

## Apple Gets Indie Bands

Deals could make iTunes the ultimate music store



**Dashboard Confessional's  
Chris Carrabba**

**Now that Apple has proved to the major labels that it can sell their digital songs inexpensively and in mass quantities, CEO Steve Jobs is going after the rest of the record industry. On June 5th, Jobs invited some 150 executives from independent labels to a summit at the company's Cupertino, California, headquarters,** with the hope of adding their music to the iTunes store -- which could increase the songs it currently offers to 400,000 within the next four months. "They made a valiant attempt to reach out," says Jonathan Poneman, co-founder of Sub Pop, which first signed Nirvana and now has bands such as the Postal Service and the Shins. "I'm psyched."

Apple wouldn't comment about details of the meeting, but attendees say that Apple will buy the indies' music for the same wholesale price that it pays to the majors (roughly sixty-five cents a song). The majors won't hog all the publicity, either. Apple reps said that the company will not charge labels for premium placement on its opening page (something like the front window of a record store). "They're not doing the payola game," says Benjamin van der Wel, president of Bay Area electronica label Delvian Records.

One key concern among labels is figuring out how to let kids who don't have credit cards buy music. "You look at Apple's most downloaded tracks, and it's U2, Coldplay and Sheryl Crow," says Dan Gill of Vagrant Records, Dashboard Confessional's home. "Our label has a much younger demographic." Apple reps say they are looking into stored-value cash cards teens could use for music purchases.

No formal agreements have been announced, but a survey of executives who attended the meeting confirmed that many are eager to sell their music on the iTunes store. "I was waiting the whole time to find out, 'Where is the catch?' " says van der Wel. "So far, there hasn't been any."

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