

## Evolution of the Jingle

For those of you who missed it, the last few years have witnessed the passing of another great American pastime. Gone are the tremendous jingles of yesteryear, the catch-phrases we all remember from Saturday morning cartoons or family hour around the television. Do you remember "The greatest part of waking up, is Folgers in your cup," or "I'd like to buy the world a Coke?" If you do, you're probably over 30 because an entire generation of Americans has grown up without them.

In today's hectic world of shortened attention spans and "how fast can I pitch my product" advertising, companies have turned to short snippets of sound or well-known pop music to market their products. These sound clips rarely last more than five seconds and are known as "sound logos." Think of the Intel chimes or the Yahoo! yodel. These sound logos are aimed directly at the listener and leave a lasting imprint on the brain. The fact that they sometimes replace the brand name itself - much like Nike's Swoosh - means they fulfill the basic brand requirements of iconography and indelible imagery.

Another and more recognizable replacement of the traditional jingle is the use of well-known pop songs to represent a company's advertising campaign. An hour of television viewing is likely to yield commercials that feature songs by Led Zeppelin, Steve Miller, and Jimi Hendrix. What was once considered taboo for mainstream artists is now a lucrative source of notoriety and revenue.

This trend towards popular music is also taking hold in the film industry. Instead of traditional underscore, more and more contemporary songs are being used in production. These songs are then packaged and sold as a soundtrack, which can generate additional millions to the bottom line revenue of a film. This soundtrack also becomes a great way in which to market the film itself.

Both the use of sound logos and the use of contemporary or popular songs is a complicated process for the film or commercial producer. Take for example the song "What A Wonderful World", performed by Louis Armstrong. A producer must obtain a synchronization license or "synch" license from the writer/publisher of the song. In this case, there are three different publishers to be paid. The producer must also obtain a "masters" license from the record company that owns the rights to the specific version they want to use. This can become problematic because record companies routinely go out of business, merge, and sell the rights of songs to other companies.

Oftentimes, film & television producers hire a music supervisor to handle this process. Similarly, ad agencies might use a music clearance & licensing

house to obtain these licenses and oversee all aspects of music in a particular production. The revenue created by these licenses and soundtrack album sales is enormous and far outweighs the hassle. Because of this, this trend will likely continue to grow and thrive.