

# A Collaborative Community

An Interview with Darryl Eaton and Rick Roskin, Co-Heads of North American Touring, Creative Artists Agency (CAA)

**EDITORS' NOTE** Respected industry leaders Darryl Eaton and Rick Roskin help guide the unprecedented success of the #1 live music agency in the world. The over 130-agent team represents the globe's top musical artists and comedians, from superstar headliners to breaking new artists.

Eaton represents a diverse roster of top touring acts – such as The Weeknd, Kelly Clarkson, Blink-182, RBD, Glass Animals, Arcade Fire, A\$AP Rocky, and Enrique Iglesias – advising clients on concert tours, event bookings, and overall career development. In the past year, The Weeknd sold more than three million tickets and grossed over \$360 million; Blink-182 has sold 1.2 million tickets so far – in addition to the half million tickets they sold throughout their headline festival slots – grossing \$150 million and counting; Red Hot Chili Peppers sold 2.9 million tickets, grossing over \$360 million; Enrique Iglesias' Trilogy tour with Pitbull and Ricky Martin has sold 270,000 tickets, earning \$45 million across 25 shows; and Mexican superstar group RBD has sold around 1.6 million tickets, grossing \$200 million.

Roskin sits on the agency's CAA Board, responsible for managing the agency's day-to-day operations. His client roster includes Eric Clapton, Santana, Iron Maiden, Cheap Trick, Kesha, Counting Crows, Kelly Clarkson, Tom Morello, Slipknot, OneRepublic, Rob Zombie, The Black Crowes, Kelsea Ballerini, The Black Keys, and Fiona Apple, among others.

**AGENCY BRIEF** Positioned at the nexus of talent, content, brands, technology, sports, and live events, CAA (caa.com) creates limitless opportunities for the storytellers, trendsetters, icons, and thought leaders who shape popular culture. Across film, television, music, sports, digital media, marketing, and beyond, CAA represents thousands of the world's leading actors, directors, writers, producers, musical artists, comedians, authors, athletes, coaches, broadcasters, teams, leagues, chefs, designers, fashion talent, consumer brands, and more. Since its founding in 1975, CAA has continued to deliver on its promise that every client is represented by the whole agency. With a global network of employees and strategic partners in North America, Europe, Asia, and beyond, CAA taps its unequalled internal and external ecosystem of experts, relationships, access, and industry intelligence to help ensure that its clients achieve their goals.



Rick Roskin and Darryl Eaton

York, London, Austin, Miami, and Toronto. Our colleagues are the most talented and creative at what they do, whether that's representing our clients in their music or comedy touring careers, helping them achieve their film and television aspirations, or connecting them with and negotiating brand and marketing opportunities. We put great focus on our culture of collaboration, across the touring department and throughout the agency, and that team mentality is central to everything we do and to how we approach client representation.

**How do you describe CAA's Music & Comedy Touring group's mission and purpose?**

**Roskin:** Our goal is to super-serve our clients. We represent the best artists in the world at the very highest level, and our approach is to serve them with intelligence, tenacity, hustle, curiosity, and teamwork. We're constantly investing in and developing new data and technology tools to stay ahead of the industry for the benefit of our clients.

**Will you provide an overview of CAA's Music & Comedy Touring group's services and capabilities?**

**Eaton:** We have over 150 agents and executives in our Music & Comedy Touring

**Will you provide an overview of CAA's Music & Comedy Touring group?**

**Eaton:** Our Music & Comedy Touring group is the best in the business, and that all begins with our people. We have more than 300 employees across Los Angeles, Nashville, New

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**Darryl Eaton**

groups working across seven offices, with the goal of helping our clients translate their art around the world in a way that is authentic to each artist and their dreams, while maximizing their reach, growth, and revenue. Our group expertly navigates every aspect of the live touring and artist services business, from on-sale dates to ticket sales and platforms. Our colleagues serve as experts in current territories and venues while also expanding into new areas around the world. We do that with the support of a wide range of services, which includes our brand partnerships, film and television crossover, marketing, and private and corporate events divisions.

**What have been the keys to CAA's Music & Comedy Touring group's leadership and how do you define the group's difference?**

**Roskin:** You'll hear this from many places, but the truth is that at CAA, we actually live it! We're a collaborative community – many of us have been here 15, 20, or 30+ years – and we put great emphasis on the company credo, "When you take care of each other, good things happen." When you live and breathe that motto across a company, it creates an atmosphere where we like to come to work and love what we do. Collaboration is intrinsic to everything we do and as a result, we're able to do the best work for our clients together.

**How valuable has it been to have a sponsorship group inside CAA's Music & Comedy Touring group?**

**Roskin:** Honestly, the word "sponsorship" isn't really used anymore. It's much more about brand partnerships, where artists have the opportunity to become integrated and have a deeper connection with the brands they're working with. In some instances, they even have an equity stake. We see a huge opportunity in brand partnerships, as well as double-digit growth in the private and corporate appearance spaces.

**How do each of you focus your efforts and what has made your relationship work so well?**

**Eaton:** At one of our earliest CAA company retreats, Rick jokingly described our relationship saying, "He's a Mac, I'm a PC." And it's funny, but it's true – our strengths complement each other. It's that balance and that trust that works – we've been working together now for more than 30 years.

**Will you discuss your views on the state of the music industry and what you expect for the future?**

**Eaton:** What we're seeing right now is unbridled growth and demand in an era of uncertainty. While people might shy away from making larger life purchases or investments, attention has turned to investing in experiences – especially in live entertainment. People want to create connections and experience community – something larger than themselves – and live entertainment does just that.

**Roskin:** The growth in touring is evidence of that and points to further growth in 2024. As we look forward, what we do know is that the world keeps getting smaller while the global nature of our business is still expanding. Music is universal – there are no barriers when it comes to language or geography in sharing in an artist's work or performance. That universality and fandom is what music and touring is all about.

**Will you discuss the focus on building a diverse and inclusive workforce to mirror the diversity of CAA's clients and the communities it serves?**

**Eaton:** The issue of diversity and inclusion is a very important one for us. We believe more diverse voices from a wide variety of backgrounds make our company stronger and provide a better-quality experience for everyone – our colleagues, our clients, and their fans. It is good business. To create sustainable, long-term

change, we've put a focus on our entry-level population, starting with our recruitment and summer internship programs. These efforts have resulted in a significant change to the pipeline of young staff hired by CAA, as well as those whose internships translate into jobs across the industry. CAA actively recruits from top-tier colleges and universities, historically black colleges (HBCUs), colleges with high Latino populations, and women's colleges all across the U.S.

**Roskin:** We also launched CAA Elevate, a next-generation training and development curriculum designed to cultivate best practices, encourage innovation, foster global strategic-thinking, and nurture the talents of CAA's next generation of agents and executives. Since its launch in 2021, we've had 16 music and comedy touring assistants enter and graduate from the program.

**How do each of you describe your management styles?**

**Eaton:** Being agents ourselves, we know the level of commitment and hard work you have to maintain to be really great at what you do, and we also understand the pressure and stress that comes with the territory. So, we try to manage like we'd want to be managed ourselves – to come from a place of empathy and be in it together, to try and help provide solutions when challenges arise, recognize the work being put in, and celebrate the successes of our group as a collective.

**Roskin:** Agents are ultimately entrepreneurs, so we try to give people enough space to be creative and entrepreneurial to help build our clients' businesses. At the same time, we stress the importance of collaboration and communication as a group. This ultimately ensures we're all rowing in the same direction. It's a delicate balance, but ultimately that's what separates us from our competition.

**You have both spent your careers at CAA. What has made the experience so special for you?**

**Roskin:** It's about the people. It's about the friendships we've made over the years and the new ones we're investing in now. In an intense industry, it's much better to be surrounded by people you enjoy working with and care about. CAA is a company with a heart, and we're proud to have invested our careers here.

**What are your priorities for CAA's Music Touring division as you look to the future?**

**Eaton:** We're focused on being ahead of the curve and being thought leaders, not followers. We do that with intentional growth, as well as with our collective strength and intelligence. Ultimately, our priority is to continue to over-serve and over-deliver for the most talented and admired creators in the world.

**Roskin:** Internally, we're focused on continuing to hire, nurture, and develop talented and ambitious people to continue to be the best and most steady team in the live industry. We've had very little turnover in over 30 years and we're really proud of that – our goal is to keep building on what we've created for the next 30 years. CAA has always been at the top, and we intend to remain the number one agency in the world by continuing to represent our clients at the very highest level. ●

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