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BEAUTY CARE

Colgate kicks off Country Showdown

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NEW YORK - August 10 - By Antoinette Alexander

Colgate is once again raring to kick up its cowboy boots with the 25th anniversary of the Colgate Country Showdown, the nation's largest country music talent search.

This year's event, of which Colgate is the national sponsor, kicked off in the spring at the local level and will come to a close in January with the taping of the 25th Annual National Final.

Local winners move to state competitions held at fairs, theme parks and festivals—also sponsored by retailers and radio stations—to determine who will compete in one of five regional finals.



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"Beauty Care" stories in this month's issue:

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From there, music industry judges decide who will head to the National Final.

The Annual National Final special will air in spring 2007 on Great American Country Television, which is a country music cable network, and on syndicated stations nationwide.

The winner of last year's event was singer and songwriter Michelle René of Phoenix. René took home the \$100,000 grand prize and is expected to launch her CD in the fall.

Each year, Colgate sends out a national FSI announcing the program and offering shoppers coupons on Colgate products. More than 450 country music radio stations partner with grocers and drug stores to host local contests.

Having served as a stepping stone for many country superstars in its two-decade history—including Tim McGraw, Garth Brooks and Billy Ray Cyrus—the event is not only is an effective platform for finding talent but is a great way for local retailers to bolster sales and store traffic as radio spots prompt consumers to visit their local participating retailer for in-store specials or entry forms.

“It is a local connection to a community event,” said Dean Unkefer, executive producer and president of Special Promotions Inc., which runs the event. “That is most important to the retailer—the local connection to a community wide event.”

Colgate offers customized point-of-purchase materials and other merchandising support for the program and commits co-op advertising dollars to participating retailers.



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