

# MID-YEAR A&R DIRECTORY UPDATE

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## DAVE MATTHEWS BAND

AN EPIC CHALLENGE:  
THE MARKETING OF  
**S P I N**  
DOCTORS



# MUSIC CONNECTION

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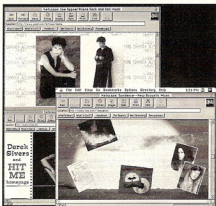


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### DAVE MATTHEWS BAND

This RCA act is back with the follow-up, *Crash*, to their quadruple platinum label debut, *Under The Table And Dreaming*. We speak with the leader of the band about the pressures of keeping the band together and following up such a hugely successful record.

By Pat Lewis



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### YOUR MUSIC & THE 'NET




















We check in with the burgeoning cyberspace arena and offer a few tips for musicians regarding how to best utilize the Internet as a marketing tool—either by fashioning your own web site or by landing a record deal through the 'Net. What you find out may help your career.

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# THE SECOND COMING OF DAVE MATTHEWS BAND

This RCA act—which was one of the biggest success stories of last year—is back with the follow-up to the multi-platinum 'Under The Table And Dreaming.' We speak with the leader of the band about the difficulties of having to follow such a hugely successful record.



(L-R): Boyd Tinsley, LeRoi Moore, Dave Matthews, Carter Beauford, Stefan Lessard (photo: Sam Erickson)

By Pat Lewis

**M**y telephone rings. It's Dave Matthews, and he's calling from his home in Charlottesville, Virginia, ready to begin our scheduled interview. Presumably, he wants to talk about his new album and the non-stop touring the band's been doing over the past year in support of their multi-platinum label debut, *Under The Table And Dreaming*.

But before I can get to my first question, Matthews—realizing that there's a female on the other end—immediately launches into a diatribe that could easily be titled "Why The World Would Be A Much Better Place If Women Were Running Things." Consequently, it takes him nearly the entire time that's been allotted for this interview to exhaust the issue.

"I'm long-winded, aren't I?" jokes Matthews. "I'm like eight buckets of beans."

"I have this theory," he continues, obviously on a roll. "Many, many years ago, there was this mishap that happened in China. There was this simple community unit, and at the head of the family was the woman—the matriarchal society—who was the vessel of

life. And everything was based around making sure she was well and fed, so she, in turn, could nurture. Then you had these guys running around in the woods, beating up these little rodents. But only one guy would go out at a time. Then they started going out in groups, so they could get an elephant or a woolly mammoth.

"While they were on these gang woolly mammoth hunts," he explains, "they formed a society—the first Masons—and they started meeting together and started building all of these grand illusions. And the rest is history. And now we're living the nightmare and we're trying desperately to somehow reverse it."

**S**ummer is here, and Dave Matthews Band's new album, *Crash*, has just hit record store bins. Controversy has already begun to swirl around the album, as industry pundits debate whether or not it was wise to release it at this juncture in the band's career and how it will ultimately effect the longevity of the band.

While *Crash* debuted at Number Two on the *Billboard* album chart its first week on the streets (it remains, as of presstime, in the Top Ten), it nevertheless arrived while its prede-

cessor is still going strong—which has potentially put the band at risk of having too much active product in the marketplace at the same time.

In addition, it's usually a safer approach—at least from a commercial standpoint—to wait until radio has eased off from playing the older material before releasing any new material (something which also applies to the new Hootie & the Blowfish record *Fairweather Johnson*).

"There's always this theory that you can flood the market or you don't want overexposure," confirms Dave Matthews. "But I just felt it was time [to release a new album]. I knew a lot of bands work records for two or three years, but that would drive me crazy. I just wanted to do something else. And if you think about it, in the Sixties and Seventies, bands put out albums every ten months. I mean, how many albums did the Beatles put out in six years? One hell of a lot!"

Another risky move was the band's decision to release the funkier/rockier tune "Too Much" as the first single (or "emphasis" track). They could've gone the safer route with a song such as the organic, acoustic instrument-heavy "Tripping Billies," which is much more in line with the band's earlier hits,

"What Would You Say" and "Ants Marching."

But, so far, the gamble has paid off, and "Too Much" has instantly penetrated almost every radio format including Triple A, modern rock and mainstream rock—quite an accomplishment when you consider that their last album's first single, "What Would You Say," took over five months to "break."

They also blew their television was early on. The band has already made appearances on both the *Late Show With David Letterman* and *Saturday Night Live*, and MTV threw their support behind the band, making the video for "Too Much" an exclusive for a month, as well as producing and recently airing a one-hour special about the Dave Matthews Band.

Though they are thumbing their noses at conventional record industry wisdom, the new record is off to a running start. Initial sales have been brisk and radio receptive.

However, the pressure of following up a four-million-selling album has taken its toll. "There's a lot of trying or testing situations," admits Matthews, "and you have to keep your eyes looking forward and picture the future the way you hope it will be for as long as possible to try and make that happen."

"For me," continues Matthews, "the focus has been to try and keep the band together because we're all very different people. The love inside this band is not an easy one because we didn't all go to college together, or grow up in the same kind of family, or in the same place. We're all really different, and what brought us together is the music, and it's the music that keeps us together."

A heavy touring schedule has always been part and parcel to the band, who've been together for over five years now. They've already begun a long-and-winding world tour in support of the new album, which includes several dates on the West Coast leg of the H.O.R.D.E. tour.

Not only does Dave & crew routinely tour, but when they perform live, they indulge in extensive, improvisational instrumental breaks and long solos. And as a result, they're often lumped in with other "jam"-style bands such as Blues Traveler or Phish or the Grateful Dead.

"We do tour a lot, and we get bored if we play the same show every night," says Matthews, "so we loosen it up a little bit. But, being compared with the Dead, that's not an insult—although I never really listened to them or saw them until we played with them in Las Vegas. So the comparison isn't founded—at least not historically—in our influences. But the Dead built a giant business completely outside of the industry, which is something that you can only admire."

One listen to *Crash*, and you will notice that it's a departure from the more song-oriented *Under The Table And Dreaming*. The members indulge in more lengthy instrumental breaks and parade their prowess as top-notch, jazz, groove-minded players.

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## A 'CRASH' COURSE IN MARKETING

By Pat Lewis

At RCA Records, the Artist Development department is a "fancy name for part of the marketing area," explains Hugh Surratt, VP of Artist Development & Marketing.

Surratt and his staff have the important task of understanding what makes the Dave Matthews Band tick and then conveying that information internally throughout his company and getting everyone excited about it, as well as taking it to the streets and helping get the public excited enough to get out and purchase the latest offering from the multi-platinum-selling rock outfit.

**MC: How have you avoided the so-called "sophomore jinx"—especially following up a hugely successful record like *Under The Table And Dreaming*?**

**HS:** Well, first off, the new album from the Dave Matthews Band is not technically a sophomore record. They've had a couple of EPs, as well as a full album, *Remember Two Things*, which were released independently prior to their first RCA release, *Under The Table And Dreaming*. So, the reality is, these guys have been playing and recording for years.

Now, how has

"whatever" jinx been avoided? Well, it's a combination of these guys just maturing more and developing more as songwriters and performers. And really, with this record—which is the second one they have done with producer Steve Lillywhite—there was much more of a comfort zone this time around. And even the process through which they made this record is different than anything that they've done—which all combined to generate this piece of product that is kicking some major ass at retail right now and on the radio.

**MC: Weren't you afraid to release *Crash* so close on the heels of the success of *Under The Table And Dreaming*?**

**HS:** It was an issue, but the fact of the matter is, it had been over a year and a half since *Under The Table And Dreaming* came out, and one of the things that the band and their management is very careful about is catering to their core audience. And those people had been living with the last record for a long time and it was time for a new piece of product.

The Dave Matthews Band is probably one of the most bootlegged bands in the country. All that about the Grateful Dead, how they sell cassettes of each live show—somebody sticks a microphone up. Well, the Dave Matthews band is exactly the same. So we had to cater to that. Also, we wanted to get a record out before college let out because that's a huge chunk of the fan base, and we wanted to get that record into their hands before they all left.

**MC: Why release "Too Much" as the first single. It's so different from "What Would You Say" or "Ants Marching"?**

**HS:** That was the band's choice. And we also felt that because it's so different, we wanted to show the growth of what these guys have been up to. It was a little risky—we could've come back with something much more in line with what was on the last record—but everybody wanted to come out and make a statement: "This is the new record, strap on your seat belts because we're going to crank it!"

**MC: The second single is always as important as the first—if not more so. Have you decided what the second single will be?**

**HS:** Yes, "So Much To Say," which is another funky, hook-laden song. We're starting at radio next week and various formats, and we are ultimately taking this one to Top 40, too.

**MC: Do you think it's a risk to the band's longevity to be associated with the H.O.R.D.E. tour?**

**HS:** That's a good question. One of the things that we've really tried to do—and it's been a process and finally it has come to fruition—we have really tried to implant these guys at the modern rock radio



RCA Marketing VP Hugh Surratt

format.

At first, a lot of the programmers in that genre wanted to dismiss the band as a H.O.R.D.E. band—a frat-rock type of band, much the same as Blues Traveler. But the fact that we've had such success with this first single "Too Much" in modern rock, scoring a Top Five record, and have been very successful at KROQ, shows that we've gotten that point across.

So, to be associated with the H.O.R.D.E. tour in the past—and the Dave Matthews Band has played H.O.R.D.E. dates previously—might have been a liability, but now that we have really gotten this across with the modern rock format, I don't think it jeopardizes their position at all. As a matter of fact, it's almost a similar thing to putting a Metallica on the Lollapalooza tour. The formats are blurring.

Hugh Surratt can be reached at RCA's offices (310-358-4000).

MC



**Hootie & The Blowfish**  
*Fairweather Johnson*  
Atlantic Records

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

**Producer:** Don Gehman  
**Top Cuts:** "Sad Capers," "So Strange," "Old Man & Me."  
**Summary:** After their hugely successful debut, you might think the pressure would be on these southern-fried rockers, but their main intention seems to be keeping things loose and in high spirits. Darius Rucker's vocals are still muffled, so it's best to just hum along to the infectious hooks, whatever the lyrical point. The Fish offer up punchy electric delights, balanced by simmering blues and a few silky acoustic gems. The album title refers to fair weather sports fans, but the band's commitment and musical maturity will ensure they suffer no such infelicity. —Jonathan Widran



**The Cranberries**  
*To The Faithful Departed*  
Island

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

**Producer:** Bruce Fairbairn, Cranberries  
**Top Cuts:** "Salvation," "Free To Decide," "I Just Shot John Lennon."  
**Summary:** Once you get past Dolores O'Riordan's waxy vocal histrionics, the most intriguing aspect of this collection is its rhythmic diversity. Lush, harmonic ballads are juxtaposed with throbbing alternative assaults, cool soul textures and whimsical spiritual symphonics. These berries are at their sweetest when they strip away the many instrumental and lyrical pretensions and shoot straight down the middle. Nothing wrong with a little lunacy here and there, but not when it detracts from some truly inspiring modern rock. —Wanda Edenitti



**Lionel Richie**  
*Louder Than Words*  
Mercury

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

**Producer:** Lionel Richie & Various  
**Top Cuts:** "I Wanna Take You Down," "Can't Get Over You."  
**Summary:** Richie scored an international triumph when he closed the 1984 Olympics with "All Night Long," his last bonafide hit. A decade later, Richie resurfaces with his knack for irresistible pop hooks. The strength of this project, however, lies in Richie's ability to pay homage to all that's gone on since he went into hibernation. The Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis produced "I Wanna Take You Down" puts him in a pseudo-hip-hop setting that works surprisingly well, as do the jazzy big band charts on "Lovers At First Sight." Richie took his time on this one, but it's truly worth the wait. —Wayne Edwards



**Art N' Soul**  
*Art N' Soul*  
Big Beat/Atlantic

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

**Producer:** Timothy Christian Riley  
**Top Cuts:** "Ever Since You Went Away," "U Changed," "That's How Love Goes."  
**Summary:** Timothy Christian Riley has always been the laid-back personality of Tony! Toni! Toné! And it shows on this self-titled debut by the very Tony-ish Art N' Soul. The tunes—all written by Riley and/or the self-contained threesome—span the gamut from ballads to uptempo material, and they're all pretty much on the mark. The overall energy level, however, never quite kicks into overdrive, making for a disc that's great when you have card-playing company over, but if you're ready to jam, you'd be better off pulling the real 3T's off the shelf. —Wayne Edwards



**Dave Matthews Band**  
*Crash*  
RCA

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

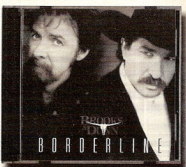
**Producer:** Steve Lillywhite  
**Top Cuts:** "Two Step," "Too Much," "Say Goodbye"  
**Summary:** Matthews and company fuse elements of other genres—most remarkably jazz fusion and world beat—into a mix that is long on rhythmic diversity and experimentation. The tasty, odd beats come at the occasional sacrifice of conventional pop hooks, but on their sophomore effort, the band seems more interested in playful jamming than any sort of convention. Violinist Boyd Tinsley and the baritone sax of Leroy Moore add spice to the mix, but it's Matthews' vocal instincts that carry the load, even when all the chops get in the way of understanding the words. —Jonathan Widran



**Voice Of The Beehive**  
*Sex & Misery*  
Discovery

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

**Producer:** Peter John Vettese  
**Top Cuts:** "Scary Kisses," "Moon Of Dust," "Playing House."  
**Summary:** Female pop/rock hasn't been this infectiously fluffy since the heyday of the Go-Go's. Tracey Bryn and Melissa Belland infuse their infectious hooks with smooth vocal harmonies that are truly heaven sent. They negotiate the ups and downs of love and romantic risk-taking with equal degrees of edge and tenderness, finding a happy home somewhere between Pat Benatar and Amy Grant. Comparisons aside, the tandem finds their own niche, conveying anything but misery even when the lyrics touch slightly on cynicism. This beehive is part sting and all honey. —Nicole DeYoung



**Brooks & Dunn**  
*Borderline*  
Arista

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

**Producer:** Don Cook, Kix Brooks, Ronnie Dunn  
**Top Cuts:** "My Maria," "My Love Will Follow You."  
**Summary:** This record is filled with more overly produced, assembly-line country-pop schlock geared for the dance floor. There's little substance, which causes this all-formula project to hit a brick wall. The remake of "My Maria" is a highlight, as is the inclusion of the Buddy and Julie Miller song "Love Will Follow You." But for the most part, it's "been there and heard that" on this disc. Originality has flown the coop, and the same guys who showed such promise years ago with the hip "My Next Broken Heart" have sunk into a pool of mediocrity. —Jana Pendragon



**The Gales Bros.**  
*Left Hand Brand*  
House Of Blues

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

**Producer:** David Z  
**Top Cuts:** "Fight The Power," "House Of Blues," "Worried Man."  
**Summary:** Funky, bluesy interpretations with the right blend of pop, rock and soul are found on this solid debut. The secret to their musical brotherly love is in switching off the lead guitar and vocal on each tune, so that fresh surprises (like a lilting acoustic ballad in the midst of the chaos) keep darting at us. The blistering electric guitars, explosive rhythms and loose ensemble vibin' are constant, and the original material is so strong that even a tasty cover of the Romantics' "Talking In Your Sleep" comes as a lull. Paul Ebersold's co-writing deserves kudos as well. —Nicole DeYoung