

Xzibit

With the entry phase of the Hip Hop SupaStar contest closed, Cingular Wireless, Sony Ericsson and SONY Urban Music are pleased to announce the selection of 10 finalists for the unique, national program designed to find the next star of Hip Hop.

Legendary hip hop rap artist, Xzibit, who kicks off his 10-city tour next month, joins the three companies to encourage all wireless users [regardless of carrier], to use their phones to "text the vote" and determine the next Hip Hop SupaStar.

Cingular, Sony Ericsson and SONY Urban Music kicked off the Hip Hop SupaStar contest in January with an invitation for undiscovered artists to submit an original song to put them in the running to become the next Hip Hop SupaStar. From the scores of applications received, SONY Urban Music executives selected 10 finalists and created ringtones based on their original songs, allowing wireless customers across the nation to listen and vote for their favorite artist.

Voting for the next Hip Hop SupaStar kicked off this week and will last through April 10th. Unlike traditional voting contests that incorporate a text messaging component into their overall voting platform, Cingular has introduced a contest where the only means of voting and determining the winner is via text messaging -- text SUPA to HSTAR (47827).

There's no limit to the number of times wireless customers can vote from their phone.

"Now, for the first time, wireless customers exclusively will be able to choose the next big thing in Hip Hop," said Jim Ryan, vice president, consumer data services, Cingular Wireless. "With programs like Hip Hop SupaStar, we are leveraging the vast power of wireless text messaging to give people a real voice and a real choice. That's the beauty and tremendous potential behind wireless technology-anytime, anywhere interactive access to the people and the events that matter most."

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Written by Robert ID906

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Musical compositions from each of the finalists' original songs have been converted into ringtones and are available to listen to and download at <http://www.HipHopSupaStar.com> and, for Cingular customers, via the Cingular MEdia Mall directly from their handset. The cost for downloading the Hip Hop SupaStar ringtones is \$2.49 per ringtone.

The mass-culture phenomenon of cell phone ringtones and text messaging has grown into a \$4 billion dollar industry with 42 percent of that revenue generated from the 15 - 25 year old demographic. With Hip Hop leading the pack in the custom ringtone industry, the collaboration with Hip Hop SupaStar and the star rapper Xzibit makes perfect sense.

"It's exciting to be a part of an innovative program that links technology and entertainment so seamlessly," said Frances Britchford, vice president of marketing for Sony Ericsson. "We are proud to join with Cingular and host Xzibit on a nationwide tour where consumers can experience the ultimate in Hip Hop, as well as mobile technology at its finest."

"We continue to be excited about the positive impact that the convergence of music and wireless devices brings to our industry," said J.J. Rosen, General Manager, Digital Music Products, SONY BMG MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT, who works with the company's U.S. labels to develop digital music offerings. Mr. Rosen continued, "In 2004, we led the industry in music personalization products, like ringtones, voicetones, and screensavers. Hip Hop SupaStar is the pivotal event that will help move mobile music beyond personalization and towards entertainment. Combining the broad reach of the mobile platform with consumer input is an incredible opportunity for a major music company like ours to help find talent that resonates with our audience."

Meet the Finalists:

Which one of these 10 finalists will be the next Hip Hop SupaStar?

- Sole Profit - Visalia, CA

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- Kendrala Watkins - Oakpark, MI

- Nicholas Seward - Dayton, OH

- OL" Green Eyes - Tempe, AZ

- Swann Notty - Pawtucket, RI

- Ty Henderson - Huntsville, AL

- Dre Yung - Madison, WI

- Banky Wellington - Bronx, NY

- Texacal - Beverly Hills, CA

- Crisis - Providence, RI

Taking it on Tour:

During the tour, where Xzibit will perform songs from his latest album, *Weapons of Mass Destruction*, consumers will have the opportunity to try out the Sony Ericsson Z500a by visiting the Hip Hop SupaStar car kiosk. Concert-goers also will have the opportunity to take part in a three-minute interactive experience, during which they will listen to the top ten finalists' ringtones and cast their vote. Available at Cingular stores

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nationwide, the Z500a is offered with a limited-edition Hip Hop SupaStar faceplates, available with a mail-in rebate, and a downloadable ringtone card.

Xzibit's 10-city tour includes the following markets:

- San Francisco at the Fillmore (3/18)
- Los Angeles at the House of Blues (3/20)
- San Diego at 4th and B (3/21)
- Houston at Numbers (3/24)
- New Orleans at the House of Blues (3/25)
- Atlanta at the Roxy (3/26)
- Miami at The Mansion (3/28)
- Washington DC at Dream (4/1)
- Detroit at St. Andrews Hall (4/2)
- Chicago at the House Of Blues (4/4)

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Visit <http://www.HipHopSupaStar.com> to hear excerpts from the finalists, get more information on voting, download the latest Hip Hop SupaStar ringtones, sign-up for Hip Hop SupaStar alerts and purchase Xzibit concert tickets. Also find out how your vote counts as an entry for the Hip Hop SupaStar Flyaway sweepstakes. The Hip Hop SupaStar winner will be announced in mid-April.

More About Xzibit:

The west coast rap and hip hop legend Xzibit is currently the host of MTV's "Pimp My Ride". Xzibit has released five albums, including the #1 chart topper, Man vs. Machine, and his latest album, Weapons of Mass Destruction, is in stores now. Having already been on two of the most legendary Hip-Hop tours of the past few years, Up in Smoke and Anger Management, Xzibit is set to headline the blazin" hot Hip Hop SupaStar tour.