

1984 can best be summed-up as the year of high-energy dance music, or Hi-NRG as the shops labelled it!

Dance and disco records had been developing a stronger, pounding bass and drumbeat and this music became the predominant force in the middle of the decade, before the "House" sound took over.

The most typical record of this era was Chaka Khan's "I Feel For You" with its distinctive, repetitive "Scratch" intro that was later embodied into the House sound.

1984 was also the year of three outstanding success stories - Frankie Goes To Hollywood, Wham! and Band Aid. Right from its October 1983 release Frankie's "Relax" single seemed destined to make history, picking up a notorious BBC airplay ban on its way to No.1 in January. It went on to total 48 successive weeks in the charts (the third longest consecutive chart run ever), returning to No.2 in July and bowing out in September after collecting 1.7 million sales. In June, the band's follow-up "Two Tribes" reached the summit on its first week, remaining there for nine weeks (the longest spell at the top in the 1980's), and in December "The Power Of Love" gave them a hat-trick of chart-toppers. Only Gerry and the Pacemakers (in 1963) and Jive Bunny (in 1989) have equalled this achievement, by having No.1 hits with their first three releases. George Michael and Wham! successfully made the transition from their "soul-boy" image of 1983 to all-round pop entertainers. George featured on four Number One hits, narrowly missing a fifth with "Last Christmas", which is the only record apart from Acker Bilk's "Stranger On The Shore" (1961/62) to sell a million in Britain without topping the charts. It became the sixth best-selling Single of the 1980's. However, both George and Holly Johnson (singer with Frankie) were part of Band

Aid's "Do They Know It's Christmas?" which took only two weeks and three days to become the nation's top selling 45 of all-time, with proceeds going to the Ethiopian Famine Appeal. It went on to sell 3.6 million singles and ignited the trend for Charity records and events like Live Aid, Sport Aid and Comic Relief to name just three.

In 1984 companies started to plan their releases (especially LPs) to the exact day, to avoid clashing with their rivals in the charts. Marketing became more important than the product with promotional videos becoming more important than the song they were promoting. Film themes and soundtrack songs like "Ghostbusters" proved more popular than ever, perhaps for this very reason. On a more positive note, Billy Joel finally received the recognition he deserved, Sade emerged as an exciting new vocal talent, reviving interest in Latin and Jazz music, while the Smiths, Bronski Beat and Madonna were the most striking debutants. Phil Fearon and Galaxy were responsible for some of the most catchy, memorable pop and soul tunes at this time, and Queen enjoyed one of their most successful years with the album "The Works". Their "Greatest Hits" issued three years earlier was on its way to selling 1.9 million - the second largest selling hits LP behind Simon and Garfunkel's "Greatest Hits" (1972) with 2.4 million sales.

1984 was the peak year for sales of Singles with five out of the Top six best-selling records of the decade released during the year. Sales have declined ever since.

These were positions 31 to 40 in the Top 80 Of The 80's (all reached No.1):

31. Into The Groove (Madonna) 1985.
32. Save Your Love (Renee And Renato) 1982/3.
33. Feels Like I'm In Love (Kelly Marie) 1980.
34. Pass The Dutchie (Musical Youth) 1982.
35. Never Gonna Give You Up

1/3/90



Holly Johnson, of Frankie Goes to Hollywood.

- (Rick Astley) 1987.
36. Prince Charming (Adam and The Ants) 1981.
37. Mistletoe And Wine (Cliff

- Richard) 1986.
38. Don't Leave Me This Way (Communards) 1986.
39. I Don't Wanna Dance

- (Eddy Grant) 1982.
40. This Ole House (Shakin' Stevens) 1981.

Bob Woodhead.