

Tools of the Trade

By Sandra O'Loughlin

Hip-Hop's Grassroots Promo

For its second annual *Hip-Hop Honors* show, VH1 execs went to barber shops, urban Starbucks and subways to get the word out on the streets.

At barber shops, customers picked up HHH-branded Afro-picks and were draped with "Hook me up with a High-Top Fade" capes while getting coiffed. New York subways got tagged with ads while wild postings allowed passersby to rip off tabloid-sized tearaway replicas of artist Kehinde Wiley's regal portraits of Ice T, Notorious B.I.G. and other hip-hop royalty.

Throughout September, the VH1 Hip-Hop Honors Sweepstakes at 83 Magic Johnson-owned Starbucks stores attracted 1,000 entrants who vied for a VIP trip to next year's show, CDs and other prizes. A contest at VH1.com baited budding DJs to freestyle a tune in 59 seconds. The winner was announced on



Notorious G.I.mme: Fans were urged to rip off posters.

the Sept. 26 TV program, which was hosted by Russell Simmons and Reverend Run, and honored old school song stylists Big Daddy Kane, LL Cool J, Grandmaster Flash and The Furious Five, Biggie, Ice T, Salt-N-Pepa, and the film *Boyz n the Hood*. Hipsters got a VH1-designed book of text and images showing hip-hop's influence on style and culture.

Ultimately, the show was the shi-zizzle: The *Hip-*

Hop Honors telecast averaged 1.4 million viewers, a 40% ratings increase over last year's telecast.

—Becky Ebenkamp

Program: VH1 *Hip-Hop Honors*

Marketer: VH1, New York; Urban Marketing Corp. of America, Los Angeles

Key players: **VH1:** Nigel Cox-Hagan, svp creative/consumer mktg; Brenda Freeman, vp-consumer mktg; Phil Delbourgo, vp-brand/design; Anastasia Pappas, dir-on-air promo