

VIEWPOINT

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[THIS WEEK
Volume 126
No. 2]

FEATURE

P.22 “In 10 years, broadcasters will be king. Every broadcaster who has real drawing power will control his own destiny.”

HOWARD STERN

FEATURE

P.34 “If we started in the U.S., we would have been a U.S.-centric company. Instead, we wanted to embrace the complexity of the world.”

AXEL DAUCHEZ DEEZER

FEATURE

P.28 “I remember playing *The Joshua Tree* at MIDEM to the people that were going to have to sell it around the world. Their eyes were lighting up. I could see them thinking, ‘Bonus time.’”

PAUL McGUINNESS



Bob Frank photographed at Qello's offices in New York.

QUESTIONS ANSWERED

P.12 “Never let a company define you—you define it.”

BOB FRANK QELLO

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Howard Stern photograph by Andrew Eccles. Grooming by Toni Coburn.



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THIS WEEK ON BILLBOARD.COM

1 Performances by **A Great Big World**, Young the Giant 2 Sundance Film Festival 3 14 artists to watch in 2014 4 Grammy preview: news, profiles, photos, video and more

COACHELLA: GETTY IMAGES/MUSIC; A GREAT BIG WORLD: KATE BUCKNER/REUTERS/GETTY

QUESTIONS
Answered

Bob Frank
Co-Founder/President, Qello
Founder/CEO, Bob Frank Entertainment

What did you wake up thinking about this morning? Qello is launching a separately branded children's platform that will be a big deal this year, and every morning I wake up thinking about the launch. The content deals for the launch are being wrapped up now. We have one major international broadcast deal that is in the ninth inning and we hope to have it wrapped up by MIDEM. Also, I woke up wearing my Bob Frank Entertainment record-business hat. We have quite a few distribution deals ready to close that we will plug into my deal with RED in the U.S.

Describe a lesson you've learned from a failure. I have failed many times but true failure is about not getting up and staying down, which is not in my DNA. To paraphrase Teddy Roosevelt, I could never be one of those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat. True leadership is about making decisions and not passing the buck. But a lot of senior executives become more like caretakers than strategic decision-makers. It makes me crazy when executives tell me they need to check with the powers that be. But sometimes you move too fast. When I was at Koch, we moved forward and closed a million-dollar deal on a "Crow" soundtrack from a movie distributed by Miramax without locking in the number of screens. That blew up in our face and we lost a lot of money and wound up in a lawsuit. At the end of the day, I was responsible for that deal. So when you make a decision and are ready to do a deal, take a deep breath and make sure all the i's are dotted and the t's are crossed. There's nothing you can do about marketplace risk, but you have to be able to protect yourself and reduce manageable risk.

What will define your career in the coming year? Hopefully no one thing defines it, as I have many irons in the fire. Qello will soon launch with Roku and Xbox over the next few months along with the new kid platform launch.

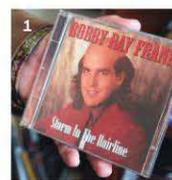
Who's your most important mentor, and what did you learn? My two most important mentors were Luke Lewis and Walter Yetnikoff, both personally and professionally. I always say my real education in the record business came during my years working for Luke in Nashville at Mercury Records. Luke is the best record executive I have ever been around and I learned a lot about this business from him. Walter, who I worked for at Velvel Records, is a force of nature and one of the smartest people I have ever met. His whole thing is always be consistent in who you are.

Name a project that you're not affiliated with that has most impressed you in the past year. The Chernin Group acquisition of Crunchyroll for \$100 million certainly got my attention. Qello sits next to Crunchyroll on every Apple TV in the world and our subscription numbers are very close to theirs.

Name a desert island album. One of my favorite all-time records is [Pink Floyd's] *The Wall*. It was an important record in my life as it came out in my freshman year. I still feel the same way about it.

—Ed Christman

"True leadership is about making decisions and not passing the buck."



Age: 47

Favorite breakfast: Eggs benedict at the Coffee Shop in [New York's] Union Square with Joe Serling, my lawyer.

First job: My first job related to the industry—when I was 16 years old I worked at a club on Long Island called the Back Barn, which was a three-story club. Game over. That was where I met all the CBS college reps who later got me into PolyGram in 1989.

Advice for young executives: I tell them the same thing I tell business students when I speak at colleges: Take chances, move around, don't live in one place too long, and find mentors. Most importantly, never let a company define you—you define it.



1 "A play on Billy Ray's *Storm in the Heartland* release. Mercury execs Keith Stegall and Ken Robold were very proud of themselves. They saw it coming before I did."

2 "What a run we had at Mercury Nashville with Shania Twain and Billy Ray Cyrus right before. Nothing was going to get in her way."

3 "With Boy George at the launch of the 'Taboo' Broadway soundtrack, which we put out. Such a nice guy."

4 "This is the bat used to thwart the Death Row invasion of the Koch office back in the day."

5 "I got involved in the comic book business last year. We put out a six-issue *Ghostface* edition, which has been successful."

