

LABEL OF THE YEAR

ARISTA

the year in music

2007 TOP TEN LABELS

1
ARISTA
NASHVILLE
14.7%

2
Capitol
RECORDS NASHVILLE
9.5%

3
CURB
RECORDS
curb.com
8.7%

4
LYRIC STREET
RECORDS
7.9%

5
MCA
NASHVILLE
A UNIVERSAL MUSIC COMPANY
7.85%

6
BNA
BNA RECORDS LABEL
7.2%

7
Mercury
RECORDS
A UNIVERSAL MUSIC COMPANY
6.5%

8
BIG
MACHINE
RECORDS
5.5%

9
BBR
5.1%

10
RCA
RECORDS LABEL
NASHVILLE
5.08%

For the second straight year, Arista/Nashville owns the largest chart share – 14.7% – in country music. The numbers are indisputable: 12 tunes in the Top 100, three in the Top 10, four in the Top 20 and 10 in the Top 50.

VP/Promotion Skip Bishop sees his team as “soldiers on the front lines protecting God’s universal language. There’s a remarkable combination of creative madness and rigid discipline that makes this group untouchable. We know we’re blessed with incredible music and gifted artists, and that manifests a sense of responsibility that we carry proudly.”

Looking back at an exceptionally successful year, we asked the Arista folks for their snapshot memories of ‘07. “Brad [Paisley] and Kim had a baby and named him Huckleberry, and that’s hard to beat,” Bishop says. “Lesly Somerville got married and the after-party is still going on. Jason Michael had two huge smashes. Bryan Frasher won a world grappling tournament and a BBQ cook-off in one year. Ronnie and Kix somehow became 10 years younger, had more fun and sold more records. John Sigler came out of his hippie commune in Woodstock and drove an old truck to Nashville. And Alan Jackson just delivered the most stunning album of his life. It’s been quite a year!”

Indeed. Here’s what the rest of the team had to say:

BRYAN FRASHER, NATIONAL

“We got together at Skip’s house periodically for what we call ‘Arista Jam Sessions,’” Frasher says. “Skip cooks – more important, his wife Diane cooks – and we hang by the outdoor fireplace and pool and just start throwing ideas around. We play music, brainstorm and it gets rowdy. It gets ridiculous. But we always come away with something worthwhile. More than that, we come away knowing each other a little better each time. It accelerated the bonding experience and by the end of the year, I think we all knew we could lean on each other at any time.”

JOHN SIGLER, NORTHEAST

“Skip and I took Carrie Underwood on a jet tour for her album launch,” Sigler says. “We had events in Boston, Philadelphia, DC and Baltimore in one day. There was a multitude of details to cover and it was a tremendous amount of work, but it had tremendous impact. I’ve done alternative rock promotion for 17 years and have been impressed at how well-educated new country artists are about the business. The other encouraging thing is how many young people I’ve seen at country shows. There’s a whole new generation coming up that loves this music.”

ALEX VALENTINE, SOUTHWEST

“Seeing two giants like Alan Jackson and Brooks & Dunn take the stage on one tour was pretty special,” Valentine says. “I’ll always carry with me that memory of standing on the side of the stage watching these two great artists and thinking, ‘Holy smokes, these guys are country

music!’ I’m in awe that I get to learn this format on a label like Arista and at a company like Sony BMG. I sometimes can’t believe I get to do this every day with these people.”

JERI DETWEILER-COOPER, SOUTHEAST

“In May, we had a seven-course meal at the Sunset Grill to learn all about etiquette from our friend Kim Goddard, and it was hilarious,” Detweiler-Cooper says. “Imagine Tom Baldrice trying to find the right fork or Bryan Frasher trying to find a polite place to put his empty sugar packet. A couple of sad events for me personally were having Phil Vassar and Keith Anderson leave Arista. I worked Phil’s first No. 1 song and miss having the day-to-day with him. Same with Keith, even though he’s just down the hall. Personal highlights include seeing my son Luke walk and talk. He loves music, but until Brooks & Dunn do a version of ‘Wheels On The Bus,’ they won’t be superstars in his eyes.”

LESLY TYSON, MID-SOUTH

“Jason Michael Carroll wrote ‘Livin’ Our Love Song’ with his guitar players Tim Galloway and Glen Mitchell during a radio tour,” Tyson recalls. “We were on a bus between Memphis and Nashville at easily 1am, but had to catch a flight to Atlanta later that morning. They were sitting up and singing the song over and over. I finally had to say to them, ‘That’s one of the best hooks I’ve ever heard, but you’ve got to stop singing! You’ve got to sing at an event in the morning!’”

“The other fun experience was a cooking class we all took in Franklin with Carrie Underwood as we were getting ready for the launch of her new album. It was a great opportunity to spend time together and hear her enthusiasm for the record. She was so fired up about the writing process.”

LORI HARTIGAN, WEST COAST

“The first single for JMC was supposed to be ‘Looking At You,’” Hartigan says. “I had the ‘marketing genius’ idea of having laminates made with a sheep on them that read ‘Looking At Ewe.’ Following the theme, I worked out a promotion with KMPS/Seattle that invited listeners to hear an emerging star at the Puyallup Fair in, of all places, the petting zoo.”

“JMC and two players performed for sheep, goats, pigs and birds, along with radio staff, Skip and about 20 listeners. One off-key bird squawked the entire way through ‘Alyssa Lies.’ I didn’t know whether to laugh or cry, but Jason pulled it off and had fun. Everyone was impressed. Seven months later he returned to play for an SRO crowd of 2,000. I sat in the bleachers and remembered back to humble beginnings at the petting zoo.”

KATES ROGERS, COORDINATOR

“Our late-night event at the Arista CRS suite was memorable for the road stories artists and regionals were telling,” Rogers says. “Skip shared his experiences in pop and how he and Butch Waugh first came to know each other. I don’t think I was born then. Bryan Frasher made us laugh with tales from the road and Arista forefather Bobby Kraig dazzled us with magic and card tricks. Also this year, Lesly got married and the entire staff was in attendance. Let me tell you, Arista can dance!”

Reiterating the top-to-bottom strength of his staff, Bishop says, “If a meteor landed on me today, any one of them could take my place. This team is never out of touch, never breaking from the task and always thinking far beyond the reach of the headlights. We’re never far away from each other. Even when we’re apart, we’re together.”

CAC



POT STIRRERS: The Arista crew cooks with Carrie. Pictured (l-r) are Alex Valentine, Lori Hartigan, John Sigler, Carrie Underwood, Skip Bishop, 19 Management’s Ann Edelblute, Kates Rogers, Bryan Frasher, Lesly Tyson and Jeri Cooper.

Arista repeats on the strength of an amazing 18 charted records, proving that last year’s dizzying 14.8% chart share wasn’t a fluke. Arista posted 11 Top 15 hits and three No. 1s that spent five weeks at the top. Sony BMG’s four imprints – Arista, BNA, Columbia and RCA – amassed a 31.4% chart share in 2007. Collectively, they had seven No. 1s that were good for 20 weeks at the peak. Leading that charge was Kenny Chesney, who had three No. 1s that ruled for a total of 14 weeks.

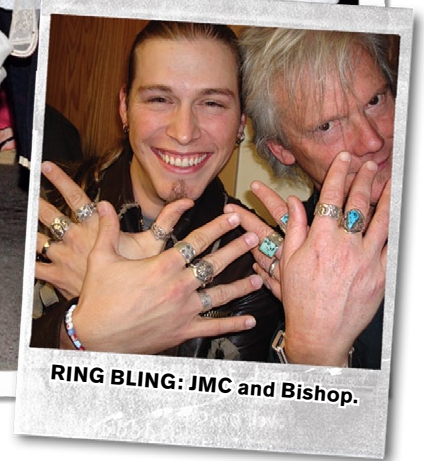
Capitol captures the No. 2 spot again this year, propelled by 17 charted records. Of those, seven hit the Top 15 including Trace Adkins’ “Ladies Love Country Boys, which spent two weeks at No. 1.

Curb leaps from sixth in ‘06 to third thanks to 11 charted tunes, among them six Top 15s and three No. 1s including the most-heard song of 2007, Rodney Atkins’ “Watching You.”

WEDDING BELLE: Lesly Tyson with Arista and Sony BMG staffers at her reception.



GOAT OF MANY COLORS: Pictured (l-r) are KMPS/Seattle’s Tony Thomas, Arista’s Lori Hartigan, Jason Michael Carroll, KMPS’ Becky Brenner and Arista’s Skip Bishop.



RING BLING: JMC and Bishop.