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National Young Women's Fashion Retailer maurices Kicks Off Second Annual Nationwide Band Search, in Partnership With PlayNetwork and Sonicbids

maurices "Hometown Sound" Bands Together With Graffiti6 to Select the Next Big Music Group

DULUTH, MN--(Marketwire -12/05/11)- **maurices** (NASDAQ:ASNA - [News](#)), the leading hometown specialty store and fashion authority, today announced the launch of its second annual nationwide "Hometown Sound" band search in partnership with PlayNetwork and Sonicbids. Last year **maurices** had tremendous success with its band search, leading to the discovery of the Alton, Illinois, songwriting duo "[Audri & Aaron](#)" and their winning single, "Home."

"The goal of this program is not only to discover the next hot up-and-coming band in the country, but to continue building strong connections with **maurices** communities," says Lisa Bartlett, assistant vice president of marketing at **maurices**. "We pride ourselves on being the best hometown specialty retailer, so we look for every opportunity to reach our customers across America and celebrate their unique musical gifts."

Building on the success of last year's girls-only campaign, led by the iconic presence of The Bangles and Chrissie Hynde, along with the emerging all-female indie band, Sick of Sarah, this year's **maurices** Hometown Sound will be adding guys into the mix. Emerging global electro soul popsters [Graffiti6](#) will launch **maurices** Hometown Sound as the kickoff partner artist. As the campaign rolls along, new partner artists will be introduced.

Music strategy and retail media agency [PlayNetwork](#) is once again partnering with **maurices** to launch this nationwide band search. The campaign will include a series of artist features, exclusive content, studio recordings, live performances and video productions featuring the partner bands. Calling on consumers to enter or vote, **maurices** stores will become immersive Hometown Sound experiences featuring PlayNetwork-produced music and content. The contest [microsite](#), once again created and managed by [Sonicbids](#), will also provide a number of opportunities to engage with the brand and bands.

"The launch of Hometown Sound proves once again that **maurices** understands the power of making an emotional connection with their fans through music and storytelling. **maurices** and PlayNetwork have become true strategic partners. We are working closely to create a new and authentic musical narrative for **maurices** that elevates the emotional conversation with their customers outside the walls of the retail space," said John Crooke, vice president, creative at PlayNetwork.

Beginning today, any unsigned band is eligible to enter **maurices** Hometown Sound at www.mauricesmusic.sonicbids.com. Submissions will be accepted through December 28, 2011.

From January 9 through January 23, 2012, fans can vote for their favorite bands, narrowing the field to the top 50 musical ensembles. From these 50 bands, a group of panelists, including select partner artists, will narrow it down to four finalists.

From February 6 through March 4, 2012, the final voting will take place and each finalist will have their music featured in **maurices** stores and on the contest microsite during a 7-day period. During each artist's 7-day feature period, the public will be able to cast their vote by scanning a QR (Quick Response) code in stores or on the contest microsite. The band receiving the most votes will win **maurices** Hometown Sound.

"We're excited to be working with **maurices** to extend their hometown outreach campaign. With more than 800 stores nationwide, **maurices** is a great outlet for the promotion of independent music," said Sonicbids founder and CEO [Panos Panay](#). "Sonicbids' mission is to get music in front of consumers through unique distribution channels and this campaign reinforces that."

The grand prize winner will perform live at their local **maurices** and receive a trip to Los Angeles to shoot a music video with PlayNetwork. They'll also receive gifts from **maurices**, as well as the opportunity to perform at a **maurices** branded daytime showcase at [SXSW](#) in Austin, Texas, in March, 2012, with Graffiti6 and other select partner artists.

All fans who vote will receive **maurices** coupons. They will also be entered into a drawing for a chance to win a **maurices** gift card.

About **maurices**

maurices, a division of Ascena Retail Group, Inc. (NASDAQ: [ASNA - News](#)), is the leading hometown specialty store and authority for the savvy, fashion-conscious girl with a twenty-something attitude. Today, **maurices** operates 800 stores in 44 states. **maurices** stands for fashion, quality, value and customer service. Offering sizes 1-26 in select stores and online, our styles are inspired by the girl in everyone, in every size. For store information and to shop online, visit maurices.com.

About **PlayNetwork**

PlayNetwork produces unrivaled media experiences for brands worldwide. PlayNetwork programs

include music, messaging, video, web radio artist promotions and events, A/V systems, advertising networks, and commercial XM Satellite Radio. PlayNetwork aims to deliver experiences with the truest level of customization and integration across every touch point -- in-store, online and on-device. Founded in 1996, PlayNetwork is currently playing for over 75,000 media subscribers in 70 countries, reaching over 23 million people every day. For more information, visit playnetwork.com or xm4biz.com.

About **Sonicbids**

Sonicbids is the leading matchmaking site for bands and promoters. Since its launch in 2001, Sonicbids has become the standard for submitting music to events and opportunities around the globe, counting as partners thousands of prominent events and festivals in North America, Europe, and Australia. Today, the Company boasts a registered membership base of 325,000 bands from over 100 different countries, who use the site daily to connect with 25,000 music "promoters" -- ranging from some of the world's largest music festivals and music conferences, to clubs, coffee houses, cruise ships, colleges, advertising agencies, brand managers, podcasters, music supervisors and other people looking to book, license or broadcast music. So far this year, bands and artists using Sonicbids booked close to 95,000 "gigs" through the site. Learn more at sonicbids.com.

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