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News Release

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WHO BENEFITED MOST FROM A CELEBRITY X FACTOR PERFORMANCE?

TV talent show-discovered guest stars see largest levels of sales, buzz and radio airplay; performances cause large increases in sales of tracks already released; Shakira benefits most in sales, Susan Boyle in buzz, Mariah Carey in radio airplay

London – 14th January 2010 – The Nielsen Company today reveals the impact that a performance on the Sunday Results programme of the most recent series of the *X Factor* had on digital download sales (online and mobile), online buzz and radio airplay for the special guest stars promoting a track.

UK Digital Download Sales

According to the recorded music industry trade body, the BPI, digital downloads account for 98 percent of UK single sales. Unsurprisingly, download sales for the song each guest star performed on the *X Factor Results* increased as, mostly, it coincided with the digital release of that single or album. However, tracks already available before to buy before the show also had large hikes in sales after.

Four of the five guest stars who sold the most UK downloads of their song during the week following their appearance are TV talent show discoveries. Leading the way was Cheryl Cole, from ‘*Popstars: The Rivals*’ winners Girls Aloud, who sold over 221,000 copies of her single “*Fight For This Love*” in the week after her performance. Cole was followed by 2008 *X Factor* finalists, Alexandra Burke (145,320) and JLS (86,725). After the Black Eyed Peas (79,706), 2006 *X Factor* winner Leona Lewis was fifth with 67,404 sales of “*Happy*” - her first of two 2009 finals performances (see Chart 1a).

An *X factor* performance had a huge effect on tracks already available to buy. Shakira benefited most from appearing on the show, selling 358% more copies of “*Did It Again*” the week after the show compared to the week before - even though the track was available for purchase 5 weeks earlier.. Michael Bubl e’s “*Cry Me a River*” had already been available for a week before his appearance, via the album, but he benefited from a 323% increase in sales the week after the show. Leona Lewis’ performance of “*Stop Crying Your Heart Out*” - her second performance during the 2009 finals - contributed to a 215% increase in sales even though the track had already been available, via the album, for a month (see Chart 1b).



Online Buzz (talkability)

For almost all the 18 guest stars promoting a track on the *X Factor*, online buzz in the UK increased after their performance. Only George Michael, Rihanna and Bon Jovi saw a decrease in online mentions or 'talkability'. The eight most buzzed about stars during the fortnight around their appearance were all female, lead by previous *X Factor* winners Leona Lewis, around her "*Happy*" performance, and Alexandra Burke (see Chart 2a).

Just as the stars discovered by TV talent shows sold most digital download sales, they tended to benefit most in terms of increases in online buzz levels (87 percent average increase) around their *X Factor* performance than their counterparts who rose to fame through traditional avenues (45 percent).

Susan Boyle (139 percent) and JLS (138 percent) benefited most in terms of increased buzz levels during the week commencing the Sunday of their performance, compared to the week before. Alicia Keys (130 percent) and Whitney Houston (114 percent) were the 'traditional' artists with the greatest increase in levels of online buzz (see Chart 2b).

Radio Airplay

Westlife were the only guests for which the show was the debut airing of the song – all the others had their song broadcast on the radio for varying periods of time before their *X Factor* performance.

The most radio plays the week of a performance correlated almost identically with the most download sales – being dominated by the "TV talent show" guest stars. Cheryl Cole led the way (3,082 plays) followed by Alexandra Burke (2,748) and JLS (2,554). Leona Lewis' "*Happy*" was fifth (2,069) but behind Whitney Houston (2,284) not the Black Eyed Peas (see Chart 3a).

In terms of increased radio airplay, Mariah Carey was, by far, the biggest beneficiary of an *X Factor* performance with a 297 percent increase in plays of "*I Want To Know What Love Is*" - despite the song having its first UK radio play 12 weeks earlier. Alicia Keys followed, with a 72 percent increase in plays of "*Doesn't Mean Anything*", its debut airing being seven weeks earlier. Third was Susan Boyle, with "*Wild Horses*" benefitting from a 71 percent airplay increase, six weeks after debut (see Chart 3b).

Jean Littolff, Managing Director, Nielsen Music Control, says: "The *X Factor* results programme is a major marketing vehicle for established stars – particularly for those discovered through the TV talent show medium itself. This type tends to have most activity in terms of download sales, online buzz and radio airplays post performance. However, the greatest impact in terms of changing levels of activity pre vs. post performance is for artists who have travelled a more traditional route to fame."

Chart 1a: Most UK Digital Download Sales in week after X Factor Finals Results Performance

Rank	Artist	Song	Sales Week After	Availability of Digital Track Before Performance
1	Cheryl Cole	Fight for this Love	221,031	Same day
2	Alexandra Burke	Bad Boys	145,320	Same day
3	JLS	Everybody in Love	86,725	Same day
4	Black Eyed Peas	Meet Me Halfway	79,706	22 weeks*
5	Leona Lewis	Happy	67,404	Same day

Source: The Nielsen Company, SoundScan International. Sales week runs from Monday – Sunday
 E.g. there were 221,031 UK digital download sales of Cheryl Cole’s single, released on the same day as her X Factor performance, in the week starting day after performance. (Shaded = discovered on TV talent show)
 *Meet Me Halfway first available on a 3-track sampler in June 2009

Chart 1b: Biggest Percentage Increase in UK Digital Download Sales in week after X Factor Finals Results Performance (only includes tracks already available before performance)

Rank	Artist	Song	Percent Increase	Availability of Digital Track Before Performance
1	Shakira	Did It Again	358%	5 weeks
2	Michael Bublé	Cry Me a River	323%	1 week
3	Leona Lewis	Stop Crying Your Heart Out	215%	4 weeks
4	Whitney Houston	Million Dollar Bill	142%	2 weeks
5	Black Eyed Peas	Meet me Halfway	77%	22 weeks

Source: The Nielsen Company, SoundScan International. Sales week runs from Monday – Sunday
 E.g. UK digital download sales of Shakira’s single were 358% higher in the week starting day after X Factor performance compared to the week finishing the day of performance. (Shaded = discovered on TV talent show)

Chart 2a: Most UK Online Buzz in fortnight* around X Factor Finals Results Performance

Rank	Artist	UK Buzz Volume
1	Leona Lewis (“Happy” performance)	11,042
2	Alexandra Burke	6,387
3	Lady Gaga	6,098
4	Whitney Houston	5,491
5	Leona Lewis (“Stop Crying Your Heart Out” performance)	5,266

Source: The Nielsen Company, BuzzMetrics. *Buzz fortnight from Sunday before performance to Saturday after performance.
 E.g. Mentions of Susan Boyle in UK blogs and message boards increased 139% in the week starting day of X Factor performance. (Shaded = discovered on TV talent show)

Chart 2b: Biggest Increases in UK Online Buzz in week* of X Factor Finals Results Performance

Rank	Artist	Percentage Increase in Online Buzz
1	Susan Boyle	139%
2	JLS	138%
3	Alicia Keys	130%
4	Whitney Houston	114%
5	Westlife	113%

Source: The Nielsen Company, BuzzMetrics. *Buzz week runs from Sunday – Saturday to include Buzz on day of performance. E.g. Mentions of Susan Boyle in UK blogs and message boards increased 139% in the week starting day of X Factor performance compared to the week finishing the day before performance. (Shaded = discovered on TV talent show)

Chart 3a: Most UK Radio Airplays in week* of X Factor Finals Results Performance

Rank	Artist	Song	Radio Airplays	First Airplay Before Performance
1	Cheryl Cole	Fight for this Love	3,082	6 weeks
2	Alexandra Burke	Bad Boys	2,748	7 weeks
3	JLS	Everybody in Love	2,554	7 weeks
4	Whitney Houston	Million Dollar Bill	2,284	10 weeks
5	Leona Lewis	Happy	2,069	9 weeks

Source: The Nielsen Company, Music Control. Radio Airplay week runs from Sunday - Saturday E.g. there were 3,082 UK radio airplays of Cheryl Cole's single, first played 6 weeks before her X Factor performance, in the week starting day after performance. (Shaded = discovered on TV talent show)

Chart 3b: Biggest Increase in UK Radio Airplays in week* of X Factor Finals Results Performance (only includes singles played in week before performance)

Rank	Artist	Song	Percent Increase	First Airplay Before Performance
1	Mariah Carey	I Want to Know What Love Is	297%	12 weeks
2	Alicia Keys	Doesn't Mean Anything	72%	7 weeks
3	Susan Boyle	Wild Horses	71%	6 weeks
4	George Michael	December Song	52%	54 weeks
5	Bon Jovi	We Weren't Born to Follow	50%	10 weeks

Source: The Nielsen Company, Music Control. *Radio Airplay week runs from Sunday - Saturday E.g. UK radio airplays of Mariah Carey's single were 297% higher in the week starting the day of her X Factor performance compared to the week finishing the day before performance. (Shaded = discovered on TV talent show)

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