

Music news & notes

Greeting Cards Strike Chord With Fans

(NAPSA)—Greeting cards have long been used to connect with friends and family, but what if they let recording artists sing your loved one's praises, too?

That's the idea behind a unique line of cards that play original music from Tim McGraw, Bare-naked Ladies and other contemporary artists when the recipient opens them up.

"I've always loved expressing myself through song. Now with three of my songs featured in the cards, other people can use that music to express themselves, too," said Tim McGraw, whose songs "I Like It, I Love It," "Down on the Farm" and "Just to See You Smile" are featured in some of the new "Cards with Sound" from Hallmark.

The cards are featured in a seven-city "Use Music Summer Tour" that began with Tim McGraw's concert in Atlanta, Ga. It's now traveling to music and summer festivals across the country, ending in Las Vegas on September 9.

Concertgoers will have an opportunity to check out hundreds of these cards at a listening station, play cover model by taking pictures with an Entertainment Weekly magazine cover, rock out by playing "Guitar Hero"—an interactive music game—and participate in the "Summer Sing-Off" challenge to compete for a \$5,000 grand prize. Finalists' videos will be posted to Hallmark.com.

Additionally, consumers will be able to purchase a range of popular iTunes gift cards at the majority of Hallmark Gold Crown stores



Tim McGraw backstage at his Atlanta concert seeing his three Hallmark Cards with Sound for the first time.

nationwide. Also, shoppers who buy one of the Cards with Sound before September 9 will get a free song download from the iTunes Store.

Trend watchers say the musical activities are an extension of Hallmark's long history with music. In fact, the company is the only specialty retailer to achieve Platinum and Gold RIAA certification of CDs sold only at their outlets. Six seasonal CDs released by the card maker, by artists such as James Taylor, Michael Buble, George Strait and Martina McBride, have been certified Gold or Platinum.

For more information, visit www.Hallmark.com.