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RIP

Ray Cooper, former Virgin Records America Co-President with Ashley Newton who is given credit for the worldwide success of the Spice Girls – died on July 28, in Guildford, England. He was 69 and had been suffering from a rare neurological condition, Progressive Primary Aphasia (PPA).

Cooper started his career in 1972 as a sales rep for UK label Transatlantic Records. This was followed by stints at Anchor and Jet Records, then a post as marketing director at Island Records, working with Bob Marley, U2 and Frankie Goes to Hollywood.

Cooper and Ashley Newton launched Circa Records in the UK. in 1986. When it was acquired by Virgin in 1995, the pair worked as co-managing directors, breaking the Spice Girls, Daft Punk and the Verve. They both joined Virgin America as co-presidents in 1997. Virgin Records founder Richard Branson called him “an extraordinary delightful individual and an incredible talent.” Source: *Variety*