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*Open Letter To Fungus/Fungi*

**JD REID**

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17 November 2009

To: Fungus/Fungi band members

Re: 2010 New Initiatives & Strategies

As we are all well aware, the 2009 fiscal year was a difficult time for all entities. Cutbacks across the music industry proved difficult for some, devastating for others. For Fungus/Fungi, lack of appropriate revenue streams—i.e., album and merchandise sales, touring, etc.—has brought a stagnate or declining financial condition at year’s end. Budgets soared beyond those predicted for in-studio time, among other miscellaneous expenditures. But with the completion and pressing of *Drums of Thunder, Beats Asunder ...*, 2010 could yield positive financial opportunities for Fungus/Fungi. Though the economy itself has yet to show recovery, with some carefully planned initiatives and strategies, a rehab of Fungus/Fungi protocol could lead to a significant and successful year, fiscally speaking. These proposed strategic opportunities are detailed below.

## **Opportunities in Detail**

### *First Opportunity,*

#### FANguy

While the term “FANguy” (known colloquially to describe a Fungus/Fungi fan), for the most part, is understood internally, the phrase is chaotic and, therefore, easily confused within the target audience. Not only is Fungus/Fungi losing opportunity to build band equity, its fan-base moniker is largely misunderstood, which could represent a lost revenue prospect. While FANguy is not particularly singular to the Fungus/Fungi fan base, the fact that we have capitalized “FAN-” to denote a differential with “fun-” and have replaced “-gi” with “-guy” to denote an individual fan, in all, does not contribute equity to Fungus/Fungi as an entity, because, taken alone, the word “FANguy” does not take you to Fungus/Fungi only. The terminology “I am a FANguy” is awkward at best, and the capitalization of the prefix is largely ignored in spoken conversation.

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Proposed Solution: The ideal solution would be to create a unique term whose definition is “a FANguy” and, ultimately, “a fan of Fungus/Fungi,” which holds value on its own and builds equity in the Fungus/Fungi name.

Proposed Solution Resolution:

Fan/guy

Utilizing the naming convention derived from Fungus/Fungi, “Fan/guy” gives the fan (and fan base, consequently) a name that ties back to—and builds equity in—the Fungus/Fungi product, while solving the problems of marketing references and spoken terminology. This term is special to Fungus/Fungi—it can be defined as our own specific brand of support and holds an immediate equity that can be built upon. At the same time, it is generic enough that, when spoken, does not sound so different that it would upset fans into thinking their fan-base support system has been tampered with.

*Second Opportunity,*

As part of 2009’s process improvement plan, data collection in the field (for results, see Third Opportunity) has distinguished a hierarchy of target-audience interest. Through web analysis—i.e., search-engine profiling, censuses, summary statistics, etc.—and other field-based technologies, we have found that Derf Boehner, Fungus/Fungi singer/songwriter, consistently ranks at a “medium/high” or higher interest level within target-audience data. (This interpretation is based on a scale of: zero, zero/low, low/medium, medium, medium/high, high interest levels.) From this result scale, we can determine that, of Fungus/Fungi’s four members, Derf Boehner is of maximum potential interest to the target audience, with reasonable room for improvement.

Proposed Solution: The ideal solution would be to raise Derf Boehner’s interest level across the board in a manner that would both elevate interest in the singing/songwriting and, thereby, elevate interest in Fungus/Fungi as an entity.

Proposed Solution Resolution: After the release of Fungus/Fungi’s 2004 album *A SPORE-ting Chance*, fair to middling interest in the target audience was quickly elevated due to the unexpected release of a Derf Boehner sex tape,

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during which the target audience, &c, saw the Fungus/Fungi singer/songwriter using his erect penis to play table tennis. From this tape, the terms “boehner/boehnered/boehnering” were born, used to describe the action of playing table tennis with an erect penis. This term came into common phraseology in such circumstances as: “What did you do last night?” “We watched the big game, drank some brewskis, and then proceeded to boehner until midnight.” Interest in Fungus/Fungi remained elevated for another seventeen weeks—reflected in data collection, unexpected sales, etc.—before dropping down again to fair to middling.

Statistical probability shows that another such “reckless” event would raise interest in Fungus/Fungi, thereby yielding higher profitability for album sales, merchandising, etc., especially considering the upcoming 2010 release of *Drums of Thunder, Beats Asunder ...* and the subsequent world tour. Therefore, encouraging what could be described as “uncontrolled” or “devil-may-care” behavior from Derf Boehner up through and beyond the immediate release of *Drums of Thunder, Beats Asunder ...* is suggested.

Uncontrolled behavior may be defined as behavior that shows a lack of self-control—ungoverned interaction that goes against, often taunting, commonly accepted social boundaries. Such behavior may include, but is not necessarily limited to: petty theft, prostitution, public intoxication, simple assault, disorderly conduct, trespassing, vandalism, drug possession, DUI, aggravated assault and/or battery, arson, burglary. Murder and rape are not suggested behavior modifications, for studies show a diminished profitability margin in most cases. All behavior modifications (suggested) should carry the defense of fatigue and/or exhaustion.

### *Third Opportunity,*

For the 22 December 2008 gig at the Ziljian New Year’s Rock-a-Shock-a-Hanukkah at the Tinactin SuperPlex in Shreveport, Louisiana, information technologies were provided to Fungus/Fungi by Veri-Site, Ltd. for the test run of its crowd-scan system (“Luk-Se Analyzer”). Mounted onstage during performances, the crowd-scan system uses retinal-scan technology to measure, register, and record audience eye movements during performances. Luk-Se Analyzer can measure the frequency at which any particular audience member,

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or the audience as a whole, glances at particular items onstage, in our case, including but not limited to four band members, equipment, lighting, stage hands, water bottles, towels, signage, clouds of smoke, fluttering of backdrop curtain, etc. The advantage of such technology is its somewhat low occurrence of false positives and negatives, with the assumption that all eyes not directly on stage are checking cell phones, ordering drinks, using restrooms, etc. Severe astigmatism and cataracts are common causes of these low occurrences of false positives and negatives.

The results have recently been collected for Fungus/Fungi's purposes, and the data shows a stark division in the frequency of audience glances toward Fungus/Fungi band members. The collected data is as follows:

Derf Boehner (singer/songwriter)	82.875
Alex Power (guitar/singer)	66.143
Bert "Cocky" Sheffield (bass/singer)	44.099
Zeke Van Antwerp (drums)	11.310

All other items (see above) registered a fairly even ratio at approximately 19.5, with "clouds of smoke" and "signage" receiving, roughly, 21.2 and 22.7 respectively. The resulting analysis is interpreted thusly: that of all things animate or inanimate onstage, the least noticed was Zeke Van Antwerp, drummer.

Proposed Solution: The ideal solution would be to maintain as high a number as possible in accords with Luk-Se analysis in order to maximize the viewer experience, thereby maximizing profit potential.

Proposed Solution Resolution: By eliminating Zeke Van Antwerp from the Fungus/Fungi lineup, the Van Antwerp glance ratio would then be distributed among all other onstage items, including band members, signage, instruments, etc., and, consequently, the glance average would be raised, which, in turn, would maximize the viewer experience.

Some immediate challenges are made apparent. With the upcoming release of *Drums of Thunder, Beats Asunder ...*, audiences may have diminished interest levels when percussion-heavy tracks are performed in a live setting, without percussion. With the dynamics of the Fungus/Fungi catalog, percussion-less

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performances may draw little interest. Such tracks as *A SPORE-ting Chance's* “Caught in the Snares” and “The Pulsing Earth” and *Fungology's* “Beat that F—ker,” along with many of *Drums of Thunder, Beats Asunder . . .*'s drum-laden tracks, can pose tricky performance issues and, likewise, would not play well as acoustic numbers.

There are two possible solutions: a) replace Zeke Van Antwerp with an up-to-date and practical drum machine that would have either a non-existent or positive glance ratio, or b) retain Zeke Van Antwerp's position as drummer, but remove him from stage performances entirely by either, a) setting him up offstage, away from the public eye, or b) hiring a touring drummer that draws a higher glance ratio (résumés are forthcoming).

*In Conclusion*

We are continuing to feel positive about the approach of 2010, and with these proposed new initiatives and strategies, we feel that Fungus/Fungi will end the coming year in good standing.

Thank you,

Mick Love  
Fungus/Fungi Manager

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