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SPOTLIGHT

Marketing Pioneer still paving way

By TOM LOWRY

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The Rolling Stones and Jovan Musk. Michael Jackson and Pepsi. "Top Gun" and Diet Pepsi. Chevy Chase and Doritos. Phil Collins and Sears.

They might seem like odd couples, but they are some of the most successful marketing marriages ever, generating billions of dollars for the stars and companies.

The matchmaker is Jay Coleman, a 44-year-old marketing executive who believed 25 years ago - when the very idea revolted so many - that rock 'n' roll and corporate America could be symbiotic.

Now, starched white-shirt executives' agreeing to spend millions of dollars to underwrite a bunch of bawdy rock 'n' rollers on tour is seen as a marketing no-brainer.

'We've always been about big ideas and breaking rules,' said Coleman, who gives off a rock 'n' roll image with moustache and hair spilling over his collar.

Coleman's company, Stamford, Conn.-based, EMCI which built its reputation on those earlier pioneering sponsorships - still brings together corporations and musicians. But it also is making its mark in brokering deals in the developing high-tech entertainment arena.

In the past year, EMCI's work has included:

- Linking corporate sponsors for movies to be shown at Sony IMAX theaters, including the new eight-story screen at Sony Lincoln Square on the upper West Side. EMCI will announce within a month major corporations that will underwrite part of the cost of IMAX movies.
- Striking a deal for Pepsi, FAO Schwarz and Comedy Central to sponsor the \$7.5 million "NY Skyride" simulated-flight, sightseeing tour of Manhattan at the Empire State Building.
- Signing 7-Up, Nabisco and Toys'R Us as sponsors for the Power Rangers Tour.

"That's what we've been about, taking the hottest product and attaching it to a promotional deal," said Coleman.

In addition, EMCI has gotten Pepsi and Taco Bell interested in sponsoring the burgeoning Roller Hockey International, a 20-team pro roller blade league that attracted two million paying customers last year, including New Jersey Rock-n-Rollers, who play at the Meadowlands.

Coleman started his company as Rockbill in 1970 distributing a free handout and advertising vehicle at nightclubs and rock concerts.

Coleman's breakthrough came in 1981 when, after Schlitz turned down the opportunity, he convinced Jovan Musk to agree to pay a \$500,000 sponsorship fee for the Rolling Stones tour, the first such sponsorship.

The \$5 million Michael Jackson/ Pepsi-Cola deal followed in 1983, spawning a continuing relationship with the Somers, N.Y.-based soda giant.

In '986, Rockbill became Entertainment Marketing & Communications International, a global operation. He now has satellite offices just in Los Angeles and Manhattan,

"We're a small company, 30 employees, but we are dynamic thinkers, If you are a company that wants the same old, same old, we're not for you," Coleman said. "We're about aligning companies with newness, the cutting edge. We never take our eye off that ball'



MATCHMAKER: Jay Coleman, a pioneer at teaming big stars with big companies, at **EMCI** offices in Stamford, Conn.