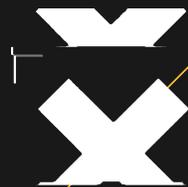




# A MARKETING DEEP DIVE





ZAK KUHN, FOUNDER OF NASHVILLE BRIEFING  
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# WHAT IS THIS?

The worst part of being isolated in a global pandemic is that ideas have a hard time spreading. While some of the biggest marketing plays made during the pandemic may have advanced the careers of some of Nashville's biggest artists, you may be unaware. This special edition highlights marketing strategies that caught our eye and companies that we think are leading the future of music marketing.

This document is broken up into two sections. In the first section, we break down 5 campaigns pulled off by some of the biggest labels in town. In the second section we spoke with founders and CEOs to highlight some of the coolest established and rising marketing companies in the business. We hope the first section inspires and the second section helps you find new partners to achieve greatness with.

Let's Dive In.



# Label Marketing Campaigns



## Campaign 1

How BBR created sparks utilizing a week of livestreams for Lainey Wilson



## Campaign 2

Sony Music Nashville and Kane Brown team up with Boys & Girls Club



## Campaign 3

How Warner Music Nashville got creative during COVID to bring Shy Carter to radio



## Campaign 4

Caitlyn Smith teams up with Boot Barn



## Campaign 5

Kelsea Ballerini and Black River break through the noise as the world shut down

# BBR MUSIC GROUP

## **Team Members**

JoJamie Hahr, SVP, BBR Music Group  
Jay Jones, VP of Publicity  
Chris Loss, VP of Digital Strategy & Analytics  
Jen Morgan, VP of Creative Services  
Devin DeToro, Dir. of Marketing  
Channing Wisz, Mgr. of Marketing  
Addie Saloman, Dir. of Digital Marketing  
Tyler Corrado, Mgr. of Social Media & Fan Engagement  
Cody Heckber, Dir. of Content Creation  
Jennifer Coen, Dir. of Brand Partnerships



## **“First Make Sparks”**

“Try to catch fire. Then keep adding to the story”. That’s what Jon Loba, the president of BBR frequently says. It’s also the approach that was taken with rising country star Lainey Willson, throughout the past year.

In 2020, the year leading up to her new album Sayin’ What I’m Thinking, Lainey released a new song every single month. Each release was crafted to focus on her brand and what differentiates her. The musical and lyrical content of songs like “What Would Dolly Do”, “Neon Diamonds” and “Sayin’ What I’m Thinking” clearly showed Lainey’s personality and who she is as an artist. Each single was accompanied by a graphic visualiser, which visually let the fans into Lainey’s throwback vibe.

Starting on February 19th of 2021, the release week of her album, BBR prepared a seven night livestream series that featured different themes every evening. From full-band performances and a live show at The Opry, to interviews and Q&A sessions, Wilson was able to interact with fans and establish a strong consumer connection while promoting her latest work. Thanks to these efforts, Wilson caught the attention of fans and critics alike, earning spots on Apple Music’s “Up Next” feature, iHearts “On The Verge Artists”, and Billboard Chartbreakers. See the full schedule from her seven night series below.

### “Sayin’ What I’m Thinkin’: A Seven Night Series” schedule:

Friday, February 19—Album ‘Side A’ Live Show (with Beasley Media Group)  
Saturday, February 20—Live from the Opry (with Opry Entertainment Group)  
Sunday, February 21—Get to the ‘Bell Bottom’ of It (with Sounds Like Nashville)  
Monday, February 22—Album ‘Side B’ Live Show (with Summit Media)  
Tuesday, February 23—Behind the Album Documentary (with American Songwriter)  
Wednesday, February 24—Writers From the Record Acoustic Night (with Whiskey Riff)  
Thursday, February 25—Live Q&A with Fans (with various independent radio stations)

## **Favorite Marketing Book?**

“Anything written by Gary Vaynerchuk. I also religiously listen to his podcast.” - JoJamie Hahr, SVP, BBR Music Group

# SONY MUSIC NASHVILLE



## **Team Members**

Jennifer Way, SVP of Marketing

Paige Altone, VP of Marketing

Liz Cost, VP of Marketing

Olivia Laster, Dir. of Marketing

Photo (left):

Brown on Zoom with children of the Boys and Girls Club of America. The kids named him an honorary member of Boys & Girls Clubs for life in a special surprise to conclude the Town Hall.

## **Kane Gives Back**

When Kane Brown released his unifying anthem “Worldwide Beautiful” following the music industry’s Blackout Tuesday, he used the opportunity to send a message of acceptance and global peace. Brown and the marketing team at Sony Music Nashville decided to allocate proceeds from the song to the Boys and Girls Club of America (BGCA).

The team also decided to celebrate the song's release by holding a 30 minute Town Hall for Boys & Girls Club members. The virtual event was attended by over 100 BGCA members across the U.S., as well as many living on U.S. military installations worldwide. Hosted by “Entertainment Tonight”’s Kevin Frazier, the event saw Brown answering questions and sharing personal thoughts around the themes of the release. In a special surprise, the kids touchingly named him an honorary member of Boys & Girls Clubs of America for life.

Emphasizing the worldwide inclusive message, “Worldwide Beautiful” was also supported with a global PR push and was serviced simultaneously to multiple radio formats: Country, Pop, Hot AC, Rhythmic, Urban and Urban AC.

## **Favorite Marketing Book?**

*Wolfpack* by Abby Wombach — Page Altone, VP Marketing

*Execution: The Discipline of Getting Things Done* by Larry Bossidy & Ram Charan — Liz Cost, VP Marketing



# WARNER MUSIC NASHVILLE

## Favorite Marketing Book?

*"I would have to say Dolly Parton's autobiography. In my mind, she is the best marketing person in the history of our genre. Her book is a masterclass on understanding the audience and fan engagement"*  
—Shane Tarleton, SVP Artist Development



## Advice For New Artists?

*"Don't be afraid to create fans one at a time and continuously follow up with them."* — Shane Tarleton, SVP Artist Development

## Getting Creative During COVID

It's time to say hello to parking lot performances. At least, that's the approach Warner's marketing team took when the old ways just weren't cutting it anymore.

This thinking outside of the box led to Warner Nashville recording artist Shy Carter to introduce and spread his new single "Good Love" in a very unique way – performing for key industry players in their own driveways and parking lots.

Shy brought his music and message to gatekeepers right as the COVID-19 pandemic started up. Shy and his truck paid visits to Nashville's major industry players, serenading them in front of their own homes and parking lots. "Good Love" continued to grow, eventually turning into the first true bus radio tour during COVID. Shy and his team traveled to 33 cities across the U.S. performing for radio programers and PDs from the front of his bus.

# MONUMENT RECORDS

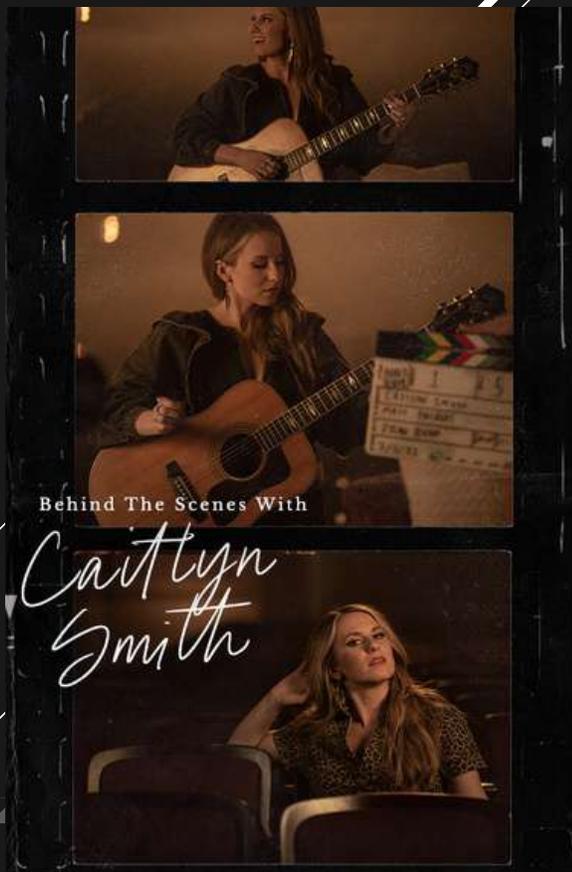
## Team Members

Katie McCartney, GM

Joel Beaver, Manager of Marketing

Casey Thomas, Publicist

Jamie Graves, Director of Digital



## Boot Barn & Caitlyn Smith

Monument's brand partnership between Boot Barn and Caitlyn Smith began with an Instagram cold DM between the label's Marketing Manager (Joel Beaver) and Boot Barn. After numerous back and forth messages, the partnership was born. Monument and Boot Barn have worked in tandem on the creation and rollout of various content pieces ever since, including the official video for Smith's single "I Can't (feat. Old Dominion)". The partnership has also included radio ad buys at all iHeart and Westwood One country stations, Caitlyn Smith's Boot Barn clothing collection and the ["I Can't" music video](#) was emailed to their entire mailing list.

## Favorite Marketing Tool?

"One sheets and sizzle reels are the best way to show off an artist's accomplishments in a very consumable way. We are constantly updating these for all of our artists. The entire team utilizes these assets with all partners when pitching an artist for an opportunity." - Joel Beaver, Manager of Marketing

## Advice For Independent Acts?

"Get scrappy! Cold outreach works more than you might think. At Monument, we pride ourselves on being scrappy – something as simple as an Instagram DM could turn into a major opportunity" - Joel Beaver, Manager of Marketing

# BLACK RIVER ENTERTAINMENT

## Team Members

Tanya Schrage, VP of Marketing

Megan Hazeltine, Marketing Coordinator

Drew DeSirey, Graphic Designer

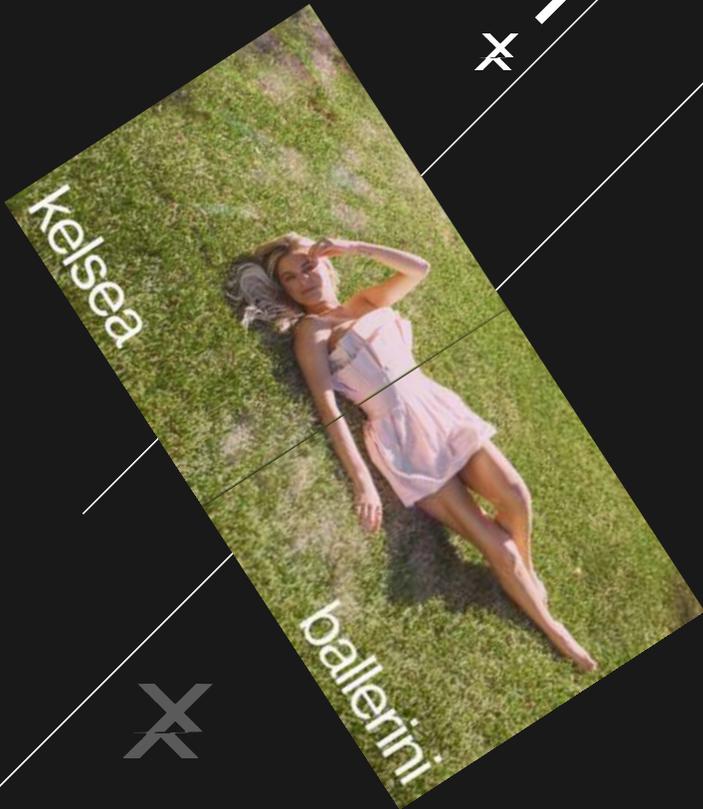
Spencer Clark, Production Engineer

## **Favorite Marketing Book?**

*“Contagious by Jonah Berger. An oldie but a goodie with a ton of application about how information spreads”  
—Tanya Schrage, VP Marketing*

## **Two For The Price of One**

Kelsea Ballerini’s third album dropped March 20th of 2020, just as the world was shutting down. Although many of Black River’s release plans imploded, it was important that Ballerini release the record to her fans during a time of uncertainty. Fast forward through much of the Spring/Summer quarantine, she delivered a deconstructed, new take on the same songs from the new album kelsea. The team at Black River knew it HAD to be heard. It was important that fans could experience the “other side of the same story” and the BR team was thrilled that the album showed Ballerini as a gifted storyteller visionary.





# Marketing Companies

## WHO TO CALL WHEN!

### **Girilla Marketing**

If you're an artist who needs to improve their online presence and brand

### **Bubble Up**

If you're a company or artist who needs to organize their entire digital presence

### **Rise**

If you need guaranteed eyeballs on your song, album or video release

### **Songfluencer**

If you need to promote your release to influencers

### **Quinton Digital**

If you need a full marketing team but you're not signed to a record label





# GIRLILLA MARKETING

**“Girilla Marketing protects and creates opportunities for your brand to thrive online.” – Jennie Smythe (President, CEO)**

## **What sets Girilla apart?**

Since we’ve been fortunate to work outside of music and on a global stage, we approach opportunities and challenges with a distinctive view.

## **What are some examples of how artists have successfully used the service?**

Each client is different, but in general most people come to us to strengthen their social presence. We approach as coaches and teach/empower our clients as much as we can. The more the client knows and is in control, the better the partnership.

## **Favorite marketing book?**

There is no better music business book than Donald Passman’s. He’s done a great job updating over the years to include any/all digital issues. Until you understand copyright and publishing, you can’t really understand how to market.

# BUBBLE UP

**“We’re a marketing company that helps artists and organizations be successful. Our expertise includes websites, fan communities, e-commerce, custom development, digital advertising, project management and design.” – Scott Heuerman (General Manager at BubbleUp)**

## **What sets Bubble Up apart?**

The team that works here and their experience. Digital marketing tools and tactics are important but the real key to serving our customers is knowing how to use those tools and tactics. There’s a high turnover rate in our segment of the business and I am proud that we have team members that have been with us for many years. That experience and expertise is something I know our customers appreciate.

## **What are some examples of how artists have successfully used the service?**

We’ve partnered with Luke Bryan and his team for years building his fan community. Not only is it a great stand alone business, it’s something that impacts all other aspects of his business. Having access to fan data under one roof has been a powerful tool that yields meaningful results. We’re talking tickets, merchandise sales and lifetime fans, not just clicks and impressions.

## **What is a service Bubble Up provides that the industry might be surprised by?**

We’ve done over 500 live streams in the past year and see live streaming as a feature of our web sites and fan communities that will not go away as live, in-person touring resumes. We’ve also helped many independent artists release and market new music. Some of them achieved things that independent artists aren’t supposed to be able to do.

## **Favorite marketing book?**

*Moneyball* by Michael Lewis. Not your traditional marketing book but a great reminder that you don’t make marketing decisions just because “that’s the way we’ve always done it.” The way Billy Beane looked at baseball was the way I wanted my company at the time to approach music marketing. I also like *This Is Marketing* by Seth Godin.

# RISE

**“it's a magical marketing platform that combines technology, data, content, and creativity to generate repeatable, reliable results for artists. Any artist, label, or otherwise can instantly create a marketing campaign to promote a song, video, social post or profile and achieve authentic, guaranteed results for each campaign.” - Tim Jack (CEO)**

## How do you explain Rise to someone who is unaware?

My favorite way to answer this question is to include [a link to a short video](#) we created that explains Rise in less than two minutes.

## What are some examples of how artists have successfully used the service?

Rise is different. Every campaign created through Rise comes with a range of guaranteed minimum results. We believe in making sure that for every dollar spent, there is a measurable outcome. Because of that, every artist that has used Rise is an example of a successful campaign. If you create a campaign that estimates a Spotify Follower Growth and Pre-Save growth of 1,000 new fans, or a YouTube campaign of 50,000 Discovery views, the campaign will be live until that goal is met, guaranteed. Our website has individual case studies showing the extended results, plus testimonials from a wide range of credible companies, and more.

## Who is using Rise?

We serve countless independent artists from all over the world, but in the name-dropping arena, there are a lot of recognizable names! To name a few: Sony Music, The Nations, Nettwerk Music Group, Curb Records, Empire, Black Box, Warner Music Group, Red Bull Records, The Orchard, and more!

## What is one thing you think is frequently misunderstood about digital marketing?

That if you pay for digital marketing, you will be successful. Even with a successful paid campaign, it can be challenging to get significant results beyond your spend. Digital marketing is an excellent catalyst to promote music, but it is not a silver bullet. Success requires the right formula of exceptional music/content, algorithmic traction, and digital marketing choices. There are other things that can factor in as well such as brand, an engaged community, and of course luck. I feel that it's rare for just one of those things individually to be enough by itself.

## Favorite marketing book?

Probably Gary Vaynerchuck's *Crushing It*. I'm a big fan of empowering anyone who is passionate about what they do to use hustle to make shit happen.

# SONGFLUENCER

**"Songfluencer is a global, innovative creative marketing agency of industry veterans and Gen Zers, that converts followers into fans. We work with artists of all sizes, including, but not limited to: Bruno Mars, Ed Sheeran, Harry Styles, Lil Nas X, Maluma, Pitbull, and more!" - Johnny Cloherty (CEO/Co-Founder)**

## **What sets Songfluencer apart?**

2 things: Culture and Technology. On the culture side - we are Gen Z meets the Music Industry. Our company consists of 20-year old TikTok enthusiasts/influencers and music industry vets with 20+ years experience. With everyone at Songfluencer viewing the TikTok conversation through a different lens, it amplifies our ability to innovate quickly. In the space we operate in, innovation is the key to success. On the technology front, we have spent millions on proprietary technology that has aided in a better understanding of the TikTok algorithm, helped us identify the most optimal consumption strategies, and vastly increased scalability. With our ecosystem of technology applications, we're proud to be able to approach clients with data-backed strategies for winning marketing campaigns.

## **What are some examples of how artists have successfully used the service?**

Artists have partnered with us to develop new release strategies, amplify viral trends, and build streaming markets across the globe. Here is a recent massive success we were part of: For the Dynoro track "Monsters" (feat. 24kGoldn), Sony partnered with us to conduct campaigns in 8 territories across the globe, including: Germany, Poland, Canada, Belgium, Finland, Poland, Netherlands, and France. The song took off across the globe, landed on over 2,000 user generated playlists and was placed on over 60 Spotify Editorial playlists. Through the combined efforts of our team and the various labels, the song achieved over 9m streams on Spotify alone. The label even used one of our influencer posts as the video for the song's Spotify Canva video.

## **What is a service Songfluencer provides that the industry might be surprised by?**

Preffy. This is a "first of its kind" creator contesting platform we acquired in May. It will completely revolutionize the influencer marketing landscape.



# QUINTON DIGITAL

**“Quinton Digital is a marketing and artist development company primarily focused on release strategy, creative direction and digital audience development.” - Amanda Quinton (Owner/President)**

## **What sets Quinton Digital apart?**

We maintain an intentionally small roster so we can be purposeful and intentional about the artists we have the pleasure of working with.

## **What are some examples of how artists have successfully used the service?**

When we take on a project, our first question to the client is “What are the goals?” For example, when we first met with Smithfield earlier this year, they told us their goal for the *New Town* EP was to debut #1 on iTunes. Our team put together a fully comprehensive marketing and content plan to give us the best chance to reach that goal and we were overjoyed when the goal was reached. In all cases our baseline for success is growth—making progress at a pace that is realistic based on where we’re at, and where we’re going.

## **What is a service Quinton Digital provides that the industry might be surprised by?**

We are essentially at a place where we can serve as the “label marketing team” for an independent artist. Some are surprised that we do more than write social media captions and make graphics!



THE

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