
The Marketing to **KIDS** Report™

MARKETING NEWS, TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS
IN THE CHILDREN AND TEEN MARKETS.

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Industries Learning From Industries About Youth Marketing

Cornering The Heavy Metal Market

NEW YORK – Bob Chiappardi believes he has created the perfect magnet to attract teen boys in the hard rock market. As President of Concrete Marketing Inc., Mr. Chiappardi networks 250 coast-to-coast independent retail record stores. In return for Concrete's marketing services each store creates a "Concrete Corner" whose sole purpose is the promotion and distribution of the headbanging, cutting-edge sound of heavy metal music.

A master mixer himself, Mr. Chiappardi formulated this unique hi-tech corporate and street blend. "When I managed heavy metal bands a few years back, I noticed that the heavy metal active consumer who is the 13-to 17-year-old male teenager and the heavy metal/hard rock record shop both thirsted for basic industry-related information which the large record companies couldn't provide. Concrete Corner through Concrete Marketing was created to provide these services," said Mr. Chiappardi.

"A Concrete Corner in a record store eliminates

complaints by the active consumer. First, the albums on our lists must be fully stocked and available. Second, all the albums must be sold at a price lower than the list price, so the savings go right to the consumer," said Mr. Chiappardi.

Concrete Corner provides the record store with the display posters, banners, and flats. Each month there is a contest for the store with the best Concrete Corner display, with the winning store receiving a cash prize of \$250. A color photo of the display is the record store's entry form.

The typical winning display positions posters of heavy metal groups beneath the big block, green letters of CONCRETE CORNER, creating an attractive collage of colors and sensual angles which appear as kaleidoscopic star constellations across a black firmament. New cassettes edge the bottom of the display, just above the free heavy metal magazine, *Concrete Corner*. Then come the straight rows of albums and cassettes.

"Concrete Marketing spends \$3,500 a month on two publications: our newsletter for the store owner, *Network Newz*, and our magazine for the active consumer, *Concrete Corner*," Mr. Chiappardi said.

The *Network Newz* newsletter announces the bands, tells the deals, asks for in-put, explains product changes, quotes network stores on the advantages of a Concrete Corner, congratulates raffle winners and lists the prizes for next month's raffle.

The consumer magazine, *Concrete Corner*, features a heavy metal gossip column along with a comic strip, *Adventures of CementHead*. Above the comic strip is the monthly raffle prize and the notice, "See back for details!!!"

"The prize we offer is a rare and valuable collectible," said Mr. Chiappardi. "Our first prizes have included a collector's framed and autographed Pushead lithograph, a Queensryche 'Empire' Double Platinum Sales Award, and a Gun 'n Roses crew packet. Like 'Wheel of Fortune,' we offer nice runner-up prizes, such as Anthrax 'Persistence of Time' T-shirts or a top-selling double album."

The middle section of *Concrete Corner* contains band photos and facts for the monthly play copy. On the back, above the entry form, are the Top 30 Metal Retail Chart and a guide to the coolest new releases.

On the entry form the contestant's name, address and phone number are followed by inventory questions. What are your five favorite bands? At what store did you get this entry form? Magazines read most often? Where did you get information about bands - Word of Mouth, Radio, MTV, Store Salesperson, Magazines, or *Concrete Corner*? How many concerts do you attend per month? How many cassettes/albums do you purchase per month? What styles of Heavy

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Metal music are your favorites? What radio stations do you listen to? Do you watch MTV's *Headbangers Ball*?

According to Mr. Chiappardi, Concrete Marketing develops a mailing list and a statistical profile of the teenage active consumer of hard rock/heavy metal music from the raffle entry form. The information can be used within the industry, from immediate promotional projections to the best strategies for developing protege bands. "The greatest positive effect is our personal postcard which tells of the sales and at what Concrete Corner you can pick up your free video of the latest bands," said Mr. Chiappardi.

"Each year," said Mr. Chiappardi, "Concrete Marketing sets an objective which will bring a fresh approach to the 13-to 17-year-old heavy metal fan. That is how the successful Retailvision video program began. Retailvision allows the active consumer to be the first one back to his group with the coolest new hits. New bands reach a greater audience because of our 250-record store network and therefore stand a better chance of making it big. MTV selects maybe 2 out of 200 entries, while Retailvision can promote 30 to 40 new bands or songs per month."

To select the bands for Retailvision, Bob Chiappardi and a committee of heavy metalers meet each week to select the best entries. "A truer pulse on heavy metal development and change is kept, and by doing this we maintain the best marketing concepts of all, quality and credibility. We devote a good part of our time and money listening to the teenager," Mr. Chiappardi said.

One time Retailvision tried edited versions of songs. Heavy metalers immediately and vocally declared for the full-length versions. Now Concrete Marketing budgets \$25,000 a month on full-song videos.

"Statistics speak very clearly," said Mr. Chiappardi. "The hard rock/heavy metal active consumer on the computer file can push the sales of an album up to eight million, and maybe more, because our file keeps growing. Other big businesses are beginning to realize that the heavy metal consumer group is an untapped source. Barq's Soft Drink Company on the East coast has come to Concrete Marketing for the best way to appeal to the hard rock/heavy metal fan. More businesses are asking us for our knowledge and our concrete marketing techniques. I recall my teachers and college professors who lauded the objective, concrete lesson. They were absolutely right. One can see and touch Concrete Marketing, feel it and know its effectiveness. We listen and then we build."

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