

RINGLING BROS. & BARNUM & BAILEY

THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH

THE MARKET

Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey® strictly limits its market to Children of All Ages. Moreover, fans must possess the ability to laugh, gasp, admire, dream, and be awestruck. Despite these daunting restrictions, audiences number in the multiple millions.

ACHIEVEMENTS

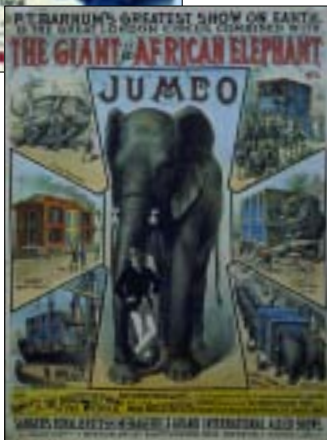
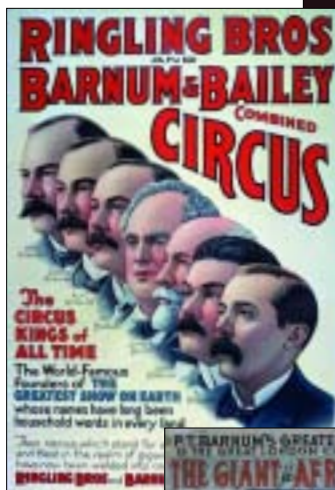
The Greatest Show On Earth® is the longest-running hit show (134 years) in the history of show business and the only continuous entertainment phenomenon to span three consecutive centuries. It preceded iconic American institutions such as professional baseball (by one year), the Kentucky Derby (by five years), and Coca-Cola (by 17 years).

Outside the circus rings, Ringling Bros. is a recognized leader in Asian elephant conservation. The 200-acre *Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Center for Elephant Conservation*, in central Florida, houses the largest, most diverse gene pool of Asian elephants outside of Southeast Asia. Since 1992, 16 elephants have been born under the care of *Ringling Bros.*, and current “expectations” promise more jumbo bundles of joy in the coming months.

HISTORY

The genesis of today’s brand may be seen as the eventual intersection of two parallel tracks. In 1872, peerless promoter Phineas T. Barnum first put his show on rails; Ringling Bros. began to travel by train in 1890. Barnum died in 1891, his reported final utterance being, “Ask James Bailey what the circus receipts were for Madison Square Garden today.” (For the record, Barnum’s alleged remark that “there’s a sucker born every minute” was actually muttered by a disgruntled Barnum competitor.) Sixteen years later, the Ringlings purchased the Barnum & Bailey circus, but their shows toured separately until 1919, when the first combined edition of *Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey* was unveiled at Madison Square Garden.

Today, the tradition of travel by rail continues, and *Ringling Bros.*



owns two of the longest privately owned trains in the world — each over a mile long. Notably, in the early 1900s, the U.S. Army learned lessons from Ringling Bros. on how to load and unload railroad flatcars quickly; during World War II, President Roosevelt, eager to sustain homeland morale, gave Ringling Bros. special dispensation to continue using the nation’s strategically critical railroads.

In 1936, a nephew of John Ringling, John Ringling North, took over the show after his uncle’s death. In 1967, during a contract signing at the Colosseum in Rome, ownership of *The Greatest Show On Earth* was transferred to Irvin and Israel Feld.

Irvin Feld (1918–1984) is credited with rejuvenating a moribund enterprise. “My

father used to say that he knew his clowns could fall down, but wasn’t sure they could get back up,” remembers his son Kenneth. “So he started Ringling Bros. Clown College®.” Irvin led the show out of tents, and into the more spacious metropolitan arenas then rising. To serve these proliferating new venues, he built a second circus unit around the late, great animal trainer Gunther Gebel-Williams. He also raised a furor by hiring the first African-American act in *Ringling Bros.* history. “People resigned,” Kenneth remembers. “Dad was a pioneer.”

Kenneth has followed his father’s example, revamping long-held circus traditions to suit evolving tastes. He began combing the globe for the freshest, most spellbinding performers. To maintain interest, he streamlined acts from 12 minutes to just over two, and placed favorite performances such as the trapeze further up in the program. Theatrical lighting and concert-quality sound systems supplanted lackluster arena equipment. Original musical scores were crafted. In

2000, *The Greatest Show On Earth*® entered its third century more vibrant and popular than ever.

With the recent leadership involvement of a third-generation Feld — Nicole, Kenneth’s daughter — the family has now guided this treasured American institution longer than any other single family in its storied history.



And aside from its legacy in entertainment and crowd-pleasing, the influence of *Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey*® on American culture also stretches to the linguistic. Many commonly used phrases stem from circus terms. Among them:

- “Toss your hat into the ring.” In 1916, President Woodrow Wilson did just that at a performance of *The Greatest Show On Earth*. Reporters took this as a sign Wilson would seek reelection. He did.
- “Jumbo.” The word did not exist until 1882, when it was given as the name of Barnum & Bailey’s huge African elephant, billed far and wide as the “largest and heaviest elephant ever seen by mortal man, either wild or in captivity.” Today, dictionaries define “jumbo” as anything huge or oversized.
- “Hold your horses.” During pre-auto parades into town, the smell of elephants spooked horses, so a roustabout preceded the fragrant pachyderms, calling out, “Hold your horses, the elephants are coming!” The shortened phrase retains its place in the American lexicon.

THE PRODUCT

The flagship of the brand is *The Greatest Show On Earth*, a live, two-hour extravaganza showcasing the world’s finest circus performers amidst a grand spectacle of exotic animals and original,



Broadway-caliber costumes, music, and choreography. A pair of fully distinct versions of the show travel the country simultaneously, so that no city ever hosts the same production twice. Entirely new productions are created every year.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

March 2004 saw the debut of the Hometown Edition of *Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey*.

This innovative, interactive production is bringing top-notch circus quality to towns and cities that have never seen a *Ringling Bros.* show, or have not hosted one for years. Standing-room-only crowds at early performances indicate *Ringling Bros.* Hometown Edition will be an outstanding opportunity to entertain even more legions of fans.

To deepen fans’ preshow involvement, in recent years *Ringling Bros.* has added the Animal Open HouseSM, a fascinating tour of menagerie living quarters, and the Three Ring Adventure®, during which fans are invited onto the arena floor to participate in circus fun with performers of both the two- and four-legged variety.

In 1999, *Ringling Bros.* also launched *Barnum’s Kaleidoscope*SM, a total-immersion circus experience beneath the festive spires of a stunning red and white tent.

PROMOTION

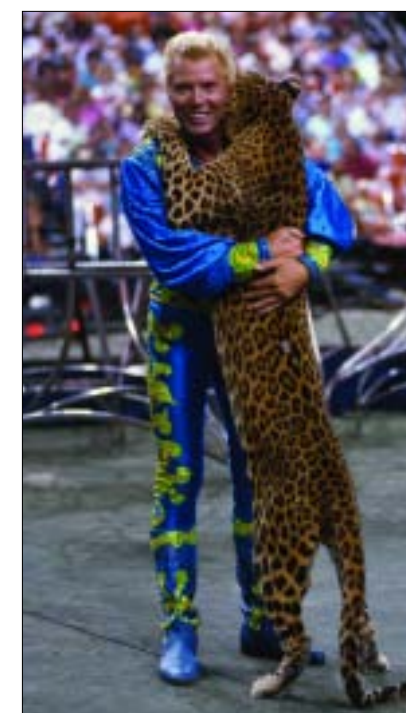
The adage “all politics is local” is equally true of circus. Consequently, although Ringling Bros. is certainly a national brand, it taps local radio, TV, and outdoor resources, as well as regional Web ads and e-mail marketing, to ensure the advertising resonates with varied venues.

Of course, Barnumesque promotions are as intrinsic to the brand as clowns and aerialists. Hence the famous Animal Walks (for instance, through Manhattan’s Midtown Tunnel), and stupendous Elephant Brunches, featuring frozen apple and banana “snow cones” — always “fruitful” in terms of crowds and press coverage. Few distinctive promotions go untried: For the 2003 New York City premiere, daredevil clown Bello Nock hung from a trapeze bar under a moving helicopter to entertain “Lady Liberty” and salute the American spirit. Major newspapers nationwide ran the photo.

The popular Web site for *The Greatest Show On Earth* (www.Ringling.com) features an e-zine

newsletter that reaches 50,000 fans weekly and promotes a variety of special offers. One example: “Baby’s First Circus,” providing free passes to every new child born in the continental United States.

Over the years, *Ringling Bros.* has also partnered with many leading brands interested in reaching families. Among them: McDonald’s, Sears, VISA, Chevrolet, Procter & Gamble, Hallmark, Disney, Kraft, and numerous others.



BRAND VALUES

The deeply family nature of *Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey* is apparent at its shows, as generation gaps vanish before the ageless, yet ever-changing magic of the three rings. It’s evident in the tight-knit collaboration of matchless performers from around the world, many representing the seventh, eighth, and even ninth generations to follow the family vocation. And it’s ensured by the Feld family, which considers itself the privileged steward of a priceless national treasure, now embarked on its third century of creating indelible memories for Children of All Ages.

THINGS YOU DIDN’T KNOW ABOUT RINGLING BROS. AND BARNUM & BAILEY

- Through various educational programs, *Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey* has long been committed to teaching children by applying circus-related lessons in vocabulary, physics, animal care, geography, and life skills such as teamwork, trust, and goal setting. (The educational program CIRCUS-WORKS is available via www.Ringling.com.)
- In 1955, Marilyn Monroe, riding atop a pink elephant, appeared on opening night at Madison Square Garden.
- Uncle Sam, familiar symbol of American patriotism, was modeled after famous circus clown Dan Rice.
- Lou Jacobs, a *Ringling Bros.* clown for 60 years, in 1966 became the only living person on a U.S. postage stamp.
- The following are among the food stores purchased weekly for performing animals: 18 tons of hay; three tons of oats; five tons of apples, carrots, and lettuce; 425 loaves of bread; and more than one ton of fresh meat.