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Weekly Success Story - Aug 13, 2001

Every week, HitQuarters presents a new story of music business success. This original feature will explain how an artist went from being unknown to becoming a major hit in the charts. Which route through the industry did the artist take? What is there to learn from the artist's mistakes and achievements?

If you have comments or questions about this week's featured artist or would like to suggest an artist that we should cover, please [mail us](#).

To gather similar knowledge and to learn more about the music business in general, read our [Advisory Text](#) and the [Weekly Interview](#) with a business professional.

The week of Aug 13, 2001 features:

Dream

Dream are an extremely young four-piece hailing from the West Coast, USA. Brought together by a series of auditions held in late 1998 by Kenny Burns, their now manager, Ashley Poole (15), Melissa Schuman (16), Holly Blake (15) and Diana Ortiz (15) were to be the teen stars set to compete in a market overpopulated by successful boybands, a market where, according to Burns, the girlband idea hadn't yet been exploited to its full potential. He was looking for "determination" above all, he says.

Both Holly and Melissa were receiving tuition from vocal coaches who tipped them off about the auditions for Dream, which had been announced in talent agencies and rehearsal halls. Diana was asked along by Holly, her best friend. Ashley took a rather different route but, due to a bizarre coincidence, ended up at the same audition. Ashley initially wanted to be a model, and, with this idea in mind, she rang the now defunct "1800 Be A Star" number, which she saw publicized on local TV and which had been set up by a talent agency based in her local Blythe, CA, who invited her for an audition. Turning up at the specified time, Ashley bumped into Burns, who was auditioning for Dream in the same building. On a hunch, he persuaded her along for a tryout. Shortly afterwards, Burns decided that the fourth member of Dream had been found.

Burns began to look for songs for the band via producers and publishers, and, from that point, worked with them non-stop for approximately a year. Vincent Herbert (the producer and co-writer of "No, No, No Part 1", which in its remixed version "No, No, No Part 2" by Wyclef Jean became Destiny's Child breakthrough song in 1998) was a crucial player at this stage, writing and producing much of the material for them. They recorded a total of 13 songs, most of them at Westlake Studios in LA, and most of them original, of which only two would later make it onto the debut album.

The demo recordings were, according to Burns, shopped to practically every existing record label, with little success. Fast running out of ideas, Burns suddenly remembered Andre Harrell, whom he refers to as a "mentor" and who was then president at Bad Boy Records, based in New York and home to Faith Evans,

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Current Features:



Interview with **Thomas Richter**, Senior Director of Content Services at the German ring tone company Jamba



Interview with **Greg Sowders**, Senior Vice President of A&R for Warner Chappell Music US and publisher for Nickelback (US No.1)



Interview with **Jef Cahours**, head of A&R at Warner Music France for Tragedie (No.1 France)

From the archives:

"I called a German radio station and said: 'I'll let you use our airships. You can fly people, give away rides and also use them for traffic and weather reporting.' All I asked was: 'Don't pay any money, but please play Backstreet Boys'," Interview with **Lou Pearlman**, manager at Trans Continental Records for Backstreet Boys and 'NSync

"First make it excellent, build up a following and become a real band, which will make it a lot more appealing to us." Interview with **Ron Burman**, VP of A&R at Roadrunner Records US for Nickelback.

"In her case the visual presentation is what can decide whether she gets signed or not." Three unsigned HitQuarters Artists Of The Week have been **reviewed** by three successful

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Carl Thomas and Black Rob amongst others. Harrell liked the demos immensely, and played them to Puff Daddy, owner of the label, who also showed evident interest in the project. A showcase was arranged at the Beverly Hills Hotel for Puff, immediately after which he contacted his lawyers, who began to draw up a recording contract for Dream. Puff states two reasons for his decisiveness: "the girls' great attitudes", and their "overwhelming commitment to being entertainers."

music industry professionals.

Once the deal had been signed, a choreographer of enormous talent, Lorean Gibson, was enlisted; she worked extensively with the girls, turning their world upside down. The ball began to roll and the band appeared, thanks to Kenny's efforts, in various teen magazines such as Teen, Teenstyle and Cosmo Girl. They also toured as support act for 'Nsync in USA and Canada. The search for the breakthrough song continued and new recordings were undertaken. A date had already been set for the album release, when, in LA, Big Jon Platt, Senior Vice President Creative Affairs at EMI Publishing, alerted two of his songwriters, David Frank and Steven Kipner (who co-wrote Christina Aguilera's "Genie In A Bottle" together with Pam Sheyne, and also produced it), to the fact that Kenny Burns, a name which, although unfamiliar to them, carried the kudos of Bad Boy Records, was looking for songs for Dream's album. When they turned up at a rehearsal, they saw the girls sing and dance and were completely taken by their great voices and solid performing capabilities. The pair had a song called "He Loves U Not", which was on hold for Britney Spears's second album, but although Frank and Kipner would have happily lent the song to an album that was sure to sell millions, they were more thrilled by the prospect of breaking a new band. The music for "He Loves U Not" was recorded at David Frank's studio in LA, called Canyon Reverb, and, because the girls were out doing promotion and performances, the vocals were cut in a studio in Las Vegas. Later on, when one more track was needed for the album, Frank and Kipner threw in what was to become the second single, "This Is Me".

"He Loves U Not" was released on September 12th 2000, peaked at No.2 in the Billboard Hot 100 in December and was certified Gold (500.000 sold singles) in January 2001. The debut album, "It Was All A Dream", was released on January 23rd 2001, approximately two years after the auditions and has so far sold Platinum (1.000.000 copies) in the US.

Written by Luci Vázquez - Research by Stefan Sörin & Kimbel Bouwman

[Weekly Success Story Archive](#)

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