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News Release

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The Nielsen Company Measures the American Idol Phenom

New York, NY, May 15, 2008 — With only a week before the finale of FOX's American Idol, The Nielsen Company today reported data trends about American Idol and its contestants. Highlights include:

- **TV Ratings** -- People age 35-49 watched American Idol Season 7 the most, making up almost 29% of the total audience. The most watched episode this season was the premiere episode on Tuesday, 1/15/08 averaging 33 million viewers.
- **Mobile** -- The average American Idol participant voted via text message 38 times in April 2008.
- **Music** -- Kelly Clarkson is the best selling American Idol contestant with album and digital download sales of 18.9 million. Carrie Underwood is second with album and digital download sales of 15.7 million.
- **Online** -- Male contestants David Cook, David Archuleta and Jason Castro dominate the show's consumer discussion online with 14.3% and 12.5% and 10.5% buzz volume, respectively. The most popular American Idol contestant from opinions and feedback from Hey! Nielsen's online panel is Carrie Underwood. Web traffic to American Idol websites saw the most unique visitors in March 2007.
- **Advertising** -- During 2007, American Idol featured 4,349 product placement occurrences. So far in 2008, the number of placements is surging—the program racked up 3,291 occurrences the first three months of 2008 alone.

TV Ratings

American Idol's highest viewership was Season 5, where more than 30 million people watched on average, compared to 12 million the first season and 27 million this current season. The east central part of the United States has the highest viewing levels above the national average, while the south west has the lowest viewing levels below average.



American Idol Season 7 Viewership by Region			
Region	% of Total US	% of American Idol Audience	% Over or Under National Average
Southeast	20%	23%	15%
Northeast	20%	21%	5%
Pacific	21%	19%	-10%
East Central	12%	14%	17%
West Central	15%	14%	-7%
Southwest	12%	9%	-25%

Source: The Nielsen Company

People age 35-49 watched American Idol Season 7 the most, making up almost 29% of the total audience. The most watched episode this season was the premiere episode on Tuesday, 1/15/08 averaging 33 million viewers. The most watched American Idol episode ever was the final hour of Season 2 on Wednesday, 5/21/2003 – more than 38 million viewers tuned in live to watch the face off between winner Ruben Studdard and runner-up Clay Aiken.

American Idol Season 7 Audience Composition							
	P2-11	P12-17	P18-24	P25-34	P35-49	P50-64	P65+
% of Total Audience	8%	7%	7%	14%	29%	23%	11%

Source: The Nielsen Company

Mobile

According to Nielsen Mobile, the average American Idol participant voted via text message 38 times in April 2008, with the April 29th show generating many more texts per person than the April 1st show. Women tend to vote via text with greater frequency than men: in April 2008, female voters of American Idol submitted 44% more text-message votes than their male counterparts. Voting by text is only available to AT&T subscribers. Nielsen Mobile tracks text message voting and contest behavior through its panel of 43,000 U.S. wireless lines.

Average Texts Per Person – American Idol Season 7

	April 2008	Apr-01 Episode	Apr-29 Episode
Avg Votes Per Person	38	9	27

Source: NielsenMobile

Music

Kelly Clarkson is the best selling American Idol contestant with album and digital download sales of 18.9 million. Carrie Underwood is second with album and digital download sales of 15.7 million.



# of American Idol Album and Digital Downloads Sold		
Artist	Total Album Sales	Total Digital Downloads Sales
Kelly Clarkson	9.4 million	9.4 million
Carrie Underwood	8.5 million	7.2 million
Clay Aiken	4.8 million	469,000
Chris Daughtry	4 million	5.2 million
Ruben Studdard	2.5 million	250,000
Fantasia	2.3 million	698,000
Bo Bice	721,000	474,000
Jordin Sparks	717,000	n/a
Taylor Hicks	702,000	344,000
Katharine McPhee	371,000	1.1 million
Blake Lewis	291,000	n/a
Justin Guarini	143,000	28,000

Source: Nielsen SoundScan, through May 4, 2008

Winning isn't everything. Clay Aiken was the runner-up of 2003, but his first album has outsold winner Ruben Studdard (2.8 million to date, versus 1.8 million). Chris Daughtry came in fourth during the 2006 season, but his band Daughtry had the best selling album by any of that year's finalists.

"Daughtry" sold 2.5 million copies during calendar year 2007, making it the year's fifth best selling album. Prior winner Carrie Underwood was second among "Idol" contestants that year, moving 1.7 million copies of second album "Carnival Ride" in less than three months.

Highest-Selling Albums by American Idol Contestants		
Artist	Album	# Sold
Carrie Underwood	Some Hearts (2005)	6.4 million
Kelly Clarkson	Breakaway (2004)	6.0 million
Daughtry	Daughtry (2007)	4.0 million
Clay Aiken	Measure of a Man (2003)	2.8 million

Source: Nielsen SoundScan, through May 4, 2008

Until 2006, when the winner was Taylor Hicks, each season's "American Idol" champ sold at least 1 million copies on his or her debut album. Hicks' self-titled album has sold 702,000 to date.

Reigning "Idol" queen Jordin Sparks has moved 717,000 copies of her debut set to date, but with current single "No Air," featuring Chris Brown, spending its 10th week in the top 10 on The Billboard Hot 100, her album still has legs, posting gains in four of the last five weeks.

Twice this year, performances by recently exiled contestant Jason Castro prompted huge digital sales spikes and album gains for original artists. His homage to Jeff Buckley's version of Leonard Cohen's "Hallelujah" prompted the Buckley download to rocket to No. 1 on Hot Digital Songs, selling 178,000 copies. A few weeks later, Castro's take on Israel "Iz" Kamakawiwo'Ole's version of "What A Wonderful World" sent Iz's track to No. 11 on Hot Digital Songs.



"American Idols" Appearing on The Billboard Hot 100 singles chart – Peak Position in the Top 3			
Artist	Title	Peak Position	Peak Date
Jordin Sparks Duet With Chris Brown	"No Air"	3	April 26, 2008
Taylor Hicks	"Do I Make You Proud"	1	July 1, 2006
Bo Bice	"Inside Your Heaven"	2	July 9, 2005
Carrie Underwood	"Inside Your Heaven"	1	July 2, 2005
Kelly Clarkson	"Since U Been Gone"	2	April 9, 2005
Fantasia	"I Believe"	1	July 10, 2004
Clay Aiken	"This is the Night"	1	June 28, 2003
Ruben Studdard	"Flying Without Wings"	2	June 28, 2003
Kelly Clarkson	"A Moment Like This"	1	October 5, 2002

Source: The Billboard Hot 100 through the charted date May 15, 2008

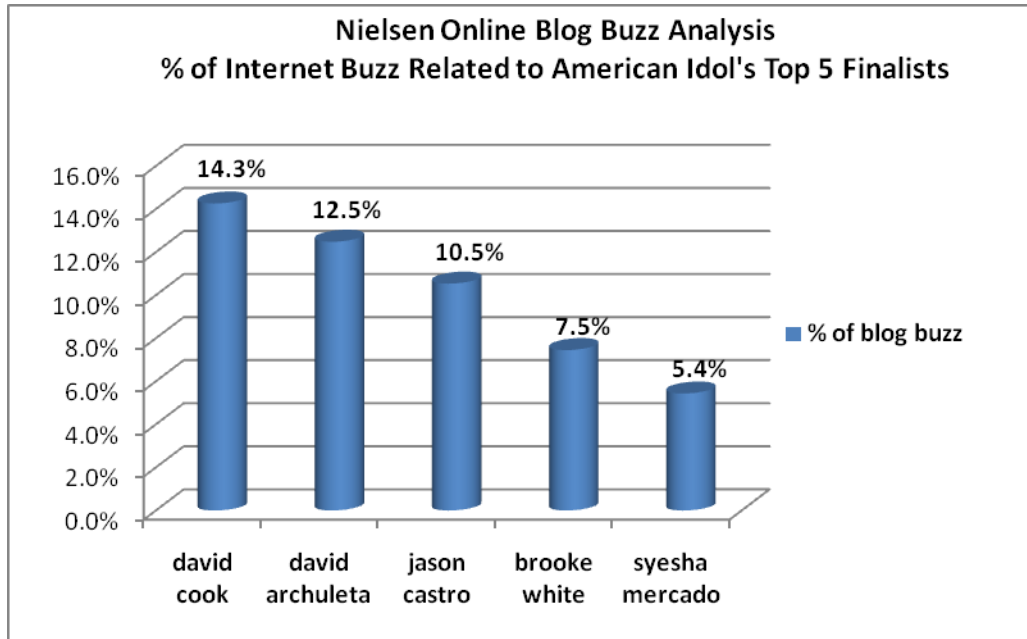
"American Idols" Appearing on The Billboard 200 albums chart – Peak Position in the Top 3			
Artist	Title	Peak Position	Peak Date
Carrie Underwood	"Carnival Ride"	1	November 10, 2007
Kelly Clarkson	"My December"	2	July 14, 2007
Elliott Yamin	"Elliott Yamin"	3	April 7, 2007
Katharine McPhee	"Katharine McPhee"	2	February 17, 2007
Daughtry	"Daughtry"	1	February 3, 2007
Taylor Hicks	"Taylor Hicks"	2	December 30, 2006
Clay Aiken	"A Thousand Different Ways"	2	October 7, 2006
Soundtrack	"American Idol Season 5: Encores"	3	June 10, 2006
Carrie Underwood	"Some Hearts"	2	December 3, 2005
Kelly Clarkson	"Breakaway"	3	December 18, 2004
Ruben Studdard	"Soulful"	1	December 27, 2003
Clay Aiken	"Measure of a Man"	1	November 1, 2003
Soundtrack	"American Idol Season 2: Classic American Love Songs"	2	May 17, 2003
Kelly Clarkson	"Thankful"	1	May 3, 2003

Source: The Billboard 200 through the charted date May 15, 2008

Online

Nielsen Online monitors consumer-generated content from approximately 70 million blogs on the Internet before, during and after Fox's hit reality competition show, American Idol. Contestants, judges and the program itself are audited to provide advertisers with both quantitative and qualitative insight around popularity, virality and sentiment.

Male contestants David Cook, David Archuleta and Jason Castro dominate the show's consumer discussion online with 14.3% and 12.5% and 10.5% buzz volume, respectively. Brooke White continues to be included in conversations after being voted off two weeks ago with 7.5% buzz volume, while Syesha Mercado trails with 5.4%, more than two times less the amount of buzz compared with Cook and Archuleta.



Source: Nielsen Online, BuzzMetrics, Period: 1/1/08 – 5/7/08

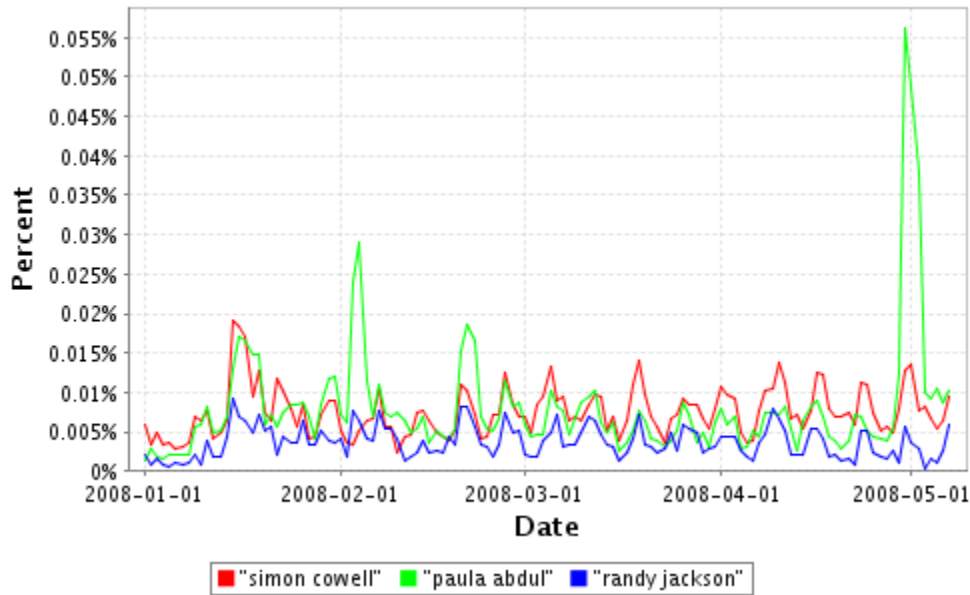
The most popular American Idol contestant from opinions and feedback from Hey! Nielsen’s online panel is Carrie Underwood. David Archuleta is this season’s most popular according to HeyNielsen.com.

- Most Popular American Idol Contestants***
- 1) Carrie Underwood
 - 2) Clay Aiken
 - 3) David Archuleta
 - 4) David Cook
 - 5) Kelly Clarkson

- Most Popular American Idol Contestants Season 7***
- 1) David Archuleta
 - 2) David Cook
 - 3) Jason Castro
 - 4) Brooke White
 - 5) Danny Norriega

Source: HeyNielsen.com, *Based on member opinions and feedback

Buzz for judges Simon Cowell and Randy Jackson has remained consistent throughout the January through May time frame, with notable increases in consumer discussion about Paula Abdul. The February spike for the show’s female host is linked to her pre Super Bowl game performance, up 200% from earlier that year. The more recent increase on April 30th, up an additional 83% since the February spike, was garnered by Abdul’s critique on two performances for David Castro although the contestant only sang one time.



Source: Nielsen Online, BuzzMetrics, Period: 1/1/08 – 5/7/08

Web traffic to American Idol websites saw the most unique visitors during March 2007. Of the top 10 months ranked by unique visitors, people spent the most amount of time on American Idol websites during Season 5, where time spent per person was over 10 minutes during the months of March, April and May 2006.

Web Traffic to American Idol Sites*		
Month	Unique Audience	Time per Person
Mar-07	7,273,000	0:07:03
Apr-07	6,478,000	0:07:13
May-06	6,153,000	0:12:33
May-07	5,234,000	0:10:01
Mar-06	5,171,000	0:12:28
Mar-08	4,298,000	0:08:13
Apr-06	4,043,000	0:10:41
Feb-08	3,891,000	0:07:31
Feb-07	3,516,000	0:07:57
May-05	3,375,000	0:07:58

Source: Nielsen Online, *Web traffic for American Idol is represented by traffic to either americanidol.com or idolonfox.com, depending on which garnered the most traffic for the give time period, Time per Person (hh:mm:ss)

Advertising

Top Advertisers

Coca-Cola was the top American Idol season 7 advertiser for the first quarter of 2008, followed by AT&T and Ford. Procter & Gamble and Apple rounded out the top five. All five of these companies



have advertised on American Idol since 2002 and, with the exception of Apple, all of them also held slots among the top five American Idol advertisers in season 6 (Jan. 16 – March 23, 2007).

<p>Top Advertisers: Full Season 6 (Jan. 16 – May 23, 2007)</p> <p>1) AT&T 2) Ford 3) Coca-Cola 4) Procter & Gamble 5) National Amusements (movie theaters)</p>

Source: The Nielsen Company

<p>Top Advertisers: Partial Season 7 (Jan. 15 – March 31, 2008)</p> <p>1) Coca-Cola 2) AT&T 3) Ford 4) Procter & Gamble 5) Apple</p>

Source: The Nielsen Company

Product Placements

During season 6 (Jan. 16 – May 23, 2007), American Idol featured 4,349 product placement occurrences. As of March 31, 2008, the number of placements featured during season 7 was surging—American Idol had already racked up 3,291 occurrences.

Coca-Cola and AT&T Wireless were the top two featured brands on American Idol during the first quarter of 2008. In season 6, Cingular Wireless rounded out the top three—but in early 2008, Ford claimed the third slot. Coca-Cola, which has an ongoing advertising association with American Idol, far outpaced all other brands’ product placements on the program—beating second-place AT&T Wireless by more than 2,000 occurrences during both season 6 and the first quarter of 2008 (season 7). (See the chart below for more details.)

Top Product Placement Brands on American Idol Full Season 6 vs. Partial Season 7			
Jan. 16 – May 23, 2007	Total # Occurrences	Jan. 15 – March 31 2008	Total # Occurrences
Coca-Cola	2,916	Coca-Cola	2,337
AT&T Wireless	275	AT&T Wireless	282
Cingular Wireless	164	Ford Autos & Trucks	41
<i>Source: Place*Views, Nielsen Product Placement Service (Jan. 16 - May 23, 2007 and Jan. 15 - Mar. 31 2008)</i>			

During both seasons 6 and the portion of season 7 included in this analysis (Jan. 15 – March 31, 2008), product placements on American Idol appeared most often in foreground shots. In season 6, there were 3,030 foreground placements on the program; in the first three months of 2008, there were 2,154 foreground occurrences. In season 6, background placements (372 occurrences) and prop placements (234 occurrences) rounded out the top three, while in the first quarter of 2008, call to action placements (310 occurrences) and wardrobe placements (206 occurrences) claimed second and third place, respectively.



About The Nielsen Company

The Nielsen Company is a global information and media company with leading market positions in marketing information (ACNielsen), media information (Nielsen Media Research), online intelligence (NetRatings and BuzzMetrics), mobile measurement (Nielsen Mobile), trade shows and business publications (Billboard, The Hollywood Reporter, Adweek). The privately held company is active in more than 100 countries, with headquarters in Haarlem, the Netherlands, and New York, USA. For more information, please visit, www.nielsen.com.

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