

## Sponsorship

# Hollywood & Highland is the West Coast Times Square

**T**o marketers looking for a high-profile Los Angeles area location to launch new products and promote their brand, Hollywood & Highland Center ([www.hollywoodandhighland.com](http://www.hollywoodandhighland.com)) in the heart of Hollywood is becoming the go-to location.

Often referred to as the West Coast equivalent of Times Square, the center, situated at the busy intersection of Hollywood Boulevard and Highland Avenue, attracts over 18 million visitors per year. Home to the famous Grauman's Chinese Theater and Kodak Theatre, site of the Academy Awards, the center also boasts the city's best view of the famed Hollywood sign and stands adjacent to the Walk of Fame. Visitors from all over the world are attracted to the center for the Tinsel Town experience, while Southern California residents enjoy it for the shopping, dining and nightlife options it provides.

The center features a popular selection of stores, fine dining restaurants, eateries, nightclubs and cinemas. Rolling Stone LA, the world's first upscale restaurant and lounge branded by *Rolling Stone* magazine, drew a throng of celebrities to the center for its inaugural party following the American Music Awards. Other popular restaurants and nightspots include Hard Rock Hollywood, Lucky Strike Lanes, The Highlands nightclub, The Grill on Hollywood, Trestavere, Koji's, California

Pizza Kitchen, Mann's Chinese 6 Cinemas and the exclusive A-list club, H Wood. Stores and boutiques include Louis Vuitton, BCBG Max Azria, Sephora, Coach, Mac cosmetics, GAP, XXI Forever and over 50 more.

### Central Hub for Hollywood

Located directly above the Hollywood/Highland Metro station and offering the area's most affordable parking, the center is the central hub for all Hollywood activity. In addition to the shopping, dining and entertainment options the center offers, there are many more stores, restaurants and trendy clubs within walking distance. Across the street, "Jimmy Kimmel Live" tapes before a live audience. Next door, Disney's famous El Capitan Theatre features a VIP movie experience and a live stage show featuring Disney characters. Shuttles from the Hollywood & Highland Center provide access to other popular Hollywood venues like the Hollywood Bowl and Pantages Theatre.

The combination of digital media screens and large-scale billboards on the property attract many high-profile advertisers looking to penetrate

the Los Angeles market. The location is a natural for advertising new movies, music or television shows. Other consumer products, from breakfast cereal to high-end automobiles, are also featured frequently on the media.

Advertisers wanting to reach consumers through experiential branding are finding that Hollywood & Highland Center is the best location for that as well. "I think one of the reasons they choose us is because we are willing to let them be as creative as they want," says Annette Bethers, vice president of marketing and strategic alliances for the center. "We have very few restrictions, and even those aren't set in stone. The more unique and cutting-edge the concept, the more we're interested in showcasing it at our property."

JONESREPORT Plus conducted a Q&A with Bethers to get her take on what makes the project work. The interview begins on the following page.

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## The Interview How Hollywood & Highland Does It



Hollywood & Highland's courtyard day and night.

**JR+:** How much staff do you devote to this? Are you represented by an agency or do you handle sponsorships and ad sales in-house?

**Bethers:** To support the dynamic programs at Hollywood & Highland we use a team of in-house staff and outside agencies. We have an in-house Strategic Alliances team of four people who focus on sponsorship, advertising and

consumer product events. We are also represented by outside agencies on specific assets in our strategic alliances inventory

**JR+:** I know Hollywood & Highland was designed and built as a venue for events and sponsorships, but I seem to recall kind of a rocky start. Was it too far ahead of the development curve in the area in the beginning?

**Bethers:** Hollywood & Highland was developed by a

**JR+:** How has your Strategic Alliances program grown over the years?

**Bethers:** Our Strategic Alliances program has grown substantially in advertising and interactive consumer product events in the past five years. These elements of our Strategic Alliances program have grown by close to 70% from 2005 to the present.



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Editorial, Advertising, Circulation and  
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800/546-9889 ■ 317/576-9889  
Fax: 317/576-0441  
E-mail: [www@jonesreportplus.com](mailto:www@jonesreportplus.com)  
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Robert M. Jones  
Founder (1945-1989)

William R. Wilburn  
Publisher/Editor



Member of  
International  
Council of  
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Centers

different company as an entertainment and retail destination. The property opened shortly after September 11 which, of course, was a difficult time. I have been involved with the property since CIM Group purchased it in 2004 and we have focused on accelerating the sponsorship programs and opportunities.

**JR+:** What did it take to turn things around or get traction for the property?

**Bethers:** Our management team has taken a different approach to merchandising and marketing the property. We saw an opportunity to better address the needs and desires of the local community and our efforts have paid off in that area. We have been able to build a strong local consumer base while continuing to take advantage of the property's appeal to domestic and international tourists.

**JR+:** How often do you have major events?

**Bethers:** Hollywood & Highland is a great event location and we have numerous functions throughout the year. During the summer, we have a large-scale Wine and Jazz series every Tuesday, sponsored by Air China. We also have frequent events showcasing new releases by major music artists and new movie releases.

**JR+:** Is there always something happening?

**Bethers:** There is almost always something happening here. It is a very dynamic and exciting environment.

**JR+:** How far out do you plan?

**Bethers:** We start planning at least a year in advance, but we also stay flexible enough to take advantage of opportunities that come our way from music labels, movie studios and promotional companies that bring us great consumer product events.

**JR+:** Please describe the venues/options advertisers have.

**Bethers:** Hollywood & Highland offers traditional outdoor advertising media including large-scale billboards and digital media screens with tremendous visibility. There also are back-lit posters throughout the interior of the property. For advertisers looking to connect with consumers in a more dynamic, experiential way, we offer opportunities to take less traditional approaches such as elevator wraps, floor graphics, stair wraps, customized three-dimensional build-outs and branded events.

A good example of this is a recent program we did with Disney. They did a domination of our property for the launch of the new *Pirates of the Caribbean* film, which included wraps on all of our elevators, graphics above all escalators, back-lit posters throughout the center and a three-dimensional build-out of a pirate ship in the central courtyard. They topped off their presence in the center with a spectacular event that attracted thousands of people all dressed in pirate garb.

**JR+:** What special challenges do you face?

**Bethers:** We don't like to set a lot of limits. That is what



*Top: The three-dimensional build of a pirate ship. Below: Visitors dressed as pirates for Disney's Pirates of the Caribbean film promo.*

our advertisers and partners like about working with the H&H team, and it's what keeps them coming back to us. We are willing to get very creative and are always open to new concepts. The more exciting and original the idea, the more interested we are in doing it.

**JR+:** How has your success affected the surrounding area?

**Bethers:** There has been a lot of synergy. The area has experienced and is continuing to experience strong residential and business growth. Hollywood has become a dynamic destination, featuring many of

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## Hollywood & Highland

*Continued from page 3*

LA's hottest new restaurants and nightclubs along with exciting retail and other entertainment venues. Hollywood & Highland serves as the hub of all that Hollywood offers. Visitors know we provide the best parking option in the community and that they can enjoy shopping and dining at the center before catching a shuttle to the Hollywood Bowl or heading out to the other entertainment venues that are within walking distance or a short subway ride



*Izod Race to the Party*

away. Of course, with the Kodak Theatre, Grauman's Chinese Theatre and many great restaurants and popular nightspots at Hollywood & Highland, guests can make a day or evening of it right here.

**JR+:** What was the most interesting or your favorite event that you've hosted?

**Bethers:** There have been so many great events here that it is hard to just name one. The "Izod Race to the Party" is a great example of an event that utilized a lot of the center's assets and an example of what

can happen at Hollywood & Highland when "the sky's the limit."

Taking over Hollywood Boulevard, Indy Race League drivers and pit crew members showed off their vehicles and their skills as they competed in a Formula Drift exhibition. Famous Indy driver Danica Patrick was on hand to greet fans along with a slew of celebrities including Mark Wahlberg and P Diddy. Meanwhile, Dave Navarro was rocking out in Hollywood & Highland's central courtyard with his new band, Camp Freddy and surprise guests Courtney Love and Chester Bennington (from Linkin Park). Izod made creative use of a lot of the center's signage assets and digital media screens to create an exciting environment for the event.

**JR+:** What have you learned over the years about what it takes to be a world-class venue for advertisers?

**Bethers:** You have to deliver results. We've learned that advertisers may be initially drawn to Hollywood & Highland due to the glitz and glamour of Hollywood, but if they don't see an effect on the bottom line they won't be back. You also have to deliver great service. When advertisers are looking to do something out of the box, it takes proper planning and execution to pull it off. They need to trust that you will give them the guidance and support required for a successful outcome.

**JR+:** Is there anything the average mall can learn from what you

do to attract sponsors and advertisers?

**Bethers:** I think it is important to be innovative. Look for ways to set your mall apart from all the other properties vying for advertiser and sponsor dollars. You have to show an advertiser or sponsor that your property is the right venue for delivering their message to their target consumer in a unique, impactful and unforgettable way. Customer service is another important component. It is critical to implement a program perfectly and without any undue hardship on the client. Most importantly, you need to do everything you can to make sure that their partnership with your center delivers the results they are after.

**JR+:** What does the future hold for Hollywood & Highland?

**Bethers:** This summer Cirque do Soleil will debut IRIS, a phenomenal new show created exclusively for the Kodak Theatre and featuring original music by Danny Elfman. As the production will be a resident show at the theatre, we expect it to be a strong draw for the Hollywood & Highland property over the next several years. We've also recently opened two new restaurants at the property – Boho, Hollywood's first Gastro Pub and Rolling Stone LA, the first restaurant and lounge to be branded by the iconic magazine. In 2012, we'll be introducing Sweet!, another unique retail concept making its world debut at Hollywood & Highland. We're very excited and positive about what the future holds for our center. ■