

The Real Reason Real Hip-Hop Doesn't Sell

Written by Mark Skillz ID2743
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Before digital downloads and mixtape exclusives, eager hip-hop fans sat by their boom boxes with blank cassette tapes set to "pause" and "record", so that they could record the newest jams to hit the streets.

Mind you it costed nothing to record songs off of the radio, except for the cost of the tape. At that time the best MC's and DJ's of the 80's and 90's could be heard on late night mix shows on radio stations all throughout the country. Name a group...The Juice Crew - played on WBLS, WBAU, KZSU, KPOO, KDAY and many other stations; Main Source - same thing. The records were played everywhere, except there was one problem: People didn't buy the records because they taped them off of the radio.

At the same time the gangsta movement was rearing its head. These guys were selling records without radio play. In fact, they were selling more records than the guys who were getting some serious spins. Why was that?

It was because their fans talked with their dollars rather than their voices.

Soon the major corporations caught onto the buzz. The rule of business is: Go with what sells. Real hip hop (as we like to call it) didn't have the numbers that the gangsta's were getting. Do you see where I'm going with this?

If ya like real hip hop (and I know you do) you gotta support it. If you don't like Source Magazine that's fine. Buy Wax Poetics or Elemental. If you don't like your local radio station tune into Spinderella's "Back Spin" or Davey D's "Breakdown FM". But for God's sake man, spend your money so that the people who make the kind of stuff we like can continue to bring it to us.

Recently the head of Cristal Champagne said that the attention that hip hoppers have given his beverage is "unwelcomed". Jay Z, one of the people who has long championed that brand is

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leading a boycott against them. What's wrong with this picture?

Let's start with this, Cristal is some of the MOST expensive stuff out there. I remember one night my cousin Gian and I were at a bar and G turned to me and said, "Yo cuz, let's get a couple of glasses of Cristal." Out of curiosity, I asked the bartender how much a glass of Cristal was, to which she responded \$75.

My mouth hit the bar top. 75 dollars? I asked.

"Yes", she said.

"For one glass?"

"Yes".

"Get da @#%\$ outta here!"

Now Jay, Diddy, Russell Simmons, Dame Dash and many others have been walking around name checking that crap everywhere they have gone for years. It is only fitting that those gentlemen lead the boycott. What the head of Cristal did was the equivalent of a pimp slap.

SMACK! Bitch where's my fuckin' trap?

(Pick any of the previously mentioned names) "Oh no daddy, I'm sorry I won't hold out no mo."

At industry events you would see those types walking around the party sipping Cristal out of the

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bottle with a straw. Yep, you sure would. Now look someone has said to them: "Get you and nigger friends and your nonsense and leave my company alone. Gone now. Shoo, you you you you porch monkeys. Oh yeah, leave your money on the table. Got dam nigger."

He might as well have said all that when he made that statement.

It's the power of the dollar that will make that company get on its knees and beg for forgiveness.

The same kind of thing is happening right now in radio. The foolishness of the few has harmed the perception of the many. Meaning advertisers (@#%\$ what ya heard about requests and all that the real Gods of radio are the ADVERTISERS) are backing away from certain Urban brands; namely hip hop radio. It is not working. Low ratings means low listener ship equaling no interest but ultimately no advertising dollars. Thus, stations like KKBT having to change formats!

The winds of change are upon us, if you want real hip hop to come back - buy it.

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