

From: Nazarene Kahn <nazarene@venuestoday.com>
Subject:
Date: July 16, 2009 4:00:52 PM PDT

M MOBILE SOLUTIONS *Fueled by Design*
www.mobileprofits.com
PHONE: (888) 310-1620 EMAIL: bruce@mobileprofits.com



VT PULSE

A WEEKLY PUBLICATION FROM VENUES TODAY

July 15, 2009 • VOL. VIII, Number 22 • ISSN 1547-4143

Quote of the Week

“There was a lot of blood on the octagon from the earlier bouts, which can be either a good thing or a bad thing when you’re trying to use the space for logos and branding.”

– Dana White, CEO, Ultimate Fighting Championships, on sponsor fulfillment at his events.

In this Issue

THE NEWS

[UFC Nears Record With \\$5 Million 100th Bout In Vegas](#)

[Javits Center Gets Renovation, Some New Space](#)

[Limp Bizkit Find Novel Ways To Promote Free Las Vegas Gig](#)

Greetings,

Welcome to VT Pulse, your weekly guide to the news behind the headlines. What happens in Vegas makes headlines this week. Dave Brooks is there attending Ticket Summit, which he'll report on next week. We'll all be in Boston for IAAM July 24-28. If you have stories about Team Leiweke, please send them to linda@venuestoday.com.

SUSTAINABLE MINDS



Give your business a lift, advertise in VT Green issue!

HOT TICKETS

[Beyonce Brings 'All The Single Ladies To Philly](#)

THE BEAT

[Faces & Places: Don Poor Heads to the Ocean](#)

[Tickets Slow, But Sponsorship Holds for MLB](#)

DEPARTMENTS

Short Takes

HELP WANTED

CONTACT VT PULSE

SHORT TAKES

>> **HARTMAN GOES IN-HOUSE** Food and drink concessions at Hartman Arena, Wichita, Kan., will reportedly be taken in house in early September. Sodexo currently holds the contract. The new operator will be Hartmoor Concessions.

Contact: John Nath, (316) 744-8880

>> CONCERT CLOSER

Pearl Jam will be the last band to ever perform at the Spectrum, Philadelphia, when they perform their only East Coast appearances at the soon-to-close arena on Oct. 28 and Oct. 30. They last performed at the Spectrum in 2003. Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band will perform Oct. 13 and Oct. 14.

Contact: Ike Richman, (215) 389-9552

We're publishing our first 2009 Stewards of Sustainability Awards in the August issue!

Green Initiative: Idea or solution that promotes environmental stewardship

Green Pioneer: Individual that pushes for environmentalism

Green Attitude: Company/individual promoting a green attitude that permeates the organization

Contact your VT Representative today!

Ad Deadline: July 29

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

Pauline Davis, Texas
(615) 243-7883
pauline@venuestoday.com

Rich DiGiacomo, Western, Northeast U.S. & Int'l
(310) 429-3678

rich@venuestoday.com
Samantha Le, Midwest
(714) 378-5400

samantha@venuestoday.com

VT NEWS

BOOKINGS

UFC NEARS RECORD WITH \$5 MILLION 100TH BOUT IN VEGAS

The UFC's new villain Brock Lesnar weighs in before UFC 100 at the Mandalay Bay Events Center in Las Vegas.





SUBSCRIBE

Do you find VT Pulse interesting and can't wait for more?

Subscribe today and get three great resources!

Each monthly issue of Venues Today will bring you information, news, photos, trends, features and more for the public assembly facility management industry.

The weekly e-newsletter is also full of all original reporting delivered to you in a timely fashion. Keep up with who's who and what's going on as it happens!

Subscribers have online access to our archive database. This feature allows you to view articles OR charts published in either the magazine or the e-newsletter.

[CLICK TO SUBSCRIBE](#)



The Ultimate Fighting Championship celebrated its centennial match Saturday with a title bout at the Mandalay Bay Events Center in Las Vegas. UFC 100 was supposed to be a coming-of-age for the 15-year-old fighting league, and while a few in-cage antics during the title fight did make CEO Dana White grimace, he believes the event's healthy gate and attendance proved that Ultimate Fighting was establishing itself as a world-class event.

White reported that the July 11 Ultimate Fighting Championship made \$5.1 million in tickets sales, with 11,000 tickets sold, along with undisclosed revenues from pay-per-view and sponsorships.

"It was the second highest grossing UFC bout in history," White told Venues Today. "We were about \$300,000 short of the gate we did at UFC 66 when we had Chuck Liddell fighting Tito Ortiz. That was a big one, but it had 1,000 more paid tickets because of the configuration of the MGM (Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas), so this fight was very comparable."

Fighter payroll cost the UFC an additional \$1.8 million, with \$400,000 paydays going to heavyweight champion Brock Lesnar and welterweight titleholder Georges St-Pierre. The payroll figure does not include \$400,000 that was awarded in "fight night" bonuses that were handed out after the event. Each title fight winner received a record \$100,000.

"From an event standpoint, we were very pleased with both the numbers and the production," White said. "I got a lot of feedback that the broadcast looked great and our sponsors felt we activated their brands in a professional way. There was a lot of blood on the octagon from the earlier bouts, which can be either a good thing or a bad thing when you're trying to use the space for logos and branding."

Chris Baldizan, vice president of entertainment, Mandalay Bay Events Center, concurred that it was a spectacular weekend. The arena not only hosted the main event, but also had 3,500 show up for the weigh-in the day prior to the event, during setup.

UFC also booked 100,000 sq. ft. of the Mandalay Bay Conference Center for a Fan Expo on Friday and Saturday. UFC sold tickets for \$20 and published reports had attendance numbers in the 40,000-range. Fan Expo featured vendor booths, Q&A sessions, demonstrations and competitions, similar to an NBA Jam or NFL Experience. Baldizan said this was the trial run for the expo but he expects they will do more of them where space is available.

Orchestrated events also included a major press conference Thursday, July 9, at the House of Blues. The event has come a long way since 2000 when tickets were \$50 and controversy was rife. Marketing elements like The Ultimate Fighter show on Spike TV, a reality show of sorts, have helped bring UFC into the main stream of bookable events, Baldizan observed.

White did note that the behavior of heavy-weight champ Lesnar was a bit disconcerting at the most recent event. After pummeling Frank Mir with over a dozen painful face punches in the second round to win the fight, Lesnar celebrated his victory by running around the Octagon and flipping off the crowd. During his post-fight interview, which was broadcast to the entire audience, Lesnar made a series of controversial statements, at one point even calling out sponsor Budweiser saying, "I'm going to go home and drink a Coors Light because Bud is not paying me anything," and his comments went downhill from there.



CONTACT US

To submit news or information, contact:

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

Dave Brooks
Senior Writer & Assignment Editor
(714) 378-5400, ext. 24
dave@venuestoday.com

Samantha Le
Marketing & Sales Associate
(714) 378-5400 ext. 23
samantha@venuestoday.com

Rob Ocampo
Operations Manager::Resource Guides
(714) 378-5400, ext. 27
rob@venuestoday.com

Riley Camarillo
Hot Tickets/Top Stops Coordinator
(714) 378-5400, ext. 29
riley@venuestoday.com

Nazarene Kahn
Resource Guides Coordinator
(714) 378-5400, ext. 25
nazarene@venuestoday.com

Bintal Patel
intern@venuestoday.com

Vanessa Bentley
intern@venuestoday.com

For advertising information, contact:

Sue Nichols
Eastern U.S.
(615) 662-0252
sue@venuestoday.com

Pauline Davis
Texas
(615) 243-7883

White said the behavior infuriated him and he chastised Lesnar in the locker room. Lesnar later appeared at the press conference and apologized for his behavior. He explained that before the UFC, he had worked as a fighter with World Wrestling Entertainment and he was used to “being in a world that was strictly entertainment.”

“We talked and I think it was clear that he had really been caught up in the emotion of the fight and was behaving in a way that might have been acceptable elsewhere,” White said. “I do not condone that type of behavior. I expect my fighters to be professionals first.”

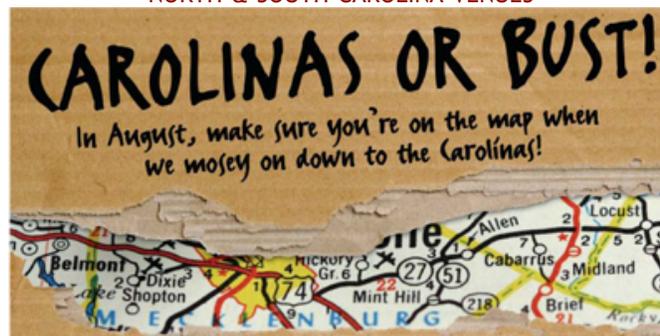
The next fight, UFC 101, is scheduled for Aug. 8 at the Wachovia Spectrum in Philadelphia. – Dave Brooks



Las Vegas venue and entertainment managers enjoying UFC 100 at the Mandalay Bay Events Center on July 11 are, front row, from left: Scott Voeller, VP of Marketing, Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino; Steve Stallworth, GM, South Point Arena; and Bobby Reynolds, VP, AEG Live Las Vegas. Back row, from left, Mark Prows, VP, MGM Grand Garden; Chris Baldizan, VP of Entertainment, Mandalay Bay; Pat Christenson, president, Las Vegas Events; Daren Libonati, executive director, Thomas & Mack Center; Dale Eeles, VP, Corporate Marketing, Las Vegas Events; and Mike Krebs, VP, Goldenvoice/AEG Live.

Interviewed for this article: Dana White, (702) 221-4780; Chris Baldizan, (702) 632-7551

NORTH & SOUTH CAROLINA VENUES



Our August '09 issue will feature North and South Carolina venues, Top

pauline@venuestoday.com

Rich DiGiacomo
Mid & Western U.S.,
International
(310) 429-3678
rich@venuestoday.com

To update a Fair or
Festival Listing for the VT
Resource Guide, contact:

Rob Ocampo
(714) 378-5400, ext.
27rob@venuestoday.com

HELP WANTED

[VIEW THE FULL LISTINGS](#)

**Melbourne (Australia) &
Olympic Parks - Event
Project Manager**

Venues West, Australia
-Director of Venue Services

**Harlem Globetrotters
International, Ariz.**
-Director of Ticket Sales

Venues West, Australia
-Director of Business
Development & Marketing

**Western Australian
(Australia) Cricket
Association - Events
Coordinator**

**Colorado Springs World
Arena and Pikes Peak
Center - Event Service
Coordinator**

[VIEW THE FULL LISTING](#)

Stops, construction and renovation projects.
Contact your local VT sales rep for ad reservations!
Ad Deadline: July 29

CONSTRUCTION

JAVITS CENTER GETS RENOVATION, SOME NEW SPACE

A rendering for the expansion of the Javits Center, New York.



New York City's 23-year-old, 765,000-square-foot convention center will not get the multi-billion renovation once envisioned by state officials, but construction will begin shortly on a more modest \$463-million facelift and exhibit space addition that will not require the venue's closure.

"This latest plan is going to respond more to the day-to-day needs of the convention center," said Elizabeth Mitchell, downstate director, public affairs for Empire State Development Corporation. "The most important aspect is that it is shovel-ready and will create thousands of good middle-class jobs and construction jobs."

A 100,000-sq.-ft. expansion will be a new wing with independent entry and exit points, constructed on the block bounded by 39th Street, 11th Avenue, 40th Street and 12th Avenue, and will contain 40,000 sq. ft. of new column-free exhibit space, along with 60,000 square feet of new pre-function and registration areas, restrooms, food service areas, a truck court and loading docks. The new wing will connect to the current building via a second-story concourse.

Renovations include a new 6.5-acre environmentally-friendly roof, transparent glazing to replace the black-mirrored exterior glass, and upgrades to the mechanical and electrical systems.

"Those are issues that need to be addressed, and based on economic factors, show managers ought to be happy they are addressing them," said Ken McAvoy, senior vice president of operations for Reed Exhibitions of the Americas, a company that brings between eight and 12 shows a year into the venue. "We're happy it is moving forward with a resolution we can all live with."

The state plans to seek LEED Silver certification for the building and green features are expected to result in a 26 percent reduction in energy

use. Construction of the FXFOWLE and A. Epstein & Sons International designs is expected to begin by Fall and finish in 2013.

Earlier designs would have added up to 300,000 new square feet with a \$4 billion-to-\$5 billion price tag.

Funding will come from \$390 million in hotel fee bonds, raised by a \$1.50 per room hotel tax imposed for a 40-year period on daily room rentals in the five Boroughs of New York City, along with \$65 million in excess earnings, and \$8 million in unrestricted funds. The renovation is expected to cost \$391 million and the expansion \$38.7 million with soft costs running \$40 million.

Mitchell said the venue would remain open during construction though those logistics were still being worked out.

“We are waiting for the logistics piece,” McAvoy said. “We assume we will be able to continue, but if some shows are impacted too severely, we’ll have to make changes.”

“It is positive,” said Chris Heywood, vice president of travel and tourism public relations for NYC & Co., the city’s marketing, tourism and partnership organization. “There had been some frustration [among meeting planners] about when it would take place, and what it would be. At this point, we are pleased there is something, especially during this global recession.” – Liz Boardman

Interviewed for this article: Elizabeth Mitchell, (212) 803-3740; Ken McAvoy (203) 840-4800; Chris Heywood (212) 484-1200

MARKETING

LIMP BIZKIT FIND NOVEL WAYS TO PROMOTE FREE LAS VEGAS GIG

The Pearl Concert Theater at the Palms Casino in Las Vegas.



Assuming you’re not a classic rock act with several generations of fans, or a beloved boy band reunited for one last go at it, how does a rock group with a somewhat checkered history create excitement for their first live U.S. show in eight years? It helps if you’ve sold 20 million records and you just wrapped up a well-received Eastern European tour of festivals and arenas, but it helps more if the show you’re offering is free.

That’s one of the ways late 90s nu-metal rockers Limp Bizkit have devised to create excitement about their July 18 show at the Pearl Concert Theater at the Palms Casino in Las Vegas. The other is by

tapping into a new social networking medium that gives fans a say in what songs they will hear at the show.

After getting a call from the band's manager, Michael Greco, vice president of Entertainment at the Palms, said owner George Maloof was more than happy to oblige. "They said they'd love to do a show at the Palms and we jumped all over the opportunity," said Greco. "They have a built-in fanbase and they wanted to do something for those fans, which is what makes it nice."

The Palms gave the room to the band, he added. "We thought it was very cool in today's times that a band wanted to do something so amazing for their fans. There is also a tremendous amount of exposure to not just new clientele, but new media outlets who might not have had the venue on their radar, bloggers, social media - it was just great exposure all around."

The eclectic mix of locals and tourists that are constantly churning through the casino has made the show easy to promote through such traditional means as local radio advertising and good old word-of-mouth, Greco said, adding that the casino's hosts also reached out to their large client base to spread the word. "Las Vegas is a tight knit community, so you tell two people and they tell two people ... we've gotten an influx of calls and we are expecting a heavy turnout," he said.

The band suggested the show for 2,700 diehards be free as a means of thanking their fans, who will be offered tickets on a first come, first served basis.

The Palms gig came after a previously scheduled July 10 one-off U.S. date during the UFC 100 weekend in Las Vegas at Mandalay Bay Beach was canceled citing a disagreement with the venue over DVD rights. In order to make it up to disappointed fans who'd bought tickets to that show, the group is offering a free t-shirt to all attendees of the Palms gig, as well as a unique opportunity to help shape the set list for the show using a new social networking tool that was not available when they last played U.S. dates in 2001.

Tapping into the two-year-old company PickRset – which has devised an application that allows users to vote on which songs they want to hear at an upcoming show – Limp Bizkit has been able to reach out to more than one million potential fans on a variety of social networking platforms. PickRset was created in 2007 by Chris Siglin, who also owns the band merchandising company Tsurt Merchandise, which creates merch for Bizkit, as well as dozens of other bands including Pearl Jam, Blink-182 and Bad Religion.

"PickRset was spawned out of that relationship with these bands with the thought that if we could create an environment where there is more of a back-and-forth conversation between the bands and fans it could result in more camaraderie and fans buying more merch and tickets because they feel more invested in the band," said Siglin.

When Bizkit's manager and singer, Fred Durst, first conceived of the free show, since Siglin was already on board to provide the merchandise (including the free commemorative t-shirt), he suggested the PickRset connection as a logical way to make the fans even more invested in attending the event. "That really slams it home, with the free t-shirt and the free show, you make it as fan-friendly as you can and I pitched it to them and they loved it," said Siglin.

The band, whose reputation with critics has long been overshadowed by

their loyal fan base, warmed up for the U.S. show with a string of European dates in 20 countries. The original lineup is in the studio now working on their first album of new material in nine years.

With Durst already actively talking to the band's fans on Twitter and other social networking sites, Siglin explained to the band that beyond allowing fans to choose songs for the set at the Pearl, PickRset also allows Bizkit members to upload photos and other media through their mobile devices to any and all social networking sites they are members of with the touch of a single button. "This gives a tool to the band to connect with fans on all networks to quickly find out what it is the band is trying to convey, whether it's ideas, tour dates or whatever else," Siglin said.

And, thanks to a new PickRset application for Facebook, bands can now post their merchandise on the site as well as ads for their tours (which they couldn't before). Siglin is helping the band get the word out about the show using those novel means, but also by doing lots of off-site advertising to promote the show, including many more news blasts than usual to his users across the band's vast social network presence. "We're hitting them on all levels to hammer home that this is a big deal," he said, noting that he's already sent out 1.5 million news blasts on top of the band's own news updates on their Twitter, Facebook, Bebo and MySpace feeds.

Greco expects many more than 2,700 fans to show up on the day of the concert and said he's not worried about the cost of the show because it is something the venue wanted to do. "We're not expecting to make money on merchandising because of the free t-shirt and if there is bar revenue, that's terrific, but this is just a great way to introduce the venue to people who haven't seen it," he said of the two-year-old theater.

Staffing costs alone to the venue, including security, ticket takers, box office, medics, etc., averages \$8,000 for a sold out show, according to Alissa Kelly, PR Plus. That does not include catering, stage hands, and marketing which vary widely per show, including the free ones.— Gil Kaufman

Contacted for this story: Chris Siglin, (949) 363-0800; Michael Greco, (702) 696-1999; Alissa Kelly, (702) 696-1999

INDUSTRY ICONS



Our August issue spotlights our **Publisher's Pick: The Leweikes**. Join us in celebrating the accomplishments of these sports and entertainment icons, including:

Tim, President and CEO of AEG

Tod, CEO/VSE, Seattle Seahawks, First & Goal Inc.

Terry, President and CEO of the World Series of Golf

Tracey, Boardmember of the World Series of Golf

Contact your VT Rep for ad reservations!

Ad deadline: July 29

HOTTickets

HOT TICKETS is a weekly summary of the top acts and ticket sales as reported to VT PULSE. Following are the top 20 concerts and events, the top 5 in each seating capacity category, which took place since June 23, 2009.

BEYONCE BRINGS 'ALL THE SINGLE LADIES' TO PHILLY

15,001 or More Seats	10,001-15,000 Seats	5,001-10,000 Seats	5,000 or Less Seats
<p>1) Beyonce Gross Sales: \$1,377,995; Venue: Wachovia Complex, Philadelphia; Attendance: 15,011; Ticket Range: \$155.75-\$89.75; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: June 26; No. of Shows: 1</p>	<p>1) UFC 100 Gross Sales: \$5,100,000; Venue: Mandalay Bay Events Center, Las Vegas; Attendance: 10,842; Ticket Range: \$1,000-\$100; Promoter: UFC; Dates: July 11; No. of Shows: 1</p>	<p>1) French & Saunders Gross Sales: \$471,085; Venue: Newcastle (Australia) Entertainment Centre; Attendance: 4,741; Ticket Range: \$126.05-\$79; Promoter: Michael Coppel Presents; Dates: June 26; No. of Shows: 1</p>	<p>1) STOMP Gross Sales: \$407,473; Venue: Broward Center For The Performing Arts, Fort Lauderdale, Fla.; Attendance: 9,415; Ticket Range: \$50-\$20; Promoter: Broadway Across America, In-house; Dates: June 22-28; No. of Shows: 8</p>
<p>2) Beyonce Gross Sales: \$1,281,632; Venue: Philips Arena, Atlanta; Attendance: 15,709; Ticket Range: \$109.75-\$20.75; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: July 1; No. of Shows: 1</p>	<p>2) WWE RAW Gross Sales: \$812,673; Venue: Brisbane (Australia) Entertainment Centre; Attendance: 9,952; Ticket Range: \$273.18-\$36.66; Promoter: Dainty Consolidated Entertainment; Dates: July 5; No. of Shows: 1</p>	<p>2) Yanni Gross Sales: \$393,533; Venue: Nokia Theatre L.A. Live; Attendance: 6,446; Ticket Range: \$145-\$49.50; Promoter: AEG Live, Goldenvoice; Dates: June 23; No. of Shows: 1</p>	<p>2) Eddie Vedder Gross Sales: \$365,025; Venue: Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre, Atlanta; Attendance: 4,867; Ticket Range: \$75; Promoter: C3 Presents; Dates: June 23-24; No. of Shows: 2</p>
<p>3) The Jonas Brothers Gross Sales: \$1,097,991; Venue: Target Center, Minneapolis; Attendance: 16,657; Ticket Range: \$348-\$27.50; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: July 8; No. of Shows: 1</p>	<p>3) Keith Urban Gross Sales: \$727,537; Venue: i wireless Center, Moline, Ill.; Attendance: 10,598; Ticket Range: \$72.50-\$17.50; Promoter: Jam Productions; Dates: June 28; No. of Shows: 1</p>	<p>3) Andre Rieu and His Johann Strauss Orchestra Gross Sales: \$246,308; Venue: Orleans Arena, Las Vegas; Attendance: 3,088; Ticket Range: \$159-\$50; Promoter: Andre Rieu US 2000 Inc.; Dates: June 24; No. of Shows: 1</p>	<p>3) Truc Tiep Thu Hinh V-62 Gross Sales: \$331,480; Venue: Long Beach (Calif.) Terrace Theater; Attendance: 4,842; Ticket Range: \$180-\$30; Promoter: Asia Entertainment; Dates: July 11; No. of Shows: 2</p>
<p>4) WWE RAW Gross Sales: \$1,073,506; Venue: AcerArena, Sydney;</p>	<p>4) Kenny Chesney Gross Sales: \$704,435;</p>	<p>4) So You Think You Can Dance</p>	

Attendance: 16,837;
Ticket Range: \$275.89-
\$39.41; Promoter:
Dainty Consolidated
Entertainment, WWE;
Dates: July 4; No. of
Shows: 1

5) Kenny Chesney
Gross Sales: \$799,677;
Venue: **Verizon
Wireless Virginia Beach
Amphitheater**;
Attendance: 17,407;
Ticket Range: \$80-
\$39.50; Promoter: AEG
Live, Live Nation, The
Messina Group; Dates:
June 25; No. of Shows:
1

Venue: **Nikon at Jones
Beach Theater,
Wantagh, N.Y.**;
Attendance: 11,651;
Ticket Range: \$75-
\$39.50; Promoter: AEG
Live, Live Nation, The
Messina Group; Dates:
June 24; No. of Shows:
1

5) WWE RAW
Gross Sales: \$491,157;
Venue: **Vector Arena,
Auckland, New
Zealand**; Attendance:
9,512; Ticket Range:
\$219.67-\$32.51;
Promoter: Dainty
Consolidated
Entertainment; Dates:
July 3; No. of Shows: 1

Gross Sales: \$158,194;
Venue: **Newcastle
(Australia)
Entertainment Centre**;
Attendance: 3,341;
Ticket Range: \$55.18;
Promoter: Andrew
McManus; Dates: July 5;
No. of Shows: 1

**5) Three Girls and
Their Buddy**
Gross Sales: \$104,543;
Venue: **Greek Theatre,
Los Angeles**;
Attendance: 2,840;
Ticket Range: \$55-\$25;
Promoter: Nederlander;
Dates: June 24; No. of
Shows: 1

**4) Anthony Hamilton &
Musiq Soulchild**
Gross Sales: \$267,027;
Venue: **Fox Theatre,
Atlanta**; Attendance:
4,276; Ticket Range:
\$87-\$49.50; Promoter:
AEG Live; Dates: June
25; No. of Shows: 1

**5) Thomas & Friends -
A Circus Comes To
Town**
Gross Sales: \$243,037;
Venue: **Fox Theatre,
Atlanta**; Attendance:
9,085; Ticket Range:
\$40-\$7.50; Promoter:
AEG Live; Dates: June
26-28; No. of Shows: 5

Compiled by Rob Ocampo. To submit reports, e-mail HotTickets@venuestoday.com or fax to (714) 378-0040.

THE BEAT

FACES & PLACES

DON POOR HEADS TO THE OCEAN



Don Poor

After spending most of his professional career in and around Atlanta, Don Poor is relocating. He has been named executive director of the Ocean Center, Daytona Beach, Fla., effective Sept. 1.

He is currently executive director of the Valdosta (Ga.) Lowndes County Conference Center and Tourism Authority, which operates the conference center, the Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Sports Commission.

Poor spent seven years with the Georgia International Convention Center, seven years with the Cobb Galleria Center and seven years with Destination One. Prior to those Atlanta area posts, he spent seven years in Roanoke, Va.

Defying the seven-year-itch syndrome, however, he spent three years in Valdosta before deciding it was time to move to the ocean. "There is a tremendous amount of opportunity," he said,

noting the Ocean Center just added 200,000 sq. ft. for \$80 million and there is a 750-room Hilton across the street. — Linda Deckard

Contact: Don Poor, (800) 569-8687

SPONSORSHIP REPORT

TICKETS SLOW, BUT SPONSORSHIP HOLDS FOR MLB

The struggling economy has brought fewer fans to Major League Baseball ballparks, but corporations are sticking with their sponsorship of America's pastime.

“This will be much closer to a normal year than people would expect,” said Chuck Costigan, of Costigan and Associates, who recently issued a category summary of MLB sponsorships. “It sounds simplistic, but it’s all about accountability now.”

While he did not have specific statistics for baseball, William Chipps, senior editor of the IEG Sponsorship Report, said sports sponsorships are expected to grow 0.7 percent in 2009.

“Flat is the new up,” he said. “It is a tough sales environment.”

Of the 168 sponsorship deals in Major League Baseball, 23 come from the financial services sector, despite the sector receiving months of scathing press for accepting government assistance while spending on sports. Bank of America has five sponsorship deals in Major League Baseball, Costigan said, while Wells Fargo has four, and PNC Financial has three.

“Those companies are still sponsoring, but there is increased pressure on how to spend marketing dollars, and how they want to be seen after the TARP fallout,” Chipps said.

“It has been a public relations nightmare,” Costigan said. “But some of the deals are in the middle years. If they dump it, they would still have to pay for it.”

Other struggling sectors - airlines and automotive - continue to be strong sponsors of MLB. Southwest Air has four sponsorships, Delta has three, and Continental, Jet Blue and United have one each. Toyota has three deals, Lexus has two, and Chevrolet has one, despite GM’s restructuring and re-emergence from bankruptcy.

Instead of cutting completely, Costigan finds corporations are consolidating their deals, as they come up for renewal.

“If NASCAR is their platform, they are sticking there, rather than sticking their toe in elsewhere,” he said.

While the big three sponsors - financial, automotive and airline - hold onto their deals, Costigan said the difficult economy has opened the door for others, like footwear and apparel company Under Armour, Klement’s food products, the 7-Eleven convenience store, and Waste Management, the trash disposal company.

“People who could not play before can step up,” he said.

Chipps agreed, but said the price of entry into Major League Baseball, which can run in the high six-figures to low seven-figures, is still “pretty steep.”

“It is a buyer’s market, but baseball has a huge platform, and it is a way for companies to tap into the passion fans have for their team,” he said.

Costigan said the selling cycle has morphed as well. Where teams could afford to come to the table with a “you should be happy to sit with us” attitude, negotiations are now more about partnerships, he said.

“Big relationships have a big list of benefits - it might be more advertising spots for television rights, because the corporations were not happy in the past with how much camera time the signage is getting,” he said. “Now, the teams understand why the corporations need the extra exposure.”

“Some deals are falling apart, not because the deal is not working, but because they require higher levels [of approval,]” he said. “They want more eyes on it.”

That includes Costigan, who has often been called in to value the deal, first as part of the Denver-based sports marketing company Bonham Group - which was a casualty of the economy in January - and now on his own.

“Dean [Bonham] was really focused on international business,” Costigan said, of his former employer. “He is a rain maker, and as the economy started getting rocky, he could not make any rain, and we were drawing heavily on credit when financial services companies began slashing credit lines, crippling the company’s ability to borrow.”

“I was on the front line, and we were all trying to save that company,” Costigan said. “In the end - and I am proud of this - outside of upper management, no one missed a paycheck.” – Liz Boardman

Interviewed for this article: Chuck Costigan, (303) 427-4223; William Chipps, (312) 944-1727

If you no longer wish to receive these emails, please reply to this message with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line or simply click on the following link: [Unsubscribe](#)

Venues Today
P.O. Box 2540
Huntington Beach, California 92647

[Read](#) the VerticalResponse marketing policy.

