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[Tour TAXI!](#)

NEWS ITEMS:

[Music Retail Continues Decline](#)

[Monday Morning Leftovers: Slanted Towards *Enchanted*, Keys vs. Groban, U2 Sighting, Mizzou#1, More](#)

[Trakin Care of Business: We Can Be Heroes](#)

[Bulletin Board](#)

Music Retail Continues Decline

Borders, Hastings Q3 Reports Show CD Sales in a Tailspin

Reprinted with permission from Hits Magazine

November 27, 2007

Music retail continued its decline, though someone did eke out a profit, thanks to diversification.

Borders Group reported steep dips in music sales in Q3, though it did show gains in its core books category, as well as its café, gifts and stationary divisions.

The company experienced a U.S.-based, same-store drop of 13.1% within music, while broader sales moved upward 5.6% to \$615.8 million, and global sales from continuing operations increased 5.3% to \$805.2 million.

Borders reported massive net losses of \$161.1 million, or \$2.74 per share, a massive rise from year-ago losses of \$39.1 million. A bulk of the losses (\$119.4 million) came from the divestiture of its stores in the U.K., which accounted for most of the year-to-year delta.

Meanwhile, **Hastings Entertainment** posted a narrow Q3 profit, the result of improved cost controls, better product margins and, of course, continued diversification away from music.

Overall, the company managed a slim \$0.1 million profit on revenues of \$122.3 million, a reversal of year-ago losses of \$2.2 million. The outcome represents the first time Hastings has scored a profit during its fiscal third quarter, which ended Oct. 31, according to CEO **John Marmaduke**. "In what continues to be a challenging retail environment in music and rental, we were able to improve pre-tax profits by \$3.7 million from the third quarter of last year," he pointed out.

Still, music sales dropped 14.8%, from last year's dip of 6.3%. By comparison, games jumped a sizable 34.1%, consumer electronics elevated 30.8%, and movies improved 7.6%.

Retailers like **Trans World Entertainment** have tried similar strategies, with mixed results, as retailers look to stronger holiday traffic to bolster Q4 bottom lines and help counteract the CD

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"I received a giant BMI check from TV airplay that I"

sales downturn.

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[↑ Top of Page](#)

Monday Morning Leftovers: Slanted Towards Enchanted, Keys vs. Groban, U2 Sighting, Mizzou#1, More

Amy Adams' Star Rises, Keys vs. Groban, U2 Goes to Church, Missouri #1 in College Pigskin

Reprinted with permission from Hits Magazine

November 26, 2007

Recovered from your turkey tryptophan hangover yet? Or have you finished ducking the crowds at Target on Black Friday? Had enough bad football? (I'm still in shock over how putrid my **J-E-T-S Jets Jets Jets** were on Thursday against the **Cowboys**). With Black Friday done, are you ready for Cyber Monday?

It was a weekend in which **The Firm** client **Amy Adams** reached stardom, as **Disney's Enchanted** topped the weekend box office with a gross of \$35.3 million, and a take of over \$50 million since its release Wednesday, the holiday season's first, big crossover family smash. **Sony/Screen Gems'** African-American family entry, *This Christmas*, came in second with \$18.6 million and a five-day gross of \$27.1 million. Last week's #1, **Paramount's Beowulf**, fell to #3 with a three-day take of \$16.2 million and a five-day of \$23.3 million, giving it a two-week total of \$56.3 million. **Fox's Hitman** opened in fourth place with five-day sales of \$21 million (\$13 million over the weekend), while **Paramount's Bee Movie** pulled in just this side of \$16 million since Wednesday and \$12 million over the weekend for a four-week total of \$112 million.

Alicia Keys' As I Am is battling it out with **Josh Groban's Noel** for the #1 spot on this week's **HITS** Album sales chart, though Groban appears in the lead at this point, thanks to an **Oprah** appearance last week boosting a total that is in the 400k range, compared to Keys at around 350k. Top debuts will be *American Idol* winner **Jordin Sparks' Jive/ZLG** bow and **Keith Urban's Greatest Hits** on **Capitol**, both in the 110-120k range. Stay tuned to our Building Album Sales Chart as the Black Friday totals are tallied by our crack(ed) retail staff [here](#).

If **Missouri**, which turned back previously undefeated **Kansas** this weekend, can top **Oklahoma** in next weekend's Big 12 championship, it will go to the **BCS** title game held at the Louisiana Superdome in New Orleans on Jan. 7, 2008, against **West Virginia**, which has to beat **Pittsburgh**. Otherwise, this weekend's traditional **USC-UCLA** battle will determine the Rose Bowl participant. If USC wins, they're in; if UCLA wins, they have to hope **Arizona** tops **Arizona State** to play in their home stadium.

U2's Bono and **The Edge** made a surprise appearance at a charity concert in a London church last Friday night. The two entertained a crowd of 250 as part of a benefit for **Mencap**, a British

probably wouldn't have earned without TAXI."

— Julie Ann Bailey,
TAXI Member

Success Stories



"We Had A #1 Hit Because We Joined TAXI!"

[Click Here to Read Them!](#)

"With help from you guys, the music is pouring out and I'm having such fun! Thanks!"

— Willie McCulloch,
TAXI Member

"Laura Becker has already gotten interest in two of my songs. You guys know the best (and nicest) people in the industry."

— James Day,
TAXI Member

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"I've had several meetings at Dreamworks Records and made several new contacts as a result of

organization that helps people with learning disabilities. The duo played four songs in a 20-minute acoustic set, including "Stay (Faraway, So Close!)," "Desire," "Angel of Harlem" and "Wave of Sorrow (Birdland)," a rarity originally intended for *Joshua Tree*, but not available until it appeared on the record's just-released 20th anniversary edition. The band's bassist, **Adam Clayton**, was reportedly in the audience at the Union Chapel, a church that also presents concerts, but did not perform with the pair.

The much-debated **XM-Sirius Satellite Radio** merger seems to be on track to pass, according to the **Motley Fool**. That news comes after the *Washington Post* claimed that hundreds of thousands of e-mails opposing the merger were fake, created by the **National Association of Broadcasters**, who have been intensely lobbying against the pact.

The *N.Y. Times* ponders the new album by **Jordin Sparks**, the U.S. release of **Amy Winehouse's** U.K. debut, new efforts from **Loren Stillman** and **Kylie Minogue** and an unearthed **Gram Parsons** live album on **Amoeba** [here](#).

The *N.Y. Times's* **Ben Ratliff** catches up with rock warhorse **Jerry Lee Lewis** during his performance at B.B. King's Blues Club & Grill [here](#).

The *N.Y. Times's* classical reviewer **Allan Kozinn** assesses **Arlo Guthrie**, playing with the **Kentucky Symphony Orchestra**, at the folk-singer's annual holiday soiree at Carnegie Hall, where you can get anything you want, [here](#).

The *N.Y. Times's* **Ben Sisario** pens an obituary for rock publicist **Paul Wasserman** [here](#).

The *N.Y. Times's* list of holiday box set stocking stuffers can be read [here](#).

The *N.Y. Times's* **Kelefa Sanneh** reviews a very tentative **Sly** with his revised **Family Stone** performance [here](#).

The *L.A. Times's* **Sarah Tomlinson** praises **John Fogerty's** "fierce" show at the Nokia L.A. Live Theater [here](#).

The *L.A. Times's* **John Payne** is taken with the cinematic punk of Long Beach emo-rockers **Cold War Kids'** show at the Wiltern [here](#).

The *L.A. Times* pop music staff ponders the multi-culturalism of a new crop of indie-rockers [here](#).

The *L.A. Times's* **Oliver Wang** wishes **Queen Latifah** would get back to her hip-hop roots [here](#).

The *L.A. Times's* Action Man reports from the trenches of the Rock N Roll Fantasy Camp at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas [here](#).

The *L.A. Times's* **Greg Burk** revels in **Van Halen's** reunion tour, which hit Staples Center last week, [here](#).

Newsday's **Rafer Guzman** assesses **R. Kelly's** "Vegas" extravaganza at the Nassau Coliseum, [here](#).

The *N.Y. Daily News's* **Jim Farber** weighs in on **Amy Winehouse's** "sober" debut [here](#).

Explore the *N.Y. Post's* rundown of current music and pop culture magazines [here](#).

ON THIS DAY:

In **1962: The Beatles** recorded their first session for the "Please Please Me" single at Abbey Road's Studio 2.

In **1966: The Beatles** convened at Abbey Road studios to record the follow-up to *Revolver*.

as a result of
belonging to TAXI."

— John Scott,
TAXI Member

"My advice to anyone planning to go to the Road Rally for the first time is: Go! It's addictive, it's the best opportunity you'll ever get, and it's fun, friendly and free!"

— Mike Fitzsimons,
TAXI Member

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"TAXI, thanks for all your help. My song, 'Drowning In Love,' will appear in the upcoming Mirimax film, 'Takedown.'"

— James Kole,
TAXI Member

"I have spent my life playing and singing in bands and this is the most real thing I have ever seen."

— Dwight Nichols,
TAXI Member

**Companies That
Work With TAXI**



In **1967**: *The Ed Sullivan Show* aired a promotional clip for **The Beatles'** "Hello Goodbye." The film was banned in England due to the Musician's Union rules regarding lip-synching.

In **1968**: **Cream** played their farewell concert at the Royal Albert Hall.

In **1969**: **John Lennon** participated in his last session with **The Beatles**, mixing and editing their B-side, "You Know My Name (Look Up the Number)."

In **1974**: **Led Zeppelin** spent their time rehearsing at London's Livewire Theatre while they waited for the release of *Physical Graffiti*. The record company was holding up the album's release due to its complicated cutout sleeve.

In **1979**: **Fleetwood Mac** played their first date in support of the double album *Tusk* in Pocatello, Idaho.

In **1979**: **Bob Dylan's** all-gospel show got an angry reaction in Tempe, AZ. Dylan himself spent most of his time berating the audience and then refused to play an encore.

In **1988**: The Russian rocket **Soyuz** sent **Pink Floyd's** *Delicate Sound of Thunder* album into deep space.

In **2002**: **Paul McCartney** released *Back in the US*, a live document of his 2002 Driving USA tour.

In **2002**: **Tupac Shakur** released *Better Dayz*, despite having been dead for six years.

In **2003**: **Britney Spears** topped the album charts with her much-hyped *In the Zone*. She became the first female artist in chart history to land four consecutive albums at #1.

In **2003**: **No Limit** rapper **Soulja Slim** was shot and killed in front of the two-story duplex he'd recently purchased for his mother in New Orleans.

In **2005**: **Christina Aguilera** married record executive **Jordan Bratman** in California's Napa Valley.

HITS magazine is the most powerful information vehicle in the music industry, and is read religiously by all the top executives and everyone else.



[↑ Top of Page](#)

Trakin Care of Business: We Can Be Heroes

Our Man Sings the Praises of Dylan at Newport, Wussy's Indie Rock, Bronx's Old-School Hip-Hop, Nealon and Hedberg's Comic Chops, Dove Soap and Clam & Garlic Pizza

Reprinted with permission from Hits Magazine

November 22, 2007

1. **Bob Dylan, *The Other Side of the Mirror: Live at the Newport Folk Festival 1963-1965***

[Click Here To See Them All!](#)

"I recently got my first deal as a result of a submission to TAXI! I'm very excited to see that this actually works!"

— George Leverett,
TAXI Member

"I signed a publishing deal this month for my song "Downward." Last year I signed two publishing deals with another publisher."

— Mike Newman,
TAXI Member

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Veteran Director of A&R at MAJOR LABEL looking for excellent [SINGER/SONGWRITERS](#)

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"In this competitive field you need all the help you can get and with TAXI. you've got

(Columbia/Legacy DVD): As a primer for **Todd Haynes' Dylan** meditation, *I'm Not There*, filmmaker **Murray Lerner's** straightforward, black-and-white documentary captures the ever-shifting faces of the iconic bard, from a humble, clean-cut, sleeves-rolled-up, jeans-wearing **Woody Guthrie** wannabe folkie to the smirking, Jew-fro'd, fully self-aware, rock and rolling voice of a generation, all in less than three years and 83 minutes. The movie starts with the shy, earnest talk-sing narrative of "North Country Blues," about labor strife amid the torturous conditions in the iron mines of his native Minnesota, and ends with a sneering "It's All Over Now, Baby Blue," his tongue-in-cheek fuck-off to all the betrayed folkies who just moments before lustily booed him for plugged-in, electric renditions of "Maggie's Farm" and the brand-new "Like a Rolling Stone." There's a beaming **Joan Baez**, giddily smitten with her young charge, accompanying him on a we're-all-in-this-together "With God on Our Side" in '63, then good-naturedly taking the brunt of his brash teasing on "It Ain't Me Babe" the following summer, only to disappear completely by the time her Bobby reinvents himself as a Rock God a year later. After Dylan's show-stopping "Chimes of Freedom" at the '64 gathering, an overwhelmed **Peter Yarrow**, attempting to introduce **Odetta** and **Dave Van Ronk** to follow, is drowned out by the rabid crowd screaming for more, yet another symbolic instance of the changing of the guard in action. By the time the '65 festival was over, Dylan would soon be headed to Nashville to record the momentous *Blonde on Blonde*, before his skyrocketing career crash-landed with the mythic, near-fatal Woodstock motorcycle accident in summer '66 that would ground him for 18 months. Lerner's remarkable document records this amazing personal transformation, which was uncannily mirrored in both the global politics and culture of the time, a true phenomenon transcending show business, the likes of which we'll undoubtedly never see again.

2. Wussy, *Left for Dead* (Shake It Records): This sleeper, out-of-nowhere indie release, from Cincinnati, of all places, is the product of post-grunge band **the Ass Ponys'** singer/songwriter **Chuck Cleaver** and partner **Lisa Walker**, who now must be placed alongside such other alt-rock power couples as **Sonic Youth's Moore and Gordon** and **Yo La Tengo's Kaplan and Hubley**. For their second album, the successor to 2005's *Funeral Dress*, like any good modern relationship, the two switch roles, with Walker taking lead vocals on eight of the 12 tracks, though the combination of her sensuous, **Chrissie Hynde-meets-Stevie Nicks** croon and Cleaver's keening, **David Thomas Pere Ubu**-esque fine whine works best on songs like the elegiac "Trail of Sadness," with its evocative reminiscence of a summer past: "Light My Fire" always playing on the radio/My desire always so afraid of letting go." "Rigor Mortis" combines the crackling, forward-motion, feedback buzz of **the Velvets** and **Jesus & Mary Chain**, as well as Sonic Youth, with pitched harmonies that reflect the give-and-take of keeping the romantic flame burning. On "Mayflies," Walker channels **the Pretenders'** "Talk of the Town" with a Christian-themed tale of crucifixion and resurrection ("Like this blood on my hands and the mark on my head/And the memory of someone I left for dead"), while "What's-His-Name" has a jumpy **R.E.M.** rhythm and melody masking a tale of sexual betrayal ("I've got a phantom limb/It's getting my attention even though there's really nothing to say/It belongs to him"). "Tiny Spiders" starts off with ominous **Nirvana-meets-Joy Division** *doom und gloom* before metamorphosing into a catchy **Fleetwood Mac** chorus: "You threw it all away to find yourself." By the time bassist **Mark Messerly** pulls out a mournful, walk-along-the Seine accordion on "God's Camaro" as Chuck sings, "This is the day I take the hose and rinse my sins away," I'm almost ready to be baptized myself... or jerk off. Boasting one of the finest rock band names ever, Wussy is the best thing to come from Cincy since **Oscar Robertson** and **Graeter's** ice cream.

3. Johan Kugelberg, *Born in the Bronx: A Visual Record of the Early Days of Hip-Hop* (Rizzoli): This stunning coffee-table tome traces hip-hop's birth in the South Bronx of the early-to-mid '70s, back in the day when **Afrika Bambaataa** (who penned the foreword) formed his historic **Zulu Nation**, **DJ Kool Herc** spun breakbeats while pal **Coke La Rock** rapped, **Grandmaster Flash** launched the wheels of steel, **Grandwizard Theodore**

....., ..
a friend in the music business."

— Richard Scotti,
 TAXI Member

"I was cynical at first, but my wife convinced me to join and I'm very impressed."

— L.A. Van Fleet,
 TAXI Member

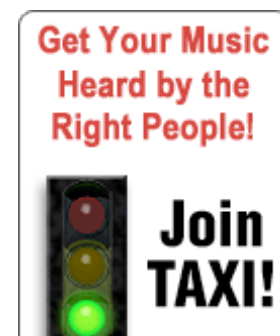


"With help from you guys, the music is pouring out and I'm having such fun! Thanks!"

— Willie McCulloch,
 TAXI Member

"I've gotten one solid offer from a record company/publisher . . . and two other songs of mine are on the desks of A&R executives at major labels. Quite simply, TAXI works!"

— Paul Schwartz,
 TAXI Member



discovered scratch and the likes of **Grandmaster Caz** and the **Cold Crush Brothers** rocked the South Bronx block parties with two turntables and a microphone. The book lovingly assembles the homemade posters and flyers advertising the shows, handwritten lyrics, unearthed Polaroids and 12" labels and sleeves alongside a **Jeff Chang**-compiled time, a **Charlie Chase** spin list, interviews with Grandmaster Caz and illustrator **Buddy Esquire** and Grandwizzard Theodore's first-person description of how he invented scratching. The vintage photos alone capture a time of discovery and cross-cultural ferment that emerged whole cloth out of funk and disco, incorporated elements of tagging and graffiti to emerge less than 40 years later as arguably America's most dominant form of popular music. You couldn't ask for a better holiday gift for that hip-hop head who wants to find out more about the genre's roots in the projects of N.Y.'s most maligned borough.

4. *Amazing Grace* (20th Century Fox): Director **Michael Apted's** story of 18th century English abolitionist and member of Parliament **William Wilberforce**, played forcefully by Welsh actor **Ioan Gruffudd**, opens a window to a little-known (at least to me) struggle in British politics, starting from just after the Revolutionary War, when the born-again idealist, who earned his wealth as a tradesman, launched a literally lifelong campaign to eliminate slavery, sometimes with, more often without, the assistance of his lasting friend, soon-to-be Prime Minister **William Pitt (Benedict Cumberbatch** aging accordingly). The rub is, of course, most Parliament members at the time were heavily invested in the island spice trade that was impossible without slave labor, fearful that the French would come in and take over, so their opposition made it impossible for Wilberforce to push his Abolition reforms through for most of his life. Much is made of Wilberforce's midlife conversion to Christianity, no surprise since the film was produced by **Philip Anschutz's Walden Media**, which specializes in this sort of thing, but don't let that deter you because it's never thrown in your face. There's a fascinating sub-plot involving **Albert Finney's** John Newton, a real-life, blinded ex-slaveowner who was a friend of Wilberforce and wrote the original spiritual "Amazing Grace" ("I once was blind/But now I see") after a conversion to the church. Veterans **Michael Gambon** and **Toby Jones** (who played **Truman Capote** in *Infamous*) offer colorful support as fellow Parliamentarians on either side of the fence, while **Grammy**-winning Senegal musician **Youssou N'Dour** gives a striking performance as slave-turned-activist writer **Oludah Equiano**, whose best-selling books on the subject helped publicize the Abolitionist cause. The movie drags on a little—after all, Wilberforce wasn't able to get his Slavery Abolition Act passed until 1833, thanks to sneaking it onto another bill while the rest of Parliament was otherwise distracted, just three days before his own death. Weakened by illness and fevers throughout his life, Wilberforce is portrayed as a virtual saint, and for those of us xenophobic Americans who thought **Abraham Lincoln's** Emancipation Proclamation was the first to set the slaves free, *Amazing Grace* offers a convincing history lesson.

5. *Badland* (COPEX): I'm not really familiar with the work of writer/director **Francesco Lucente**, but his tragic story of an Iraqi war veteran who returns to America, only to encounter dim prospects, exacerbated by a harping, pregnant wife and three needy kids, explores dark territory you rarely see in any films, mainstream or otherwise. British actor **Jamie Draven**, best-known as the older brother in *Billy Elliott*, is Jerry Rice, who is fired from his gas station job as the film opens, then returns to his family for an uncomfortably extended scene of domestic hostility that finally explodes in an eruption of violence that is both inevitable and shocking, the most intense I've seen since *Full Metal Jacket*. Rice goes on the lam with his daughter, touchingly played by the preternaturally mature **Grace Fulton** (a regular on *CBS' Ghost Whisperer* as the young version of **Jennifer Love Hewitt's** character), the two of them ending up in a small Wyoming town, whose vast skies and wide-open spaces belie the ever-tightening trap that threatens to unmask his shocking secret. Reliable veteran **Joe Morton** (*American Gangster*, *The Brother from Another Planet*) shows up as yet another damaged vet, who returns to the town as sheriff and befriends Rice, only to get caught up in his violent past. There are some sharp supporting turns by **Vinessa Shaw** as Rice's doomed wife, and **Chandra**



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"We appreciate all that you do and try to do to help us struggling songwriters!"

— Pat Harris,
TAXI Member

"I just want a shot, and I feel that TAXI has given that to me."

— Roger Yeardley,
TAXI Member



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"Thanks to TAXI I no longer have a day job! The membership fee was a drop in the bucket compared to what I have earned because of TAXI."

— George Nelson,
TAXI Member

"Wow! 6 forwards for one listing! Thanks guys, you made my day (week, month, etc!)"

— Reid Power,
TAXI Member

Companies That

West as the cute girlfriend who tries to save him with her love. There's also an effective use of a pair of **Ray LaMontagne** songs and **Bruce Springsteen's** "Devils and Dust" over the final credits, both of whom allowed the filmmaker to use their music for probably much-reduced fees. At two hours and 40 minutes, the movie takes a while to get where it's going, but when it finally arrives, the finale offers a shattering denouement. There are no happy endings here, or even happy beginnings, and the theme of disillusioned veterans returning home with no future is not a new one, but, if you give it the time, the sheer force of Lucente's unflinching vision is undeniable. Opens in New York and Los Angeles Nov. 30.

6. Kevin Nealon: Even back in his *SNL* salad days, I've never been the biggest fan of Nealon's, but his role as wacky accountant Doug Wilson totally enlivened this just-concluded season of *Weeds*. Whether he's dancing his little robot jig of Zorba-like revenge as sewage spews into the air of Majestic's bloodless takeover of Agrestic or plucking the banjo while giving an ongoing musical commentary on the action at the shelter in the final, apocalyptic episode, Nealon brought a kind of manic savoir faire to the proceedings, alternately spoofing and getting trapped in the proceedings with straight-faced, in-control aplomb. And while the conclusion of the series left things a little *en media res* (even my son complained, "They didn't advance the narrative"), a promise of new episodes next year offered at least some consolation. Contemplating all those suburban homes of "ticky-tacky" burning to the ground—while Nealon blithely picked and hawked grass, and fundamentalist Christians prayed, spoke in tongues and were enraptured by the Holy Spirit—was enough to justify the show's riff on the death of conformity, so wonderfully underlined by all those different versions of **Malvina Reynolds'** hoary "Little Houses" featured over the opening credits.

7. Mitch Hedberg: This Minneapolis long-haired, shaded, haphazard hipster, who was a favorite of **David Letterman**—he appeared on *Late Night* 10 separate times from 1997 to 2003—died of an accidental heroin overdose in March, 2005. Like **Bill Hicks**, his legend continues to loom large among comic aficionados, but thanks to **YouTube**, we can still see signs of his eccentric, slouching stand-up genius. Hedberg's similar to **Steve Wright** in his observational humor and play on words, a more sardonic, deadpan version of **Seinfeld**. Samples of Hedberg's quirky takes: "I went to a doctor and he sucked the blood out of me. Do not go see Dr. Acula." "Is a hippopotamus a hippopotamus or a really cool opotamus?" "I order a club sandwich all the time and I'm not even a member. I don't know how I get away with it." "I like to take a toothpick, throw it in the forest and say, 'You're home.'" "I thought my teeth were white until I washed my face with Noxzema. They are off-white. I'm off-white. It's a new race. We will prevail." "If 13 is an unlucky number, then B should be an unlucky letter, because it looks like a scrunched-together 13." "I bought a two-bedroom house, but it's up to me how many bedrooms are in the house, isn't it?" "I've got a king-sized bed. I don't know any kings, but if one came over, I guess he'd be comfortable." "When I was a boy, I laid in my twin-sized bed and wondered where my brother was." "I don't know if **Carmex** cures cold sores, but it will make them shiny and more noticeable." Check out this performance at Canada's 2001 *Just for Laughs* festival [here](#).

8. Dove Soap: A tribute to how an effective brand can inspire a lifetime of loyal consumerism. When I was young, a doctor recommended Dove soap for my dry skin condition, which remains a problem to this day, especially in cold weather, when I itch and feel like I want to crawl out of my body. Most soaps dry out as they cleanse, but Dove is a notable exception. One of my simple pleasures is cracking out a brand-new bar, with its pleasing shape, perfectly contoured with a slope to lathering up the various parts of the body, in white, pink or the newest variety, green. Dove leaves my skin soft, approximating its own stated claim that's it's like cream in a bar. I've never found a better soap, which is why I remain a devoted customer, and now my wife and kids are believers, assuring a second generation of Dove buyers. A steaming hot shower and Dove soap. One of life's little joys. As the punch-line of the old shaggy-dog joke put it, "No soap radio." Indeed.



"We appreciate all that you do and try to do to help us struggling songwriters!"

— Pat Harris,
TAXI Member

"You are making an incredible difference in the lives of musicians and artists trying to break into the business!"

— Rob Khurana,
TAXI Member


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Veteran Director of A&R at MAJOR LABEL looking for excellent [SINGER/SONGWriters](#)



"I would like to thank

9. Slice of clam and garlic pizza at Village Pizzeria in Larchmont Village, CA: Make that two slices with a **Stewart's** Orange Cream soda chaser, thank you very much. Not quite the New York variety, but close enough, especially when you're surrounded by faded press clippings of the **Mets'** 1986 championship, photos of **Tom Seaver** and framed tickets to the 1969 **Met-Oriole** World Series. It's kinda like a pizza version of another personal favorite, linguine and clam sauce, except without the pasta, and the combination of clams and garlic on the thin, crunchy crust offers all of my favorite tastes together in one food. Haven't tried the whole pie yet—mainly because I can't find anyone with similar cravings to share it with me—but a pair of slices on the run is more than enough to satisfy a primal urge.

10. Gripe of the Week: I never realized how much of **the Beatles'** early popularity came from their pleasingly lilting Liverpudlian Scouse accents, which made every statement sound like a quizzical retort or a sarcastic rejoinder, thanks to the sing-song uplift at the end of each utterance. That linguistic quirk is also evident in so-called Valley Girl speak, and now it's entered into the vernacular of not just my kids, where it's understandable, but my wife as well, whose statements now end with a hypothetical question mark, an upward tilt of the final syllables. It's an interesting affectation that has turned into a habit, because it comes with the implication that anything you say is turned into a query, as if you're asking for approbation, *right?* Without the Beatles' charm and the exotic nasality of an English dialect, the speech pattern rapidly becomes annoying, spawning a passive-aggressive noncommittal quality that begins to grate on the nerves. I don't quite know what to do because it is now so pervasive that you hear it on TV and in the movies. That, and the frequent adolescent substitution of "like" for "he said" or "she said," followed by quoted dialogue, is driving me positively bonkers. Where's **Funk and Wagnalls** when you really need 'em?

HITS magazine is the most powerful information vehicle in the music industry, and is read religiously by all the top executives and everyone else.



[Top of Page](#)

Bulletin Board

By **Kenny Kerner**

The **Rolling Stones** were named Top Earning Group of the Year according to *Forbes* magazine after they pulled in a nifty \$437 million with their Bigger Bang tour. A 64-year-old Mick Jagger told reporters he had no plans of retiring: "I'm sure we will do more things and more records and more tours. I'll use my own judgment to decide when it's time to stop singing."

In case you blinked, tickets for the **Spice Girls** concert in London sold out in exactly 38 seconds! But fear not... the group also announced plans for shows in San Jose, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, and New York.

Cable operator **Time Warner** is offering **Road Runner** music, a new music subscription service for their cable subscribers. The service offers users unlimited use and access to about three million songs for about \$10 per month.

Paul McCartney will be including three previously unreleased tracks and a DVD on his *Memory Almost Full* Deluxe Edition CD. The three new tracks are "222," "Why So Blue," and

Taxi for helping me and my partner and become more polished writers."

— Liz Aday,
TAXI Member

"I've known most of TAXI's A&R people for years. These are real industry pros. I'd be happy to listen to anything they send me."

— John Carter,
Vice President of A&R,
Island Records

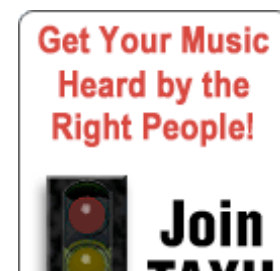


"I am enclosing a check for my third year of membership in TAXI. You've got a great thing going, and it's fun being a member."

— Thomas Hipps,
TAXI Member

"Your dedication and hard work never ceases to amaze me."

— Jimmy Clark,
TAXI Member



"In Private."

Looks like all of the incredibly bad press helped **Britney's** single, "Gimme More" jump all the way to the top of the charts.

That Material Girl looks like she's making all the right moves. A 10-year deal from **Live Nation** worth in the area of \$120 million was enough to tear **Madonna** away from **Warner Bros.** Records. The deal included three albums, tours, the right to sell merchandise, and license her name. The artist would receive both cash and stock options. Madonna still has one more studio album to deliver to Warner Bros. By the time the deal ends, Madonna will be 59 years old.

When **Justin Timberlake's** single, "Until the End of Time" made it into the Top 40 on the *Billboard* charts, he became the first solo male artist this decade to have six Top 40 singles off the same CD. His *FutureSex/LoveSounds* album was released in September 2006. The last solo male artist to accomplish this was **Michael Jackson** who had seven hit singles off his *Dangerous* CD. **Shania Twain's** *Come on Over* also yielded six from 1997-1999.





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— Peter Martin,
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[↑ Top of Page](#)



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