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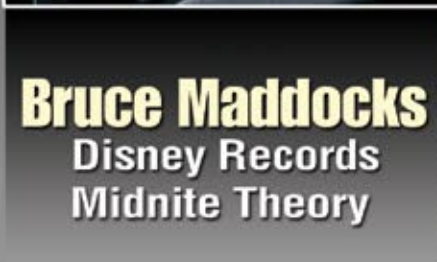
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6 PITFALLS YOU MUST AVOID WHEN MIXING

Legendary Producer
David Kershenbaum

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Artists: Aframan, Bee Gees, Beth Hart, Brian McKnight, Camron, Course of Nature, Diplomats, DMX, The Doors, Eve to Adam, Everlast, The Exies, Godsmack, Hall & Oates, Hanson, Kurupt, Lil Wayne, Matt Nathanson, Mushroomhead, Nelly, Nick Lachey, Patty Smyth, Peter Noone, Ra, Seven Mary Three, South Park Mexican, Sticky Fingaz, Suge Knight, Three Doors Down, Tonic, T-Pain, Tupac, Yanni.

BACKGROUND: Jonathan Wolfson is at the forefront of a recent trend. He is a seasoned publicist who has successfully expanded his business to also include artist management. Most recently, Wolfson became sole manager for '80s hitmakers Hall & Oates, whom Wolfson has guided to ever more interesting cutting-edge opportunities. Having first learned the ins and outs of publicity under industry icon Lee Solters, Wolfson got his first big break when he solicited Suge Knight while the Death Row Records maven was still in jail. Working on behalf of the hip-hop mogul netted Wolfson much attention and he soon racked up a dizzying roster of incongruous clients.

The Apprentice:

Lee Solters was a legend. We had clients ranging from Michael Jackson to Lollapalooza. I started out as his assistant and I went to the school of hard knocks with him. It wasn't a very politically correct environment. Lee operated in the early '90s no different than the early '60s. He was very demanding. It's funny, because you look back and he was preparing me for some of the difficulties that

“There are a lot of managers who are order-takers and they just do fulfillment, and then there are some who strategize with their artists. I'm a combination of both.”

come along with the job. He was a really good person to train me. I owe him a lot. He put me through the ringer — it was kind of like pledging a fraternity.

Prison Break:

I flew up to prison to meet Suge Knight and solicited him to be a client. That's kind of an insane move, but it was a move I made out of desperation. I had a wife and kid to support! I saw an opportunity and went for it. I basically had my interview process in prison. I said, look, when you're released there's going to be an onslaught of publicity and you're going to need someone to manage and handle that. And at that time he had no in-house publicist at Death Row or an independent publicist, for that matter. So he hired me as a publicist for Death Row. I used to fly back and forth to Mule Creek State Prison. It was very interesting... never a dull moment. But he was the first person to really empower me. It was like, shit, now it's serious, because I became a voice for him in the media. It got very intense.

Meshuggah:

I think Suge was convinced [of my abilities] the second I walked into prison and sat down with him, because I had the balls to go up there in the first place. I think he said, who is this guy with such audacity to fly up to a Level Four maximum security prison and say *you need me?* Suge Knight made me a name, overnight. I'll always thank him for that. I think Lee Solters' guidance prepared me for Suge Knight and Suge Knight prepared me for anything.

Sowing His Oates:

As their publicist, I got Hall & Oates on outlets that they had never been on, like BET and Tavis Smiley. I even got them on allhiphop.com. My whole angle was that because they'd been sampled so many times by rappers it would constitute a story. Remember, in 1989, "I Can't Go For That" was sampled by De La Soul; it was one of the first legally sampled songs. I thought that was significant enough to push for not only urban but hip-hop press.

This Time, It's Personal:

There are a myriad of reasons why this [relationship with H&O] fits like a glove. I saw this band at their height. Hall & Oates were ubiquitous on

MTV, all over radio and one of the biggest musical acts in the '80s. When I started doing publicity with Hall & Oates, it was very difficult to have [people] see them for what they are: two guys who have written and sung 29 Top 40 hits. Just because you're commercially successful doesn't mean that you're a manufactured Pussycat Doll. Just because they were uber-successful doesn't mean they weren't the real deal. I had a real beef with that. I remember buying my first 45 of "Kiss On My List" in 1980 when I was nine, so connecting with these guys as an adult and going to bat for them, I took it a little personally.

Create and Sell a Story:

I had a tough time getting these guys the press they deserve, so what I did was create a story. A journalist friend called and said he'd just interviewed Brandon Flowers from the Killers. He told me that everything you need to know about writing a perfect song is in "Rich Girl." I asked my friend if I could use that statement in a testimonial. Yeah, sure, no problem. Then I had another idea: I'm going to start gathering testimonials from other bands that revere Hall & Oates. *Spin* magazine put out a cover story - it said "Hall & Oates: The New Velvet Underground?" I'm not going to play the old game and beg the press to write about my clients.

Bridging the Generation Gap:

Once the *Spin* article came out, Daryl Hall had a light bulb moment and started [his internet show] *Live From Daryl's House*. We've been using it to bridge the gap between the Hall & Oates brand of music and a younger generation. If you're a fan of Chromeo and never heard of Hall & Oates, but see Chromeo online with Daryl Hall, you might get interested in Hall & Oates.

You tap into all of those fan bases, whether it's Finger Eleven or the Doors. It starts making *Live From Daryl's House* a destination spot for bands.

Publicity-Driven Manager:

We have a [Hall & Oates] boxed set coming out on October 6th. Now, the publicist in me sees this as another way to get the Hall & Oates brand in people's consciousness. Even though I'll be sharing in the profit of this boxed set, it's actually more important to me what the set

represents — a body of work from a band that has had tremendous success. The publicist in me sees this as another vehicle to publicize the brand of Hall & Oates; and when you're partnering with a company like Sony, who has marketing and promotional muscle, by promoting the boxed set you're really promoting your brand. So I guess I'm a publicity-driven manager. A lot of managers are thinking about the dollar, where I'm thinking about the big picture.

The Manager Serves the Artist:

At the end of the day, the artist is the boss, and while my opinion matters the final decision always comes back to the band. There are a lot of managers who are order-takers and they just do fulfillment, and then there are some who strategize with their artists. I'm a combination of both. I'm on the phone with Daryl all the time and we go over all aspects of the business together. Sometimes he's got an agenda he wants me to execute and sometimes I bring things to the table. It's a give and take, but the people in charge are the artists, always.

Balance:

I'm always working. It could be Sunday afternoon and I'm thinking about work. It's all-consuming; that's the nature of this business. Unfortunately for my family, they're sort of at the mercy of my insane schedule, but I consciously try to keep a balance. If you're completely devoured by this industry, you're going to lose your soul. And if you're not somewhat balanced, you're not going to be as good in your job. If you totally live in your client's world, there are no checks and balances with yourself.

Recording for Posterity:

I just started [having my picture taken with clients] a few years ago. I worked with Suge Knight for six years and there were so many opportunities where the photographer was like, hey, jump in. I regret that now.

A Business of Affection:

If I bumped into Suge today, we'd get along fabulously. In this business, you have to get along personally. You could be the best manager, the most kick ass publicist, the greatest attorney, but if the clients don't like you as a person and they're not jiving with you, that's a big problem. It's a business of personalities. 