

Burnside Dials Up Online Solution For Its Labels

Independent Recording Industry Services (IRIS) in San Francisco has agreed to provide Burnside Distribution's labels with online representation for their music.

Burnside's association with IRIS will allow the distributor's labels to secure digital encoding and encryption for their music, content delivery, standardized agreements with online retailers, consolidated monthly royalty payments, sales

reporting services and marketing and legal services.

IRIS was founded in May. The company's principals are president **Matt Laszuk**, a DJ and software developer, and managing director **Bryn Boughton**, a veteran of the now-defunct one-stop Valley Media and developer of Valley's developing-artist program HomeGrown.

The distributor's labels are not obligated to use IRIS' services and can choose to work with another firm on the digital side if they like. IRIS' contracts with labels that work with the company directly are also non-exclusive.

Burnside VP **Bill McNally** says the hook-up with IRIS "is a way of saying to our labels, 'Here's another way to get your stuff out there digitally if you haven't already.'"

Like many indie distributors, Burnside has been slow to pull the trigger on setting up its labels for online distribution.

"We didn't want to jump into it just to jump into it," McNally says.

The massive promotion and immediate popularity of Apple's iTunes Store and the recent debut of the iTunes platform for PC users have probably led Burnside

and other conventional distributors to take a closer look at their online strategy.

But, like others on the brick-and-mortar side of the business, McNally voices uncertainty about the magnitude of the market for indie music online.

"The question is, What does this really mean in the long run? I don't think anybody has really embraced this on an Apple iTunes level," he says.

Laszuk notes that IRIS has so far submitted digital content—mainly from New York-based MRI, which is distributed to conventional retail via Ryko—to digital services, but not a lot of music is up online.

"We have posted some content—not our entire catalog, because we've found some of the retailers are slow," Laszuk says.

While Burnside is the first brick-and-mortar distributor to sign on with IRIS, Laszuk doesn't expect it to be the last. "We've talked to a number of other distributors," he says.

FRESH BERRY: Country vocalist **John Berry** has founded his own label, Flower Branch, Ga.-based

singer is due in early 2004. Clear Sky has also signed new artists **Zac Brown** and **Paige Turner**.

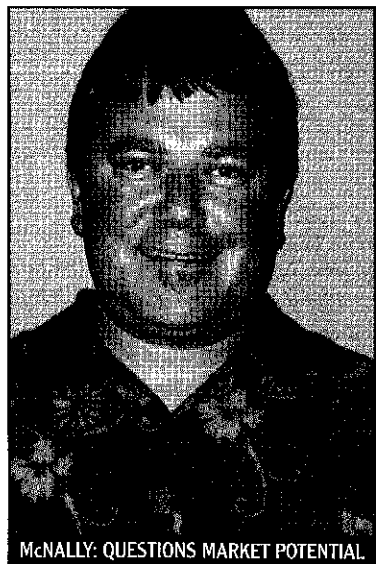
The
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DISINFORMATION PLEASE: Ryko Distribution has struck a deal with the Disinformation Co. for its two-DVD project "Disinformation: The Complete Series." The set contains six hours of left-of-center footage originally aired on Channel 4 in the U.K. and acquired, but never aired, by the Sci Fi Channel.

Hosted by Disinformation maestro **Richard Metzger**—whose company has published such tomes as "Everything You Know Is Wrong" and "50 Things You're Not Supposed to Know"—the series focuses on such biz-arros as **Throbbing Gristle's Genesis P-Orridge**, painter/performance artist **Joe Coleman**, filmmaker/cultural historian **Kenneth Anger** and publisher **Adam Parfrey**, among others.

AT LIBERTY: Koch Entertainment publicist **Lulu Cohen** has left the company and is seeking other opportunities. She can be reached at 917-318-2161.



McNALLY: QUESTIONS MARKET POTENTIAL

RIAA Album Certifications For October

Following are the October Recording Industry Assn. of America certifications of album ship-

Dylan," Columbia, his 14th.
Mary J. Blige, "Love & Life," Gef-fen/Interscope, her sixth.

Mary J. Blige, "Love & Life," Gef-fen/Interscope, her eighth.
Maná, "Revolution de Amor,"

Kenny Loggins, "Outside: From the Redwoods," Columbia, his 10th.

GOLD ALBUMS
Akwid, "Proyecto Akwid," Univi-sion Records, its first.