



Tom's Message Board

American Idol and the Human Spirit

My name is Tom Brassard and I watch American Idol. There... this 54-year-old business professional has come clean. Surprised? Even "I" surprise myself that I've been bit by the Idol bug, but I have my reasons.

Here's my take on American Idol and why I'm a fan. First and foremost, when the show started eight years ago, it became quality time for Sue, Abby (then 11) and I to crowd together on the sofa and just be. We enjoy music and it was just plain fun to watch. Secondly, Idol allows viewers to follow the otherwise unimaginable opportunity for a complete unknown to realize "The American Dream". And thirdly, the producers infuse just enough drama, competition, tension, levity, and good ol' rock-n-roll to be relevant to people of all ages. If music is an international language, it's no wonder American Idol is a top-rated show each year.

From the outset, one of my favorites in the show has been Simon. Yea, he's overbearing and a bit too full of himself, but his brutally candid comments following each performance and his ability to quickly peel away the outer layers of a contestant and his/her performance to get to the core of each performance is quite remarkable.

But while I enjoy Simon... the success of the show lies with the contestants themselves. From literally out of nowhere, these young adults appear in homes around the world having earned a stab at fame and fortune. And through the 5 month Idol process it becomes less about the last one standing and more about what it takes to persevere through personal highs and lows, good song choices/bad song choices, performing in good health or when sick, and enduring the blisteringly candid judging in front of family, friends, and all of America. To then express to viewers like me a consistent air of gratitude and positive thinking makes me appreciate what I have and what the human spirit can accomplish. Like the human interest stories that are such a big part of the Olympic broadcasts, so too are learning about the trials, tribulations, and inspirations of the Idol contestants. In my view American Idol is a wonderfully entertaining journey toward an American Dream and exemplifying the human spirit. Corny, maybe... but I'm a fan... I admit it.

Finally, speaking of the *human spirit*, this newsletter marks the official – yet soft – announcement of a new division of Paw Print & Mail... **Catamount Marketing** – dedicated to providing marketing solutions that connect with the human spirit. Look for much more to come in the weeks and months ahead.

Sing on!

Tom Brassard
President

