

= Paper Trail =

Paper Trail is the sixth studio album by American hip hop recording artist T.I. , released September 30 , 2008 , on Grand Hustle Records and Atlantic Records . He began to write songs for the album as he awaited trial for federal weapons and possession charges . Unlike his past albums , he wrote his lyrics down on paper , which he had not done since his debut album , I 'm Serious (2001) .

The album debuted at number one on the Billboard 200 , selling 568 @,@ 000 copies in its first week , becoming T.I. ' s highest debut sales to date , and the fourth highest debut of the year . The album was eventually certified double platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) on August 27 , 2009 . It received generally favorable reviews from critics , and is T.I. ' s most successful currently . The album spawned eight singles , four of which reached the top five of the Billboard Hot 100 , with two singles peaking at number one .

= = Background and recording = =

On November 13 , 2007 , while awaiting a trial for federal weapons charges , T.I. announced he had been writing songs for a new album to be entitled Paper Trail . He wrote his lyrics down on paper , which he had not done since his debut album , I 'm Serious . The album highlights his " fear , anger and guilt " as he awaited trial .

T.I. recorded nearly 100 tracks during the production for Paper Trail , including a collaboration with Fall Out Boy on a track entitled " Out in the Cold " . However the song was left out of the final cut , but T.I. told MTV that he may add some of the cut tracks to his next album . On August 22 , 2008 , the songs " Like I Do " featuring The @-@ Dream , " Let My Beat Pound " , " My Life Your Entertainment " featuring Usher , and " Swagga Like Us " were all leaked online .

The album was scheduled to be released in September 2008 , but was subsequently moved up to an August 12 after the release of the promotional and lead single " No Matter What " and high demand of the album . At the time , T.I. said that the first single may have been " Top of the World " , originally featuring B.o.B and Kanye West , explaining that the song was " a reflective song about our humble beginnings and how far we 've come " . The album was pushed back for a release date of September 2 , then September 9 and to its final release date of September 30 , 2008 , in the US . The album was first released on September 29 , 2008 , in continental Europe .

= = Singles and promotion = =

The first single released from the album was a song titled " No Matter What " . It was posted on StreetCred 's website on April 29 , 2008 , as a promotional recording , then released as a single on May 6 , along with a music video , which he premiered on MTV 's FNMTV . The song narrates T.I. rising above his misfortunes , including a prison sentence for weapon charges .

On August 19 , 2008 , the album 's lead single " Whatever You Like " , was made available for digital download . The song reached number one on the Billboard Hot 100 on September 6 , 2008 and set a new record for biggest one @-@ week jump to the top position , going from number seventy @-@ one to number one , becoming his first number one song on the chart as a lead artist and best opening @-@ week sales by a rap track since Nielsen SoundScan began compiling download data in 2003 . T.I. announced that he was " ecstatic " and " overjoyed " after setting a record for the biggest jump to top of the Billboard Hot 100 .

After the success of " Whatever You Like " , iTunes published the release dates for the upcoming singles , " Swing Ya Rag " on August 26 , " What Up , What 's Haapnin ' " on September 2 , and " Ready for Whatever " on September 23 , 2008 . Additionally , a song titled " Swagga Like Us " , featuring T.I. , Jay @-@ Z , Lil Wayne and Kanye West - which samples " Paper Planes " by M.I.A. - was then released as a single on September 4 , for Paper Trail and debuted in the Hot 100 at number five .

The album 's seventh single , " Live Your Life " featuring Rihanna , broke T.I. 's own record for biggest leap to number one , when it jumped from number eighty to number one on the Hot 100 ,

giving T.I. his second Hot 100 number one as a lead artist , and Rihanna her fifth overall . The song also set a first week digital record , when it sold 334 @, @ 000 digital downloads in its first week of availability , a record that was previously held by Mariah Carey 's " Touch My Body . "

The eighth single was confirmed to be " Dead and Gone " featuring Justin Timberlake , by the song 's co @-@ producer Rob Knox . T.I. himself later confirmed the release of the single . The song was charted by Billboard before the announcement of the single . The song reached number two on the Billboard Hot 100 on February 27 , 2009 . Overall , eight songs from the album charted on the Billboard Hot 100 , including " 56 Bars (Intro) " , " I 'm Illy " and " My Life Your Entertainment " , despite not being singles . A music video was released for the song " Slide Show " which highlighted a photo collage that followed T.I. ' s career as a recording artist . The track " Every Chance I Get " was featured on the promotional trailer for *Armored* starring Columbus Short .

= = Reception = =

= = = Commercial performance = = =

According to Nielsen SoundScan , *Paper Trail* sold 357 @, @ 000 copies in the United States in the first three days of its release. and it went to debuted at number 1 on the US Billboard 200 chart , with 568 @, @ 000 copies sold . It is T.I. ' s best debut to date and the fourth highest debut of 2008 . In its second week , the album remained at number 1 with sales of 177 @, @ 000 copies in the United States . In its third week , the album fell to number 2 , selling 131 @, @ 000 copies in the United States . In its fourth week , the album fell to number 3 , selling 93 @, @ 427 copies in the United States . In its fifth week , the album fell to number 7 , selling 76 @, @ 560 copies in the United States . It ultimately spent 55 weeks on the US Billboard 200 .

The album has sold over two million copies in the United States and it has been certified two @-@ time platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) .

= = = Critical response = = =

Paper Trail received positive reviews from most music critics . At Metacritic , which assigns a normalized rating out of 100 to reviews from mainstream critics , the album received an average score of 74 , based on 19 reviews , which indicates " generally favorable reviews " . Several critics praised the production on the album ; Andy Kellman of AllMusic noted that DJ Toomp 's and Danja 's production appearance provided " some much needed punch " , which placed the album above T.I. ' s previous album , *T.I. vs. T.I.P.* .. Margeaux Watson of Entertainment Weekly said that the " outstanding production " proved that T.I. " still knows how to have a good time " . Wilson McBee of Slant Magazine called the songs produced by Toomp the " vintage T.I. " , describing the sound as " ecstasies of sweltering synth lines , ground @-@ shaking 808 patterns and breathless verbalizing " . However , McBee felt that the songs that were directly about T.I. ' s prison sentence for weapons charges (" No Matter What " , " Ready for Whatever ") were among the weakest on the album , saying that " admitting guilt , making excuses and expressing no regrets falls flat " . Sharing a similar sentiment , Jody Rosen of Rolling Stone called the songs " mostly dispenses with the Tupac @-@ wannabe gangsta @-@ confessor pretensions to deliver catchy , tight , bombastic pop @-@ rap alongside a who 's @-@ who of megastar guests " , saying that T.I. was a " well @-@ oiled hit machine who 's more fun than deep " .

Newsday 's Glen Gamboa gave *Paper Trail* a B rating and commented that " [T.I.] is still bouncing between pop @-@ leaning hip @-@ hop anthems [...] and spare , often violent , tales of crime and brutality " . Michael Saba of Paste said that , " Even with the burden of sloppy crossover tracks , *Paper Trail* has enough standout moments for T.I. ' s throne to remain secure for now . " Shannon Barbour of About.com said that , " Regardless of the outcome of reality , *Paper Trail* is a solid combination of rhyme , repentance , swagger and substance . " People magazine gave the album four out of four stars , saying that the album was " a near @-@ perfect hip @-@ hop album for 2008

. " In his consumer guide for MSN Music , critic Robert Christgau called Paper Trail an " expediently excessive piece of rich @-@ get @-@ richer " and gave it an A- rating , indicating " the kind of garden @-@ variety good record that is the great luxury of musical micromarketing and overproduction . Anyone open to its aesthetic will enjoy more than half its tracks " .

= = Track listing = =

Notes

" Porn Star " features an additional vocals by Ricco Barrino .

" Collect Call " features an additional vocals by Mitchell 'l .

Sample credits

" Live Your Life " ? Contains a sample from " Dragostea din tei " performed by O @-@ Zone .

" Whatever You Like " ? Contains a sample from " Redemption " performed by Bill Conti .

" What Up , What 's Haapnin ' " ? Contains samples of " Never Give You Up " performed by Harvey Mason .

" Swagga Like Us " ? Contains a sample from " Paper Planes " performed by M.I.A ..

= = Personnel = =

= = Charts and certifications = =

= = = Chart procession and succession = = =