

## **The Blonder Group, LLC, sells Famed Ocean Way Studios to Belmont University - Ocean Way Acquisition Seen as Boon to its Curb School**

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Belmont University President Robert Fisher this morning will announce the school has acquired Ocean Way Studios, considered one of the best in Music City. But the studio's owners, Gary Belz and Allen Sides, remain in the picture through a "complex partnership" with Belmont which could provide a boost to its Mike Curb School of Music Business, music industry insiders said. Fisher will provide details on the partnership at a 10 a.m. news conference at Ocean Way, 1200 17th Ave. S. Belmont officials wouldn't comment yesterday. Belz also wouldn't confirm the deal. "I'm very excited about it," he said of the announcement. "It's a great thing for the community." Belz and his family own Memphis' Peabody Hotel and real estate in Nashville, including 100 Oaks Mall. He also owns East Iris Recording Studio and House of Blues Studios in Los Angeles and Memphis. The Nashville studio, a former church, has been for sale for several years. Belz and Sides, the latter of whom also owns the Ocean Way Studios in Los Angeles, opened the studio here in 1997. One of the studio's three recording rooms has top-line equipment not found elsewhere in Nashville. Artists like pop acts Christina Aguilera, Train and Matchbox 20 and a host of country stars have recorded albums there. "Ocean Way is a beautiful studio," said Gary Overton, executive vice president and general manager of EMI Music Publishing/Nashville. "If you are using the studio for student instruction, you can't find a better, more up-to-date facility."