

# billboard Bulletin

YOUR DAILY ENTERTAINMENT NEWS UPDATE

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## Rdio Bankruptcy: Streaming Service Was Losing \$2 Million Each Month

BY ERIQ GARDNER

On Monday, Rdio declared Chapter 11 bankruptcy in one of the bigger busts in the era of streamed music. The filing was expected after an announcement that the on-demand service would sell some of its key assets to Pandora for \$75 million, but court papers lodged in U.S. Bankruptcy Court in San Francisco, California reveal more about the company's financial state.

At the time of the bankruptcy filing, Rdio had more than \$190 million in secured debt and about \$30 million of unsecured debt.

Much of the secured debt is owed to Pulser Media, which provided the bulk of the company's financing since its inception in 2008 and is now a majority owner. As for unsecured creditors, digital media set-top box manufacturer Roku is tops with a \$2.7 million claim. Sony Music is next at \$2.4 million. Online ticket platform AXS digital ranks third at \$1.25 million, Shazam comes in at fourth at nearly \$1.2 million, while Warner Music Group rounds out the top five at more than \$613,000.

Rdio currently owes more for ads placed on Facebook (nearly \$500,000) than to Universal Music Group (\$294,000) or Merlin BV (\$134,960), which represents independent record labels.

According to a declaration by Rdio general counsel Elliot Peters, the streaming company was bleeding money at a quick rate.

The bulk of Rdio's revenue came from its \$9.99 per month subscriptions. The company took in \$1.5 million per month there. Advertising only accounted for \$100,000-\$150,000 per month. That was dwarfed by the nearly \$4 million in monthly operating expenses, including payroll for 140 employees, royalty payments to rights owners and service maintenance costs.

That meant that Rdio was losing anywhere between \$1.85 to \$2.4 million each month, and Peters reports Rdio "no longer has the economic means of funding such significant operating cash flow shortfall."

By late 2014, Rdio had hired Moelis & Company, an investment bank, in an attempt to raise new equity capital, but ultimately realized it wouldn't be possible. Rdio also reports looking for a buyer or merger partner, and ultimately decided that Pandora was making the best offer — \$75 million for tech assets, but one that was contingent on a

(continued)

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# [In Brief]

Chapter 11 filing, an auction process where overbids might result, and eventually court approval.

In the meantime, Rdio has secured \$3 million debtor-in-possession financing to supplement a \$2.5 million payment from Pandora, which will fund operations through the next eight weeks. ●

*This article was originally published by The Hollywood Reporter.*

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## Where's That Damned Button?! Warner Bros. Records Former Co-President on Artist Development in a New Age: Op-Ed

BY LIVIA TORTELLA

I remember when I first got to Los Angeles, I found myself having dinner with Jeff

Ayeroff, a well-known music executive, at The Ivy in Santa Monica. At the time, I was co-president & COO of Warner Bros Records, and since Jeff had executed some of the most memorable creative while at WBR, I was looking forward to picking his brain.

This was the man who helped architect the visual brands of My Chemical Romance and Green Day in later years, but as head of creative at WBR in the early eighties, had made videos and art for Madonna, Prince, Paul Simon, Don Henley, Talking Heads, ZZ Top, Dire Straits and others.

Jeff has a smooth, elegant and enthusiastic way of approaching all subjects relating to our business. In conversation, he had me yearning for a time in the business that I had no actual connection to; an industry with money that embraced risk.

I asked him about his approach and wondered how he was enjoying running his own label imprint, Shangri-La Music. Jeff told me that although he loved running his label, he missed “pushing the button.”

And I contemplated the button, wondering where it fit in today's music business. I mean, where the hell is that button? Sure, labels still have powerful media relationships, leverage in their artists, and money to fund them. But in the old industry model, even if they pushed the button and nothing happened, you knew

that someone had spent some money on you — and you got a shot.

Back in the day, one video on MTV could change your life — and an audience could be waiting for you on the next one.

Today, it's hard to know how and where to push. Artist Development used to be a coordinated series of calculated pushes from publicity to lifestyle marketing, that lead to real momentum.

Even though radio remains a real lever in the process of breaking an artist, these days, it's more about pull rather than push. You get further by using social and media platforms really well to support an artists' brand than any positioning a label can ask for.

Getting fans to like and follow, is only the first step. How passionate are they about you? Do they really care? How do you maintain a lasting connection with them?

There is a real art about this process. You need to tell your story, and weave it through the various aspects of your album campaign, in a personal and dynamic way. Artists who distance themselves from their fans by not engaging beyond the music, risk fulfilling a real need for those experiencing media today.

The good news is that if you are an artist, this is in your control. The bad news? You are going to need to want to get uncomfortable. You are not only going to be talking with strangers — you will be going on blind dates. Channel your inner creative: Why

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should they be interested in you? Once you have that figured out, they are going to have to believe in you.

**The button is in you.** *Matrix*-like, but true. Its circuitry is part inspiration, but mostly sweat and creative chutzpah.

Well, did you think I was going to say it was as easy as pushing one?

*Livia Tortella is the founder and CEO of Black Box.* ●

*Billboard welcomes responsible commentary. To submit pieces for consideration, email the editor at [andrew.flanagan@billboard.com](mailto:andrew.flanagan@billboard.com)*

## Spotify Gives Artists on the Platform Access to the Data They Generate With Fan Insights Dashboard

BY ANDREW FLANAGAN

Today Spotify is giving the truly vast number of artists available on its platform access to data on how they're being listened to. The data can be useful, if understood, interpreted and contextualized properly, to artists trying to identify untapped audiences or optimize their tour routing.

The [Fan Insights](#) dashboard joins similar initiatives from Pandora and YouTube and helps creators to segment their audience and the sources of those listeners. The utility helps delineate between fans and casual listeners — drilling down to fans that have listened to an artist every day for a week, most days of a month, new listeners — as well as geographical locations, what percentage of listens are being generated by specific playlists on the service and other metrics like statistics on specific songs and albums, and spikes in popularity by their date and

which artists people listened to the most besides themselves (or their client). Spotify tells Billboard it worked with managers and artists to try and identify the data metrics that would be most helpful to the most people — to provide them “the right data in the right context,” as a Spotify representative explained it to Billboard during a preview of the features.

The design of Insights is smooth and slick, more resembling a semi-dynamic piece of online feature journalism than a serious analytics tool, though representatives stressed this is a beta version of the dashboard.

According to Spotify its targeted campaigns — what the company calls “Fan First Campaigns,” which target a particular artist’s top fans with “unique rewards” — perform four to five times better than non-targeted promotions, and achieve a clickthrough rate between 40 and 50 percent. (Normal web advertisements generally have clickthrough rates lower than five percent.) It’s important to note that in its preview materials the company cites those figures for better-known acts like Chvrches, Ed Sheeran and Father John Misty. Truly independent artists’ mileage may, of course, vary.

The company says it will offer more robust analytics in the future, allowing users to better segment their audiences and to better identify sources of discovery and attention. Spotify says half of artist discovery on its service is generated by playlists and the radio service within it, a figure that is also unsurprising given that a majority of music listeners prefer that listening be as easy and quick as possible. (That said, the “deep-fan minority” can be a powerful force for word-of-mouth discovery.)

Asked about instructing that huge number of music creators on how to best use the information they’ve generated and now been given access to, Spotify says it is planning a “Basic Training” website and will be “working to get case studies out there.” (If you’re truly lucky — or talented, and preferably signed to a major label — [they’ll get in touch with you.](#))

In a day and age when data reigns, any insight provided to artists is helpful — though size, as always, matters. ●

## Nederlander and TAG Presents Form Venture in Austin, Launch Venue Called Skyline Theater

BY RAY WADDELL

Nederlander Concerts and Austin-based independent promoter TAG Presents have partnered to form Paragon Presents, which will book and produce live events throughout Austin and the surrounding markets, starting with the 7,000-capacity Skyline Theater at the Long Center, a newly developed venue at Austin’s Long Center for the Performing Arts.

The Skyline Theater is located on the grounds of the Long Center for the Performing Arts, situated in the heart of downtown Austin, overlooking Ladybird Lake. In a multi-year contract, Paragon Presents will be the exclusive promoter for productions at the Skyline and will present a wide range of concerts and productions.

“We truly want to make this the most fan-centric venue in the industry, and we’re willing to take chances and try things and break down every part of the fan experience and figure out how to make it the best and change that paradigm,” says **Paul Thornton**, who, prior to founding TAG, launched Bravo Entertainment in Boise, Idaho. Over the course of 13 years, Thornton grew Bravo from a start-up to more than 200 employees, producing 700 events per year across 19 states, and owning and operating multiple venues. Thornton sold Bravo to Knitting Factory Entertainment in 2007 and launched TAG later that year to present live music attached to sports events, including Formula 1 US Grand Prix, the ESPN X Games, Austin Fan Fest, RedFest, and the Honda Ski Tour. Recently, TAG led the design and management of the 14,000 capacity Austin360 Amphitheater.

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The Austin venture is a notable expansion for Nederlander Concerts, a boutique event promotion firm that operates and programs such popular California venues as the Hollywood Pantages Theatre in Los Angeles, the Santa Barbara Bowl, Vina Robles Amphitheatre in Paso Robles, City National Grove of Anaheim, and City National Civic of San Jose. In addition, the company promotes events at third party arenas, theatres and clubs up and down the West Coast, including the Greek Theatre, Galen Center at the University of Southern California, San Diego Civic, RIMAC Arena at UC San Diego, and Raley Field in Sacramento. Nederlander also partners in booking and promoting shows at the Durham (N.C.) Performing Arts Center.

Nederlander CEO **Alex Hodges** says his national staff and resources will augment Paragon's efforts in Austin. "Paul is local and has local relationships and people to put into place to do all of the functions," says Hodges. "We're looking for Paul to take the lead on doing the shows and marketing with the team he has put together, he has tremendous resources, but we're a full-fledged partner and happy to add what we can in resources and our sense of energy and vision into what Paul is doing locally."

The Long Center is a non-profit primarily funded by private citizens and corporations, and is home to Austin's Symphony, Opera and Ballet. Skyline Theater will utilize existing amenities offered at the Long Center during events, including indoor restrooms and air-conditioned spaces, star dressing rooms, backstage catering, and VIP spaces. The venue will also utilize the existing Long Center production team and tech equipment, and will be ticketed through the Long Center box office using Spectra — Ticketing & Fan Engagement. This joint venture will use the Long Center's existing staff for marketing, event services, ticketing and concessions, while Paragon Presents will book and promote shows.

The launch of Paragon returns Thornton to his independent promoter roots. "We're really about making the connection to the fans' hearts, the artists' hearts, and not everyone's wallets," he says of his partnership with Hodges. "I hope we can help create a movement where it gets back to working

with independent promoters in markets they truly know where they can be a part of that creativity again, and get away from accountants driving what this industry is doing."

While the Skyline is Paragon's initial focus, the partnership will also look to doing concerts and events in other venues and markets. "We're open to do business, and when the right shows in the right markets make sense, let's do it," says Thornton. "A lot of what we did at Bravo and why we stayed under the radar a bit is we worked in a lot of secondary and tertiary markets, but when you take great music into those markets that are under served, you see the love in the fans of that experience, and that's what I want to capture."

Adds Hodges, "We believe we're adding something in terms of options and we're adding TLC and vision to the live concert space. We're not trying to take on the world, we're trying to add to the experience for artists and fans." ●

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## Joey & Rory Fans Pay Tribute to Ailing Singer With Chart Campaign

BY JIM ASKER

**Joey & Rory's** moving ballad "When I'm Gone" re-enters *Billboard's* Country Digital Songs chart (dated Nov. 28) at No. 7 with 27,000 downloads sold in the week ending Nov. 12, according to Nielsen Music. It logs a 1,303 percent gain (from 2,000). On Hot Country Songs, "Gone" opens at No. 22, marking the pair's strongest showing on the survey, besting its No. 30 peak with 2009's "Cheater Cheater."

It's bittersweet news for the singer-songwriters. In 2014, **Joey Feek** was diagnosed with cervical cancer, which has since become terminal. Husband and duet partner **Rory Feek** announced recently that the couple decided to end treatment and that

she has entered hospice care.

The song was recorded for the twosome's 2012 album *His and Hers*, which peaked at No. 24 on Top Country Albums and has sold 15,000 to date. Penned by **Sandy Lawrence**, a friend of the duo, the track was written when Lawrence was losing her mother.

Fans of Joey & Rory have started a campaign to send the song to a No. 1 chart ranking, with a social media push that has been growing steadily. Artists including **Terri Clark** have joined the effort, encouraging supporters to purchase the song.

**NO. 1 STAPLE: Chris Stapleton's** "Tennessee Whiskey" tops Hot Country Songs for a second week. The cut re-entered the chart (dated Nov. 21) at the summit after his huge night at the Country Music Association Awards on Nov. 4, when he won male vocalist, new artist and album of the year honors, the latter for *Traveller*, which also notches a second week at No. 1 on Top Country Albums (97,000 in traditional sales, down 37 percent) and the all-genre *Billboard* 200 (124,000 equivalent album units, down 30 percent). The *Billboard* 200 ranks the most popular albums of the week based on multimetric consumption, which includes traditional album sales, track-equivalent albums and streaming-equivalent albums.

*Traveller* is one of only two albums to spend more than one week at No. 1 on the *Billboard* 200 in 2015 — and both are country sets: **Luke Bryan's** *Kill the Lights* led the list for the weeks of Aug. 29 and Sept. 5.

**MORE 'COUNTRY MUSIC': Eric Church's** *Mr. Misunderstood* steps 3-2 in its second week on Top Country Albums (58,000, down 18 percent), and **Tim McGraw's** *Damn Country Music* opens at No. 3 (39,000), marking his 19th top 10. Also in the top five is **Old Dominion's** debut full-length, *Meat and Candy*, which starts at No. 5 (21,000).

**'OVER'-ACHIEVER: Chris Young's** "I'm Comin' Over," co-written by Young, **Corey Crowder** and **Josh Hoge**, rises 3-1 in its 25th week on Country Airplay, up 5 percent to 49.1 million audience impressions. On Hot

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Country Songs, the track pushes 5-4.

“Over,” the lead single and title cut from Young’s fifth studio album, released Nov. 13, is his sixth Country Airplay No. 1 and first since “You” (Feb. 11, 2012), which became his fifth consecutive leader (dating to 2009), following “Tomorrow,” “Voices,” “The Man I Want to Be” and “Gettin’ You Home.”

“I made [“Over”] with Corey and Josh, and we became a core,” Young told *Billboard* upon learning of his new No. 1. “I think they’re losing their minds right now, and I can’t wait to celebrate with them.” The album, produced by Young and Crowder, grants Young his first producer credit.

**A TRUE ICON:** Also on Country Airplay, **Hank Williams Jr.’s** “Are You Ready for the Country” (featuring **Eric Church**), originally recorded by the late **Waylon Jennings** (No. 7 on Hot Country Songs, 1977), bows at No. 58. “Ready” is Williams’ first entry for the Nash Icon label and marks his sixth decade of denting the *Billboard* country charts. He first charted with 1964’s “Long Gone Lonesome Blues.” ●

## Evan Harrison Is New CEO of Huka Entertainment, Producer of Pemberton & Tortuga Festivals

BY RAY WADDELL

Music industry veteran **Evan Harrison** has been named CEO of Huka Entertainment, producer of destination site festivals like Pemberton Music Festival in British Columbia, and the Tortuga Music Festival in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.

The move is geared to allow **A.J. Niland**, Huka’s founder and previous CEO, to

focus on “creating new, one-of-a-kind festival experiences for music fans around the world.” Niland’s new title will be Chairman and Chief Experience Officer at Huka.

In addition to Pemberton, situated at the base of Mt. Currie in British Columbia (110,066 attendance in 2015), and the Tortuga on the beaches of Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., (70,295 attendance in 2015), Huka has a growing touring division which promotes concerts across North America annually. Harrison will oversee the day-to-day operations of the company and lead Huka into what its principles expect to be “unprecedented” growth. Based in New Orleans, Huka also co-produces the Buku Music + Arts Project in New Orleans, which drew 29,000 in 2015.

Harrison (pictured, right) has a lengthy history in the digital music space. He was the first head of digital marketing for BMG, leaving the label group in 2001 to join AOL, where he went on to become head of music and radio. In 2004, Harrison joined Clear Channel as president of digital, where he played a critical role in creating the company’s multi-platform strategy, and ultimately, iHeartRadio. In 2012 Evan created a similar strategy for Univision, overseeing the company’s approach to music on radio, television, online and in the live sector.

Harrison says he “caught the live music bug” during the festival boom and met Niland, “this young guy with a vision to do things a little different in the live event space,” he says. “He locked in on the idea of developing festivals at destination locations where the destination is really the star of the event, and building a community around that backdrop. I fell in love with the vision, we built a special team, it seemed like an exciting time and place to make an impact on the music community.”

According to Harrison, Huka has five festival projects in development, and is “likely to roll out one or two new ones in ‘16,” he says. “We’re continuing to look for sites that fit our criteria in being destination locations that are underserved from a music experience perspective. We’re looking for like-minded partners, and that cuts across digital companies, to other promoters and

really across the board.”

Huka’s concert division, which has sold 61,756 tickets this year, has relationships with some 50 venues and is “absolutely a focal point of our growth,” Harrison says. Among the acts booked by Huka across the Southeast in the past year are **Chris Stapleton**, **Bassnectar**, **Ray LaMontagne**, **Brett Eldredge**, **Sam Hunt**, Slightly Stoopid and Grace Potter.

As corporate promoters including Live Nation and AEG Live build their portfolios in the uber-competitive festival space, Huka has found “a nice little niche” by focusing on destination sites, Harrison believes. “Our play is less of a mass volume play and more about having a real relationship with the fans that leads up to anticipation of the event, and then looking back at the great memories of the event,” he says.

Harrison adds that Huka is also talking to potential investors and partners. “We have so many concepts and opportunities in our pipeline, we’re just trying to constant align with the right partners for each,” he says. ●

## Elisa Torres to Head SBS’ Aire Radio Network

BY LEILA COBO

Elisa Torres will head SBS’ Aire Radio Network, becoming one of the first women to helm a radio company in this country.

Torres, who spent three years in SBS and was most recently svp of affiliate corporate sales for Aire, will now oversee all operations for the network, which distributes SBS-generated content in over 38 markets, and includes digital, mobile and online platforms. Aire also produces private concert series La Musica en Privado and AIRE Privados.

Torres will report directly to Raul Alarcon, chairman/president of SBS.

“I join with all of you in welcoming Elisa to her new position at Aire Radio Networks and in pledging our wholehearted support as she undertakes to lead our network to new

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levels of operational excellence,” said Alarcon in a statement.

SBS is best known as a major Hispanic radio network that owns and operates 20 of the most influential Spanish-language radio stations in the U.S. and Puerto Rico, including La Mega in New York, the most-listened to Spanish language station in the country, according to Nielsen. SBS also owns TV network MegaTV, bilingual website LaMusica.com, and Aire, which was launched last year to produce and distribute original content in multiple markets and in other stations. ●

## Nashville Notes: ‘I Hope You Dance’ Film to Debut; Country Acts to Flood Small Screen in December

BY TOM ROLAND

*Here is your weekly roundup of goings on — artist signings, staffing moves, good news and more — in the wide world of country music.*

Fresh off two wins at the Country Music Association Awards on Nov. 4, **Little Big Town** has two major events on its calendar for December. The band joins **Blake Shelton**, **Sam Hunt**, **Luke Bryan** and **Florida Georgia Line** as this year’s recipients at the annual *CMT Artists of the Year*, airing live Dec. 2 from the Schermerhorn Symphony Center in Nashville. LBT also takes part in an installment of *Skyville Live* on Dec. 11, paying tribute to **Gregg Allman**. The live-streamed event will feature blues musician **Taj Mahal**; an additional act is promised.

Country acts will participate in two events that celebrate music anniversaries during the month of December. **Zac Brown** has been added to the previously announced *Sinatra 100 — An All-Star Grammy Concert*,

which will be filmed Dec. 2 in Las Vegas and airs Dec. 5 on CBS. Other participants include **Carrie Underwood**, **Garth Brooks**, **Celine Dion** and **Alicia Keys**. Additionally, **Eric Church**, **Chris Stapleton**, **Willie Nelson** and **Kris Kristofferson** perform during a Dec. 5 taping in New York of *Imagine: John Lennon 75th Birthday Concert*, which airs Dec. 19 on AMC. That lineup also boasts **Steven Tyler**, **Peter Frampton**, **The Roots** and **Sheryl Crow**.

**Kelsea Ballerini** will take part in the lighting of the national Christmas tree on Dec. 3 at the Ellipse near the White House in Washington, D.C. Presented by the National Park Service, the event also features **Aloe Blacc**, **Crosby Stills & Nash** and the **Joyous String Quartet**.

**Vince Gill** and **Lee Ann Womack** will participate in *I Hope You Dance: The Power and Spirit of Song*, a film based on the award-winning song written by **Mark D. Sanders** and **Tia Sillers**. Produced by **John Scheinfeld** (*The U.S. vs. John Lennon*) and **Spencer Proffer**, the film debuts Thanksgiving Day on the Hallmark Movies & Mysteries channel. A DVD and a related book will arrive Dec. 1.

**‘ROUND THE ROW**  
**Hart Street Entertainment** hired **Chris Kagay** as executive vp. She most recently owned a CD duplication company, Write Away Media.

**Kelsea Ballerini** will be honored with the Rising Star Award on Dec. 11 when *Billboard* throws its annual **Women in Music** event in New York. The ceremony will air as a Lifetime special on Dec. 18.

**Sam Hunt** is one of four artists participating in the fourth annual **Grammy Amplifier** program, which provides an opportunity for emerging artists.

New Orleans artist **Allen Toussaint** died Nov. 9 following a performance in Madrid. The producer-songwriter authored **Joe Stampley**’s “All These Things” and **Glen Campbell**’s “Southern Nights.”

**RADIO MOVERS & SHAKERS**  
**Silverfish Media** launches a midday show, *Country With Carsen*, beginning Jan. 18. The five-hour daily program is hosted by **Carsen**, aka **Jessica Humphreville**, a

former **WKDF** Nashville personality who currently works at rock **WKRL** Syracuse, N.Y.

**E.W. Scripps**/Tulsa, Okla., hired **David Abel** as vp/GM for the five-station cluster, including country **KVOO**, beginning Nov. 23. He previously held the same post for Apex/South Carolina.

**Alpha Media**/Peoria, Ill., named **Matt Marchand** director of sales in the market, which includes country **WXCL**. He has an eight-year history with Alpha.

**Scott Alexander** joined **WOGG** Pittsburgh as PD/morning talent, [RadioInfo.com](#) reported. He was most recently on air with adult contemporary **WBZZ** Pittsburgh.

**WKXC** Augusta, Ga., hired **Jeff Reynolds** for afternoon drive, according to [RadioInfo.com](#). A former **WTHI** Terre Haute, Ind., personality, Reynolds replaces **Bryan Axelson**, who recently moved to mornings.

**Edison Research** will present “What Content Makes Country Radio Matter?” during **Country Radio Seminar** on Feb. 8, 2016 in Nashville. The presentation weighs listeners’ relationship with different elements of radio content.

**GOOD WORKS**  
After raising \$1.5 million for St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital in the last 18 months, **Bobby Bones & The Raging Idiots** are out to raise more with a Million Dollar Show.

The duo, launched through iHeartMedia’s syndicated *The Bobby Bones Show*, will be joined Dec. 7 by at least five acts — **Dierks Bentley**, **Little Big Town**, **Cam**, **Brett Eldredge** and **Eric Paslay** — at Nashville’s Ryman Auditorium. ●

Tickets went on sale Nov. 13. This article first appeared in *Billboard’s* Country Update — [sign up here](#).

## Merlin Sets Board for 2015-17, Martin Mills Reappointed Chairman

BY BILLBOARD STAFF

Beggars Group founder **Martin Mills** has been reappointed chairman of indie digital rights group Merlin. The not-for-profit agency also announced results of its board elections, with executives from Epitaph, Because Music and elsewhere earning two-year terms.

According to Merlin, this year saw a record number of candidates standing for election, as well the highest ever percentage of votes cast by Merlin members. Board seats are divided into three territories, with five members each for North America, Europe and R.O.W. (rest of the world).

### North America

**Darius van Arman** - Secretly Group (USA)

**Dave Hansen** - Epitaph Records (USA)

**Erik Gilbert** - Essential USA inc. t/as CV America (USA)

**Justin West** - Secret City Records (Canada)

**Tom Silverman** - Tommy Boy (USA)

### Europe

**Emmanuel de Buretel** - Because Music (France)

**Erik Brataas** - Phonofile (Norway)

**Horst Weidenmueller** - !K7 Records (Germany)

**Martin Mills** - Beggars Group (UK)

**Michel Lambot** - [PIAS] Group (Belgium)

### R.O.W.

**Ashley Whitfield** - Evolution Music (Hong Kong)

**Colin Daniels** - Inertia (Australia)

**Luciana Pegorer** - Delira Musica (Brazil)

**Scott Muir** - [Dunedinmusic.com](http://Dunedinmusic.com) (New Zealand)

**Yoel Kenan** - Africori (South Africa)

Commenting on the election results, Merlin CEO Charles Caldas said he was “delighted that so many of our members took the opportunity to vote in this election, and that Merlin remains of such importance to their digital business. The two years ahead will be

critical for the independent label sector, but Merlin is in better shape than ever to help our members realise the opportunities ahead.” ◉

## Numero Group Announces ‘Project 12’ Music Club

BY BILLBOARD STAFF

The Numero Group is launching its own seasonal music club in January 2016.

The Chicago-based, multiple Grammy-nominated reissuer is promoting its new venture, entitled “Project 12,” with what it describes as an offer of 12 “exceedingly rare or entirely unreleased LPs,” which won’t be available in stores and won’t be repressed. “We’re not issuing them on CD and the only way you can buy them is by joining the club,” the company notes in a statement.

The club is all about exclusivity. According to Numero Group, it’s limited to just a thousand members. Once on the inside, members can subscribe to one, two, or all three series (at \$100 each or \$250 for all three). A record from each series goes out each quarter, and the company will alert its members of the coming goods via email.

The first batch of releases include **94 East’s** *The Cookhouse 5*, **Circuit Rider’s 2**, and **Jimmy Carter & the Dallas County Green’s** *Summer Brings The Sunshine*, with the following nine titles set to be announced in the coming weeks. ◉

For more details, visit [numerogroup.com](http://numerogroup.com).

## APA Promotes Music Agent John Pantle to Vice President

BY REBECCA SUN, THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

APA has promoted agent John Pantle to vice president in the concerts department, *The Hollywood Reporter* and *Billboard* have exclusively learned.

Pantle’s clients include **Public Enemy** and **Run-D.M.C.**, as well as Mexican artists **Café Tacuba**, **Natalie Lafourcade** and **Molotov**. He also represents **Hatsune Miku**, the J-pop hologram “vocaloid” that has become a bona fide sensation in Japan and other international markets.

Pantle, who has been with APA since 2009 and works out of the agency’s Beverly Hills offices, also puts together and implements the nationwide tours and events for corporate sponsors including AT&T, Coors, Energizer, Honda, Jack Daniels, Levi’s, Magnavox, Proctor & Gamble, Rockstar Energy Drink, Sprint and Volkswagen.

“John is an integral part of our team who has done a tremendous job expanding and servicing our roster of artists and live-experience events,” APA president and CEO Jim Gosnell said in a statement.

“His dedication, track record and passion speak volumes and I’m very pleased to acknowledge his hard work and success with this promotion.”

Pantle’s career began in 1999 as a talent buyer at the Los Angeles House of Blues, later becoming head of development for the HOB Club Network, where he oversaw direct booking, industry relations and talent procurement for more than 2,500 events for clients that included Disney and Microsoft. At the same time, his John Pantle Presents promoted and presented shows for **Beck**, **No Doubt**, **Sublime**, **Korn** and **The Goo Goo Dolls**, among other acts.

## [In Brief]

**The 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Olympics also tapped his banner to create three concert venues and book artists that included The Neville Brothers, Sergio Mendes, Foo Fighters, Cheap Trick, Cake, Pennywise, Sheryl Crow, Smash Mouth and Modest Mouse.**

Starting in 2004, Pantle worked for The Agency Group and then for UTA for three years. In addition to developing national and international tours for their respective artist clients, he also worked with corporate sponsors including Coors, Budweiser, Nokia, McDonald's, Microsoft and Sprint (at TAG) as well as Coors, Televisa and Verizon (at UTA). ●

## German Watchdog Agency Probes iTunes, Amazon

BY BILLBOARD STAFF

Germany's federal watchdog group for market competition is probing the relationship between Apple and Amazon in the audiobook business. The Federal Cartel Office's investigation, [announced Monday](#), follows complaints by German book sellers that Amazon-owned Audible and Apple's iTunes were too dominant.

iTunes' library of books is exclusively supplied by Amazon/Audible. Publishers in Germany have argued that Amazon's terms are unreasonable, but say they are left with little choice since more than 90 percent of audiobook downloads in the country are made via Amazon/Audible or iTunes.

"Both companies hold a strong position in the market for digital audiobooks in Germany," said cartel office president **Andreas Mundt**. "We therefore see ourselves obliged to examine more closely the agreement between these two competitors. The audiobook publishers need to have sufficient alternative channels for the sale of

their digital audiobooks."

Mundt added, "The proceedings were initiated following a complaint by the German Publishers and Booksellers Association (Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels) which objects to various practices used by Audible, including its exclusive supply of audiobooks to Apple's iTunes Store. The [cartel] is in close contact with the European Commission, which has also received the complaint." ●

## Tom Petty is Getting His Own SiriusXM Station

BY COLIN STUTZ

Starting Friday, [Tom Petty](#) is getting his own SiriusXM station.

Tom Petty Radio will be channel 31 on the satellite radio station, curating choice cuts of rock, rhythm and blues, SiriusXM announced Tuesday (Nov. 17). Petty will also be exclusively premiering new music on the station.

Naturally, Tom Petty Radio will include music all across Petty's extensive career, including songs from [Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers](#), Petty's solo career, [the Traveling Wilburys](#) and [Mudcrutch](#). It will also include unreleased studio and live recordings, unique cover versions of Petty's songs and rare live performances, including the worldwide radio debut of Petty and The Heartbreakers' Aug. 30, 2014, concert at Fenway Park in Boston.

Petty has been recording a weekly show with SiriusXM called *Tom Petty's Buried Treasure* for nine seasons, which will continue on with new and archival episodes on his new station. He will also be featured on the station through interview segments conducted by acclaimed journalist and SiriusXM host David Fricke.

Petty's bandmates Steve Ferrone and Benmont Tench of the Heartbreakers will also get in on the show, as well as [Lucinda Williams](#), [Jackson Browne](#) and [the Byrds'](#) founding member [Roger McGuinn](#), all of

whom will host special guest DJ sessions.

"We are so honored and grateful to SiriusXM for giving our fans access to all of our music, from our biggest hits to very obscure tracks only available through this channel," said Petty in a statement. "I intend to be very hands on and supply brand new exclusive tracks as well as rarities from our vaults. Our biggest hope is for a channel that is always entertaining in the way only radio can be."

A two hour special hosted by Petty will kick off Tom Petty Radio on Friday at 6 p.m. EST.

"We are truly thrilled to be creating a new music channel with one of the biggest names in the history of rock and roll," said SiriusXM president and chief content officer Scott Greenstein. "Now with his own channel, Tom can spread his wings playing his incredible music from multiple decades, the familiar and the rare, as well as a broad range of other artists in rock and R&B." ●