

# Independent labels fight back in year of the platinum single

1997 was a remarkable year for the single. While the revolving door to the singles chart spun a little bit faster than ever before – there were a record 1,127 new entries to the Top 75 in the course of the year – more records hung around longer to sell in significant numbers.

A staggering 16 singles sold in platinum quantities (600,000 or more), with four singles topping a million, and Elton John's poignant remake of *Candle In The Wind* becoming the biggest seller not just of 1997 but of any year, with 4,770,000 takers.

It's the first time Elton has had the year's best-seller in his long and distinguished career. The Brotherhood Of Man's *Save Your Kisses For Me* prevented his *Don't Go Breaking My Heart* duet with Kiki Dee from becoming the 1976 chart champ, while his best performance as a soloist hitherto came in 1990, when *Sacrifice/Healing Hands* was placed third.

*Candle In The Wind* continues the trend for best-sellers of the Nineties to be remakes, albeit more honourably, since Elton recorded the original too. In the eight years which have elapsed in this decade, the only years in which new original songs have taken the prize are 1991 – *Everything I Do (I Do It For You)* by Bryan Adams – and 1993 – *I'd Do Anything For Love* by Meat Loaf.

The success of *Candle In The Wind* and its notional equal *Something About The Way You Look Tonight* condemned Aqua's *Barbie Girl* to second place, even though it sold more than 1.5m copies, the highest total ever for a record not number one in its year. The success of records like this is likely to result in 1997 being the third-best year ever for singles sales, not bad for a format considered to be in terminal decline a few years ago.

Indie labels were also thought to be a phenomenon whose time had passed, and the major conglomerates have dominated the charts with an ever-tightening grip in recent years but 1997 saw the indies fighting back with a vengeance.

Indeed, so mighty was their assault on the chart that among the year's 100 biggest hits there were more signed to indies (18) than to any major, with the biggest contributions coming from Sash! (signed to Telstar's Multiply label) and the Backstreet Boys (Jive), both of whom are placed with three discs.

Eternal, George Michael and Boyzone also have three records in the Top 100, which is a fine achievement, although for Boyzone it's a step down from both 1995 and 1996, in each of which years they were the only act to have four tracks among the year's Top 100. In 1997, that crown passed to the Spice Girls, who actually placed all of their four in the Top 40, finishing 10th with *Spice Up Your Life*, 15th with *Mama/Who Do You Think You Are*, 22nd with *Too Much* and 35th with *2 Become 1*, which was also the 10th biggest hit of 1996.

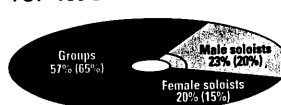
The Spice Girls sold more than 2m singles in 1997 to add to the 3m they sold the previous year. The only act to sell more singles was Elton John who, with Bernie Taupin, was the year's top writer too – at least if we base success



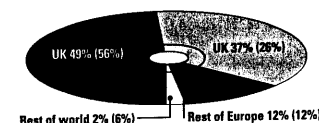
SINGLES STUNNERS OF 1997: ELTON (LEFT), AQUA (TOP RIGHT) AND PUFF DADDY

## 1997 TOP 100 SINGLES BREAKDOWN

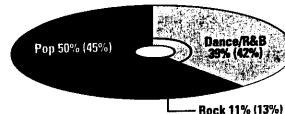
### TOP 100 BY TYPE OF ARTIST



### TOP 100 BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN



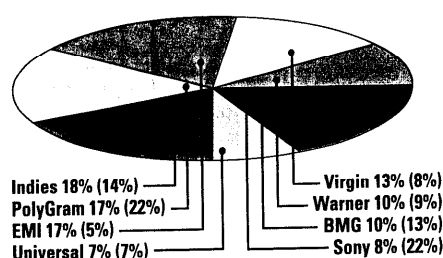
### TOP 100 BY GENRE



### NUMBER OF ENTRIES BY CORPORATE GROUP

Group	Top 10s	Top 20s	Top 40s	Top 100s
INDIES	1	3	9	18
POLYGRAM	1	4	6	17
EMI	2	4	6	17
VIRGIN	1	2	6	13
WARNER	–	–	3	10
BMG	2	3	5	10
SONY	1	2	3	8
UNIVERSAL	2	2	2	7

### TOP 100 BY CORPORATE GROUP



Source: Era. (Last year's figures in brackets)

on the number of singles sold.

If we use the number of Top 75 hits written as the measure instead, the top writers were easily Jimmy Jam & Terry Lewis, whose veteran status didn't prevent them from writing 12 hits in the year, of which the biggest, Janet Jackson's *Together Again*, took 34th place. Their nearest rival was Babyface, who penned nine winners in 1997.

While Brits accounted for a record slice of the album chart action in 1997, they didn't have the same level of success with singles, and the number of indigenous artists whose singles registered in the Top 100 of 1997 was 49, returning to 1995's level from a Nineties-best of 56 in 1996.

The main beneficiaries of the British stumble were Americans, who increased their presence from 26 to 37. This may sound strange given the suggestion in the album commentary that the Anglo-American duopoly there is becoming more of an Anglo monopoly, but many of the successful US singles

struggle to sell albums in the same quantities, among them Puff Daddy (number three single, number 111 album), Will Smith (number six single, number 427 album) and No Mercy (number 18 single, number 397 album), with urban/R&B acts finding album sales particularly hard to come by without a sustained run of hit singles.

These urban acts are, however, becoming increasingly popular in the singles chart, while the former star pupil, Britpop, has all but disappeared, leaving rock with a very sorry 11% of the Top 100.

Of the 25 singles that topped the chart in 1997, the one which sold fewest copies was the Chemical Brothers' *Block Rockin' Beats*, which occupies 88th place for the year, while the biggest seller *not* to reach number one was Natalie Imbruglia's *Torn*, which squeezed past Chumbawamba's *Tubthumping* to take the honours.

Ranked eighth for the year, *Torn* sold

813,000 copies in 1997 and is still selling well. It has a chance of becoming the first million seller to peak at number two since 1984, when Wham!'s *Last Christmas* had the bad luck to be released at the same time as Band Aid's *Do They Know It's Christmas?*

New artists continue to provide the singles chart with its vitality, and 298 of them could claim to have had their first hit in 1997, up 13 from the previous record of 285 set in 1996. Among them are the chart veterans of tomorrow, and the one-hit wonders whose success will, on more mature reflection, make us think we took leave of our senses. But in which of these camps must we include the Teletubbies who became the fifth fictional TV act to top the charts following *The Archies*, *Spitting Image*, *The Simpsons* and *Mr. Blobby*? When you consider the subsequent chart careers of the other four, there are obvious and very real reasons for optimistic hope that it is the latter...

Alan Jones

# TOP 100 SINGLES 1997

Peak pos.	Wks on ch.	Title	label (distributor)
1	16	<b>SOMETHING ABOUT THE WAY YOU LOOK/ CANDLE IN THE WIND 97</b> Elton John	Rocket (F)
2	11	<b>BARBIE GIRL</b> Aqua	Universal (BMG)
3	21	<b>I'LL BE MISSING YOU</b> Puff Daddy & Faith Evans	Puff Daddy/Arista (BMG)
4	6	<b>PERFECT DAY</b> Various Artists	Chrysalis (E)
5	4	<b>TELETUBBIES SAY EH-OHI</b> Teletubbies	BBC Worldwide Music (BMG)
6	16	<b>MEN IN BLACK</b> Will Smith	Columbia (SM)
7	18	<b>DON'T SPEAK</b> No Doubt	Interscope (BMG)
8	9	<b>TORN</b> Natalie Imbruglia	RCA (BMG)
9	20	<b>TUBTHUMPING</b> Chumbawamba	EMI (E)
10	11	<b>SPICE UP YOUR LIFE</b> Spice Girls	Virgin (E)
11	13	<b>MMMBOP</b> Hanson	Mercury (F)
12	18	<b>D'YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN?</b> Oasis	Creation (3MV/V)
13	7	<b>NEVER EVER</b> All Saints	London (F)
14	17	<b>I BELIEVE I CAN FLY</b> R Kelly	Jive (P)
15	15	<b>MAMA/WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE</b> Spice Girls	Virgin (E)
16	15	<b>I WANNA BE THE ONLY ONE</b> Eternal featuring BeBe Winans	1st Avenue/EMI (E)
17	14	<b>FREED FROM DESIRE</b> Gala	Big Life (P)
18	15	<b>WHERE DO YOU GO</b> No Mercy	Arista (BMG)
19	15	<b>SUNCHYME</b> Dario G	Eternal (W)
20	17	<b>FREE</b> Ulrich Nate	AM-PM (F)
21	15	<b>ENCORE UNE FOIS</b> Sash!	Multiply (TRC/BMG)
22	2	<b>TOO MUCH</b> Spice Girls	Virgin (E)
23	14	<b>TIME TO SAY GOODBYE (CON TE PARTIRO)</b> Sarah Brightman and Andrea Bocelli	Coalition (W)
24	17	<b>BELLISSIMA</b> DJ Quicksilver	Positiva (E)
25	13	<b>AS LONG AS YOU LOVE ME</b> Backstreet Boys	Jive (P)
26	5	<b>BABY CAN I HOLD YOU/SHOOTING STAR</b> Boyzone	Polydor (F)
27	12	<b>ECUADOR</b> Sash! featuring Rodriguez	Multiply (TRC/BMG)
28	6	<b>WIND BENEATH MY WINGS</b> Steve Houghton	RCA (BMG)
29	16	<b>DON'T LET GO (LOVE)</b> En Vogue	East West (W)
30	12	<b>STAY</b> Sash! featuring La Trec	Multiply (TRC/W)
31	13	<b>LOVEFOOL</b> The Cardigans	Stockholm (F)
32	13	<b>THE DRUGS DON'T WORK</b> The Verve	Hut (F)
33	8	<b>TELL HIM</b> Barbra Streisand & Celine Dion	Epic (SM)
34	4	<b>TOGETHER AGAIN</b> Janet Jackson	Virgin (E)
35	21	<b>2 BECOME 1</b> Spice Girls	Virgin (E)
36	14	<b>YOU MIGHT NEED SOMEBODY</b> Shola Ama	WEA (W)
37	13	<b>YOU'RE NOT ALONE</b> Olive	RCA (BMG)
38	11	<b>EVERYBODY (BACKSTREET'S BACK)</b> Backstreet Boys	Jive (P)
39	4	<b>ANGELS</b> Robbie Williams	Chrysalis (E)
40	12	<b>C U WHEN U GET THERE</b> Coolio featuring 40 Thevz	Tommy Boy (V/DISC)
41	9	<b>YOUR WOMAN</b> White Town	Chrysalis (E)
42	15	<b>NEVER GONNA LET YOU GO</b> Tina Moore	Delirious (BMG)
43	12	<b>BITTER SWEET SYMPHONY</b> The Verve	Hut (E)
44	13	<b>REMEMBER ME</b> The Blue Boy	Pharm (TRC/BMG)
45	12	<b>CLOSER THAN CLOSE</b> Rosie Gaines	Big Bang (TRC/BMG)
46	14	<b>STAND BY ME</b> Oasis	Creation (3MV/V)
47	10	<b>PROFESSIONAL WIDOW (IT'S GOT TO BE BIG)</b> Tori Amos	East West (E)
48	18	<b>PICTURE OF YOU</b> Boyzone	Polydor (F)
49	10	<b>SAY WHAT YOU WANT</b> Texas	Mercury (F)
50	15	<b>I'LL BE THERE FOR YOU</b> The Rembrandts	East West (W)
51	13	<b>ANGEL OF MINE</b> Eternal	1st Avenue/EMI (E)
52	10	<b>BITCH</b> Meredith Brooks	Capitol (E)
53	11	<b>COCO JAMBO</b> Mr President	WEA (W)
54	9	<b>ALONE</b> Bee Gees	Polydor (F)
55	11	<b>DISCOTHEQUE</b> U2	Island (F)
56	10	<b>QUIT PLAYING GAMES (WITH MY HEART)</b> Backstreet Boys	Jive (P)
57	10	<b>MO MONEY MO PROBLEMS</b> The Notorious B.I.G.	Puff Daddy/Arista (BMG)
58	14	<b>ISN'T IT A WONDER</b> Boyzone	Polydor (F)
59	6	<b>AIN'T THAT JUST THE WAY</b> Lutricia McNeal	Wildstar (W)
60	8	<b>HUSH</b> Kula Shaker	Columbia (SM)
61	7	<b>BEETLEBUM</b> Blur	Food/Parlophone (E)
62	6	<b>AIN'T NOBODY</b> LL Cool J	Geffen (BMG)
63	10	<b>DON'T CRY FOR ME ARGENTINA</b> Madonna	Warner Brothers (W)
64	7	<b>BODYSHAKIN'</b> 911	Virgin (E)
65	9	<b>LOVE WON'T WAIT</b> Gary Barlow	RCA (BMG)
66	9	<b>GOT 'TIL IT'S GONE</b> Janet featuring Q-Tip and Joni Mitchell	Virgin (E)
67	10	<b>DON'T LEAVE ME</b> Blackstreet	Interscope (BMG)
68	8	<b>ALL I WANNA DO</b> Dannii	Eternal (W)
69	9	<b>BLOOD ON THE DANCE FLOOR</b> Michael Jackson	Epic (SM)
70	9	<b>UN-BREAK MY HEART</b> Toni Braxton	LaFace (BMG)
71	8	<b>CHOOSE LIFE</b> PF Project featuring Ewan McGregor	Positiva (E)
72	8	<b>YOU HAVE BEEN.../STRANGEST THING '97</b> George Michael	Virgin (E)
73	12	<b>LOVE SHINE A LIGHT</b> Katrina And The Waves	Eternal/WEA (W)
74	10	<b>SOMETHING GOIN' ON</b> Todd Terry	Manifesto (F)
75	7	<b>YOU SEXY THING</b> Hot Chocolate	EMI (E)
76	8	<b>RUMBLE IN THE JUNGLE</b> Fugees	Mercury (F)
77	8	<b>I SHOT THE SHERIFF</b> Warren G	Def Jam/Mercury
78	8	<b>WONDERFUL TONIGHT</b> Damage	Big Life (P)
79	11	<b>OLD BEFORE I DIE</b> Robbie Williams	Chrysalis (E)
80	5	<b>PARANOID ANDROID</b> Radiohead	Parlophone (E)
81	7	<b>DON'T YOU LOVE ME</b> Eternal	1st Avenue/EMI (E)
82	13	<b>STAR PEOPLE '97</b> George Michael	Virgin (E)
83	8	<b>I KNOW WHERE IT'S AT</b> All Saints	London (F)
84	9	<b>WHERE'S THE LOVE</b> Hanson	Mercury (F)
85	9	<b>OLDER/I CAN'T MAKE YOU LOVE ME</b> George Michael	Virgin (E)
86	10	<b>DA YA THINK I'M SEXY?</b> N-Trance featuring Rod Stewart	All Around The World (TRC/W)
87	9	<b>IF I NEVER SEE YOU AGAIN</b> Wet Wet Wet	Precious Organisation/Mercury (F)
88	7	<b>BLOCK ROCKIN' BEATS</b> The Chemical Brothers	Virgin (E)
89	8	<b>YOU GOT THE LOVE</b> Source featuring Candi Staton	React (V)
90	17	<b>5,6,7,8</b> Steps	Jive (P)
91	7	<b>LOVE IS THE LAW</b> Seahorses	Geffen (BMG)
92	7	<b>JUST A GIRL</b> No Doubt	Interscope (BMG)
93	8	<b>HONEY</b> Mariah Carey	Columbia (SM)
94	10	<b>LET'S GO ROUND AGAIN</b> Louisa	1st Avenue/EMI (E)
95	8	<b>YOU'RE THE ONE I LOVE</b> Shola Ama	WEA (W)
96	9	<b>EVERYTHING</b> Mary J Blige	MCA (BMG)
97	7	<b>ARMS AROUND THE WORLD</b> Louisa	1st Avenue/EMI (E)
98	8	<b>HISTORY/GHOSTS</b> Michael Jackson	Epic (SM)
99	10	<b>STEP BY STEP</b> Whitney Houston	Arista (BMG)
100	9	<b>ALL ABOUT US</b> Peter Andre	Mushroom (3MV/P)

# British acts trounce US rivals in race for the albums crown

Ever since albums were first sold in this country there has been an Anglo-American duopoly. This has, for many years, been a partnership in which the Brits have played the leading role, though, from time to time, the Yanks have come through to enjoy the lion's share of chart action. On the evidence of 1997, however, the duopoly is in serious danger of becoming a British monopoly.

To get ahead last year was much easier if you were a) British and b) in a group. Homegrown talent, all groups, provided nine of the year's 10 biggest-selling albums, leaving Canada's Celine Dion as the token foreigner and token solo artist in the upper echelon. Only 20 of the Top 100 albums were by American acts, their lowest ever tally, and three down on 1996. The total of 65 Brits was, conversely, the highest ever.

Competition between our native acts was fierce, however, and, after finishing runners-up in both 1996 and 1995 with (What's The Story) Morning Glory, Oasis finally carried away the prize for best-selling album of the year by selling just over 1.5m copies of Be Here Now. Oasis' favourite band and tour support The Verve themselves emerged as huge stars in the year, thanks largely to the winsome charms of their first two hits Bittersweet Symphony and The Drugs Don't Work, which propelled their Urban Hymns album to sales of more than 1.3m units. Urban Hymns and Be Here Now both spent five weeks at number one, a total beaten only by the Spice Girls' Spice, which spent 10 weeks at number one in the year, to add to the five in spent on top in 1996.

It was, in fact, another great year for the Spice Girls, who returned to the summit for a further fortnight in November with their second album, Spiceworld. Both albums sold more than 1m copies in the year, with Spice occupying third place in the annual chart, and Spiceworld finishing fifth. They thus become the first act to have two of the year's top five albums since 1989, when Gloria Estefan took fourth and fifth place, courtesy of Anything For You and Cuts Both Ways.

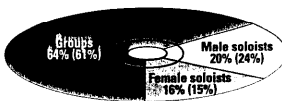
As a cursory glance at the new release listings for any week will show, aggressive exploitation of back catalogue continues apace, but the wealth and diversity of current musical talent available at present – and, no doubt, the fact that we're now in a mature CD market with fewer punters having to go out and replace their vinyl favourites – has somewhat dulled the edge of the "greatest hits" market. As recently as 1994, 32 of the Top 100 albums were hits packages. In 1995, that dipped sharply to 22, and in 1996 to 17. Last year, it increased only marginally to 18, of which the biggest was Eternal's Greatest Hits, which took ninth place overall, selling over 550,000 copies. Among the star performers were Their Greatest Hits by Hot Chocolate – a number one album from 1993, which sold a further third of a million in 1997, only being reactivated after You Sexy Thing's inspired use in the movie The Full Monty – and The Very Best Of The Bee Gees, the 29th biggest-seller of 1990 reborn as the 50th biggest-seller of 1997. We should also make mention of Essentials, the David Gates and Bread "best of", which is 79th for the year with nearly 150,000 sales – a remarkable



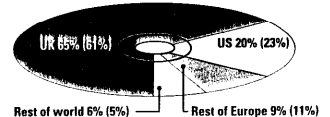
BEST OF BRITISH: OASIS (TOP LEFT), SPICE GIRLS (ABOVE) AND THE VERVE

## 1997 TOP 100 ALBUMS BREAKDOWN

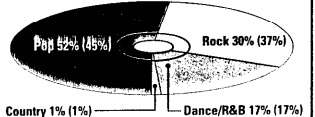
### TOP 100 BY TYPE OF ARTIST



### TOP 100 BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN



### TOP 100 BY GENRE

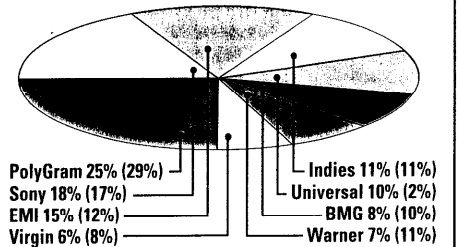


## NUMBER OF ENTRIES BY CORPORATE GROUP

label	Top 10s	Top 20s	Top 40s	Top 100s
POLYGRAM	1	5	8	25
SONY	3	4	10	18
EMI	2	3	5	15
INDIES	1	2	5	11
UNIVERSAL	0	0	3	10
BMG	0	1	3	8
WARNER	0	1	2	7
VIRGIN	3	4	4	6

(Last year's figures in brackets)

## TOP 100 BY CORPORATE GROUP



Source: Era

success story for several reasons, among them the facts that Bread never were that big in the UK (five hits, only one Top 10, all over 20 years ago); that the last attempt to chart their back catalogue, by Telstar in 1987, was rewarded with a two-week run in the chart, and a peak position of 84; that few Bread records are ever played on radio and don't feature in TV ads; and, not least, the fact that although their catalogue is owned by a major (Warner), the successful album was audaciously issued by an indie (Jive) which had the gall to think it could make it work and the balls to do so. Among straightforward back catalogue, as opposed to compilations, The Beatles' Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band regained its title as the year's biggest-seller, a crown it lost to Jeff Wayne's War Of The Worlds in 1996. Sgt Pepper finished 147th overall in 1997, with War Of The Worlds 21 places lower. The Beatles' back catalogue continues to sell more, and in more depth, than any other act, their tally of 14 albums among the Top 500 for the year being more than double their nearest rival.

Aside from Sgt Pepper, they did their best business with Abbey Road (179th), Revolver (242), 1967-1970 (244th) and 1962-1966 (254th).

While the number of album chart entrants continues to decline – there were 334 last year, 26 fewer than the year before, and 74 down on the record 1993 total – they're still queuing up to take turns at number one, with 21 different titles at the summit at some stage of the year. Americans were number one for only four weeks, with Michael Jackson's Blood On The Dancefloor top for a fortnight, and the Wu-Tang Clan and Hanson surviving one week apiece. The Hanson album went on to become quite a success, finishing 61st for the year, and selling 190,000 copies but the Wu-Tang Clan LP, Enter The Wu-Tang, sold fewer copies than any of the year's other number ones and is absent from the Top 100, finishing in 134th place. The only other chart-topper to fall short of the Top 100 was the Depeche Mode album Ultra which is placed 102nd.

While not yet back catalogue, George Michael's Older album is, naturally,

older than it was but it performed magnificently in 1997, taking 13th place after finishing fifth in 1996. That makes it the top album by a male soloist (or indeed a British soloist of either gender) for the second year in a row – a fine achievement. It would have been higher still but for the presence of Wham!'s The Best Of in 10th place. The Lighthouse Family were also doubly blessed, finishing 11th with Ocean Drive (the 13th biggest seller of 1996) and 14th with their latest album, Postcards From Heaven.

Finally, proving that one hit single can go a very long way indeed, the success of Time To Say Goodbye by Sarah Brightman and Andrea Bocelli gave each a hit album. Bocelli's Romanza was placed 101st for the year, while Brightman's Timeless was 73rd – not a massive success but one of only three by British solo women in the Top 100, compared with 13 for their sisters from overseas. When compared with the 65% British content for the Top 100 overall, it illustrates yet again the low standing which British women have at home.

Alan Jones

MUSIC WEEK 17 JANUARY 1998

# TOP 100 ALBUMS 1997

Peak pos.	Wks on ch.	Title	label (distributor)	Peak pos.	Wks on ch.	Title	label (distributor)
1	19	<b>BE HERE NOW</b> Oasis	Creation (3MV/V)	50	11	<b>THE VERY BEST OF</b> Bee Gees	Polydor (F)
2	13	<b>URBAN HYMNS</b> The Verve	Hut (E)	51	8	<b>DREAMLAND</b> Robert Miles	Deconstruction (BMG)
3	52	<b>SPICE</b> Spice Girls	Virgin (E)	52	19	<b>STILL WATERS</b> Bee Gees	Polydor (F)
4	47	<b>WHITE ON BLONDE</b> Texas	Mercury (F)	53	23	<b>THE SCORE</b> Fugees	Columbia (SM)
5	8	<b>SPICEWORLD</b> Spice Girls	Virgin (E)	54	14	<b>MAVERICK A STRIKE</b> Finley Quaye	Epic (SM)
6	26	<b>THE FAT OF THE LAND</b> The Prodigy	XL Recordings (W)	55	12	<b>WOMAN IN ME</b> Louise	1st Avenue/EMI (E)
7	6	<b>LET'S TALK ABOUT LOVE</b> Celine Dion	Epic (SM)	56	21	<b>IN IT FOR THE MONEY</b> Supergress	Parlophone (E)
8	28	<b>OK COMPUTER</b> Radiohead	Parlophone (E)	57	26	<b>10</b> Wet Wet Wet	Precious Organisation/Mercury (F)
9	10	<b>GREATEST HITS</b> Eternal	1st Avenue/EMI (E)	58	13	<b>HEAVY SOUL</b> Paul Weller	Island (F)
10	5	<b>THE BEST OF</b> Wham!	Epic (SM)	59	36	<b>ALISHA RULES THE WORLD</b> Alisha's Attic	Mercury (F)
11	52	<b>OCEAN DRIVE</b> Lighthouse Family	Wild Card/Polydor (F)	60	27	<b>REPUBLICA</b> Republica	Deconstruction (BMG)
12	20	<b>BACKSTREET'S BACK</b> Backstreet Boys	Jive (P)	61	27	<b>MIDDLE OF NOWHERE</b> Hanson	Mercury (F)
13	52	<b>OLDER</b> George Michael	Virgin (E)	62	30	<b>RECURRING DREAM - THE VERY BEST OF</b> Crowded House	Capitol (E)
14	10	<b>POSTCARDS FROM HEAVEN</b> Lighthouse Family	Wild Card/Polydor (F)	63	16	<b>BUTTERFLY</b> Mariah Carey	Columbia (SM)
15	52	<b>SHERYL CROW</b> Sheryl Crow	A&M (F)	64	41	<b>ODELAY</b> Beck	Geffen (BMG)
16	49	<b>TRAVELLING WITHOUT MOVING</b> Jamiroquai	Sony S2 (SM)	65	7	<b>HIGHER GROUND</b> Barbra Streisand	Columbia (SM)
17	11	<b>FRESCO</b> M People	M People/BMG (BMG)	66	10	<b>GREATEST HITS</b> Simply Red	East West (E)
18	9	<b>LENNON LEGEND - THE VERY BEST OF</b> John Lennon	Parlophone (E)	67	27	<b>COMING UP</b> Suede	Nude (3MV/V)
19	8	<b>PAINT THE SKY WITH STARS - THE BEST OF</b> Enya	WEA (W)	68	12	<b>THE NAIL FILE - THE BEST OF</b> Jimmy Nail	East West (W)
20	5	<b>ALL SAINTS</b> All Saints	London (F)	69	13	<b>PORTISHEAD</b> Portishead	Go Beat (F)
21	35	<b>BLUE IS THE COLOUR</b> The Beautiful South	Go! Discs (F)	70	16	<b>BLOOD ON THE DANCE FLOOR</b> Michael Jackson	Epic (SM)
22	7	<b>LIKE YOU DO... THE BEST OF</b> Lightning Seeds	Epic (SM)	71	15	<b>ATTACK OF THE GREY LANTERN</b> Mansun	Parlophone (E)
23	27	<b>EVITA (ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK)</b> Various	Warner Brothers (W)	72	8	<b>QUEEN ROCKS</b> Queen	Parlophone (E)
24	40	<b>EVERYTHING MUST GO</b> Manic Street Preachers	Epic (SM)	73	21	<b>TIMELESS</b> Sarah Brightman	Coalition (W)
25	33	<b>POP</b> U2	Island (F)	74	5	<b>THE BEST OF</b> Bob Dylan	Columbia (SM)
26	43	<b>TRAGIC KINGDOM</b> No Doubt	Interscope (BMG)	75	34	<b>MOSELEY SHOALS</b> Ocean Colour Scene	MCA (BMG)
27	46	<b>FALLING INTO YOU</b> Celine Dion	Epic (SM)	76	11	<b>THE SMURFS HITS '97 - VOLUME 1</b> The Smurfs	EMI (E)
28	51	<b>SECRETS</b> Toni Braxton	LaFace (BMG)	77	18	<b>LISA STANSFIELD</b> Lisa Stansfield	Arista (BMG)
29	40	<b>BLUR</b> Blur	Food/Parlophone (E)	78	11	<b>THE VELVET ROPE</b> Janet Jackson	Virgin (E)
30	10	<b>THEIR GREATEST HITS</b> Hot Chocolate	EMI (E)	79	19	<b>ESSENTIALS</b> David Gates/Bread	Warner.BSP/Jive (W)
31	15	<b>MARCHIN' ALREADY</b> Ocean Colour Scene	MCA (BMG)	80	27	<b>BEAUTIFUL FREAK</b> Eels	Dreamworks (BMG)
32	30	<b>DO IT YOURSELF</b> Seahorses	Geffen (BMG)	81	8	<b>AQUARIUM</b> Aqua	Universal (BMG)
33	40	<b>STOOSH</b> Skunk Anansie	One Little Indian (P)	82	15	<b>FLAMING PIE</b> Paul McCartney	Parlophone (E)
34	30	<b>ALWAYS ON MY MIND - ULTIMATE LOVE SONGS</b> Elvis Presley	RCA (BMG)	83	15	<b>DESTINATION ANYWHERE</b> Jon Bon Jovi	Mercury (F)
35	52	<b>(WHAT'S THE STORY) MORNING GLORY?</b> Oasis	Creation (3MV/V)	84	21	<b>LOVE IS FOREVER</b> Billy Ocean	Jive (P)
36	32	<b>GLOW</b> Reef	Sony S2 (SM)	85	17	<b>LOVE SONGS</b> Elton John	Rocket (F)
37	13	<b>THE BIG PICTURE</b> Elton John	Rocket (F)	86	38	<b>THE BENDS</b> Radiohead	Parlophone (E)
38	24	<b>TELLIN' STORIES</b> The Charlatans	Beggars Banquet (RTM/DISC)	87	29	<b>SHARE MY WORLD</b> Mary J Blige	MCA (BMG)
39	29	<b>K</b> Kula Shaker	Columbia (SM)	88	17	<b>MUCH LOVE</b> Shola Ama	WEA (W)
40	17	<b>IT'S MY LIFE - THE ALBUM</b> Sash!	Multiply (TRC/BMG)	89	20	<b>NEW FORMS</b> Roni Size Reprazent	Talkin Loud (F)
41	5	<b>LEFT OF THE MIDDLE</b> Natalia Imbruglia	RCA (BMG)	90	21	<b>SPIDERS</b> Space	Gut (TV/P)
42	28	<b>BEFORE THE RAIN</b> Eternal	1st Avenue/EMI (E)	91	19	<b>DIZZY HEIGHTS</b> Lightning Seeds	Epic (SM)
43	23	<b>OPEN ROAD</b> Gary Barlow	RCA (BMG)	92	14	<b>B-SIDES, SEASIDES &amp; FREERIDES</b> Ocean Colour Scene	MCA (BMG)
44	43	<b>COME FIND YOURSELF</b> Fun Lovin' Criminals	Chrysalis (E)	93	29	<b>DEFINITELY MAYBE</b> Oasis	Creation (3MV/V)
45	7	<b>THE VERY BEST OF</b> Sine/The Police	A&M (F)	94	25	<b>BADUIZM</b> Erykah Badu	Universal (BMG)
46	42	<b>JAGGED LITTLE PILL</b> Alanis Morissette	Maverick/Reprise (W)	95	9	<b>I BELIEVE</b> Daniel O'Donnell	Ritz (P)
47	37	<b>MOTHER NATURE CALLS</b> Cast	Polydor (F)	96	8	<b>LIFE THRU A LENS</b> Robbie Williams	Chrysalis (E)
48	30	<b>SHELTER</b> The Brand New Heavies	ffrr (F)	97	26	<b>MUSIC FOR THE JILTED GENERATION</b> The Prodigy	XL Recordings (W)
49	26	<b>DIG YOUR OWN HOLE</b> The Chemical Brothers	Virgin (E)	98	4	<b>UNPLUGGED</b> Bryan Adams	A&M (F)
				99	15	<b>A DIFFERENT BEAT</b> Boyzone	Polydor (F)
				100	22	<b>GOLD - GREATEST HITS</b> Abba	Polydor (F)

PKWoC Title	label (distributor)	PKWoC Title	label (distributor)
<b>1 1 6 NOW THAT'S WHAT I CALL MUSIC! 38</b>	EMI/Virgin/PolyGram (E)	<b>25 6 5 THE BEST CLUB ANTHEMS...EVER! 2</b>	Virgin/EMI (E)
<b>2 1 4 DIANA PRINCESS OF WALES - TRIBUTE</b> Diana Memorial Fund (3MV/P)		<b>26 1 11 THE BEST DISCO ALBUM IN THE WORLD...EVER!</b>	Virgin/EMI (E)
<b>3 1 16 NOW THAT'S WHAT I CALL MUSIC! 37</b>	EMI/Virgin/PolyGram (E)	<b>27 1 11 IN THE MIX 97</b>	Virgin (E)
<b>4 1 16 NOW THAT'S WHAT I CALL MUSIC! 36</b>	EMI/Virgin/PolyGram (E)	<b>28 2 11 THE BEST DANCE ALBUM IN THE WORLD...EVER! 7</b>	Virgin/EMI (E)
<b>5 1 8 THE ANNUAL III - TONG/BOY GEORGE</b>	Ministry Of Sound (3MV/SM)	<b>29 7 6 THE BEST ROCK BALLADS IN THE WORLD...EVER! II</b>	Virgin/EMI (E)
<b>6 3 17 THE FULL MONTY (OST)</b>	RCA Victor (BMG)	<b>30 2 7 IN THE MIX 97 - 2</b>	Virgin/EMI (E)
<b>7 2 8 THE GREATEST HITS OF 1997</b>	Telstar TV (W)	<b>31 4 12 WHAT A FEELING!</b>	Columbia (SM)
<b>8 5 7 THE BEST '60s ALBUM IN THE WORLD...EVER! III</b>	Virgin/EMI (E)	<b>32 1 11 THE SOUL ALBUM</b>	Virgin (E)
<b>9 1 17 THE ANNUAL II - TONG/BOY GEORGE</b>	Ministry Of Sound (3MV/SM)	<b>33 5 13 MEN IN BLACK - THE ALBUM (OST)</b>	Columbia (SM)
<b>10 1 10 IBIZA UNCOVERED</b>	Virgin/EMI (E)	<b>34 7 3 THE NO 1 CHRISTMAS ALBUM</b>	PolyGram TV (F)
<b>11 1 6 HUGE HITS 1997</b>	warner.esp/Global TV/Sony TV (BMG)	<b>35 1 7 KISS IN IBIZA 97</b>	PolyGram TV (F)
<b>12 3 21 ROMEO + JULIET (OST)</b>	Premier Soundtracks (E)	<b>36 6 5 HEARTBEAT - LOVE ME TENDER</b>	RCA/Global TV (BMG)
<b>13 1 6 NOW DANCE 97</b>	Virgin/EMI (E)	<b>37 13 7 THE BEST '70s ALBUM IN THE WORLD...EVER!</b>	Virgin/EMI (E)
<b>14 1 12 FRESH HITS 1997</b>	warner.esp/Global TV/Sony TV (BMG)	<b>38 11 5 THE BEST PARTY IN THE WORLD...EVER!</b>	Virgin/EMI (E)
<b>15 4 7 A PERFECT LOVE</b>	warner.esp/Global TV (BMG)	<b>39 5 3 BIG HITS</b>	warner.esp/Global TV/Sony TV (BMG)
<b>16 1 7 THE BEST...ANTHEMS...EVER!</b>	Virgin/EMI (E)	<b>40 5 10 SPACE JAM (OST)</b>	Atlantic (W)
<b>17 1 10 DANCE NATION 3 - TONG/JUDGE JULES</b>	Ministry Of Sound (3MV/SM)	<b>41 11 4 SMASH HITS 98</b>	Virgin/EMI (E)
<b>18 1 9 THE BEST CLUB ANTHEMS...EVER!</b>	Virgin/EMI (E)	<b>42 1 8 SMASH HITS - SUMMER 97</b>	Virgin/EMI (E)
<b>19 1 11 NEW HITS 1997</b>	warner.esp/Global TV (BMG)	<b>43 7 4 ALL MY LOVE</b>	warner.esp/PolyGram TV
<b>20 4 10 THE ALL TIME GREATEST LOVE SONGS II</b>	Columbia (SM)	<b>44 9 4 DISNEY'S HIT SINGLES &amp; MORE!</b>	Walt Disney (F)
<b>21 4 5 THE BEST CHRISTMAS ALBUM IN THE WORLD...EVER!</b>	Virgin/EMI (E)	<b>45 1 12 NOW THAT'S WHAT I CALL MUSIC! 35</b>	EMI/Virgin/PolyGram (E)
<b>22 5 19 TRAINSPOTTING (OST)</b>	Premier Soundtracks (E)	<b>46 2 7 KISS ANTHEMS 97</b>	PolyGram TV (F)
<b>23 10 9 THE MOST RELAXING CLASSICAL ALBUM...EVER!</b>	Virgin/EMI (E)	<b>47 2 9 SPICE GIRLS PRESENTS BEST GIRL POWER ...EVER!</b>	Virgin/EMI (E)
<b>24 11 8 THE LOVE ALBUM IV</b>	Virgin/EMI (E)	<b>48 2 8 DANCE NATION 4 - TONG/BOY GEORGE</b>	Ministry Of Sound (3MV/SM)
		<b>49 6 4 KISS ANTHEMS 97</b>	PolyGram TV (F)
		<b>50 7 4 THE ALL TIME GREATEST ROCK SONGS</b>	Sony TV/warner.esp (SM)

## Now! series just misses clean sweep

For the 11th time in the 12 years since its launch, the Now That's What I Call Music! series provides the year's biggest-seller. The series has settled down to three regular releases a year with the last invariably the biggest.

Now! 38 fulfilled its obligations in 1997, taking just six weeks to come from nowhere to number one for the year, with 920,000 copies sold. It's another previously invariable rule that the last Now! album of the year sells a million before the year's end, and in that respect Now! 38 was found wanting - though it did finally top 1m last Saturday (January 10).

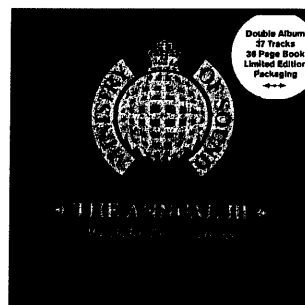
The main reason why Now! 38 seemed a little under the weather was the release of the Princess Of Wales - Tribute album. Although the two albums have very different contents there is much evidence to suggest that the latter - which sold 700,000 copies in four weeks to take second place in the chart - stole many sales from the former, not least the fact that sales of Now! 38 diminished by 4% the week the tribute album was released while the market expanded 37% overall.

The tribute album also prevented the Now! series from doing something it has never done before, namely making a clean sweep of the top three - and this is a feat it would certainly otherwise have accomplished in 1997, with Now! 37 and Now! 36 both selling a shade under 600,000 copies to finish third and fourth respectively.

While former compilation players Dino bowed out during the year, a new force emerged in the shape of the Ministry of Sound. The Elephant & Castle club's burgeoning



EVEN THE DIANA TRIBUTE ALBUM COULD ONLY DENT THE DOMINANCE OF THE NOW SERIES WHILE THE ANNUAL III CAME FIFTH



extracurricular activities and visibility are best represented by its highly successful mix albums, of which four appear in the Top 50.

Pete Tong played a part in mixing all four, while Boy George is also present on three. The MoS imprint's second annual (The Annual II) was the ninth biggest seller of 1996 and showed it had considerable and very attractive legs, finally rising to number one on the weekly album chart in the early part of 1997. It continued to sell well into the year, thus setting up The Annual III, which is off to an even racier start, and rounds out the top five, taking fifth place after selling more than 400,000 copies. The Dance Nation series is also a winner for MoS, with volumes three and four also among the year's 50 biggies.

In 1996, the most successful soundtrack album was EMI Premier's Trainspotting, which film's cult status and TV screening guaranteed it sold throughout 1997 too, finishing in 22nd

place. While there were only two soundtracks among the 50 best-sellers of 1996 there are five in the 1997 rankings, the others being the urban-slanted Space Jam, which spun off five hit singles each by different artists, the similarly hip Men In Black, EMI Premier's latest hit Romeo & Juliet and The Full Monty.

The Full Monty is on the threshold of becoming the biggest-grossing movie in UK film history, and its lengthy run at the cinema has helped it to sell nearly 350,000 copies. It includes Hot Chocolate's You Sexy Thing plus other well-chosen and much-loved oldies such as We Are Family (Sister Sledge) and Come Up And See Me (Steve Harley) as well as incidental music by Anne Dudley, notably The Lunchbox Has Landed.

In 1996, it seemed that the compilation market had finally reached saturation point, and there was a noticeable dip in the number of big sellers. In 1997, it checked that

decline, and gave compilations what appears to be their second biggest share of the market ever, trailing only 1995.

Each of the Top 50 compilations in 1997 sold more than 130,000 copies in the year, with the last of them ranking 140th in a combined artist/compilation chart. In 1996 the number 50 compilation sold 100,000 units and was ranked 157th overall, while in 1995 it sold 132,000 and was 131st, in 1994 it sold 110,000 and was 146th, and in 1993 it sold 86,000 and was 171st.

Finally, for years now Virgin has been the most aggressive and successful operator in the marketplace, and it continued to be so in 1997, getting its name on 24 of the Top 50, in an increasingly confusing array of combinations, although primarily in association with sister and ultimate parent company EMI, whose TV division it has now paired with.

Alan Jones

MUSIC WEEK 17 JANUARY 1998

Pk	WoC	Title	label
1	1 32	<b>DON'T SPEAK</b> No Doubt	MCA
2	1 31	<b>FREE</b> Ultra Nate	AM:PM
3	1 30	<b>I WANNA BE THE ONLY ONE</b> Eternal feat BeBe Winans	1st Avenue/EMI
4	1 24	<b>LOVEFOOL</b> The Cardigans	Stockholm
5	1 16	<b>SAY WHAT YOU WANT</b> Texas	Mercury
6	3 20	<b>DON'T LET GO (LOVE)</b> En Vogue	East West America
7	1 20	<b>I'LL BE MISSING YOU</b> Puff Daddy & Faith Evans	Puff Daddy/Arista
8	1 20	<b>YOU MIGHT NEED SOMEBODY</b> Shola Ama	WEA
9	2 19	<b>UN-BREAK MY HEART</b> Toni Braxton	LaFace
10	1 19	<b>MEN IN BLACK</b> Will Smith	Columbia
11	2 24	<b>BITCH (NOTHING IN BETWEEN)</b> Meredith Brooks	Capitol
12	1 17	<b>BLACK EYED BOY</b> Texas	Mercury
13	1 16	<b>RAINCLOUD</b> Lighthouse Family	Wild Card/Polydor
14	2 20	<b>TUBTHUMPING</b> Chumbawamba	EMI
15	3 18	<b>SUNCHYME</b> Dario G	Eternal
16	1 11	<b>TORN</b> Natalie Imbruglia	RCA
17	1 15	<b>MMMBOP</b> Hanson	Mercury
18	1 17	<b>JUST FOR YOU</b> M People	M People/BMG
19	2 13	<b>YOU'RE NOT ALONE</b> Olive	RCA
20	3 15	<b>HUSH</b> Kula Shaker	Columbia
21	12 18	<b>I'LL BE THERE FOR YOU</b> The Rembrandts	East West
22	3 15	<b>STAR PEOPLE '97</b> George Michael	Virgin
23	1 15	<b>HALO</b> Texas	Mercury
24	5 15	<b>BITTER SWEET SYMPHONY</b> The Verve	Hut
25	2 15	<b>THE DRUGS DON'T WORK</b> The Verve	Hut
26	4 14	<b>PICTURE OF YOU</b> Boyzone	Polydor
27	5 16	<b>REMEMBER ME</b> The Blue Boy	Pharm
28	1 12	<b>WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE</b> Spice Girls	Virgin
29	7 17	<b>SOMETHING GOIN' ON</b> Todd Terry	Manifesto
30	3 13	<b>AS LONG AS YOU LOVE ME</b> Backstreet Boys	Jive
31	4 13	<b>FREED FROM DESIRE</b> Gala	Big Life
32	2 12	<b>OLD BEFORE I DIE</b> Robbie Williams	Chrysalis
33	1 12	<b>D'YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN?</b> Oasis	Creation
34	15 14	<b>CLOSER THAN CLOSE</b> Rosie Gaines	Big Bang
35	7 14	<b>YOU SHOWED ME</b> Lightning Seeds	Epic
36	6 15	<b>C U WHEN U GET THERE</b> Coolio feat 40 Thevz	Tommy Boy
37	3 14	<b>STAND BY ME</b> Oasis	Creation
38	10 19	<b>NEVER GONNA LET YOU GO</b> Tina Moore	Delirious
39	4 13	<b>A CHANGE WOULD DO YOU GOOD</b> Sheryl Crow	A&M
40	14 17	<b>HEDONISM (JUST BECAUSE...)</b> Skunk Anansie	One Little Indian
41	2 13	<b>I BELIEVE I CAN FLY</b> R Kelly	Jive
42	1 13	<b>DON'T YOU LOVE ME?</b> Eternal	1st Avenue/EMI
43	2 13	<b>ANGEL OF MINE</b> Eternal	1st Avenue/EMI
44	1 9	<b>2 BECOME 1</b> Spice Girls	Virgin
45	3 13	<b>YOU'RE THE ONE I LOVE</b> Shola Ama	WEA
46	5 12	<b>GUIDING STAR</b> Cast	Polydor
47	6 14	<b>REAL THING</b> Lisa Stansfield	Arista
48	4 12	<b>WALK ON BY</b> Gabrielle	Go. Beat
49	4 13	<b>YOU'VE GOT A FRIEND</b> The Brand New Heavies	ffrr/London
50	2 11	<b>YOUR WOMAN</b> White Town	Chrysalis

## New acts take their turn on the airwaves

George Michael and Will Smith would hardly deem themselves veterans, but they alone in 1997's Airplay Top 50 could boast a chart career going back more than a decade.

Michael, who first registered with Wham! in 1982, and Smith, appearing firstly as the Fresh Prince four years later, were very much the exceptions to the rule in a year in which ILR followed Radio One's lead and swung behind new and emerging artists like never before.

While just two years ago the end-of-year survey was dominated by the likes of Mike & The Mechanics, Sting and Wet Wet Wet, this time around 14 of the 50 most-played records came from artists who made their first sales chart appearance in 1997. Besides Smith and Michael, the only artists present whose chart careers began prior to 1990 are the Lightning Seeds, Lisa Stansfield and Texas with all three starting out in 1989.

Where once the likes of Michael Bolton and Paul McCartney could rely on the leading ILR stations for strong support, even if Radio One's commitment had already ebbed away, many of the established acts were finding it harder and harder to win radio airplay during the year. Radio Two was one of the few key stations still prepared to play new recordings by the old guard, suggesting the network's role in breaking hits will become even greater during 1998.

The new wave of acts is reflected at the pinnacle of the chart with No Doubt whose sales number one Don't Speak spent three weeks at the top of the airplay listings in March as part of a 32-week run in the Airplay Top 50. It gave the US a rare triumph in a year



STAR SPINS (FROM LEFT): NO DOUBT, ULTRA NATE AND ETERNAL

that was largely dominated by homegrown acts, although the Americans appeared to perform slightly better on radio than in the shops, supplying five of the Top 10 airplay records of the year but only three of the equivalent sales chart.

Runner-up Free by the Italian Ultra Nate highlights the continuing and increasing presence of continental acts with another, Sweden's The Cardigans, represented at number four with their reissued Lovefool, which finally became a big sales hit when it reached number two in May. Eternal, experiencing their biggest hit to date with the Bebe Winans collaboration I Wanna Be The Only One, claimed the biggest radio hit by a UK-signed act of the year as they took the number three slot, but it was another UK group two places below them who could really claim the airplay crown of 1997.

Texas, whose first and only previous Top 10 sales hit was in 1989, could not put a foot wrong as far as radio was concerned, clocking up three airplay number ones with the first three singles from White On Blonde – Say What You Want (fifth), Black Eyed Boy



(12th) and Halo (23rd) – which gave them eight chart-topping weeks, a total that by the new year had been beaten by just one song, Natalie Imbruglia's Torn, which finished 16th of the year.

Texas, like Eternal, supplied three hits on the year-end chart helping to give Mercury five hits in all, a total equalled only by Virgin which had two hits apiece from the Spice Girls and The Verve. Shola Ama also managed two hits on the chart, one of a number of acts benefiting from a continuing upsurge of interest in R&B, a trend reflected more and more by radio in the year and illustrated by the chart of the year which included En Vogue, Puff Daddy and Toni Braxton in the Top 10.

Once again, 1997 confirmed that scoring a big sales hit does not necessarily guarantee strong radio airplay. This is amply demonstrated by the biggest-selling record of the year and, for that matter, all time – Elton John's Candle In The Wind 1997 – which became radio's biggest song in the wake of the Princess Of Wales' death, but lost favour within just a few weeks. It finished way down at 115th of the year while the record's other A-side,



Something About The Way You Look Tonight, came in at 121. The year's second highest-seller, Aqua's Barbie Girl, fared even worse, finishing in 186th place, while number three seller Perfect Day made it to 67th, although would have finished higher had it had more time to gain more plays. Still, they all won more friends at radio than the Teletubbies who couldn't make it anywhere in the year-end Top 200. But, while a handful of the biggest hits did not win much favour at radio, overall record buyers and station programmers moved closer in 1997 than they had for several years. Eight of the 20 biggest sellers appeared in 1997's Airplay Top 20, compared with just two in 1996 and three in 1995.

Finally, special mention should go to The Rembrandts who proved, when it comes to radio hits, longevity doesn't necessarily mean weeks or months, but sometimes years. Having scored the seventh biggest radio hit in 1995 with I'll Be There For You in 1995 and 33rd biggest with the same song a year later, they were back again with the Friends theme in 1997, coming in at 18th place.

Paul Williams