

**Signals in the Static:** **Nathan Lane** and **Matthew Broderick** have signed to star in the film adaptation of the hit musical, *The Producers*, to be released in 2005. After just one week of sales, Nike's Air Zoom Generation shoes, endorsed by **LeBron James** (see JOHO 6/03), have become the company's best-selling signature shoe in two years. Punk rocker **Patti Smith** turns 57. Died: Fashion photographer **Francesco Scavullo**, 82; ad exec and co-creator of the Pillsbury Doughboy, **Robert Ross**, 85.

**Coca-Cola** opens "Red Lounges" in shopping malls in Los Angeles and Chicago, with plush sofas, plasma screens playing teen-friendly content, and vending machines stocked with Coca-Cola beverages. **Campbell Soup** launches "Soup Sanctuaries" which offer mall shoppers a chance to relax and sample soup. **AT&T Wireless** stages street performers at bus stops and train stations to entertain travelers with songs about cell phone courtesy. **Honda** completes test flights of a small business jet in the United States, preparing to enter the aircraft business. **Denny's** will introduce wireless Internet access at its coffee shop restaurants. The average cost for a 30-second spot on the **Super Bowl** (Feb. 1) jumps 7% to \$2.3 million.

#### 2003's Most Successful Product

**Launches:** Apple's iPod, McDonald's Salads Plus, Lexus GX470, Sprite Remix, Schick Quattro razor, Levitra, match.com, Fructis hair care, Kellogg Drink'n'Crunch Portable Cereals, PAM for Baking With Flour, *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy. *Ad Age*, *NY Times*.

**Five Products to Watch in 2004:** Treo 600 smart phone, Toshiba Portege M200 laptop with swivel screen, Dawn Power Dish Scrubber, Russell Simmons' Yukon Denali, Cialis. *Ad Age*.

**Hip-hop Branding:** Of the 111 Billboard Top 20 songs in 2003, 43 songs mentioned brand names for 82 different brands. Mercedes had 112 mentions, Lexus had 48, Gucci had 47, Cadillac had 46, Burberry had 42, Prada had 39, Cristal had 37, and Hennessy had 35. **Lil' Kim's** "The Jump Off" had the most brands crammed into one song (14). The top brand-dropping artist of 2003 was **50 Cent**, with 31 brands. [www.americanbrandstand.com](http://www.americanbrandstand.com)

**CES Report:** Product trends emphasized mobility, connectivity, and interchangeability—storing and streaming digital content anywhere and everywhere. Product highlights included Samsung's \$12,000 high definition DLP projector, Philips' Streamium Internet television and key ring camcorder, Archos' handheld AV300 multimedia player, Denon's NS-S100 multimedia server, and Sony's tiny 5.1 megapixel Cyber-shot DSC-T1 camera. Industry trends: New global competitors, quicker product lifecycles, shrinking margins, digital rights issues, and relentless innovation.

**Catchphrase Nation:** Referring to the USA, book titles from amazon.com include *Prison Nation*, *Rogue Nation*, *Savage Nation*, *Poker Nation*, *Roadtrip Nation*, *Credit Card Nation*, *Hellfire Nation*, *Database Nation*, and *Cornbread Nation*. 2003 headlines from the *N.Y. Times* include *Discount Nation*, *Napa Nation*, *Monoglot Nation*, *Captivity Nation*, and *Joystick Nation*.

**American Snapshot:** In 1987, a poll found that 48% of Americans said "it's all right for blacks and whites to date each other." This summer, the figure had risen to 77%. Only 15% of adults said they "don't have much in common with people of other races," a historic low. *Pew Research Center*.