

Press Release

Absolute launches consultancy service to help brands set up own record labels

LONDON, 22 June 2007 - With major brands playing an increasingly influential role in the music industry, Absolute Marketing & Distribution – which manages record labels for artists such as Melanie C, Dame Shirley Bassey, Ali Campbell, Darren Hayes, Ocean Colour Scene, Bowling For Soup, Marillion, and Hall & Oates – is to launch a dedicated consultancy service for brands that want to follow Starbucks lead and release music on their own record label.

Absolute has already handled one-off branded singles for Specsavers, Halifax and Pipex Broadband – each of which achieved significant success on the UK charts.

However, the new Absolute Label Management consultancy will go one step further. It will help brands to establish and manage a complete record label framework – either as a strategic marketing tool or a brand extension.

This will enable brands to release multiple retail albums and singles on their own label, as well as one-off singles perhaps linked to their above-the-line advertising.

The Absolute Label Management consultancy will manage all of the key functions required to get a brand's music releases into high street and online music stores – including label administration, manufacturing, packaging, stock management, sales, marketing and media promotion.

The consultancy can also provide advice on creative concepts - and the selection and licensing of artists and repertoire.

Artists appearing on a brand-owned record label can help to generate high-profile media exposure that might not otherwise be available to the brand – such as television and radio airplay and PR coverage in lifestyle and entertainment media.

It also allows a brand's imagery to be seen in new areas – such as high street music outlets, online music stores and music download sites worldwide.

Henry Semmence, managing director of Absolute Marketing & Distribution, says: "Having had huge, measurable success with projects for Specsavers, Halifax and Pipex, we have now decided to set up a dedicated consultancy to help brands that want to set up their own record label as a brand extension or as a strategic marketing platform. Our end-to-end label management service is designed to enable them to do this without being distracted from their core business."

He adds: "In recent years, marketers have increasingly recognised that associating a brand with music can help to position or re-position the brand and influence consumers' perception of it. The growth of branded content for rapidly emerging marketing platforms such as podcasts, vodcasts and viral marketing is also leading to more brands creating and owning their own music content."

Semmence says: "Releasing a single-artist retail album or an exclusive compilation album around a brand takes this strategy a step further. The cost of marketing a record is very small compared with the overall marketing budget that most major brands have at their disposal. But the benefits are huge in terms of the potential exposure for the brand."

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NOTES FOR EDITORS:

Pipex Broadband

Absolute recently marketed the single 'Jump in My Car' by David Hasselhoff as a spin-off from the Hoff's appearance in Pipex's 'King of the Internet' TV advertising campaign. The single was supported by a huge 'Get Hoff to Number 1' campaign. It reached Number 3 on the UK singles chart and sold over 50,000 copies. Pipex Broadband gained substantial additional exposure through press coverage and the appearance of Hasselhoff, and the single's promotional video, on national TV shows and music TV channels. The record was even a Single of the Week on BBC Radio One.

Specsavers

Absolute managed the release of a single by a fictitious boy band called All Eyes who appeared in a Specsavers TV commercial. Amongst other initiatives, Absolute organised a *Pop Idol*-style audition tour of major cities to find a 'replacement' member for the band. This generated a huge amount of PR exposure for Specsavers through national and regional media. The promotional video for the band's single 'She's a Vision' was also played on national TV shows and music TV channels.

Halifax

Absolute managed the release of the single 'You're the First, the Last, My Everything' by Howard Brown, the Halifax employee who became the unlikely star of a series of TV commercials for the bank. The single reached Number 13 on the UK singles chart and extended consumer awareness of the TV ads through Halifax Howard's appearances on radio and TV shows. The promotional video for the single was also played on music TV channels.

About Absolute Marketing & Distribution

London-based Absolute Marketing & Distribution is a leading provider of tailor-made sales, marketing and business management solutions for independent record labels, single-artist labels and brand-owned music labels.

Established in 1998 as an independent 'one-stop' label management specialist, Absolute handles everything from label administration to television advertising.

Absolute's impressive client label list has included artists such as Melanie C, Dame Shirley Bassey, Herbie Hancock, Bananarama, Marillion, The Editors, Darren Hayes, Hall & Oates, Boy George, Coolio, Imogen Heap, Ocean Colour Scene, and many others.

With such an array of star talent, Absolute is bucking the music industry trend by achieving significant year-on-year growth while many major companies are struggling to sustain sales and market share.

Absolute proactively manages all of the key functions required to get a new music release into the physical and digital marketplace – including functioning as a ‘virtual’ marketing department for its clients.

Absolute’s comprehensive range of services includes: manufacturing and stock management, physical and digital distribution (in partnership with Universal Music), in-house sales teams, marketing (including online and mobile marketing), e-commerce management, label administration, international licensing, compilation licensing, other third-party exploitation, web site development, and liaison with music industry bodies.

While Absolute can get an independent label’s releases into the marketplace in the same professional and timely manner as any the major record companies, there is one major difference: ownership of the music copyright always remains in the hands of the label or the artist.

For further information, please visit: www.absolutemarketing.co.uk

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Brian Oliver, Focus Marketing Communications
Tel: 020 8687 1164
Mobile: 07906 800823