Music & Media®

NOVEMBER 29, 1997

Volume 14, Issue 48

£3.95
DM11
FFR35
US$7
DFL11.50

As long as they love them... Radio programmers' passion for the Backstreet Boys continues: the Jive act are No.1 on this week's European Radio Top 50 (page 20).

we talk to radio

M&M chart toppers this week

Eurochart Hot 100 Singles
AQUA
Barbie Girl
(Universal)

European Top 100 Albums
SPICE GIRLS
Spiceworld
(Virgin)

European Radio Top 50
BACKSTREET BOYS
As Long As You Love Me
(Jive)

Inside M&M this week

RADIO BUILDS THE TV STARS
The state of music on TV in Italy has long been deemed by the country's record industry as unsatisfactory. Now, however, its prospects make better viewing—and it's Italy's radio stations which are taking much of the credit for that change. **Page 9**

A VERY FULL MONTE
Radio professionals from across Europe gathered at the NAB Europe conference in Monte Carlo from November 16-18 (photo, this page). M&M writers were on hand to capture the flavour of life on the Riviera and report on the main talking points. **Page 7**

RADIO GETS MILES BETTER
Swiss-born Robert Miles has now left his Italian base to set up home in London; but his new residence is no "dream-house." M&M meets this most European of artists and takes a listen to his new album, *23am*. **Page 11**

End of an era for MTV Europe

by Christian Lorenz

LONDON — MTV Europe is taking its regionalisation strategy to its final stage by handing over complete control of its programming and day-to-day business to its regional services.

As a result, MTV Europe is reducing the head-count at its London-based headquarters from 360 to 150 employees. The broadcaster estimates there will be 80 lay-offs. In addition to those redundancies, around 130 employees on temporary contracts will not have their agreements renewed.

MTV expects, however, that 150 new positions will be created in its regional offices, and some of the London staff affected may be offered new positions abroad.

Brent Hansen, president and CEO, MTV and VH-1 Europe, announced on November 17 that the broadcaster's four existing regional services—Northern, Southern, Central and U.K.—will from now on exercise total control over programming and production, marketing, advertising sales and human resources.

Hansen says he expects "to see more music on all of our channels." He adds that "a 'must carry' status for a specific title or programme can still come from me," but that this will be the exception rather than the rule. According to Hansen, the channel will not operate a quota system with fixed percentages for local and pan-European content.

Responding to the news, Rick Dob-

continued on page 25

Austrian licences stay home

by Susan L. Schuhmayer

VIENNA — Domestic broadcasters were the major winners when Austria's regional radio authority announced its long-awaited award of eight regional radio licences on November 16.

Only in the capital, Vienna, did a group headed by an international broadcasting company win a concession—the remaining seven licences have been given to Austrian consortia or existing cable broadcasters.

As expected, a consortium headed by Luxembourg-based CLT-UFA won the licence for Vienna's most powerful local station. Petra Dittrich, project manager for the new CLT station (to be called K4), says she had been confident her group would win the licence.

Two years ago, when the Austrian

continued on page 25

NRJ boosted by French frequency allocations

by Rémi Bouton

PARIS — Radio group NRJ has emerged as the main winner in the long-waited allocation of France's FM frequencies.

French broadcasting authority CSA announced the new frequency plan on November 19. The massive allocation of frequencies will allow NRJ to add 8.1 million potential listeners to its fold, to develop its third network Rire et Chansons (humour and music), and to strengthen its NRJ (CHR) and Cherie FM (soft AC) networks.

Other groups benefitting from the CSA plan include: RMC (RMC, Nostalgie, Montmartre), which gains 3.2 million potential listeners; CLT-UFA (RTL, RTL2, Fun), gaining 2.2 million; and Europe 1 Communication (Europe

continued on page 25

The 5th NAB European Radio Operations Seminar in Monte Carlo attracted some 300 broadcasters. At the opening night dinner, delegates enjoyed a brief acoustic performance from WEA Italy recording artist Ligabue. Pictured with Ligabue is Terri Rabel (right), NAB senior vice president operations and international business development, who confirmed that next year's NAB will take place in Madrid on November 15-17.

unbelievable unexpected unforgettable untamed unbelievable unexpected unforgettable untamed unbelievable unexpected unforgettable untamed

NO-ONE BUT YOU
(ONLY THE GOOD DIE YOUNG)

THE BRAND NEW SINGLE
OUT NOW
FROM THE ALBUM "**QUEEN ROCKS**"

EMI

Upfront

by Emmanuel Legrand, Music & Media editor-in-chief

The 5th European NAB conference in Monte Carlo last week offered the radio industry a real treat.

That was less because of the Riviera setting and the beautiful weather, but more because one felt the 300 or so broadcasters present were there to celebrate the emergence of a truly mature European radio industry.

The competition which has been seen in individual European countries is now becoming evident across the whole continent, as the major radio groups search for growth opportunities. There is little room for amateurs—this is clearly the era of dynamic, creative, professional players.

With that in mind, last week at NAB offered an intriguing scenario, with two key industry figures sharing their thoughts about the future of the radio business with delegates in a transatlantic cross-examination.

On one side was shrewd Texas businessman Lowry Mays. As chairman of Clear Communications—one of the companies to emerge from the relaxation of radio ownership rules by the U.S. administration last year—Mays' business is buying and selling radio stations as disposable properties.

Mays is convinced that the law of the market reigns supreme; what he does is in the interest of his shareholders first and the public second. Unsurprisingly, Mays said little about programming, and he left his interviewer Simon Cole speechless—which takes a lot—when he called for "more deregulation in the U.S."

Then came David Mansfield—a different style, and seemingly from a different world. The Capital Radio group's chief executive talked about building a group from a brand, expanding into new territories and new businesses, and getting into the entertainment industry. He also claims to serve the interest of his shareholders (latest annual results show £36 million profit from £86 million turnover) while "understanding people's needs," and caring about the product he is building his group from.

Both speeches provided much food for thought. At a time when the European radio industry is looking for role models, two radically different routes were pointed out. Time alone will tell which path Europe chooses to tread.

French speech formats rise

by Rémi Bouton

PARIS — French radio chalked up an all-time high in listenership during September and October this year.

However, according to latest figures from official ratings body Médiamétrie, the increase in listening has mainly benefited full-service and news/talk networks; music stations have struggled to maintain their market shares.

"The music networks' drop in audience is probably due to the monotony of their offerings [to listeners], and the lack of renewal in their programming," suggests Eric Baptiste, president of national radio organisation Vive la Radio.

Guy Banville, programme director of AC network Europe 2, considers the music stations' poor showing is "also linked to a heavy news agenda, from the death of Lady Di to the [French] trucker's strike, which caused listeners to switch to stations with a strong news content."

Médiamétrie figures show the overall rise in audience primarily benefitted full-service public broadcaster France Inter, and commercial news/talk network Europe 1, which for the first time in three years rose above the 9 percent mark with 9.2 percent reach. Europe 1, which switched formats from full-service to news/talk in September 1996, has gained 280,000 listeners on the same period last year.

France Inter is now level with CHR network NRJ, which took over the full-service station's position as France's second most popular network a year ago. Radio France president Michel Boyon also had another reason to celebrate, as the all-news France Info moved up to a 11.1 percent reach following a couple of bad sweeps.

Commercial full-service network RTL reaffirmed its status as the leading station in France, with a total of 8.3 million daily listeners (a 17.9 percent reach).

Although not ruling out that ratings for speech-orientated stations were positively affected by the so-called "Diana factor," Arnaud de Saint-Roman, head of Médiamétrie's radio department, notes: "After a long downward trend, full-service stations have probably reached a plateau and are regaining audience."

Top French national stations

Cumulative audience—ranked by percentage of listeners

Station (Format)	Sept-Oct '97	Apr-Jun '97	Sept-Oct '96
RTL (full service)	17.9	17.9	18.0
France Inter (full service)	11.6	10.8	11.9
NRJ (CHR)	11.6	11.4	11.6
France Info (News)	11.1	10.7	10.6
Europe 1 (News/Talk)	9.2	8.6	8.6
Fun Radio (CHR)	5.8	6.6	6.3
Skyrock (CHR)	5.8	6.3	5.7
Europe 2 (AC)	5.4	5.9	5.5
Nostalgie (AC/gold)	4.7	4.8	5.0
Chérie FM (Soft AC)	4.1	4.0	4.2
RFM (Gold)	3.8	3.8	2.8
RMC (full service)	3.4	3.3	3.6
RTL2 (Soft AC)	3.3	3.2	2.5

(1% = 467.620 listeners over 15 years). Source: Médiamétrie

Skyrock in talks with Emap

by Wayne Bodkin

PARIS — Following recently-announced plans to move into French radio, Emap France has confirmed it has been discussing the purchase of Lagardère-owned CHR network Skyrock.

Emap France director of development Jan Jacob Boom-Wichers says initial contact between the two sides has been very positive. "Skyrock is oriented towards youth, and clearly it would fit very nicely in the Emap portfolio," he notes. "It is typically the kind of music station we would want [to buy]."

Skyrock chairman and founder Pierre Bellanger confirms he has had talks with Emap France concerning the sale of the station. "It's no secret they're looking for a nationwide music station," he says. "Both sides appreciated where the other was coming from, and I think we could work closely together."

However, Bellanger hopes other groups will show also interest in the Skyrock sale, forced on the Lagardère group because it currently exceeds French "anti-concentration" laws which limit radio ownership to a cumulative potential audience of 150 million inhabitants.

The sale of Skyrock combined with the recent disposal of domestic music network Chante France/Paris (Music & Media, November 15) would bring Lagardère within the ownership limit and allow it to apply for further frequencies to expand news/talk network Europe 1 on the FM band.

Bellanger says he would like to find a buyer as "quickly as possible" for the 85 percent majority share of Skyrock which is up for sale. His own 15 percent shareholding, however, is not on the market. "I'll hang on to my shares," he confirms. "I think the station has a great future."

Open mike

ANDREAS GEORGIOU
President, Agean Records
Georgiou is president of George Michael's Aegean label and its newly relaunched Aegean.net (www.aegean.net) service (M&M, November 15).

Q. *Aegean claims to be the first U.K. label to sell music via digital distribution. First question: why now?*
A. Digital distribution is going to happen—we can't survive without it. We think that 10 per cent of music will be digitally distributed on a worldwide basis in the next three to five years.

Q. *But surely most people don't yet have the facilities in their homes to download music via the Internet?*
A. The only thing that's holding it back at the moment, for people with Internet access, is the penetration of CD "burners" and other recording formats like MiniDisc, allowing the transfer of downloads from hard disks to hi-fi systems. But the cost of those is declining rapidly, and we'll see retailers offering downloading facilities in shops. Pay-per-track will be [in record shops and cybercafes] in six months time.

Q. *Will that change the relationship between retailers and labels?*
A. Record stores will remain the prime route for selling music. But, at the moment, unless you give major retailers a 60 per cent plus discount on your records, you don't get stocked. Digital distribution allows us—in theory—to bypass major retailers if they're demanding excess discounts. When we deal with retailers, I want to do it on my terms. If I can sell direct successfully, then if retailers demand a 60 per cent discount on selling a record in store, I can say "take 15 per cent" and mean it. Being able to say: "I don't need you"—that's where I want to be in dealing with retailers. Even for acts with smaller appeal, we can create marketing campaigns on the Internet which actually make us and our acts money, rather than face situations where discounting means you can sell 150,000 records and make no money.

Q. *What are the implications for acts of digitally uploading/downloading music?*
A. Our site means we can feature acts, people can listen to a sample of a particular track, and decide if they want to download it. We can avoid discounting through retailers to simply secure an in-store presence, and revenues can be split between us and the act. I can write cheques quicker for acts on smaller volumes of sales, rather than see money passed over to retailers who have demanded discounts. We'll also create a database library of tracks, so that even if acts or artists are not signed to Aegean or highlighted on the site, fans can still listen to archived tracks and decide if they want to download them.

Interview by Mick Kavanagh

ON THE BEAT

EMI NORWAY RESTRUCTURES A&R

OSLO — EMI Norway is reorganising its local A&R department. Petter Krogstie, current marketing manager of local and international A&R, is to be appointed EMI Norway marketing director, while retaining responsibility for international A&R. A new marketing manager will be hired to handle local A&R. The company's international exploitation manager Helene Rognoy now looks after artist development, in addition to her previous responsibilities.

LOS 40 LAUNCHES CREDIT CARD

MADRID — National CHR network Los 40 Principales has linked up with Europe's largest savings bank, Barcelona-based La Caixa, to issue a 40 Principales Visa credit card, aimed at young people. The card gives users several special offers connected to music and leisure, including automatic entry into several draws whose prizes range from free concert tickets and opportunities to meet pop stars to tickets for cinema premiers. So-called "affinity cards" have been issued for five years in Spain by a number of major football clubs, but this is the first tied in with a radio network.

ITALIAN HERO EMERGES AT SANREMO

SANREMO — Annalisa Minetti won the Sanremo Giovani (Young Sanremo) song contest on November 12 with *L'Eroe Che Sei Tu* (Columbia/Sony), a version of Mariah Carey's hit *Hero*. A demographically representative panel of 2,000 voters selected 14 young artists from the 28 competitors to go through to the main Sanremo Song Festival next February, where they will take part in the newcomers section. Minetti, who was struck blind eight months ago following an illness, missed out on winning the Miss Italia beauty contest earlier this year.

MDR WINS SPUTNIK BATTLE

BERLIN — The government in the German federal state of Saxony and commercial broadcasters Antenne Thuringen, Energy Saxony, Radio ROPA, Radio PSR and Radio SAW have failed in a joint legal bid to stop public broadcaster MDR transmitting its CHR station Sputnik on an FM frequency in the city of Halle. MDR had been under fire from commercial broadcasters in the region, who claim official broadcasting agreements between MDR and the federal states of Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia only permit Sputnik to be broadcast by satellite in those states. The commercial stations say that Sputnik's FM frequency in Halle crosses federal state borders, creating unwanted competition.

SER IN SOCCER WAR

MADRID — Spanish radio giant Cadena SER has cried foul after leading first division soccer club Betis of Seville banned SER's Radio Sevilla from transmitting "any event live from the installations of the club" just hours before Seville's November 12 match against Real Sociedad. SER issued a statement protesting at "aggression against freedom of expression and the public's right to information." SER—part of the Prisa media group which owns the digital TV platform Canal Satelite Digital—and Betis club chairman Manuel Ruiz de Lopera have been at loggerheads for some time as part of a wider national dispute over who has the rights to televise league games. Lopera favours CSD's rival TV platform, Via Digital.

Italia Network deal draws near

by Mark Dezzani

MILAN — A board meeting at the end of this month at Bologna-based CHR/dance network Radio Italia Network is expected to formally approve the purchase of a 70 percent majority stake in the station by Finradio.

Sources say the deal with Finradio is estimated to be worth between L8-9 billion ($4.7-5.3 million). Finradio is the new company formed by Gianni Miscioscia, who has sold his 13 percent stake in CHR network Radio Deejay to Elleradio (the radio holding company of Italy's Espresso Publishing Group) which now wholly owns Radio Deejay as a result of that deal. Miscioscia will be appointed president and managing director of Italia Network's holding company Finwork.

Enzo Campione, managing director of radio sales house Radio E Rete, is to acquire a 15 percent stake in Italia Network, leaving former majority shareholder Andrea Gandolfi with a 15 percent share.

In anticipation of the change, Italia Network has already made a series of changes to its format. Federico Lazzavorich, the network's director of international relations, says that the station is now confining specialist dance shows to the evenings and weekends.

"There is less hard-core dance and more cross-over dance and pop with a touch more Italian music, up to around eight percent," he says. "We want to target a broader public than just dance fans."

Virgin blames photographers for fiasco at Spanish awards

by Howell Llewellyn

BARCELONA — Virgin Records España is blaming local photographers for the much-reported stormy scenes which took place around the Spice Girls' appearance at the Premios Amigo awards ceremony in Barcelona on November 13.

The incident has lent fuel to what appears to be something of a media backlash against the Virgin act, led by the very U.K. tabloids which were instrumental in their original success. At the 44th Premios Amigo awards ceremony, the group were booed, whistled and jeered off stage by a 1,500-strong industry and media audience.

The crowd reaction took place at the end of an evening during which 36 prizes had been awarded to domestic and international winners in the radio, cinema, TV and music categories of the awards, which are organised annually by media giant Grupo Prisa through Radio Barcelona, part of Prisa's Cadena SER radio company.

When Iñaki Gabilondo, a presenter at news/talk station Cadena SER, announced the award ceremony's final performance (by the Spice Girls), the white stage remained bare. A technician came from backstage and spoke to Gabilondo, who then announced that the Spice Girls had refused to appear with the photographers present.

Several security staff then moved in on a line of about 20 photographers, and jeers began as mild jostling broke out. A handful of photographers stormed off, although most stood their ground as bouncers tried to shield their view of the stage.

Spice Girls

When the Spice Girls walked confidently on stage minutes later, they were met by a torrent of booing and whistling, which was only partly drowned out by their lip-synching of their *Spice Up Your Life* single.

After the music stopped and the booing continued, the girls reacted by yelling into the silent microphones. "This is really great" and "muchas gracias" were among the audible comments as the group retreated.

Andy Ferguson, head of the international department at Virgin Records España, says: "There was an agreement between Virgin and the organisers, Prisa, that the photographers should leave when the Spice Girls came on, and unfortunately they didn't do so. Everything went wrong, and the photographers did not play by the rules. But there is no conflict between us and Prisa."

Brocken drops its schlager

by Ed Meza

BERLIN — In a move which reflects the changing musical tastes of older listeners in Germany, Saxony-Anhalt's commercial broadcaster Radio Brocken has switched its German schlager/gold format to AC.

While the station is still playing plenty of oldies in its music mix, programme director Thomas Melzer says artists like Tina Turner and the Rolling Stones—plus AC stalwarts such as Phil Collins and Joe Cocker—now appeal more to the station's 30-49 year-old target audience than traditional schlager music.

"The musical tastes of 40 and 50 year-olds were very different 15 years ago than they are now," he notes. "Today's older listeners grew up listening to these artists. It was about time for the change."

The audience for German schlager music is decreasing because more listeners identify themselves with rock and pop artists than they do with the traditional home-grown fare, according to Melzer, who took over as programme director at the station in July.

Prior to the switch, Brocken had been Saxony-Anhalt's only state-wide gold station.

PETER ANDRE

time

THE NEW ALBUM

time

Released November 17th

PETER ANDRE before time
Flava #1, I Feel You #1, All About Us #3
Mysterious Girl - highest selling
UK independent release '96
Natural - album #1
Platinum in 8 territories,
Gold in 10 territories

time **includes the hit singles 'Lonely' & 'All About Us'**
and features collaborations with Coolio, Montell Jordan
Brian McKnight & The Refugee Camp Allstars

AVAILABLE ON CD & CASSETTE

BMG

mediawatch

MEDIAWEEK The U.K. trade weekly publishes a full-page report on Zenith Media's top 50 European media owners survey. Based on annual media revenues, the survey shows Anglo-Dutch publisher Reed-Elsevier at the top of the list for the fourth successive year, followed by Luxembourg-based broadcaster CLT-UFA, French media company Havas and German giant Bertlesmann.
Media Week (U.K.), November 14

Musique Info Hebdo The recently-launched French trade weekly publishes a double page interview with industry veteran Jean Karakos, who enjoyed massive international success at the end of the '80s as the man behind the *Lambada*, but has maintained a low profile for some time. He now runs Distance, an independent label and distribution company active in the techno and world music genres. "I have always been an indie and don't see how I could work differently," he says.
Musique Info Hebdo (France), November 7

Billboard Music & Media's sister publication turns the Billboard Spotlight on to Spain this week, in a 10-page special which marks the launch of the first Premios Amigo awards. Elsewhere, Billboard writers examine the past year in rap, look forward to the next generation of rappers emerging from various territories around the world and focus on the new wave of video directors working on hip-hop tracks.
Billboard (U.S.), November 22

LA STAMPA Marinella Venegoni, senior music journalist at the Turin-based daily, reflects on this year's Sanremo Giovani—the Sanremo Song festival qualifying event for new talent. He complains: "Who knows why the demographically selected jury always send home the best artists? New innovative musicians are literally mown down, whilst the majority of those selected do not represent the wave of creative new artists." Venegoni asserts this year's winner—blind songstress Annalisa Minetti with a traditional ballad—was a "politically correct" selection by the jury.
La Stampa (Italy), November 14

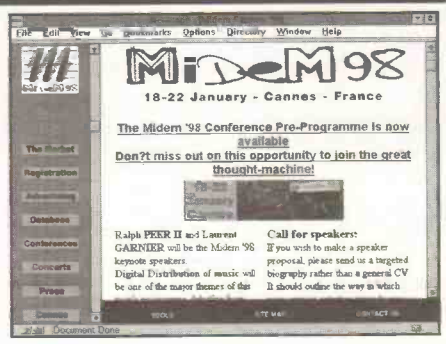
Newsweek The U.S. newsweekly profiles the new generation of Latin rock bands—such as Cafe Tacuba, Los Fabulosos Cadillacs and King Chango—who are inspired by rock, hip-hop or reggae and who blend these genres into a Latin sensibility with ranchera rhythms, mariachi brass and flamenco flourishes. "Renegade bands are remaking music in their own images, and audiences are latching on," writes Newsweek.
Newsweek (U.S.), November 17

Topp 40 Scandinavia Covering all the Scandinavian countries, the second edition of the monthly English language version of the Swedish music industry trade magazine is now out. In a feature on "The Battle Of The Scandinavian Christmas Market," the magazine looks at what's on the way for the music, cinema, video and interactive entertainment industries this coming season. Also in the latest issue, a profile of Jens Otto Paludan, MD of Universal Denmark—"The Man Behind Aqua."
Topp 40 Scandinavia (Sweden), November issue

SongLink International In its latest issue, the U.K.-based tipsheet for songwriters and publishers reports on the result of the recent Unisong International Song Contest, won by Los Angeles songwriter Lindy Robbins with *The Love We Never Made* (co-written with Tanya Leah). Robbins, SongLink's David Stark notes, went on to impress fellow writers attending the Celtic Harmony songwriter retreat in Clifden, Ireland, during the first week in November (photo, this page).
Songlink International (U.K.) November issue

internet in-site

Midem '98
http://www.midem.com/cannes/



It's not too early to start thinking about January's Midem '98—so its bilingual English/French home page should prove fairly popular with industry types planning their visit. Programme, panel and concert schedules are provided, along with maps and practical information about matters such as hotels and transport. There are also sections devoted to press and marketing. This year, Midem Web is offering on-line space to complement participants' more usual stand presences, complete with RealAudio capabilities. Another new feature is that conference registration grants visitors a password which allows access to Midem's On-line database of useful details about everyone attending next year.

Chris Marlowe

EU directive 'fails to please'

by Jeff Clark-Meads
International news editor, Billboard

LONDON — European record labels say a leaked EU directive intended to bolster copyright protection in the digital era leaves much to be desired.

The draft of the EU's Copyright and Related Rights in the Information Society directive was leaked ahead of official publication, due later this month. If the record industry joins telecommunications companies in opposing it, the draft directive may fail to be adopted, depriving the music business of the improvements it does provide.

IFPI welcomes the directive in its present form in so far as it implements the provisions of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) treaties ratified at the end of last year. The draft provides for labels to be given the right to control the use of their copyrights over the Internet and related systems. It also outlaws technology which would circumvent copy-protection systems.

However, Olivia Regnier, legal adviser at the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI)'s Brussels offices, says concerns arise over multichannel broadcasting and subscription music-on-demand services. In these areas, she notes, labels would only have a right to "equitable remuneration" rather than a right to permit or prevent broadcast as they would with Internet-based services.

The absence of the right to control broadcasts means labels cannot negotiate realistic licence fees, says Rick Dobbis, president of PolyGram continental Europe, a key member of the IFPI lobbying team on the issue. Furthermore, adds Dobbis: "If an individual knows a particular record is coming over a digital multichannel broadcast or a subscription service, they can make a clone their own original copy."

Another significant omission in the draft, according to Regnier, is the fact that it leaves control of private copying to individual governments within the EU. Though this was a painful thorn in the side in the analogue era, "We need a whole new approach to digital private copying," she argues.

Dobbis says of the draft's overall impact: "If it goes through as it is, it will provide an improvement over current circumstances, but, clearly, it will not be the end of what we need. It will be a step on the road."

Two Kennedys from very different worlds came together in Dublin recently. Gordon (left), U.S. writer of Eric Clapton's *Change The World*, and Ireland's Brian (right), took part in a charity concert in the city on November 9, after the Celtic Harmony songwriting summit in Clifden, Ireland, organised by the Music Bridge organisation. The Irish Music Rights Organisation supported the event, as did U.S. collection bodies ASCAP, BMI and SESAC.

Labels wind up EVA Holland

by Marc Maes

AMSTERDAM — EVA Holland, the chart compilations album company jointly owned by EMI, Virgin and BMG, will cease its activities in the Netherlands from January 1 next year.

New BMG Holland managing director Maarten Steinkamp also has MD responsibilities at EVA Holland. "Compilations are no longer the core [business] of EVA's partner companies," he explains, "so we want to leave this to Arcade and others. We want to be active in the [compilations] market in other niches, but EVA is not the instrument for it."

EVA Holland has been very successful with chart compilation series such as *Hit History* and *Play My Music*, but profit margins have declined as a result of piracy and price wars in the sector. The three EVA Holland partners will continue to release a limited number of hit compilations, but the company will cease to exist as a label in its own right.

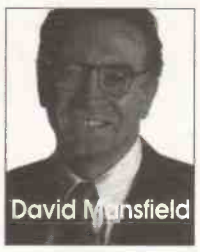
EVA Holland's relative lack of success contrasts starkly with increasing sales enjoyed by its sister company in Belgium. Whereas overall album sales in Belgium have dropped by 10 percent so far this year, EVA Belgium expects a 10 percent boost in its turnover by the end of the year.

EVA Belgium general manager Linda Coopman says: "Without increasing the number of releases, we have been able to maintain last year's high level [of sales]. We've adapted to the market and have pitched EVA at a younger audience."

The sounds that broke the bank at Monte Carlo

by Mike McGeever

Consolidation is good for you. That's what some 300 delegates from throughout Europe were told at the fifth NAB European Radio Operations Conference.


David Mansfield

Recent and current shifts in the U.S. radio industry—such as consolidation and deregulation—are now being increasingly reflected in European markets. At the conference, held in Monte Carlo from November 16-18, two broadcasting heavyhitters, one from each side of the Atlantic, compared and contrasted the U.S. and European industries.

Lowry Mays, CEO and chairman of media group Clear Channel Communications in the U.S., and David Mansfield, chief executive of U.K.-based entertainment group Capital Radio, both delivered addresses to the nearly 300 delegates asserting that everyone is a winner with consolidation.

"Consolidation creates more diversity," Mays said. "The reason [why] that works is, if you had the most popular format, where most of that market's audience would go, the other stations in that market would try to get a piece of that revenue. So, you would have competitors with generally the same type of format. When you have more stations owned by fewer people, then you can have all sorts of format derivatives."

However, warned Mays, the elements of programming and business must blend together if broadcasters are going to deliver their advertisers' messages effectively. "The meshing of programming with business has to be a very tight fit," he told the conference.

"Outside the U.S., we have observed that the programming staff is [solely concentrated on] programming, and the management staff on management and sales. The two don't have real interaction. That's very sad. The two have to be a combined unit to move the customer's product, or it's not going to be successful. The programmer, or presenter, has to be just as much of a salesperson as the person on the street trying to create revenue," he explained.

Mays, whose company has broadcasting interests in Europe, also contended that a single broadcasting regulator across Europe would stimulate overall growth of the industry. "If you are going to have one single currency, why not a single regulator?" he reasoned.

Mansfield, making Capital's case for the proposed takeover of Virgin Radio, which is currently being considered by the U.K.'s Mergers and Monopolies Commission, agreed with Mays on consolidation. He contended that in the case of the London radio market, it would be of benefit to audiences.

"Our acquisition of Virgin Radio is in the public interest," claimed Mansfield, "because at the moment Virgin simulcasts pretty much the same output on its national AM service and its London FM station. Also, they have had a problem in getting their programming right. We know it's not easy," he conceded. "They have had four programme director in four years."

Lowry Mays

Capital's solution would be to create two stations, Mansfield explained. "There will be one standalone FM station. The other will be a separate AM national service pitched [at a] younger [demographic] against the BBC.

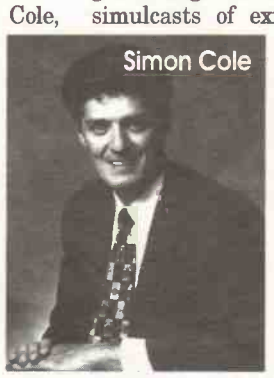
"So, with our programming skills, " he concluded, "the consumer wins twice: better programming; and two stations rather than one."

Content is key to digital success

by Emmanuel Legrand

Content must drive the development of Digital Radio (formerly DAB), or consumer interest will turn to other multimedia technologies.

Such is the belief of Simon Cole, chief executive of U.K. syndication company Unique Broadcasting, who urged broadcasters at the NAB conference to address the issue with the final consumer in mind, and to look at all the opportunities offered by the technology.


Simon Cole

Speaking from the perspective of a "content provider" during a conference session, Cole described himself as "a DAB enthusiast for many years." "Unfortunately," he continued, "I have to re-evaluate this enthusiasm. Look at what has happened since 1995. How long will it take for receivers to be available? In Europe, we have done more than others, but the future is not a pretty one. There is a sense of a shrinking window of opportunities."

Cole added that most DAB programming nowadays consists of simulcasts of existing signals, and contended that "broadcasters really still have no clear idea about what content will be provided on them [Digital Radio receivers]."

Cole fears that Digital Radio might be affected by "the Betamax syndrome"—a case where the [video] technology was the best on the market, but didn't win consumer favour. "We must create a market for consumers who want premium content," said Cole.

The advent of Digital Radio on a large scale will also provide broadcasters with the opportunity to embrace multimedia, and to deliver not only sound, but also data, through Digital Radio receivers.

A major threat to the format, Cole said, comes from other technologies, such as wideband Internet transmissions via cable or telephone lines. Digital technologies "will create a booming demand for multimedia content," according to Cole. He adds that Digital Radio is "perfectly positioned to provide a complement to fixed cabled hardware.

"If the broadcasters are to be the pioneers, then they must learn fast that they will not pioneer [Digital Radio] content alone," Cole continued. He urged broadcasters to "embrace some of the talents available in the companies who are in the business of creatively using fast data transfer rates to create dynamic content."

Final score

How radio industry professionals saw this year's NAB European Radio Operations Conference.

Marc Büker, director, Avrupa Holdings, Turkey
"As a first time delegate, I was impressed with the number of subjects covered in the sessions. It's good to see representation from so many countries, as well as finding out what we have in common with each other. It is vital for us to be here, since we just launched [Genç Radio, HitNet, PopNet] recently, and commercial radio in Turkey is still quite new. Every bit of information and experience learned helps."

Paul Kavanagh, group programme director, Emap Radio U.K.

"It was great for networking. It's important to get as you much as you can from the sessions, but this kind of gathering is a perfect—and important—opportunity to establish relationships with other broadcasters from other countries. It was also encouraging to see a fair number of British delegates."

Phillippe Generali, VP Europe, RCS Europe, France

"As an exhibitor, it was the perfect place to do business. It was professional and relaxed. You found yourself closer to the people you have to deal with. The conference wasn't like other such events—these delegates are serious. But, of course, it was fun."

Pascal Grierson, international business manager, Unique Broadcasting U.K.
"By far the best [to date]. But why, when it comes to questions and answers time in the sessions, can't delegates participate more? If they are worried about looking silly, what the hell are they doing in the industry? Also, they should start the sessions at 10.30 instead of 09.30."

Michael Gentile, general manager, Oui FM, Paris
"It was my first NAB and I found it really interesting. I picked bits and pieces from conferences, but the real interest is in meeting people and sharing experiences. It is very useful to have presentations from specialists which use scientific methods, although it doesn't always translate to all markets. What also struck me was the poor representation of the French broadcasting industry, and that at a time when French groups are trying to expand across their borders, and foreign groups to invest in France."

Peter Waak, general manager, Bandit 105.5 FM & RTL 104.7, Stockholm

"For me, it was the best NAB European conference so far. There was cutting edge information in the sessions, and—just as importantly—great and useful networking with other broadcasters."

Others may promise you the stars, but we deliver the world.

That's right. We're Billboard Online

And we take our responsibility as the music industry's premiere online information resource very seriously. Not only do we deliver the leading industry publication to your computer every week, but we do it before Billboard hits the newsstands! Plus complete access to our archive of Billboard articles and charts dating back to 1946; Industry contact databases; the Airplay Monitors; over 30,000 artist profiles and discographies; - and more - all fully searchable through the World Wide Web.

Check out Billboard Online's newest features . . .

• The Daily Billboard Bulletin • Audio clips from the Charts • This Day in Music database • Billboard's Fantasy Chart Rotisserie Game • New Release Round-Up • and more to come !

Billboard Online. When you need to know.

Ph: 212-536-1402 or 800-449-1402, email: info@billboard-online.com