

Rob Ocampo

Subject: FW: August 16, 2006 Venues Today



VENUES**today**

The news behind the headlines

Dear April,

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Welcome to your **Venues Today** weekly e-newsletter, full of the latest live entertainment industry news. We look forward to hearing your comments. For a full calendar listing, to view archives or to subscribe to *Venues Today*, visit our Web site at www.venuestoday.com.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"There are some aspects of adult entertainment, but our dancers wear pasties over their nipples and fuller thongs to cover themselves up...We're always very accommodating to facility needs and local laws." — *Kari Calder of Showcase Productions on her company's Sex and So Much More show.*

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VENUE NEWS



Punk rock group The Adicts; Queensryche guitarist Mike Stone mounts a motorcycle before his upcoming tour.

NEW AIRLINE RESTRICTIONS CHANGE CONCERT TRAVEL

An alleged terrorist plot to blow up planes flying out of Heathrow Airport has again altered airline travel habits and added additional burdens to international commuters. No one knows the impacts better than booking agents, who help schedule acts all over the world.

“We already had a massive problem the day after the rules changed trying to get one of

our bands out to London," said booking agent Chris Maggiore of Los Angeles firm Artists Worldwide. The group The Adicts was attempting to board a U.S. plane bound for London when several members from the Department of Homeland Security tried to stop the band from carrying on their guitar equipment.

"It was a real nightmare, but somehow — I don't know how — they were able to get through and straighten things out," Maggiore said.

Many booking agents have already had to come up with new solutions to alleviate the headache from rule changes restricting the way bands tour and travel, but most agree that the new restrictions ultimately make commercial air travel less convenient, and ultimately less appealing to artists on the road.

"I doubt if kd lang is going to bring any more bottles of whiskey on board with her," joked Jeff Lawrence of Artists Representation and Management of Saint Paul, Minn.

Lawrence and others said the impact of the new travel restrictions won't affect booking for several months because gigs and travel arrangements are usually made far in advance — one-offs and festivals can be scheduled as much as one year in advance, he said. Still, he wonders if European festivals like the Dusseldorf Carnival in Germany, the Budapest Spring Music Festival in Hungary and the Glastonbury Festival in Somerset, England will have a more difficult time attracting American acts now that artists can't bring electronics like iPods, DVD players or laptops on board.

"At the same time, we have to remember that you still have to show up to the gig on time," Lawrence said, later adding "The first day or two was pretty rough, but I think once the situation dies down, it's just one more thing they throw up in front of you."

There are a few alternatives, he said. The restrictions made ground travel look more appealing, although high gas prices definitely take a toll on the budget, he said.

"One of our bands, Firehouse, decided to up its merch sales to pay for the gas," Lawrence said. "It took a real targeted effort to get more merch moved, but ultimately they were able to do it and it helped pay for a lot of the trip."

Another Artist Representation and Management band, Queensryche, is saving a bunch of money by doing their current tour via motorcycle for a promotion with VH1. Obviously, this isn't an option for a lot of bands looking to save on travel cost, but Lawrence said there are ways to get creative with travel budgets and even invite corporate sponsors to incur some of the costs.

The other way to fly without incurring any additional hassles is private jet service, although the costs can be exorbitant. Quotes from a popular jet broker service pegged 10-to-13 person flights at \$20,000 for a trip from Los Angeles to New York, and about \$80,000 from Los Angeles to London. A trip from Los Angeles to Rome, the most expensive travel listed, runs about \$100,000.

Some groups, like rockers REO Speedwagon, have found creative ways to defer the costs by offering licensing deals with airlines to use band logos to decorate jets that are then leased out to corporate clients, but for the most part, chartered jet service is still too costly for smaller acts.

"It's just way to much cost to justify," said Mark Green of Celebrity Talent Agency in New York. "Plus a lot of people feel more safe on a commercial jet than on a private airliner."

And while commercial airline flights are definitely slowed down and more inconvenient, Green said he's not seeing artist cancellations occur like they had after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Another air-related attack could reverse fortunes, but for now, artists realize that the show must go on.

"You either make a decision that you need the money, or you don't. That's what all this comes down to," Green said.

Anaheim, Calif. promoter John Cuda said he's not concerned about getting band members to shows — it's their equipment he's worried about. Lots of rock groups have sponsorship deals with instrument companies essentially banning them from checking in high-priced music equipment.

"I hope (The Department of Homeland Security) doesn't have to get out a screwdriver and open up every foot pedal and wawa-box," he said.

Maggiore said the new restrictions place more responsibility on individual show promoters and venues to supply the necessary equipment to get a concert off the ground.

"We already rely a lot on the promoter to provide most of the backline, and I think that's only going to increase," he said. "Especially for international shows, promoters are going to have to take more on. For the booking agents, we're going to have to be a lot more conscious about taking care of everything ahead of time.

Some of Maggiore's artists have sponsorship deals with musical instrument companies and national chains like Guitar Center. Maggiore said his artists will be looking more to instrument companies to help get equipment to shows, especially if artists have a difficult time boarding planes.

"Everyone is going to have to help out," he said. "The gigs are already booked, so the shows are going to happen." — Dave Brooks

Interviewed for this article: Jeff Lawrence, (651) 483-8754; Chris Maggiore, (213) 368-2112; John Cuda, (714) 991-5065; Mark Green (212) 539-6039.

S.J. Hannah as "Simba" and the Ensemble singing "He Lives In You" from The Lion King National Tour. ©2005, Disney. Photo Credit: Joan Marcus.



TPAC TAKES BROADWAY IN-HOUSE; LIVE NATION ADDS KANSAS CITY

Citing a desire to keep more money in town, the Tennessee Performing Arts Center, Nashville, has opted out of its 25-year relationship with Live Nation's Broadway Across America and its predecessor companies to present Broadway in-house. The change is effective June 30, 2007.

"Our contract dates back to Pace Theatrical Group 24 years ago," said Kathleen O'Brien, president and CEO of TPAC. "We may not have been their first market, but close. Back then, TPAC was a brand new performing arts center. Pace brought expertise we didn't have. Now we do."

The change also means from 2007 onward, the profit from presenting Broadway and from sponsorships tied to the series will go to the venue. "The revenues will stay here," O'Brien said.

From the 2001-2002 season through the 2005-2006 season, Live Nation and TPAC shared a total of \$1,575,500 in net ticket income, or \$787,750 each, said Lori Ward, TPAC senior director of Communications.

This is the second such severing effective with the 2007-08 season. The Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center (TBPAC) made a similar announcement in May (VT e-newsletter, June 7, 2006). Michael Kilgore, TBPAC vice president of marketing, said they have since announced the first booking in-house, *Lion King*, which returns to Tampa Bay Dec. 13, 2007-Jan. 26, 2008. The rest of the season will probably be announced by April. That Live Nation contract ends June 1, 2007.

Meanwhile, Steve Winton, CEO of North American Theatricals for Live Nation, said the good news is Live Nation has also signed a new client, the Kansas City (Mo.) Music Hall, for a seven-year deal beginning with the 2007-08 season. And more new clients will be announced in the fall, he said.

The Kansas City Music Hall, an art deco music hall that opened in 1935, is going through a \$13.4 million renovation that will deepen the stage by 15 feet and improve backstage facilities. It reopens in February of 2007 with the ability to host Broadway and with Live Nation booking it.

Winton characterized the termination of the longterm deals in Nashville and Tampa as mutual decisions. He concurred that in presenting Broadway, "the risk and reward ratio is more challenging" in today's environment and he understands the decisions made locally to maximize revenues. Live Nation has reorganized and the company is predominantly focused on music, but that's not to the detriment of Broadway, he said. "Live Nation will invest in 26 [Broadway] productions next year," he said.

TPAC's contract, generally set up in five-year increments, came up for renewal, and any prudent businessperson will review any contract at renewal time, O'Brien said. That was the genesis of this decision, not any change in market brought on by the upcoming opening of the Schermerhorn Concert Hall in Nashville or any change in Live Nation philosophy, she said.

"The needs for our organization and the expertise available in house, has grown," she said, from booking to marketing to ticketing. In part, that's through decades of building relationships and partly it's new hires that put TPAC in that position, she said. "Prior to July 1 of this year, we had never had anyone on staff where the job description was dedicated to programming," O'Brien said, citing Tom Baker in that role.

In addition, two more people have been recruited to work on programming, she said. Steve West, Go West Presents, will book concerts and comedy and pop. West is also the director of the War Memorial Auditorium, which is under TPAC's control. Christi Goins, who had worked for TPAC in the past, has been lured back to be director of programming. She will concentrate on Broadway, also with O'Brien. The first Broadway Series booked independently will be for the 2007-08 season.

Prior to the change, TPAC received rent on Broadway shows and the promoter profits and sponsorship dollars were split. For example, HCA/TriStar is the title sponsor for the Broadway series. That relationship, or one like it, will now be direct. Kilgore noted Tampa Bay also had the expertise to present Broadway in house. "Judy

[Judith Lisi, TBPAC president] has been an independent presenter before, when she ran the Shubert in New Haven. It's not a new role for her. She's very active on the board of the League of American Theaters and Producers and is the current chair of the Performing Arts Center Consortium."

TBPAC is also the largest PAC in its region with 2,600 seats in the Carol Morsani Hall, Kilgore said. "Producers are always going to look at the potential. Plus we have a track record and a base of 10,000 subscribers and 6,000 members (donors who get priority seating). That's a good base. Plus they've come here for years."

The Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center reported 100,000 visitors to its Web site every month and an e-mail database of 85,000-90,000 people, Kilgore continued. "We had the expertise in house and we had a desire to keep more money in the marketplace."

Bottom line for both performing arts centers is the revenue from Broadway that helps support everything else. "We do a lot of non-profit, mission-based programming that has to be subsidized," Kilgore said. "Two years ago we started a conservatory. We need to help nurture that. Going into the negotiations [with Live Nation], we just said we'd like to keep more money here. It really didn't work for them. It was all friendly and amicable." Live Nation's ties to Tampa Bay date back to the building's opening in 1987 when Zev Buffman, later absorbed by Live Nation predecessors, presented the first Broadway series at the new center.

In the future, Kilgore said the Tampa Bay Performing Arts center will probably take a larger role in investing in shows, which will add to its booking clout. He added that Broadway does very well in Tampa Bay, averaging 85 percent capacity for a 16-17 week series.

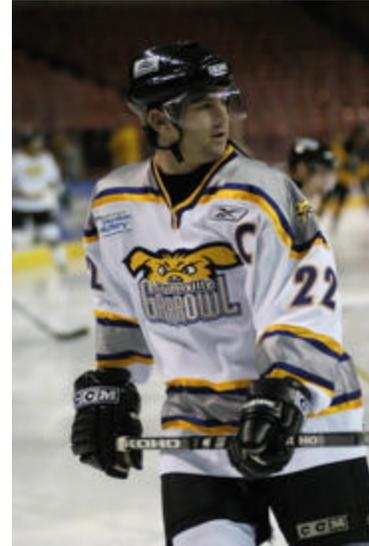
Past season numbers for TPAC in Nashville, including net ticket income, a facility fee and facility usage, include: 2002-2003, 12 weeks of Broadway, including Phantom of the Opera, \$1,142,274, (from which Live Nation earned \$120,750); 2003-2004, seven weeks, \$619,324 (\$22,095); 2004-2005, nine weeks, \$1,040,896 (\$238,540); and 2005-2006, six weeks, \$836,8868 (\$384,916)

TPAC typically presents seven to nine Broadway touring shows each year in the 2,472-seat Andrew Jackson Hall. Its subscription base provides approximately one-third of the total annual Broadway attendance, which averages over 100,000.

According to O'Brien, TPAC will immediately begin negotiations with producers and booking agents to schedule touring Broadway for the 2007-2008 performing arts season. By March 2007, TPAC expects to confirm its next line-up of Broadway tours.

The presenting partnership with Live Nation will continue through the upcoming HCA/TriStar Broadway Series at TPAC which opens on Sept. 19 with On Golden Pond, continues with Disney's The Lion King, The Rat Pack Live from Las Vegas, The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, and Sweet Charity in the series subscription package, and also includes the return of CATS and Mamma Mia! as special engagements. — Linda Deckard

Interviewed for this story: Kathleen O'Brien, (615) 782-4027; Lori Ward, (615) 782-4077; Michael Kilgore, (813) 222-1058; Steve Winton, (917) 421-5405



Greenville (S.C.) Grrrowl

BI-LO CENTER REGROUPS FOR LIFE WITHOUT THE GRRROWL

Five out of six managers of arenas in the South surveyed by Roger Newton, manager of the Bi-Lo Center, Greenville, S.C., for Centerplate, said they were better off financially without a hockey team. Those results were somewhat comforting to Newton who lost the Greenville Grrrowl of the ECHL when the team folded July 10.

He's had to put quality of life issues aside and deal with the financial future of the arena, which has housed the hockey team since it opened its doors in October 1998. It's complicated, however, because for Centerplate and Bi-Lo Center, the hockey team was tied into the privately-financed portion of the arena. That issue is still with the banks and the board, fodder for concern "beyond my pay scale," Newton said, though it certainly effects him.

Two weeks ago, Newton sent letters to the venue's 500 club seat holders who paid \$1,500 per seat per year for hockey season tickets (a \$750 value) and for a license fee that gives them plenty of amenities and first right of refusal to buy those seats for any other Bi-Lo event. "We take good care of them," Newton said.

So far, only one or two club seat holders have asked for refunds. He's budgeting as though only a handful will. The letter, signed by Chrissy Nalley, Premium Seating Manager, and dated July 28, assures premium seatholders the arena is working hard to bring more events to the arena and offers several options for the "restructured Club Seating program."

"We are pleased to announce the new annual Club Seat price has dropped to \$750 per seat. The security deposit will now be \$250 per seat and the lease terms will be 3 or 5 years," Nalley wrote.

The options are to double the number of seats, say from two to four, which also includes a free parking pass for every event (two for eight), at a price of \$750 per seat; adding a free year to the existing contract at no additional cost, absorbing that additional season ticket payment; or, option C, taking the first year of a contract renewal agreement free, the out for those whose lease expires in August 2007. Clients were asked to respond by Aug. 22.

Newton said the operating budget for the Bi-Lo Center is \$4.3 million for the upcoming year. He is projecting 80 events in the new hockey-less world, compared to 100 typically with the Grrrowl and down from an arena high of 120-125 when there were several sports franchises in the arena. Importantly, 20 of those events will probably be concerts. With newly available Friday and Saturday night dates during hockey season, he's budgeting for 23 concerts. Newton points out the Bi-Lo Center benefits from the fact there is no major amphitheater in the area. He said he is also negotiating for a possible new tenant, an indoor football franchise.

Operating expenses are budgeted at \$2.5 million before backing out management fees and debt service. "Most publically-owned arenas don't have to pay debt service," Newton noted.

But Bi-Lo was built as a public/private partnership. Three-fourths of the arena was built with public money, which is paid through taxes. But one-fourth was private, repaid through naming rights and operating revenues. "Centerplate was backstopping the debt service," Newton said. To entice the banks to cover the loan, Centerplate guaranteed that operating revenues would cover the debt or it would step up and do so. One time over all these years it has had to pay, Newton said. "The building has been successful event-wise and financially."

However, there is a clause in the contract that relieves Centerplate of that guarantee if the hockey team leaves the arena. Now that that has happened, "the banks don't have a backstop anymore. We don't know what the bank's game plan is," Newton said. He might guess the banks have to assume there will be sufficient operating revenues. "The balance on the loan is about \$12 million. In the scheme of things, it wasn't the biggest piece," Newton said. He doesn't expect wholesale changes for the arena because of that deal, but the bottom line is it's still wait and see if the banks come up with a refinancing plan or a different structure.

Newton concedes the situation in Greenville is not a cookie cutter minor league sports franchise deal. "Depending on how you want to sell it or spin it or couch our deal, one could argue that the building's going to take a huge financial hit or very little impact. I truly don't know. We've never had a situation without a hockey team. The more realistic assumption is the Bi-Lo will not close up, it will continue to operate. It has been one of the more successful secondary market buildings in the country year in and year out and will continue to be. It's just going to be operating differently."

He is definitely counting on that premium seat money to help. In its best years, the Grrrowl had 1,100 club seat holders, he recalled. The building got all the income from the first 600, and the team got its season ticket money from anything over 600. "When that number dropped below 600, they didn't realize any income. That's how we differ from typical deals, season ticket money usually gets to the team, but here, not at first and lately, not at all," Newton said.

From an arena manager's perspective, his issue is profitability. "For a building to be successful in minor league sports, they have to have good attendance. In the last three years, it hasn't been there," he said of the Grrrowl. The team averaged 2,500 turnstile count last year. The high was 4,500-4,600 in the early, profitable years. "For us, if you factor in the cost of keeping ice and utility costs and the spike in natural gas, if you don't count the club seat revenue, for the last three years, we've basically broken even on hockey," Newton said.

Sadly, only about 20-25 percent of the club seat holders actually used their game tickets, Newton added. "The majority of them owned the club seat because they had the right to buy great seats for concerts." That's why he thinks the option package will

salvage those license fees. In addition, the number one complaint from club seat holders was cost and now, without hockey, it has been slashed in half, he said. "We also allow them to purchase some additional tickets to concerts. For a big company, that's a good perk."

Ed Rubinstein, who managed the arena before becoming managing partner of an investment team that tried to save the Grrrowl (VT e-newsletter, April 6, 2005), had truly thought the team would get some financing from the Bi-Lo Center. "They said they'd advance us some money and give us some rent credits to keep us alive because we contribute so much money to the bottom line," he recalled. "When push came to shove, the money wasn't there. They decided they weren't going to put up any more money; they had lost enough. We ended up watching it tick away as the league took our membership from us when we couldn't post a letter of credit and tell them we were definitely going to play next year. They had to put out a schedule, which is understandable. Push came to shove and we are no more. It's unfortunate for us and for Bi-Lo Center."

He believes the hockey team actually helped the arena pay down a significant amount of debt this past year "that they would not have been able to do if we'd folded the year before. I wish it had turned out differently, but the fact is I think I did the right thing. Now it's on to the rest of my life."

Owning a minor league team is a tough business, Rubinstein learned. He recalled going to the ECHL board of governors meeting in June to gain additional time to implement their plan, which was financing from the Bi-Lo Center or from the banks that are now at risk for the guarantee.

"We lost about \$1 million this year," Rubinstein said of the Grrrowl. "Our expenses were close to where we expected them to be, but the unknown, workers comp expenses from previous years, expenses we incurred from previous owners, and being off quite a bit in ticket and sponsorship revenues from projections" made the difference. "We really were turning it around. We hired some people. We couldn't pay people by about the middle of May, but I was hoping, with financing, to pay and go forward. I'd brought everybody back."

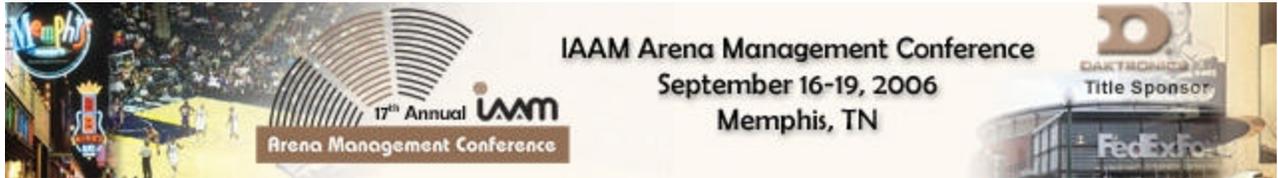
If there is a major culprit in minor league sports, it's workers comp, he said. "We purchased a workers comp policy through ECHL, but there is a huge deductible, and hockey is a rough sport. One of our guys got hurt this year, and two shoulder operations later we were looking at a huge bill." The options include making trade deals with hospitals and doctors, and the Grrrowl had them, "but you still have workers comp claims where people are not able to function later in life, have impairment ratings, and those things add up."

Rubinstein's group had expected to lose \$500,000 in the first year, with a goal to break even by the fourth year. Their operating budget was \$2 million. "We brought in more than \$1 million, but our expenses were more than \$2 million. Some stuff we didn't know about. We didn't get as full of an accounting as we hoped [from the former owner]," he said. When the team folded July 10, the Grrrowl had seven employees.

The Bi-Lo Center is owned by the Greenville Arena District. Centerplate manages it for them. — Linda Deckard

Interviewed for this story: Ed Rubinstein, (864) 414-9737; Roger Newton, (864) 250-4917

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HOTtickets

DELIRIUM DRIVES CLEVELAND CRAZY

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 July 25, 2006. To submit reports, e-mail HotTickets@venuestoday.com or fax to (714)

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

15,001 or More Seats

- 1) *Gross Sales: \$2,281,744; Event: Delirium; Venue: **Quicken Loans Arena, Cleveland**; Attendance: 25,686; Ticket Range: \$110.50-\$69.50; Promoter: Live Nation, Cirque du Soleil; Dates: Aug. 3-5; No. of Shows: 4*
- 2) *Gross Sales: \$1,129,770; Event: Ozzfest; Venue: **Tweeter Center for the Performing Arts, Mansfield, Mass.**; Attendance: 19,903; Ticket Range: \$85.75-\$39.75; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: Aug. 1; No. of Shows: 1*
- 3) *Gross Sales: \$1,074,620; Event: Mariah Carey; Venue: **American Airlines Arena, Miami**; Attendance: 13,156; Ticket Range: \$129.50-\$19.50; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: Aug. 5; No. of Shows: 1*
- 4) *Gross Sales: \$1,012,726; Event: Dave Matthews Band; Venue: **New England Dodge Music Center, Hartford, Conn.**; Attendance: 24,958; Ticket Range: \$55-\$36; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: July 29; No. of Shows: 1*
- 5) *Gross Sales: \$1,001,272; Event: Kenny Chesney; Venue: **New England Dodge Music Center, Hartford, Conn.**; Attendance: 22,256; Ticket Range: \$71-\$37; Promoter: AEG Live, Live Nation, The Messina Group; Dates: July 27; No. of Shows: 1*

10,001 - 15,000 Seats

- 1) *Gross Sales: \$1,095,343; Event: Dixie Chicks; Venue: **Halifax (Nova Scotia) Metro Centre**; Attendance: 17,650; Ticket Range: \$61.91; Promoter: AEG Live, Concerts West, Moore Entertainment Group, The Messina Group; Dates: Aug. 8-9; No. of Shows: 2*
- 2) *Gross Sales: \$663,658; Event: Dixie Chicks; Venue: **John Labatt Centre, London, Ontario**; Attendance: 9,271; Ticket Range: \$75.46-\$57.67; Promoter: AEG Live; Dates: Aug. 13; No. of Shows: 1*
- 3) *Gross Sales: \$524,252; Event: Chicago; Venue: **Nikon at Jones Beach Theater, Wantagh, N.Y.**; Attendance: 9,597; Ticket Range: \$86-\$20; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: July 28; No. of Shows: 1*
- 4) *Gross Sales: \$385,382; Event: Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers; Venue: **Spokane (Wash.) Arena**; Attendance: 6,922; Ticket Range: \$59-\$45; Promoter: Another Planet Entertainment; Dates: Aug. 1; No. of Shows: 1*
- 5) *Gross Sales: \$351,114; Event: River Riot '06; Venue: **WestFair Amphitheatre, Council Bluffs, Iowa**; Attendance: 14,064; Ticket Range: \$26; Promoter: Live Nation, Mammoth Live Radio Station; Dates: July 30; No. of Shows: 1*

5,001 - 10,000 Seats

- 1) *Gross Sales: \$429,885; Event: Dixie Chicks; Venue: **Harbour Station, Saint John, New Brunswick**; Attendance: 6,953; Ticket Range: \$61.91; Promoter: AEG Live, Concerts West, Moore Entertainment Group, The Messina Group; Dates: Aug. 10; No. of Shows: 1*
- 2) *Gross Sales: \$364,593; Event: 311; Venue: **Red Rocks Amphitheatre, Denver**; Attendance: 9,450; Ticket Range: \$39.25; Promoter: Live Nation, Bill Bass Concerts,*

Inc.; *Dates:* July 28; *No. of Shows:* 1

3) *Gross Sales:* \$363,096; *Event:* Maze Feat featuring Frankie Beverly; *Venue:* **Chastain Park Amphitheatre, Atlanta**; *Attendance:* 5,407; *Ticket Range:* \$78-\$38; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* July 28; *No. of Shows:* 1

4) *Gross Sales:* \$357,680; *Event:* Goo Goo Dolls, Counting Crows; *Venue:* **Mohegan Sun Arena, Uncasville, Conn.**; *Attendance:* 7,608; *Ticket Range:* \$70-\$50; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* July 31; *No. of Shows:* 1

5) *Gross Sales:* \$349,385; *Event:* Ween, Flaming Lips; *Venue:* **Red Rocks Amphitheatre, Denver**; *Attendance:* 9,471; *Ticket Range:* \$40.50-\$32; *Promoter:* Live Nation, Kroenke Sports Enterprises; *Dates:* July 29; *No. of Shows:* 1

5,000 or Fewer Seats

1) *Gross Sales:* \$1,283,572; *Event:* Mamma Mia!; *Venue:* **Fox Theatre, Atlanta**; *Attendance:* 24,360 *Ticket Range:* \$64-\$25; *Promoter:* Broadway in Atlanta; *Dates:* July 25-30; *No. of Shows:* 8

2) *Gross Sales:* \$858,415; *Event:* Jerry Seinfeld; *Venue:* **The Colosseum at Caesars Palace, Las Vegas**; *Attendance:* 8,170; *Ticket Range:* \$150-\$75; *Promoter:* AEG Live, Concerts West, In-House; *Dates:* Aug. 4-5; *No. of Shows:* 2

3) *Gross Sales:* \$338,585; *Event:* Widespread Panic; *Venue:* **Chicago Theatre** ; *Attendance:* 10,418; *Ticket Range:* \$32.50; *Promoter:* Jam Productions; *Dates:* Aug. 11-13; *No. of Shows:* 3

4) *Gross Sales:* \$325,841; *Event:* Gipsy Kings; *Venue:* **The Mountain Winery, Saratoga, Calif.**; *Attendance:* 3,475; *Ticket Range:* \$115-\$49.50; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* July 25-26; *No. of Shows:* 2

5) *Gross Sales:* \$273,756; *Event:* Tom Waits; *Venue:* **Auditorium Theatre, Chicago**; *Attendance:* 3,872; *Ticket Range:* \$73-\$48; *Promoter:* Jam Productions; *Dates:* Aug. 9; *No. of Shows:* 1

Compiled by Rob Ocampo, HotTickets@venuestoday.com



Scenes from last year's Sex and So Much More Show in Denver

TAMPA CONVENTION CENTER AXES ADULT SHOW

A Florida convention center has axed an adult-themed consumer adult show from holding an expo in one of its convention halls, sparking a first-amendment debate about accessibility to publicly owned meeting-facilities.

On Aug. 2, the city-owned Tampa Convention Center rejected an application by Canada-based Showcase Productions to host the "Sex and So Much More Show" in one of the center's large ballrooms. Facility director John Moors said the show violated local zoning ordinances, which ban adult entertainment from the downtown area where the convention center is based. City Attorney David Smith said the show included the "exposure of certain anatomical parts" and would have to be shifted to a part of town that allowed for strips clubs and sex shops.

"It's not an issue of rejecting their application, it's that there is an ordinance in place not allowing this type of activity in the downtown area," said Moors.

Event organizer Kari Calder rejected the claim that her show contained any nudity. "There are some aspects of adult entertainment, but our dancers wear pasties over their nipples and fuller thongs to cover themselves up," she said. "We're always very accommodating to facility needs and local laws."

Calder said the show consists off a large live entertainment portion featuring exotic dancers; a seminar area where local experts are brought in to discuss issues of sexuality; a beer garden and a vendor expo area with 125 to 155 vendor booths used by 50 to 75 exhibitors. Exhibitors range from adult-toy shops and DVD sales, to hot tubs, gym membership and beauty services.

"Basically anything that has to do with sexuality, whether its toys or just looking good, we carry it," she said. She estimated the show needed about 100,000 square-feet of convention center space to operate — most space offered by adult-theme facilities like strip clubs was far too small, she said.

Calder said her group is looking at challenging the Tampa ruling on the grounds that a public facility cannot discriminate against any group that wants to rent the facility.

The show has also been held up in Albuquerque, N.M. amid zoning concerns, although the Canadian group has been able to push forward with two shows at the Colorado Convention Center in Denver and the Minneapolis Convention Center earlier this year. Calder said she has rebooked the two cities for a 2007 tour and recently added Detroit's Joe Louis Arena and another in Phoenix, although she didn't release the facility name. Calder said she hopes to grow the event by two cities per year. Admission is generally \$20 to \$25 per person and limited to individuals 19 years or older.

"We understand that some 18-year-olds are high school seniors, so in the interest of protecting the parents, we're not allowing them to attend," she said.

While the show has drawn considerable press, it was a rather tame and orderly affair, said Jody Geiselhart, sales manager for the Minneapolis Convention Center which booked the show last November.

"We got a lot of publicity for the show and a few complaints, but mostly in went over very smoothly," Geiselhart said. "There was a copycat show a couple months later and it was very dirty and didn't do so well."

Geiselhart said the center did really well on concessions, especially alcohol and beer sales, although she didn't have any exact figures for the show. Geiselhart also said the convention center required additional police presence to monitor for nudity and

inappropriate behavior, but there were no incidents at the show. Neither Minneapolis nor Denver have zoning laws banning adult conventions.

Calder said her group will continue to monitor U.S. convention center laws and push for access into more markets as her company continues to grow.

"In Canada, these type of events are the most successful consumer trade shows around," she said. — Dave Brooks

Interviewed for this article: Kari Calder, (888) 268-0020; John Moors, (813) 274-8423; Judy Geiselhart, (612) 335-6000.

MARKETING

LIVE NATION DEAL CREATES NEW CLASS OF VIPS

Live Nation has entered into a new partnership with online community BurnLounge in hopes of creating a new class of industry VIPs at upcoming shows.

Whether the company's latest deal with BurnLounge realigns the music industry remains to be seen, but the project has the potential to elevate the fan beyond hardcore enthusiast into a music retail player with VIP access to shows and concerts, said BurnLounge Founder and President Ryan Dadd.

"If you're in the record business, you take for granted the access you're afforded to concerts," Dadd said. "This deal shares that access with music fans and rewards them in ways that are unique to the record business."

BurnLounge pegs itself as the world's first community-powered digital music service, allowing fans to create online storefronts and pedal downloads of singles and full length albums, receiving a percentage of each sale they refer. The Live Nation deal — with financial terms remaining undisclosed — would give BurnLounge's top-tiered online retailers access to special privileges and amenities at select Live Nation amphitheaters — mostly in Los Angeles, Charlotte, N.C., Nashville, Houston, Miami and other South and Southwest cities.

BurnLounge fans will be given access to VIP parking, VIP access areas and other promotions like early entry into shows and meet and greets. They'll also be eligible for a number of free ticket giveaways, Dadd said. In exchange, Live Nation will run live data feeds on BurnLounge sites with information about live events and links to purchase tickets. The site gives Live Nation the opportunity to offer targeted marketing to music buyers willing to make purchases online.

The new deal is only offered to BurnLounge's top tiered customers, who pay \$429.95 per year to run a high-end online store-front peddling their favorite music. The Web site is part MySpace and part iTunes, with users interacting in a social-networking environment where they chat in real-time and share comments and images. The site is dedicated to music and users recommend songs to others. If a buyer decides to purchase a song from another user who made the same recommendation, the user will be given a small fraction of the download sale — like iTunes, music goes for 99 cents per song and \$10 for a full length album. The basic user can maintain a site for \$29.95 per year and all users have access to BurnLounge's 2-million track catalogue.

“We have access to all four major record labels and thousands of independent record labels,” he said.

BurnLounge’s higher-tiered customers have access to the company’s promotional and sales material, as well as online and print advertising materials. There’s also a print BurnLounge magazine that keeps retailers updated on new music. Dadd said some of his customers maintain large catalogs of music with elaborate customized playlists and real world listening parties to promote their latest downloads.

To Dadd, the company could be the modern reincarnation of the mom and pop record stores that used to flourish in college towns before digital music services forced many out of business. Just as the smaller shops would compete with national chains, now smaller BurnLounge retailers find themselves competing with big names like iTunes and the new, legal Napster. Dadd said he hopes BurnLounge retailers can enjoy a similar relationship with venues that smaller record stores used to have now that the Live Nation deal has been inked.

The Internet application is also being increasingly used by record company street teams, as well as emerging artists hoping to record and release their own music, Dadd said. Major artists like Kanye West, Kiss, Good Charlotte, Hootie and the Blowfish, James Brown and Willie Nelson all have their own online storefronts.

For Live Nation, the deal marks another in a series of recent acquisitions and mergers to grow the company’s presence in the music community and further capture a chunk of the entertainment business. In June, Live Nation purchased Michael Cohl’s Concert Productions International, followed by House of Blues Entertainment on July 5, sale in progress (VT e-newsletter, July 12, 2006), and then specialty-merchandise Trunk Ltd. eight days later (VT e-newsletter July 26, 2006). The company entered the online foray earlier this month when it purchased fan club site Musictoday (VT e-newsletter August 9, 2006).

Officials with Live Nation didn’t return repeated calls for comment, but Live Nation President and Chief Executive Officer of Global Venues and Alliances Bruce Eskowitz said in a recent press release “We are excited to offer these special benefits to the passionate music fans of the BurnLounge community. We look forward to welcoming them in our venues across the country.” — Dave Brooks

Interviewed for this story: Ryan Dadd, (212) 925-0250

CONCESSIONS



Hussong's at the Orange County Fair, Costa Mesa, Calif., inside and out.

MEXICAN LANDMARK CANTINA REPLICATED AT CALIFORNIA FAIRS

In an effort to bring two worlds closer together, while at the same time, create something totally different, Nick Nicora, vice president of business development, Ovation Food Services, with the help of others, has developed Hussong's Traveling Cantina.

The 6,000 square-foot traveling restaurant, bar and entertainment facility has already played the Orange County Fair, Costa Mesa, Calif., July 19-30, where approximately 110,000 visitors were drawn into the establishment. Hussong's Traveling Cantina also grossed a quarter of a million dollars at Costa Mesa "right off the bat," Nicora said.

It is now at the Cal Expo (California Exposition and State Fair, Sacramento) Aug. 11-Sept. 4. Plans are to move it to the Los Angeles County Fair, Pomona, Sept. 8-Oct. 1. Nicora is still negotiating with one other fair for this season.

"I think it is pretty incredible," said Norb Bartosik, C.E.O., Cal Expo. "I haven't seen anything like this since Ovation built Big Bear Frontier, our on-grounds saloon. I think the response is going really well. It is set up next to the rodeo arena. It is getting good foot traffic."

Nicora, owner of Fanfare Enterprises which merged with Ovation in 2001, said this whole endeavor started with a trip to Mexico, to the Aja Baja, a tradeshow for the Mexican agricultural industry.

"We went with the Ensenada city mayor to this little hole in the wall, Hussong's," Nicora said. "I just couldn't quit thinking about it. It had entertainment and it is where the Margarita was invented. It is a very famous place. We were talking about how we could bring these two cultures together."

Nicora traveled back to Baja, Mexico, and visited again with the mayor.

"We were at an event and he said, 'I will introduce you to Ricardo Hussong,' " Nicora said.

"Then, we heard a 'Me?' Ricardo was sitting right behind us."

The relationship was formed over the next six or seven months.

"I could use his name and replicate this bar and bring it to the fairs," Nicora said. "But, then, we began thinking that it is sometimes hard to bring the perception of a bar to fairs so we needed something else."

It was then decided to add a small part of the Hotel Caesar, Tijuana, where allegedly the Caesar Salad originated. It could be combined with Hussong's.

The end result is that one half of the facility makes a customer feel like they are sitting next to the pool area at Hotel Caesar, Nicora said. The other half is so much an exact replica of Hussong's that Nicora said they even took photos off the wall of the original Hussong's, duplicated them, and pinned the duplicates on Ovation's Hussong's.

"We actually had someone come in and look over at the photos and say, 'Hey, that's me!'"

The establishment was created by Angel City Design, a professional Hollywood set design company. It can be moved in two semis. The original investment totaled about \$350,000, Nicora said. It costs about \$25,000 to move it. It seats 200 people at 50 tables. The Hotel Caesar half has green turf to make customers feel they are sitting in the gardens by the pool at the original hotel. The Cantina half is floored with tan turf. It opens with the fair and closes with the fair. Customers are in and out all day, with crowds waxing and waning throughout the day.

"We have a pretty good wave coming in to eat dinner from about 5-8 p.m.," Nicora said. "Then, they leave and go out on the midway or other parts of the fair. Then, we have a whole other crowd come in again about 9:30-10 p.m. That is when it takes on more of a bar atmosphere. But, it is definitely for the whole family. We see many very young children up there dancing."

The band this season is Cokodrilo, one of the original bands that have played at the Hussong's in Baja.

The Cantina serves an array of foods including, of course, the Caesar salad, but also the Baja-style taco. Nicora said foods are fresh and homemade. The sauces are authentic. All beer sold is bottled beer and the best ingredients go into the Margaritas, he said.

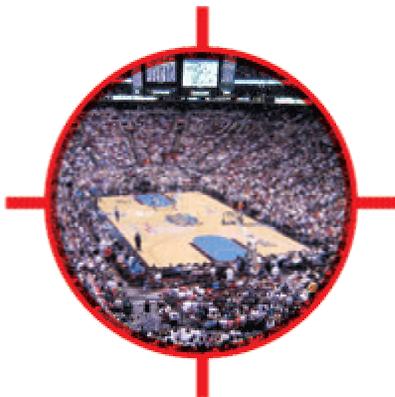
The original Hussong's is a family-run operation. Ricardo is the grandson of the founder, Juan, according to reported information. A bartender in 1941 was reported to have come up with the Margarita concoction.

The Caesar salad legend credits a Caesar Cardini with the creation of the dressing recipe. He is reportedly an Italian immigrant. Although the Cardinis lived in San Diego, they operated a restaurant in Tijuana to circumvent Prohibition.

Whatever the truths be, the Ovation's Hussong's Cantina is certainly not just selling the typical hot dogs and beer. "Part of our job is to keep people at the events longer," Nicora said. "The longer they stay, the better the experience." — Pam Sherborne

Interviewed for this story: Nick Nicora, (510) 501-9900; Norb Bartosik, (916) 263-3000

ARENA FEVER!



Coming in **September** is our annual **Spotlight on Arenas**. This important issue is complete with what's new in arenas, the latest in-depth construction charts, booking and marketing trends. Don't pass up this chance to invite acts into your world, get the attention of arena managers, or put your arena on the map! **ADVERTISE today!**

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SHORT TAKES

TRADE SHOW ORGANIZER SUES OVER EL PASO CONVENTION CENTER

Borderland Network Productions, producers of the Borderland Trade Show, is suing El Paso (Texas) Convention Center operator SMG over allegations the group double booked the center. Borderland was planning to hold its trade show in the center in March 2010, but the center already has a contract with the U.S. Bowling Congress to host the five-month National Women's Bowling Tournament. Borderland organizer Larry Stelley said his group already had an agreement to rent the facility in 2010, a claim the convention center denies.

Contact: Larry Stelley, (915) 771-7061

AEG TO BREAK GROUND ON NEW STADIUM

The official groundbreaker for Red Bull Park, a 25,000-seat soccer stadium in Secaucus, N.J., is set to take place on Sept. 19 at 11:30 a.m. EST. The stadium is the center for a three-million square-foot mixed-used development called the Harrison MetroCentre. When completed in summer 2008, the park will be home to the New York Red Bulls of Major League Soccer and will be owned and operated by AEG.

Contact : Nick Sakiewicz, (201) 583-7000

LIVE NATION RENEWS SUPERCROSS DEAL

Live Nation, producers of the Amp'd Mobile AMA Supercross Series, has renewed its Supercross Sanctioning Agreement with the American Motorcyclist Association (AMA) to run through 2019. The deal extends Live Nation's current sanctioning contract that covers both the AMA Supercross Series and the AMA Arenacross Series. Live Nation and its predecessors have been producing the event for 30 years.

Contact: AMA Pro Racing (614) 856-1900

ONTARIO PRODUCING A RACETRACK FAN FEST

The Ontario (Calif.) Convention Center is producing the Ontario Fan Fest from 4-10 p.m. Aug. 31 to kick off the racing at the California Speedway, Fontana, that culminates in the Sony HD 500 Nextel Cup Sept. 3. The Fontana Racefest was cancelled this year because of construction at the speedway and conflicts in the downtown area, but that event was hit and miss anyway, according to Ontario personnel. Fontana does host a February event in conjunction with the Auto Club 500 Nextel Cup. Bob Brown, general manager of the Ontario Convention Center, has lined up Stater Bros. Supermarkets as a sponsor and hopes to make it an annual event.

Contact: Bob Brown, (909) 937-3001

LANDMARK SIGNS ITS FIRST CLIENTS

Landmark Event Staffing Services announced it has reached agreements to provide crowd management services for its first clients, the McAfee Coliseum and Oakland Arena in Oakland, Calif., and the University of California, Berkeley. Landmark, founded

by Pete Kranske and Mike Harrison, will provide full-service crowd management solutions to the new clients.

Contact: Bill George, (916) 797-8878

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

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Staples Center - VP, Food & Bev/Corporate Hospitality (Los Angeles)

STAPLES Center seeks experienced VP for F&B/Corporate Hospitality Department. VP is responsible for daily oversight of all f&b operations. Works with Levy Restaurants to develop menus and pricing structure. Institutes cost control procedures and standards of performance. Analyzes and evaluates food & beverage management, profit and loss statement information to determine alternate courses of action required. Responsible for development, marketing and sale of Corporate VIP events and programs. EOE.

[Click here to apply online: http://AEGworldwide.teamworkonline.com/teamwork/r.cfm?i=9927](http://AEGworldwide.teamworkonline.com/teamwork/r.cfm?i=9927)

L.A. Live - Technical Director

l.a.live, a new entertainment district in downtown Los Angeles featuring the STAPLES Center, new music club, various retail stores and theatres, seeks a Technical Director, to coordinate/supervise house crew & oversee maintenance, budget & equipment. EOE.

[Click here to apply online.](#)

Food & Beverage Director - Fredericksburg Expo & Conference Ctr

Seeking energetic professional to manage the catering and concession operations at the new Fredericksburg Expo and Conference Center. The ideal candidate will have 5 + years of progressive Convention, Upscale Catering or Hotel Food & Beverage GM experience. Previous banquet mgt, catering sales exp and knowledge of local market a +! ServSafe and TIPS required. Forward resume to Regional Vice President, Boston Culinary Group at the following: bcgnortheast@aol.com.

Sacramento Convention Center Complex - Theater and Auditorium Manager

Responsible for the daily operation of the Community Center Theater and historic Memorial Auditorium. For specific application information and requirements, visit www.cityofsacramento.org under "Employment", "Exempt Positions", "Event Services Manager" July 17 – Aug. 25, 2006.

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FT, salaried position as the chief executive officer of non-profit organization responsible for all theater operations and programming in a 1,400 seat renovated Fox Theater.

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The Lakeland (Fla.) Center - Client Service Manager

Candidate will oversee the organization of facility bookings, manage a part-time FOH staff, coordinate event distribution, review event plans, monitor contract compliance, invoicing, prepare budgets, conduct pre/post event planning mtgs, and assist the sales dept. Knowledge of USI (Ungerboeck Systems International), or other computer based event mgt systems, and Roomviewer is a plus.

[To learn more and apply on-line, click here.](#)

To submit news or information to **Venues Today** contact:

Linda Deckard, Publisher, Editor-in-chief
(714) 378-5400, ext. 22
linda@venuestoday.com

Dave Brooks, Staff Writer
(714) 378-5400, ext. 24
dave@venuestoday.com

Rob Ocampo, Hot Tickets/Top Stops Manager
(714) 378-5400, ext. 21
rob@venuestoday.com

For advertising information, contact:

Sue Nichols, Eastern Region
(615) 662-0252
sue@venuestoday.com

Pauline Davis, South Central Region
(615) 356-0398
pauline@venuestoday.com

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