

## **MTV Games and Harmonix Empower Artists and Labels to Get Their Music in the Game with the *Rock Band Network***

*The Rock Band Network Gives Artists and Record Labels Tools to Author, Promote and Sell Music for Download via the Rock Band Platform*

CAMBRIDGE, MA and NEW YORK, NY – July 17, 2009 – Harmonix Music Systems and MTV Games, a part of Viacom's MTV Networks (NYSE: VIA, VIA.B), today announced the *Rock Band Network*, a ground-breaking initiative that gives musicians and record labels the ability to author their own original recordings into gameplay files and sell their music as playable *Rock Band* tracks through the newly-created *Rock Band Network* Music Store. The introduction of the *Rock Band Network* marks a fundamental shift in the exposure music games can give emerging and established artists through innovative technologies that will open new revenue streams and promotional avenues.

"Our goal with *Rock Band* has always been to go beyond making music games and create a true music platform," said Alex Rigopulos, CEO and co-founder of Harmonix. "With the *Rock Band Network*, we've evolved the platform to its next logical step, giving players access to an incredible amount of new music by putting the professional tools we use in the hands of the artists themselves."

"The *Rock Band Network* enables songwriters and musicians – at any stage of their careers – to create their own paths through the interactive music realm," said Paul DeGooyer, Senior Vice President, Electronic Games and Music, MTV Networks Music Group. "Our download store has been an extraordinary success, and it's exciting for us to provide access to our platform through this uniquely elegant solution."

The *Rock Band Network* will launch as an open beta in late August 2009 in the U.S. and provide a sophisticated toolset, with detailed documentation on how bands can begin the process of authoring songs into *Rock Band* gameplay files. Authors will be able to submit tracks for playtesting and peer review via a specialized Web site, [Creators.RockBand.com](http://Creators.RockBand.com). Potential publishers will need a membership to Microsoft's XNA Creators Club Online in order to test and publish game content. The service will only be available to those who purchase a premium membership to Microsoft's XNA Creators Club Online, which can be purchased for four months at \$49.99 or for a year at \$99.99.

"The proven strength and stability of Microsoft's game development tools, technologies and services allowed Harmonix to focus on making an easy-to-use experience for authors without needing to reinvent the wheel," said Dave Mitchell, product unit manager, XNA publishing platform. "*Rock Band Network* is a model example of integration with XNA Creators Club Online."

Once tracks are approved, they will be transferred to the *Rock Band Network* Store, an in-game music marketplace where millions of *Rock Band* fans will be able to demo samples of the songs

for free before they purchase. Songs will debut exclusively on Xbox 360 for 30 days. Artists featured in the store will be able to choose from multiple pricing tiers for individual tracks and will be compensated via a simple payment system that provides automated accounting and regular royalty payments.

Tracks for the *Rock Band Network* will be made available later in the fall on the Xbox 360<sup>®</sup> video game entertainment system from Microsoft. Stand out tracks will follow on the PLAYSTATION<sup>®</sup>3 computer entertainment system and Wii<sup>™</sup> console. Joining the more than 750 tracks available to date, the *Rock Band Network* Store will greatly increase the amount of music available through the *Rock Band* music platform and further confirm MTV Games and Harmonix's position as the leading provider of downloadable content for music-based video games.

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#### **About MTV Networks**

MTV Networks, a division of Viacom (NYSE: VIA, VIA.B), is one of the world's leading creators of entertainment content, with brands that engage and connect diverse audiences across television, online, mobile, games, virtual worlds and consumer products. The company's portfolio spans more than 150 television channels and 350 digital media properties worldwide, and includes MTV, VH1, CMT, Logo, Harmonix, Nickelodeon, Nick at Nite, Noggin, The N, AddictingGames, Neopets, COMEDY CENTRAL, Spike TV, TV Land, Atom, Gametrailers and Xfire.

#### **About MTV Games**

MTV Games is dedicated to creating, marketing and publishing high-quality, innovative interactive products that are relevant to the MTV audience and complement the core values of the MTV Networks brands.

#### **About Harmonix Music Systems, Inc**

Harmonix Music Systems, Inc., based in Cambridge, MA, and established in 1995, is the leading developer of groundbreaking music-oriented videogames. Harmonix was founded by Alex Rigopulos and Eran Egozy, who formed the company to invent new ways for non-musicians to experience the unique joy that comes from making music and have pioneered music and rhythm gaming in the US. For more information please visit [www.harmonixmusic.com](http://www.harmonixmusic.com).

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