



# Money

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 1995

## SEARS & ESTEFAN:

Rock star Gloria Estefan agreed to a 15-month deal with Sears. The deal, worth \$1 million to \$3 million, includes sponsorship of Estefan's 1996 tour, promotions, ticket giveaways and ads (story, 4B).



Ron Galella Ltd.

**ESTEFAN:** Sears sponsors '96 tour.

## Sears boosts image by marketing events

Sears wants to become a major force in event marketing.

The retail chain announced Thursday that it has agreed on a 15-month deal with rock star Gloria Estefan. Industry experts estimate the deal could be worth \$1 million to \$3 million. It includes sponsorship Estefan's 1996 tour, promotions, ticket giveaways and ads. Estefan's new Spanish-language album, *Abriendo Puertas*, goes on sale Tuesday.

Music sponsorships have long been a venue for cigarette and soft drink companies. But recently, retailers like Sears and Target have jumped in.

Choosing Estefan strength-

ens Sears' commitment to marketing to Hispanic customers. Sears spends about \$20 million to market to Hispanics, making it one of the largest retail chains targeting Spanish-speaking consumers.

"America is evolving into a multicultural society," says John Costello, Sears' head of marketing. "Our involvement with Gloria is a way for us to reach a broad range of Sears customers."

Sears also is sponsoring a concert next month at Planet Hollywood in New York City starring Bruno and the Accelerators, a rock band anchored by actor Bruce Willis. The

show will promote Sears' line of denim jeans, Canyon River Blues. Willis does voiceovers in Canyon River ads.

This isn't Sears' first gig as an entertainment sponsor, but it is the largest. In 1994, Sears sponsored the Phil Collins tour. Earlier this year it backed pop singer Brandy.

The shift to event marketing is part of Sears' image update. Once a conservative department store, Sears has spent millions on store makeovers and ads to reinvent itself. Last year, Sears had revenue of more than \$33 billion and spent more than \$1 billion on marketing.

— Dottie Earleo