



**Matt Scannell: guitar, vocals**  
**Keith Kane: vocals, guitar**  
**Sean Hurley: bass**  
**Craig Macintyre: drums**

You can't keep a good band down.

Take Vertical Horizon, who have survived a turbulent ride that began with their platinum-plus smash *Everything You Want*, rocketed through a year and a half of sold-out shows, hit a brick wall when their former label inexplicably dropped them, slowed briefly into a period of reassessment, picked up speed as they renewed their commitment to themselves and their fans ...

... and now they blast back with *Go*, their Hybrid Recordings debut and a new standard for passion, honesty, and exhilaration.

As always with Vertical Horizon, the music is the story. Their sound, which became a radio staple with *Everything You Want*, is even stronger here. Its key ingredients – solid writing, a vast dynamic range, thundering rhythms, and vocal harmonies soaring over wave after wave of muscular guitar – kick into action during the opening seconds of “When You Cry,” rise to a high point in the thoughtful verses and resonating choruses of the album’s first single and video, “Forever,” and sink beneath the dreamy depths of the last track, “Underwater,” a masterpiece of delicate arrangement and dark imagery.

Each song brims with drama and emotion – but perhaps “I’m Still Here” best captures the message of *Go*. There’s pride and triumph in the words (“The cities grow, the rivers flow ... but I’m still here”), and though the focus is personal, a declaration of faith within a relationship, a broader meaning is evident too:

Vertical Horizon *is* here. They’ve kept the faith – in their fans and in themselves. And *Go* is their gift to those who have waited ...

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Flash back to the summer of '00. Vertical Horizon is on fire. *Everything You Want* is climbing toward two million sales. They’re playing sold-out shows with Third Eye Blind and Nine Days. *Billboard* will soon honor them as the Adult Top 40 Artists of the year as “Everything You Want” hits the top of their Hot 100 and Adult Top 40 singles charts.

Yet Matt Scannell is already focusing on what lay ahead. “*Everything You Want* was the record I had always wanted to make, but at the time we were unsure about who we were as a band,” he remembers. “It was a very difficult process. And having gone through that, I felt much more ready to tackle the next one.”

After wrapping up eighteen months on the road behind *Everything You Want*, the band took some time off and then regrouped to work on the follow-up. “That way,” jokes Keith Kane, “we weren’t sick of each other anymore. We were excited to get back into it. It was definitely a creative time.”

Their choice for producer on *Go* was inspired. Though he had recorded several major bands, John Shanks was celebrated more for his work with Sheryl Crow, Michelle Branch, Melissa Etheridge, and other female rockers. “But he’s the best producer I know in terms of vocals,” Matt points out. “He’s a guitar player too, and he’s just as much into guitar sounds as I am. And since guitar sound is one of Vertical Horizon’s defining characteristics, I knew he would be a great match.”

The sessions for *Go* went smoothly and quickly. After three weeks of pre-production, stretched over a three-month period to keep the feel fresh, the band spent no more than two months tracking at Henson Studios in

L.A. “That was maybe half the time it took for *Everything You Want*,” says bassist Sean Hurley. “At that point we were built for speed, able to turn on a dime. It’s like we’d been exercising and were ready for the game. And we were playing a lot better than we ever had.”

Then came that grim twist that’s become almost a cliché in this business: A purge at their label sent Vertical Horizon’s main supporters off into corporate exile, and almost overnight, despite their track record, the band lost its record deal. “That totally sucked,” Keith admits. “We were completely demoralized. There were definitely days when I wasn’t sure if Vertical Horizon would play another note of music.”

Those days passed quickly, as the greater truths sank in: “First of all,” Keith continues, “we’re brothers. Just as important, we knew that we couldn’t just turn away from this record without fighting for it.”

“We stepped back and asked ourselves whether we had the will to keep doing this,” Sean adds. “Then we kept seeing our answer on the faces of our fans and hearing it in their voices as they sang along with us.”

“That’s why, a year after everything went down, we were talking about how we would move forward,” Matt concludes. “Bands that aren’t so close to each other and to their fans couldn’t have survived any of this.”

Their plan was to move slowly. Each member set time aside for his own projects: Matt co-wrote with Richard Marx and toured as his lead guitarist; Sean played on some of those dates and also filled his calendar with album and soundtrack dates. Keith and Matt did an acoustic radio tour, recalling for longtime listeners the early days when Vertical Horizon was mainly a duo act working clubs around Washington, DC. The band acquired the rights from RCA to license *Go* and signed it to Hybrid. They made sure to play Vertical Horizon shows too, though at a pace designed to build their energy rather than wear them out.

“It was,” Keith recalls, “a great way to transition back into the chaos of a full band tour.”

Now, with the re-release of *Go*, chaos – wonderful chaos – is imminent. Since their longtime drummer Ed Toth became an official Doobie Brother, they’ve been tearing through summer concerts with Craig McIntyre as their fourth member. “We’re fueled by our belief in this music and give that back in return to all of us onstage and everyone in the audience,” Matt says. “It’s incredible; we’ve been playing sets that run for an hour and a half, and I always feel at the end like we’ve been up there for five minutes. We’re just warming up.”

What, then, are the band’s goals as *Go* takes off? Matt thinks for a moment, and then gives a typically candid reply: “The real answer is that I want it all, which means playing to as many people as we possibly can.”

In other words, it’s about beating the odds, exceeding even the expectations of their fans, and following this road as far as it goes – somewhere beyond the horizon, vertical or otherwise.