



# PolyphonicHMI

Human Media Interface

## How to Interpret a Hit Song Science Professional Report

The score in the first column of the report summary page (below) is called the HSS Song Rating. A song that scores a 7.0 or above would be considered to have mathematical hit potential. If the score is between 6.75 and 6.99 we would consider the score to be borderline and could still perform in the market but might require a little extra promotion effort and investment.

If the HSS Song Rating scores close to a 7.0 or above it does not matter what any of the other scores say. This is the most important score. However, our technology does not know if a song “sounds” like a hit. It is only useful to determine if a song that already sounds like a hit to the human ear can also perform in the market. So many times a song that sounds and feels like a hit does not perform in the market and we have determined that this is due to the fact that the music does not possess the optimal mathematical patters that compel people to want to hear it again and again.

Artist: Norah Jones  
Album: Come Away With Me

**Album Summary:**

Track	HSS Song Rating	HSS Classic Hit Rating	HSS Recentness Rating	HSS Sales Rating
(01) Norah Jones - Don't Know Why	7.21	6,07	6,18	NA
(02) Norah Jones - Seven Years	4.55	5,65	7,97	NA
(03) Norah Jones - Cold Cold Heart	3.31	4,68	7,39	NA
(04) Norah Jones - Feelin' The Same Way	7.29	6,18	6,79	NA
(05) Norah Jones - Come Away With Me	6.97	5,73	6,85	NA
(06) Norah Jones - Shoot The Moon	7.15	6,01	6,37	NA
(07) Norah Jones - Turn Me On	7.32	5,96	7,37	NA
(08) Norah Jones - Lonestar	7.26	5,90	6,07	NA
(09) Norah Jones - I've Got To See You Again	7.59	5,95	5,89	NA
(10) Norah Jones - Painter Song	7.12	5,39	6,97	NA
(11) Norah Jones - One Flight Down	6.13	4,97	6,53	NA
(12) Norah Jones - Nightingale	6.82	4,86	4,53	NA
(13) Norah Jones - The Long Day Is Over	6.29	5,72	7,12	NA
(14) Norah Jones - The Nearness Of You	7.03	5,58	7,04	NA
Global Album Rating:	6.68	5,64	6,70	NA

You can see by looking at this first page that tracks 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, and 14 all score with mathematical hit potential. This is an extremely strong album. Again, because of these scores there is no need to look at the other scores to determine if the song can become a hit. The only thing that is left is for an A&R professional to determine which of these songs sound most like a hit and to for the label to promote it effectively. However there are insights into how to best promote the music on the song detail page (below).



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On the other hand, you might want to take into consideration whether the song has the potential to be considered a classic hit in the future and that can be determined by looking at the Classic Hit Rating (second column). If the song has a classic hit rating of 5.5 or greater AND the song can become a hit today we would say the song has staying power. This is helpful decision-making information when deciding which song to go with, especially if the label group controls the publishing.

**Furthermore, we also show that if a song scores below a 4.0 in the first column, combined with a score of 7.0 or greater in the third column (Recentness Rating) the song also has mathematical hit potential. So you can see that track 3 meets that criterion.**

Most albums do NOT have anywhere near as many songs with mathematical hit potential. It is not uncommon to see albums with NO songs scoring hit potential, in which case, no matter how many songs from the album sound and feel like hits, the music does not chart and few CDs are sold.

The fourth column is what we call the Sales Rating. It is currently only available in the UK market and thus not shown on this report which was done for the US market. If that score is at 6.0 or greater we would say that a particular song is a sales driver of an album. This is important information when deciding if a song should be the single, and can be especially useful in deciding the release order.

For example, the first single by a new artist typically doesn't drive sales. Therefore, if you have three possible singles on an album that all score with hit potential perhaps you may not want to go to radio with your sales-driving single as your first release from the album. You instead may want to go with a lower sales driver and then use the big sales driving single as your second or third release to augment the natural tendency of the market to buy at that time.

Below is a song detail page in one of our reports:

**Song: Don't Know Why**

HSS Song Rating: 7.21  
 HSS Recentness Rating: 6.18  
 HSS Sales Rating: NA  
 HSS Classic Hit Rating: 6.07

Proximity to Hit Songs

Hit Song	Affinity Value	Single Sales To Date	Album Sales To Date	Release Date
1. Voices of Theory -- Say It	0.42	0	NA	23/05/1998
2. Lee Ann Womack With Sons Of The Desert -- I Hope You Dance	0.59	0	NA	27/01/2001
3. LeAnn Rimes -- Can't Fight The Moonlight	0.59	0	NA	09/09/2000
4. Boyz II Men -- Thank You In Advance	0.62	0	NA	30/12/2000
5. Shania Twain -- From This Moment On	0.65	0	NA	12/05/1998
6. Nine Inch Nails -- The Day The World Went Away	0.67	0	NA	08/07/1999
7. Mo Thugs Family -- Ghetto Cowboy	0.71	0	NA	21/11/1998

HSS Recentness Rating: 6.18  
 HSS Sales Rating: NA

HSS Classic Hit Rating: 6.07

Proximity to Classic Hit Songs

Classic Hit Song	Affinity Value
1. Blind Melon -- No Rain	0.68
2. Paul Revere and the Raiders -- Indian Reservation	0.80
3. Santana -- Oye Coma Va	0.95
4. Squeeze -- Tempted	0.96
5. Argent -- Hold Your Head Up	1.09



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On the detail pages (one for each song on the CD) you will see the information of the scores repeated again. On top of the page you will see the song that was tested. In this case it is "Don't Know Why" by Norah Jones.

Below the song title you will see a box with a list of 7 hits from the past 5 years. These are recent hits that are mathematically related to the song that was tested. On the surface some of these songs may not seem like they have a lot to do with the song being tested but they are indeed related.

The thing to keep in mind is that if ALL the songs that were related to *Don't Know Why* happened to be songs by the Backstreet Boys or the Spice Girls it might not be a great sign, even though the song is scoring with high hit potential. Ideally you should be able to find one or two of the related songs that were popular with the same demographic or market segment you're trying to target. If not, you have a marketing challenge.

There was recently a case of a smooth jazz singer, whose label was targeting the Norah Jones fan base, hoping to gain traction. However, the single they were promoting was not related to any adult contemporary hits and not even one Norah Jones song.

We were able to help the label realize that the people who were going to enjoy that song, although seemingly not a logical conclusion, were the fans of certain songs by Maroon 5, Jay-Z and Aerosmith. This presented a marketing challenge for the label but in the end proved to be correct and they were able to gain traction.

This was validated by months later seeing on Amazon.com that people who bought the album we tested had also bought music by Maroon 5 et al and Norah Jones was not even listed.

Additionally, for each album we include "internal clustering" information.

### **Found in Come Away With Me**

Clustering Information - 3 Clusters in This Album

#### **Group 1** (11 Songs)

- (01) Norah Jones - Don't Know Why
- (04) Norah Jones - Feelin' The Same Way
- (05) Norah Jones - Come Away With Me
- (06) Norah Jones - Shoot The Moon
- (07) Norah Jones - Turn Me On
- (08) Norah Jones - Lonestar
- (09) Norah Jones - I've Got To See You Again
- (10) Norah Jones - Painter Song
- (12) Norah Jones - Nightingale
- (13) Norah Jones - The Long Day Is Over
- (14) Norah Jones - The Nearness Of You

#### **Group 2** (2 Songs)

- (02) Norah Jones - Seven Years
- (11) Norah Jones - One Flight Down



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## **Group 3** (1 Songs)

(03) Norah Jones - Cold Cold Heart

This tells the label which songs on the album are related to which other songs. We have seen that if the majority of album tracks are mathematically related (in the same cluster as) the singles, those that like the singles tend to also enjoy the album tracks that are in the same internal cluster. On the other hand, albums that are very disperse and have 5 or more internal clusters are those that do not generate high word-of-mouth sales.