

THE RACE IS ON FOR THE SONG OF SUMMER

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It's open season for this year's song-of-summer hopefuls.

The annual "contest" to see which infectious tune will define the sunny months ahead already has begun, but so far, there isn't an odds-on favorite. While past title-holders such as Iggy Azalea (*Fancy*) and Carly Rae Jepsen (*Call Me Maybe*) were clear front-runners from the get-go, "it's not always obvious," says *Billboard* charts co-director Gary Trust, noting the showdown between Robin Thicke's *Blurred Lines* and Daft Punk's *Get Lucky* in 2013. "This just seems like a year where it's not absolutely clear-cut," and with so many factors that define a summertime smash, "it's a fun little competition to see what's No. 1. It's a mix of what's already out there and the surprise element. That's why I think we all follow it."

Before you place your bets, consider these five candidates leading the pack:

WANT TO WANT ME

Jason Derulo

- ▶ No. 5 peak on the Hot 100 singles chart
- ▶ 1.2 million downloads sold, according to Nielsen SoundScan
- ▶ 111 million Spotify streams
- ▶ 4.6 million Shazams

WHY IT COULD WIN: The '80s are alive and well on top-40 radio, with Walk the Moon imploring you to *Shut Up and Dance* and Jason Derulo crooning his latest, *Want to Want Me*. Although the R&B singer's new album, *Everything Is 4*, launched with a disappointing 22,000 copies sold its first week, according to Nielsen SoundScan, the singles-driven hitmaker has notched his 14th Hot 100 hit in *Want to Want Me*. Since its release this spring, "it's shot up the chart, and sales have been solid, and continue to grow each week," says Marissa Morris, Clear Channel's vice president of artist relations. "It has a strong melody and hook, and that '80s pop sound really seems to be coming back in pop music."

