

SPECIAL ISSUE

VOLUME 9 // ISSUE 3



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2016



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CONTENTS

VOLUME 9 2016 // Issue 3

TL CONFERENCE

- 3** // CSUK Launches London Based Sleeper Bus Company
- 7** // TL Cannonball Run
- 12** // Jack Healy Receives Vangard Proze
- 14** // JABOR Service Day
- 16** // Opening Night Reception
- 22** // 3rd Annual Golf Tournament
- 28** // Transportation BBQ
- 32** // Panels
- 55** // Hub Entertainment Insures the Music Business
- 56** // Top Dog Awards



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16 // Opening Night



7 // TL Cannonball Run



14 // Service Day



32 // Panels



28 // Transportation BBQ

LARRY SMITH PUBLISHER

Once again, we present our recap of the recent Tour Link Conference and Top Dog Award Winners. This issue always takes more time to assemble than any other issue of the year. To be honest, after such a demanding event produced by a small staff, supported by a great, dedicated group of volunteers, it takes a few days for everyone to recuperate.

In addition to the annual breather, we say farewell to our Office Manager and Conference Coordinator, Lori DeLancy, who did such a great job helping us to expand and modernize the Tour Link Conference. Also, Shelby Cude has departed and both have accepted Industry positions with other top companies. We wish the both success in their new careers.



larrysmith@tourguidemag.com

Thankfully, JJ Janney has agreed to return as Editor and Rachel Janney has signed on as our new Data Manager and Ad traffic Director. We will announce a new Coordinator as well as the dates and location of the next conference shortly.

There are so many people and sponsors to thank for the success of the conference that I hardly know where to begin. One unsung hero every year is Nick Gold of Entertainment Travel. Nick has been at my side for thirty years, tirelessly helping us to research and select the site of every event, coordinate the transportation outing and deal with all matters related to the hotel.

Our thanks also goes out to Jim Risgn, our Production Manager and the entire OSA title Sponsor team who not only took care of the outdoor stage and meeting rooms, but answered a late-night call to move the Award Show indoors due to cold weather and turned my panic into relief in a matter of a few sleepless hours and made the anchor event of the conference a huge success.

Certainly, our thanks also go to Chuck Randall, my perennial co-host and constant advocate of our work and the other show participants who keep the show moving, entertaining and added validity to the concept of an Industry event that is a true collaboration.

So, we hope you enjoy the coverage of the highest-attended, most successful event in the history of these gatherings and we hope you join us next year.

Larry Smith PUBLISHER

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From left: TourLink Cannonball Run organizers Pierre Guiotte, John Aikin and Scotty Ross.

TOUR LINK CANNONBALL RUN ROARS DOWN 200 ROAD MILES

Story and Photos by Debi Moen

With Palm Desert in their rearview mirrors, motorcycles and a few sports cars roared out of the resort parking lot early Tuesday morning to embark on a 200-mile roundtrip journey, destined for Joshua Tree National Park.

Tour Link Cannonball Run event organizers Pierre Guiotte (Event Safety Alliance Canada), John Aikin (Senators Coaches) and Scotty Ross (road manager) rounded up the riders and mapped out the route. "This year we opened it up to cars - sports or exotic cars," Guiotte said. "You can't come with a Ford Escort!"

The idea germinated three years ago when Aikin and Guiotte rented bikes for the Tour Link near Phoenix, and the tradition gained traction since then. "We had a blast," Aikin said. "It's a great way to see the mountains, to get out in the open air and see Joshua Tree."

Truck N Roll, EPT Trucking Service and Saan Trucking sponsored the ride and lunch at the Joshua Tree Saloon Bar & Grill. EagleRiders, with an office inside the hotel, provided bike rentals and morning coffee service.

Strapping leathers on her legs, BearCom's Gina McNamara was ready to ride with her husband, David. "I don't have to think or be in control. I can just be Gina, and enjoy the ride. It's the one time I can tap out."

Delighted to leave the Canadian winter behind, Aaron Buchanan and Peter Kaminski of Unlimited Video Staging spent 27 hours transporting their own

bikes in a trailer to TourLink. "We're happy we can ride in January," Kaminski said.

Kees Brouwer of Peter Smith Trucking in the Netherlands rented a Harley for his second ride at TourLink. "It's freedom," he said. "I like the off-road riding, the mountains. It is a good way to meet people."

Twin brothers Elmar and Hanno Lamberti of EPT Trucking Service in Cologne, Germany, rented their bikes in Los Angeles and rode a week on a route snaking through mountain snow - stunning the skiers at higher elevations - to get to Palm Desert. This is their fourth year to ride, and they say enjoy the open roads and wide open spaces, such a contrast to their road routes in Germany.

From Keep the Beat Alive, Damian Brezinski and wife Sue followed behind in a Corvette, which they rented from Midway Rental in Los Angeles and drove out to the conference. "It's a great vista at Key's View Observatory," Damian said. "You can see all the way to Mexico on a clear day. It's a breathtaking view."



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JACK HEALEY PRESENTED WITH JUST A BUNCH OF ROADIES VANGUARD PRIZE

Story by Peter Ferguson, Photos by Shelby Cude

During the Top Dog awards ceremony at Tour Link Conference 2016, human rights activist Jack Healey received the first-ever Vanguard Prize. Humanitarian organization Just A Bunch of Roadies (JABOR) sponsored the new award, which was presented by JABOR founders and touring industry authorities Lori Tierney and Charlie Hernandez Sr.

Healey, a leading figure in the fight against government violations of human rights for the past 50 years, currently serves as the head of the Human Rights Action Center and has been recognized by U.S. News and World Report as “Mr. Human Rights.”

Tierney and Hernandez explained that the Vanguard Prize was developed “to honor a creative individual who occupies the leading position in a movement or field. This person is active in the innovation and application of new concepts and techniques in their respective field.”

“If you’re in the vanguard, you’re up front,” stated Tierney. “He integrated message, music, activism, philanthropy and human rights in our business.”

Following the introduction by Tierney and Hernandez, a video reel highlighting Healey’s work was shown. Topics included the influential concert

tours for human rights he spearheaded starting in the 1980s.

Healey assumed his place at the front of the stage to the sound of Bob Marley’s iconic anthem “Get Up, Stand Up.” Enthusiastic representatives from across the touring industries in North America and Europe welcomed his appearance at the awards show.

“There’s nothing better than getting this award from Lori and Charlie,” Healey began. “There’s a lot of things I’ve been honored for, but there’s nothing better than this one—it comes from sacred hands who believe in their work, their family, and in love.”

Throughout the week of panel sessions, networking and service projects, Healey mingled amongst the conference attendees. He tagged along for JABOR’s volunteer service project at Pegasus Therapeutic Riding Center in Palm Springs. Healey also participated in panel sessions, including a talk entitled “Jack Healey: There’s No Them, There’s Only Us...It Always Seems Impossible Until Its Done.” Moderated by Forbes contributor Ruth Blatt, he explained his perspective on how roadies and human rights workers are much alike.

Healey’s baritone peaked as he advised, “When you come together, take your voice, and turn it into thunder! Take your candle, and turn it into a bonfire!” He concluded with a charge to support the effort to bring clemency to Lakota Nation member Leonard Peltier, a prisoner whose guilt has come under scrutiny from figures such as the Dalai Lama, Amnesty International and the United Nations.



To learn more about Jack Healey and the Human Rights Action Center, please visit www.humanrightsactioncenter.org

To learn more about **Tour Link Conference**, please visit www.tourlinkconference.com

To learn more about **Just A Bunch of Roadies**, please visit www.justabunchofroadies.org



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JUST A BUNCH OF ROADIES HOLDS SERVICE DAY AT TOUR LINK 2016

by Peter Ferguson

Fifty-nine volunteers laced up their boots and loaded buses headed to Pegasus Therapeutic Riding Center before the panel sessions of Tour Link 2016. The nonprofit organization Just A Bunch of Roadies, or JABOR, had organized a service project as an alternate option to the golf tournament and motorcycle run. On a sweltering desert morning, the logistical expertise of these five-dozen touring professionals effectively transformed the facilities and rider experience at Pegasus.

In business since 1981, Pegasus Therapeutic Riding Center operates on a small, but dedicated, staff. Thanks to the efforts of these employees and the generosity of community volunteers, the organization has grown from a few horses and four riders to 14 horses and over 210 active weekly riders. The riding center is situated on five acres not far from Coachella Valley. Recently, unexpected heavy rains in the area had sent the facilities into disrepair. The unexpected solution? Roadies.

Charlie Hernandez and Lori Tierney conceptualized JABOR while working on a benefit concert for victims of the Indian Tsunami in 2004. Since then, the organization has provided critical aid across the globe.

JABOR is known for its ability to efficiently organize and execute intimidating tasks just as a road crew does when it enters a venue. At Pegasus, volunteers were quickly split into teams and leaders as a truck from Gallagher Staging arrived with supplies for the day. After unloading, teams got to work reinforcing fences, planting trees, repainting shelters and building interiors, cleaning out storage facilities, and more.

As the day progressed and the desert sun climbed higher, the volunteer workforce refreshed their spirits by talking to the employees at Pegasus. Program Director Chase Berke and Stable Manager Virginia Davis had incredible stories to tell about the children that had their lives changed by the riding center.

Even after a few hours of work in the heat, the volunteers showed

no signs of slowing down. John Huddleson, director of Upstaging, Inc, has a niece who rides therapeutically. He knew firsthand the impact that a therapeutic riding center can have on someone's life, and this personal connection kept him motivated as the day wore on. Representing Coast Anabelle Hotel in Burbank, CA, Michelle Freedman enjoyed being a part of something bigger. Also from Upstaging, Inc, Jeni Clark raved about Hernandez's vision and leadership. "We love Charlie, and we love everything he stands for," she explained. "He's such an amazing guy, and who doesn't like to help out?"

Hernandez shared his big ideas for the humanitarian potential in the touring industry. He refers to his vision as the "one-percent solution." "We are the one-percenter in this business, and we have the one-percent solution. We make it better every day at every show. Young crews are the start of this. Leaders matter, but those who surround the leader make the real impact." Tireny quantifies this in her vision for the future of JABOR. "I would like every tour decide what their cause is for that tour, even if they have just one service day. They can collect shampoo or soap from the hotels and give it to a homeless shelter. No tour hits the road out until they decide what they are going to do for someone else."

Over the past decade, JABOR has become one of the most effective critical-aid organizations in the world. The volunteers caught a glimpse of JABOR's global potential during the service project at Pegasus. Not only did they easily make a huge difference for the riding facility, but they also met new friends painting and digging side-by-side. One worker referred to it as "sweatworking." Teamwork between individuals from different companies brought together touring industry professionals that may have not met otherwise. According to Hernandez, this development is essential for the future of the industry.

As the projects wrapped, the volunteer workforce left as quickly as it arrived – but not before a well-deserved lunch provided by In-And-Out Burger. The rewards of the morning were most clear in the thoughts and eyes of the Pegasus staff. Touring professionals regularly pull off incomprehensible tasks in the arena, and their logistical expertise paid dividends for a nonprofit that will benefit from their work for years to come.

Photos: AlloftheLights.co

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OPENING NIGHT RECEPTION



TOUR LINK KICKS OFF CONFERENCE WITH FOOD, FUN AND FIREWORKS

Story by Debi Moen, Photos by Shelby Cude

The stars above the resort's Tennis Lawn sparkled with intensity in the chilly desert night air. There was no star sponsor. But thankfully and appreciatively, there was one for everything else that evening...

Tour Link attendees mingled with cold drinks and hot food in hand while huddled around towers of space heaters. Bars punctuated the perimeters, with barkeeps making Manhattans, shaking martinis, pouring beer and wine from cocktail sponsor The Appointment Group. Banquet sponsor CM Entertainment Technology supplied the menu for the soiree, distributed in separate stations offering sushi, quesadillas, mashed potato "cocktails" with add-ins, a selection of salads and more. White jacketed chefs with knives, tongs and spoons in hand helped serve or create the desired menu items.

Meanwhile, returning production manager Jim Risgin from OSA International along with generators from Area 51 Power kept the energy flowing. G2 Mobile Structures provided the stage, outfitted with lighting from L3 Productions, a live production company specializing in digital designs and lighting architecture. Video from I-MAG and scenery from Atomic filled out the production.

The live stage setup is a showcase of featured technology from the evening's sponsors. Risgin said companies bring in their own products to highlight in the rig. Many times it's a special effect or a way to show how a new lighting fixture, video screen, truss element or

portable stage will play well with others in a real-time event.

With all the production elements in place, one wonders: who is the band this year? Good question. "There is none," said Nick Gold, part of the production team. "We learned our lesson from last year and we have no band this time." Apparently Tour Link made note of the trend that when a band starts, that's the attendees' cue to run to the lobby bar to talk. So this time, music wafted through a PA system at levels conducive to conversation. Martin Audio provided the sound with help from Avid consoles and Cadac (audio).

Replacing the band was a group of announcers. Tour Link founder Larry Smith spoke of the re-branding of Mobile Production Monthly to its new moniker, Tour Link Magazine. Many attendees may have already figured out that bit of news, upon receiving the Tour Link Magazine issue No. 1 in their registration bags onsite.

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ence," Smith explained. "Tour Link has taken on a life of its own. We're on the way to change the landscape of what we're all about."

Smith expressed gratitude to the Event Safety Alliance, or ESA, under Jim Digby's guidance. "The ESA helped us grow," he said. "Just a Bunch of Roadies, who performed a community service project the day before Tour Link started reminds us it's so important to remember why we got into this in the first place," he added. With those updates, he revealed his dream of taking a form of the Tour Link conference to other parts of the world in 2016.

Tour Link Magazine Editor Shelby Cude was introduced, and Tour Link conference organizer Lori Delancey announced event schedule updates.

Tour Badgers' Dave Paiva recapped the day's golf tournament with a roll call of winners and sponsors, while Chuck Randall wrapped it up with a mention of the evening's sponsors.

And then on cue, Pyro Engineering choreographed a pyrotechnics show above the roof of the stage, synced to music and vintage concert visuals on LED video screens. Attendees mixing and mingling all stopped in their tracks, all eyes directed up to the evening sky for the fiery ribbons and flower explosions of firework art. And with that, Tour Link 2016 was officially open for business.



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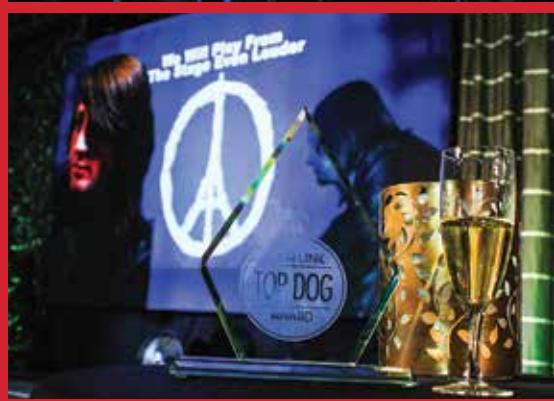
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TOUR LINK CONFERENCE HOSTS THIRD ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

Story and Photos by Shelby Cude

For the second year in a row, Tour Link Conference hosted its annual Golf Tournament at the 72-par course, Desert Springs Golf Course at the JW Marriott, where some +70 attendees teed up and let it rip down the fairways, (or into the lake on Hole 11). Although there was a late start due to a frost that morning, as the sun rose over the San Jacinto Mountains and temperatures rose to the mid-sixties, there couldn't have been a more perfect day for a game of golf.

Teams were arranged prior to the shotgun start. Michelle Pekrol from Star Gift Alliance and Dave Paiva from Tour Badgers not only orchestrated the event, but were active participants. Paiva, in true Paiva nature, even hosted a little yoga session (for one) one of the greens. Whether his moves were in regulation is still to be determined...

Every so many golf holes, our golf hole sponsors posted up, meeting and greeting the teams. ExcelAir hosted a closest-to-the-pin raffle that

raised \$450 for non-profit, Keep the Beat Alive, and Trump Soho New York had participants playing a mini game of putt-putt. Best Western International, Inc. served up Irish Coffee and killer Bloody Mary's, while Crowne Plaza, Oakwood Worldwide, Albuquerque Convention & Visitors Bureau offered skin care products like sunscreen, chapstick, and body wash.

As for the winning team, Keith Mitchell, Mark Spring, Doug Masterson, and John Zjonic took 1st place as they have the last three years. While they played for bragging rights, in the production industry, what more could you ask for?

On behalf of Tour Link, we're thankful for the support of our Golf Tournament and Golf Hole Sponsors for allowing the event to continue. As Tour Link has been known as the social-mixer of industry conferences, the golf tournament has become an iconic event for many and a good time had by all, sponsor and attendee alike. Don't believe me? The photos speak for themselves...

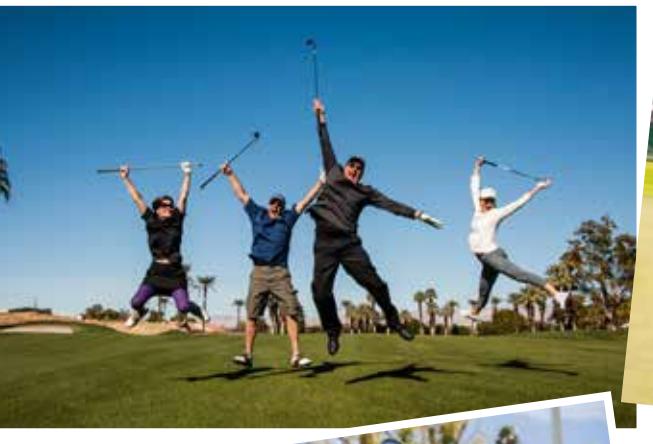




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TRANSPORTATION BBQ



TOUR LINK'S TRANSPORTATION BBQ SIZZLES WITH PLANES, COACHES & LATITUDE 45 CATERING

by Jordan Haymaker

Tour Link Conference brought together some of the leading air and ground transportation providers in the industry. Not only were attendees able to tour jets, vans, and buses first hand, but there were also served exquisite BBQ from Latitude 45 Catering. Guests were given the opportunity to not only experience the luxury of these various modes of transportation, but also speak directly with representatives from each company.

Sun Air Jets

Senior Director of Charter Sales, Leigh Ann Spooner, states the LA based Sun Air Jets can take you anywhere in the world and drastically change the way your tour runs. "When you tour with us, you're not just a charter. You receive all the attention to detail and care you expect during a fast paced roadshow." With 10 jets for charter including long-range jets such as Gulfstream Vs, Global 6000, and Global 5000, they also house a G4 at their Van Nuys location. Their largest jet can hold 17 passengers, and every jet is pet friendly. Leigh Ann stated, "Sun Air Jets is one of only 4 other companies in the U.S. that hold all 5 top safety ratings."

Worldwide Jet Charter

Andrew Kaufman is President & CEO of Worldwide Jet, a company that owns and leases all of their own aircraft. They offer 10 aircraft that are dedicated to charter and are always available. With 30 years experience, their service is really what makes them stand out. Andrew noted, "We understand that in this industry the small details mean everything." The staff is experienced with a wide network of 5 star hotels, yachts, and planes all while keeping privacy at the top of their list. Andrew mentioned, "With our aircraft, we don't skimp." Each jet is equipped with Wi-Fi, Text2Speech, and other amenities. Worldwide Jet Charter has also earned the highest attainable industry safety ratings: Wyvern Wingman, IS-BAO, ARGUS Platinum, and ACSF. Andrew is proud that, "We are one of the few worldwide jet charter companies in the world who holds them all."

Victor

David Young, Senior Vice President - North America of private jet charter pioneer Victor, has been in attendance at Tour Link Conference for 7 years. He started with Young-Jets, winner of the 2014 Top Dog Award for Air Charter Company of the Year. In turn, he was approached by the British based Victor, and thoroughly impressed by their game-changing business model, agreed to sell his own company last April. Victor currently has

locations in London, Santa Barbara, and NYC. Their focus on technology has lead to the creation of an impressive front-facing app that provides tour managers with accurate price estimates within seconds. David commented, "The Victor app puts managers and touring professionals in total control." Victor is the only aggregator to reveal the specific details and operator of every single jet - over 7,000 globally. "We're proud of our transparency," he added. "Customers can make effective side-by-side comparisons and quick, paperless bookings. Victor's unique mix of hi-tech and hi-touch customer service really does allow us to take the complex travel challenges of touring artists and their entourages in our stride."

Hemphill Brothers Coach Company

Joey and Trent Hemphill have worked as a team for Hemphill Brothers Coach Company since 1980. Joey and Trent's father was also in the business of providing coaches, so they decided that it only made sense to follow in his footsteps. As the word spread of the reliability and service of Hemphill Brothers, their client list expanded allowing them to build a 28,000 square foot office complex just outside Nashville, TN. With a fleet of more than 90 coaches and a team of 100 drivers and mechanics, their dedication and passion earned them a Top Dog Award at Tour Link Conference in 2013. Each coach is built completely from the ground up, allowing them the opportunity to personalize every aspect down to even the smallest details. Hemphill Brothers Coach Company has followed the same principles since the beginning and still builds on the foundation of quality, safety, and customer satisfaction.

Prevost Coaches

President and CEO Gaetan Bolduc employees over 1000 employees at Saint-Clair, Quebec based Prevost. They are reputed with exceeding expectations in providing quality passenger coaches, parts sales, and coach service. Since their beginnings in 1924, Prevost's fleet has grown to include over 10,000 vehicles. They are the leading North American manufacturer of premium passenger coaches who believe in holding customer satisfaction, commitment to innovation, and after-sales service to the highest standard. Being part of the Volvo Group grants Prevost access to the product



development and quality manufacturing technology of the world's second largest motor coach manufacturing group. Over their 92-year legacy, they have remained on the cutting edge of design and technology thanks to their many years of experience.

EmpireCLS Brianna Balty, an Account Executive in Business Development for EmpireCLS, made it clear that their company is recognized for going above and beyond when it comes to luxury chauffeured service. EmpireCLS provides luxury chauffeured worldwide transportation in 700 cities and pride themselves at being the best in the business. EmpireCLS provided the four full size buses that were used for the BBQ through a local affiliate. EmpireCLS' Global Network Partners department strives at seeking out like-minded affiliate companies that follow their level of exceptional service. Brianna said, "We expect these partners to follow our exact same practices and must meet the high standards we set for ourselves. Ultimately, they are a reflection of us." At the BBQ, they showcased an EmpireCLS custom, luxury executive Mercedes sprinter van they call Ground Force One. These vehicles were designed for the traveling corporate executive, entertainer, and VIP client in mind by bringing the experience of flying in a private jet. All of EmpireCLS clients, whether a CEO of a company, an

A-list entertainer, or a tour manager with their band, can safely and discreetly travel in and around town with luxurious amenities, privacy, and the comfort of confidentiality. Their world-class chauffeurs are put through rigorous white glove training in order to provide this exceptional service. Brianna reiterated, "They definitely aren't just your normal drivers; these are highly trained professional Chauffeurs."

VanY Tours

VanY Tours is a Sprinter van rental company based in Phoenix, AZ with a second location in Nashville, TN. Specializing in Mercedes-Benz Sprinter van rentals, VanY Tours is dedicated to providing luxury transportation at an affordable price for various touring acts. They believe the environment should be one of the top priorities when it comes to ground transportation, so they only lease the most eco-friendly and fuel-efficient vans around. VanY Tours also strives for convenience by having office locations on each side of the country allowing for ease of access regardless of the destination. They are also willing to deliver Splitter vans anywhere nationwide. VanY Tours stands out with luxurious vans and a commitment to service based on their first hand knowledge of life on the road. Each VanY Tour van is designed with precision to detail to offer the most comfortable

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Latitude 45 Catering

Since 1997, New Zealand native, Chris Mitchell, has owned and operated Latitude 45 Catering. New Zealand is located at the 45-degree south latitude marker, which is where the name of the company is cleverly derived. Jeremy Criscitiello, who's been with the company for 15 years, insured that everything ran smoothly for the duration of the BBQ. His typical role is helping out on huge tours and festivals catered by Latitude 45. With enough staff and equipment to cater to 9 tours at once, they've fed crews from Michael Buble to Jay Z and countless festivals in between. They strive to create a menu with plentiful options for everyone. Jeremy explained, "People crave comfort food most often, so we like to make everyone feel like they're taken care of at all times. We keep the options broad and try not to repeat anything." They're always listening to see what people are craving, so they even take requests. For Latitude 45, it all boils down to professionalism. Jeremy admitted, "We like to think we excel with our service, and we're not trying to do anything but cater."

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WEDNESDAY PANEL SESSIONS

A scenic sunset or sunrise over a range of mountains. In the foreground, several palm trees are silhouetted against the bright sky. The colors transition from deep blue at the bottom to orange and yellow near the horizon.

33 Opening Address

34 Breaking & Entering

37 Sennheiser's New Business Strategy

38 Festivals – What's Next?

41 Keep The Beat Alive Offers AED/CPR Training

43 Learning More About: Radios

45 Learning More About: Cases

47 International Touring Logistics

48 Good Neighbors

48 Being a Good Neighbor with Noise Mitigation

52 Meyer Sound Workshop Focuses on Consistency of Great Sound

53 You Can't Make This \$#*! Up

Thursday panels in next issue

OPENING ADDRESS: “DOING THE IMPOSSIBLE: IMPRESSIONS OF THE TOURING INDUSTRY”

Story by Debi Moen; Photos by Shelby Cude

Using the concert touring industry as a model for ideal workplace behavior, Ruth Blatt, Ph.D. helped open Tour Link by speaking on “Doing the Impossible: Impressions of the touring industry.”

The social scientist has been interviewing bands, managers and other industry professionals for a book about teamwork lessons from rock bands. She has written about rock n’ roll for The Atlantic and Psychology Today. Her blogs can be accessed in Forbes, Psychology Today and Wired.

“The question is: how do you get more out of groups, organizations, industries?” she asks. “Everyone is constrained with time, resources, people. We always have to do more with less. How do you achieve excellence?

Blatt says the touring industry is “always doing more with less and the impossible in a challenging working context.” She cites difficult assignments, high-consequence work (if things go wrong, it can be bad from a safety or financial perspective), time pressures, challenging working conditions, close quarters, frequent technological changes.

“Work is collaborative and interdependent. The music industry business model is flipped on its head. People are constantly having to learn and adapt. For all these characteristics, it is a great industry for the rest of the world to learn from.”

Her research shows that the touring industry is young and entrepreneurial. “There are habits of discovery, inventing, trying, making mistakes and learning from them. People tell me there was no manual when they started. They didn’t know what they needed to succeed, they just did it. That spirit lives on and hopefully other industries can learn from that - to invent solutions to problems and dare to dream.”

Alertness to safety is a big key, she said. “People have saved the day just by noticing things.”

P A N E L



Passion, love and a feeling of family also help the touring industry exceed normal working levels. “It’s a real strength. I’ve seen instances of humor and play and joking and pranks and bets and dares, all that kind of having fun that keeps the culture youthful. Some industries try to artificially create this, but it becomes a joke. It is so important for creativity and play is how we create. But it’s important to buffer against the challenges of living on the road, having to do things so fast, so those positive relationships really buffer.”

“Positive relationships are energizing, expansive, community-building and safer,” Blatt said. “The entrepreneurial culture, alertness and positive relationships are the glue that enables us to do the impossible.”

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BREAKING AND ENTERING INTO THE INDUSTRY: PANEL SESSION

Moderated by Jim Digby
Story by Peter Ferguson



P A N E L Z

Touring veterans, young industry professionals, and hopefuls looking to get their foot in the door eagerly awaited the popular “Breaking and Entering” panel session. Every year at Tour Link this open forum serves as an opportunity to hear from big names in the industry and network for future job opportunities.

Jim Digby, President and Chair of the Board of Directors of the Event Safety Alliance, mentioned the focus of the panel as he called several individuals up to the stage; “We are going to figure out how to get in, stay in and be glad that you did.”

As everyone got settled, it became clear that this year’s session would also touch on women in the industry. Six women at different stages in their careers sat down: Wendy Wilson, Dani King, Cory Messineo, Morgan Dentch, Erica Devereux and Lauren Watt. Wilson began the discussion with her story. She has been on the road in various positions for 14 years, and currently works with The Black Keys. She indicated that she experienced difficulty with bands that were concerned about having a woman on the bus, but still found ways to thrive in this male-dominated industry. Digby remarked that in a touring environment, the leadership should work to minimize gender-based conflict.

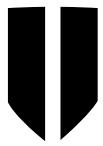
The rest of the women introduced their career goals and explained what brought them to Tour Link. Each had a different story, but all recognized the hard work required to move forward. Messineo found her way into the industry volunteering with nonprofits like Music for Relief and Reverb. Devereux networked and used social media resources, such as LinkedIn, to land jobs as a Production Assistant on the road with Charlie Puth and Carrie Underwood.

Digby opened the floor for questions. In the past, folks who spoke up and got their name out caught the ear of future employers. Antoine Cholette, “Jersey” Joe Skarz and Mitchell Kellman were examples of “success stories” who were present this year.

The conversation continued as attendees discussed how to find a career path in the industry. Tour Manager and “Resident Young Gun” Henry Bordeaux highlighted the importance of mentorship. “I can tell you how I did it, but everyone’s story is different. Show up and work the hours with me if you want, and then we can talk about jobs,” he challenged. The call for mentorship was directed at both veterans and hopefuls

Fifty minutes was not enough time to cover all the topics raised, but Digby’s trademark panel session started conversations about women in the industry, how to work smart in the field and the importance of networking. Digby closed with a piece of advice for veterans and young guns alike, “Show the passion, dedication and willingness, and the do it every day, and the right job will find you.”





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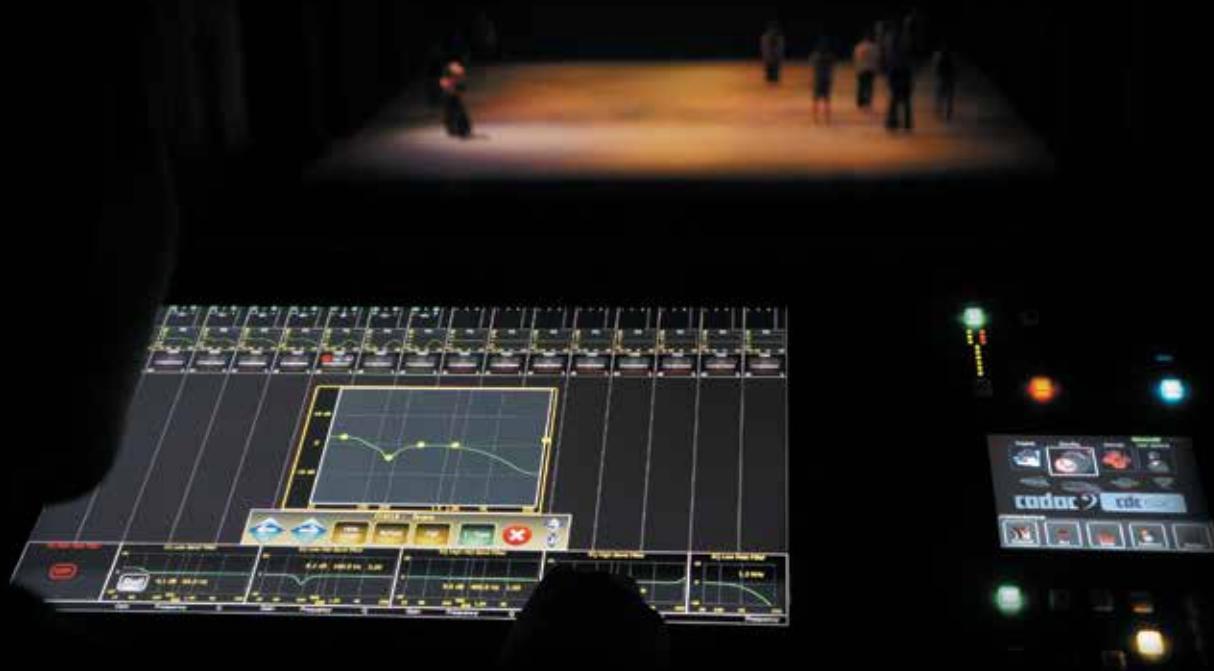
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SENNHEISER'S NEW BUSINESS STRATEGY

by Jordan Haymaker



With over 70 years in the industry, one of the largest professional audio manufacturing companies, Sennheiser, was established back in 1945 by Dr. Fritz Sennheiser. Currently, there are 2600 employees worldwide and manufacturing locations in the USA, Germany, and Ireland creating headphones, headsets, integrated systems, and microphones. To this day, the company is still 100% family owned.

Sennheiser is smart in sticking to the mindset of having to earn income first before any money can be invested. "No one tells us what to do except for our customers," said Angelika Weiss, Manager of Strategy and Development of Professional Systems.

Oliver Ohrndorf is in charge of Business Development regarding the music industry and mentioned, "Since we're an engineer driven company, it can take awhile to produce a product. In order to become quicker in solving production problems, we're listening to people in the business. We dedicate our new approach to talking to people who work with our equipment to see what challenges they face."

In charge of Business Development for Live Performance, Tim Moore worked in artist relations in the past. Tim is aware of previous issues, and as a company they are becoming more open and aware with this business restructuring. Tim noted, "It's about getting feedback earlier on and keeping a dialogue going. We want to know how to help make everything more efficient."

Sennheiser's Live Performance Au

dio Counsel is the dedicated group in charge of compiling any feedback. Prior to this change, they were used to receiving the same feedback from the same people, but now they're opening more channels of communication.

Sennheiser was represented for the first time at Tour Link Conference this year, and could have taken the entire allotted panel time to really push their new ideas. Instead, they decided to turn the tables and asked for input from the audience, proving they are committed to their new approach in making sure each individual concern is heard and addressed. The friendly roundtable discussion exemplified that Sennheiser is embracing this change. Angelika brought the session to a close by stating, "Simply put, we just want to be better at listening."

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FESTIVALS – WHAT'S NEXT?

by Jordan Haymaker

Attending a concert is one thing, but attending a festival spanning multiple days with a monstrous crowd and dozens of artists is an entirely different beast. With festivals booming in popularity in recent years, it's imperative to remain aware of various elements and potential issues regarding this growing trend.

The first step is obviously setting up the location. Building something like Coachella, for example, takes nearly 2 months from start to finish. With easily 100,000 people in attendance, it's definitely a logistical challenge to plan for something on such a large scale.

Tim Burris is familiar with these struggles, as he works for Promowest and runs production for festivals like Bunbury and Promowest Fest. To him, the experience for fans is important, but he strives to make everything as easy and clear as possible for crews as well. Tim mentioned, "It's good to layout the specs and be reasonable with expectations up front. It's important for all of the acts and crews to be happy and satisfied enough to want to come back and play again."

Two of the biggest concerns revolving around festivals are whether they can ever grow to be too large, or if their impact and popularity will diminish with so many festivals popping up all over the place. Bobby Schneider is in charge of the touring division for Rock Nation and said, "No way. The beauty of festivals is that it affords similar bands the ability to play together. It's a good experience and people know it's a good bang for their buck. Additionally, artists have to rely on touring for the majority of their income flow nowadays."

Since festivals are now such massive and complex operations, it's easy to wonder where all the money comes from to make them happen. Charlie Jennings is the Senior Vice President of Operations at Danny Wimmer Presents. He works with Bonnaroo and puts on 1000 separate concerts a year. From his perspective, "Festivals are honestly the way we make money. It really depends on the type of audience, but a majority of the income is generated from sponsors, concessions, etc."

Charlie also believes that festivals are able to cater and appeal to more niche audiences too, which explains their rising popularity. EDM, for example, started out small, but is currently helping push the boundaries when it comes to production. Charlie noted, "It's all about letting things grow organically."

There's also still the ongoing issue focusing on the safety of everyone involved with these live events. Keeping people safe is of the utmost importance in the eyes of touring professionals. Physical security including guards, pat downs, and double fences helps, but improving technology is at the forefront of industry. Not only is it a necessity to set up ultra high-speed Internet for the DJs, but also for fans to

P A N E L Z

have access in case of emergencies.

Unfortunately, even with continuous advancements, technology isn't always reliable. Kevin Wilkins has 40 years experience and has worked with Coachella and Stagecoach. He helped create an essential booklet that is updated annually and outlines critical safety procedures based on his experiences at Coachella.

At this festival, every single employee gets a booklet and fans receive a condensed brochure. He believes, "Making fans aware of what to do is vital because you can't always count on the PA system and the Internet. Learning how to react is so important. I urge everyone to educate themselves with this booklet because training every single person is simply impossible."

With so many different types of festivals, Charlie noted that it's smart to always be on the look out for inspiration. "People will always come to see the band play, but I like to think of it as if you could have gone to the show and not seen a single band, but still have had a good time." Kevin continued, "We're opening our arms to them and giving them the ultimate experience." There are so many components from great food to artwork and many diverse stages. It's all about keeping the audience interested for the entirety of the festival. Bobby explained, "People now expect the whole experience."

Henry Bordeaux is a Production Manager/Tour Manager with 15 years of experience in the business. He's a fan of festivals for the sole fact that it's where he got his start touring on Warped Tour. Young artists and crews alike can take the opportunity to learn from the seasoned professionals. He observed, "Playing well with others is really put to the test at a festival, but it's also one of the few times roadies see each other for a reunion. Crews show their true colors at a festival. You really know how good you are when the shit hits the fan." He continued, "We're all trying to outdo each other. It's a fun pissing contest, but sometimes simplicity is the name of the game. There's a lot of 'throw and go', so it's truly amazing what these crews can pull off."

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TOUR LINK PANEL SESSION: KEEP THE BEAT ALIVE OFFERS AED/CPR TRAINING

Story and photos by Debi Moen

"Cardiac death is the number one cause of death in the touring profession. This is the group most likely to drop dead on tour," said Damian Brezinski, MD of Keep The Beat Alive. His non-profit organization's mission is to reduce cardiac death amongst touring professionals by putting the AED - or Automated External Defibrillator - on every tour bus. He's currently working with underwriters and TourLink to offer equipment discounts for tours.

"Touring professionals are an exceptionally high risk group," he said. "It happens 10 years earlier for you than the national average. So if you see something happen, do something. Call for help first. Call 911. And then, if you know how to use the AED device, it can increase survival odds enormously. Survival depends on the first three minutes."

The defibrillator is "the simplest device in the venue - a one-touch device," he showed attendees its green button. "Push it and it takes care of everything else."

When the attendees pushed the green button, audio commands instructed them step-by-step, from how to position the victim to placing shock pads on the chest.

Brezinski led attendees through the CPR process, breaking them into groups to practice using a dummy on the floor. "Compressions are everything. You may break ribs, and break the sternum. There will be burns on the chest from the chest pads, too. But you will save a life."

Attendees viewed a short American Heart Association video showing how the musical rhythm of the BeeGee's song "Stayin' Alive" is the correct timing to administer chest compressions in CPR.

Brezinski provided this checklist before administering CPR:

- 1) Make sure your surroundings are safe.

Look around you. Stay away or move that person to safe surroundings.

2) Before you start the compressions, tell someone to call 911 and tell someone else to get the AED.

3) And while that is going on - whether you have the AED or not - you start chest compressions.

Brezinski offered the AED/CPR class at multiple times during TourLink.

"Starting this year, we at Keep The Beat Alive plan to put defibrillators in every tour bus. Cardiac deaths are a secret of the industry and we are trying to correct that problem," he said.

For more details on the program, visit www.keepthebeatalive.org



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LEARNING MORE ABOUT: RADIOS...MORE THAN JUST TWO WAY COMMUNICATION

P A N E L Z

by Debi Moen, Photos by Shelby Cude

Moderator Gina McNamara of BearCom asked the dozen or so Tour Link attendees to explain any Wi-Fi and radio services they provide for touring, festivals, sports and commercial use.

"When there's a mix of touring, festival and production people, the difficulties are in coordinating everything," she said, "especially when people bring in their own communications."

McNamara brought up the issue of buying vs renting communication equipment. "If your equipment gets damaged, we can replace it, swap it out. We provide casing so you don't need to make the capital investment. Do you really want to deal with batteries, repairs, upgrades? Renting is 85 percent of the time better than buying."

Road Wifi's Sean Bottcher agreed with McNamara, pointing out the costs of adding a crew member to maintain the radios and to store the equipment during touring down time. "There is a tremendous amount of work to make sure they are working. Every time radios come back, we test the entire thing. There is a lot of high level maintenance, a whole world of headaches associated with radios that hopefully you never experience."

McNamara provided examples of other customizable benefits. "On a recent tour with two opening acts, we gave both opening acts their own zone and then they could share a common channel. If you own the radios, you have all the responsibility to set that up yourself."

Bottcher agreed. "The radios are customizable. Each channel can talk to a different band that no one else has access to. We can also set up an emergency channel so that everyone gets the message."

McNamara pointed to weather issues, saying that BearCom is working in conjunction with the Event

Safety Alliance to provide alerts in real-time with the weather forecasters. "Instead of doing a

phone call or being on a laptop, one of the channels is dedicated. Each radio has a specific ID so the weather forecaster can talk directly one on one."



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LEARNING MORE ABOUT: CASES-MYTHS, BEST PRACTICES AND DEAL MAKING

P A N E L Z

by Peter Ferguson

Muffie Alejandro and Erich Alejandro with Jan-Al Cases facilitated a session on the ins and outs of road cases, from dimensions to ATA specifications. Attendees were interested in information about saving money on bulk orders of road-ready cases.

The first topics covered were the ATA specifications for cases.

Most attendees were unaware of what the Airport Transport Association was, and they were surprised to learn that the association simply writes the specifications – they do not certify individual case companies. An outside agency must test a case for it to be ATA certified. When writing their specifications, the ATA consults with two case companies, one of them being Jan-Al Cases.

Currently, ATA calls for recessed hardware on cases, but does not include specifications for casters or case material.

When it comes to purchasing cases, Muffie Alejandro explained that there is no standard terminology between companies for case specifications. It is the purchaser's responsibility to be clear on both inside and outside dimensions. Terms such as "left-right, bottom-top" should be used rather than "height, width and depth" to effectively communicate dimensions.

Another important consideration is what the cases will need to pass through – be it a plane's cargo hatch or a small venue door. Weight also matters, especially if the loaded case will be manually lifted at any point during or after the tour. Additionally, cases should have a hand-and-glove relationship with the gear they protect – not only for fit, but for post-tour usage as well.

Jan-Al Cases and other case companies offer the most competitive prices when multiple cases are purchased. Tours will have a better experience when purchasing all their cases from the same company rather than on a case-by-case

basis. A bulk order delivers better quality, consistency, and price point across the board.

Road crews essentially live in between buses and their cases, so it is vital to give the case design and purchase considerable thought. Muffie and Erich Alejandro facilitated an important discussion that covered ATA specifications, case dimensions and valuable advice for customers.

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INTERNATIONAL TOURING LOGISTICS

Story by Debi Moen, Photos by Shelby Cude

Moderator: Bobby Schneider of Rock Nation

Panelists:

Keith Mitchell: ACES Corp, logistics

David Klein: tour manager

Brande Lindsey: Global Access

Eddie Kercher: production manager

Bob Ross: Pyrotek

Touring logistics started with transportation issues. New driver rules required more bunks for more drivers.

Items ruled as "hazardous" also cause flight problems. Keith Mitchell brought up issues with lithium batteries and aerosols. For the definitive word on what is allowed in carry-on vs. checked cargo, go to: http://www.faa.gov/about/initiatives/hazmat_safety/

David Klein emphasized the importance of staying on top of travel issues, be it fluctuations in currency or changes in passport regulations." He noted the US government's Department of Homeland Security Twitter feeds for valuable information.

Brande Lindsey cited <http://www.travel.state.gov> as a helpful website with travel alerts, passport and visa rules and more. Long time frames are needed for immigration, especially for South America, and she suggested applying for a second passport for business purposes. One can request a 52-page passport book as opposed to a normal 26-page book to allow plenty of room for stamps and visas.

Bob Ross said heavy regulations on pyro, flame and gas effects need more lead time - sometimes 10 to 18 weeks - as they work through government agencies. "Also, because it is a consumable, there is no carnets and you are paying duties on it when it's coming in. Anything in foreign soil, we drop shop site by site. In general, everything is drop shipped per event. It's almost a 30 percent price hike to use pyro in foreign countries. But I'm not comfortable using foreign product that I'm not familiar with because it's on our liability. We jump through hoops to be compliant with regulations, whereas in North America we're dealing with local authorities or venue by venue," he said.

Carnets were discussed as another important document necessary for crossing some borders. Mitchell suggested making a list of all equipment and their serial numbers ahead of time because some countries, such as Brazil, will check them.

P A N E L

Regarding touring in Cuba, Schneider agreed it is a new market with no infrastructure in place yet. Lindsey said they're just starting the process of getting clearances. "To get in to Cuba, you have to go through a licensed organization," she noted.

Ross advised, "Be aware of different rules in different countries. Tools such as pocket knives are considered weapons in Japan. Any touring items remotely resembling weapons, such as T-shirt guns, could cause problems as well."

Schneider agreed. "The world is changing. I come from a world where we could bully our way through. You could always bribe a person to get stuff on the plane. People don't care who you are or who you work for now. We don't work like that anymore."

Summing up, Schneider advised: "Be aware and be prepared. Allow plenty of lead time. Be polite, learn a few words in whatever country you're in. It will make a big difference."

The advertisement features a black background with white and red text. At the top, the Shure logo is displayed. Below it, a large rectangular frame contains the text "TOUR SUPPLY INC." in red, surrounded by decorative elements. To the right of this frame, the text "RECOMMENDS" is written in white. Further down, the Shure logo appears again with the tagline "IT'S YOUR SOUND". On the left side, the text "LOCATIONS:" is followed by a list of cities: LOS ANGELES, NASHVILLE, NYC, TWIN CITIES, MANCHESTER U.K., COMING SOON, and ROCK LITITZ PA. On the right side, the phone number "800-933-8687 (TOUR)" is prominently displayed in red.

GOOD NEIGHBORS PANEL SESSION

P A N E L Z

Story by Debi Moen

Moderator Jim Risgin, production manager, set the scene. "There are more regulations, and we have to become more responsible, more proactive, and be a good corporate citizen. This panel is about how to play well with others."

Panelists:

Neel Vasavada: EPS

Jennie Perkins: Club Nokia

Bill Kenney: Bill Kenney Productions

Kevan Wilkins: Goldenvoice.

Tim McKenna: Live Nation production mgr

The question was raised: how do you respond to neighborhoods who complain about sound levels, traffic, the use of public space for private events, lawn damage of parks, after-event trash and more? "Communication in all forms" was the answer.

Tim McKenna brought up noise complaints from neighbors surrounding amphitheaters. "I had a decibel reading machine, we changed our speaker systems into line array systems and were able to put sound where we wanted it. But we still have problems with traffic - there is one road in and one road out. We stick to curfews; we still have to deal with neighbors. Every venue we work with, we bring problems but we also bring solutions and revenue into town."

Kevan Wilkins of promoter Goldenvoice produces multiple events, a main one being Coachella. "We come in and intrude with 100,000 people and multiple weekends, so it's important to liaise with the neighborhood." Over the last seven or eight years they designate a full time staffer whose sole job is to hold town hall and neighborhood meetings to find out and reduce the complaints around the fest sites.

Bill Kenney discussed the Boston Calling festival. "Our biggest challenge is audio. Because of what is around the site, there are multiple noise restrictions. We've done our best to accommodate business and revenue that is brought to that area."

Jennie Perkins of Club Nokia/LA Live, cited "more problems with EDM and hip hop. There is a lot that needs to go on to keep everyone happy and keep the machine running smoothly."

Wilkins said they realized they needed to communicate more with the locals, so they have regular meetings with the city officials, police, fire and surrounding city managers.

Risgin asked, "We can generate millions for the community and get one bad news story and we're not wanted again. How can we as an industry change that?"

Neel Vasavada said we need to communicate and promote positive efforts, and spread the news through the media

when we fix up the park, create a new playground, and improve the site for future events.

Sound levels also stirred up much discussion. Many times there are no decibel levels listed in the city regulations. Should there be? An audience member said EDM festivals do not always play well with neighbors because of the sub-basses, which can travel five to 10 miles out.

Wilkins said, "We have bands that turn up, Dr. Dre, and they have 18 more sub-basses and we're like no no no. We have to get permission to add your sub-basses in or you can't use them. It's been a fight right until the artist goes on stage. He has had all the time in the world to tell us he is going to use these."

Risgin said the artist should be alerted in advance as to what their audio limits are.

McKenna solved some noise problems by giving neighbors tickets to the shows. "So communication is the main way to being a good neighbor."

Risgin agreed. "We all have to work at it together. It's all about the experience - it's not all about the moment. We need to get the good PR out there."

P A N E L Z

BEING A GOOD NEIGHBOR WITH NOISE MITIGATION

by Jordan Haymaker

What exactly is mitigation? It is defined as reducing the impact of noise created by an event through scientific and creative layout. How is this achieved and applied? For Sean Macke of STS Engineering, the solution is obvious. He suggests hosting the event far away from people, pointing the sound system away from an area where people live, and hiring STS engineers.

Sean started as a touring musician and now owns STS Engineering working to help various clients achieve the clearest and most controlled sound possible. One of the advantages of STS Engineering that sets them apart is that fact that they are actually able to monitor and provide spectrum data to clients in real time.

Ferrit Rowe, Director of Engineering for OSA International, started off by acknowledging that it's important to find out the bylaws of the location of an event first. It's always good to questions whether or not the laws are reasonable too. Some bylaws are based solely on traffic, industrial, and construction sound levels, which can already be at a relatively high dB level.

In the US, there are municipal, local, county, and city laws to take into consideration. At the end of the day, it's up to local authority to determine what's considered a nuisance. If an event gets too out of hand, there is an absolute possibility

that the FOH Engineer could end up in handcuffs.

Sean stressed, "The goal is for every event to be promoted in a positive way. You have to be aware of the surroundings. What type of area is this and how close are the nearest dwellings?" Ferrit thinks that, "It's all about finding the balance between meeting expectations of artists while also being respectful of people who built houses nearby." Andy Davies, Lead Product Support Engineer for Martin Audio, explained, "Additionally, neighbors with money can have a huge impact too."

It's imperative to keep the expectations of the event in mind, including the location with traffic impact, what type of sound system should be utilized, the skill of operators, and the coverage of the sound system and its deployment. The hours of sound check and the event itself can also determine whether or not complaints are generated. Communicating with the artists and neighbors and local governing body can alleviate any ill feelings toward an event. Ferrit added, "It's safe to assume that you can get away with most things up to 10pm. Communication really is the key."

Commerce, however, sometimes gets in the way of common sense. Sean warned against having the attitude of just dealing with any punishments or fines, as it puts both the artists and venue in jeopardy. That's precisely how artists are banned and venues are closed. He continued, "We're really trying to optimize our compromises. Sometimes law enforcement skips right past the fines and you just end up getting turned off."

As far as the sound coverage goes, the system only needs to cover the designated area. We have the ability now with modern systems to have SPL at a certain location while diminishing it in another. Distribution systems, such as delay towers, help control direction-

ality at given distances. Sean's favorite is the Martin Audio MLA, citing it as the most accurate and discreet tool for controlling coverage currently available. SPL at a given distance can easily be diminished by 15-20 dBA.

Another tip in regards to reducing LF impact, as with EDM for example, is to implement steerable and directional subwoofers to also aid in increased predictability. With LF, the older you get, the more it disturbs you. Ferrit observed, "Isn't it weird that we're hurting our customers? You want to deliver an experience, but also have some control."

What constitutes as a comfortable dB level all depends on the artists and venues. Though it's easy to generate LF, we have technology now that also allows us to direct it. To find a happy medium Sean suggested thinking about the size of the event and how loud it will be depending on the stage direction, equipment, and genre. His job is to determine how everything can be controlled.

One of Sean's recommendations is to conduct a short noise impact study for a new location prior to an event to set a baseline to work from. Andy confirmed that, "There's a huge advantage in taking the initiative early on. Early work can make a massive difference in whether or not an event is allowed to go on." "It's possible to make these things work," added Sean, "and prove to the government you know what you're doing to gain some leeway." For Ferrit, his secret is to record everything to have proof of the noise that was made and documenting complaints to learn from them in future. According to him, "If we don't work to police ourselves, someone else will."

The advertisement features a large image of a dark-colored Prevost luxury motorcoach parked outdoors under a clear sky. The coach has a large, curved front window and a side door open, revealing a spacious interior with light-colored leather seats and wooden paneling. Above the image, the Hemphill Brothers logo is displayed, featuring a stylized 'H' monogram and the text 'HEMPHILL BROTHERS Est. 1960'. In the bottom left corner, there is a smaller inset image showing the interior of the coach, specifically a seating area with a large sofa and a small table. In the bottom right corner, the word 'PREVOST' is printed along with the tagline 'The ultimate class.'

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MEYER SOUND WORKSHOP FOCUSES ON CONSISTENCY OF GREAT SOUND

by Jordan Haymaker



The Meyer Sound Workshop was an interactive discussion between the audience and some of the best audio experts in the business focusing on consistently keeping concerts sounding great.

The panel included Productions Managing Director of Britannia Row, Bryan Grant; Bruce Eisenberg of McCauley Sound; Linkin Park's FOH, Engineer Kevin McCarthy; President of Morris, David Haskell; Jim Risgin, OSA Vice President; and Buford Jones, Tour Liaison Manager for Meyer Sound.

What is the sound engineer's role?

Buford: The artist bakes the cake and the sound engineer serves it. It's all about listening to the artists for their needs. Having communication with the artist and knowing their music is also crucial.

Bryan: I've had people come up to me and say my sound mix was life changing, while others have said it was crap. It's all arbitrary, but you need to get as close as possible to making everyone happy.

What do people expect out of a show?

Kevin: People expect to go and be able to recognize their favorite songs.

Bryan: I strive to create a mix that sounds like the CD recordings and to keep the singer the focal point instead of beating the audience into submission.

Bruce: Knowing the venue is key as well. The environment and acoustics play into it, but engineers should be able to work with it.

How is new technology affecting how concerts sound?

David: Just because you have a certain piece of technology doesn't mean you always have to use it. Technology is making everything so easy now, so it's just all about adapting. Young engineers have the tendency to get louder just because they can.

Buford: It can be mixed 100 different ways. There's no excuse for a bad sounding show with the technology we have today. It's inexcusable for people to be walking out of a show due to poor sound because we have the tools to fix anything. Some people tend to make the big mistake of mixing with their eyes instead of their ears. The bottom line is, if it sounds good, do it.

Jim: Technology is making it to where you can just hit the

next button of preprogrammed stuff night after night. People also tend to fall into a headphone mix, but you have to hear it coming through the PA instead.

Bruce: Times change and what was a great mix 20 years ago is not necessarily good now. The envelope keeps getting pushed with all of the newer technology.

What common mistakes are being made?

Jim: So many people don't pay attention to good mics. Move a mic before you use a plug in. Sometimes the sound guys also have to be the problem solvers because the artists decide to play venues they shouldn't be in.

Bruce: I try to match the artist with venues that work, but the availability isn't always there.

David: The audience is so in tune nowadays and everyone is a critic.

Jim: In the old days, the engineer knew every single input and output, but now people stick to just mixing. You should really learn the equipment inside and out.

Buford: Stop trying to do everything and trust the people around you to do their jobs. It's a team effort and the main focus should be on the music.

Bruce: It all depends on the audience. It's good to keep in mind that not every fan goes just for just the sound; they go for the full experience.

Bryan: With social media, bands get famous so quickly now, so the engineer doesn't always have much of the necessary experience.

Buford: Sound engineers need to spend more time on the stage just listening. Don't always go by what you read, just listen and think about things like microphones. You also have to understand the band and their sound, and realize that not everything is meant to be polished. We're basically promoting a product on tour and helping to sell the artist's album.

Bryan: Oddly enough, the audio budget on tour is usually the lowest, which is interesting because no one walks away humming the lights.

YOU CAN'T MAKE THIS \$#! UP BUT TOUR LINK WON'T TELL!

by Peter Ferguson



At Tour Link 2016, old friends looked forward to catching up throughout the week. Stories were exchanged over drinks, in between panel sessions, and during the Top Dog Awards. This spirit was so no more apparent than when the attendees showed in full force for "You Can't Make This Shit Up." A great opportunity to experience community, this open-floor panel session was bursting at the seams with stories that were, at times, some of the most incredulous tales ever spun.

The panel opened with a reminder to keep a memoir while on the road. "Write often and remember more" was the name of the game.

The microphone passed through many hands as attendees recalled experiences in recent memory and from tours that had loaded out years ago. From Bus Drivers to Tour Managers, folks from many positions spoke up. Maybe it was the rock n' roll life style, or maybe it was just simply traveling for the majority of a year – some stories told were utterly unbelievable.

It was understood that no stories would leave the room, so we won't publish any specifics in this article. Topics covered included bus septic tanks, self-cleaning bathrooms, plates being thrown from New York City hotels, a tour's bank bag, and

the forklifted fate of a shady promoter's car. The only way to get the full details is to come hang at Tour Link 2017!

The whole panel was underscored by a mood of reverence for those who had been lost in the past year. As stories delicately arched through years of travels and shows, the memories of lost friends inevitably came to mind. Some names were openly acknowledged, while others were simply understood. Friendships grew stronger through the unspoken realization that the stories and legacies of late friends abide beyond death.

The storytellers at "You Can't Make This Shit Up" wove a tapestry of tales, which warmed the room in the spirit of community. No other industry can match the crazy stories that surfaced, and no other industry fosters camaraderie like what was present in the conference room. No, you cannot make up the stories, but you certainly can't make up the energy of a group of old friends reuniting over old tales.

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Peter Tempkins arrives at the office wearing jeans and black cowboy boots. He's never been a suit-and-tie insurance broker, and doesn't see himself as just a seller of insurance policies. He and his team are a well-oiled machine, working 'round the clock providing risk management consulting in the form of contract reviews, safety planning and insurance coverage analysis to music industry professionals – everyone from business managers, tour managers, festival organizers, concert promoters, roadies and vendors – there is no aspect of the music and concert industry and Peter and his team at HUB International have not worked with.

Hanging in the office is a sign that says it all, "This ain't my first rodeo," a tribute to the experience gathered in his 30-year career, that he imparts on his rock-solid team that includes Summer Whitenton, a rising star in the industry. Whitenton, a vice president at HUB Entertainment, has over 10 years of hands-on experience working with bands and festival promoters working onsite at the Warped Tour and Bonnaroo music festivals. With experience comes an understanding of the urgency and complexity of touring, and inspires a different approach to doing business. HUB International works with each client to assess and reduce risks, manage costs and design comprehensive insurance programs that make sense for each show. HUB takes pride in working on behalf of the client, putting their interests first and finding creative ways to protect those interests.

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This ain't my first rodeo. A sign at HUB International's Brentwood, TN office



Summer Whitenton, Vice President (left) Peter Tempkins, Managing Director (right)



Backstage for 21 Pilots show (L-R): Summer, Rit Venerus (CAL Financial) and Peter Tempkins

2016 TOP DOG AWARDS



2016 TOP DOG AWARDS HONORS INDUSTRY'S BEST AND BRIGHTEST

Story by Debi Moen, Photos by Shelby Cude and Scott DeLancey

The Top Dog Awards Show is an annual event honoring the best in the touring community. Honorees are nominated and voted on by the industry readers of Mobile Production Monthly - now rebranded in January 2016 as Tour Link Magazine.

More of those production professionals should have received honors as well for how they handled a big decision during Tour Link. On show day, with nighttime temperatures dipping into chilly lows, it was decided to move the Top Dog Awards Show from outdoors on the Tennis Lawn to an indoor ballroom. Production managers Jim Risgin, Chris Musgrave and the Tour Link crew were put to the test. But being the production professionals they are and were, it was all in a day's work.

"With any outdoor event, you want to have a good contingency plan in case the weather goes south," said Tour Link Conference Director Lori DeLancey. "So Jim Risgin and OSA International had taken that into consideration long before load-in. The Opening Night Reception was cold. We used the heaters and for the shorter event it was manageable, but to hold a cocktail party, dinner and then an award show seemed like a long time for folks to be outside. We just didn't think the

heaters would cut it."

"Nick Gold notified the hotel and met with them early in the morning to troubleshoot," she added, "but there were really no troubles to shoot. The crew, under the direction of Jim Risgin and Chris Musgrave, and the hotel staff flipped the room in record time," DeLancey added. A quick walk-through was done with the Master of Ceremonies, Chuck Randall; host, Ted Stryker; co-hosts Jim Digby, Rocco Reedy and Lori DeLancey; and award assistants Dani King and Brittany Burke.

Despite the scramble, the now indoor event ran as smoothly as if it was planned that way all along. A few elements didn't make it inside, such as the G2 stage, some scenic elements from Atomic that weren't transferrable to indoors, and I-Mag's video screen.

The stage curtains for the award show, which we also used for the panel sessions, were provided by Atomic. Martin Audio and OSA International provided the sound. Video screens were provided by OSA International, with video direction from PRG Nocturne's Bryan Venhorst, and content creation by Below The Bar's Charlie Alves.

After dinner, a laser display sliced into the night to set the scene. Tour manager Chuck Randall introduced Larry Smith, father of Tour Link and publisher of the newly branded magazine.

Smith said, "We're talking about taking Tour Link to other re-



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gions, to take this vibe we've created out to the community to help individuals bond more, become more professional, to discuss serious issues and expand the fraternity of what this is all about. I have one message: Find one person who should be here and get them to come. It works. We get bigger and better."

The evening's host was again Ted Stryker, going on his 18th year as DJ at KROQ in Los Angeles. "Let's keep this thing moving," he insisted, urging award winners to keep their thank-you comments brief.

Every year Jan-Al Cases presents a Modern Newtonian Award to an individual who pushes the envelope, goes the extra mile, and brings their boss a choice of solutions. This year's award, a four-drawer workbox, was presented to Marvin Torres, tour manager for Slip Knot. Muffie Alejandro, president of Jan-Al Cases, read the nomination letter recommending Torres for the honor.

Just A Bunch of Roadies (JABOR) presented their first Vanguard Prize to Jack Healey, honoring his integration of message, music, activism, philanthropy and human rights in the music and touring industry. Healey was a founder/director of Human Rights Action Center and was head of Amnesty International. A video touched on his life's highlights, including video testimonials from Sting, MTV footage and news coverage of Healey's accomplishments.

Accepting the award, Healey said, "Nothing is better than this award... We believe the decent must defeat the indecent. My advice: take your voice and turn it to thunder. Take your candle and turn it into a bonfire."

Upon presenting the award to Healey, JABOR founder Charlie Hernandez was emotional in describing a community service event that they put on the day before TourLink, in which a number of attendees participated. He said, "Thank you to all of you in the room. This week we raised \$15,000 because of matching funds. You guys showed us what love was all about."

The Top Dog Hall of Fame Award was a family affair, presented in an emotional tribute to Mountain Productions' Jim Evans by his son, Jim "Jimbo" Evans Jr. "To the only boss I've ever had," the younger Evans said on handing the trophy to his father. A biographical video highlighting the timeline told the tale, while the son recalled moments about growing up in the industry, learning the ropes to become part of the business with his father.

While the memoriam paid tribute to those we lost this past year, a special toast was given to those who died in the Paris attacks at the Eagles of Death Metal show at the Bataclan. A special video from Zoey Alexander, the sister of Nick Alexander - the British merchandizer killed in the massacre - thanked the touring industry family for their love and support.

Look for a complete list of 2016 TopDog Award winners in this issue.



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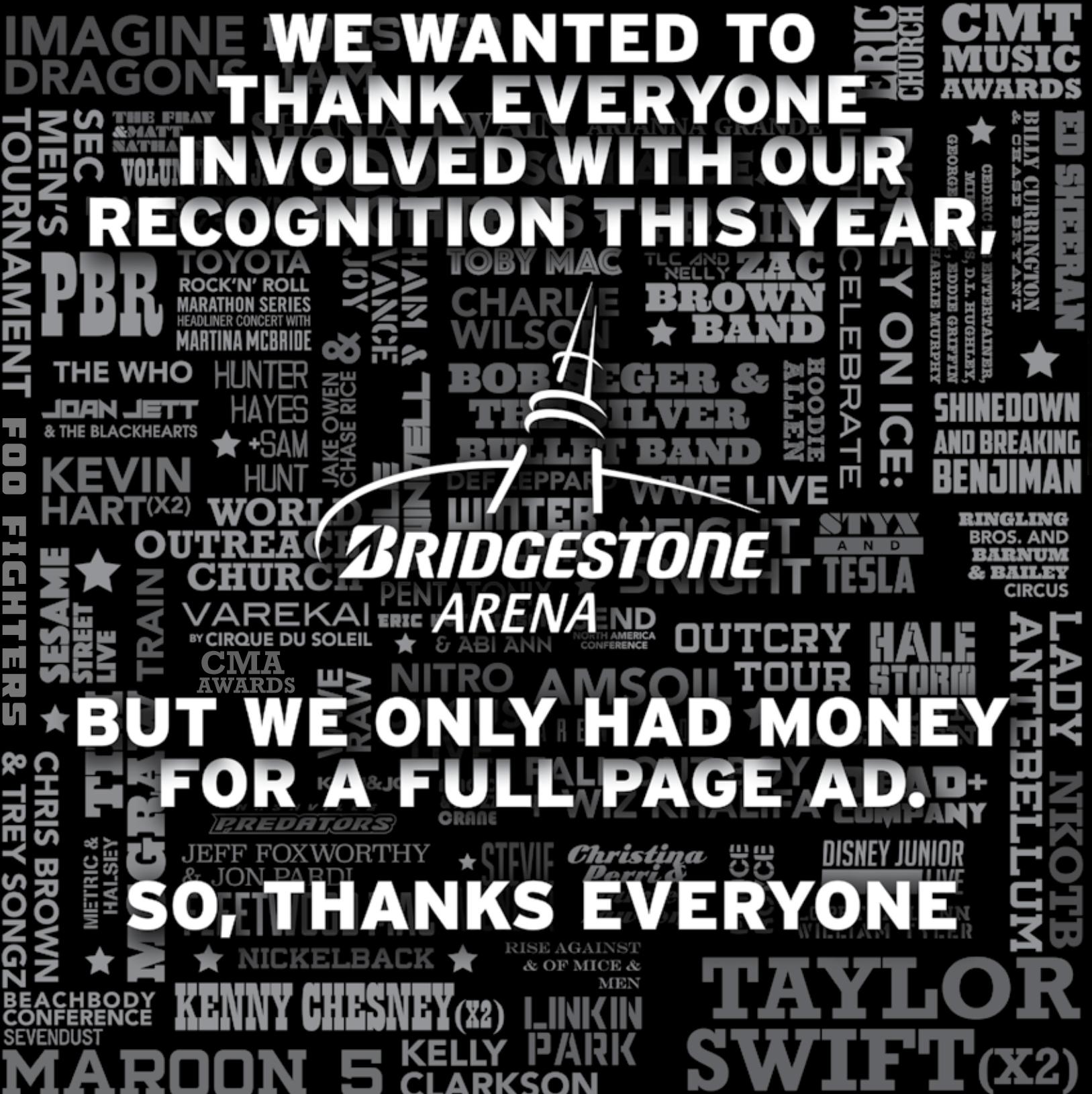
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Ian Jarvis-Fleetwood Mac, The Eagles

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STAGE MANAGER (TIE)

Anthony Giordano – Dave Matthews Band
Rocko Reedy – U2

VIDEO DESIGNER

Paul Becher – Paul McCartney

VIDEO DIRECTOR/OPERATOR

Steve Fatone – Rolling Stones, Bruno Mars

TOUR ACCOUNTANT

Pete Merluzzi – ACDC

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR/ASSIST.

Misty Roberts – Enrique Iglesias, Bruno Mars

PRODUCTION MANAGER - YOUNG GUN

Rob DeCeglio – The Weeknd

PRODUCTION MANAGER

Dale "Opie" Skjerseth – ACDC, Rolling Stones

TOUR MANAGER - YOUNG GUN

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9.3 Ad Index:

A.C.E.S.....	6	Prevost.....	BC
AJL International.....	58	PRG.....	40
Apex Stages.....	3	Priority Brokerage Services.....	38
Atomic Design.....	10	Pyrotecnico.....	43
Backstage Network.....	13	R & R Cases.....	3
Bearcom Wireless.....	7	Road Radios.....	.53
Beat the Street.....	70	Roadhouse.....	.37
Bill Kenney Productions.....	57	Rock It Cargo.....	.69
Bridgestone Arena.....	62	Rocko Reedy.....	.34
Braun Events.....	25	Senators.....	.21
Cadac.....	36	SES.....	.27
Clair Global.....	42	SMC.....	IFC
Cosmo Wilson.....	39	Sheraton Nashville.....	.64
Crown Seating.....	15	Soundcheck.....	IBC
Cube Services.....	61	Stage Call.....	.15
Dale "Opie" Skjerseth.....	45	Stage Door Transportation.....	.33
Delicate Productions.....	44	Starbase Jet.....	.59
Engine Power Source.....	17	Tater Audio.....	.29
Enterprise.....	13	Tour Jet.....	.15
EPT.....	59	Tour Supply47
Event Gear Broker.....	27	Tour Badgers.....	.35
Five Points Production Services.....	18	TransAm Trucking.....	.72
Gallagher Staging.....	73	Upstaging65
Hemphill.....	49	Victor.....	.50-51
Hub International.....	54		
Hutton Hotel.....	72		
Jet Productions.....	37		
Le Parc Suite Hotel.....	46		
Mountain Production.....	30		
Nationwide Logistics.....	41		
OSA International.....	20		



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