

'TRL' brings 'Bandstand' to new generation

NEW YORK (AP) — As host of MTV's "Total Request Live," Carson Daly is at ground zero every day of a booming new teen-age culture. It made him interested in talking with someone who stood there before.

Daly called the ageless wonder himself, Dick Clark, to set up an appointment when he was in Los Angeles recently.

"Carson Daly! You're the man!" the former "American Bandstand" leader greeted his 26-year-old heir apparent, before settling down to chat about what happens when hormones and the hot

lights of television intersect.

After just a year on the air, "TRL" is the force behind an MTV ratings renaissance. More than one million youngsters tune in at 3:30 p.m. each weekday to hear their favorite music.

The program's format is simple: viewers vote on their favorite videos, and "TRL" counts down the top 10 every afternoon. Fans "shout out" tributes, either on camera from Times Square or the studio audience, or through phone calls and e-mail.

Most "Total Request Live" fans will stare blankly at any mention of

"American Bandstand," the daily, then weekly, house party for teen-agers that aired nationally from 1957 to 1989.

At the heart of both shows is the energy and excitement of young music fans. "TRL" does today what "American Bandstand" used to — it lets kids know what their peers are wearing, what they are listening to and how they talk.

Aside from the music itself, the most obvious difference between the two shows is the direct impact MTV fans have on what is played every day.

"It gets my blood pumping," said Dave Willey, 17, of Hicksville, N.Y., as

he sat in MTV's intimate studio to watch a show one day this fall. "Britney Spears, she's so hot."

"We like it because it's live," said Steve Demko, a college student from New Jersey who came in to Times Square with his buddies, Chris Sorber and Brian Mieczkowski, to stand on the street and look up at the studio.

"Total Request Live" caught the wave of young fans who have made Britney Spears and the Backstreet Boys stars, a new generation eager for its own heroes. Since the audience determines the "TRL" playlist every day, the show is

guaranteed to reflect what's hot minute-by-minute.

Because "TRL" serves a wide constituency, a typical show careens from style to style in a way few radio stations would dare: the blue-eyed soul of 'N Sync bumps against the corrosive metal of Korn, which segues into the rap of Warren G.

Young fans are hungry for variety, said Tom Calderone, MTV's senior vice president of music and talent.

"It's always going to change," Calderone said. "It's not going to be stale."

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