

UpFront

Making The Brand

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Sweet Cleans Up With Soaps

'Passions' Play For Pop Newcomer



The 2 million viewers of NBC's daytime soap opera "Passions" are used to seeing steamy affairs, motorcycle accidents and wronged lovers toting baseball bats on a daily basis. But on June 28, they were treated to something new courtesy of 18-year-old newcomer **Kelly Sweet**.

Sweet isn't a long-lost relative or a new love interest for one of the soap's cast of larger-than-life characters. She's actually an adult-pop-leaning artist whose debut album "We Are One" (Razor & Tie), due next year, received valuable exposure via a segment on the show that lasted nearly two minutes. The power-pop ballad was featured during a flashback scene.

It's part of an innovative brand-marketing strategy that will also see album track "Ready for Love" receive a three-minute close-up Aug. 22 on ABC's "One Life to Live" soap, reaching a likely 3.1 million viewers, according to the most recent Nielsen TV ratings.

"In 2006, everyone is trying to figure out the best way to introduce a new artist to as wide an audience as possible," Razor & Tie co-founder **Cliff Chenfeld** says.

Included in this audience are people like "One Life to Live" supervising music director **Paul S. Glass**. "I needed a song for a developing relationship story line that was sweet and innocent, that expressed a new beginning and that had touches of sophistication," he says. "Many songs are so packaged and produced that the emotion doesn't ring true. Texturally, Kelly's song has a fresh feel, and the emotion rang true."

Los Angeles-based Sweet couldn't be happier with these music placements. "There are so many soap opera fans," she says. "And because music is not often heard on daytime soaps, when music does come on, those watching at home go, 'What is that?'"

Indeed, prime-time series like "Grey's Anatomy" and "The OC" get all the attention, but daytime soaps are bringing music and acts into their world with more frequency.

Last October, **the Rolling Stones** debuted the video for "Streets of Love" on "Days of Our Lives." The song was also played in the background of several key scenes. In recent weeks, **Rihanna** appeared on "All My Children," while **Mary J. Blige** appeared and performed two songs on "One Life to Live," driving up sales of her latest album, "The Breakthrough," by 40%.

Following the "Passions" episode, Sweet says she saw an increase of 375 friends on her MySpace page, compared with 50 new friends added the week before.

To make the most of this online interest, beginning Aug. 22 for 30 days, "We Are One" and "Ready for Love" will

be available for download at Yahoo Music, which is also streaming the video for the former.

For Razor & Tie senior VP of marketing **Michael Krumper**, the best partnerships will increase artist exposure "in situations where consumers aren't expecting to learn about music," he says.

According to **Krumper**, those discovering Sweet form a large demo, from teens to older adults. So working with the right partners "will reach these potential fans—some of which aren't seeking music through traditional means," he notes.

The photogenic Sweet appears tailor-made for a variety of brand partners, and Chenfeld is confident such impressions will add up in a major way.

"If Kelly sells millions of downloads and CDs, I'll be thrilled," Chenfeld says. "But in today's music industry, success can be found in more places."

Decision-makers, take note: Sweet is confirmed to participate at the Music Upfront artist showcase Sept. 26 at B.B. King Blues Club & Grill in New York. The daylong event, hosted by **Billboard** and **Adweek**, coincides with **Advertising Week**.