

# Rich Stumpf

**VP of Marketing and Licensing,  
Cherry Lane Music**

Music reaches us in many ways—from our favorite CDs or MP3s, the latest radio hit, or the video countdown on MTV. But what about the classic rock song in the rugged pickup truck commercial, the heavy-metal track that paces a movie's big chase scene, or those acoustic ballads you hear on all those WB shows? You're even absorbing music while playing video games—though you're often too fixed on the screen to realize it. All of these are “secondary outlets” for songs.

As Vice President of Marketing and Licensing at Cherry Lane Music, Rich Stumpf targets these outlets for music; then he fills them with the songs that fit best. He's sort of a “finder of homes” for songs.



Cahn's “Let it Snow! Let it Snow! Let it Snow!”—or Valentine's Day, which features our love-based stuff. After all, many ad campaigns are seasonal.

#### Tell us about some song placements!

We just got the Black Eyed Peas song “Hey Mama” into a commercial for iPod. We've also done music for films like *Black Hawk Down* and placed all the Elvis music in *Lilo & Stitch*. A few years ago, we put “Afternoon Delight” in *Good Will Hunting*, and [John Denver's] “Leaving on a Jet Plane” in *Armageddon*.

#### How did you get started in the music business?

I started as a musician, and in college I was a sound engineer. I had an interest in music, and I wanted to tie that into a business career. After college, I pounded on record labels' doors and finally got into EMI/Capitol Records where I worked on “special market” projects like *Best of the '80s* compilations. That taught me the value of songs being used in other ways besides

the original releases. Publishing was attractive to me because the income for a song is brought in from many different sources.


#### What skills are necessary for your job?

First and foremost, I use negotiation skills. Next, it's important for me to be flexible, in terms of thinking creatively. Also, I must be persistent. When I first started, I was probably turned down 50 times by 50 different labels. But you stick with it, and eventually it breaks. To get into the business side of a creative industry, you should have a college degree with some sort of a business focus. At the same time, though, you have to stay street-smart and understand things from a creative level. I go to shows to stay current with music.

#### What's the hardest part of negotiating?

Trying to please everyone. We want to please our songwriters and get them the best fees possible. But we can't overcharge our licensees because we want them to come back. Still, we can't undercharge them because that does an injustice to the song and to the writer. Finding that balance point—that perfect number—is a challenge.

#### What's the most rewarding part of your job?

The reaction I get from the writers when we do a cool placement for them—especially the younger writers. When a young or new writer hears his music in a show, and we had something to do with, it's rewarding. And it's nice to be able to take my education, apply it to an art that I love, and make a living at it. 

#### What does your job entail?

I'm responsible for the placement of all of Cherry Lane's music in films, trailers, television programs, commercials, and new media such as video games, ring tones, and iTunes. First, I “pitch,” or suggest, songs. Then, once someone wants to use one of them, we have to negotiate a rate. That's the licensing aspect of my job. Every music publishing company has people like me pitching their songs.

#### How do you pitch songs?

We send potential licensees CD samplers of our music that are organized either by genre or by themes. If a sampler contains songs that would fit action scenes, we might call it our “High-Energy Sampler.” We also have seasonal samplers, for Christmas—one of our biggest songs is Sammy