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AND NOW, A WORD FROM OUR SPONSORS ...

By robertscovill on Sun, 10/06/2013 - 12:54am

Okay, I'll say it. The concert experience and in particular concert sound is where my passions lie. Now admittedly,

spaced chapters of a long novel with each one thematically centered on my efforts in a particular sector of the music business. I've traveled a number of different roads that resulted in my becoming an accomplished live sound engineer, recording engineer, producer, musician and even record

my professional history reads like a number of loosely-

company owner. In the latter part of my professional life, I'm doing a lot of work as an educator and technology developer. Relatively speaking, I've been pretty successful at all of those efforts, some more so than others. But just as in

any well-written novel, there is always an underlying thread or plot line to the whole story. For me—make no mistake about it—live music and concert production is where my heart and my passions lie. I still attend a lot of concerts and shows (if you've read my previous blogs you'll know that the use of term "concerts"

tour regularly as a mixer, although not with the ferocity that I did earlier on in my career. So it's with trepidation that I present you with the following observations in that I may inadvertently open a big ol' can of worms if a marketing firm reads this. But here it goes anyway ... While at a large, sold-out concert the other night, I was actually struck by something that had me thinking all the way home during the drive and even afterward while sitting on the couch unwinding and watching TV. It all

and shows" is intentional...) of all sizes and scale and I still

entertainment?" Okay, Scovill you had me right up until then ... I'm off to bed ... Zzzz ... Zzzz ... Zzzz. But wait, think about it for a second. What do users typically loath about the current entertainment experiences? Let's just consider the big three; TV, Radio

just kind of morphed together into the thought "Is the

insertion of advertising the death knell for any form of

and Internet. It's easy to make the case that; what people typically dislike the most about these experiences; is the fact that each of them is being completely inundated by commercial advertisers. Heck in a lot of cases, the

advertisement IS the program content in the form of an

infomercial. Wha???

stay clear of this?

advertising, that's why.

Laughable.

Now, concerts have always been this kind of a "safety zone" from these kinds of marketing activities, seemingly untainted by mainstream entertainment formats and influences. I mean, you buy your ticket, you show up, the house lights go out and away you go for two uninterrupted hours of what you came to see! No fuss, no muss, no commercial interruptions – escapism at it's finest. But given the daily pounding that our senses are subject

offered a similar "marketing free zone" up until recently. Okay, at the movies you know what you came to see, you buy your ticket, sit down, and ... oh wait, what is this? I'm going to have to sit through commercial after commercial for products, services and even ads for upcoming

television shows! Why? Because television shows are

weary of the 18 minutes of content plus 12 minutes of commercials format for today's TV shows. And apparently even the 12 minutes is not enough. They also feel the need to run banners in the lower third of the screen DURING the show, hyping upcoming shows on the same network! Hell, on many channels, the commercial time within a feature length movie presentation exceeds the actual running time of the movie! And what's even worse yet, I've seen movies subjected to positively horrible edits all in order to reduce the length of the movies apparently in an effort to fit more commercials into the allotted time slot! An hour and half movie is now in a three hour time slot? WTF? It's unwatchable that's WTF. Let's see, where else is this happening? Radio? Oh my

Internet? If I turn off my pop-up blocker I can't even open a single browser window without so many pop ups ads fighting for space on my screen that surfing is literally impossible. And who knows what the hell is going on under the hood with malware, spyware and crawlers. Okay well, how about LIVE sporting events? Nope, even live sports are totally a slave to the marketing teat. Have you ever been to a live football or a basketball game and had to sit through a "TV time out"? Interpret it as: the TV

live; yeah, you just sit tight for the next 6 minutes. As a

ads on the big screen on the score board for you as well.

pathetic display. And this is FM radio—remember FM

We wouldn't want you to miss out on the opportunity to be marketed to just like the TV viewers. I mean, consider the Super Bowl as the prime example. There's nearly as much pre-game hype and anticipation for the half-time advertising as there is for the game itself. How the heck did we get there??? I mean, this really is totally out of hand and shows no sign of let up. Magazines? Open your next mag and tear out every ad you see. The magazine will be less than a 1/3 as many pages as it was when you bought it. Email? I spend so much time deleting junk email it's positively insane. Somehow, these emails magically avoid being blocked and are able to somehow ignore requests for removal from the companies distribution list.

What a joke. It actually motivated me to get rid of my landline because the answering machine was so inundated with solicitors. Cable news organizations? You could EASILY make a case that news stories are "cherry picked" and reported based

The telephone is just as bad. National Do-Not Call list?

Snail mail? Are you kidding me? How many trees have met their death in my mailbox, all based on the chance

products, services or scams? Not a single one, not a single

that I'll actually open up one of these pieces of crap

chance—straight to the trash.

to survive—no different than TV shows.

with ads for restaurants or nightclubs. My front door gets papered with ads for services. Scenic drives along beautiful highways are cluttered with billboards for EVERYTHING. And on and on it goes. The pounding is just relentless.

And consider this for just how deep marketers have their claws in us. We will actually pay more money in order to have an experience that is void of marketing interruption. With radio it's satellite radio, with TV it's Netflix, with the internet or even our phones, we pay for premium versions

of a service or app that offer what? Not a single thing

or app free from pop up ads. Wow ... now they have us

more in terms of features other than to give us the service

over the proverbial barrel. They've made us loathe the marketing experience so much that we're willing to pay money to avoid it. Where does one go to have a different experience? Well, funny enough, the concert experience, "for the most part", has been spared the infection of this deadly marketing cancer. But I'll tell you, I for one am shocked that we don't actually see more product and ad placement

video already leverages the pre-show walk-in time to promote upcoming shows and products including tour merchandise. It's already creeping closer to what is currently happening in movie theaters. Seats are currently littered with paper flyers for products and discount coupons. The first symptoms of the cancer are starting to show up at the concert experience. So what's next? Can you actually imagine a concert experience that would mimic the TV model? Don't laugh, because this is not really meant to be funny.

back to play a classic song from our very first album" I can see it now, during the break, road crew all scurrying about on a UV lit stage re-adjusting all the perfectly placed products, all of them sporting the appropriate

footage. Lead-in bumper; "This rock concert break sponsored by Samsonite, the touring professional's choice" First 1:00 spot: Fredrick's of Hollywood commercial. "Girls, are you looking to make the "biggest" impression and grab that artist's or road crew's attention? Check out our FOH "concert series" line of bras and panties. (see what I did there? FOH is an acronym for Fredrick's Of Hollywood too ya know ... how fateful for Fredrick's, it's a sign that this was all meant to be)

Next up a :30 spot: "Sharpie – for autographs that will last a lifetime" Text 555896 for a coupon to pick up your

free Sharpie at the tee shirt stand.

well.

another six songs.

In the lower third of the screen is a fly-in for Brett's new show where they fully rebuild and customize existing buses for high end customers.

timed to allow for the perfect bathroom or snack break as

House lights back off -- "And we're back!" followed by

And then, the spot light hits the guitar player who speaks directly into the camera on IMAG "Okay, after this next commercial break we're going to do a cover of one of your all time favorite, classic songs that we just love to play

Seems ridiculous doesn't it? Nothing this extreme could EVER happen for the concert experience right? I'll bet for stage and vaudeville performers who were new to TV when it first came on-line, the concept seemed just as ridiculous

and look at where we are now. It would be very easy to make the case for TV being a more effective vehicle for advertisers than content creators with no sign of swinging

pitch or offers the right amount of money to a band or manager and in turn plants their first marketing seed in

Oh God, please take me now ...

sure to grow. I don't know about you fellow live music lovers; but the concert experience is hollowed ground for me. My prayer is that it can stay cancer-free, or that I'm long gone from this world when it is not. MORE LIKE THIS... SOUNDPROLIVE Powered by Centextly Madix and Rush: A Shared Work Ethic

This One's For You, Joe

the ground of the live concert. Heck that seed may already

be planted. All I know is, once the seed is planted, it is

Shrek Is Loving Life The Overuse of Plugs and the

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David Henzerling · Sr. Software Engineer at Live Nation Great commentary, Robert - but, my god, what a buzz-kill... Reply · 1 · Unlike · Follow Post · October 6 at 4:50pm Kenneth H. Williams · Following · Owner at Widow Nikjamdra Productions Absolute truth...sadly

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INSTANT SAVINGSON SIUDO **SOUNDPROLIVE DIGITAL EDITIONS**

to by the marketers of the world, how long can concerts Well, okay, let's start by comparing the concert experience to today's moviegoing experience. Moviegoing has always television shows? I came to the movies to get away from completely inundated and overwhelmed with commercial I mean, I don't know about you guys and gals, but I'm SO gosh. My daughter and I used to "laugh" about it when I would drive her to high school in the mornings. We would get in my truck and she would immediately turn on the radio and begin scanning looking for some music to listen to. Way more often than not, we would make it ALL the way to her school before hearing a single song. It was a radio? "More music, less commercials" was the mantra. network needed to run more commercials, so all of you who paid all that money for tickets to see the actual game

matter of fact, we're going to take that time to run some

on which ones will bring in the most TV viewers. Read as: "advertising viewers" because those news orgs are on the hook to sell ad slots in order to generate revenue in order My car itself is not even safe as it regularly gets papered

at shows – especially on tours that have corporate sponsors. Now that video production has become such a significant part of the modern concert experience, the marketers may just be crouched in the grass waiting to attack. So, be forewarned as you're already starting to see more marketing opportunities start to creep in. In-house

Let's start with just some simple product placement, which we regularly see in TV shows. Let's say the tour is sponsored by a soft drink company and part of the agreement (read as CONTRACT) demands that the artist be seen drinking those products on stage, or at the very least, the products be strategically placed around the stage so that when the IMAG picks up a close up of the drummer, the sponsor's drinks are within arm's reach, clearly in the frame, label conveniently facing forward. Revised roadie to do list: tune drums, bring fresh towels, camera block all soft drink cans.

Oh, let's just go "all in" shall we? How about every 6 songs we break for a commercial. Lead singer speaking; "After this short break for a word from our sponsors, we'll be

corporate black tee shirt with glow-in-the-dark logo for the desired branding opportunity for the sponsor of the tour. And then the commercials begin on the HD screens, once reserved for the artist's concert video content and IMAG

Next a 1:30 spot: A modern and stylistic ad produced by Prevost and narrated by Brett Michaels "Rock your vacation in style in the touring coach chosen by more tours than any other. Visit your local Prevost dealer today" And on and on it goes for a full six minutes, strategically

too. So stay right where you are!" And then ... we get to see the SAME commercials all over again ... UGGGHHHH ...

the other way anytime soon. My real fear is that it's it only a matter of time before some marketing firm or corporate sponsor makes the right

Destruction of Dynamics Keep Up! Subscribe to the newsletter... The Show vs The Concert Gigs "Avid S3L" advertising AEG Clear Channel concerts <u>LiveNation</u> sponsorship iii 썤 😘

> Add a comment... Posting as Robert Scovill Comment

Reply · 1 · Unlike · Follow Post · October 6 at 3:29pm

Dude, what is it you don't understand about "Free"? Reply · 🖒 1 · Unlike · Follow Post · October 6 at 5:09pm

One only has to look at the jäger stage. Or rock star energy over the last 10 yrs.. Though at least the market blends easy enough, big corp has has there hand in live music for quite

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