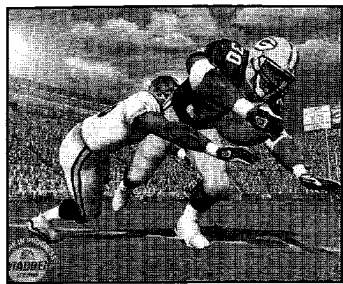


where entertainment meets technology



Electronic Arts' "Madden NFL 2005"

New 'Madden' game sings with hot tunes

By John Gaudiosi

When it comes to music in video games, the "Madden" franchise is considered the pinnacle. And not just because Electronic Arts' critically acclaimed NFL game has sold more than 37 million units in the past 15 years, either — its soundtrack has proved to be a powerful promotional vehicle for CDs by both new and established artists.

Steve Schnur, EA executive vp music and audio creative, said he starts with a list of 3,000 songs each year and then narrows that down to 200, choosing 21 for the final in-game soundtrack.

His decisions for "Madden NFL 2005," which ships Aug. 12, were confirmed Thursday. The soundtrack includes the title track from Green Day's "American Idiot," due in September, as well as the first single from Chevelle and new singles from Will.I.Am of the Black Eyed Peas, Hoobastank, New Found Glory and Alter Bridge.

Adding further edge to the lineup are breaking bands Midtown, Earshot, Hazen Street, the Mooney Suzuki, Jazze Pha, Franz Ferdinand and more.

According to Schnur, video games are to music companies what MTV was in the 1980s. "Madden helps set the pace of pop culture by defining the look, feel and sound of the upcoming season," he said.

Rounding out the audio talent in the game, EA has signed ESPN's Jill Arrington and ESPN Radio host Tony Bruno to the game. ABC's "Monday Night Football" hosts John Madden and Al Michaels will once again provide commentary and insight from the virtual booth. ■

Live365, GarageBand get amped

Deal gives webcasters free access to unsigned artists

By Chris Marlowe

Two Internet-based companies that help individual voices find their audience came together to benefit many unsigned bands. GarageBand.com and Live365 have announced an alliance that makes hundreds of tracks by aspiring artists available to a wide range of online broadcasters.

The musicians will get potential exposure to millions of new people, while webcasters have a wealth of fresh music they can legally stream.

To make this possible, GarageBand will waive the digital performance royalties that would otherwise be payable, making it financially attractive for Live365 to add the songs. GarageBand artists agree to give that power to the company as part of their membership.

Software tools make the discovery process easier for the webcasters, too. Live365 chief operating officer Rags Gupta said the GarageBand tracks will be added to its Live365 Music Library, an online repository of songs its users can add to playlists with a click of the mouse.

GarageBand CEO Ali Partovi

said his company's proprietary review process will guide webcasters to the best and most appropriate music for their program. Before a member can submit a song, he or she must review and rate a randomly assigned selection of 30 other songs. These ratings are factored in to a

dent musician," Partovi said. "With its gigantic radio audience, Live365 is a powerful promotional avenue never before tapped for breaking new music."

According to Partovi, 14 GarageBand artists have been signed by major labels, including double-platinum recording artists

Drowning Pool, and many more have achieved licensing or publishing deals.

Jenna Drey is one of many artists who willingly give testimonials to the power of GarageBand. She's in the studio with renowned producer Nile Rodgers recording her first single, and her indie-label CD will be distributed by Universal Music Group.

Pet Project is another emerging success story.

Known as Sci-Fi Lullaby until recently, the group is one of the all-time best-rated bands on GarageBand. That drew the attention of the Reach Tour, an annual event dedicated to promoting Ireland as a fertile and supportive environment for artists.

"If it weren't for GarageBand.com, I would have quit music and got a day job," Pet Project's Anthony Rodriguez said. "GarageBand is what KROQ was 10 years ago and what KCRW was five years ago. I can't say there is anything more pure and honest yet public left to speak of when it comes to new music."

Anne Heaton is on tour with Jewel, and she also believes GarageBand plays a major role in her career. "Everyone's music gets reviewed, and a lot of times the reviewers are other musicians and songwriters, so the feedback is really helpful and right on," she said, adding that she uses the site's charts to discover other people's music as well. ■



Pet Project's Art Martinez and singer Anne Heaton credit GarageBand.com with boosting their indie careers.

comparative ranking algorithm from which charts and other pointers are drawn.

This feature "is the perfect filter to find the best of independent music," Gupta said.

Both companies also have plans in the works to develop additional revenue opportunities, beginning with links that encourage listeners to purchase downloads or CDs.

"This deal opens a spectacular new opportunity for the indepen-

IcyPole in sync with mobile fans

By Chris Marlowe

For those who think online dating services are too retro, AgentArts has a solution. The entertainment personalization technology company is working on IcyPole, a product that can match up complete strangers based on their mobile music collection.

The application uses Bluetooth wireless technology to detect nearby devices, then compares what it finds to what's on its owner's smartphone device. If it thinks the two collections reflect similar tastes, it alerts its owner and activates wireless music sam-

pling and other features.

"Advances in smart-phone storage, combined with the always-with-you, always-on nature of mobile phones, are turning the mobile phone into a powerful way to discover new music and connect with like-minded people," AgentArts CEO Andrew Coates said. "In the very near future, mobile consumers could become walking music-sampling stations."

IcyPole builds upon AgentArts' proprietary ExpertDriven personalization technology. It is expected to become available by year's end. AgentArts is funded by Innovent, a business unit of Nokia.

Convergence appears Monday and Friday. Information may be e-mailed to new media/technology editor Chris Marlowe at: CMarlowe@hollywoodreporter.com

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