

Oasis Teams with Spero Communications Using IBM's Digital Media Technology For New Album Launch

IBM's Digital Rights Management paves the way for artists to distribute content in a managed e-commerce environment

London, June 20, 2002 – IBM today announced that it is working with Spero Communications and other key companies to launch a unique, free promotional CD of new Oasis music and video content, using innovative IBM digital media technology. This Sunday 1.7 million newspaper readers in the UK will receive the CD enabling them to access previously unreleased tracks from Oasis's new album -- *Heathen Chemistry* -- on a preview basis, one week ahead of the album's official release date.

The free CD will allow consumers to preview three new album tracks on their PCs, using the embedded Big Time™ Multimedia player. From the CD, users will be able to register online and obtain a digital key, which unlocks the new tracks. Users will also be able to play these new tracks up to four times or until the end of the launch period. In this way, The BigTime player, conceived by Spero Communications, and based on IBM's Electronic Media Management System (EMMS), enables record companies to reach new audiences while protecting the rights of their artists.

The CD will also contain three other previously unreleased Oasis demo tracks -- as well as the *Hindu Times* music video and an exclusive 15 minute interview with Noel Gallagher – lead guitarist from the band. Three of the tracks will be accessible using conventional CD players.

Having previewed the tracks, PC users will be able to link directly to the HMV website to pre-order the new album online. Using IBM EMMS superdistribution technology, PC users will be able to share the exclusive tracks with other users, who will then be able to register online and preview the new files in the same managed environment.

"This is a first of its kind promotion that opens up many new possibilities for music marketing," said Emma Greengrass, General Manager, Big Brother, Oasis' record company. "Things have moved on from trying out latest releases by listening to CDs over headphones in a crowded music store. This is the first promo CD that allows fans to try out new album tracks from the comfort of home. This is really good news for fans, music companies and recording artists."

"This promotion allows record labels and music retailers to harness the power of new digital technologies in ever more innovative ways, in order to promote, market, distribute and sell music, both online and in-store, said Scott Burnett, Director of Marketing for IBM Digital Media. "IBM Digital Media Solutions enable companies to explore new business models that can compliment both physical and digital delivery and promotion --driving new revenue opportunities."

Ian Spero, Managing Director, Spero Communications said: "BigTime will promote creative expression through live events and digital infotainment channels. The challenge for Spero is to select companies that not only offer the expertise to delivery this vision, but also the mindset to collaborate to build a lifestyle enabling service designed to inform, entertain and educate our audience. IBM has enabled Spero to establish a viable business model by creating a dynamic multimedia platform that meet the needs of our Media & Entertainment clients."

IBM's EMMS technology includes security features that allow content providers to distribute digital media in a controlled manner, including high-quality AAC audio compression from Dolby Laboratories and Fraunhofer IIS.

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About Spero Communications Ltd

Marketing Partnerships through Live Brand Experience, Spero Communications (Spero) is widely recognised as a leading authority on cultural and affinity marketing and the role of private/public sector partnerships in modern society. Working at the cutting-edge of innovation, Spero has capitalized upon increased consumer interest in leisure, and the responsibility of business in the community, to create a unique through-the-line approach to brand development and corporate communication.

About IBM Global Digital Media

With over 80 years of experience in helping business innovate, IBM leads the industry in developing solutions that help companies create, manage, distribute, transact, and protect their content in a digital form. IBM Digital Media Solutions incorporate an open and standards-based framework, media enabling, the IBM e-business infrastructure, including business partner technologies. Additional information on IBM's strategy for Digital Media can be found at www.ibm.com/industries/digitalmedia.

About EMMS

EMMS is a comprehensive electronic media distribution and digital rights management system designed to support a broad range of media types across multiple industries. EMMS provides the foundation for new business models created by the digital delivery of assets and offers a rich set of security features designed to protect the intellectual property rights of content owners throughout the delivery process. EMMS has an open architecture to allow technology advances in audio compression, encryption, and end-user devices and applications to be integrated. EMMS is part of IBM's digital media solutions portfolio, which offers comprehensive, enterprise-wide solutions for creating, managing, storing and distributing digital assets. Additional information on EMMS can be found at www.ibm.com/software/data/emms.

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