

Branding to a new rhythm

Night clubs and music concerts are no longer the only places where the youth market is rocking to the newest hits. Retail stores, restaurants and leisure spots eager to grow their footprint in the sought after youth market now understand that music is the fastest route in.

04 October 2007 Johannesburg South Africa: The importance of music to the youth market is undeniable. Industry experts say youngsters under the age of 18 have a combined disposable income of R6bn, and influence a further R20bn in spending while the 18 to 30 year old sector represents a burgeoning market with desirable spending power.

Brand owners have previously uses unorthodox marketing tools to capture this market, which is fickle and driven by trendsetters who have a huge influence on the consumer preferences. Now smart marketers are beginning to understand that the quickest route to the heart of this market is music.

Recognised youth market specialist, Andrew Milller, agrees; "Music has a massive influence and is often a definer of particular social groups. So hip hop kids will listen to a particular type of music, and skaters / surfers another. Music is a key point of identity, especially amongst teenagers, because it is so emotive and opens creative, personally-orientated channels through which to establish identity.

Then there's the fact that music crosses many life themes in terms of lyrics, style and general attitude. From love to fashion to politics, music deals with it all, which is why kids relate to and interact with music so much. It defines who they are."

"When marketers make use of audio branding with the youth they should avoid buying the services of existing, established mass market stars as ambassadors and should be looking to create the stars of tomorrow through support for different musical genres.

Once this has been achieved they will effectively have created a wide range of tools, such as CDs, in-store music, web sites, videos, blogs etc; where they maintain a welcome and

authentic presence – in other words they will be viewed as an authentic part of the youth landscape rather than a brand constantly trying to 'infiltrate' through ad campaigns and competitions," says Miller.

Savvy retailers are starting to use music to connect to the youth market and build brands. Called 'audio-branding' experts, these business music specialists mix a unique blend of music that reflects the personality and characteristics of the brand to appeal to a target demographic.

The local leader in audio branding is DMX, who recreates business environments into extraordinary brand experiences that customers can relate and therefore what to spend more and more time in.

Music informs youth market thinking and no one understands this better than DMX Music CEO Craig Cesman. "Music is strongly cognitive and research shows that it has a powerful impact on business environments. P

particularly for youth brands where people come into the store because they get to know that they can hear the latest hits first. Internationally DMX programmers are constantly picking out and playing future hits long before they reach the radio," says Cesman.

"South African youth crave music which has become more than just a lifestyle, but a way of life," says Craig Cesman, CEO of DMX. "Music defines who and what the youth market is and at DMX we're ahead of the cutting edge, we're at the bleeding edge of new music to ensure we have the hottest sounds before anyone else done.

Our success in appealing to this market is ensuring we know music and put it out there before anyone else." The global leader in digital

music programming, DMX premieres music way ahead of traditional channels because it owns one of the world's largest digital music libraries, with experts around the globe spotting and integrating the newest and hottest music trends.

"When marketers make use music to connect to the youth market credibility is crucial and this is why we launch new music styles, hits and genres in the stores we do audio branding for. This immediately elevates the brand from a 'cred' perspective and creates strong affinity between the brand and the consumer because of the importance music has in the lives of younger markets," says Cesman.

DMX has been pioneering the creation and development of enhancing the in-store experience for consumers of innovative brands for decades, and the key to the company's success is its researched-based understanding of consumer lifestyle behaviour patterns as they relate to the strategies and goals of business.

To compliment DMX's ever growing bouquet of music the company recently launched two new channels on DMX's satellite audio bouquet- Electrosphere and Campus Rock. True to its name, Electrosphere features techno, electronica, progressive house, trance, breakbeat, drum and bass-styles while Campus Rock spins indie labels, scene-savvy bands and the latest from the local emerging market.

More information on DMX can be found at www.dmx.co.za. The global leader in digital music programming, DMX premieres music way ahead of traditional channels because it owns one of the world's largest digital music libraries, with experts around the globe spotting and integrating the newest and hottest music trends.