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# VT PULSE

A WEEKLY PUBLICATION FROM VENUES TODAY

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## Quote of the Week

*“There’s an ethic in the Flaming Lips community and there’s an ethic for bands like Wilco and Dave Matthews where people don’t do that. They want the tickets to go to the fans.”*

— Columnist Jim DeRogatis at the Event & Arena Marketing Conference, explaining that not all bands scalp their tickets.

## In this Issue

### THE NEWS

[Marketing Conference Kicks Off with Lively Contrast of Views](#)

[Aerosmith Wheels Out VIP Packages](#)

[Airwave Wars: Getting Votes vs. Selling Tickets](#)

### HOT TICKETS

[Sasquatch Gross Makes the Gorge Looks Gorgeous!](#)

### THE BEAT

Greetings,

Welcome to VT Pulse, your weekly guide to the "News Behind the Headlines." Most of the *Venues Today* team is on site in Chicago today for the Event & Arena Marketing Conference. Our Editor-In-Chief, Publisher and Owner Linda Deckard is being inducted into the Hall of Fame tomorrow.



**2010 VT Stewards of Sustainability awards.**  
Categories are:  
**Green Initiative**  
**Green Pioneer**  
**Green Attitude**  
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[Naming Rights Report](#)

[Feld Signs Up with TixTrax in Optimization Agreement](#)

#### DEPARTMENTS

Short Takes

HELP WANTED

CONTACT VT PULSE

#### SHORT TAKES

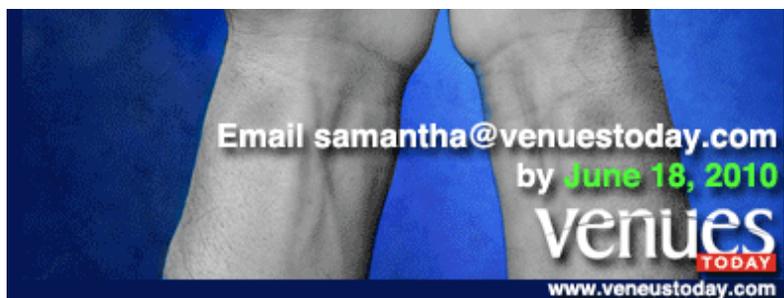
>> **STUBHUB SIGNS MOBILE DEAL** – StubHub has inked a deal with ESPN to purchase tickets on mobile devices. Visitors to ESPN's ScoreCenter App and ESPN's mobile Web site will be directed to StubHub for tickets. Contact: Joellen Ferrer, (415) 308-8209

>> **PLASA AND ESTA MERGE** – Event planners coalition PLASA has merged with ESTA, a North American trade association for entertainment and technology services. Contact: Russ Rossington, (212) 352-2334

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#### VT NEWS

##### MARKETING

#### MARKETING CONFERENCE KICKS OFF WITH LIVELY CONTRAST OF VIEWS

*The EAMC state of the industry panel included columnist Jim DeRegotis, Jim O'Neil of the Chicago Bulls, Nederlander's Alex Hodges and Rich Krezwick of the Devils Arena Entertainment.*



**REPORTING FROM CHICAGO** – The Event & Arena Marketing Conference got off to a rousing start Wednesday during a spirited debate at the opening “State of the Industry” Panel.

Music critic and Columbia College of Chicago professor Jim DeRogatis prodded and occasionally poked a panel of industry experts that included Alex Hodges of Nederlander Entertainment, Joe O’Neil of the Chicago Bulls and Rick Krezwick of Devils Arena Entertainment and dipped heavily into the impact of the Ticketmaster/Live Nation merger.

“We were all waiting for something to happen, and nothing has really happened,” said Krezwick. “I think the big advantage now is that there’s another major ticketing company about to blossom with AEG, which is good for all of us with a building contract that is about to come up to bid.”

Krezwick said the biggest change is the shift in the rebate structure between the facilities and Ticketmaster over service fees. Instead of a percentage of fees, facilities will now be charged a flat fee per transaction (between \$2 - \$2.50), and the building will keep the remainder of the money.

That puts the fate of Live Nation’s No Service Fees promotion in question, especially since rental rates have been static for 20 years.

“The only way you make money is off the ancillaries. If we lose the four or

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five bucks per ticket, it's just going to become a lot harder to make buildings work and I don't see buildings giving it up that easily," he said

Where does that leave independent promoters, a group DeRogatis called "a rarer breed than a healthy pelican in the Gulf not covered in oil," like Nederlander or Chicago's Jam Productions?

"We're fortunate that we have a few must-play venues in our market," said Hodges. "Being an independent, we have to work harder to sell our building. We have competitors who can buy an entire tour, and we try to buy a handful of cities, so our model has been adjusted."

Even more challenging is that the Greek Theatre's competitor is part of its ticketing company (and represents many of the artists who play the facility), and despite reassurances from Christine Varney at the Justice Department that government-monitored firewalls will be put in place to block the sharing of certain information, what's to stop "a Live Nation representative from yelling at the Ticketmaster guy three cubicles down," said DeRogatis, "and asking him what [the Greek] just offered for the Eagles concert?"

Hodges was stoic in his answer, simply replying "that's yet to be seen." He later added "for them to have that type of absolute knowledge would concern anyone. We're already fighting for the shows and the price we pay for shows."

An even bigger challenge is determining the correct price for a ticket; brokers are marking tickets up while discount sites like Goldstar and TravelZoo are flourishing. Many facilities are finding themselves making money from the scalping of their own tickets.

"About three years ago, we had this writing on the ticket that said the resell of Chicago Bulls tickets above face value is expressly prohibited," O'Neil said. Now, the company has a deal with Ticketmaster to resale Bulls seats on TicketExchange "so we have the same thing, but it says it's expressly encouraged," later adding, "Everybody is selling to everybody. You can go to my website and buy a ticket I just sold to another guy, selling them back and forth, all print at home. They're like invisible paper airplanes flying all around the city, and I don't know who the hell is in my building."

DeRogatis said as a consumer, he despised resale, promised to perpetually refer to the practice as "scalping" and noted that not all musical groups are driven by money or fans trying to flip tickets to make a buck.

"There's an ethic in the Flaming Lips community and there's an ethic for bands like Wilco and Dave Matthews where people don't do that. They want the tickets to go to the fans," he said, pointing out that many kids today couldn't afford \$350 tickets to go see Paul McCartney, although it was an inexpensive Little Richard show over a half decade ago that inspired the Fab Four crooner.

Regardless of how the industry evolves, it's clear that venues aren't necessarily in the driver's seat and it will be agents and managers who shape the direction of business.

"The problem from my perspective is that we're overbuilt. There are just too many facilities," Krezwick said. "Even if there aren't two arenas in close proximity, a band will play Detroit and skip Chicago. There are only 35 dates on the tour and they're not going to take your nonsense. If they don't want to play your building, they will skip you."

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- Director of Sales &  
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[VIEW THE FULL LISTINGS](#)

But all is not lost. DeRogatis pointed out that demand for live entertainment certainly hasn't subsided. Live music is still the only industry "where people pay money to be in the same room as another person, despite many the escort business." — Dave Brooks

*Interviewed for this article: Jim DeRogatis, (773) 775-1093; Joe O'Neil, (312) 455-4103; Alex Hodges, (323) 468-1710; Rick Krezwick, [rkrezwick@prucenter.com](mailto:rkrezwick@prucenter.com)*

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#### **BOOKINGS**

**AEROSMITH WHEELS OUT VIP PACKAGE**

*Aerosmith*



After a year of interpersonal and medical struggles, veteran rockers Aerosmith are reloaded and ready to hit North American amphitheaters again. And, like a lot of their brethren, the Boston rockers are making sure that longtime fans who can afford a little something extra have plenty of choices when it comes to perk-packed VIP ticket offers.

This summer's "Cocked, Locked, Ready to Rock" tour will again offer a variety of VIP options through the band's fan club, Aero Force One, which will give diehards a chance to meet the band and get some serious face time.

"We don't do cookie cutter anything," said Keith Garde, president of PAID Celebrity Services Inc., the firm that handles the VIP program for Aerosmith and provides online marketing, branding, fan community management, VIP experiences and video production for acts from Patti LaBelle to Deep Purple as well as athletes Laila Ali and Andrew Bynum.

With packages ranging from nearly \$1,500 to around \$230, Garde said the amount of VIP experiences offered at each of the 18 venues on the summer North American tour is specifically geared to what the facility can accommodate and what is best for fans.

"We advance everything with a fine tooth comb," explained Garde, who has worked with the band for 23 years. "For example Jones Beach Amphitheater is a fun venue, but it's old and it has extremely limited capacity for things other than a dressing room in a very tight backstage area. That limits what we can do and we won't jam people into something because it can increase numbers."

That is also why the number of top-tier experiences is also limited to around 25 per show for those looking for face time with the band's formerly Toxic Twins, singer Steven Tyler and lead guitarist Joe Perry. The top level "Wheels Up Package" includes a meet-and-greet with frontmen, a front-of-house ticket, a pre-show party and photo ops with Tyler and Perry. (Some of the packages are also sold as VIP experiences only, with no tickets to the show.)

At the tour's opening date at Oracle Arena in Oakland on July 23, the "Wheels Ups" option will cost \$1,449 (prices vary slightly from city-to-city depending on availability and market rates), which includes a guaranteed seat in the first four rows, the meet-and-greet with Tyler and Perry, a catered pre-show party with other Aerosmith fans, a photobook of the experience, an official Aerosmith lanyard, collectible laminate and tour pin

and an exclusive merchandise package.

There's also the "Up Close and Personal Package with Joey and Brad," in which drummer Joey Kramer and guitarist Brad Whitford regale attendees with some stories from the road in an intimate setting for \$549 at the opening show. Whitford will also play a little something and share his road tales during the session, which also includes food and beverage, giveaways and a private pre-show party with other Aerosmith fans.

Purchasers are guaranteed tickets within the first 20 rows, the pre-show party, a photobook, lanyard, laminate and pin and the merchandise package.

The four different VIP Experience packages also include the \$299 "Top Spot," with an exclusive pin depicting the entire band that is not available in the other options, as well as a reserved seat right off the floor and the merchandise package. For \$229, the "Premium" package includes a reserved seat in the first five rows of certain floor sections or parallel seating areas and the band member pin. PAID has one to three staffers on site for each show to attend to VIP purchaser's needs.

At press time, a ticket on the main floor in row C for the opening show was available for \$227.30, but Garde said for the band's superfans, the rare collectibles and knowledge that they are buying a guaranteed premium ticket from a primary source is the allure.

Aerosmith is not alone in offering such packages. Bon Jovi fans can get up close and personal seats, a leather bag, catered meal and a take home black metal folding chair with the band's logo on the cushion for \$1,750 this summer. Before she canceled her summer tour, Christina Aguilera was offering a pre-concert photo op for \$800 and even fans of teen sensation Justin Bieber can plunk down \$350 for a pre-show soundcheck.

Garde has been putting together these VIP packages for Aerosmith for nearly a decade and he said the "Wheels Up" experience is limited to around 50 fans per show, while the "Up Close" one can accommodate around 100.

"Aerosmith is one of the first bands to have accommodated fans, back in late 1980s, when we were just making sure people who were fan club members were given preferential treatment and tickets," he said, estimating that the deluxe package accounts for between 7-9 percent of tickets sales for each date on the tour.

He said the takers for the most expensive packages tend to fall in two camps: longtime uber-fans who are typically professionals in their 40s or 50s with expendable income who can afford the tab and another tier of superfans "who save their lunch money" in order to have a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Garde would not talk about the financial upside for the band or the profit margins on the packages, but he said they are priced based on the combination of the cost of providing the personnel to staff the event and the catering, as well as what peers such as Kiss, Bon Jovi and Paul McCartney are charging.

"What does the market bear? We want to make sure that what we do is to remain competitive and responsible while covering costs for the value added," he said. "Aerosmith puts a lot of value at a substantial cost to make these work. It's definitely an alternate source of revenue for the band and it has its financial value, but it's not just that for the band."

The true value, he said, comes from the fan who buys that premium package, goes online and raves about it to several hundred people, who then pass that on to several hundred more. That good word-of-mouth typically results in a noticeable uptick in ticket and merchandise sales.

The value of the experience is stoked further by PAID, which posts photos and recaps of every show, along with video and photos of fans interacting with the band, which he said has helped grow the band's network of followers on social media platforms from 170,000 to more than 2 million over the past two years.

The other thing Garde could not quantify is the upside for the venue, which he said likely gets some value from the soft connections between the increased promotion PAID does to sell the packages, with each ad mentioning the venue. The packages also include exclusive early access to merchandise booths, so the house might also get a bump from its cut of merch sales as well. While pre-sales are still rolling out for the dates, Garde said he expects to sell out most, if not all of the premium packages.

"We don't see these programs as just a way to make money," he said. "For us, it's the bigger picture about the longer haul of the relationship between us, our clients and their fans."—Gil Kaufman

*Interviewed for this story: Keith Garde, (815) 479-1833*

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#### BEHIND THE HEADLINES

#### AIRWAVE WARS: GETTING VOTES VS. SELLING TICKETS

As television spot prices skyrocket during election season, arenas have taken a creative stance in promoting events.

“Every year, whether it’s election season, television sweeps or the Oscars, we are trying to be creative in working around certain events,” said Jamie Loeb, vice president of marketing for Los Angeles-based Nederlander Concerts.

When 30-second television spots are sold out, the company will consider 15-second spots. With radio advertising, Nederlander will substitute a 10-second sponsorship for a 60-second spot.

If network television is not available, cable is utilized. “For a recent Scorpions concert in Sacramento, network television was sold out. We looked at the audience for this show and found advertising opportunities at ESPN and Spike TV,” Loeb said. “Finding alternative promotional outlets takes time, but it’s a matter of doing your homework.”

Unlike election ads, which are geared toward massive and broad audiences, marketing specific events or shows is more targeted and niche oriented.

“Part of the skill or art of marketing concerts and performances is about determining who the potential audience is,” Loeb said. “We can correlate various events, like fans of the Scorpions and NASCAR, [where there may be a lot of overlap].”

Supply and demand determine advertising cost, and if a medium is sold out, then bump rates apply.

“It’s hard to estimate the price increases during an election period,” Loeb said. “It varies from network to cable, station to station, media to media.” He estimated a network spot can be 10 times more costly during the election season, but a cable spot may cost the same regardless of the time period.

The BOK Center, Tulsa, Okla., has benefited from strong relationships with station representatives, who keep the venue’s marketing department apprised when inventory may be tight.

“Placing orders early is a challenge, because we find out about a show and place media a week before the performance,” said Paige Laughlin, the BOK Center’s director of marketing. “We depend on representatives and promotional departments to get extra mentions and value whenever possible.”

In Tulsa, television spot inventory is highly dependent on what political office is up for a vote and how many candidates are in each race.

“It would be difficult to estimate the percentage increase of television spots during political races,” Laughlin said. “Fortunately, the price hasn’t been so high that we’ve had to find an alternative medium to promote our shows.”

For Dallas’ American Airlines Center, it is the governor’s race that has

presented the biggest issues with television time.

“Our governor’s race was heated this year, and we were bumped for political candidate ads,” said Melissa Mezger, American Airlines Center’s director of marketing. “It is usually not this bad. We know it’s coming, but there’s not a lot we can do about it except plan ahead.”

Predicting the upcoming shortage of television spots, the center’s staff planned many of its promotions early this year, securing prices and times before rates jumped.

“When we were priced out of the television market for our other shows, we cut those ads and focused on radio and online promotions,” Mezger said. “This only happened with a couple of our shows. Since we didn’t have a runoff, the political season was cut short.”

Mezger estimated television spot prices jump between 25 and 50 percent during political races.

Because promotions are considered a trade-out in terms of pricing, arenas can lose these freebies, in addition to air time, during the political season.

“Typically, if we do a buy on stations, we require them to do a giveaway, which shows up as a free promotion,” Mezger said. “During political races, we lose our promotions because stations can’t offer the same package to political candidates. So we lose airtime along with the promotions that go with it.”

Mezger estimates television stations provide between 15 and 20 free spots as part of a promotional campaign.

“If we can get placement before rates jump, we’re good,” Mezger said. “Our reps are great about reminding us early that the season is coming.” — Lisa White

*Interviewed for this article: Paige Laughlin, (918) 894-4200; Jamie Loeb, (323) 468-1700; Melissa Mezger, (214) 665-4218*

## 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 May 11.

### SASQUATCH GROSS MAKES THE GORGE LOOKS GORGEOUS!

15,001 or More Seats	10,001-15,000 Seats	5,001-10,000 Seats	5,000 or Less Seats
<b>1) Sasquatch! Music Festival</b> Gross Sales: \$4,423,520; Venue: <b>The Gorge, George, Wash.</b> ; Attendance: 75,000; Ticket Range: \$70; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: May 29-31; No. of Shows: 3	<b>1) Aventura</b> Gross Sales: \$3,828,750; Venue: <b>Auditorio Telmex, Guadalajara, Mexico</b> ; Attendance: 8,791; Ticket Range: \$70.53-\$11.75; Promoter: IM*PRO, Westwood Entertainment; Dates: June 4; No. of Shows: 1	<b>1) Glee</b> Gross Sales: \$2,161,304; Venue: <b>Radio City Music Hall, New York</b> ; Attendance: 29,739; Ticket Range: \$89.50-\$39.50; Promoter: Live Nation, MSG Entertainment; Dates: May 28-30; No. of Shows: 5	<b>1) Cher</b> Gross Sales: \$4,949,904; Venue: <b>The Colosseum at Caesar’s Palace, Las Vegas</b> ; Attendance: 39,285; Ticket Range: \$250-\$95; Promoter: AEG Live, Concerts West; Dates: May 8-23, 25-30; No. of Shows: 13
<b>2) Pearl Jam</b> Gross Sales:	<b>2) Furthur Festival</b>	<b>2) Glee</b>	<b>2) The Phantom of the Opera</b>

\$2,719,623; Venue: **Madison Square Garden Arena, New York**; Attendance: 36,830; Ticket Range: \$74.50; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: May 20-21; No. of Shows: 2

### 3) Westlife

Gross Sales: \$1,961,741; Venue: **The O2 Arena, London, England**; Attendance: 35,261; Ticket Range: \$59.37-\$51.31; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: May 12-14; No. of Shows: 3

### 4) Rihanna

Gross Sales: \$1,888,810; Venue: **The O2 Arena, London, England**; Attendance: 30,813; Ticket Range: \$65.96-\$56.43; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: May 10-11; No. of Shows: 2

### 5) Bon Jovi

Gross Sales: \$1,656,811; Venue: **Hersheypark Stadium, Hershey, Pa.**; Attendance: 24,956; Ticket Range: \$505-\$29.50; Promoter: Live Nation, In-house; Dates: May 19; No. of Shows: 1

Gross Sales: \$1,080,325; Venue: **Calaveras County Fairgrounds, Angel's Camp, Calif.**; Attendance: 8,609; Ticket Range: \$125; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: May 30; No. of Shows: 1

### 3) Nickelback

Gross Sales: \$843,342; Venue: **Credit Union Centre, Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan**; Attendance: 13,221; Ticket Range: \$81.63-\$37.93; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: May 29; No. of Shows: 1

### 4) Nickelback

Gross Sales: \$724,005; Venue: **Intrust Bank Arena, Wichita, Kan.**; Attendance: 11,421; Ticket Range: \$85-\$35; Promoter: Live Nation, In-house; Dates: May 14; No. of Shows: 1

### 5) Cirque du Soleil "Alegria"

Gross Sales: \$714,910; Venue: **Save Mart Center at Fresno (Calif.) State**; Attendance: 11,693; Ticket Range: \$90-\$40; Promoter: Cirque du Soleil; Dates: May 27-30; No. of Shows: 7

Gross Sales: \$1,649,743; Venue: **Gibson Amphitheatre at Universal CityWalk, Universal City, Calif.**; Attendance: 23,720; Ticket Range: \$79.50-\$39.50; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: May 20, 21; No. of Shows: 4

### 3) Conan O'Brien

Gross Sales: \$871,641; Venue: **Radio City Music Hall, New York**; Attendance: 11,876; Ticket Range: \$79.50-\$39.50; Promoter: Metropolitan Talent Presents LLC, MSG Entertainment; Dates: June 1-2; No. of Shows: 2

### 4) Roberto Carlos

Gross Sales: \$534,047; Venue: **Nokia Theatre L.A. Live**; Attendance: 6,866; Ticket Range: \$250-\$36.50; Promoter: AEG Live; Dates: May 29; No. of Shows: 1

### 5) Bill O'Reilly, Glenn Beck

Gross Sales: \$429,445; Venue: **Constant Convocation Center, Norfolk, Va.**; Attendance: 6,343; Ticket Range: \$120-\$45; Promoter: Mercury Radio; Dates: May 21; No. of Shows: 1

Gross Sales: \$2,704,692; Venue: **Wharton Center for Performing Arts, East Lansing, Mich.**; Attendance: 43,731; Ticket Range: \$70-\$30; Promoter: In-house; Dates: May 19-June 6; No. of Shows: 24

### 3) Mary Poppins

Gross Sales: \$683,576; Venue: **The David A. Straz Jr. Center for the Performing Arts, Tampa, Fla.**; Attendance: 10,534; Ticket Range: \$83-\$15; Promoter: In-house; Dates: May 20-23; No. of Shows: 7

### 4) Glee

Gross Sales: \$624,453; Venue: **Rosemont (Ill.) Theatre**; Attendance: 8,895; Ticket Range: \$79.50-\$39.50; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: May 25; No. of Shows: 2

### 5) Carole King, James Taylor

Gross Sales: \$603,892; Venue: **Santa Barbara (Calif.) Bowl**; Attendance: 4,542; Ticket Range: \$173-\$69; Promoter: Nederlander; Dates: May 18; No. of Shows: 1

Compiled by Rob Ocampo and Josh Huckabee. To submit reports, e-mail [HotTickets@venuestoday.com](mailto:HotTickets@venuestoday.com) or fax to (714) 378-0040.

## THE BEAT

### NAMING RIGHTS REPORT



#### Stage AE, Pittsburgh

Date Announced: June 3

Buyer: American Eagle Outfitters

Terms: Not disclosed

Ownership: Pittsburgh Steelers, Continental Real Estate Companies,



PromoWest Productions

**Brokered by:** Tony Quatrini, Steelers director of marketing

**Comments:** American Eagle Outfitters, a Pittsburgh-based retailer, has purchased naming rights to an entertainment complex under construction next to Heinz Field.

“The type of entertainment we are bringing in - Death Cab for Cutie, Paramore, MGMT - are all hot acts with high school, college and young professionals,” said Scott Steinecker, president of PromoWest Productions. “That is the exact demographic for American Eagle.”

Tony Quatrini, the Steelers director of marketing, brokered the deal. “They had a deal with the Steelers, and we met and put it together,” Steinecker said.

The venue features outdoor seating for up to 5,500, indoor seating for 2,400, and a rock club with a capacity of about 300. There are 60 corporate boxes. They expect to host 150 events a year, including rock club events, Steinecker said.

“It will be special events, not just concerts,” he said. “Touchdown club, proms, speeches of all kinds, and American Eagle and others will be able to utilize it for corporate events.”

The project broke ground in April and they hope to open Nov. 20. Steinecker said the financial terms, and the number of years on the contract, were not being released. And while the deal would include cross promotion and signage, those details were still being worked out.

*Contact: Scott Steinecker, (614) 461-5483*

#### **Amsoil Arena, Duluth, Minn.**

**Date Announced:** May 11

**Buyer:** AMSOIL

**Terms:** \$6 million over 20 years

**Ownership/Management/Tenant:** Duluth Entertainment Convention Center Authority (DECC)/University of Minnesota - Duluth Bulldogs Hockey

**Brokered:** Locally

**Comments:** The new arena at the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center will be named Amsoil Arena, after the locally-based AMSOIL, Inc., the international leader in the manufacturer of synthetic lubricants.

Amsoil paid \$2 million upfront, and will pay \$200,000 annually over the next 20 years, according to Dan Russell, executive director for DECC.

“They will have a 42-foot marquee sign on the side of the building and signage in the facility and on the scoreboard and center ice,” Russell said. “They also get a luxury box, and have a presale option for their dealer network and employees.”

The company is based in Superior, Wis., which along with Duluth, Minn., make up an area called Twin Ports.

“They are a great customer for dealer training and meetings at the convention center,” Russell said. “This came out of a casual conversation over lunch between Mark Emmel, chairman of the DECC board, and Albert Amatuzio, AMSOIL’s founder, president and CEO. We put it together in less than two weeks.”

The arena is scheduled to open on Dec. 30, with a men's hockey game between UMD and North Dakota. The arena will seat 6,600 for hockey games and more than 8,500 for concerts.

"Throughout the planning and construction process, the DECC Board has always sought ways to make this great new arena even greater for residents of the entire region," Emmel said, in a statement. "One important way of doing that is through a naming rights agreement. We wanted to team up with a company that's local, has a reach far beyond this area, and has a reputation for excellence."

"Although AMSOIL produces products that are used throughout the world, the vast majority of our employees live and work right here in the Twin Ports," Amatzio said. "This is our home."

Amatzio once played on the UMD Bulldogs hockey team. The naming rights revenue will be used to help the arena to achieve and remain LEED Gold Standard, the second venue in the nation with the designation.

"Often when facilities such as this open, everything is perfect at the beginning but funds are not available when updates are needed," said Emmel. "AMSOIL's investment will ensure that the DECC will be able to make upgrades as things age and wear out, without needing to put that financial burden on Duluth taxpayers."

Contact: Dan Russell, (218) 722-5573

— Liz Boardman

## DEALS

### FELD SIGNS UP WITH TIXTRAX IN OPTIMIZATION AGREEMENT

Feld Entertainment has signed a deal with firm TixTrax to license the company's professional software service to track and optimize ticket sales for Disney On Ice, Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus and Feld Motor Sports events throughout North America. TixTrax's web-based service will provide the company with real time seat maps and pricing scenarios for all its properties.

"I was interested in the system because it is compatible not just with Ticketmaster, which is used by about 80 percent of the venues we work with, but all the major ticketing firms," including legacy Paciolan, Tickets.com and Veritix, said Jeff Meyers, Feld Entertainment Senior VP, Event Marketing & Sales, North America.

"Right now there's no real tool out there that we use other than a simple spread sheet and diagrams that we color in ourselves of the venue maps to try and get the right scaling in place," he said. "Their system gives us a much better ability to run better scenarios and optimize tickets in a quick and efficient way."

TixTrax CEO Steven Sunshine said the platform is designed to overcome some of the limitations of today's ticketing systems.

"It's very easy to determine how many unsold seats there are for a facility, but to know where they are and what that means in how to better sell them is not so easy," he said. "It's harder to figure out, 'Are all of those seats at the back of certain sections, or are they scattered as singles around the venues?'"

TixTrax is based in Pasadena, Calif., and has a number of clients in the entertainment space including the Harlem Globetrotters and Cirque du Soleil; venues such as Air Canada Centre, Toronto; Verizon Center, Washington; and Staples Center, Los Angeles; and sports teams such as the Los Angeles Clippers and Miami Heat. —Dave Brooks

Interviewed for this article: Steven Sunshine, (415) 738-7718; Jeff Meyers, (703) 449-4105

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