Team UMG Rocks The Ryman

“It all starts with you guys hearing our music and delivering it to the fans,” Luke Bryan told the crowd during his spot at Team UMG at The Ryman yesterday (2/9). The superstar dialed back his usual upbeat tunes and played piano for the ballad “To The Moon And Back.”

The seventh annual event was hosted by UMG/Nashville SVP/Promotion Royce Risser and featured the label group’s lineup performing one song each. Appropriately, Little Big Town opened with “The Beginning.”

Jon Pardi helped kick things off with “Head Over Boots” and Kacey Musgraves was right on time with “Late To The Party.” Canaan Smith played “Stuck” and Kip Moore offered his sincere thanks to radio before playing “Running For You.”

Charles Kelley (aka “Man Antebellum”) tapped Dierks Bentley and co-writer Eric Paslay to trade verses on “The Driver.” Bentley returned to perform “Somewhere On A Beach,” and recounted the time, circa 1999, when Vince Gill and Amy Grant came to see him play on Lower Broadway and Gill joined him onstage. At The Ryman yesterday, Gill received a standing ovation as soon as he stepped onstage and proceeded to play his ode to George Jones, “Sad One Coming On.”

Also joining the standing O club were Darius Rucker (“So I Sang”) and Paslay, who showed off his dance moves during “High Class.”

Chris Stapleton, David Nail and Lauren Alaina mentioned their families. Stapleton drew cheers with one of his wife’s favorites, “Either Way.” Nail, who recently welcomed twins, performed “Fighter,” written for his wife. Alaina owned her family drama with “I’m Doing Fine.”

Eric Church performed “Record Year” and Keith Urban closed the event with a double-header high-note of new single “Break On Me” and last year’s “John Cougar, John Deere, John 3:16.”

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**CRS Research Presentation**

Edison Research's Larry Rosin and Megan Lazovick presented "Ear Wars," a graphic-heavy, Stars Wars-themed CRS Research Presentation yesterday (2/9). The project surveyed more than 1,500 respondents, examined the benefits of radio over other mediums and featured interviews with listeners and broadcasters from WXTU/Philadelphia, WIVK/Knoxville and WTHI/Terre Haute, IN. Among the highlights:

The team began with a look at its most recent Share of Ear study, which shows AM/FM radio in the lead with 54% compared with other audio sources. Owned music (16%), streaming audio (15%) and SiriusXM (7%) followed. Interestingly, 39% of in-car SiriusXM subscribers held radio as their close second choice with 39%, which encouraged Rosin to ask, “Why?”

Respondents cited their favorite songs (77%), music discovery (70%), news and information (68%), confidence in being informed if major news breaks (63%), what popular people were talking about (61%) and finding out about community events (55%) as the top reasons, all of which were higher among Country listeners specifically. “Country listeners are much more intense about radio listening than others,” Rosin noted.

Central to the presentation’s theme was what Rosin and Lazovick referred to as “FOMO,” or “fear of missing out.” The way radio makes people feel connected is its biggest selling point, the pair noted. As one listener put it when she met the WXTU morning show for the first time, “We’ve known each other for years! They just don’t realize it.”

See the presentation in its entirety here.

**Beach Buds**

In a business that leans toward high turnover and a demanding pace, Tuesday afternoon’s "While You Were Out: To The Beach And Back” session offered much needed perspective. A panel of radio and record pros shared their stories.

After a decades-long run, Midwest Communication’s Tom Baldrica described his return to radio as a centering decision. If luck is the residue of design, he said, “The design at a certain point in life was to chase happy ... [after a career centered on] selling the unnecessary to the disinterested and doing the impossible for the ungrateful.”

“That is the gift of being kicked out,” KMNB/Minneapolis’ Lauren MacLeash said, relating her own tale of devoting almost two decades to a crosstown cluster. Returning to radio and in a new format allowed her to reset priorities.

Cumulus’ Charlie Cook told of the years he spent grinding out merciless travel as a consultant. “One day it took 24 hours to get from L.A. to Shreveport,” he said. “I called [boss Mike McVay] and said I can’t do it anymore. I’m done.”

Billboard’s Jim Asker recounted his battle with cancer, including two years he described as hell. “Relationships mean so much.”

The lessons they’ve brought to their new positions were hard won. “Know when to say when,” said Baldrica.

**Post-It Notes**

Social media should showcase a brand’s personality, according to panelists at yesterday’s (2/9) “Beyond The News Feed—Using Social Media For More Than ‘Listen Now,’” moderated by Falls Media Group’s Don Halyburton. Facebook, Twitter and numerous other sites are a place to display unique perspectives. Panelists USRN’s Margaret Vergheese (United Stations Radio Networks), New Orleans Saints’ Digital Media/Social Media Mgr. Alex Restrepo and Nash Nights Live’s Elaina Smith agreed that when posting on socials, quality is more important than quantity. Content must be timely and it should engage, inform, or entertain the reader. Stations and personalities should determine the purpose of their feeds and why listeners follow them. It is also important to pay attention to which posts resonate and to interact with listeners through social sites. Panelists listed specific ideas for social media engagement such as scavenger hunts and guest takeovers of an account.

**A Woman’s Place**

How can women recognize opportunities as they come up, secure upper management positions and maintain a balance in their work and personal lives? That was the subject of Tuesday’s (2/9) panel ‘Women In the Industry: Breaking Barriers and Balance,’ moderated by Scripps VP/ Radio Programming Beverlee Brannigan. Panelists were CBS Radio/ Houston MM Sarah Frazier, KP Entertainment President Kerri Edwards, Warner Bros./WMN VP/Promotion Kristen Williams and Premiere Networks President Julie Talbott.

All agreed it was a major benefit to have a support system that included family and friends, but also included supervisors and mentors at work. Frazier even took a demotion and changed jobs when she felt her boss didn’t believe in her. “Choose your bosses carefully,” said Talbott.

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**LOVE AND THEFT**

EXPLODING! SALES! REQUESTS! RESEARCH! SOCIAL MEDIA! STREAMING!

“WHISKEY ON MY BREATH IS BY FAR THE MOST IMPORTANT SONG WE HAVE EVER RELEASED. WE ARE WATCHING THIS SONG CHANGE LIVES. THANK YOU COUNTRY RADIO”

-STEPHEN BARKER LILES AND ERIC GUNDERSON/LOVE AND THEFT

GREAT TO SEE ALL OF YOU LAST NIGHT!
THE LAST BANDOLEROS

KEEP THE PARTY GOING!

CATCH WARNER MUSIC NASHVILLE’S EXCITING NEW BAND PERFORMING IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE NEW FACES SHOW!
"You have to be committed to both sides of that balance," said Edwards of work and family. "There will be days where you're not 100% at work or at home and you just want a bottle of wine. If you're committed to both, you find a way to make it work."

**Pop Vs. Country Chart Churn**

Single cycle speed was at the center of the "Whose Hits Are Bigger: How We Program" panel. CBS Radio/Miami's Rob Morris noted the artist-driven nature of Country, as contrasted with Top 40's song focus. Lee Brice told of his long and arduous adventures with the singles charts. iHeartMedia Top 40 exec John Ivey said, "If I was an artist, I would be a little frustrated by that. On the Pop side, the acceleration of an artist is incredible."

Pop promotion exec John Boulos (Atlantic) said most added is irrelevant in the format. Country's propensity for "push weeks" and tacit label cooperation was equally foreign. "I don't give a fuck if they get there," Boulos said of other labels and the race for No. 1. "They're not my partners." He also said radio's challengers have a long way to go, even in the Pop world. "Radio is still No. 1 for exposure by far. When we get radio we have success. It drives sales, streams, tours and merch."

A moment of levity came when Ivey was asked whether he would be frank in telling Brice a new single wasn't up to par. Before the radio exec answered, Brice interjected, "I have a knife in my pocket."

**See Insurgency**

Imagine a decades-long head start for Pandora and Spotify, with a newfangled radio technology coming in as a challenger was the idea behind "Radio As The Insurgent." The University of Cincinnati's John Owens revealed adjective "word clouds" his students associated with Pandora (mom, commercials), Spotify (expensive, exciting) and radio (boring, outdated). He pointed to the craft brewing movement and urged radio to be distinctive, authentic and fun.

KRTY/San Jose's Nate Deaton discussed being located in the center of Silicon Valley. "We saw this coming eight years ago [and our strategy to win was to] be live and local," he said.

Answering the premise, iHeartMedia's Rod Phillips said, "We wouldn't start out telling DJs to all sound the same. We'd be looking for unique, compelling and interesting." He offered a mea culpa about being a cutting edge Pop programmer who had no idea about MySpace when station interns first told him about the beginnings of social media. Years later, he admitted, "It's still hard to keep up" with technological advances.

Arista's Lesly Simon noted access to artists and unique content that streaming services don't use allows radio to connect with listeners. Owens suggested overnights or HD channels as possible incubators of creative research. Training young people to be multiplatform storytellers extended to the overall narrative arc in comments from NuVoodoo's Leigh Jacobs.

**Alley Cats**

A standing-room-only crowd greeted 11 of Nashville's finest songwriters at "Bob Kingsley's Acoustic Alley" last night (2/9). More than 40 hit songs from Shane McAnally, Josh Osborne, Josh Kear, Heather Morgan, Jonathan Singleton, Andrew Dorff, Jimmy Yeary, Tim Nichols, Ross Copperman, Rodney Clawson and Rhett Akins created many memorable moments.

Among them was Yeary's story of how co-writer Connie Harrington heard an NPR interview featuring Paul Monti, father of late Army veteran Jared Monti. The elder's affinity for driving his son's truck in remembrance inspired Harrington, Yeary and Jessi Alexander to write Lee Brice's "I Drive Your Truck." Yeary's delivery silenced the room and brought tears to some eyes.

Everyone showed appreciation for Country radio. "We know how lucky we are," Nichols promised. “Thank you for playing our music. It’s made our dreams come true.”

CAC
CRS 2016 Omni Hotel Map

LEVEL TWO
- CMA Theatre
- Media Room
- Stage
- Broadway Performance Hall
- Performances sponsored by Live Nation

LEVEL THREE
- Warner Music Nashville After Party
- Big Spark New Faces Cocktail

LEVEL FOUR
- Turnpike Music
- Edge Hill Music and Media
- Nine North Records


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Wednesday, 2/10

8am
Women Mentoring Breakfast
Kristen Williams, Jinny Laderer, Becky Brenner, Beverlee Brannigan, Lori Lewis, Alison Bonaguro, Erica Farber, Katie Dean, Mandy McCormack
Omni, Level 2, Cumberland 5 & 6

8am
CRS Futuri Tech Breakfast
Daniel Anstandig, Dan Halyburton (moderators)
Omni, Level 2, Cumberland 3 & 4

9am
Put Me In Coach! The Best Talent Coaches Converge
Bob Richards (moderator), Barry Switzer, Dennis Clark, Steve Reynolds
Omni, Level 2, Legends D-G

10am
What YOU Want to Know About Digital and Social
Gregg Lindahl (moderator), Nicole Slater, Adam Zinke, Cassie Petrey
Omni, Level 2

10am
Promotions Start to Finish Sponsored by VCreative
Bob Richards (moderator), Tim Leary, Mark Anderson, Kenny Jay, Lois White
Omni, Level 2

11am
Listeners: Are You Speaking Their Language?
Beverlee Brannigan (moderator), Marc Chase, Brian Thomas, Shelly Easton, Jeff Garrison, Leigh Jacobs
Omni, Level 2, Legends Ballroom D-G

11am
Social Content Creation Bootcamp
Dan Halyburton (moderator), Nada Taha, Megan Joyce, Ryan Schmidt
Omni, Legends Ballroom A-C

11:45am
Acoustic Stage Performance Featuring Macy Martin
Jennifer Nettles, Justin Moore, Tara Thompson
Omni, Level 2, Broadway Prefunction Area

12pm
What YOU Want to Know About Digital and Social
Gregg Lindahl (moderator), Nicole Slater, Adam Zinke, Cassie Petrey
Omni, Level 2, Legends D-G

2pm
Winning The First Occasion
Gregg Lindahl (moderator), Robe Rowe, Tim Clarke
Omni, Level 2, Cumberland Rooms 1 & 2

2pm
From the Outside Looking In: Other Formats Give Their Take on Country
RJ Curtis (moderator), Doc Wynter, Troy Hanson, John Ivey
Omni, Level 3, Legends Ballroom D-G

2pm
Frenemy: Competitor or Brand Extension?
Dan Halyburton (moderator), Copeland Isaacson, Shawn Kirkham, Nick Fishbaugh, Bobby Bones
Omni, Level 2, Music Row Room 1

3pm
Featured Speaker: Tim McGraw
“Transcending/Evolving With Tim McGraw”
Omni, Level 2

5:30pm
New Faces Cocktail Reception
Sponsored by Big Spark Music Group
Omni, Level 2, Broadway Pre-function Area

6:30pm
New Faces of Country Music Dinner and Performance
Sponsored by ACM and St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital
Brothers Osborne, Cam, Chris Janson, Kelsea Ballerini, Old Dominion
Omni, Level 2, Broadway Ballroom

7pm
New Faces Live Stream Viewing Party
Omni, Level 1, Barlines

9pm
Wild Wednesday After Party
Sponsored by Spin Doctors Music Group
Margaritaville, Broadway

10pm
The Official New Faces After Party
Sponsored by Warner Music Nashville
Omni, Level 2, Broadway Pre-function Area

10pm
SSM Nashville Beer Garden + Performances
Omni, Level 2, Music Row Room 1

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