to strike Olympics-related sync deals, with CTV—the games’ Canadian broadcaster—particularly active in sourcing music. After informing publishers and labels that it was seeking material, CTV chose 20 English-language and 10 French-language songs, mainly for use in daily highlights montages during its on-air and online coverage.

While international acts are well-represented in the Olympics’ live programming, CTV opted to use homegrown talent. “We started considering other music, but decided there was so much spectacular Canadian music that we didn’t need to look elsewhere,” CTV VP of business development for the Olympics Dan Cimordin says.

CTV’s choices include songs from veteran rock band Sloan (“If It Feels Do Good”), pop-punk act Simple Plan (“Generation”) and country artist Johnny Reid (“Hey Y’”).

While these are well-known domestic acts, CTV’s other choices include more obscure names, including Brumpton, Ontario, band Monae with “Believe,” from its 2009 album “The World I Want to Leave Behind” (Dine Alone).

While not revealing the offered terms—CTV confirms it is paying royalties for music usage—Dine Alone founder Joel Carriere hopes the song’s success will introduce Monae to a wider audience. “As a manager,” he says, “I want it out there.”

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‘Friends’ In High Places

Italian TV Talent Show ‘Amici’ Breaks New Acts, Drawing Expanded Label Participation

MILAN—Imagine if “American Idol” contestants had to face a judging panel comprising top major-label executives.

The Italian version of this scenario has been featured in the current season of “Amici di Maria De Filippi,” a TV talent show hosted by veteran talk show host Maria De Filippi. “Amici,” now in its ninth season, is broadcast on Mediaset’s Canale 5 and features senior executives from five key labels as judges, all vying to sign their favorite acts.

Sony Music Italy president/CEO Rudy Zerbi, EMI Music Italy managing director Marco Alboni and Universal Music Italy managing director Alessandro Massara are joined on the panel by Warner Music Italy artistic director Marcello Balestra and Stefano Senardi, senior publishing consultant at leading Italian indie Sugarmusic. Their participation is a sign of the increasingly important role that TV talent shows play in breaking new artists in Italy’s notoriously conservative entertainment market.

“‘Amici’ is one of the few media opportunities for young Italian acts,” Alboni says. “Usually an Italian artist will only get on TV if he already has a large following.”

“Amici” originally featured performers from different entertainment fields but is now limited to singers and dancers. Due to previous restrictions on when labels could sign contestants, the show didn’t have much of a relationship with the music industry, with Warner even failing to exercise its option to sign 2006-07 winner Federico Angelucci, according to Balestra.

But during its 2007-08 season, “Amici’ amended its rules to allow artists to sign original material and release records immediately after the contest ended. Marco Carta, the 2007-08 winner, released a debut album, “Ti Rincontrero” (Warner), that went platinum (700,000 units), Carta also went on to win the 2009 Sanremo Festival competition.

Meanwhile, Giussi Ferreri, runner-up of the 2008 season of Italy’s “The X Factor,” also hit commercial gold. Her debut album, “Gaetana,” was certified seven-times-platinum (400,000 units), a rare achievement for an Italian artist. And the 2008-09 season of “Amici” produced three commercially successful artists—winner Alessandra Amoroso (Sony), runner-up Valerio Scano (EMI) and third-placed Luca Napolitano (Warner).

“We’d been led to believe only the winner would get a record deal,” says Napolitano, who adds it was “a very pleasant surprise” when he too got signed after Balestra, Zerbi and Alboni appeared as guest judges on that season’s finale, which reached a season-high 7.8 million viewers, according to ratings monitor Auditel. Napolitano’s “U’Infinito” album has since gone gold (35,000 units).

The current season, which began in September, brought label executives on board as judges for the entire run. It entered its final phase Jan. 17, with eight singers and six dancers competing in a public vote, while the executives offer advice and feedback to sign the leading contenders.

Sugarmusic’s Senardi says he believes the labels’ involvement “gives the show a certain prestige or credibility… the kids get media exposure and coaching, the labels get access to a reserve of talent.”

Retailers caution that buzz from such shows doesn’t always translate into a long-term sales boost. Angelo Leone, music department head at the Milan branch of entertainment retailer FNAC, notes that Ferreri’s second album “didn’t live up to [sales] expectations.”

But there’s “definitely interest” in “Amici,” he adds. “Let’s hope the final phase generates interest in at least one artist.”

The show’s contestants aren’t the only ones to benefit from the TV exposure. The judging panel’s executives are enjoying a celebrity status that already rivals that of some of their signings.

“We get plenty of teasing for that,” Sony’s Zerbi says. “But when you consider the amazing media exposure ‘Amici’ provides for new artists, we’d be mad not to appear.”

DEATHS

Smith’s daughter, country singer Carnie Smith, died Jan. 16 at his home in Franklin, Tenn. He was 82.

Smith was widely regarded as one of the most important country music hitmakers of the post-war era, first appearing on Billboard’s Hot Country Songs chart in 1951 with “Let’s Live a Little.” His career spanned 31 top 10 hits during the ’50s, including five No. 1s, among them “Let Old Mothers Have Their Way” and “Louise Talk” and “Hey, Joe.” Smith placed 99 songs on Billboard’s country charts between 1951 and 1978.

Born March 13, 1927, in Maynardville, Tenn., Smith began his performing career in 1944 at the Bluebird Cafe. He served in the military during World War II and performed in bands in Nashville, N.C., and Augusta, Ga., working alongside Molly O’Day and Archie Campbell. Smith sang on demos that ended up on the desk of Peer-Southern executive Troy Martin, who took them to WSM Nashville executive Jack Stapp and Columbia producer Don Law. Smith was signed to the label and hired to perform an afternoon show on WSM; he first appeared on the station’s Grand Ole Opry as the guest of Hank Williams in 1950.

Smith was among the first generation of young stars to bring country music to TV. He appeared on Kate Smith’s “Main Music Hall,” on such syndicated shows as “Stars of Country Music” and in a string of B movies including “Buffalo Gun.”

After marrying June Carter in 1952, Smith’s daughter, country singer Carlene Carter, was born in 1955; her parents divorced the next year. In 1957 Smith married singer Goldie Hill, who died of cancer in 2005.

In addition to Carlene Carter, Smith is survived by his three children with Hill, Lorri Lynn, Carl Jr. and Larry Dean.

—Wade Jessen
Sonidos De ‘Amor’

Javier Romero Has Built A Radio Career Following His Instincts

Much like its English counterpart, Spanish-language morning-drive radio is better known for its crass jokes, parodies and double entendres than for the thoughtful interviews and careful consideration of issues.

And yet for years, the reigning Spanish-language morning show in the Miami market has been “El Desayuno Musical,” the music-driven, interview-heavy program hosted by Javier Romero on WAMR (Amor). Although the station no longer tops the ratings (like other Univision-owned stations in Miami, Amor isn’t monitored by Arbitron’s Portable People Meter), Romero is still very much the go-to guy when artists release new albums.

On Jan. 12, Romero’s 30th anniversary on the air (he started at age 15), the host received calls from an array of artists from around the world, including Julio Iglesias and Chayanne, and was visited in the studio by many others. The display of affection was rare for someone who doesn’t program anything outside of his show. Romero, however, has made a career out of opening the airwaves to new and established artists, often playing music from his weekend program during a single interview.

“Javier Romero is synonymous with credibility,” Universal Music Latina managing director Luis Estrada says. “He’s gained the respect of his listeners with a special combination of seriousness and empathy. He’s a real opinion leader.”

Of course, not everything Romero plays becomes part of Amor’s programming. But his daily show—coupled with his weekend program, “El Hit Parade America”—is often the first valuable step toward mass listenership.

“I’m the more serious guy,” Osvaldo Vega, a frequent guest on Romero’s show, says explaining his lasting appeal. The raciness that permeates much of morning radio “has never been our line,” he says. “My take is, if you keep it pretty clean, if you keep it classy, you’ll have a longer shelf life.”

Although Amor is a top 40 pop station with a rather static playlist that leans toward current trends, the morning show features a palate of sounds from jazz to tropical, although getting invited to Romero’s show isn’t a given for any act.

Station staffers discuss the guest list and weigh its merits, even when an artist is well-known. Romero finds MP3s—the favored form of delivery for many promoters—impersonal. Instead, “I usually do a little interview. Who produced the album? Who wrote the song? Where did you record it? They already know to bring me the CD with certain information.”

With his three decades on the air, the baby-faced Romero came up in an age where DJs could turn songs into hits and labels would often consult them on choosing one single over another. In an era of research and electronic measurement, much of that gut instinct no longer exists in programming. But Romero says, “We like to give a window of opportunity to new music and new acts. I like to give new talent a chance, and I like to give the audience a chance to judge.”

At a time when labels and radio stations are playing it safe, Romero sees few musical trends or movements on the horizon, though he does say, “I do like that salsa is enjoying a comeback with the success of Luis Enrique.”

Who is your audience?

Our best demographic is 18 to 54-year-olds, specifically 25 to 45-year-olds.

You launched your first radio station in 1988. Why did you decide to expand into TV in 1998?

Back in the late 1990s radio had been deregulated by the FCC and the prices skyrocketed. Television hadn’t seen an increase in prices and our radio advertisers were also big advertisers on television. So we thought there was a big opportunity in television. We naively thought there was a lot of programming available. And we found out very quickly that it was difficult to get television programming. So we had to devise our own programming to be able to survive.

One of the trademarks of your Los Angeles radio station, KBUE (La Que Buena), is that it’s very aggressive in programming new acts. What do you see the TV stations?

Our formats are like that. We try to be students of the television business. Television is an evolving art, and what’s popular today may not be popular in two years. Now you have [shows like] “Dancing With the Stars.” We try to do the same by embracing new formats for television and creating them for Hispanic audiences in their language. I think our radio folks find new talent, talent nobody else has seen before, because they see what will be popular two years from now. We hope to do the same on television.

Spanish-language music sales are down sharply, in part because traditional themes are shrinking, while you are expanding. Do you think it’s your duty to promote new music?

I think we have a duty to entertain our audience, and the way they enjoy programming and music is a very big part of Latin culture and plays a role, maybe even more so than in general culture. But it’s not about music alone. We like to mix music with comedy and sketches and very famous actors and actresses. That combination is very powerful.
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Chris Gorog

The ex-Napster chief talks about how labels hampered the launch of subscription services—and why the paid streaming model is back in vogue.

Chris Gorog has played a central role in efforts to monetize digital music downloads and streams. He oversaw Roxio’s conversion to a digital music subscription and download service through the acquisitions of Pressplay and Napster. He later changed the company’s name to Napster and managed its subsequent sale to consumer electronics powerhouse Best Buy.

During that time, Gorog has been on the front lines of digital music’s struggles with various business models, which have included charging for unlimited downloads encoded with digital rights management restrictions, providing free access to music through advertising-supported streaming and offering consumers the ability to stream music through their mobile handsets. While Gorog has long been a key ally of record labels in the digital music market, he’s also been critical of the licensing terms and DRM restrictions that labels have imposed on online music services.

On Jan. 6, he and Napster president Brad Duea announced that they were stepping down from their posts, leaving oversight of the company to Christopher Allen, whose title changed from COO to GM. Although Best Buy eliminated the CEO and COO posts at Napster as part of a restructuring, Gorog says the split was not amicable, but his idea (Billboard, Jan. 13) is now searching for new opportunities in the digital entertainment space through his advisory firm Gorog.net.

In an interview with Billboard, Gorog discusses the evolution of the subscription music market.

With all the negative press the paid subscription model has received through the years, how do you account for the resurgence of the model through such newcomers as MOG, Spotify and others?

Frankly, I feel vindicated. We said for a decade it was about unlimited access—owning nothing and having everything. You very clearly see that trend now. It’s notable Apple bought Lala after previously saying nobody wants to rent music. People love this model once they understand it. The whole concept of owning content on your hard drive in the digital age will become irrelevant over the next decade.

What has changed to make subscriptions more appealing?

The only thing that has changed of any great significance is a very critical thing, and that’s pricing. Selling a product for $13-$15 a month versus $5-$7 a month is an enormous difference to consumers.

But Yahoo Music Unlimited tried that same $5 price point when it first launched and it didn’t make a difference. But I think that goes to my second part of my answer to your question. These ad-supported free streaming services—streaming, you name it—were really effective in teaching people about the opportunity of on-demand streaming. So while they were not successful business models, most all of them were very successful from a consumer uptake perspective, and I think that had a lot to do with educating consumers about what it meant to have on-demand streaming.

Have mobile phones helped solve the portability problem for subscription tracks by streaming from “the cloud” rather than transferring “tethered” downloads?

We all underestimated how successful on-demand mobile streaming could be, and I don’t mean from a consumer perspective but from a technology perspective. Even a couple of years ago, many in the industry felt the networks were not up to a high-quality, on-demand streaming experience. We found that to be obviously untrue. It’s going to be a huge part of the story. The explosion of Pandora’s growth because of their iPhone app was very exciting for the industry, and it’s fun to watch.

Napster stated a few months ago that it wouldn’t offer an iPhone app because the cost of streaming to mobile is too high. Napster actually has had a fully functioning iPhone app for about six months and hasn’t released it yet because there’s ongoing negotiations with the labels. The fundamental tension there is that the labels view it as an opportunity to charge users more for what they view as an additional value, whereas it’s my point of view that consumer access to their Napster account should be ubiquitous.

The labels worry that streaming to portable devices could cannibalize download sales. But I think this is an opportunity for labels and music publishers to get ahead of the curve. This is where consumers want to go. Go back seven or eight years ago. Labels were excited about a world where tens of millions of consumers would pay a monthly fee for unlimited access to their libraries. You now have consumers who are really interested in doing that. So we’re at a pivot point here where if the labels are really focused on pricing structures, they could finally move paid streaming into mass adoption.

What’s the difference between accessing Napster through a phone’s Web browser and accessing it from an app?

Right now, the labels take the view that digital music providers do not have the right to offer on-demand streaming on a mobile handset. They take the view that those rights are limited to the PC. So it’s not a technical issue. It’s a legal issue. What the labels are saying is that it’s not allowed under the contract.

Looking over the last 10 years, what would you have done differently?

With respect to the labels, certainly the most critical mistake was not licensing in the MP3 format many years earlier. Had they done that, companies not only like Rhapsody and Napster, but huge companies like Yahoo and AOL and Microsoft and MTV would have been able to compete with iTunes, because they could have sold downloads that would play on the iPod. By not doing so, it ghettoized every other player in the marketplace, which is why iTunes was able to get an 85% market share almost overnight. That was very destructive to creating a healthy marketplace.

What mistakes did you make during that same time frame?

I would say first as a disclaimer, because we didn’t have downloads that people wanted, you are forced to innovate around what consumers wanted to do. One of our solutions was the portable subscription business. It was horrible, riddled with licenses expiring every 30-40 days. Quite frankly, I don’t know what we would have done if we had not gone down that path. But that path was fraught with peril. The technology was not ready for prime time.

I admire what eMusic did during the same time frame, which was to say, “Consumers want MP3s. We can’t get MP3s from the major labels. So we’ll simply sell the MP3s we can get access to.” That was a courageous and bold approach, and one that ultimately helped move the industry.

How would you assess Napster’s efforts to market subscription services?

Napster really was challenged to come up with that perfect way to teach consumers about what that product was. I think all of our competitors were in the same spot and were unfortunately equally unsuccessful.

I have to ask about that 2005 Super Bowl ad. The much-maligned Super Bowl ad (which featured Napster’s trademark cat holding up a sign comparing the cost of iTunes downloads with Napster’s subscription fee) propelled the hell out of Napster’s visibility. If you look back at our public reports, the Super Bowl launch worked very well. Hundreds of thousands of subs were added over the next six to nine months.

For a longer version of this interview, go to billboard.biz/digital.

We all underestimated how successful on-demand mobile streaming could be… Even a couple of years ago, many in the industry felt the networks were not up to a high-quality, on-demand streaming experience.
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After A Successful 20-Year Career, Chayanne Easily Could Have Gone Indie. But Despite Past Disagreements With The Label, He Re-Upped With Sony

BY LEILA COBO
PHOTOGRAPHS BY RUBEN MARTIN

Leaving
Perhaps more than any other genre, Latin music is notorious for the length of time it takes to break new acts. And yet in the last 18 months, Sony Music Latin, owner of some of Latin music’s most venerable recordings, parted ways with a few of its most active flagship artists, including Ricardo Arjona, Juan Gabriel and Alejandro Fernandez. Hanging in limbo with a contract that expired two years earlier was Puerto Rican artist Chayanne, a pop star who has been with Sony for more than two decades, singing and dancing his way through a hit-studded career that encompasses nine No. 1s on Billboard’s Hot Latin Songs chart—including the No. 14 Latin song of the 2000s, “Y Tu Te Vas”—three No. 1 albums and starring roles in soap operas and a major Hollywood film. That Chayanne re-signed with Sony—despite feeling that his venerable recordings, parted ways with a few of its most active label’s support waned in the last few years—is an example of how legacy artists and their labels can come to terms in a business and artistic environment that’s profoundly changing.

The deal and the release of his latest album, “No Hay Imposibles” (It’s Not Impossible) Feb. 23, mark a new beginning and the potential for an artist-label relationship that in some ways evokes the tight-knit partnerships of the past. The album, mostly comprising signature Chayanne ballads and three up-tempo tracks, was produced with continuous A&R feedback from the label, in contrast to his most recent albums, which he recorded on his own and then delivered to the label. His first single, “Me Enamore de Ti,” is also the theme of a Televisa and Univision soap opera, a type of song he hadn’t created in more than a decade.

And, even though Sony will act as Chayanne’s concert promoter for part of his South American tour, the singer’s recording deal is a traditional one, where the tour agreement wasn’t a condition for signing.

“To me, the current state of affairs is based on something very old-fashioned—trust,” says Alo Verde, Sony Music Latin’s new president. “There isn’t a paper that says Chayanne has to tour with Day 1 [Sony’s management and concert promotion arm]. We have mutual trust that’s the result of our history together. It’s also important that the artist understand that we didn’t invent piracy and that if our work isn’t paid for, we can’t provide a service. So, we look at the formulas that can allow us to continue doing our job.”

The erosion of trust between star artists and their longtime labels is an ongoing topic of discussion in the music world; in the Latin arena many established stars have switched labels in recent years as their contracts have expired. Although labels and artists are reticent about discussing the reasons behind breakups or nonrenewals, most deals today include some form of profit sharing that was absent from previous recording contracts.

In Chayanne’s case, his contract came up for renewal in 2008, after he starred in the soap opera “Gabriel,” which was produced by Mega Films and aired on the Mega TV network in the United States. At that point, Chayanne had finished a successful world tour of 120-plus arena dates (see story, page 23), but his most recent studio album, 2007’s “Mi Tiempo,” had sold less than 100,000 copies stateside, according to Nielsen SoundScan, a number below par for him. Regardless, he began working on a new album, not knowing if he would remain with Sony.

“I was working on this album without a label,” says the singer, who began the process early last year. “I did it believing in my career. I could have gone independent, because there were many alternatives for this album and we looked at all of them. I had conversations with people who had the energy to give me the continuity I wanted for my career—which is to record my albums and tour—while following my musical concept, and without waiting from what I am.”

**EPITOME OF POP**

Chayanne (real name Elmer Figueroa Ace) is the quintessential Latin pop star. A dancer/singer/actor who launched his career in his teens as a member of Puerto Rican boy band Los Chicos, Chayanne is equally adept at singing soaring ballads and up-tempo fare that lends itself to spectacular dance numbers on the arena stage.

Throughout his career, Chayanne’s musical output has remained remarkably consistent, his sound immediately recognizable and his knack for selecting catchy, hummable material intact. Chayanne doesn’t write his own songs, but he knows what he wants and he’s clear about his musical identity, down to the last dance step in his elaborate shows.

While he’s willing to expand arrangements, add instrumentation or incorporate different world beats, he isn’t the type of artist who pursues reinvention, a fact that has allowed him to establish a loyal fan base that crosses the continent and beyond. In 1998, Chayanne starred in the Hollywood film “Dance With Me” alongside Vanessa Williams, and although he’d never released an English-language album, his music was heavily promoted in Spain and Italy, among other European countries.

“Artists like Chayanne are born every 100 years,” Verde says. “They’re guys that are unique; they’re irreplaceable; they’re not forgettable. He’s part of the company’s patrimony, of the many years many people spent developing his career.”

Verde, who was formerly head of Sony Music Sur (encompassing Argentina, Chile, Uruguay and Paraguay), was one of those people—particularly in Argentina, where the singer is...
TIES THAT BIND

Chayanne is an artist who believes strongly in connections, and it's evident in how he does business with, and has done business with, for years.

"Chaf Enterprises is the little nest that allowed me to continue with my career," Chayanne says, getting around his office, located on the 21st floor of an older high-rise facing Miami's Biscayne Bay. Chaf, the company he created in 1988, has Vega as its director plus a staff of three, including Chayanne's brother.

Chayanne greets visitors in the conference room with its view of the bay, adjacent to his personal office that's meticulously neat, a reflection, Vega says, of Chayanne's persona. Today, for example, he's dressed in sweats and sneakers; after this meeting, he'll head to rehearsal for a series of shows and is literally "dancing seven hours a day."

Chaf, through Vega, is the entity that handles all of Chayanne's tours—which often cover more than 100 dates per outing. It also coordinates every aspect of his musical career, including album and tour producers, as well as his sponsorships and his side projects, like acting.

It was Chaf that negotiated Chayanne's current association with Televisa, which is using his song "Me Enamoro de Ti" for the soap opera "Corazon Salvaje." The program currently airs in Mexico and will begin airing in February in the United States on Univision.

Vega says Televisa called her late last summer requesting a soap opera theme for October; it was Chayanne's first for the network in more than a decade.

"I told them we weren't even close to finishing an album, but they told me this was their big production of the year and I didn't want to be [left out]," Vega says. Together, they went over several demos and settled on "Me Enamoro de Ti," which was released to radio in Latin and tropical versions. The track is No. 21 on Billboard's Tropical Billboard airplay chart and No. 22 on Hot Latin Songs.

"Having a hit song on the soap is excellent for us," says Televisa VP of production Jorge Murguia, who considers Chayanne among the top 10 artists in Mexico. Providing Chayanne with promotional exposure across Televisa's many platforms—incorporating print, Internet, and radio—was part of the incentive to get his song on the soap opera. Murguia says.

Onscreen, the track is used for the opening and end credits and as incidental music throughout the daily show. Even though Chayanne doesn't act on the soap, Chaf used some of its footage for the music video, in an effort to link the album with the program's theme. "Soap operas have a very big target—from grandparents to little kids—and those music themes penetrate people's consciousness," Vega says.

Although a soap opera's theme has been known to change from country to country (a different network in a different region may use different music) Vega says this deal calls for Chayanne's song to be used whenever the soap airs, a huge asset for an artist who needs to be worked throughout the continent.

In Mexico, in an effort to take advantage of holiday sales, Sony's regional office had a Christmas promotion where fans could purchase the album in advance for pickup in February and, as a bonus, get the single plus a bachata version of the song that won't be available on the album.

In the digital realm, Sony is aggressively marketing "No Hay Imposibles," including an iTunes Countdown campaign where three tracks will be released (one every two weeks) prior to the album's street date. A campaign on Chayanne's YouTube channel will include short video messages that fans can upload in which they describe what isn't impossible to them.

Perhaps Sony's most significant collaboration with Chaf is Chayanne's tour, traditionally one of the most extensive and lucrative in the Latin music world. Chayanne says that in the recent past, when Sony forayed into the concert promotion business, he wasn't averse to giving the company a piece of the action. "Of course I'm willing, if I feel they have the expertise," he says.

In addition to working jointly on his tour, Sony and Chaf are partnering on any new business or territories that the label opens up for Chayanne. Target markets include Spain, Italy and, in particular, Brazil, where Chayanne has done some promotion, but where Sony now plans to push harder, including Brazilian tour dates.

"Because of my background, it's hard for me to envision my career without a label," Chayanne says. "It's not the same. The road is harder without the infrastructure of support. Plus, I believe in record labels. And I believe in the people that work in record labels."

Round Trip

Chayanne's Upcoming World Tour Includes Two U.S. And Three Mexican Legs

As a seasoned performer who's been onstage since the age of 10, Chayanne is as well-known for his live shows as he is for hit songs.

According to Billboard Boxscore, the singer's last U.S. tour, in 2007, yielded a gross of $12,669,655 and an attendance of 229,461. The route featured 36 shows in 25 cities.

But the United States is only one small portion of Chayanne's touring circuit, which usually comprises 120-150 shows in its own right, following Europe and Latin America, with the second U.S. leg slated for the fall, for a total of some 125 shows.

Different promoters that Chayanne has long worked with in each country (his U.S. partner is still being negotiated) will present the tour.

The biggest break from tradition is Chayanne's partners with his label, Sony Music Latin, which for the first time will present his tour in Latin America's Southern cone countries: Argentina, Chile, Uruguay and Paraguay, for roughly 30 shows.

Giving up tour rights in a major market was a leap of faith that Chayanne and Vega made as a gesture of good will toward a record company with which they were on the same artistic and financial page. At no point, Vega says, did Sony ask Chayanne to relinquish some of his rights as a condition of his label deal.

"It's not in me to do that," Sony Music Latin president Alo Verde says. "It was clear, from our relationship, that we would find a way to do business together, beyond the content alone."

Vega says Sony will locally use the same tour producers and promoters that Chayanne has worked with for years, but Sony will be the presenting entity and coordinate the marketing and promotion strategy. As for promotion, the partnership gives Sony further incentive to market Chayanne's album together with his tour.

With regard to integrated marketing, the most noteworthy piece of the campaign is the concert ticket, dubbed a "Music Ticket," which will include content tailored for each country. "The ticket will have added value," Verde says, explaining that ticket buyers will gain access to a Web site featuring content such as videos, music and photos.

That applies to other areas as well. Because the site will also allow fans to download a certain number of songs and rate them, Chayanne and his team see firsthand just how much music fans prefer in specific markets. —LC

Frequent flier: CHAYANNE is preparing for 125 shows in 2010.
How ADAMYOUNG Went From A Minnesota Basement To The Top Of The Hot 100

By Cortney Harding

Photograph by Pamela Littky

New York top 40 station WHTZ’s annual Jingle Ball is always a study in excess. Screaming tweens and their ear-plugged parents pack Madison Square Garden; onstage, genetically blessed young women in a metric ton of make-up and men who either fall into the “roguish thug with a heart of gold” or “sweet young boy you can take home to mom (assuming she was not crushed at the riot at the mall)” archetypes sing about love and/or partying. Backstage, one imagines record executives rolling, Scrooge McDuck-style, in piles of cash.

In the midst of all this, a quiet, floppy-haired, sad-eyed 20-something named Adam Young took the stage. Less than a year ago, Young had never played for anyone other than his parents, who might have overheard him making music in the basement. Now he was in front of a sold-out arena crowd, performing his hit song, “Fireflies.”

“Fireflies” first cracked the Billboard Hot 100 the week of Sept. 5, entering at No. 97. Two months later, an artist who sang about the simple joys of bugs and lightning bugs was at the top of the chart, much to the amazement of everyone, including Young himself. Owl City’s debut album, “Ocean Eyes,” has sold 700,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan, while “Fireflies” has sold 3 million digital downloads.

“It’s a little scary,” Young says a few days after Jingle Ball. “I went from having nothing to having, well, a lot.”

A couple of years ago Young was living with his parents in a small town in Minnesota, unloading trucks at a warehouse and hating his life. “I had nothing to do, so I started making music with some friends,” he says. “But I had my own ideas, so I went off and started doing my own stuff with this ghetto little setup I had. I posted it on MySpace, and people started sending it around. It was funny, because only a few of my friends knew about it, and my hometown was actually the last place to catch on.”

As the MySpace plays started to rack up, Young took the time to respond to all the kids who reached out and sent him messages. And as his following grew, major labels took notice.

“A former employee that I stayed in touch with tipped me off to him,” Universal Republic president/CEO Avery Lipman says. “When we did get in touch with him, it took us about six weeks to convince him to come to New York and meet with us. He didn’t have a lawyer or a manager, and I’m pretty sure he’d never even been to New York before.”

Young eventually relented and flew to New York with a family friend after he hired a manager and a lawyer and inked a deal with Universal Republic.

For Lipman, the next step was figuring out what would make it onto an album and who would produce it. The label finally decided to repurpose some of his existing material and that Young would continue to produce all his own songs. “We did bring in a mixer, though,” Lipman says. “He resisted at first, because he was so used to doing his own stuff.”

“My stance was that Adam should stay in his natural environment to get the best result,” manager Steve Burksky says. “But at the same time, we had to get him out of the basement a bit. I remember booking his first two shows in Chicago and Minneapolis in February, and they both sold out. He was really terrified; he didn’t want to tour and wanted to just be a studio rat. His fans did a lot of the work, though, and he made it through.”

Once Young delivered the album in May, the campaign began in earnest. He was already on tour, mixing headlining dates, support shows for Reliant K and festivals, but now that the album was done, everything could move to the next stage.

“We had a couple core tenets for the setup,” Burksky says. “No. 1, we didn’t want the story to be ‘MySpace kid goes major.’ We were very quiet about Universal Republic’s role, and a lot of the services we used were out-of-house.”

Burksky says his ultimate goal was for the press and tastemakers to discover Young in the same way his fans did. “We never said, ‘Hey, this is Universal’s big new priority,’ or anything like that,” he says. “We presented it to insiders in a very organic way.”

Right after the album was delivered, Owl City announced a single-a-month campaign, with each track released in cooperation with a media partner. Both Spinner and Spin.com posted tracks, but then iTunes came in with a request: The retailer wanted to make “Fireflies” its free Single of the Week.

Initially, Burksky says he struggled with the decision. “‘Fireflies’ was never supposed to be the single,” he says. “But it was an opportunity we couldn’t pass up.”

Universal Motown Republic Group executive VP Cameo Carlson says Owl City already had a solid sales following in the electronic category at iTunes, and she knew the act had editorial support, too. “iTunes looked at a few tracks, but they really loved ‘Fireflies,’” she says. “And once it took off there, we moved up the album release, and it acted as a catalyst at radio.”
Ironically, radio was never part of the original plan to break Owl City. But with the success of the iTunes promotion (Bursky says “Fireflies” is the second-most successful Single of the Week, measured by how many people downloaded the single and then purchased the album), the song went wide to alternative radio at the end of July.

“It was incredibly polarizing,” Bursky says. “I went to KROQ [in Los Angeles] and they showed me some of the feedback—most of the girls loved it, most of the dudes hated it. But we had great traction at alternative, and we decided to take it to top 40.”

Despite the fact that the song sounded little like typical top 40 fare, it was warmly embraced at the format. “The song has exactly what is needed to be a hit—infectious melody and lyrics,” KUDD Salt Lake City operations manager Brian Michel says. “That alone, regardless of how ‘different’ a song may feel texturally, can drive a song all the way to the top. In this case, you had the two necessary elements, but the textural difference actually worked in its favor to stand out from everything else.”

The song also started climbing the Hot 100, steadily leaping up the chart, until, two months after it first entered, it was No. 1.

As Owl City skyrocketed, people started offering theories for why the song rose so quickly. Bloggers began pointing out that “Fireflies” sounded rather similar to indie act the Postal Service, an allegation that Young brushes off.

“I’m getting compared to good bands, I’m happy,” he says. “It really beats being compared to terrible ones.”

Bursky says some of Owl City’s success is due to Young’s positivity. “In a format that is so full of sex and drugs, it’s nice to have something that’s so hopeful,” he says.

Young walks the walk: He doesn’t drink or smoke, and he even gets upset when reporters curse in front of him. The only time during his interview with Billboard that he gets a bit risqué is when he’s asked about his huge preteen fan base, laughingly admitting that he wouldn’t mind if more of his female fans were of legal age.

And Owl City may be at the leading edge of a new trend as one of several uncommon acts to break at pop radio in 2009. Lady Gaga, arguably the biggest pop star of last year, sang more conventional-sounding songs but often looked like an alien and downplayed her sexuality in favor of channeling avant-garde performance artists.

KKHH Houston PD Mark Adams says the rise of Owl City and Lady Gaga can be attributed to one thing: catchy music. “Top 40 is largely a song-driven format,” he says. “If the record is hot, if there’s audience/listener demand for it, programmers are going to find a way to get it on the radio. ‘Fireflies’ is just a really great song.”

But one great song does not a career make. Still, Bursky remains confident that Young is around for the long haul.

“The idea that Owl City will be one and done hasn’t crossed my mind,” Bursky says. “The album is really deep, and we’re building a brand. We’re selling merch, we’re selling tickets, we’re doing press and TV—I feel good about where we are.”

Bursky aims to keep Young busy for the foreseeable future. Owl City will play a sold-out tour of the United States in late January and early February, then head to the United Kingdom, Europe and Australia for a run of shows before returning stateside for another three-month tour.


After his tour wraps, Bursky plans to send Young back to the studio to start recording a follow-up. “I’m going to put him in the studio in May and make a record for next summer so we can go seamlessly into the new album,” he says. “We don’t want to have a lag time where he disappears.”

But even if things don’t play out and “Fireflies” winds up being one of those songs that provokes a ‘Hey, whatever happened to that guy?’ response, Young says he’s grateful for how things have turned out.

“I got to go to China,” he says. “I got to see the world and meet amazing people and play music for them. If I weren’t doing this, I’d be working in a warehouse. So I’m pretty happy with everything that’s happened so far.”
HILL OUT, HYSTERICAL

tweens—you know, both of you who just bought your first-ever copy of Billboard based on the Nick Jonas cover line and the hope of new pictures, squeeeeal!—the Jonas Brothers aren’t breaking up. But Nick Jonas, the youngest member of the trio that’s sold 4.3 million albums, according to Nielsen SoundScan, is debuting his side project—as Nick Jonas & the Administration—with the release of “Who I Am” (Hollywood Records) Feb. 2. (No, really, they’re not breaking up. When Jonas announced the project, the Brothers went on the offense and posted the fact they’re not breaking up in all caps on their MySpace page. What more evidence do you need?) “Who I Am” isn’t a teenybopper project, but rather one that combines Jonas’ youthful appeal with some rock-solid industry veterans. The Administration comprises John Fields—the Jonas Brothers’ longtime producer—on bass, and former New Power Generation members Sonny Thompson, Michael Bland and Tommy Barbarella. The album was recorded in two weeks at Nashville’s Blackbird Studios, although the 17-year-old Jonas says he was stowing away solo song ideas—ones with a rougher edge than those he writes with his brothers—for the better part of two years. The first single, “Who I Am,” debuted on the Dec. 2 telecast of CBS’ Grammy Awards nominations concert. It holds at No. 8 with a bullet on Billboard’s Heatseekers Songs chart and has sold 120,000 downloads, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The band is currently on a 14-stop club tour to promote the album, including dates in New York at the Beacon Theater and in Los Angeles at the Wiltern. During a practice session for the Grammy nominations show in Burbank, Calif., Jonas sat down with Billboard and talked about the new album, what’s next for the Jonas Brothers and why his first stop after he’s elected president of the United States will be Roswell, N.M.
Why did you decide to record a side project?

This all came about around two years ago when I started writing some songs that stylistically weren't right for the Jonas Brothers. I was finding inspiration from Elvis Costello, Prince, Stevie Wonder—all these guys that I've really admired. After writing about eight or nine songs, I thought, "It would be great to go record this some day." The timing worked out—we had two weeks off from some touring and recording that my brothers and I were doing—and so I went to Nashville with the Administration and I made this record.

Two weeks is a tight deadline to record an entire album.

Nashville was intense and going into it I was excited, but a little nervous. But once I got there and sat down with the musicians for 10 minutes I knew it would be possible. It was really less than two weeks—it was about eight days—and then the mixing went on for another four. I left with a CD and was really proud and happy about it.

I just think that it's all about learning from each other. When we got there it was me sharing an idea for a song and if it wasn't completely finished, then we'd work together to make sure it was done. It was recorded like a record from the '60s or the '70s, in the sense that we're all in individual isolation booths and we're recording simultaneously as opposed to what you do in a lot of pop music these days, which is record one thing and go to the next, [with] a lot of overdubs. We decided to make it kind of raw and real, and there are very minimal overdubs. I felt like a real recording of a band and it made for a good vibe in the studio, too.

Was it difficult adjusting to this new style of recording?

Going into the whole recording process, I really didn't know what to expect. I'd met some of the musicians before—Michael Bland and John Fields—but Tommy Barbarella and David Ryan Harris [who played guitar on the album; Sonny Thompson is the guitarist for the tour] were new. I sat down with them and talked about how I saw it going down. It was a learning process in a lot of ways. It was the best class I could ever be a part of.

Prince plays a big part in this whole project because a lot of the guys are from the New Power Generation, so a lot of the time I was like, "I really think we could do it like this Prince song"—kind of forgetting for a minute that these were the guys who played it and they were all right there with me.

Talk about "Who I Am," the single and the album.

All of the songs on the album it's probably the most personal in the sense that it tells a story about me. This one is just about wanting to find someone who loves you for who you are. It's kind of a hopeful song. It's actually the second song we recorded for the record and so it was early in the process, but still one of my favorites. Some of the other tracks that are standout for me are things like "Rose Garden"—that was the first song I wrote for the record. It's a story about a young girl who finds her safe place in the rose garden—wherever it is in life where you feel most comfortable, where you can be yourself, where you can find love or just be alone if you need to.

Some of the other fun ones are "Last Time Around"—the Stevie Wonder influence is definitely on that one—and then there's "Olive an Arrow." That ties in the concept of the presidency and it has one of my favorite lines in the record: "We've never been into honesty/But promise me/You'll let me know/When you're lying."

With the song titles and the band name, it's obvious you're quite taken with the office of the president. Why?

I've always been fascinated with it, and partially because I hope to be the president one day—I hope to run. Another [reason is] I think that it really reflects a lot of things about who we are in this country and the culture. It's amazing how you can tie stuff in with—there's conspiracy theories, state of emergency, olive and an arrow, rose garden—all of these things you think just relate to one thing can really expand. You can find a whole song about it.

You really want to run for president?

I've said it in the past as kind of a joke, because a lot of people have said, "You're a leader, you seem like you could run for president one day," and I said, "That's cool."

But another reason is I really want to know if there are aliens. That's the real reason. If there's a way to figure that out without having to run for president, maybe that would be good.

You have to get to Area 51 somehow.

Exactly.

In the short term, though, you're just going on tour with the Administration.

This record is meant to be played live. The recording is basically live and so we got together and started rehearsing. It felt like there were going to be so many opportunities to expand them for the live versions—make up new things if we want to, change them—just so many possibilities.

I know it's going to be an emotional experience singing these songs, trying to pour as much of my heart into them as I can and knowing that the tour itself is going to be that kind of intimate vibe. I want people to really hear the music, so I want seated venues like theaters where you can really hear the music.

How involved are you in the marketing efforts for the Administration?

I had a meeting with the management side and I told them I'd love to be a part of every detail of this. I'm copied on every e-mail that comes in. I'm heavily involved. It really is a passion project for me, and being involved in every step is important to me. There's a lot of things coming in, but we have a good time and it comes all together.

You just joined Twitter. Why now?

I really like the Twitter. I've been so kind of, cold feet about it for so long. We have one as the Brothers, and it's been good for us to talk to our fans—we have over a million followers—but we don't use it as much as some other people do. But with this, I was like, "You know what, this could be a way to have that connection with the fans of this project." I started using it three days ago, and I think I have over 100,000 followers now. It's so instant—you can pretty much say anything or start any kind of hooral about anything. It really is good for the setup of this project to be able to say, "I have an exciting announcement for all of you," and instantly there's messages like, "Oh, what is it?" You feel like you're having a conversation with people directly.

I get a really weird message last night, though. I was tweeting, and I checked my inbox on the Twitter, and someone said, "I can see you tweeting." I was in my house and I was like, "This is where it gets strange." I started looking around and yes, it was a bit uncomfortable.

What have you learned from your Jonas Brothers experience that applies to going solo?

Obviously, I'm so thankful for them giving me the time to do this project. But I think the biggest change is when people say, "What's it like having your brothers onstage with you?" and the answer is usually, "Oh, it's great because you feel secure because you have them with you and they're your brothers and there's this bond." Not having them is going to be a little different, but I think that they're always going to be there because that's where I learned how to be who I am onstage and with music.

What's next for the Jonas Brothers?

We're going to shoot the second season of our TV show, "JONAS," and "Camp Rock 2" is coming out, and there's another world tour. There's a lot of things coming up that will keep us very busy.

Also, the reality show with the Disney Channel, "Living the Dream," got picked up. They were with us all this past month. The first one we did with them was an introduction to our world—but this one will show the real side of what it's like to be on the road and far away from home.

Are you interested in pursuing acting?

I'm not really sure. Joe's really passionate about that. Kevin has some dreams of going behind the camera, but for me personally, I don't know—I think music comes first, always. But if the right role came up and it was something I was really passionate about, I might go and try to do that. But I really enjoy where we've been able to tie the music in with the acting.

How will you balance your work with the Administration and with the Jonas Brothers?

It's going to be a year of liminality for our team and for my brothers—just learning how to balance everything out. We have an idea of how it will all work, and a hope and a dream of how it will all work, but it's going to be a year of learning.
'WAR' AND PEACE

Reformed Hellraiser Daniel Merriweather Takes The Long Road To Success

Daniel Merriweather has no desire to be remembered as a runner-up.

Currently preparing for the U.S. release of his debut album, the soulful Australian has already enjoyed a British breakthrough—but so far, the No. 1 spot has proved elusive.

Merriweather first climbed the Official Charts Co. (OCC) U.K. listings in April 2007, singing on Mark Ronson’s “Stop Me” (his take on the album, the soulful Australian has already enjoyed a run as did Merrick’s debut album, “Love & War,” which has sold 255,000 copies in the United Kingdom, according to the OCC. The album has also gone top 40 in Austria, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Switzerland and Australia, where he won the 2009 ARIA Award for best male artist.

Now, RCA/Jive Label Group chairman/CEO Barry Weiss says, “We think Daniel’s on the verge of a world-wide success story.”

“He has the hits, no question,” RCA Music Group senior VP of marketing Aaron Borns says. “Daniel’s success in Europe gives him a launch pad here, certainly for the media.”

Merriweather delivered an intimate performance Jan. 16 for noncommercial KCRW Los Angeles on the rooftop of the Paley Center for Media ahead of a handful of theater dates, which started Jan. 20 at the Troubadour in L.A. before moving on to the Florida Room in Miami (Jan. 22) and New York’s Gramercy Theater (Jan. 26).

The lead track for the United States is the smoldering ballad “Red”—a U.K. No. 5 hit in May 2009—which is targeting hot AC and triple A stations. It will go to radio in mid-February, while VH1 will feature Merriweather as a You Oughta Know artist beginning Feb. 1. He is booked to appear on “Late Show With David Letterman” Feb. 23 and “Jimmy Kimmel Live!” Feb. 26.

Further U.S. TV spots and synchs are taking shape, while a performance of “Red,” taped at Merriweather’s Nov. 9, 2009, showcase date at Joe’s Pub in New York, will premiere on Amazon ahead of the album release. The two-time MTV Europe Music Award-nominated singer is also tipped to appear during Fashion Week (Feb. 11-18) in his adopted home of New York.

“His dream is to be able to keep living here and making records until I’m 85,” Merriweather says. “I live by the idea that ‘if you build it, they will come.’ If they don’t come, then you didn’t build it big enough.”

It’s frustrating to miss the top spot, but someone once told me the best songs go to No. 2. I can live with that.”

—DANIEL MERRIWEATHER

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—DANIEL MERRIWEATHER
"Yellow Submarine." The summer on the U.K.
Reporting by Roger Friedman, James Hibberd featured a storyline for the cast of director Old Fred meets up with Cary Elwes, Dean event, which will also be Grammy producer Ken Cole and John Legend. It's "all together now" from synth pop to indie pop to alternative dance, but the truth lies somewhere in the intersection of all three. "We don't tend to settle down in one style," Clarke says. "Our only goal when we record is to move forward—we don't want to change the sound too much, but we want to develop." The development is clear on the band's new release, "One Life Stand," which comes out Feb. 1 in the United Kingdom on Parlophone/JME and Feb. 2 in the United States on Astralwerks. While the new album is less dancey and more contemplative than Hot Chip's previous releases, representatives behind the release on both sides on the Atlantic are confident the band's fan base will stick around. "We're covering the key core with a limited-edition package that has video and exclusive tracks," Astralwerks GM/executive VP of marketing Glenn Mendlinger says. "We're going to offer exclusives for different retailers, supervise the indie coalitions and do an In單ond poster pre-order, so there's something for everyone." Mendlinger adds that the band's greatest strength is its large touring base, which is rare for many U.K. acts in the States. "A lot of bands come from overseas and do what I call a 'U.K. tour in the U.S.'—they play eight markets and then disappear," he says. "Hot Chip were willing to spend the time over here and it really helped them." The band has lined up a U.S. tour that in

"The album I always dreamed of writing and recording," Alexis Clarke and Owen Taylor are the rare musicians who show up early for an interview. But then again, most of what the members of U.K. act Hot Chip do defies expectations. They've been called everything from synth pop to indie pop to alternative dance, but the truth lies somewhere in the intersection of all three. "We're always disappointed at not being able to capture the same feeling as a live show. But I made this record in the studio and worked with the studio, I felt very much aware of how it had to be." "With '83, we will try to get heavier rotation on French and German radio," Figieri says, but adds that "Sophie isn't really a hit-singer type. It's onstage where she's best, so she'll be touring as much as possible across Europe." Following a Jan. 24 MIDEM Showcase, Hunger has European live shows scheduled from March through the sum-

"There are so many moving parts to this record, and part of the fun is that we're trying a lot of stuff and hoping it all converges."

—ALEX BRAHL, CO-MANAGER
includes slots at key festivals during the spring and summer. But time spent stateside doesn’t mean Hot Chip will neglect its countrymen. The act will tour there in February, concluding with two nights at the 5,000-capacity London O2 Academy Brixton Feb. 15-16 with the release of lead single “Right Here, Right Now.” Conehead, he adds, is actively campaign begins in earnest Graham Stokes says the album audience with 10 dates in Holland, Belgium, France, Germany and Italy in March. At radio, the title track lead single was playlisted at the BBC’s national top 40 station Radio 1 six weeks ahead of its release. “It’s really good sign,” Parkephlo VP of promotions and press Kevin McCabe says. “That’s how the record has been received—everyone has been genuinely pleased they are back and by the record they have delivered.” McCabe is hopeful that future singles “Hand Me Down Your Love” and “I Feel Better” could even get Hot Chip on the playlist of BBC AC network Radio 2 for the first time. It’s the country’s most popular radio station with an audience reach of 16.6 million in the United Kingdom, according to official radio research group RAAR. “One Life Stand” has received some plays on Radio 2 from DJs who are fans of the group. Radio in the States also has been receptive. “We haven’t even officially serviced the single, but we gave it to some key tastemakers, and now it’s No. 5 at [Los Angeles public radio station] KCRW,” Mendinger says. “This is also the first time we’re taking the band wider at radio, not just to college and specialty stations, but to commercial alternative.”

Whether the expansion experiment works or not, the members of Hot Chip pare quite content either way. “We’re ambitious in a creative sense, but we’re happy where we are,” Taylor says. “In a way, it’s nice to play smaller venues and connect with the audience.”

Additional reporting by Andre Paine in London.

1. Why did you decide to make this album a return to the music that inspired you as a child? People were always trying to figure out what kind of music I grew up listening to, based on what kinds of music I do now, and threw out the idea of what an African artist should be doing. I was also about time for me to thank artists. When you’re writing music, you have to be careful, because people listen to it at every age. It can derail somebody’s life or it can empower somebody, and that’s what music did to me. The music that I listened to kept me away from trouble.

2. How did you choose the songs? That was the hardest thing. They came and they came and I’m like, ‘You know what? Whatever comes, that’s it.’ One of those was really difficult, a song that I had been looking for so long [“110 Main Chumpa Ke Pyar Ka” from Bollywood film “Aan”]... the music is a memory of my father [who] passed away last year. I would be dragging him to the movie all the time, and he understood that it was not only the movie that I wanted to see, but the songs also.

3. Why do you think the message of Curtis Mayfield’s song “Move On Up” still resonates, and what did you want to bring to your interpretation? I wanted to dedicate that song to the youth of Africa, for them to continue dreaming even if the times are hard. And to all you kids, because Curtis Mayfield wrote that song, not only for the poor kids, it’s for every kid today that’s struggling to find their identity, their place in a society that is changing so fast.

4. The song “Agbalagba” was offered as a free download with Uwem Akpan’s book “Say You’re One of Them.” What is the story in the song? “Agbalagba” means ‘elderly’ or ‘ancestor.’ Elderly people or ancestors—what is the legacy that they leave to us? They have cherished us and protected us. They are the reason we are here today. So how are we going to continue that legacy? Every child in the world should be free to go to school, not to be sold, not to be turned into prostitutes, not to face our differences in opinions. Religion shouldn’t be a matter in their lives.

5. You’re a UNICEF Ambassador and started the Batonga Foundation to provide secondary education to African girls. How will downloads of album track “You Can Count On Me” benefit this work? Every song that is downloaded gives a vaccine to a child or pregnant woman, because we need millions of vaccines. It’s amazing that we’re in the 21st century and every four minutes there’s a new child with tetanus. I can’t send those girls to school if they aren’t born, or if they die before they reach secondary school.

6. You’ve been a performer for a long time, across several continents and genres. What changes in the music industry have most affected your career? iTunes and YouTube have allowed me to exist in more people’s houses than before. It gives the people the choice of choosing what they want to listen to... versus all the politics of the single... The only downside is that the sales of the actual CDs have decreased drastically... but if they want to buy the whole CD, you know they are hardcore fans. It’s more in the hands of the consumer to choose.
ALBUMS

ROBIN THICKE

Sex Therapy: The Session
Producers: various
Star Tracks/Interscope
Release Date: Dec. 15

Robin Thicke might be the only R&B crooner currently working whose love-song lexicon includes the word “brasierie.” The “Lost Without U” star drops the term in his new album’s song “Meiple” while informing a lady friend of their plans for a weekend in Paris before dinner at shopping at Chanel and having afternoon tea at the Ritz. “A lady don’t lift things, open doors, stand alone,” he sings over a sample from Brigitte Bardot’s “Moi Je Joue.” “Not when she with me, babe.” Throughout this quick follow-up to last year’s “Something Else,” Thicke reveals a side of his personality that’s flashier and funnier than the Oprah-approved image that was cultivated with previous hits. Musically, too, he flexes an eclectic streak last heard on his underappreciated 2003 debut, moving from the steely soul sonics of the title track to the club-friendly bounce of “Shakin’ It Daddy” to the dark electro-rock of “Ellevates.” There’s plenty to chew on here. Dig in.—MM

ALEJANDRO FERNANDEZ

Dos Mundos—Evolución + Tradición
Producers: Aureo Bequeiro, Joan Sebastian
Universal Music/Latino/ForoUSA
Release Date: Dec. 8

Alejandro Fernandez’s superstars status lies in his ability to convincingly deliver in both pop and mariachi, with alternating releases in each genre. With new two-disc set “Dos Mundos,” Fernandez tackles both simultaneously—and the results are well-crafted, sophisticated takes on each style. The pop songs range from anheimic ballads to tunes with prominent acoustic guitars, while the mariachi set stretches the genre’s boundaries, lending it a confident breeziness. Highlights are a spirited bolero (“Rocacora”) and an almost American country-style “La Historia Que No” that one can imagine as a vintage “MTV Unplugged” production. Those who buy the pop and mariachi albums separately won’t be disappointed, but the versatility of Fernandez and his producers can best be appreciated in combination.—ABY

TIMBALAND

Shock Value II
Producers: Timbaland, Barry Hankerson
Interscope/Blackground
Release Date: Dec. 8

After producing mega-hits by Justin Timberlake and Nelly Furtado in 2006, Timbaland’s first “Shock Value” album felt like a well-deserved victory lap upon its release the following year. “Shock Value II” offers another postseason-R&B aesthetic, but the producer pushes even harder to establish himself as a featured artist instead of just the percussion sizzles, with the track “Morning After Dark” and Timberlake collaboration “Carry Us”. Immediately competing to burn up dancefloors.

KE$HA

Animal
Producers: various
Kemosabe Entertainment/RC4
Release Date: Jan 5

Pop singer Ke$ha scored a No. 1 hit with her frothy first single, “Tik Tok,” but the 22-year-old protege of Lukasz “Dr. Luke” Gottwald still has plenty to prove on her debut album, “Animal.” Luckily for her, the set teems with choruses that stick with the listener for days, from the blissful “Your Love Is My Drug” to the catty “Backstabber.” Equally prevalent, however, are the heavily processed vocals, which make it difficult to tell whether Ke$ha can actually sing. The song “Take It Off,” which lifts heavily from Robert Miles’ 1995 trance-lite hit “Children,” demonstrates how easily individuality can get lost in a sea of Auto-Tune. Another misstep is the agile, Vanity 6-esque “I’m A Gypsy,” which could only appeal to the most heartless of teens. (Ke$ha blares on the chorus, “You need a CAT scan?”) But she does have a point: This music is definitely not for the faint of heart.—MH

ROB ZOMBIE

Hellbilly Deluxe 2
Producer: Rob Zombie
Loud & Proud/Roadrunner
Release Date: Feb. 2

Sequels are tricky in any art form, but Rob Zombie—who has revived the "Halloween" horror film franchise and has "The Blob" on his radar—certainly seems like the right guy for the job. While “Hellbilly Deluxe 2” certainly captures the Saturday afternoon matinee spirit of his 1998 solo debut, it’s also a different kind of creature. With a facile band and a particularly fertile collaborator in guitarist John 5, “Hellbilly Deluxe 2” is a more diverse and wide-ranging effort. From the industrial grind of “Sick Bubblegum” and “Mars Needs Women” to the garage-y fury of “Death and Destiny Inside the Dream Factory” and the bluesy, slide-flued classic rock stomps of such tracks as “Virgin Witch” and “Burn,” Acoustic guitars (talk about horror) even pop up a couple of times. Movie dialects, lovas and Rob Zombie’s famous “Jesus Frankenstein,” “Werewolf, Baby!” and “Werewolf Women of the SS” keep Zombie on well-established B-movie terrain. And if some of the song arrangements overreach, the nearly 10-minute “The Man Who Laughs,” complete with orchestrations and Tommy Cifuentes’ four-minute drum solo (take that, Iron Butterfly!), ends the album on an appropriately epic note.—GG

MARGIE BLYE

Stronger With Each Tear
Producers: various
Matriarch/Geffen/Big Machine
Release Date: Dec. 21

Like fine wine and Brett Favre, some things just get better with time. Another example: Mary J. Blige. On her ninth studio album, “Stronger With Each Tear,” the soulful chanteuse strutts confidently through a tight set of 12 songs about love, devotion and inner strength that lends more midtempo than ballad; more uplifting than angst-ridden. Hip-hop/pop lead single “I Am” perfectly captures the album’s overall mood: Blige has never been in better voice—or more adventurous. The metaphor-rich “Kitchen” (“Never let a girl cook in your kitchen”) finds the singer/songwriter wittily admonishing would-be man-stealers. Despite pleasing hooks (TL on “Good Love,” T-Dub on “Hood Love”), unadulterated Blige remains the draw. That’s especially evident on another midtempo charmer, “I Feel Good” (“Like the moon is shining just for me/I feel just too damn good”). A Blige album wouldn’t be complete, however, without a heart-wrenching, emotional tug, which is supplied here with the poignant “I Can See in Color” from the “Precious” soundtrack. Throughout “Stronger With Each Tear,” Blige solidly reinforces why she endures as a fan favorite.—GM
**SINGLES**

**THE KINGS**

**Smile Kid**

Producers: S'AM & Sluggo

Release Date: Dec. 8

On sophomore album "Smile Kid," Florida rock act The Kings continues to turn out catchy pop-punk anthems, but this time with a heavier emphasis on blackened riffs and hokey melodies. The single "Heaven Can Wait" straddles the line between synth rock and poppy pop, complete with a collection of head-bopping, toe-tapping piano chords, while "We'll Be a Dream" is an arena-sized ballad, featuring the soaring vocals of Disney teen idol Demi Lovato. Despite its rather descriptive title, "In-N-Out (Animal Style)" is actually a feel-good ode to Los Angeles with short, choppy riffs and an arm-stretching bridge that will have listeners singing along before they even know it.—CB

**CLIPSE**

**Til the Casket Drops**

Producers: various

Release Date: Dec. 8

Hip-hop duo Clipse was bound to face high expectations for its new album, "Til the Casket Drops." Afterall, Virginia brothers Pusha T and Malice will be measured up to the heavy-hitting chart-toppers, which featured snarling rap-rhythms and lightning-fast rhymes. Constant collaborators the Neptunes. Unfortunately, the third single from Snoop Dogg's "Malice 'N Wonderland" serves as a re-introduction to the veteran West Coast's hazy hip-hop style. "I Wanna Rock" gets its title and bass-heavy groove from Rob Base & DJ E-Z Rocks' "Hit Takes Two," and like the extended "Snoop Dogg" chants in its chorus, the song features all of the familiar Snoop elements. The rapper reiterates his Lothario persona with a metaphor that plays, somewhat tastelessly. off of his moniker: "Call me Michael Vick 'cause I'm a dog, ho," he raps. Snoop knows full well that he's an elder statesman in the hip-hop game ("I'm almost 20," but before anyone thinks he's out of touch with the culture, the rapper name-checks a certain young MC later in the song: "She call me Superwoman, I'm on my Soulja Shit (You're Out)".—CB

**ROCK**

**BROKEN BELLS**

**In My Head**

Producers: J.R. Rotem

Writers: J. Desrouleaux, J. Rotem, C. Kelly

Singles: various

"In My Head" is a no-nonsense, no-frills burner that's a nod to the early days of the Stone Roses, with a gritty, raw feel and a pounding beat. The song features a driving bassline and a catchy hook that will stick in your head for days. "In My Head" is a great example of how to make a song that's both accessible and memorable.—CM

**LADY ANTEBELLUM**

**American Honey**

Producers: Paul Worley, Lady Antebellum

Writers: S. Stevens, C. R. Barlowe, H. Lindsey

Publishers: various

"American Honey" is a powerful love song that explores the complexities of a relationship. The song features a strong female lead and a driving beat that keeps you on your toes. The lyrics are poetic and heartfelt, and the production is top-notch. This is a song that will stay with you long after you've heard it.—CM

**WE THE KINGS**

**Smile Kid**

Producers: S'AM & Sluggo

Release Date: Dec. 8

On sophomore album "Smile Kid," Florida rock act The Kings continues to turn out catchy pop-punk anthems, but this time with a heavier emphasis on blackened riffs and hokey melodies. The single "Heaven Can Wait" straddles the line between synth rock and poppy pop, complete with a collection of head-bopping, toe-tapping piano chords, while "We'll Be a Dream" is an arena-sized ballad, featuring the soaring vocals of Disney teen idol Demi Lovato. Despite its rather descriptive title, "In-N-Out (Animal Style)" is actually a feel-good ode to Los Angeles with short, choppy riffs and an arm-stretching bridge that will have listeners singing along before they even know it.—CB
Making The Grade
After Four Singles, Sarah Buxton Breaks Into Country's Top 30

In her self-penned bio, Sarah Buxton says she “had a whole plan mapped out” when she signed with Lyric Street Records in 2005. Then reality revised her best-laid plans, as her bio further notes, “What’s the old adage? ‘If you wanna hear God laugh, tell him your plans.’ Well … I told him. And he laughed!”

The singer/songwriter is thankful her career didn’t take off quite as quickly as she hoped. Her latest single, “Outside My Window,” has become the highest-charting of four that Lyric Street has released since 2006. As Buxton’s first single to break into the top 30 on Billboard’s Hot Country Songs chart, “Outside My Window” peaked at No. 25 on last week’s chart. With 29 weeks on the tally, “Outside” is now No. 27. Buxton’s self-titled album—on which she shares production credits with Dann Huff, Craig Wiseman and Blair Daly—is due Feb. 23.

“I would have liked to hit one home run and then another home run,” Buxton says. “But I almost feel lucky that things didn’t happen back then, because the things that I’ve learned about life and about myself have been really valuable for who I’m going to be as a woman.”

A native Kansan, Buxton moved to Nashville after high school. “I grew up loving music. I didn’t grow up thinking I was going to do this with my life,” she says, citing Stevie Nicks and Patty Loveless among her influences.

It was Nicks’ music that inspired Buxton to write songs. “I remember listening to her album and realizing, ‘She’s writing letters about her life and putting melodies behind it. I can do that.’” Now Buxton calls songwriting “an obsession. The more I write, the more I want to write,” she says. “When I started, I wrote maybe 10 songs a year; now I write hundreds.”

She co-wrote “Outside My Window” with Mark Hudson, Victoria Shaw and Gary Burr. Buxton’s forthcoming album also includes her version of “Stupid Boy,” the Keith Urban hit she co-wrote with Dave Berg and Deanna Bryant. “I actually prefer listening to Keith’s version because it’s cool when someone else sings your song,” Buxton says. “He totally took it to another planet. But I also want people to hear what that same lyric sounds like from the female perspective.”

Country KSOP-FM Salt Lake City PD Debby Turpin is a fan of Buxton, whose voice has “a raspy, earthy sound to it,” she says. While the station has played either Buxton singles, Turpin says the message behind “Outside My Window”—“to not lose sight of what’s important—carries the most impact. ‘Even the guys at the station love this song, which is amazing because they aren’t super-passionate about much,’” she says.

Buxton’s effervescent video, shot with songwriter Hudson for $80, is airing on GAC and CMT. “My record label didn’t even know we were doing it,” she recalls with a laugh. “It was like a home video. In fact, [singer] John Rich texted me and said, ‘Thanks a lot, Sarah. Now the budget for my next video is only going to be $100.’”

For now, Buxton is celebrating the success of her single. “It’s so rewarding,” she says. “It’s like getting a report card back. I feel like I’ve had A and C-plus-type of songs. Now I feel like I’ve finally gotten a B-plus or A-minus.”

MEASURE OF SUCCESS: 20 YEARS OF NIELSEN BDS

Twenty years ago this month, Billboard revolutionized the way U.S. radio airplay measurement was presented. In the Jan. 20, 1990, issue, the Hot Country Songs chart converted its rankings from reports submitted by station programmers to more accurate, electronically monitored data provided by Broadcast Data Systems, now a division of Nielsen. The country format was chosen first, in part because country singles sales were so minuscule that the industry relied almost exclusively on airplay information to gauge success. Many in the radio and record industries were skeptical of the conversion to charts based upon monitored data. However, acceptance of—and eventually, reliance upon—BDS data went hand in hand with point-of-sale-based SoundScan data, the equally groundbreaking, technology-based model for more precise retail measurement, which began powering Billboard’s sales charts in 1991. Together, these systems ushered in a radical upgrade of the industry’s sales and airplay figures and, thus, the collective industry’s marketing capabilities.

Artists with the Most No. 1s on Hot Country Songs during the Nielsen BDS Era

George Strait edges past Alan Jackson to claim the most No. 1s.

TOP HOT COUNTRY SONGS OF THE NIELSEN BDS ERA

(Ranking based on an inverse point system, with weeks at No. 1 earning the greatest value and weeks at the lower end of the chart earning the least.)

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<td>“Amazing,” LONESTAR</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>“Somebody Like You,” KEITH URBAN</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>“19 Somethin’,” MARK WILLS</td>
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<td>“It’s Five O’clock Somewhere,” ALAN JACKSON &amp; JIMMY BUFFETT</td>
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<td>“How Do You Like Me Now?,” TOBY KEITH</td>
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<td>“The Good Stuff,” KENNY CHESNEY</td>
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<td>“Live Like You Were Dying,” TIM MCGRAW</td>
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<td>10</td>
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ARTISTS WITH THE MOST NO. 1s ON HOT COUNTRY SONGS DURING THE NIELSEN BDS ERA

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<td>(TIE) KEITH URBAN</td>
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The XX Factor

Constant Touring, TV Synchs Help British Act Build Stateside Base

British electronica act the xx was virtually unknown to U.S. audiences following the August 2009 release of its self-titled debut on Young Turks, an imprint of XL Recordings. But thanks in part to a string of sold-out New York club shows that helped build initial buzz, group members Romy Madley Croft (guitar, vocals), Oliver Sim (bass, vocals) and Jamie Smith (producer, keyboards) have steadily built a stateside fan base through constant touring, TV synchs, in-store play and favorable press coverage.

In last week's issue, the xx broke into the top 100 on the Billboard 200, with a new peak at No. 98. The album debuted at No. 12 on the Heatseekers chart following its Aug. 18, 2009, release, spending the first three weeks of 2010 at No. 1 on that tally. It has sold 71,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. In the United Kingdom, the album peaked at No. 36 on the Official Charts Co. list and has sold 48,000 copies. XL senior VP of A&R Kris Chen says the xx began generating interest in the United States following six back-to-back concerts last summer at such New York venues as Mercury Lounge and Pianos. "That really translated in getting word-of-mouth started," Chen says.

In addition to heavy blog coverage, the group received an 8.7-rated album review from influential site Pitchfork, which prompted a surge of interest. To capitalize, the xx supported labelmates the Friendly Fires on a U.S. tour of large clubs last fall. "By the time the tour rolled around, it seemed like 50% of the people were coming to see the xx and the other half coming to see the Friendly Fires," says xx booking agent Tom Windish, who's also president of the Windish Agency.

Thanks to XL's licensing department, the xx has scored song placements on Fox's "Lie to Me," NBC's "Mercy" and CBS' "CSI." Synchs for other TV shows and advertisements are in the works, but Chen declined to reveal details.

In addition to synchs, the band has received in­store play in several North American retail chains, including Starbucks, Urban Outfitters and Puma. "Every bit of healthy exposure makes the difference," Chen says. "These are all the things you want and need when you don't have a record that's driven by pop radio."

Following its current tour of Australia and Europe, the xx will headline a brief U.S. club tour in March, followed by a handful of support dates in April for U.K. electro outfit Hot Chip. Windish says that many of the xx solo dates are already sold out, including shows at Chicago's 5,500-capacity Lincoln Hall and Washington, D.C.'s 750-capacity Sixth & I Historic Synagogue. The xx will also play several major U.S. festivals this summer. Additional festival and tour dates are lined up in Europe through May. ....

Additional reporting by Mark Sutherland in London.

ADDGING FUEL TO THE FIRE

Slow and steady can still win the race. Just ask Eric Roberson.

After nine years as an independent artist, the singer/songwriter is enjoying the fruits of that hard­fought labor: his first Grammy Award nomination. He’s up for best urban/alternative performance for the song “A Tale of Two” featuring Ben O’Neill & Michelle Thompson. The song is from Roberson's seventh album, “Music Fan First” (Blue Erro Soul).

Recognized as a role model for the independent soul movement, Roberson says it’s too soon to quantify the nomination’s full affect. He does, however, call the nod an honor and an affirmation of his right thing and maintains the hunger to keep going,” Roberson says.

Released last August, “Music Fan First” marked Roberson’s return to the Billboard charts after a 16­year gap when the album bowed at No. 84 on Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums. Another album track, “Borrow You”, debuted at No. 91 on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs and peaked at No. 77 in the Jan. 16 issue. He’d last appeared on that chart in 1994 as a Warner Bros. artist with the single “The Moon.” It debuted at No. 72 and peaked at No. 53.

In the meantime, the video for another album selection, “Dealing” featuring Leah Hathaway, has been voted into the top 20 on BET’s Centric network. And the album itself is now available at Best Buy, following in the recent footsteps of retailer tye.

“Four years ago,” Roberson says, “we couldn’t get in those stores.”

A tireless performer, Roberson will play several dates before the Jan. 31 Grammy Awards ceremony. Those include the xx solo dates are already sold out, including shows at Chicago’s 5,500-capacity Lincoln Hall and Washington, D.C.’s 750-capacity Sixth & I Historic Synagogue. The xx will also play several major U.S. festivals this summer. Additional festival and tour dates are lined up in Europe through May. ....

Additional reporting by Mark Sutherland in London.

GUITAR HEROINE

Armed with a story about moving beyond an ungrateful boyfriend, Australian singer/guitarist Orianthi is connecting with U.S. audiences. Her empowering single, “According to You,” has hit No. 21 on the Billboard Hot 100, and her second album, “Believe,” reached No. 1 last week on Heatseekers Albums, where it’s now No. 2.

The 24-year-old never imagined having a solo career or releasing an album as a soloist. However, Orianthi says she couldn’t have asked for a better song to help accomplish that feat.

“So many people have gone through the experience of not feeling good enough,” she says. "I have a story that, written by Andrew Frampton and Steve Diamond. "Hopefully, this can inspire people to get out of that situation and say, 'I’m better than that.'"

Although “According to You” showcases a commanding vocal range, Orianthi describes herself as a guitarist before anything else. Growing up in Adelaide, Australia, she would watch tapes of Carlos Santana and learn his guitar solos. The practice paid off when Santana played a date in Adelaide and invited a 16-year-old Orianthi onstage to jam with him.

Orianthi self-released her first album, “Violet Journey,” in 2005, then signed with Geffen in late 2006. After appearing at the 2007 Crossroads Guitar Festival in Bridgeville, Ill., Orianthi attracted attention with a memorable guitar solo during Carrie Underwood’s 2009 Grammy Awards performance. The spot led to an offer from Michael Jackson to be the guitarist for his This Is It concerts in London last year. "Michael taught me to play with attitude. Working with him made me become more of a perfectionist and believe in myself," she says.

Produced by Howard Benson (Dawn Patrol, No Chemicals), “According to You” was released last October, “Believe” exudes that confidence. Tracks like “Suffocated” offeramped-up pop, while “Untogther” puts Orianthi’s flashy riffs front and center.

“We’re delighted that young girls can look at her and think, 'Wow, I can play guitar,' that it’s not just a boy’s arena,” Geffen Records chairman Ron Fair says.

Orianthi has released a video for “Highly Strung,” her instrumental duet with Steve Vai. After an overseas trek this winter, she’ll announce U.S. tour dates later this year.

—Jason Lipshutz
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Vampire Weekend Scores First No. 1 For ADA

Vampire Weekend not only celebrates its first No. 1 album on the Billboard 200, but the New York band also notches its best sales week yet.

The act's new "Contra" (XL Recordings) opens atop the tally with 124,000 copies sold, according to Nielsen SoundScan. That easily surpasses the chart's previous best sales frame, notched when its self-titled debut album opened with 28,000 copies. That set debuted and peaked at No. 17 on the chart and has since sold 498,000 units.

"Contra" also is the second independently distributed album to hit No. 1 on the Billboard 200 in the past year. Vampire Weekend's new effort is distributed by Alternative Distribution Alliance and is the company's first No. 1 on the albums chart.

In addition, "Contra" is the first indie set to top the tally since Pearl Jam's self-released "Backspacer" debuted at No. 1 on the Oct. 10, 2009, chart. All told, "Contra" is only the 12th indie album to reach No. 1 on the Billboard 200 since Nielsen SoundScan began powering the chart in May 1991.

INDIE STATE: For Billboard charting purposes, defining an independent album is done on a title level and based on its distribution.

If an album is sold by an indie distributor or one of the majors' indie distribution arms, it's classified as an independent title and can appear on our Top Independent Albums chart. Classification isn't based on a label's ownership or if an act is signed to an independent label.

Before Pearl Jam's "Backspacer," the last indie set to reign at No. 1 was Radiohead's RED-distributed "In Rainbows" (TBD/A&L), which climbed to the pole position on the Jan. 19, 2008, chart. A couple of months earlier, the Eagles' self-distributed Walmart exclusive "Long Road Out of Eden" topped the tally in late 2007.

Before that, there was a lengthy dry spell, with no indie album hitting No. 1 from the fall end of 1997 until the Eagles' achievement.

From the start of the Nielsen SoundScan era in May 1991 through the end of 1997, only eight indie albums topped the list. Six of them came from the indie Priority, while two came from former indie Walt Disney Records. N.W.A's "Efil4zaggin" (Ruthless/Priority) was the first indie set to hit No. 1 in the SoundScan era on June 22, 1991.

After that, Priority scored No. 1 with Ice Cube's "The Predator" soundtrack (1992), "The Friday" soundtrack (1995), Bone Thugs-N-Harmony's "E. 1999 Eternal" (1995) and "The Art of War" (1997), and Tha Dogg Pound's Dead Row/Interscope set "Dogg Food" (1995). "Dogg Food" wasn't originally intended to go the indie route, but then content concerns pushed Interscope—in its final days as part of Warner Music Group—to bypass WEA and sell it through Priority.

Walt Disney Records scored two No. 1 soundtracks before it joined the Universal Music Group Distribution fold with "The Lion King" and "Pocahontas" in 1994 and 1995, respectively.

ODDS AND ENDS: With Ke\$ha's "Animal" debuting at No. 1 with 152,000 copies last week and Vampire Weekend's "124,000 bow atop the tally this week, it's the first time since 2006 that the first two tracking weeks of the year had an album that sold at least 100,000 copies. In the week ending Jan. 8, 2006, three albums surpassed 100,000 copies: Jamie Foxx's "Unpredictable," Mary J. Blige's "The Breakthrough" and Eminem's "Curtain Call." In the following week, Foxx and Blige did it again. The intriguing new "Commentary! What The Musical?" debuts at No. 23 on Top Compilations (viewable at billboard.biz/charts) with nearly 1,000 copies sold. It's a stand-alone album that was originally included as a bonus audio feature for the DVD release of the made-for-theater Internet short film "Dr. Horrible's Sing-a-long Blog." "Commentary!" appears on the Compilation chart—instead of the Soundtracks or Cast Albums charts—since it's not quite a soundtrack nor a musical show. The original "Dr. Horrible" soundtrack, released in 2008, has sold 47,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan.
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<td>The E.N.D.</td>
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Find more magazines at www.magazinesdownload.com
### Billboard Top Albums

**Artist:** Michael Jackson  
**Title:** Thriller  
**Number One:** 3

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**Title:** Animal  
**Number One:** 1

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**Title:** Life Is Good  
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**Artist:** Soundtrack  
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**HEATSEEKERS ALBUMS**

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<td>Up From Below</td>
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**HEATSEEKERS SONGS**

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**REGIONAL HEATSEEKERS #1 ALBUMS**

- **Believe**
  - Orianthi
  - Laura Veirs
- **MOUNTAIN**
  - Blackroc
  - Orianthi
- **WEST NORTH CENTRAL**
  - Laura Veirs
- **NORTH EAST**
  - Orianthi
  - Laura Veirs
- **EAST NORTH CENTRAL**
  - Orianthi
  - Laura Veirs
  - Blackroc
- **SOUTH CENTRAL**
  - Ray Wylie Hubbard
  - Orianthi
  - Laura Veirs
- **PACIFIC**
  - Owl Pose
  - Julia Flame
  - Laura Veirs
- **SOUTH ATLANTIC**
  - Florence & The Machine
  - Lungs
- **MID ATLANTIC**
  - Bob Dylan
  - Owen Pallett

**NEW ON THE CHARTS**

Owen Pallett, “Heartland”

After recording under the pseudonym Final Fantasy for the past four-and-a-half years, Owen Pallett opts for his real name this time around. His “Heartland” set debuts at No. 49 on Heatseeker Albums, becoming the artist’s first charting effort.
### Hot 100 Airplay

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### Hot Digital Songs

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<td>2.5 million</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ALBUM CHARTS

- **Billboard 200**: Sales data compiled from a comprehensive pool of U.S. music sales sources. Albums with sales of 10,000 or more are eligible to chart. Sales data for the week ending January 10, 2010.
- **Heatseekers**: Albums with sales of 1,000 or more are eligible to chart. Sales data for the week ending January 10, 2010.

### SOUNDTRACKS

- **Billboard 200**: Sales data compiled from a comprehensive pool of U.S. music sales sources. Albums with sales of 10,000 or more are eligible to chart. Sales data for the week ending January 10, 2010.
### Mainstream Adult Top 40

**Title**
- 1. Bad Romance - Lady Gaga
- 2. TiK ToK - Ke$ha
- 3. Love the Way You Lie - Eminem feat. Rihanna
- 4. Fireflies - Owl City
- 5. Whatcha Say - Will.i.am feat. Britney Spears

**Artist**
- Lady Gaga
- Ke$ha
- Eminem feat. Rihanna
- Owl City
- Will.i.am feat. Britney Spears

**Label**
- RCA Records
- Geffen Records
- Interscope Records
- Columbia
- Interscope

**Genre**
- Pop
- Dance
- Hip Hop
- Classical
- Rock

**Additional Information**
- The chart reflects the top 40 songs based on airplay data from January 30, 2010.
- Artists and songs are listed with their respective labels and genres.

---

### Adult Contemporary

**Title**
- 1. Fallen for You - Celine Dion
- 2. We Belong Together - Mariah Carey
- 3. Hajimeta Jibun ni Sora wo Yobu - Yasuda Ayumi
- 4. Sunshine of Your Love - Cream
- 5. Don't Touch Me - Whitney Houston

**Artist**
- Celine Dion
- Mariah Carey
- Yasuda Ayumi
- Cream
- Whitney Houston

**Label**
- Curb Records
- Epic Records
- Sony BMG
- Sony Music Entertainment
- Arista Records

**Genre**
- Pop
- Rock
- Classical
- Hip Hop
- R&B

**Additional Information**
- The chart reflects the top 40 songs based on airplay data from January 30, 2010.
- Artists and songs are listed with their respective labels and genres.

---

### Rock Songs

**Title**
- 1. You Belong with Me - Taylor Swift
- 2. I Won't Bow - Kings of Leon
- 3. Back Against the Wall - Green Day
- 4. Letter to a Thief - David Bowie
- 5. Fireflies - Owl City

**Artist**
- Taylor Swift
- Kings of Leon
- Green Day
- David Bowie
- Owl City

**Label**
- Republic Records
- RCA Records
- Reprise Records
- Sony Music Entertainment
- Interscope

**Genre**
- Rock
- Pop
- Hip Hop
- Alternative
- Classical

**Additional Information**
- The chart reflects the top 40 songs based on airplay data from January 30, 2010.
- Artists and songs are listed with their respective labels and genres.

---

### Alternative

**Title**
- 1. Kings of Queens - Kings of Leon
- 2. Break - St. Vincent
- 3. Meet Me on the Equinox - M83
- 4. Substitution - The xx
- 5. Give Me a Sign - Kings of Leon

**Artist**
- Kings of Leon
- St. Vincent
- M83
- The xx
- Kings of Leon

**Label**
- RCA Records
- Warp Records
- Atlantic
- Columbia
- RCA Records

**Genre**
- Rock
- Electronic
- Pop
- Hip Hop
- Electronica

**Additional Information**
- The chart reflects the top 40 songs based on airplay data from January 30, 2010.
- Artists and songs are listed with their respective labels and genres.

---

### Triple A

**Title**
- 1. Give Me a Sign - Kings of Leon
- 2. It's Not You - The xx
- 3. Better Together (Live) - Weezer
- 4. Hold On - lcd soundsystem
- 5. Greatest Fear - Kings of Leon

**Artist**
- Kings of Leon
- The xx
- Weezer
- lcd soundsystem
- Kings of Leon

**Label**
- RCA Records
- Columbia
- Geffen
- Interscope
- RCA Records

**Genre**
- Rock
- Rap
- Pop
- Electronica
- Rock

**Additional Information**
- The chart reflects the top 40 songs based on airplay data from January 30, 2010.
- Artists and songs are listed with their respective labels and genres.

---

**Note:**
- The chart images are from Billboard magazine, a leading weekly music publication. The charts are based on data from various sources, including airplay, sales, and streaming metrics.
- The charts are updated weekly to reflect the current hit songs in the music industry.
**HOT COUNTRY SONGS**

1. **SOUTHERN VOICE**
   - Artist: Tim McGraw
   - Title: Southern Voice
   - Week: 1

2. **I WANNA MAKE YOU CLOSE YOUR EYES**
   - Artist: Dierks Bentley
   - Title: Between the Bars
   - Week: 2

3. **NEED YOU NOW**
   - Artist: Lady Antebellum
   - Title: Need You Now
   - Week: 3

4. **HISTORY IN THE MAKING**
   - Artist: Garth Brooks
   - Title: History in the Making
   - Week: 4

5. **AMERICAN SATURDAY NIGHT**
   - Artist: Keith Urban
   - Title: American Saturday Night
   - Week: 5

6. **THAT'S HOW COUNTRY BOYS ROLL**
   - Artist: Blake Shelton
   - Title: That's How Country Boys Roll
   - Week: 6

7. **CRIKIN' FOR ME (WAYMAN'S SONG)**
   - Artist: Toby Keith
   - Title: Crikin' For Me (Wayman's Song)
   - Week: 7

8. **TIL SUMMER COMES AROUND**
   - Artist: Carrie Underwood
   - Title: Til Summer Comes Around
   - Week: 8

9. **THANG**
   - Artist: George Strait
   - Title: Thang
   - Week: 9

10. **YOU DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH I LOVE YOU**
    - Artist: Taylor Swift
    - Title: You Don't Know How Much I Love You
    - Week: 10

**TOP COUNTRY SONGS**

1. **SOUTHERN VOICE**
   - Artist: Tim McGraw
   - Title: Southern Voice
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2. **I WANNA MAKE YOU CLOSE YOUR EYES**
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10. **YOU DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH I LOVE YOU**
    - Artist: Taylor Swift
    - Title: You Don't Know How Much I Love You
    - Week: 10

**TOP COUNTRY ALBUMS**

1. **FAITHFILTH**
   - Artist: Faith Hill
   - Title: Faith
   - Week: 1

2. **LADY ANTEBELLUM**
   - Artist: Lady Antebellum
   - Title: Lady Antebellum
   - Week: 2

3. **CARRIE UNDERWOOD**
   - Artist: Carrie Underwood
   - Title: Play On
   - Week: 3

4. **ZAC BROWN BAND**
   - Artist: Zac Brown Band
   - Title: Uncaged
   - Week: 4

5. **JASON ALDEAN**
   - Artist: Jason Aldean
   - Title: My Kinda Party
   - Week: 5

**TOP BLUEGRASS ALBUMS**

1. **WHERE THE HEART IS**
   - Artist: Del McCoury
   - Title: Where The Heart Is
   - Week: 1

2. **THE HIGHROAD**
   - Artist: The Highroad
   - Title: The Highroad
   - Week: 2

3. **THE BLOODY MOUNTAINS**
   - Artist: The Bloody Mountains
   - Title: The Bloody Mountains
   - Week: 3

4. **THE NEW GRASS REVIVAL**
   - Artist: The New Grass Revival
   - Title: New Grass Revival
   - Week: 4

**BETWEEN THE BULLETS**

**VOICE RISES**

Tim McGraw scores his first No. 1 in nearly three years on Hot Country Songs with "Southern Voice," which is featured in the film "The Blind Side." He last reached the top of the chart with "Last Dollar (Fly Away)" led by April 14, 2007, chart. "Voice" is the first No. 1 for McGraw's label (Curb) since Rodney Atkins led for two weeks last May with "It's America." The new No. 1 brings McGraw's total to 33. He first ruled the chart with "Don't Take the Girl" in May 1994. Since that time, no artist has logged more No. 1 songs on the list. Only George Strait comes closest— with 19—during that span.

—Wade Jason
### Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bedrock</td>
<td>Charlie Wilson</td>
<td>Epic/Strong/Nine Yards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2 | Closer | Alicia Keys | RCA/BMG
| 3 | The Black Eyed Peas | The Black Eyed Peas | Interscope
| 4 | Stand | Mary J. Blige | Def Jam/Atlantic
| 5 | Money | Ociation | YB
| 6 | You Don't Miss Nobody | T.I. | Atlantic
| 7 | Born 2 Piss Off | David Banner | Tha Carter Entertainment
| 8 | Luv | Maxwell | J Records
| 9 | A Little Bit | Ne-Yo | Atlantic
| 10 | Only God Knows | Sean Garrett | Universal Motown
| 11 | Love ft. Ashanti | Anthony Hamilton | Columbia
| 12 | So Much Better | Anthony Hamilton | Columbia

### Mainstream R&B/Hip-Hop

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| 10 | Only God Knows | Anthony Hamilton | Columbia
| 11 | Love ft. Ashanti | Anthony Hamilton | Columbia
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### Rhythmic

<table>
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<th>Week</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
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### Adult R&B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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| 9 | A Little Bit | Ne-Yo | Atlantic
| 10 | Only God Knows | Anthony Hamilton | Columbia
| 11 | Love ft. Ashanti | Anthony Hamilton | Columbia
| 12 | So Much Better | Anthony Hamilton | Columbia

### Hot Rap Songs

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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| 10 | Only God Knows | Anthony Hamilton | Columbia
| 11 | Love ft. Ashanti | Anthony Hamilton | Columbia
| 12 | So Much Better | Anthony Hamilton | Columbia

### Between the Bullets: Sade Sizzles with Love

Sade ascends to its first No. 1 on Adult R&B as "Soldier of Love" marches 3-1. The act's six-week journey is the second since Anita Baker's five-week climb with "You're My Everything" in 2004. Sade is also the first group since the Isley Brothers in September 2001 ("Contagious") to earn a No. 1 as a lead act. The retail offering of "Soldier" debuts at No. 1 on Top R&B/Hip-Hop Singles (viewable at billboard.biz/charts) and propels the tune 1-5 on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs. This marks Sade's first top 10 since "Kiss of Life" peaked at No. 18 in May 2003.

Also on Adult R&B, Alicia Keys (No. 7) matches a record-tying 11th top 10, joining Mariah Carey, Mary J. Blige, Toni Braxton and Whitney Houston for the most top 10s among females. Meanwhile, Usher's resurgence continues with the format with the No. 2 debut of "There Goes My Baby." It follows the chart-toppers "Here I Stand" from 2008 and "Papers" in January. — Ruphiel George

The 10-song Time Warner greatest-hits package "First!" re-enters Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums at No. 32 with a staggering 76% increase. The album's first appearance since the Jan. 9 issue is bolstered by a $2.19 one-day sale at Amazon.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist/Featuring</th>
<th>Peak Position</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>It Kills Me</td>
<td>Melanie Fiona</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Bedrock</td>
<td>Young Money Featuring Lloyd</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Soldier of Love</td>
<td>Timbaland Featuring Keri Hilson</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Try Sleeping with a Broken Heart</td>
<td>Birdman Featuring Lil Wayne &amp; Drake</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I Am</td>
<td>Mary J. Blige</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Wanna Rock</td>
<td>Snoop Dogg</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Bad Habits</td>
<td>Robin Thede</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>In the Middle</td>
<td>YG &amp; DJ Mustard</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Papi</td>
<td>Rihanna Feat. Ne-Yo</td>
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<td>Ain't No Other Man</td>
<td>Ne-Yo &amp; Matt Redman</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Put It In a Love Song</td>
<td>Alicia Keys Featuring Beyoncé</td>
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<td>Sex Therapy</td>
<td>Robin Thede</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Put It In a Love Song</td>
<td>Alicia Keys Featuring Beyoncé</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Hold Me</td>
<td>Diddy Featuring Cassie &amp; Ne-Yo</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Ain't No Other Man</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
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<td>Ne-Yo &amp; Matt Redman</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Ain't No Other Man</td>
<td>Ne-Yo &amp; Matt Redman</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BETWEEN THE BULLETINS**

"Rock' Rolls into Top 10"

Snoop Dogg takes his ninth top 10 on Top R&B/Hi-Top Songs with "1 Wanna Rock" which rises to No. 6. This is the second single from Snoop's "Malice N Wonderland" and his first visit to the top since the No. 5-peak ing "Sensual Seduction" in 2006. The new album's lead single, "Gangsta Love," topped out at No. 24 in December. "Rock" marks Snoop's seventh top 10 on Mainstream R&B/Hi-Top (14-8) and his 11th on Hot Rap Songs (No. 5), where it joins "Gangsta" in the upper tier for the sixth consecutive week. The two singles grant the rapper his first concurrent top 10s since 1999.

—Raphael George
### Christian/Gospel

**CHRISTIAN SONGS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Week 2</th>
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<tr>
<td>Until the Whole World Hears</td>
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<td>Team86</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hold My Heart</td>
<td>Casting Crowns</td>
<td>Sparrow</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hold on to You</td>
<td>Steven Curtis Chapman</td>
<td>Sparrow</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Redeemer Lives</td>
<td>David Crowder Band</td>
<td>Sparrow</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Turn Your Face</td>
<td>Thousand Foot Krutch</td>
<td>Sparrow</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heaven Is the Face</td>
<td>Peter Paul &amp; Mary</td>
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**TOP CHRISTIAN ALBUMS**

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**HOT GOSPEL SONGS**

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<td>They Who Wait</td>
<td>Kari Jobe</td>
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<td>Best in Me</td>
<td>Shari Pettersson</td>
<td>Sparrow</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>How I Got Over</td>
<td>William McDowell</td>
<td>Sparrow</td>
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<tr>
<td>God Hears Me</td>
<td>CeCe Winans</td>
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<tr>
<td>They Who Wait</td>
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<td>Break the Silence</td>
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<td>They Who Wait</td>
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<td>Best in Me</td>
<td>Shari Pettersson</td>
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<tr>
<td>How I Got Over</td>
<td>William McDowell</td>
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<td>Break the Silence</td>
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<td>They Who Wait</td>
<td>Kari Jobe</td>
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**HOT LATIN SONGS**

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<td>Aventura</td>
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<td>Me Gusta Todo de Ti</td>
<td>Paty Gómez</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Te Vas Fatal</td>
<td>Anahí</td>
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<td>Triste No Vivo</td>
<td>Paty Gómez</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Sin Evidencias</td>
<td>Juan Luis Guerra 7 y 30</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Hoy Me Confie</td>
<td>Alejandro Fernandez</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Como Ayer</td>
<td>Juan Luis Guerra 7 y 30</td>
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<td>Jesus de la Ketchup</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Ni Rosas Ni Juguetes</td>
<td>Myriam</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Te Amo</td>
<td>Soledad</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Eres Mi Todo</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>90 Millas (90 Miles)</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Sentimientos de Carton</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Down</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Carta de Amor</td>
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**TOP LATIN ALBUMS**

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<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Todo</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
<td>US</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Yo Soy Tu</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
<td>US</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>A Mi Manera</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
<td>US</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Te Quiero a Ti</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
<td>US</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>En Mis Sueños</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
<td>US</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Te Amo</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
<td>US</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Asi Te Necesito</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
<td>US</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
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<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
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<td>10</td>
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**REGIONAL MEXICAN ALBUMS**

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<td>En El Recodo De Cruzmagenda</td>
<td>Alejandro Fernandez</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
<td>US</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Todo</td>
<td>Alejandro Fernandez</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
<td>US</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>En El Recodo De Cruzmagenda</td>
<td>Alejandro Fernandez</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
<td>US</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Mi Corazon</td>
<td>Alejandro Fernandez</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
<td>US</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Mi Corazon</td>
<td>Alejandro Fernandez</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
<td>US</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>En El Recodo De Cruzmagenda</td>
<td>Alejandro Fernandez</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
<td>US</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Mi Corazon</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>En El Recodo De Cruzmagenda</td>
<td>Alejandro Fernandez</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Mi Corazon</td>
<td>Alejandro Fernandez</td>
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**LATIN POP ALBUMS**

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<td>Sony Latin</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Yo Soy Tu</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>A Mi Manera</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Te Quiero a Ti</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>En Mis Sueños</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Te Amo</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
<td>US</td>
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<td>Asi Te Necesito</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Todo</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
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**TROPICAL ALBUMS**

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<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Yo Soy Tu</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
<td>US</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>A Mi Manera</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
<td>US</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Te Quiero a Ti</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
<td>US</td>
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<td>En Mis Sueños</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
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**LATIN RHYTHM ALBUMS**

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<td>US</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Todo</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
<td>US</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Yo Soy Tu</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
<td>US</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>A Mi Manera</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
<td>US</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Te Quiero a Ti</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
<td>US</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>En Mis Sueños</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
<td>US</td>
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<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Todo</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
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<td>De Que</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
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**BETWEEN THE BULLETS**

**SHAKIRA: ENGLISH ALBUM, LATIN HITS**

Shakira's "She Wolf" album is primarily in English and therefore ineligible to chart on Top Latin Albums, its Spanish songs have been taken over the radio charts. The album notches a second No. 1 on Latin Pop Airplay with "Did It Again" (Lo Hecho Esta Hecho) rising 2-1 P44 million audience impressions, following last year's "Loco." It's her 11th No. 1 on the airplay chart, tying her with Cristian Castro for the second-most toppers behind Enrique Iglesias’ 14. — Rady Ramirez
### Japan

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<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Lady Gaga</td>
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<td>Rihana</td>
<td>Talk to Me</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Koda Kumi</td>
<td>King of the Game</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>MISIA</td>
<td>Hold Me Down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Hikaru Kume</td>
<td>Out of this World</td>
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### United Kingdom

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<td>Lady Gaga</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Calvin Harris</td>
<td>Nothing But You</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Emeli Sandé</td>
<td>Grow</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Elton John</td>
<td>Your Song</td>
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<td>George Michael</td>
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### Germany

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<td>Hold Me Down</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Calvin Harris</td>
<td>Nothing But You</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Black Eyed Peas</td>
<td>The Black Eyed Peas</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Emeli Sandé</td>
<td>Grow</td>
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### Europe

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<td>Grow</td>
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### Canada

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Susan Boyle</td>
<td>Mess (It's All About)</td>
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<td>Adele</td>
<td>Easy</td>
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<td>Mess (It's All About)</td>
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<td>Adele</td>
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- January 30, 2010

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**EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE**

Send submissions to: exec@billboard.com

**RECORD COMPANIES:** Columbia Records Group names Ashley Newton president. He was executive VP of A&R at RCA.

Sony Music’s Commercial Music Group names Gil Aronow executive VP of business and legal affairs. He was senior VP.

Universal Music Mexico promotes Jose Puig to GM. He was VP of Latin artists marketing at Universal Music Latin America.

Sony Music Entertainment Canada names Shane Carter president. He was co-president of Sony Music Canada.

**PUBLISHING:** BMI promotes Anne Cecere to director of film/TV relations. She was associate director.

Warner/Chappell Music appoints Phil May VP/GM in Nashville. He was a founding partner of global music publisher R2M Music.

Dutch collecting society Buma/Stemra will submit Hein van der Ree—currently CEO of Epiphany Europe—for appointment as statutory director/chairman of the board. The Buma/Stemra members will meet to consider the appointment March 22. If appointed, he will succeed Cees Vervoord May 1.

**DISTRIBUTION:** Universal Music Group Distribution promotes Nydia Laner to senior VP of Latin sales and marketing. She was a senior sales executive at Universal Music Latin Entertainment.

**TOURING:** The Agency Group names Guy Richard VP and an agent. He served in the same role at the William Morris Agency.

**RELATED FIELDS:** Licensing consulting company RightsFlow names Michael Kauffman VP of sales and marketing. He was managing partner at the Hi Five Group.

MTV Latin America promotes Pablo Sznieberg to VP of original content development. He was director of development at Nickelodeon Latin America.

**EDITED BY MITHCELL PETERS**

**GOOD WORKS**

**MUSIC FOR RELIEF AIDS HAITI VICTIMS**

Alanis Morissette, the All-American Rejects, Dave Matthews Band, Enrique Iglesias, Hoobastank, Linkin Park, Lupe Fiasco, Kenna, Peter Gabriel and Slash are among the artists that have donated exclusive songs to nonprofit group Music for Relief to raise money for the earthquake victims in Haiti.

In the days following the Jan. 12 earthquake that devastated Port-au-Prince, Music for Relief—founded by Linkin Park after the Asian tsunami in 2004—contacted artists to donate music to sell for charity on its Web site. The songs are a mix of unreleased studio material and live tracks.

“We started talking about how huge the impact was and how we really wanted to do something special,” Music for Relief executive director of operations Whitney Showler says. “[Linkin Park] started reaching out to other artists who also felt deeply saddened and impacted by the earthquake and we got a great response.”

The music is also available for download at each of the participating artists’ Web sites. After clicking to download the songs bundle, users will be sent a zip file with the MP3s. Fans are then asked to give a suggested donation of $10, but Showler says that no amount is “too big or too small.”

—Mitchell Peters

**INSIDE TRACK**

**COLE FANS BANKROLL NEW ALBUM**

Lloyd Cole will enter the studio March 8 to record his new album—with a little financing help from his fans.

The former Commotions leader used his Web site and e-mail list to encourage prepurchase of the follow-up to 2006’s “Antidepressant,” which he says has raised a significant amount of the funding he needs to record it.

“I’m looking to raise $60,000, which these days is a lot of money, but it’s looking like I’m going to get at least 80% of it,” Cole says. “Even though I haven’t got everything we were looking for, it’s enough to start making the record.”

Cole, who resides with his wife and two sons in Northampton, Mass., has opted to return to New York to record in “a proper studio” with outside producers. “My last two records have very much been solo records—me in a room for 90% of them,” he says. “I want to make an old-school record working with musicians I like in a room, with songs I’ve just written, probably recording to tape.”

He’ll be joined in the studio by multi-instrumentalist Mark Schawber, who’s part of Cole’s current Small Ensemble acoustic touring outfit, and drummer Fred Marr, who produced some of Cole’s early solo recordings. It’s likely that Commotions guitarist Neil Clark will also play some role on the album.

“It is going to be very diverse in sound,” Cole says. “There’s going to be some loud songs but also some quiet songs—at least two or three done in the Small Ensemble style.”
British blues legend John Mayall and his singer-songwriter wife, Maggie Mayall, recently signed worldwide administration agreements with Wixen Music Publishing and accepted their obligatory spring bonuses. Wixen Music Publishingorienced president/CEO Tim Leleweke for his significant business and philanthropic accomplishments. The event raised more than $8.6 million.

City of Hope’s Spirit of Life Gala

Cancer research, treatment and education partner City of Hope sponsored its annual Spirit of Life gala Jan. 13 in Los Angeles. Held downtown at the JW Marriott and Ritz-Carlton Hotel at L.A. Live, the black-tie gala honored AEG president/CEO Tim Leleweke for his significant business and philanthropic accomplishments. The event raised more than $8.6 million. Photos courtesy of Leleweke.

City of Hope’s Spirit of Life Gala

One Haven Music CEO Michael Castan, recording artist Batch Walker and One Haven president Jonathan Chang (from left) celebrated John Lennon’s 70th birthday and spoke out on the importance of music education for American youth at the annual RABMM Show Jan. 14 in Anaheim, Calif.

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MICHAEL GUDINSKI’S PIONEERING PROMOTION FIRM CELEBRATES THREE DECADES OF HOT SHOWS DOWN UNDER

BY LARS BRANDLE

Frontier headliners (clockwise from top right): BILLY JOEL; MADONNA with MICHAEL GUDINSKI; Kings of Leon; CALEB FOLLOWILL; Foo Fighters’ DAVE GROHL; LEONARD COHEN; Gudinski with KYLIE MINOGUE and STING
MICHAEL GUDINSKI HAS
more reason to party than ever
before. An icon of the Australian
music business, Gudinski founded
Frontier Touring 30 years ago
and the company expects
 sometime this year to present
its 500th tour.

During the past three decades, a who's who ofock’n’roll has toured Australia
and New Zealand under the
Frontier Touring banner. Frontier
 paired Billy Joel and Elton John
as co-headliners and the
likes of Bob Dylan, Frank Sinatra,
Aerosmith, Madonna and Guns
N’ Roses have enjoyed Gudinski’s
famous hospitality Down Under.

Gudinski also is founder/
chairman of the Mushroom Group
of Companies, the multipronged
music enterprise that includes
Frontier and traces its roots
to the founding of Mushroom
Records in 1972. In recognition
of Gudinski’s influence and
impact, MIDEM has invited the
Australian entrepreneur to
deliver a keynote at the
trade event's International
Indie Summit Jan. 26, which
coincides with the Australia
Day holiday.

“Michael is the original 360 innovator; he was doing 360 deals
decades before anybody,” says Artist Group International presi-
dent Dennis Arfa, agent for Joel and other artists whose tours
have been presented by Gudinski through Frontier. “He was a
record label, promoter, manager, publisher, agency owner. The
only reason it never quite raised many eyebrows is because it hap-
pened in Oz. He was a visionary and extremely entrepreneurial.

He was a man who didn’t require much sleep.”

Harvey Lister, CEO of Brisbane-based AEG Ogden, which manages venues in
the Asia Pacific region including Sydney’s Acer
Arena and the Brisbane Entertainment Centre,
echoes that praise.

“Michael’s prepared to be innovative,” he says.
“He talked Billy Joel into selling the seats around
behind the stage in Brisbane and Sydney. Those
seats are as good as the seats out the front—they
sit right over the top of the stage. It’s like sitting
in the choir stalls at an orchestra. Michael went
for that. He was able to increase his yield for the
Billy Joel tour, which made Billy pretty happy,
and the people who sat in them were happy as
well. Every promoter is looking for additional
revenue opportunities, but Michael was the first
to embrace that. He thinks about those types of
things as much as anyone in the industry.”

While Frontier Touring marks its 30th an-
niversary, Gudinski has reached another no-
table milestone: He’s been in the music
business for a half-century. Part of Australian
music industry folklore is the tale of how this
impressario cut his teeth in the art of deal-
making at the tender age of 17.

Gudinski’s family home was a short distance
from the Caulfield Racecourse in Melbourne’s
suburbs. “We had a big backyard and we worked
out we could park six to eight cars in the yard,
at two shillings a car,” he recalls. “There was a
bit of entrepreneurial spirit even back then.”

Gudinski soon graduated from parking cars
to parking backside of concert seats. As a shy teenager, he took
in a lunchtime concert where the stage was lit up by the Loved
Ones, a dynamic mid-‘60s local band. It was love at first sight. “I
wasn’t really enjoying school. I wasn’t going to get a job where I
would get up in the morning and say, ‘Fuck this, another day at
the slogger,’” he says. Before the end of the ‘60s, Gudinski was
presenting his own dance parties

APRA|AMCOS congratulates
FRONTIER TOURING
30 years of success - Thanks Michael Gudinski and all his team.

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AEG Ogden

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from >>pF-2 Throughout Melbourne, booking acts like Chain and the Aces. The shyness evaporated.

Gudinski came under the eye of Bill Joseph, one of the biggest promoters, agents and artist managers in Australia at the time. Now brimming with confidence, the young music fan got an offer from his new mentor for the “perfect job,” trying his hands at all aspects of the live game. The offer came at a pivotal moment in the youngster’s career, but it carried a price. At 16, Gudinski dropped out of school to pursue his dream of a career in music.

“My parents were overseas at the time,” he recalls. “When they returned home my father swiftly threw me out of the house. I’m not bitter about that. If he hadn’t, I probably wouldn’t be where I am today.”

Gudinski would later return to the family home. A bungalow behind his parents’ home served as the early offices for what became Frontier Touring and the Mushroom Group of Companies.

By the age of 21, Gudinski was opening up new frontiers in Australia’s music scene. But not without making some memorable mistakes along the way. In one episode, Gudinski and his friend Ray Evans teamed up for what seemed a no-brainer business scheme at the non-legendary Sunbury Festival, an annual event that ran from the mid-‘60s through the mid-‘70s in Sunbury, Victoria.

“Ray came up with the idea of a watermelon concession. We would just truck them in and cut them in half. But the third year in 1974, [the rain] pissed down,” recalls Gudinski, who at the time was stage manager of the show. “And we got stuck with 1,000 watermelons. It sort of ended in tears.”

Gudinski formed the Consolidated Rock Agency with Michael Browning, who subsequently managed AC/DC and launched the band’s international career. Soon after they employed Tasmanian Michael Chugg, who had recently moved to Melbourne. At the time, Chugg was selling linen by day and managing bands at night. He would go on to play a leading role in the rise of Frontier Touring.

The triumvirate had a dalliance in the world of music magazine publishing with the Daily Planet, but it closed in 1973. Gudinski and Browning learned another lesson in professionalism when they booked a disco without the requisite license, and were shut down two weeks later. “I started to realize it was business,” Gudinski says. “and you needed to have certain practices in place.”

The disco was called the Magical Mushroom Mansion. And the Mushroom name lived on many years after the club shuttered. Ray Evans would prove to be a constant partner in Gudinski’s ventures.

Eventually, Evans Gudinski ran into financial difficulties and the company ceased doing business. It was the beginning of the end of Gudinski’s partnership with Evans, but the start of bigger things to come.

Gudinski learned from his mistakes. Within two years, Frontier Touring was formed with a team of partners, including Chugg, Evans, Frank Sivula and Philip Jacobson. This time, Gudinski was running the show. “We had enough tentacles to penetrate,” he says, “and we came along at the right time.” It was the late ‘70s, a time when alternative, new wave music was breaking through in England and making ripples abroad.

In January 1980, Frontier Touring presented its first national tour, bringing to Australia the British new wave band Squeeze. Next up was a trio that would set the tone for commercial success in the early part of the decade, the Police.

“Frontier had a pretty amazing run through the ‘80s,” Gudinski says. “We really went out of our way to look after the artists when they were in the country, whatever it took within reason. We quickly got a pretty good reputation. Before you knew it, we were dealing with the Irving Azoffs, Howard Kaufmans, Chris Wights and Rod McSweens—the big names who are still there today.”

Meanwhile, Frontier Touring was catching the biggest names in music—Duran Duran, Neil Young, Bon Jovi and R.E.M. among them—and bringing them to Australia.

“We first worked together on Duran Duran in the early ‘80s, where we went from theaters and clubs to multiple arenas very quickly,” recalls Rob Hallett, president of international touring for AEG Live. “That was probably 1983-84. Last year we worked together on Leonard Cohen’s triumphant, award-winning tour, where we again sold out arenas despite Michael being constantly told by his friends, ‘Leonard who?’ In between we shared many successes, meals and laughs.”

Mushroom Records, Gudinski has often said, became his “day job” while Frontier Touring was his “fun job.” There was a lot more fun to come.

continued on >>pF-6

MTV AUSTRALIA CONGRATULATES

MICHAEL GUDINSKI & THE FRONTIER TOURING COMPANY

30 YEARS OF BRINGING THE BIGGEST INTERNATIONAL & LOCAL ACTS TO AUSTRALIAN STAGES. ROCK ON!
Jeanne Pratt

Anthony Pratt & Claudine Revere

Heloise and Alex Waislitz

Fiona and Ruffy Geminder

with their families

congratulate Michael and Sue Gudinski

on 30 fabulous years with

Frontier Touring Company's concert promotions
Through the years, Frontier continued to evolve, losing a couple of partners along the way, while Chugg's profile grew within the firm. 

By the early '90s, Frontier was a touring powerhouse with Gudinski presiding in Melbourne and Chugg overseeing Sydney. "One of the things that has kept Frontier strong is our standing as the most reliable touring company in this part of the world," Gudinski says. "We pay quickly, properly and on time. That's the best reputation you can get."

Gudinski and Chugg also earned a reputation as party animals. "A lot of it came in the line of duty," Gudinski says with a laugh. "It's a competitive business. You've got to have an edge somewhere. I'm sure there are a couple of tours we might have not got because they'd heard of the Gudinski-Chugg legend."

Sony Music Australia chairman/CEO Denis Handlin muses over one unforgettable celebration. "I have fond memories of the first Billy Joel tour (in '87), which was an outstanding success. Rob [Michael] and I threw an ice sculpture of a piano into the Sherraton Mirage pool. The Industry needs characters like Michael Gudinski. Otherwise we should all go basket-weaving together."

The '90s had its share of highlights for Frontier Touring, including Guns N' Roses concerts in 1993 at Eastern Creek International Raceway in Sydney (selling 71,000 tickets) and Calder Park Raceway in Melbourne (73,000). But the decade would close out with a bang when Chugg split in 1999 to establish his own business, Michael Chugg Entertainment.

However, Chugg continues to admire the work of his former partner. "Frontier set new standards in marketing, production and the presentation of acts.

—MICHAEL CHUGG, FORMER FRONTIER PARTNER

As a new decade arrived, the company also extended its reach across the Tasman Sea, opening an affiliate in New Zealand run by Brent Eccles and his wife, Helen. "We're the only promoters who have got a stand-alone New Zealand office," Gudinski says. "It's a small market, but a very exciting, trendsetting one."

These days, Gudinski remains the undoubted power at the helm of Frontier. But responsibilities are shared. Sydney-based Michael Harrison, an 18-year veteran who rose through the ranks at the affiliated Harbour Agency, plays a vital role as Frontier's tour coordinator. His counterpart in Melbourne is Gerard Schlager, a 27-year company veteran who previously worked at the Premier Artists booking agency. To both men—and his son, Matt, who runs Mushroom's Illmave label—Gudinski entrusts responsibility to ensure the future of Frontier.

(Gudinski's daughter, singer-songwriter Kate Alexa, is making her own name as a pop singer, with a Top 10 national single, "All I Hear," to her credit. She is signed to Mushroom's Liberation label.)

In addition, Gudinski's wife, Sue, has been the first lady of Mushroom Group and a positive counterpart in the music executive's life for more than 30 years. "Sue has been my solidity in what can be a difficult, eccentric and ego-centric business," Gudinski says. "She supports me totally and she gives me ideas on how to deal with people. She's an asset to the business without any doubt. And she's been a very stabilising influence in an industry where, at times during the years, I've probably partied a bit too hard."

To stay ahead of the game in the competitive Australian promotion market, Frontier last year re-engineered its Web presence and launched new interactive features. The company has amassed a database of nearly 400,000 ticket buyers, with whom it can communicate and target for specific shows. Already the online overhaul is paying off. British artist David Gray's October 2009 tour was one of a growing number of Frontier treks that sold out without advertising.
Looking ahead, Frontier will further explore opportunities between sponsors and music events. “I see a trend coming where there will be a lot more sponsorship dollars which can be diverted, not necessarily directly into tour sponsorship, but into music-related events,” Gudinski says. “Sports gets so much sponsorship money [now], but I can feel the cycle turning. Music seems to be very much back in vogue as it has such a wide age-group appeal. Sponsorship can enable us to give the public things at a cheaper [ticket] cost.”

Gudinski says he’s had various offers in the past to sell Frontier Touring or to take on investors. “Frontier has always run as a private company, never under the scrutiny of investors. But you’ve got to look at the options that come up,” he says. “Over the next couple of years there’ll be a couple of situations that we’ll have to consider. I learned from the sale of Mushroom Records to News Corp. I had to let anyone get involved, [my involvement] would have to be implicit. They’d be insane not to have me continue on.”

The stakes in the touring business are higher than ever, but Gudinski doesn’t intend to cash in his chips. “We’ve had tours that have lost $2 million Australian [$1.8 million] over the years, but not too many fortunately. We’ve had some which have made more than that. It’s high risk, but it’s a business I still enjoy.”

The coming year promises to be another busy one for Frontier. In February and March, a combined bill of Diana Krall, Madeleine Peyroux and Melody Gardot will tour Australasian arenas. Krall will perform with her band and a 42-piece orchestra. The trek will also take in five wineries as part of the popular series A Day on the Green, in association with Roundhouse Entertainment. Frontier also will promote tours by acts including Tom Jones, Them Crooked Vultures, Lupe Fiasco, the Fray, Matisyahu and Moby. Gudinski has his sights set on promoting a return visit by Cohen and he also plans on working with a string of rising international talents like Cobra Starship and La Roux.

Australia’s number one independent spreads its wings

A family affair: Along with a media profile that has earned numerous magazine covers through the years, MICHAEL GUDINSKI has enjoyed the support of his family including (from top center) his wife SUE GUDINSKI; his son MATT GUDINSKI, managing director of Mushroom’s Illusive label; and his daughter KATE ALEXA GUDINSKI, a singer/songwriter who has had a top 10 hit in Australia. "I’ve always been very keen on working with new artists,” Gudinski says. "The new artists are the future. By trying the best in new artists, it separates us from a lot of the competition.”

And what are the chances Frontier will be around to celebrate its 1,000th tour?

“I’d like to think Frontier would get into triple figures,” Gudinski says. “But we’re in no hurry.”
Michael Gudinski, founder of Australia’s Frontier Touring and chairman of its parent enterprise, the Mushroom Group of Companies, is a study in constant movement. As he sits behind a desk at the Brisbane Entertainment Centre, Gudinski’s left knee bounces up and down, like a sprinter’s before a race. There’s a hum of incoming phone calls and people entering his orbit. Visitors from all sectors of the local music industry drop by to greet the man whom admirers call “Godinski.” “I don’t like that nickname,” he says dismissively. “I find it a bit over the top.” The world doesn’t revolve around Gudinski, but a fair-sized chunk of Australia’s music business does. The Mushroom Group, based in Melbourne, is the original 360-degree business model, with 20 companies, including Frontier, that encompass every aspect of the music business. Gudinski is in Brisbane for a stop on Green Day’s eight-date December tour of Australia. The tour is No. 489 presented by Frontier, which marks its 30th anniversary this year. The company is expected to stage its 500th tour before the year is out. “I find it hard to name someone else in the industry with Michael’s global success on the touring side, the label side and the publishing side,” Universal Music Australia managing director George Ash says. “He’s one of the music industry legends. We’re lucky to have him in Australia.” Troy Blakely, senior VP of the Agency for the Performing Arts and one of Gudinski’s many U.S. colleagues, says, “Michael has not only played an important role in developing artists in Australia, he has deftly handled the entire curve of some artist careers there, from breaking to headlining and then maintaining their career so the artist can return to Australia on a consistent basis and always have Australia in their worldwide tour plans.” Backstage at the Green Day show, Mark Wilson, bassist for supporting act Jet, pays Gudinski a visit. Wilson’s carrying a python—a surprise for a bandmate’s birthday. But then, nothing is quite ordinary in Gudinski’s world.

continued on ➤ pFT-10

Deal maker: MICHAEL GUDINSKI “is one of the music industry legends,” Universal Music Australia managing director George Ash says.
Village Roadshow, John, Robert, and Graham wish Frontier Touring and Michael Gudinski all the best for the 30th Anniversary.
AUSTRALIAN ACCOLADES

Frontier’s Founder Often Honored

The achievements of James Cassius (JC) Williamson, an impresario whose company dominated the Australian theater scene for much of the 20th century, live on through the JC Williamson Award, bestowed during the annual Helpmann Awards, presented by Live Performance Australia. The 2009 JC Williamson Award was presented in July to Michael Gudinski, founder of Frontier Touring and its parent enterprise, the Mushroom Group of Companies. The honor recognizes individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to the Australian live entertainment and performing arts industry and shaped the future of our industry for the better, according to the LPA Web site.

The accolade is one of several that Gudinski has received throughout his career. In the early ’90s, he was inducted into the Australian Recording Industry Assn. Hall of Fame with a Lifetime Achievement Award. In 1998, the Australian Performing Rights Assn. gave him the Ted Albert Award for outstanding services to Australian music. Honors followed from the Australian Marketing Institute in 1999 and the International Live Music Conference in London in 2003.

In 2006, Gudinski was named Ernst & Young’s Southern Region Entrepreneur of the Year. Most recently, Melbourne magazine, published by the Age newspaper, included Gudinski in its “Top 100” issue for his work on the Sound Relief benefit concerts. Those shows in March 2009 raised more than $8 million Australian ($7.4 million) for victims of bush fires in Victoria and floods in Queensland.

So what are your regrets?

There have been tours you’ve passed on, tours you’ve lost a lot of Temper Trap. They’re already doing big things in the U.K. with a No. seekers albums chart with “Conditions,” released in the United States.

Australians rather than make the move to America or Britain. Unlike many of your peers, you didn’t earn your stripes in a band. I never played an instrument. I had a bad piano teacher when I was younger and I didn’t like it. From a record company and a production point of view, [musical training] would have been handy to have. It other ways, it makes me more business-savvy, realistic. I have no frustrations about being a pop star. I haven’t wanted to stick my nose too much into the musical, creative process, although I did produce a bit in the early days.

Any regrets?

Often Honored Frontier’s Founder

Honored

Music Conference in London in 2003. In 2006, Gudinski received a Member of the Order of Australia medal for his service to the entertainment industry through the promotion of Australian artists and as an advocate for young people in the industry and the Australian community. The Bulletin magazine also named him one of Australia’s 100 most influential people that year. Also in 2006, Gudinski was named Ernst & Young’s Southern Region Entrepreneur of the Year. Most recently, Melbourne magazine, published by the Age newspaper, included Gudinski in its “Top 100” issue for his work on the Sound Relief benefit concerts. Those shows in March 2009 raised more than $8 million Australian ($7.4 million) for victims of bush fires in Victoria and floods in Queensland.

We’ll probably have another go. There are very few multi-day festival events in the country. That’s a move...
RECORD LABELS

Liberation

Already 10 years young, Liberation is a dynamic independent music label signing and developing some of the most exciting Australian and New Zealand artists for markets worldwide including The Temper Trap, Jimmy Barnes, Liam Finn, Kasey Chambers, Little Red, Howling Bells, and many more. www.liberation.com.au

Liberator Music

Launched in 2006, Liberator focuses on signing all styles of international music for Australian and New Zealand release including Kaiser Chiefs, Dizzee Rascal, Michael Franti & Spearhead, Tiesto and many more. www.liberatormusic.com.au

Ivy League

A joint venture between the successful team behind Winterman & Goldstein Management and Liberation since 2003, Ivy League is home to exciting talents such as Josh Pyke, Cloud Control, The Mess Hall and more. www.ivyleague.com.au

Illusive

Formed in 2004, Illusive is a successful hip hop and RnB recording and publishing label representing exciting local talents such as Bliss N Eso, Paris Wells, True Live, Lowrider, Diafrix and more. www.illusieve.com.au

TOURING & EVENTS

Frontier Touring

Founded in 1979, Frontier Touring is the only independently owned and operated national touring company in Australia and New Zealand. Frontier Touring’s core business is live entertainment for government, corporate, and international sporting events. www.frontiertouring.com

Premier Artists

Established in 1973 the premier booking agency and foremost booking agent for Australia and New Zealand. Premier Artists exclusively represent some of Australia’s leading performing artists with helping to guide them through their impressive careers. www.premierartists.com.au

The Harbour Agency

Roundhouse is responsible for some of the most impressive events across Australia. Roundhouse is also the leading delivering of events in New Zealand. The events combine the best of live music, food and spectacular backdrops. www.roundhouse.com

Roundhouse

Since 2002, Illusive has successfully managed club events, under 18’s events, music festivals and successful record labels. www.illusieve.com.au

PUBLICITY & PROMOTIONS

Mushroom Group Promotions

In 2007 MGP was born from the Mushroom Group’s united approach to promoting Australia & New Zealand. MGP has formed the Mushroom Group of Companies.
AUSTRALIAN ACCOLADES

Frontier's Founder
Often Honored

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—Thom Duffy

Founder feted: MICHAEL GUDINSKI received the JC Williamson Award in 2009 for his "outstanding contribution to Australian live entertainment."
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Premier Artists

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Roundhouse

Roundhouse is responsible for managing, promoting and selling national and international touring acts across Australia and New Zealand. The events combine entertainment, food and spectacular scenery catering for over 200 winery concerts, outdoor festivals, Leonard Cohen, Alicia Keys and much more. www.adayonthegreen.com

Illusive

Since 2002, Illusive has promoted club events, under 18 events and oversize successful record labels. www.illusive.com.au

PUBLICITY & PROMOTIONS

Mushroom Group Promotions

In 2007 MGP was born out of the Mushroom Group's philosophy of a united approach to promoting and marketing Australia and New Zealand. MGP has worked in the United States, Europe and South America. www.mushroomgroup.com.au

MERCHANDISING

Australian Tour Merchandising (ATM) manufactures and distributes approved licenced product throughout Australia, New Zealand and selected SE Asian countries. ATM work closely with new & established entertainment clients and international commercial partners, including exclusive agreements with Bravado and Signatures, to create innovative products carefully tailored to each artist or brand. www.autome.com.au

BANDTSHIRTS

bandtshirts.com.au is an online shop offering passionate and loyal music fans the chance to buy official and exclusive band merchandise from both Australian and international artists. www.bandtshirts.com.au

Australia & New Zealand's largest independent entertainment group

Offices: Melbourne, Sydney, Auckland | +61 3 9690 3399 | www.mushroomgroup.com.au
CONGRATULATIONS
INSKI, FRANK STIVALA & ALL THE STAFF AT FRONTIER TOURING COMPANY ON 30 SUCCESSFUL YEARS!

PUBLISHING

In 2009 Mushroom Music celebrated its 35th anniversary. It remains the largest independent publishing company in Australia and #1 publisher of Australian music. Mushroom Publishing launched into New Zealand late 2005, creating the country's first locally based major publishing company. Representing artists such as Kylie Minogue, Eskimo Joe, The Vines, Crowded House, Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds, Red Hot Chili Peppers, The Black Eyed Peas and many more.

www.mushroommusic.com.au

FILM & TELEVISION

Mushroom Pictures & Mushroom TV was formed in 1995, to develop, produce and distribute a wide range of films, television and multi-media projects. Successes to date include cult movies Chopper and the top #10 US hit, Wolf Creek, and the highly lauded TV series Great Australian Albums featuring legendary albums by Crowded House, Silverchair, Nick Cave & the Bad Seeds amongst others.

www.mushroompictures.com.au

MARKETING & MEDIA

Mushroom Marketing provides direct access to the combined resources and experience of the Mushroom Group of Companies to ensure marketers from other industries can effectively harness the power of music.

www.mushroommarketing.com.au

The Mushroom Group is a major investor in mcm entertainment group ltd. The company was founded in 1983, and today is one of Australia's most progressive media entertainment, digital solution and new media technical innovation organisations. With offices in Melbourne and Sydney the company is listed on the ASX and comprises three businesses: mcm media - Australia's leading music radio, television, online and mobile content producer & distributor; Igloo digital - digital strategy, design & website development and mts - the developer and global supplier of the movideo online streaming media solution for major video and audio content publishers.

www.mcmentertainment.com.au

Clear Intent is a fresh, dynamic in-house design agency focused on providing the industry with web, interactive and print solutions.

www.clearintent.com.au

VENUES

Ding Dong Lounge is Melbourne’s underground & alternative rock'n'roll bar that delivers live local, national & international rock. The Ding Dong Lounge is the sister bar to New York City's very own Ding Dong Lounge, and is nestled in the centre of Melbourne.

www.dingdonglounge.com.au

Trak is one of the newest and most unique venues in Melbourne catering to functions and events whilst offering state of the art in house audio and visual equipment.

www.trak.com.au

Dirt Music has been promoting international and local tours, shows and music festivals as well as operating its label and publishing arm.

www.dirtmusic.com.au

EMTIONS

Frontier Touring Company has been repeatedly award winning, ranked as Australasia’s #1 concert promoter and Pollstar ranking as Australasia’s #1 Australian promoter website list. Continues to deliver the best live music experiences to Australia and New Zealand.

www.frontiertouring.com

MUSHROOM PICTURES

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from >>pFT-10 toward the future. We’re looking at it quite closely and we’d like to do something at the end of 2010, early 2011. We were very close to bringing Coachella here. But it was the time when the worldwide recession happened and we had to hold back.

Have you considered setting up an affiliate of Frontier Touring in the United States or Europe?
I’ve never been that keen to do it. Alone stage, many years ago, I did think about setting something up in England after the success of the Mushroom label. But now that I’m 57 years old, let’s get serious. However, the incredibly successful start of the Infectious label in the U.K. has increased my international involvement.

What are the biggest hurdles facing promoters Down Under?
There are too many people in the game over here. And to get in the game, sometimes people throw around an inordinate amount of money, which is pushing ticket prices up. We don’t have a Live Nation or AEG Live here yet. It’s only a matter of time. Whether that will be a better thing for the market or not, time will tell.

I’m very concerned that the touring business is in the position where if it’s not careful, it will follow the record industry into decline. The Australian dollar goes up and the ticket price seems to go up with it, whereas it should be the other way around. It’s really up to the agents, managers and the artists taking control and thinking long term, ensuring that bidding wars don’t result in unachievable ticket prices and forgetting hardcore fans.

Some of your rival promoters are big believers in a Pan-Asian touring circuit.
I’m not a big believer in it. Parts of Asia will come together. But there are lots of social issues, financial issues, a lack of venues and sponsorship issues. Asia has missed its time a little bit. South Africa and South America are as relevant to Australia, or more so. South Africa is a market getting stronger and stronger. There are many different routes to Australia and New Zealand, whichever way you go. It’s a long way from anywhere. Some of my competitors really think there’s a big future [in Asia]. It’s certainly something I’d be happy to tie in with some of the locals, and leave to some of the locals. Time will tell.

Australia’s dollar has fluctuated wildly in the past 18 months. How much of an issue has that presented for promoting tours?
The currency rates are one of the biggest problems we have. We had some huge tours when the dollar dropped like I never saw it drop. When you’re in the middle of a $10 million Australian tour and the [Australian] dollar drops 30 cents or 40 cents [in value against foreign currencies], that’s a few million dollars’ difference. You go from having a profitable tour on a sellout to a losing tour. That’s just not right. It’s an additional risk, something we never had to think about so much in the old days.

I’ve been a vocal supporter of tax breaks for music industry investors, outside of the touring business. If you set up something like the film industry [tax concessions], you’ll find a lot of people would invest in local artists. And in turn, that would save the money that the government puts out in grants. Outside investors would take a lot more risks if there was some sort of [tax concession] structure in place. I don’t see why the music industry needs to play second fiddle to the movie industry.

Live Performance Australia’s ticketing survey revealed a steep drop-off in Australian concert ticket sales in 2008. Do you agree with that assessment?
The top-end and the red-hot acts will always sell. You look at [someone] like Pink, which was phenomenal. continued on >>pFT-16

Perhaps the world’s most esteemed authority on etiquette and protocol, Emily Post created the definitive manual on social graces and polite conduct. Mrs. Post included a list of “proper” gifts to celebrate different anniversaries. For 30th anniversaries, Mrs. Post recommends pearls.

We couldn’t agree more.

No one deserves a pearl necklace more than Michael.

Love,

SAM SILVA ARTIST MANAGEMENT
Michael,

You are a visionary, extremely entrepreneurial, and a man who doesn’t require much sleep.

Congratulations on 30 Years of Success.

Dennis Arfa
and Artist Group International
The older market is alive, and it’s discerning. But older fans need to know it’s the real deal. Too many acts re-form and come out here and have just two original members. Leonard Cohen restored the faith in real music. Andre Rieu was another unusual success who took time to really work the market. The Day on the Green [concerts at wineries in Australia and New Zealand] has established alternative venues for some acts to play, which can really make the difference with the viability of a tour. It’s something that will get bigger and bigger. It’s something we’ve created which could make sense in some international countries. We’ve been in the middle of discussions about doing some Day on the Green events in other countries.

Sponsorship is going to twist around a lot more to music. Over the next 12 months, you’ll see a change, with sensible tie-ins with sponsors. When sponsorship is involved, you just don’t let the act or the promoter pocket the money, but you try to pass it on by keeping the ticket prices down.

Describe yourself.

I’m a man of my word. I’m persistent and I’m loyal. You can talk about me in different eras. In the early days, I was just a workaholic who had a dream. I clutched onto a dream which eventually came to fruition. After selling the record company to Rupert Murdoch’s News Corp., I probably went through post-sale depression.

Every time I’ve had trouble, I’ve had a knack of finding a hero, whether it was Skyhooks at the start, Split Enz, Jimmy Barnes. Kylie Minogue, one of the major international stars on the Mushroom roster, was a massive thing for us.

The record business is a tough business at the moment. Being involved with the [ Infectious] label in England has given me renewed excitement.

And I’d like to give back more and more to the community. I’m very lucky when I go out to a crowded show or I’m walking down the street, a lot of people recognize me and I don’t hear. “You’re an asshole.” It’s usually, “Mate, what you’ve done for Australian music!” There’s love out there, and I don’t want to abuse that fact.

How do you divide your time overseeing the various companies within the Mushroom Group?

The most important thing to do is to learn to delegate. You’ve got to pick your marks. Your credibility is more important than everything. I have a talent for spotting good people, developing good people, communicating with them and getting the best out of them. I’d like to have a reunion of all the staff who’ve come through the group of companies over the years. So many people who are successful in the music business have come through Mushroom at one stage or another. I’ve always had good rapport with my staff and give them more and more responsibility. Even though I get most of the kudos, it’s not the way it actually goes.

You’re also a serious sports fan.

Through my two years of being VP of the St. Kilda Football Club, I’ve made a few moves which helped the club and we nearly won the Premiership. [The team was the runner-up in the 2009 Australian Football League season.] I’ve probably got an ownership share in a dozen horses. Chris Wright [chairman of the U.K. music and media company Chrysalis Group] got me started in all that. Horse racing is part of the Australian culture. I grew up with it, and it’s such a levelling thing. A group of young people can buy a horse for $50,000 and win a big race. And a rich person can buy a horse for $1 million and it runs last.

Where do you see the growth in the touring market?

The older market is alive, and it’s discerning. But older fans need to know it’s the real deal. Too many acts re-form and come out here and have just two original members. Leonard Cohen restored the faith in real music. Andre Rieu was another unusual success who took time to really work the market. The Day on the Green [concerts at wineries in Australia and New Zealand] has established alternative venues for some acts to play, which can really make the difference with the viability of a tour. It’s something that will get bigger and bigger. It’s something we’ve created which could make sense in some international countries. We’ve been in the middle of discussions about doing some Day on the Green events in other countries.

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The two things I’ve never done—which I hope to achieve—is a No. 1 album in America and to win the Melbourne Cup [the premier horse race in Australia]. If we do win the Melbourne Cup, 100,000-plus people attending will know that we’ve won it. But I’d give it all up for a No. 1 album in America. I’ve got my priorities right.

What other projects is Mushroom or Frontier looking at?

I’m interested in sports promoting. I’m interested in working with more celebrities. I can relate and have a rapport with them. I’ve taken on [representation of] one of the most high-profile footballers in history, Ben Cousins [a star of the Australian Football League].

We’re also moving into the exhibition business. We’re making Frontier Events a priority. We’ve picked up the Titanic exhibition for Australia. [The exhibit is a touring presentation of artifacts from the shipwreck.] Beginning in April, we’re going to do a lot more in that area. We’re looking at new areas that we believe there is room for expansion in, rather than just sitting back on the same touring circuit and living in what has become quite a standardized number of ways of doing concert tours in Australia.

We figure with the international acts we’re working with, there are lots of special one-off events that can actually make a difference to a tour, whether they’re corporate events or big public events like football finals. We’re looking at ways of bringing in extra income and extra shows.

It’s a hell of a long way to come to Australia, and certain things can really make the difference of a tour making financial sense or giving us the edge over our competitors.

Do you ever see yourself getting out of this game?

I don’t envisage myself—unless I live to a ridiculous age, which isn’t in my genes—that I would ever fully retire. Nor would I want to.

—Lars Brandle

Congratulations to Michael, Philip, Frank and all at the Frontier Touring Company from Kylie & Terry.
CONGRATULATIONS on 30 outstanding years from everyone at Rod Laver Arena, Melbourne.
30 years on the Frontier of world class live entertainment. It takes an awesome team. And a uniquely gifted leader.

Tony McGinn and the mcm entertainment group congratulate Michael Gudinski on three decades of success with The Frontier Touring Company.

We’re proud to be your partners and friends.

“Because of you, we’ve seen the world’s best acts here on our doorstep

Michael Gudinski and everyone at Frontier Touring Company

Thanks for an incredible 30 years and here’s to many more

Congratulations from Melbourne's "Good Times and Great Classic Hits"

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Marking the 30th anniversary of Frontier Touring, Billboard asked firm founder Michael Gudinski about memorable tours presented by Frontier. Here are 15 of his favorites.

FRANK SINATRA, LIZA MINNELLI and SAMMY DAVIS JR. (1958): “In a way, my coming of age. If my father had lived a few more years, it would have been the one and only Frontier Touring show he would have wanted to see.”

GUNS N' ROSES (1993): “After working with Guns N' Roses on their first tour—they never remembered it—they turned in two of the biggest shows in not only Frontier Touring's history but Australia's history at Calder Park Raceway in Melbourne and Eastern Creek International Raceway in Sydney. After all the trouble that had been going on, we were so nervous about these shows and had no insurance. So it was like a dream come true when they all went off without a hitch. It's all about getting the timing right, and this was right at their peak. Record-breaking figures.”

GUDINSKI FAVER (1993): “Still to this day the only time when she has toured Australia. The tour was gigantic and we went out of our way to do everything to make it memorable, including a massive Thanksgiving dinner at my country property where we did not just look after the A-list but all the crew and the hired musicians.”

SOUND RELIEF (2009): “This finally proved to so many people that Michael Chugg and I have a lot of love for each other. Chugg was formerly a partner in Frontier with Gudinski and now runs the competing Michael Chugg Entertainment. Although competitive, we worked together on the most important and biggest charity event in Australia. The show in Melbourne had twice as many people but, after all, we are the home of rock'n'roll and the Mushroom Group. A very proud feel-good moment, and we pulled it off.”

THE POLICE AND STING (1980-2007): “Not only were the Police one of the first acts we toured before the well-publicized breakup, we toured the final show in Melbourne. To be involved with Sting from the very beginning has generated one of my greatest relationships, and his last tour of Australia was the sell-out Lute tour. We have known each other for over half our lives.”

BILLY JOEL (1987-2008): “Australia has been such a big part of his career and one of the first countries he ever broke in. After going through about four different promoters, [Joel's booking agent] Dennis Afae realized he found the right home and we have worked with Billy [or ever since [including co-billed shows with Elton John]]. One of the great live performers who always rallied to put on a great show.”

JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE (2007): “We wanted to work with him for so long and even though we lost money on his first Australian tour [in 2004], we knew it was a worthwhile investment and, boy, the next tour was just enormous. I can't wait to see what he comes up with next.”

KINGS OF LEON (2009): “Although I was quite a fan, we had nothing to do with Kings of Leon until recently. We fought so hard to get this tour and were so determined to ensure it was unforgettable. I never expected to hit it off so well with the boys and management. In fact, it's one of the few tours [for which] my wife came on the road. We felt like their new second family, to the point where I went to New York for the wedding of one of the co-managers, Andy Mendelson. It's great when acts break in this market so far ahead of their own country.”

LEONARD COHEN (2009): “I was never Leonard's biggest fan but I had the utmost respect [for him] as he was so unique and inspirational to so many. But after my friend Rob Hallett [president of international touring at AEG Live] encouraged me to see Leonard live in Europe and finalize the tour, I realized this was something very special, and, as the Australian public lapped it up.”

FOO FIGHTERS (2005-08): “Working with the Fooz is a pleasure. They have some of the best people working around them, including one of the greatest managers in the world, John Silva, and they are a group that cares more about their fans than any of the industry bullshit, which is so important. [Frontman] Dave [Grohl] was in Australia when I received my Order of Australia [medal] and he has given my wife and I the credit of rock royalty. Always a pleasure to experience.”

CHRISTINA AGUILERA (2003-07): “Absolutely enormous, [She] really changed the face of pop in the fact [that] she is such a great singer. Someone that was at the forefront of the incredible success of female artists.”

THE EAGLES (1995-2007): “I have been a huge fan all my life and they are a real benchmark...”
for this industry. We have an incredible relationship with their long-term manager, Irving Azoff. The only way to summarize it is: There is only one Eagles. I look forward to the Farewell Tour.

JEFF BUCKLEY (1995-96): "Such a tragedy. [Buckley died in 1997 at age 30.] But to be involved with him so early in his career was another example of Frontier working with artists from the beginning."

LIONEL RICHIE (2007): "It’s a mark of a great artist who hasn’t been in the marketplace to continue to garner success. Lionel Richie does. I went to a couple of [his] shows in Europe and was blown out by what I saw. In bringing him to Australia [in 2007], he absolutely repeated that success. He’s the ultimate showman, a real professional to deal with, and we’re looking forward to bringing Lionel back toward the end of 2010. And we’ll all be dancing on the ceiling." — Lars Brandle

Top tickets: Among Gudinski’s favorite Frontier tours were outings by (from top) SAMMY DAVIS JR., FRANK SINATRA and LIZA MINNELLI, LEONARD COHEN, FOO FIGHTERS, shown with Gudinski (second from left) and Frontier tour coordinator GERARD SCHLAGHECKE (third from right), and KINGS OF LEON.

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HEALTH WARNING

WARNING: Promoting can seriously damage your health

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How Frontier Fits
Promotion Company Thrives Within Mushroom Group

Billing itself as Australia and New Zealand’s largest independent entertainment group, the Mushroom Group traces its roots to the creation by Michael Gudinski and Ray Evans of Mushroom Records in 1972. From the start, in Australia’s close-knit music business, Gudinski has played multiple roles in the careers of artists, foreshadowing the 360-degree business model that has become more common in recent years.

For example, Mushroom Records had early success in the ‘70s with the band Skyhooks, which he also managed. Gudinski sold 50% of Mushroom Records to Rupert Murdoch’s News Corp. in 1993 and the balance of the company to News Corp. in 1998. But he retained his interests in publishing, touring and other ventures. That created the foundation for the Mushroom Group of today, which includes divisions focused on recording, music publishing, live music and merchandising, publicity and promotions, marketing, movies and TV.

Mushroom Music Publishing also was founded in 1972 and remains one of Australia’s leading music publishers.

Liberation Music is the Mushroom Group’s primary label, launched by Gudinski in 1999 after the sale of Mushroom Records. Its sister labels are Liberator Music, Ivy League and Illusive.

Frontier Touring is the anchor of the Mushroom Group’s touring and events division, which also includes Frontier Events, focusing on entertainment for corporate and sport venues; the Harbour Agency, Premier Artists and Pace Entertainment booking agencies; Roundhouse Entertainment, which presents the Day on the Green winery concerts; and the live promotion arm of the Illusive label. The Mushroom Group includes two merchandising entities: Australian Tour Merchandising and online retailer BandShirts.

The Mushroom Group also includes two venues: The Ding Dong Lounge is an alternative club in Melbourne with a sister club in New York, while Trak is a Melbourne venue that offers a state-of-the-art audio setup and catering for hosting events.

Mushroom Group Promotions was set up in 2007 to serve the promotional needs of the Mushroom Group record labels and Frontier Touring.

Mushroom Marketing allows outside companies to leverage Mushroom’s expertise in creating music-focused marketing campaigns. Other marketing divisions include the radio production and syndication company MCM Entertainment and the print- and Web-focused Clear Intent.

Lastly, Mushroom Pictures and Mushroom TV was set up in 1995 to develop, produce and distribute film, TV and multimedia projects. Mushroom reports its successes to date include the cult movies “Chopper” and “Wolf Creek” and the TV series “Great Australian Albums,” highlighting the works of Crowded House, Silverchair, Nick Cave & the Bad Seeds and others.

—Thom Duffy
A savvy staff has been a key to the success of Frontier Touring during the past three decades, founder Michael Gudinski says. Here's a quick guide to members of the Frontier team.

**PARTNER**
Frank Stivala: Stivala is the only other remaining partner in Frontier Touring, which Gudinski established in 1979 with Stivala, Ray Evans, Philip Jacobsen and Michael Chugg. Stivala and Gudinski have known each other since they were 16 years old. Stivala is also head of Australia's largest domestic booking agency, Premier Harbour, comprising the Harbour Agency in Sydney and Premier Artists in Melbourne.

**FINANCE**
Philip Jacobsen: An original Frontier partner, Jacobsen continues to act as a consultant on financial matters for the company. He's also director of Premier Artists.

**PRODUCTION**
Nick Pitts: With more than 40 years in the touring business, Pitts emigrated from the United Kingdom 22 years ago and has worked as a full-time tour manager for Frontier Touring since. His international experience working with artists like Jimmy Page, Elton John and Van Morrison has been a major advantage for Frontier and its touring acts.

**TOUR COORDINATORS**
Gerard Schlaghecke: A 27-year veteran of Premier Artists and Frontier, Schlaghecke has a wealth of knowledge to draw upon in his position as a tour coordinator. Among the successful tours he has booked are Australian treks by Green Day, Them Crooked Vultures, Kings of Leon, Foo Fighters and Regina Spektor.

Michael “Harry” Harrison: After beginning his career at the Harbour Agency, Harrison came to Frontier as a tour coordinator and is an 18-year veteran. He has been responsible for booking successful tours for Justin Timberlake, the Killers, the Black Eyed Peas, My Morning Jacket and Snow Patrol.

Psyche Payne: Since joining Frontier in 2005, Payne has worked closely with Schlaghecke for the past five years on each of his tours. In 2010, Payne will move into a tour coordinating role with Frontier starting with the Cobra Ship/Owl City tour.

**MARKETING, EVENTS & TICKETING**
Mary Balmbridge: A 26-year veteran of Frontier, Balmbridge has been an integral part of its operations for most of the company’s existence, originally as Gudinski’s assistant and, in more recent years, overseeing all aspects of marketing and ticketing for the company.

**PROMOTIONS & PUBLICITY**
Reegan Stark: Stark has been Frontier’s publicist for seven years, heading up the newly formed Mushroom Group Promotions team since 2007 and coordinating promotion across Frontier and Mushroom Group’s four labels. Stark was responsible for the recent relaunch of the Frontier Touring Web site, which now boasts an active membership of 400,000-plus fans. According to Frontier, it ranks as Australia’s top promoter Web site.

**NEW ZEALAND OFFICE**
Brent & Helen Eccles: This husband-and-wife pair has run Frontier Touring New Zealand for the past 10 years with a team that looks after all aspects of Frontier tours that travel to the country. Frontier is the only promoter with a dedicated full-time office in New Zealand. Brent formerly managed, and was the drummer for, successful Australian band the Angels.

---Thom Duffy

To the BIG G and Frontier Touring Company

Congratulations and Thanks

for 30 years of great entertainment
Congratulations Michael Gudinski and Frontier Touring for reaching the 30 year milestone!

It's been an amazing journey and Show Group is proud to have been a partner along the way.

There's no business like Show business!

Frontier Touring founder Michael Gudinski also helped change the face of big-scale tours Down Under with that tour, according to Rod Pilbeam, executive director of AEG Ogden, which manages venues in the Asia Pacific region that include Sydney's Acer Arena and the Brisbane Entertainment Centre.

"Michael was one of the first, on an Eagles tour [in 1995], who introduced differential pricing," Pilbeam says. "They introduced a 'golden circle' for 1,500 seats down the front, which had a higher ticket price. They were the first ones that sold out. Frontier were the ones that took the risk and the chance of getting a bad reaction.

"What it meant," Pilbeam continues, "was that Frontier were able to bid for shows which might have been too expensive to bring down here. Ticket prices were always a bit higher in Australia. The differential pricing that Frontier went with first really meant that Australia was able to keep getting shows that other areas of the world might have fended off. And it was introduced in Australia even before it was introduced in the United States. Within 12 months, Australian promoters were in a better position to bid for acts."

Frontier continued its relationship with the Eagles. The most successful engagement in the company's 30-year history, according to Billboard Boxscore data, was five sellouts by the band at the Rod Laver Arena in Melbourne Nov. 17-24, 2004, which drew 60,379 fans and grossed $10.3 million.

— Lars Brandle and Thom Duffy

Australian performances by the Eagles account for five of the top 25 engagements promoted by Frontier Touring, according to Billboard Boxscore data.

The earliest Frontier booking of the Eagles that makes the company's top Boxscores tally was a triple sellout at Melbourne's Flinders Park Nov. 29-Dec. 2, 1995. With Melissa Etheridge on the bill, the Eagles drew 39,981 fans and grossed $2.5 million at that tour stop.

Frontier Touring and Show Group are proud to have been partners along the way.
### FRONTIER'S TOP BOXSCORES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist(s)</th>
<th>Venue, Location, Dates</th>
<th>Audience(s), Dec 2007</th>
<th>Promoter(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong> EAGLES</td>
<td>Rod Laver Arena, Melbourne Nov 14–17, 2004</td>
<td>66,379</td>
<td>Frontier Touring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong> EAGLES</td>
<td>Sydney SuperDome, Sydney Nov 19–22, 2004</td>
<td>83,606</td>
<td>Frontier Touring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong> JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE, PARIS WELLS</td>
<td>Acer Arena, Sydney Oct 18–21, 2007</td>
<td>79,768</td>
<td>Frontier Touring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong> EAGLES</td>
<td>Hisense Arena, Melbourne Nov 11, 2006</td>
<td>29,774</td>
<td>Frontier Touring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5</strong> EAGLES</td>
<td>Brisbane Entertainment Centre, Brisbane, Nov 18–21, 2006</td>
<td>34,666</td>
<td>Frontier Touring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6</strong> THE POLICE, FERGIE, FICTION PLANE</td>
<td>ANZ Stadium, Sydney Jan 19–21, 2008</td>
<td>41,728</td>
<td>Live Nation Global Touring, Frontier Touring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7</strong> BILLY JOEL</td>
<td>Rod Laver Arena, Melbourne Nov 10–13, 2006</td>
<td>30,988</td>
<td>Frontier Touring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8</strong> THE POLICE, FERGIE, FICTION PLANE</td>
<td>Members Equity Stadium, Parramatta Feb 1–3, 2008</td>
<td>36,192</td>
<td>Live Nation Global Touring, Frontier Touring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9</strong> BILLY JOEL</td>
<td>Acer Arena, Sydney Nov 9–12, 2006</td>
<td>34,965</td>
<td>Frontier Touring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10</strong> THE POLICE, FERGIE, FICTION PLANE</td>
<td>Melbourne Cricket Ground, Melbourne Jan 29, 2008</td>
<td>29,655</td>
<td>Frontier Touring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11</strong> SOUND RELIEF: KINGS OF LEON, KYLIE MINOGUE &amp; OTHERS</td>
<td>Melbourne Cricket Ground, Melbourne Nov 30, 2008</td>
<td>81,006</td>
<td>Sound Relief by arrangement with Frontier Touring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>12</strong> THE POLICE, FERGIE, FICTION PLANE</td>
<td>Sydney Entertainment Centre, Sydney Jan 22, 2008</td>
<td>25,928</td>
<td>Frontier Touring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>13</strong> KYLIE MINOGUE</td>
<td>Acer Arena, Sydney Nov 23–25, 2007</td>
<td>37,657</td>
<td>Frontier Touring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>14</strong> JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE</td>
<td>Rod Laver Arena, Melbourne Nov 16–19, 2007</td>
<td>29,701</td>
<td>Frontier Touring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>15</strong> BILLY JOEL</td>
<td>Acer Arena, Sydney Nov 17–19, 2006</td>
<td>28,701</td>
<td>Frontier Touring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>16</strong> KYLIE MINOGUE</td>
<td>Acer Arena, Sydney Dec 14–16, 2006</td>
<td>34,308</td>
<td>Frontier Touring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>17</strong> ROD STEWART</td>
<td>Acer Arena, Sydney Dec 15–16, 2006</td>
<td>20,248</td>
<td>Frontier Touring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>18</strong> FOO FIGHTERS, KAKI KING, THE MESS HALL</td>
<td>Acer Arena, Sydney Mar 2–4, 2007</td>
<td>30,965</td>
<td>Frontier Touring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>19</strong> BILLY JOEL</td>
<td>Acer Arena, Sydney Dec 17–19, 2008</td>
<td>25,525</td>
<td>Frontier Touring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>20</strong> BILLY JOEL</td>
<td>Acer Arena, Sydney Dec 20–22, 2006</td>
<td>25,220</td>
<td>Frontier Touring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>21</strong> EAGLES, LMFAO</td>
<td>Brisbane Entertainment Centre, Brisbane, Dec 22–24, 2008</td>
<td>27,388</td>
<td>Frontier Touring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>22</strong> EAGLES, LMFAO</td>
<td>Brisbane Entertainment Centre, Brisbane, Dec 27–29, 2008</td>
<td>27,388</td>
<td>Frontier Touring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>23</strong> THE BLACK EYED PEAS, LMFAO</td>
<td>Acer Arena, Sydney Oct 23–25, 2007</td>
<td>27,388</td>
<td>Frontier Touring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>24</strong> CHRISTINA AGUILERA, LOW RIDER</td>
<td>Acer Arena, Sydney Dec 24–25, 2007</td>
<td>25,450</td>
<td>Frontier Touring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>25</strong> EAGLES, MELISSA ETHERIDGE</td>
<td>Acer Arena, Sydney Dec 30–Jan 2, 2007</td>
<td>39,081</td>
<td>Frontier Touring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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