

**Rob Ocampo**

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**To:** Venues Today

**Subject:** RE: September 13, 2006 Venues Today



# VENUES**today**

The news behind the headlines

**September 13, 2006 VOL. V, Number XXIX ISSN 1547-4143**

Welcome to your **Venues Today** weekly e-newsletter, full of the latest live entertainment industry news. We look forward to hearing your comments. On Saturday, reporter Dave Brooks will be heading to the IAAM Arena Management Conference in Memphis. He'll be keeping a blog of his travels there, which can be accessed at [venuestoday.blogspot.com](http://venuestoday.blogspot.com). Keep an eye on the site for conference articles and photos. For further information or to subscribe to *Venues Today* visit [www.venuestoday.com](http://www.venuestoday.com).

## **QUOTE OF THE WEEK**

"It's not that the business model won't work; it's that we have people working against it." — *Forum Enterprises Inc. COO Marc Little on his group's lawsuit against AEG, alleging that AEG is not living up to its agreement to exclusively book the facility.*

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## VENUE NEWS



*The L.A. Forum, Inglewood, Calif., and, at right, from left, Hank Abate and Gene Felling of SMG; Marc Little; and Terry Barnes, Ticketmaster.*

### **BOOKING EXCLUSIVITY CHALLENGED AGAIN IN L.A. AS FORUM SUES AEG**

On Sept. 5, Forum Enterprises Inc. (FEI), Inglewood, Calif., terminated its exclusive booking agreement with Anschutz Entertainment Group (AEG), citing breach of contract. On Sept. 6, FEI filed a lawsuit against AEG in the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California alleging AEG and its subsidiaries were engaged in a monopoly, conspiring to control the major entertainment venues in Los Angeles, and had knowingly made false representation to FEI that they would aggressively book the Forum, instead directing acts to the Staples Center, which AEG owns and operates, violating its contractual agreements.

The issue will probably be a year in the courts and/or at the negotiating table. AEG vehemently denies any wrongdoing and announced they plan to counter-sue.

Meanwhile, SMG, which is contracted by FEI to book and operate the Forum, has now been mandated to aggressively book the arena, just as it would any other arena it manages, said Marc Little, who is COO and general counsel and FEI contract designee for Faithful Central Bible Church, which owns the Forum. "The AEG contract is not incorporated by reference in my facility agreement with SMG. It will stand on its own," Little said.

The situation is highly unusual in the industry. The only other major arena owned by a church is in Houston and it is not functioning as an arena. Faithful Central Bible Church bought the Forum, once the major arena in L.A., in 2001 for \$22.5 million and contracted AEG as exclusive booking agent. Little said the church has learned a lot about the sports and entertainment industry in the five years it has owned the Forum.

Foremost, it has learned that to attract sponsorships, parking and concessions revenue and rent, an arena needs big events. The magic number is 13 in Little's mind. If AEG had been able to bring 10-15 major events to the Forum annually over the term of the contract, the church could have sold advertising and sponsorships (of which they currently have none), and raised enough money to pay the operating costs at the Forum, he said. "If I have a crowd and that book of business, we then try to get a naming rights deal or something like that," he said. Aramark has the concessions contract, a deal that was redone in 2003, he added.

Little said the church has spent good money hiring consultants and experts to find advertising for the Forum, including, in its initial agreement, AEG. Little even put marketing strategies together to go after the low-hanging fruit.

"If the Forum was just a church, it would be a different business model," Little said. "The church would have been funding a new \$35 million-\$40 million building five years ago. But it's a question of the board authorized a particular business model. We bought this building. It's incumbent on me, COO and general counsel, to try to do what's best to keep this business model we agreed to years ago and fix the things that stand in the way of that business model being effective. It's not that the business model won't work; it's that we have people working against it."

Johnny Griggs, Strategic Counsel PLC, Los Angeles, attorney for FEI, said though the lawsuit asks for \$5 million or more in damages, etc., "first and foremost, the Forum must have the right to book its own building. Secondly, the Forum is seeking compensation for AEG's failure to book the building in accordance with the agreement."

The lawsuit states that AEG "failed and continues to fail to account to Plaintiff for the amounts it received from the following events it diverted from Plaintiff: Aerosmith, Tool, Cirque du Soleil, AFI and Madonna." Griggs claims FEI has a variety of pieces of evidence, it is not appropriate to discuss, that back up the contention AEG has actively diverted bookings to Staples Center.

Griggs further highlighted the aspect of the lawsuit that "when the Forum took steps to book the building, AEG attempted to impede those attempts, so you have a circumstance under which AEG isn't booking the building and is attempting to prevent the Forum from booking the building, notwithstanding the fact the Forum was paying AEG as if it had actually gotten those bookings. The circumstance is not competitive, it's anti-competitive."

While FEI and Griggs understand Staples Center is new and has all the bells and

whistles artists are drawn to, all the things the Forum no longer is, Griggs counters that: "I'd ask the question, then, why is it that AEG is afraid to let the Forum be an open building? I think they haven't done it. Understand, AEG makes a pittance under the contract when it books an act at the Forum. It makes a significant amount of money if it books a significant act at the Staples Center. The only way this makes sense for AEG is if they are trying to keep acts out of the Forum. If AEG is not concerned that the Forum would compete with Staples, then let's have an open building."

AEG has been silent on the Sept. 5 termination of the contract so far, Griggs said. Now that the lawsuits are filed, the defendant generally has 20 days to respond. Depending on that response, the parties go into discovery, motion work and eventually trial or some other kind of resolution. Griggs anticipated the issues would be settled in a year to 18 months. "State law and policy moves cases quickly in California," he said.

Michael Roth, vice president of communications for AEG, would not compare this particular case to any other, including AEG's dispute in 2001 over exclusivity with Nederlander. "This is a case of a lawsuit that is unwarranted and one we are going to stand up and fight because it's someone trying to get out of a binding and legal arrangement where there is no cost to them."

"We have lived up to everything in our contract with FEI. Not only will we challenge their lawsuit, but we will likely initiate legal action on our own," Roth said, declining to address specific issues.

Faithful Central Bible Church "is a ministry that is committed to Inglewood," Little said. "We are committed to this city and we bought that building to be a tool for this city, to include community events that would hopefully one day turn a profit and we could take that money and one day put it into economic development. We have got a plan much larger than just trying to have a concert. We're trying to effect change in the lives of the community and to have a legacy from the pastor of this church — what we build is a beacon in this city and we did a good job on our watch. That's the undercurrent of what this lawsuit is about."

FEI entered into the booking arrangement with AEG with the expectation that "the Forum would have gotten its fair share of events in the market," Little said. "Unfortunately because of their conflict in filling Staples Center and otherwise, they have just not, in our opinion, fulfilled their obligation."

FEI is alleging that Staples interfered with booking the Forum, knowing the deal points and dates available, detouring acts to its own venue. "When Neil Diamond said years ago he would never play anywhere but the Forum, Neil Diamond would have played the Forum last year instead of Staples Center," Little said. "When Madonna says she wants to play the Forum, all four shows would have been at the Forum, not three at the Forum and one at Staples Center. Those are tangible opportunities that we lost because of what I perceive to be a divided and conflicted interest."

In fact, the Forum has nearly reached its magic 13 events this year, but FEI is claiming that's despite AEG, not because of them. The only shows they've given AEG credit for booking are Guy and a reggaeton concert, not the biggest. The other 10 were big and booked without AEG, though AEG is listed as co-promoter per the exclusive contract, Little said. Two sold out Red Hot Chili Peppers shows, Aug. 31-Sept. 1, were a Live Nation and AEG co-promote. Bob Dylan is scheduled for Oct. 20 and is a co-promote between Nederlander and AEG. Madonna was predominantly TNA/Live Nation and the Rolling Stones, also TNA. AEG is listed as co-promoter.

This isn't the first run-in between FEI and AEG. When Nederlander and AEG were suing

each other over Nederlander's endangered exclusive to book the Forum and Staples Center and AEG's contention they were in default, the Forum went dark, Little recalled. (*Venues Today*, August 2002 issue, 'Sweet Deal Gone Sour'). And in 2003, FEI and AEG renegotiated the exclusive booking agreement, which was amended to allow that AEG would pay a minimum guarantee of \$500,000 against a percentage of the gross from events it booked. The result has been an annual check for \$500,000, insufficient to operate the arena, Little claimed. "What we realized was it was just an agreement that they would pay us \$500,000, but they weren't going to do any work, which was not the model." That \$500,000, he said, "only covers a third of our expenses."

Little believes it is a disincentive for other promoters who have to share fees with AEG when considering the Forum. He sees a changing L.A. marketplace, with the Galen Center at the University of Southern California about to come on line and expected to aggressively enter the concert market, possibly with private management on board, and with Live Nation buying House of Blues, leaving two major promoters in the game.

Little alleges the church has made every effort to strategically resolve the differences with AEG over the past four years. "I have complained regularly," he said. "Their interests did not support a Forum that is doing well."

Little emphasized, "We're not on the brink of financial destruction. What we are is smart responsible businesspeople seeing what's happening in this market in the future. The last thing I need is to be in the middle of a promoter war when my building is under exclusivity. At the end of the day, we may find out that this doesn't work. But I'd rather be in charge of my own destiny than having someone's foot on my neck driving me into bankruptcy."

Lawsuit notwithstanding, Little is hoping that AEG will come into the Forum as a regular promoter, along with Live Nation and Nederlander. "I think that at the end of the day people we are dealing with, Tim Leiweke and others, are good people and businesspeople and we will resolve our differences and do what's best for our respective companies. I believe that if they have an act that is more suited for the Forum that they will do what's best for their act. I believe that. Sometimes you just have to stand up and say we tried this long enough. We said for four or five years this isn't working. Thanks for listening, thanks for trying your best, but we have to fix this."

As to the lawsuit, "at the end of the day, I want my building open. What that check looks like from them to me, I don't know," Little said. "All I have to prove in my lawsuit is they didn't intend to perform the way they said they would and that they are monopolizing the market." — Linda Deckard

*Interviewed for this story: Marc Little, (310) 330-8000, ext. 266; Johnny Griggs, (213) 895-7010; Michael Roth, (213) 742-7155*



### ***The 2006 Colorado State Fair, Pueblo, PRCA rodeo and the midway***

#### **CARNIVAL OPERATOR, WEATHER TAKE COLORADO FAIR ON WILD RIDE**

Colorado State Fair officials had a bit of a scare a few weeks before the Aug. 25–Sept. 4 fair was scheduled to begin when the Fort Worth, Texas-based Bill Hames Show announced the carnival could bring in only 35 rides.

“For us to have anything like a state fair, we need a carnival with about 45 rides,” said Chris Wiseman, fair general manager.

Apparently, subcontractor problems prevented the Bill Hames Show from bringing a full slate. So Wiseman and his board scrambled and found Texas-based Crabtree Amusements to fill the gap and bring in about 48 rides, including eight new ones that had not been to the Pueblo, Colo.-based fair. Those included Drop Zone, Power and Freak Out.

After dodging that bullet, the fair still had to deal with rain on the opening Friday and Saturday, which caused about a three percent drop in attendance, from last year’s 463,000 to 450,000.

But Wiseman, in his second year of a shortened fair, from 16 to 11 days, said that even without all the numbers counted, he expects revenue to be up this year.

“The attendance never tells the whole story,” he said. “We had years even when we were 16 days and attendance was down 45,000, but revenues were up and expenses were down. That’s the key to running the fair. You know you are at risk to weather and things.”

Last year, incurring less expense for the shortened fair did not positively affect the bottom line, but this year, Wiseman expects better results.

“Last year, we had a learning curve,” he said. “This year, it will be a positive net to the bottom line. We don’t know all the numbers – it takes us a long time to get expenses – but I believe this fair was better than last year.”

A shorter fair also allows Wiseman to bring in more grounds and family acts, “which is the way we enhance the fair, by offering a lot of free shows and family shows. We tried to do as much as we can to add a lot of value for the gate admission.”

The fair offered 10 paid concerts this year, most of them in a 7,800-seat Events Center. Those concerts included Los Lonely Boys, Carrie Underwood and Big & Rich, for a \$36

ticket, with Los Lonely Boys and Underwood drawing the best crowds.

"Los Lonely Boys, by far, was the best concert for us in terms of profit," said Wiseman, who noted that the group drew 7,856.

Other concerts included Rick Springfield, Howie Mandel, Trapt and REO Speedwagon. Blake Sheldon and Trace Adkins tickets were \$12 and concerts were held in conjunction with PRCA Rodeo at an outdoor grandstand, which also featured three nights of PRCA Rodeo without concerts as well as other dirt events.

Rain ultimately hampered the bottom line for the rodeos, Wiseman said. The concert spent about \$500,000 just on acts, and made \$65,000 on the indoor concerts, but lost \$121,000 on the grandstand acts.

"The biggest issue we had was during two nights of rodeo, the first Friday and Saturday, the rain impacted us," Wiseman said. "And on Sunday, the rain had been so bad that on that night, when skies turned dark, it scared people. That's the risk you take when you have acts outside."

Also scheduled for the Events Center was a concert by Neil Sedaka, who canceled because of a bronchial infection.

Following a capital improvement plan, the fair has been undergoing infrastructure improvements, including upgrading water and sewer lines in the horse show arena. "We're also in the process of redoing electrical infrastructure in the carnival area," Wiseman said. "That will help us with the non-fair camper rallies."

Other plans in the next few years include re-asphalting the entire grounds and burying all the electrical lines.

"Aesthetically, it just looks better than the power lines that run above the ground," he said.

Gate admission at the fair, which has a budget of \$6.5 million, is \$8 on Fridays, Saturdays and Sunday, and \$5 Monday through Friday. However, Wiseman noted, fairgoers on weekends often can take advantage of gate specials that get them through the door for anywhere from \$1 to \$2.50.

Advance gate sales were up. "This year, we did \$128,000," he said.

Sponsorships also were up this year, Wiseman said, to \$35,000 in cash and \$65,000 in-kind.

At a meeting at the end of September, Wiseman said he plans to recommend that the fair give Crabtree Amusements a contract for next year.

"He did an outstanding job for us on short notice," Wiseman said.

Next year's dates will be Aug. 24-Sept. 3. — Mary Wade Burnside

*Interviewed for this story: Chris Wiseman: (719) 561-8484*

***Busta Rhymes was one of the performers at this year's Amsterjam***



**INNOVATIVE  
AMSTERJAM**

### OVERSHADOWED BY ARRESTS

The second annual AmsterJam, New York, that was supposed to be a showcase of instant messaging technology and unique artist collaborations was instead marked by the high-profile arrest of one of its headliners.

At the conclusion of the Aug. 19 show on Randall's Island, police arrested rapper Busta Rhymes on assault charges. According to reports, police held Rhymes for several days and used the arrest as an opportunity to grill him about the murder of one of his bodyguards following a Brooklyn video shoot. According to reports, Rhymes has refused to cooperate with the investigation.

"Sadly that's what made the news of our event," said co-producer Dale Salmon who independently promoted and organized AmsterJam on behalf of Dutch beer-maker Heineken. "The concert had seen the launch of several new innovations in the way live events are held, but after the festival, all everyone wanted to ask me about was Busta Rhymes."

That might have been a blessing, said tour manager Eric Godet who was disappointed with the finale performances of his two Latin reggaeton stars Yerba Buena and Tego Calderon. The highlight of the concert was to be "mash-up" finales with hip hop acts, blending the two sounds together in an experimental move that would hopefully draw interest from fans of both genres. During the festival, Yerba Buena had Rhymes accompany her set, and returned for Rhymes' finale, while rapper L.L. Cool J finished his set with several songs alongside Calderon.

"It was suppose to be innovative and have cross-over appeal, but in the end it was just confusing and disorganized," Godet said of the mash-ups, adding that sound engineers during the performances had a difficult time coming up with solid backup tracks for the acts. "I'm not sure I can say that more rap fans are going to be buying reggaeton albums after that set," he said.

Godet said the only mash-up he could tell was a success was the finale performance between Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers and Foo Fighters frontman and former Nirvana drummer Dave Grohl. The pair played two songs together and were really well received by the crowd.

"I think our booking staff is going to really take a strong look at the Grohl-Petty performance to analyze what works and what doesn't with mash-ups," Salmon said. "It's a tough thing to find something for urban music fans. If you put two rock stars on the stage together — that's considered innovative. Now when you bring two separate rap acts on stage together and they perform a song, it's just considered another rap song. In that sense, it's constantly a challenge to keep the mash-ups relevant."

Salmon said he didn't believe the mash-up was a failed concept, arguing that the duet had become "a major component of the branding at AmsterJam." Famed producer Jermaine Dupri had even been brought on to help pioneer this year's mash-up, and Salmon said Dupri would take a larger role next year.

Salmon said ticket sales were slightly up four percent over last year to roughly 31,200 attendees for the show. Tickets sold for \$49.50 a person for general admission. Salmon estimates the festival moved about 35 percent of its initial tickets during the show's presale, which drew on information from the fan sites of all artists who performed at AmsterJam.

This year saw the festival's launch of its Insider Text Messaging Program. Salmon said his concert crew was able to sign up about 5,700 participants for the program by offering prizes and end-of-concert meet-and-greets with Petty.

The phone numbers that were collected were then dumped in a satellite server set up onsite and powered through an independent generator. After the phone numbers were inputted, the server sent out a signal to several transmitters throughout the festival, beaming text messages into the phones of anyone who signed up for the promotion.

"We used it to calendar some of our events and performances and draw people to different parts of the festival," Salmon said. "In a dream world, we wanted to use the system to ease foot traffic in densely populated areas of the festival by sending out messages about events happening in other areas of the park, but that never really happened."

Instead, the system helped boost some attendance at sponsor events and contests, including a promotion hosted by a local radio station to win back stage passes to the show. Importantly, the information went to Heineken's marketing department, which planned to compile the list into a database and market beer promotions at New York City bars.

"If you look at the system from a data-collection standpoint, it was hugely successful," he said. "The labor involved probably cost Heineken a little more than \$2,000, which is a steal for the quality of leads they were able to produce."

Salmon said that Heineken split the text-messaging services costs — roughly \$30,000 — with a local internet service provider, which would be given access to the database for a limited number of targeted marketing pieces. — Dave Brooks

*Interviewed for this article: Dale Salmon, (718) 515-3018; Eric Godet, (352) 331-3040*

### ***A parade of flags at the Maryland State Fair, Timonium.***



### **MARYLAND FAIR STRUGGLES WITH DATES, WEATHER**

The aftermath of Hurricane Ernesto hit the Maryland State Fair, Timonium, on two of the event's biggest days, the last Friday and Saturday of Labor Day weekend, prompting a 19% drop in attendance.

"We had a total washout on Friday and Saturday of Labor Day weekend," said Max Mosner, general manager.

Attendance was 344,585, compared to last year's figure of 424,827.

However, the rain actually might have helped Stuart, Fla.-based carnival Deggeller Attractions set a single-day record on the last Sunday of the fair, which ran from Aug. 24 to Sept. 4, Labor Day, on which the show also did well. Apparently, fairgoers were ready to play after two solid days of rain.

That was not the case when the area experienced drenching downpours, Mosner said. "I think on one day, they did \$14 in sales," he said. "The sad part is that those two days are strong. We lost a concert."

Country band Sawyer Brown was set to play in the outdoor grandstand on the Friday night.

Fairgoers did have the opportunity to check out singer and TV star Raven, and as other fairs have found, she can be a huge draw.

The free concert took place on the infield of the fairground's racetrack with the stage in the center.

"I figure we had 12,000 people out there for Raven," Mosner said. "People were packed in like sardines. To me, it became a little bit of a concern because people were right up against the fencing. We're going to look at doing some things differently." Fans began lining up at 4 p.m. for the 7:30 p.m. concert.

Country crooner Chris Cagle did not do nearly as well, drawing about 1,500, but potential bad weather – this time in the form of tornado watches – might have been at least partly to blame, Mosner said.

The talent budget for the Maryland fair is \$150,000, which includes stage, sound, lighting and security, Mosner said. Louisville, Ky.-based Triangle Talent books entertainment for the fair.

Attendance at the Maryland State Fair probably never will reach the kinds of numbers it did back when school started later and when simulcast racing was less popular, making the event's thoroughbred racing on a 5/8-mile track less of a draw, Mosner said.

"The days when the race track would attract 10,000 are over," he said. "With simulcasting, people can go to five or six different places."

However, in an effort to keep up with the times, Mosner has been expanding year-round events and relying less on just the fair.

"Really, what the off-season events do is justifies or allows me to keep my crew intact year-round," he said. "If I were to lay them off, when I needed them for the fair, I wouldn't have them. So I use those funds to keep my staff intact."

The carnival brought in around 40 rides, including four new ones – a new Extreme Scream, Monkey Maze, a Speedway for children, and a new Starship.

Wristbands were offered on the opening Friday, and then the first four weekdays of the following week. Most wristbands cost \$20, but the fair did a promotion with Food Lion and Deggeller offers \$2 off coupons.

But when it comes to the gate admission, fair officials have been reluctant to offer too many deals.

"We just try not to," Mosner said. "That's our biggest source of revenue. We do an advance sale, which is growing a little bit." The advance price is \$4, while the gate price is \$6.

Officials spend between \$120,000 and \$130,000 on marketing, but Mosner noted that media trade-offs really benefit the fair.

"The ABC affiliate in Baltimore does a marvelous job broadcasting the news live every day from here, and they do remotes all the time," he said. "They bring in their Jumbotron and broadcast different events throughout the fair on the Jumbotron, and put their own station's broadcast on there.

"I couldn't tell you how much that is worth. I think it's worth hundreds of thousands of dollars."

Mosner has looked into holding the fair earlier now that earlier school start times have gotten in the way, but he and his board never can come up with a good date that satisfies all vendors.

"Our board still felt that Labor Day weekend was too important to give up," he said. "We decided to stay where we are. On Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday, we do half our attendance."

Next year's dates will be Aug. 23–Sept. 3. — Mary Wade Burnside

*Interviewed for this story: Max Mosner, (410) 252-0200, ext.*

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## CORRECTION

In the Aug. 30 e-newsletter, *Venues Today* reported incorrect attendance numbers for several events at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre. In fact, the Hong Kong Book Fair brought in 680,000 guests; the comic-book festival, 490,000, and the Computer and Communications Festival, 300,000. The book fair and comic festivals are public events while the computer festival is for the trade industry and public. *Venues Today* regrets the error.

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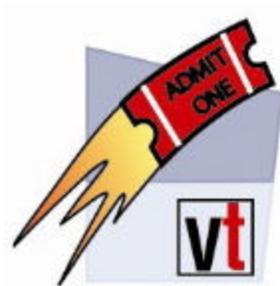
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## BOOKINGS



### HOT tickets

#### HUGH JACKMAN SOARS HIGH DOWN UNDER

**HOT TICKETS** is a weekly summary of the top acts and ticket sales as reported to **Venues Today** e-newsletter. Following are the top

20 concerts and events, the top 5 in each seating capacity category, which took place since Aug. 15, 2006. To submit reports, e-mail [HotTickets@venuestoday.com](mailto:HotTickets@venuestoday.com) or fax to (714)

378-0040.

The **Hot Tickets** this week as reported to **Venues Today**:

#### 15,001 or More Seats

- 1) *Gross Sales:* \$3,360,485; *Event:* Dave Matthews Band; *Venue:* **Gorge Amphitheatre, George, Wash.**; *Attendance:* 64,468; *Ticket Range:* \$62.50-\$48; *Promoter:* House of Blues Concerts; *Dates:* Sept. 1-3; *No. of Shows:* 3
- 2) *Gross Sales:* \$1,718,288; *Event:* Kenny Chesney; *Venue:* **Toyota Park, Chicago**; *Attendance:* 24,701; *Ticket Range:* \$75-\$50.50; *Promoter:* AEG Live, The Messina Group; *Dates:* Sept 2; *No. of Shows:* 1
- 3) *Gross Sales:* \$1,118,427; *Event:* Kenny Chesney; *Venue:* **Verizon Wireless Music Center, Indianapolis**; *Attendance:* 24,973; *Ticket Range:* \$69.50-\$38; *Promoter:* AEG Live, Live Nation, The Messina Group; *Dates:* Sept. 3; *No. of Shows:* 1
- 4) *Gross Sales:* \$1,076,790; *Event:* Mariah Carey; *Venue:* **Continental Airlines Arena, East Rutherford, N.J.**; *Attendance:* 12,697; *Ticket Range:* \$150-\$19.50; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* Aug. 27; *No. of Shows:* 1

5) *Gross Sales:* \$1,046,560; *Event:* Mariah Carey; *Venue:* **Bell Centre, Montreal, Quebec**; *Attendance:* 13,200; *Ticket Range:* \$125-\$19.50; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* Aug. 15; *No. of Shows:* 1

#### **10,001 - 15,000 Seats**

1) *Gross Sales:* \$9,643,782; *Event:* Hugh Jackman – The Boy from Oz; *Venue:* **Brisbane (Australia) Entertainment Centre**; *Attendance:* 80,802; *Ticket Range:* \$374.71-66.83; *Promoter:* BFO Arena Pty. Ltd.; *Dates:* Sept. 1-10; *No. of Shows:* 9

2) *Gross Sales:* \$459,412; *Event:* Red Hot Chili Peppers; *Venue:* **Selland Arena, Fresno, Calif.**; *Attendance:* 8,546; *Ticket Range:* \$53.50; *Promoter:* Live Nation, Goldenvoice; *Dates:* Aug. 27; *No. of Shows:* 1

3) *Gross Sales:* \$445,762; *Event:* Nickelback; *Venue:* **Cajundome, Lafayette, La.**; *Attendance:* 10,309; *Ticket Range:* \$44.50; *Promoter:* AEG Live, Concerts West, Fastlane Concerts; *Dates:* Aug. 28; *No. of Shows:* 1

4) *Gross Sales:* \$435,401; *Event:* Nickelback; *Venue:* **Mandalay Bay Events Center, Las Vegas**; *Attendance:* 9,271; *Ticket Range:* \$52-\$41.50; *Promoter:* AEG Live, Concerts West, The Messina Group, Fastlane Concerts; *Dates:* Aug. 19; *No. of Shows:* 1

5) *Gross Sales:* \$259,852; *Event:* Nickelback; *Venue:* **Selland Arena, Fresno, Calif.**; *Attendance:* 6,015; *Ticket Range:* \$47.50-\$39.50; *Promoter:* AEG Live, Concerts West, Fastlane Concerts, The Messina Group; *Dates:* Aug. 18; *No. of Shows:* 2

#### **5,001-10,000 Seats**

1) *Gross Sales:* \$532,058; *Event:* Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey; *Venue:* **Stockton (Calif.) Arena**; *Attendance:* 32,828; *Ticket Range:* \$80-\$12; *Promoter:* Feld Entertainment; *Dates:* Aug. 31-Sept. 3; *No. of Shows:* 7

2) *Gross Sales:* \$364,585; *Event:* Nickelback; *Venue:* **BancorpSouth Center, Tupelo, Miss.**; *Attendance:* 8,799; *Ticket Range:* \$44.50-\$39.50; *Promoter:* AEG Live, Concerts West, Fastlane Concerts, The Messina Group; *Dates:* Aug. 29; *No. of Shows:* 1

3) *Gross Sales:* \$358,410; *Event:* Dave Chappelle; *Venue:* **Agganis Arena, Boston**; *Attendance:* 6,782; *Ticket Range:* \$60-\$45; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* Aug. 23; *No. of Shows:* 1

4) *Gross Sales:* \$321,556; *Event:* Countdown; *Venue:* **Newcastle (Australia) Entertainment Centre**; *Attendance:* 4,038; *Ticket Range:* \$113.48-\$49.54; *Promoter:* Frontier Touring Company; *Dates:* Aug. 30; *No. of Shows:* 1

5) *Gross Sales:* \$238,929; *Event:* James Taylor; *Venue:* **Ted Constant Convocation Centre, Norfolk, Va.**; *Attendance:* 3,951; *Ticket Range:* \$63.50-\$46.50; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* Aug. 18; *No. of Shows:* 1

#### **5,000 or Fewer Seats**

1) *Gross Sales:* \$818,498; *Event:* Beauty and the Beast; *Venue:* **Fox Theatre, Atlanta**; *Attendance:* 20,047; *Ticket Range:* \$59-\$20; *Promoter:* Theater of the Stars; *Dates:* Sept. 5-10; *No. of Shows:* 8

2) *Gross Sales:* \$335,368; *Event:* Ben Harper, Damian Marley; *Venue:* **Santa Barbara**

**(Calif.) Bowl**; Attendance: 9,259; Ticket Range: \$41.50-\$36.50; Promoter: Nederlander; Dates: Aug 15-16; No. of Shows: 2

3) Gross Sales: \$283,111; Event: Melissa Etheridge; Venue: **Dodge Theatre, Phoenix**; Attendance: 3,644; Ticket Range: \$100-\$35; Promoter: AEG Live; Dates: Aug. 29; No. of Shows: 1

4) Gross Sales: \$191,853; Event: The Allman Brothers Band; Venue: **Rosemont (Ill.) Theatre**; Attendance: 4,211; Ticket Range: \$59.50-\$35; Promoter: Jam Productions; Dates: Aug. 30; No. of Shows: 1

5) Gross Sales: \$168,207; Event: Melissa Etheridge; Venue: **Times-Union Center for the Performing Arts, Jacksonville, Fla.**; Attendance: 2,091; Ticket Range: \$101-\$46; Promoter: Fantasma; Dates: Aug. 16; No. of Shows: 1

Compiled by Rob Ocampo, [HotTickets@venuestoday.com](mailto:HotTickets@venuestoday.com)

### **AEG BRINGING ITS OWN 'LOLLAPALOOZA' TO DOWNTOWN L.A.**

LOS ANGELES — AEG is planning one of its biggest music festivals in Los Angeles Oct. 7, bringing the metropolitan area one of its first permanent music festivals in years.

The "LA Weekly Detour" is one of the first of its kind in the downtown area, which is witnessing a renaissance of sorts with the construction of the Staples Center and the soon-to-be-completed LA Live mixed-use development. Featuring headliner Beck along with support from the Queens of the Stone Age and Basement Jaxx, the festival occurs the same day as the Grand Avenue Festival — a three-year-old, all-day cultural event hosted by the Downtown Center Business Improvement District.

"I think it truly has the potential to transform the area into a music festival destination, even if it's only once a year," said Mindy Rosen, co-producer of the Grand Avenue Festival, adding that the Detour concert offers a broad commercial appeal while the Grand Avenue event offers patrons more of a cultural appeal.

Entrance to the Grand Avenue Festival, which runs from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., is free. The media sponsor for the event is KRCW, Los Angeles' NPR affiliate. During the festival, organizers block off Grand Avenue and visitors are given free admission into a number of cultural institutions, including the Museum of Contemporary Art and the Walt Disney Concert Hall, where they can enjoy a free concert from the Los Angeles Philharmonic Symphony. The festival will also include free street performances and an art market, along with several special guests that have yet to be announced. Rosen said she is expecting 30,000 people to attend.

"We're thrilled that both festivals are taking place. I think it shows that downtown is alive on the weekend with a lot of choices," she said.

While the Grand Avenue Festival has been safely operating for three years, much more is at stake for the LA Weekly Detour, which has the potential to deliver to downtown Los Angeles an annual music festival on par with the recently relaunched Lollapalooza Festival in Chicago and Vegoose event in Las Vegas, she said.

AEG-owned promoter Goldenvoice is producing the event. Goldenvoice is the promoter behind the popular Coachella music festival in nearby Palm Desert.

"They definitely bring a lot of credibility to the event," Rosen said. "It's been a long time since we've seen anything in the area to this scale. I think a concert with

widespread commercial appeal will be good for Los Angeles as it turns a new chapter with the construction of L.A. Live.”

L.A. Live is an AEG-development project across the street from the AEG-owned and operated Staples Center (*Venues Today*, September 2006). The \$1.5 to \$2 billion project includes the 2,500-person capacity Club Nokia, along with the 7,100-person Nokia Theater, slated to open October 2007. The new development will also include a hotel adorned with condominiums, the Grammys museum, headquarters for the Convention Center and the ESPN broadcasting station. The complex will also have 12 new restaurants and serve as a destination point for the Staples Center, before and after the 270 annual events booked at the arena.

“The Staples Center has already proven that there is a draw for top-caliber acts in downtown Los Angeles, and these new additions to the area will certainly allow smaller acts to perform locally,” Rosen said. “That’s what I think a big part of this concert is about — developing downtown Los Angeles as a live music destination so that people are already thinking of it that way by the time L.A. Live is completed.”

Tickets to the concert are \$35.50, with the bulk of the proceeds benefiting TreePeople, a local non-profit charity group.

“We wanted to incorporate an environmental component to the event while existing in an urban environment,” said Dianne Tanner, one of the producers working on the show.

Tanner did not release any figures on how many tickets had yet been sold or projections on total attendance. She said her group had to work closely with city officials to coordinate the closing off of First Street in downtown Los Angeles and providing the electricity to power the set. — Dave Brooks

*Interviewed for this article: Mindy Rosen, (213) 624-2425; Dianne Tanner, (323) 465-4414*

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## MARKETING

***Jason Newsted, Tommy Lee and Gilby Clarke are looking for a singer to front their tour***



### **SUPERNOVA TOUR SELLS BEFORE SINGER IS SELECTED**

They had sold out New Year's Eve show at The Joint before even selecting their lead singer or releasing an album. In fact, Live Nation's Bruce Kapp

said he had begun work to launch the Supernova Tour before the popular show even aired on CBS earlier this summer.

All from a band that until four months ago, had never existed. Although they won't release any numbers, Live Nation promoters said the upcoming arena tour for the popular television show is doing very well and has booked several sold-out performances. The tour officially kicks off on Jan. 16 in Hollywood, Fla. The 30-show itinerary includes stops at the Pepsi Arena in Albany, N.Y.; the Wachovia Spectrum in Philadelphia; Radio City Music Hall in New York City; the Fox Theater in Detroit; the Budweiser Events Center in Loveland, Colo.; the ARCO Arena in Sacramento, Calif. and the Pala Casino near San Diego. Tickets range from \$39.50 to \$64.50.

The celebrity nature of the three band members involved — former Motley Crue drummer Tommy Lee along with Metallica bassist Jason Newsted and former Guns N' Roses guitarist Gilby Clarke — along with its weekly eight-to-ten million viewers was enough to convince Live Nation officials that a viable U.S. tour existed out of the show — all they had to do was wait 16 weeks for the band to pick a lead singer.

"It's kind of a dream-come-true scenario for a promoter to be able to speak on a weekly basis to eight-million fans," Live Nation's Senior Vice President of Marketing John Loken said.

Rockstar: Supernova is a Mark Burnett-produced reality television series that grew out of the original installment, Rockstar: INXS. On both shows, band members hold an American Idol-style competition in search of a new lead singer. Each show a different person is eliminated until only one singer is left — that person is then picked to front the rock band.

Kapp said the success of the original INXS show launched the band into a popular tour, currently playing Australia and Europe. While the popularity of Lee and others in Supernova surely parlayed into some ticket sales, Kapp and Loken agreed that the show's partnership with Live Nation was a big factor in moving tickets.

Much like American Idol, viewers of Supernova are regularly prompted to phone in their votes to the show to select each night's winner. After the caller votes, a message on the phone then prompts them to a sales pitch where they are offered tickets for the upcoming tour.

"You can't get access to a more segmented fan base than that," Kapp said.

Television show producers even allowed one of the show's hosts to promote the band's presale on-air at the conclusion of the Aug. 22 show that included a prize to win a fly-away to Vegas to see the concert. Loken said the show's website received 30,000 hits that night, including 10,000 who opted in to Live Nation's database system and another 9,000 who actually bought tickets — he estimates the band grossed \$500,000 that night alone.

And while the direct pitch has helped Live Nation move a lot of tickets, producer Burnett has even allowed the tour to be incorporated into segments of the show. In one scene that has yet to air, Lee's manager Carl Stubner walks up to the remaining contestants on the show and hands them the upcoming tour's itinerary. While the interaction is strictly entertainment value, Loken said the result is the same — get viewers thinking and talking about the tour.

"It's not the hard sell of looking into the camera and saying 'go buy tickets now,'" but it keeps the dialogue of the tour running throughout the program, Loken said. For the

most part, Burnett has been willing to comply with most requests to promote the tour because high-ticket sales would likely be a testament to the popularity of the show, Loken said.

Opening for Supernova on tour, second on the bill, will be Dave Navarro's new band Panic Channel — Navarro is the former guitar player for Jane's Addiction and the Red Hot Chili Peppers. The show will be opened by the Supernova house band and fronted by some of the top runners-up on the show.

As for merchandising, Kapp said he's unclear what exactly the band will sell at their show although a new album and single are scheduled to be released just days after the show airs. The single will be out on Sept. 26 and the selected singer is expected to drop the vocal tracks for the song the day after winning the television show. Most of the instrumental tracks have also been recorded for the new album, Kapp said, and music execs at Epic Records are simply waiting for the winner to be selected so they can record the vocals.

Loken said the success of the Supernova tour will hopefully prompt his team to find new ways to market large scale shows.

"More and more you're going to see groups integrating promotions into programming where it appears seamless," he said, later adding "You have to think big when launching a tour. You have to use the biggest canvas possible." — Dave Brooks

*Interviewed for this article: John Loken, (310) 867-7000, Bruce Kapp, (310) 867-7000.*

## **CORRECTION**

The marquee at the Arrowhead Pond of Anaheim (Calif.), soon to be the Honda Center, was totally privately funded. An article in our Aug. 30 e-newsletter indicated there were some public monies involved. In fact, Anaheim Arena Management and the Anaheim Ducks of the National Hockey League paid for the marquee. *Venues Today* regrets the error.

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## **CONCESSIONS**

### ***Concessions stand at Nutter Center, Dayton, Ohio***



### **CUSTOMER-CENTRIC PHILOSOPHY UNITES NUTTER CENTER AND OVATIONS**

Ovations Food Services has been contracted to provide concessions and catering at the 12,500-seat Nutter Center at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio. The new deal takes effect Oct. 1.

John Siehl, arena executive director, said the contract is for five years. Ovations will pay the university a percentage starting at 40 percent of concessions and escalating at various thresholds. The

concessionaire will pay 15 percent on catering.

Siehl said that historically the arena grosses about \$1.5 million from food and drink, \$201,000 of that from catering. The arena has 18 suites and is home to Wright State University athletics and the Dayton Bombers of the ECHL.

Ovations was one of four respondents to the university's request for proposals, Siehl said. The others included Centerplate, which had had this contract the first 10 years the arena was open when it was Service America; Sodexo and Gladieux. Sportservice has had the contract for the past five years and opted not to renew, Siehl said. The technical end to their contract had been July 1, but they agreed to a three-month extension.

"We're incredibly happy with Ovations reply to our request," Siehl said. "The number one reason we are here is the customer and to please the customer whatever it takes. It's the way they act as well."

Ovations will make an investment of \$200,000 in improvements, said Todd Wickner, Ovations chief operating officer. Nutter Center currently has eight stands with two or three points of sale at each stand, plus portables.

Wickner said Ovations is looking at purchasing additional portable equipment for the concourse and at refreshing the existing permanent stands. They will also introduce some of the company's signature products, including the Hot Dog Nation stands, which feature different hot dogs, sausages and toppings from across the country; Hussong's, a Mexican cantina; and the half-pound Black Angus burger.

This will be Ovations sixth university venue account, Wickner said. Ovations will bring management support and possibly some trained part time help from its Duke Energy Center operation in Cincinnati, one hour away. Fulltime concessions staff at Nutter Center will number three, Wickner said.

Siehl was happy with Ovations' level of improvements as well as their philosophy. "We've been open 15 years now and we spend money keeping the building looking new," he said.

In fact, the Nutter Center has been closed since Aug. 7 to complete nearly \$1 million in improvements, \$750,000 of which was for new telescopic seating for 1,200 from Irwin Seating. "We're closed for six weeks, but we got it done in four," Siehl said.

Other improvements include \$75,000 for high steel rigging, as well as upgrades to the sound system and a curtaining system between courts in the gymnasium out back.

The Nutter Center opens again Sept. 17. Funds for the capital improvements come out of operating revenues. Siehl is already saving for his future improvement list.

"All of our box office windows are outside. My dream is to build a lobby around those within the next one to three years," he said. Another dream project is to build an entrance at the back of the auxiliary gym on the back, freeing up space for more arena dressing rooms.

"My number three dream is an escalator off of our floor," Siehl said. Nutter Center is a one-concourse arena and people have to climb 38 rows, nearly 40 feet, from the floor to the concourse. Siehl would like to have an in-bowl escalator to move people up to the concourse. Right now, he has to use an eight-foot exit stage right, with the promoter's permission. The arena is a 270-degree configuration with a dead end where the stage is set up.

If he can't throw in an escalator, he's stuck with tunneling and that costs \$1,000 a foot. "I'd like to relieve the pressure down there with my magical escalator," Siehl said. — Linda Deckard

*Interviewed for this story: John Siehl, (937) 775-4726; Todd Wickner, (813) 948-6900, ext. 105*

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## SHORT TAKES

### CSC ADDS FOURTH IVY LEAGUE SCHOOL TO CLIENT LIST

When the Columbia Lions open their 2006 Football season on Sept. 16 at Lawrence A. Wien Stadium at Baker Field Manhattan, N.Y., against the Fordham University, it will mark the first year that Contemporary Services Corporation (CSC) has provided its services for Columbia University. Baker Field is home to several Columbia Athletics facilities, including Wien Stadium, Columbia Soccer Stadium, Columbia Softball Complex, Andy Coakley Baseball Field, The Dick Savitt Tennis Center, The Gould-Remmer and 1929 Boathouses, and the Chrystie Field House. CSC will also be providing its services for Columbia Lions basketball at Francis Levien Gymnasium in the Marcellus Hartley Dodge Physical Fitness Center, a 3,408-seat arena. Overseeing the operation at Wien Stadium is CSC Branch Manager George Griffin. CSC provides its services to three other Ivy League schools: Princeton University, University of Pennsylvania, and Yale University.

*Contact: Jeanette Johnson, (818) 335-1904*

### FMI RENEWS TWO MAJOR MERCHANDISE DEALS

The United States Tennis Association announced that Facility Merchandising Incorporated (FMI) will remain the exclusive merchandise concessionaire for the US Open through a new long-term partnership. FMI has been the merchandise concessionaire for the US Open, held at the National Tennis Center, White Plains, N.Y., since 1996. In 1999, the USTA added three walk-in retail stores as well as premier merchandise stands within Arthur Ashe Stadium. Presently, the US Open retail program includes official sponsor Polo Ralph Lauren, and other well-known manufacturers such as Lacoste and Nike. In 2005, the USTA recorded its highest US Open merchandise sales in its history. In addition, FMI will remain the exclusive merchandise concessionaire for the Super Bowl, according to the National Football League. FMI will expand its current exclusive rights to include being the Official Merchandise Concessionaire of the 30,000 square-foot NFL Experience Store adjacent to Dolphin Stadium, Miami, host of Super Bowl XLI, as well as many key NFL hotel properties. FMI has been the official merchandise and program concessionaire for the NFL at Super Bowl stadiums since Super Bowl XXIII in 1989. The Exclusive Stadium Collection, the line of Super Bowl products only available for sale at the host stadium, will be available for sale at the NFL Experience Store as well. For the past six years, FMI has also served

as the NFL's exclusive national distributor of the Super Bowl program.

*Contact: Steve Brenner, (818) 344-6195*

#### **CABARRUS COUNTY ADDS INDOOR FOOTBALL TEAM**

An American Indoor Football League team will play its 2007 season at the Cabarrus Arena and Events Center, Boone, N.C. A contest to name the team is being held during the Cabarrus County Fair there. Play will start in the spring. There will be eight home games.

*Contact: Frank Lapsley, (704) 920-3976*

#### **DURYEA PROMOTED; GUIDO LEAVES FELD**

Mark Duryea has been promoted to vice president of North American Routing and Tours for Feld Entertainment, Inc. After 20+ years in the live entertainment industry, Jerry Guido has decided to make a career change and will be leaving Feld Entertainment. Feld Entertainment will be represented this weekend at the annual Arena Management Conference by Duryea, Radar Hennen, Dave Pitman and Kelly Shea.

*Contact: Kenneth Feld, (703) 448-4000*

#### **WNBA FINALS HELD AT JOE LOUIS**

A last minute scheduling conflict moved the fifth and final game of the WNBA championships from the Palace of Auburn Hills in Detroit — where winning team Detroit Shock normally plays — to the Joe Louis Arena, also in Detroit. Apparently the Palace had booked a Mariah Carey show for the same night. The game was a sellout crowd, bringing in 19,671 fans — the second largest for the WNBA finals.

*Contact: Julie Geisinger, (313) 471-3386*

#### **ZEOLLNER POWERED BY AUDIENCEVIEW**

Zoellner Arts Center at Lehigh University in Bethlehem, Pa., announced it would use AudienceView's ticketing and customer relationship management (CRM) system to power its front of house operations. Zoellner will use AudienceView's integrated solution to bring their online ticket sales in-house, and develop new marketing applications for their existing customers.

*Contact: Jessica Kosmack, (416) 913-6125*

#### **ABERDEEN RECOGNIZED FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EFFORTS**

Aberdeen (Scotland) Exhibition & Conference Centre (AECC) has been recognized by the Green Tourism Business Scheme (GTBS) with Silver Status for environmental awareness. The Green Audit Report revealed that the AECC excelled in energy saving, water issues and waste minimization. Several measures have been initiated as part of the Center's growing involvement with environmental work. These include the use of more recycling bins, the storing and disposing of all materials in accordance with the latest legislation; green approved catering equipment and food suppliers and the creation of an environmental policy.

*Contact: Christina Pappas, (617) 536-0590*

#### **ARROWHEAD POND ENTERS EXCLUSIVE DEAL WITH MILLER**

The Arrowhead Pond of Anaheim and the Anaheim Ducks have agreed to a multi-year sponsorship alliance with Miller Brewing Company. The partnership establishes Miller Lite as the exclusive malt beverage sponsor of both the team and the venue, which includes concerts and other special events. The deal includes creation of two Miller Lite Taste Zones on the Plaza Concourse of the arena near sections 206 and 220. The deal also features signage throughout the arena, cross-promotional opportunities and a presence on the Arrowhead Pond's new marquee.

*Contact: Scott Bussen, (414) 931-3848*

#### **SAVVIS CENTER GETS NAME CHANGE**

Sports Capital Partners, the new owners of the St. Louis Blues, have announced that the team's home arena, currently known as the Savvis Center, will be renamed the Scottrade Center. A new Scottrade Center logo was unveiled at the news event announcing the deal. Financial terms of the partnership were not disclosed. Visitors to the new Scottrade Center can expect to see a strong Scottrade presence in the arena and with the Blues, including signage, broadcast and print advertising and promotions, as well as a new Web site ([www.scottradecenter.net](http://www.scottradecenter.net)).

Contact: Mike Caruso (314) 378-3080

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## NEW VT WEBSITE COMING MID SEPTEMBER!



Stay tuned in September to see our new, improved website! It will sport an updated look and will be more user friendly. There will also be new exciting features available to users. The help wanted ads that appear in the weekly e-newsletter will also be posted on the new site for anybody to view, you'll be able to submit your box office scores online, and for the first time, the monthly Hot Tickets and Top Stops charts will be available for download to subscribers of *Venues Today*

Keep checking back!

[Click here to visit our current website](#)

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## HELP WANTED

*Venues Today* now offers **free help wanted listings** in the e-newsletter. For more information or to submit listings, e-mail April Stroud, Advertising/Production Manager at: [April@venuestoday.com](mailto:April@venuestoday.com)

[Click here to view free help wanted listing guidelines](#)

### XOS Technologies - Ticketing Support Specialist

XOS Technologies, a fully integrated, 100% web-based ticketing and donor management solution, is looking for a self motivated individual to respond to inquiries and requests for assistance with our ticketing system. This position requires working closely with clients, assisting with box office procedures, training, etc. via telephone, Webex, and/or in person. Must possess 5 years of both Ticketing Supplier and Box Office environment. Please respond to: [Jointtheteam@xostech.com](mailto:Jointtheteam@xostech.com)

### ARENA AT HARBOR YARD – DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

This position reports directly to the General Manager, and will oversee building operations. Must have strong knowledge of back of house operations, event production and management, arena building systems, ice prep and event changeovers, CAD preferable, working knowledge of building codes and OSHA regulations.

[Click here for a more detailed job description](#)

### **Nederlander - Marketing Director in Arizona**

Full-time, senior level position for nationally renowned concert producer. Position requires an experienced marketing director to run marketing/sales/special events campaigns and publicity for its Arizona venues. Candidate must have experience with the advertising, promotion, and publicity of contemporary music concerts. Sponsorship sales and/or special event booking experience helpful. Please forward resume to [yourcontact@nederlander.com](mailto:yourcontact@nederlander.com).

### **AT&T Center, San Antonio, Texas - Project Manager**

Analytical review of corporate development opportunities and business ventures, organizational financial statements and event negotiations and settlements. 3-5 years experience in sports/entertainment facility preferred. Interested parties, please forward resume to [HRIntern@attcenter.com](mailto:HRIntern@attcenter.com)

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