



BOB SHAYE
NEW LINE FOUNDER
IN DIRECTOR'S ROLE



TIME INC. MUSIC MAG
EXTENDS *NME* BRAND,
BUILDS WEB AUDIENCE



HBO ADDICTION SERIES
MULTIMEDIA CAMPAIGN
DELIVERS FACTS, HOPE

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keywords

**Time
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LEADING WOMEN

**14 Executives
Talk About Life at the Top**

Hilary Estey McLoughlin (left)
and Diane Nelson
on the Warner Bros. lot

NME ROCKS ON IN U.S. MARKETS

Time Inc.'s British music mag—originally the *New Musical Express*—extends brand to clubs, tours, website, and makes waves on both sides of the Atlantic **By Justin Neely**

It's almost midnight as Pagoda, a four-man indie rock band, begins the second song in its set. Inside New York City's Hiro Ballroom, heat radiates from the packed dance floor in front of the stage. As an amplified cello gives way to a few plaintive vocal notes, the stylish young crowd, outfitted in slim-cut jeans and equipped with the latest mobile gadgets, draws closer to lead singer Michael Pitt. Club NME, an innovative band-showcase franchise developed by *NME* magazine, has overcome frigid winter temperatures to make its second outing in New York a hit.

Although Club NME is a relative newcomer to the New York scene, *NME*, a U.K.-based popular-music magazine published by Time Inc.'s U.K. publishing arm, IPC Media, has long had an impact on U.S. tastes through its market-leading readership in the music industry. IPC is now hoping to

build on the influential title's trendsetting history to extend the NME brand to a larger U.S. audience and attract new visitors to its website, NME.com.

At home in the U.K., the magazine that began its run in 1952 as the *New Musical Express* has become a model of how to adapt a venerable publication so that it can thrive in a marketplace increasingly dominated by new media. By diversifying its brand, NME has connected with readers online through a combination of innovation and flexibility. It has also forged a direct bond with young opinion makers by implementing Club NME nights in 13 U.K. cities and sponsoring award-winning national tours featuring bands spotted by the magazine.

Club NME, which has now reached Los Angeles and New York, is a good example of how

resources can be coordinated. Club nights and tours are effective at marketing the brand to readers through a visceral experience, while also providing a constant stream of editorial content to both *NME* and NME.com.

"One of the things that we're very much focused on at *NME* is brand integration and working very closely together as a team," says Paul Cheal, *NME*'s Publishing Director. "What we're doing with Club NME is trying to let people feel what the brand is like. This is a brand that feels fresh, contemporary and exciting, but it's actually 54 years old."

As IPC and NME.com target the U.S. market, they will promote *NME*'s storied history: The magazine arranged the only meeting between Elvis and the Beatles, and over the years has introduced to mainstream audiences new bands from U2 to

the Strokes. IPC is also seizing opportunities for NME.com to partner with trusted brands. An *NME* editorial feature is already up on EW.com, another Time Inc. site, and there may be arrangements with more websites yet to come. "We're really trying to find people who think the same way as we do, and see how we can share what we do to make both ends work," says Kevin Heery, Director of Digital Development at IPC Ignite, the men's lifestyle and entertainment group.

The approach has worked well in the U.K., where NME.com has become the leading site for music news, pulling in some 1.6 million unique users a month, according to the *Times* of London.

After Club NME's latest success—bringing heat to a bleak and frigid New York night—IPC exports *NME*'s British cool to the heart of Texas in March at Austin's South by Southwest Music Festival. With two band showcases scheduled as well, and a full slate of meetings to connect with potential partners, *NME* appears poised to take center stage in the U.S. online music scene. ■



I'M WITH THE BRAND New York City's Hiro Ballroom hosts Club NME. The band showcase scores with trend-setting music fans in the U.S. as well as the U.K., building the audience for NME.com and *NME* magazine (March 3 issue, inset).