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volume 1 issue 2

- >> **Tour Link 2008 Issue**
Marty Hom wins Platinum Award
Alice Cooper wins Lifetime Achievement Award
- >> **Coach Quarters**
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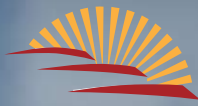
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Tour Link is a special event

for all of us. This issue is a recap of that event, including the winners of the Top Dog Award. This was a banner year for the event. The general feeling from everyone involved was one of genuine satisfaction and a desire to return next year.

This issue will outline much of the event, but it is not possible to capture the spirit that permeated the event without being in attendance. Simple words will not do the event credit. The warmth and camaraderie is an experience all of you should experience at least once.

There is no way to describe the flow of emotions that swept the attendees when a Top Dog Award winner broke into tears of happiness on the stage for receiving a well-deserved award. There is no way to quantify the strength of a new relationship forged at the Fun Day Outing or over a beer at Sluggo's. Neither can one explain the sheer pleasure of listening to four coach owners on the stage lighting up the night with their music.

One of the things we hear often, especially from vendors and manufacturers is "How much business is there?" Well, this is not the typical trade show full of booths and exhibits. This is not an event where a representative is stuck at an exhibit waiting for buyers to stroll in. There is business at the event, and plenty of it, but it is the business of relationship building. Next year, we will be adding more elements and broadening the attendance demographic, but even so, you simply have to be there to "get it."

Larry Smith

HOME OFFICE STAFF

ph: 615.256.7006 • f: 615.256.7004

email: info@tourguidemag.com

tourguidemag.com

750 Cowan St • Nashville, TN • USA 37207

Owner: **Larry Smith**

larrysmith@tourguidemag.com

Editor: **Chris Cogswell**

chriscogswell@tourguidemag.com

Chief Writer: **Michael A. Beck**

grockit@comast.net

Contributing Writer: **Mike Wharton**

wharton8317@bellsouth.net

Contributing Writer: **Deslee Gonzales**

desleemarie@yahoo.com

Contributing Writer: **Bill Abner Jr.**

bigolbill@comcast.net

Advertising Coordinator / Contributing Writer: **Erika Hagy**

erikahagy@tourguidemag.com

Art Director / Graphic Designer: **Kristin Searcy**

kristin.tourguide@gmail.com

IT Support: **Michael Stalcup**

michaelstalcup@tourguidemag.com

TOUR LINK BOARD OF ADVISORS

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ADVERTISING SALES OFFICE

Jessi Wallace • Nashville

jessiwallace@tourguidemag.com

ph: 615.256.7006 • f: 615.256.7004

Erika Hagy • Nashville

erikahagy@tourguidemag.com

ph: 615.256.7006 • f: 615.256.7004

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ph: 615.256.7006 • f: 615.256.7004

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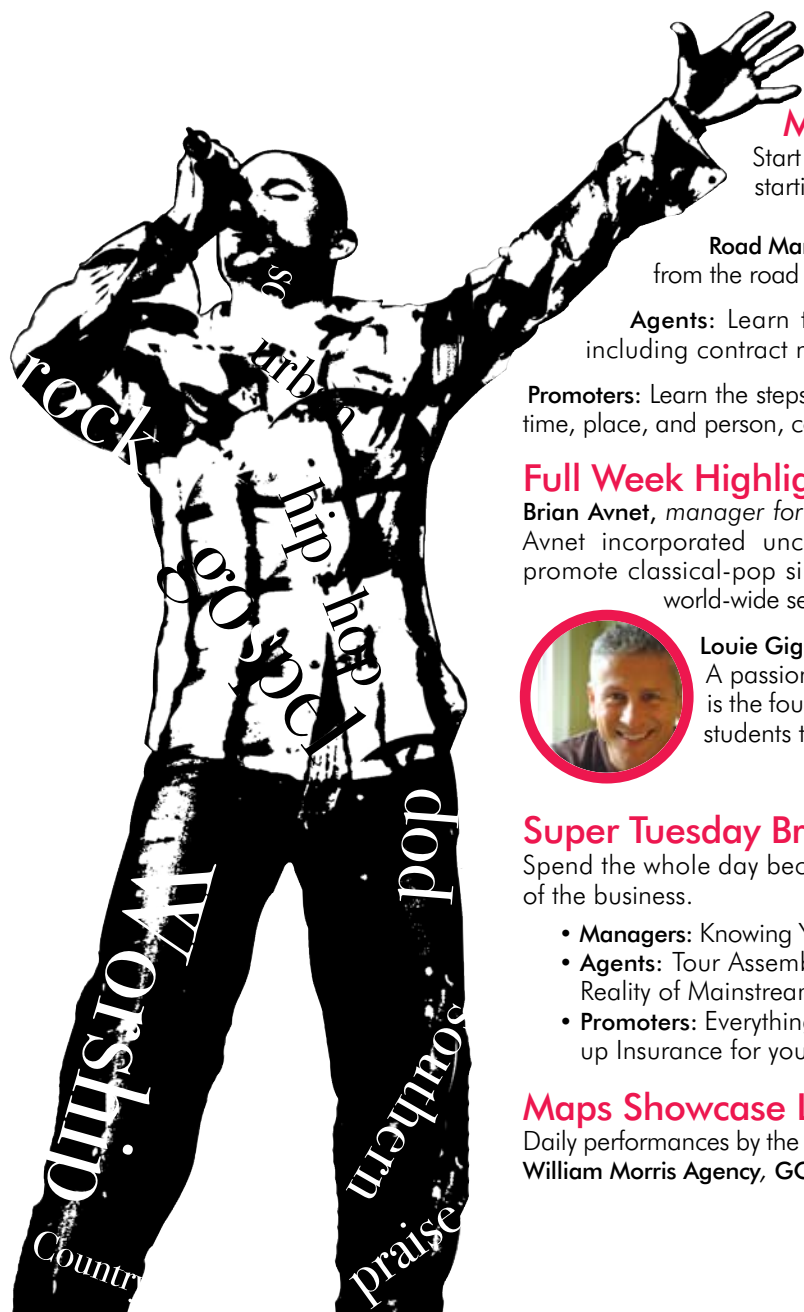
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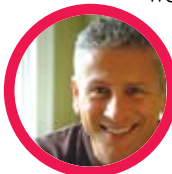
Road Managers: Learn the basics of taking care of an artist on tour from the road managers for Third Day and Casting Crowns.

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SOUNDCRAFT VI SERIES™

Gets Offline Editing And Multiple Stageboxes



photo: Soundcraft Vi Series™ Offline Editor

The Soundcraft Vi Series goes from strength to strength and continues to gather new friends as Soundcraft announces even more new features and facilities for this impressive digital console.

First, starting in March, the desks will support multiple stageboxes. This means that a digital patchbay can be created where the engineer can select the 64 inputs to a Soundcraft Vi6™ (or 48 on the Soundcraft Vi4™) from a selection of inputs available on any of the connected stageboxes. So, for example, with two stageboxes connected, there are 128 inputs to select from; with three there would be 172, and so on.

The Vi Series stagebox is the main input/output interface for the system, with up to 64 mic/line inputs and 32 line outputs available, or AES/EBU digital cards can take the place of mic/line I/Os.

Perhaps even more welcomed by any engineer using the Vi Series is the ability to set up shows and configurations offline on a PC, which can then be downloaded to the desk from a USB memory drive.

The Vi Offline Editor software will be downloadable free from the www.SoundcraftDigital.com website starting in March and can be run standalone in any location and the file transferred at any time. All routing, naming, EQ and dynamic settings and so on can be pre-configured offline. This also provides new engineers a superb opportunity to “test out” the console on their laptops before getting hands on. The editor can also be configured to control the DSP core in the absence of the desk control surface, and thus can provide control of audio in an emergency. ☺

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SUPERLUX D112/C HARMONICA MIC Fits Nakamura's Style

Harmonica artist finds the perfect microphone for performing

Be it rock and roll, the blues, or a host of other musical styles, the harmonica is, without question, one of popular music's most recognizable and enduring instruments. From the Beatles to Stevie Wonder and numerous other musical artists, the harmonica has lent its signature sound to countless recordings. For Tetsuya "Weeping Willow" Nakamura, an LA-based harmonica player with a wide range of high profile credits on his resume, finding a microphone that faithfully captures the personality of the harmonica is no small task. However, his search for the right microphone recently came to a conclusion when he discovered the Superlux D112/C harmonica microphone—distributed in North America by Avlex Corporation.



Tetsuya Nakamura
Superlux D112/C

player," notes Nakamura. "As the harmonica is frequently surrounded by guitars, keyboards, and drums, achieving the necessary level without compromis-

ing the instrument's sound quality is not easy. Fortunately, the D112/C handles this sort of environment extremely well. The microphone provides high gain before feedback—enabling me to play at levels loud enough to be heard among the other instruments. The mic's shape is ideal for handheld use with the harmonica and I really like the fact that a volume control is included. As a high-Z microphone designed to output to a guitar amp or some similar high impedance input, the D112/C is the perfect choice for live performance."

"I've also been very impressed with the D112/C's build quality," continued Nakamura. "This is a very well made, heavy duty microphone that is ideally suited to the rigors of the road."

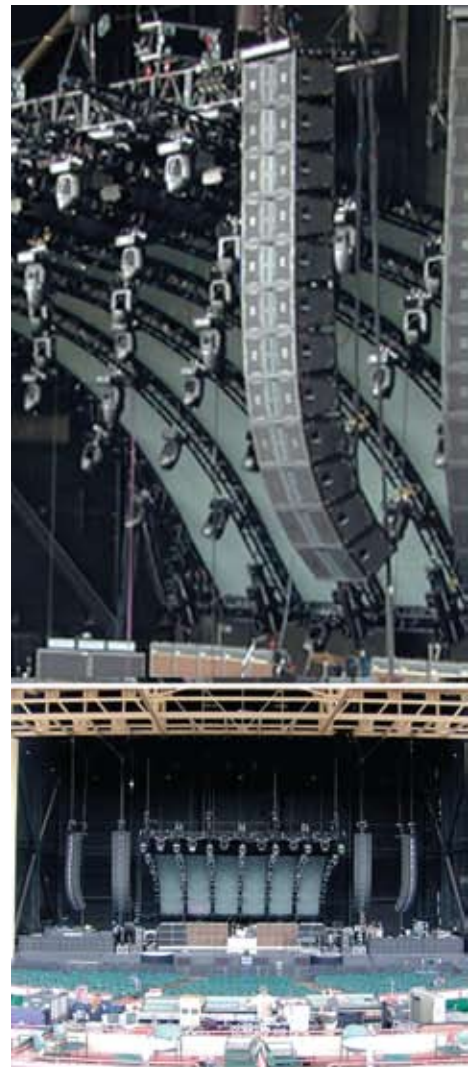
Nakamura was equally enthusiastic about Avlex Corporation's customer and technical support services. "I've been very impressed with the level of support the company provides," said Nakamura. "Whenever I've had questions about various products Avlex offers, they've always responded promptly and courteously. My dealings with the company have been very positive."

Asked what advice he might offer to other harmonica players in search of a microphone, Nakamura responded, "I'd tell them to snap up one of the Superlux D112/C's. With its wide frequency response, the ability to operate at high levels without feedback, and the fact that it fits perfectly in one's hand—making it easy to hold while performing—I can't imagine why you'd waste time looking

For thirteen years, Nakamura was a member of WAR, one of the first and most successful musical crossover bands that forever fused rock, jazz, Latin, and R&B. With hit records including *Low Rider*, *Spill the Wine*, and *Why Can't We Be Friends?*, WAR transcended racial and cultural barriers with a multi-ethnic line-up and an enduring influence that has sold over 50 million records. These days, Nakamura divides much of his time between two bands—the Monte Carlo 76 (an R&B band with all original music) and The 44's (a 4-piece blues band)—playing harmonica for audiences of all ages.

As a wind instrument that is typically placed in extremely close proximity to the microphone, the harmonica is a challenging instrument. Finding a microphone capable of handling the instrument's output without distorting or coloring the sound is no small matter. In Nakamura's opinion, this is the very strength of the Superlux D112/C.

"The D112/C is the ideal microphone for today's performing harmonica



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SERIOUS STAGES

Getting Serious in Australia



Glastonbury UK based Serious Stages shipped 10 containers with two of their new Solar Roofs to Australia for a busy summer festival season there.

with site co-ordinators Butlers Hire for tour logistics and local crewing with whom they have a longstanding relationship in Australia and New Zealand.

The Solar Roofs were utilised for Elton John's "The Captain and The Kid" tour followed by Sydney's Big Day Out event, where the 2008 line rocked with Rage Against The Machine, Bjork, Arcade Fire, Carl Cox and many others.

Serious's 22 metre wide 12 metre deep Solar Roof - as used on the Elton gigs - offers 12 metres of headroom and also featured a 2.4 metre

thrust running its full length. This version of the Roof can support up to 24 tonnes of flown equipment. It was supplied complete with double out-rigged goal post towers standing 9.6 metres wide and 15 metres off the deck, facilitating two PA hangs and video screen supports each side.

The tour visited assorted wineries and country houses and was Elton's 12th of the country. Serious worked

Serious also supplied all the decking for the Elton stage, constructed from their Black Deck system and measuring 42m wide x 14.4m deep, plus various ramps and steps as per each individual site's requirements.

A crew of 16 - 8 from the UK and 8 from Australia - all fully trained in how to rig the structure, were co-ordinated by Kenny Falconer for Serious.

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ordinated by Kenny Falconer for Serious.

They leapfrogged the two identical Solar roofs. This was necessary because of the distances between gigs and the schedule, which involved two days of trucking between shows and weekend performances – leaving a tight time-frame for the stage/roof systems to be de-rigged, moved and re-rigged during the week.

These same two Solar Roofs supplemented by additional kit were then erected side by side in the Sydney Showgrounds for their recent Big Day Out event. The two stage formula was adopted by the festival to dramatically reduce changeover times.

The BDO Solar Roofs were both built with one extra bay of depth and could fly an increased capacity of up to 30 tonnes of sound, lighting and video production.

Four Serious 18 metre, 4-bay Orbit stages were used at all the other Big Day Out events - in Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne, Brisbane and Wellington, New Zealand. ☺

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The Grinch meets LOOK SOLUTIONS' CRYO-FOG on Broadway

Look Solutions' CRYO-FOG low-fog system played a role in the return run of the Broadway hit *Dr. Seuss: How The Grinch Stole Christmas!* The musical enchanted audiences at New York City's St. James Theatre during the holiday season. In the record-breaking show, whose engagement ended January 6, the Grinch discovered there was more to Christmas than he bargained for when he tried to steal the holiday from the Whos in Whoville.

The CRYO-FOG was built into the Grinch cave set piece and comes rolling out of the mouth of the grotto in a big burst when the Grinch first appears on stage. The system was also used several additional times in more subtle ways to underscore the Grinch's anger.

"What we did was put the machine under and in the back of the rolling cave unit," explains Jeremy Chernick, Design Associate of Jauchem and Meeh, which created the effect. "The opening of the cave was pushed into a sealed wooden plenum underneath the cave unit where vents in the steps allowed the fog to seep out."

The CRYO-FOG uses Look Solutions' Low-Fog fluid and an external tank of liquid CO₂ to produce dense clouds of low-lying fog, an impressive effect for theater, dance, haunted attractions or almost any live performance.

Unlike other products currently on the market, which first make regular fog and then convert it to low fog, the CRYO-FOG creates low fog straight from the nozzle. This makes it far more efficient and far smaller than all previously-available products.

"The small size of the unit worked tremendously in our favor," Chernick reports. "We could hide it in the scenery

CONTINUED ON page 52



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CHRIS BROWN BLOWS IT UP

Bombs Away on “Exclusive” Tour

Lorenzo Cornacchia, Vice President and Designer, of Laser Design Productions and Pyrotek Special Effects, Inc. supplied the effects including lasers and pyrotechnics for Chris Brown’s tour in support of his sophomore album “Exclusive”. The tour which began in early December is scheduled to continue through February. Maceo Price began the initial discussions with Cornacchia to design special effects into the show, and was keen on both lasers and pyrotechnics.



A total of five lasers are implemented within the Chris Brown set design. One 15-watt, white light, full color laser is positioned centre stage on a lifted platform. Two, 3-watt green yags are positioned on the main stage right and left of the deck level. The green yags are located below two symmetrical staircases which mechanically recede to reveal the laser effects throughout a number of acts. Prior to the beginning of the show the white light lasers projects a countdown on to a shark tooth scrim. As the laser countdown draws to the final seconds the arena transitions to a full blackout and the crowd bursts in anticipation. Chris and four dancers are harnessed up in the air, while a video dialogs a mission impossible scenario. The first pyrotechnic effect parallels with the conclusion of the video where Chris Brown throws a bomb. As the video sequence translates to real time, four flash air bursts with concussion erupt and trigger a solid Machida

safety equipment and eye wear. The introduction, along with a number of the special effect designs came to fruition from Cornacchia collaborating with Chris Brown (Artist), Joyce Brown (Management); Daunte Kenner (Lighting Designer), Rich & Tone Talaueta (Choreographers) and Maceo Price (Initial Production Manager).

A pair of two green micro yag lasers are positioned on the trussing above the B-Stage at front of house. Cornacchia worked along with Amy Case (Laser Programmer) and Robert Prat (Laser Tour Crew Chief) in developing the laser effects during the rehearsals at *Center Staging* in Burbank, CA. On the pyrotechnic side Cornacchia worked with Rob Liscio (Pyro Crew Chief) and Eric Mucho (Pyro-Technician). While working on the pyrotechnics during the day and laser effects throughout the night, Cornacchia became involved with a number of the sets.

Cornacchia explained; “*The set designs allowed us to come up with a number of creative positions and effects. One which was a collective design which I really enjoy is an implemented laser cone effect to surround the rotating B-Stage while a second laser scans back towards the main stage*”. The cone effect rotates in a counter clockwise motion to create a full laser closure around Chris Brown and two dancers for the introduction of the song “Lottery”. The B-Stage is set in an intimate fashion, it is approximately 4- 5 feet away from the audience giving them a peerless experience. Additionally; Cornacchia added, eight Cryo Jet Heads each with its own liquid CO2 50-pound tank. In order for the Cryo effect to conform to the stage which tilts and rotates, 4-foot stands were built to hold the tanks. While working with Daunte Kenner (Lighting Designer) through the evenings, the two came together to discuss lighting scenarios and ensure the lasers were not being washed out and were synchronized with the lighting designs. While coordinating the effects into the show both Cornacchia and Kenner began to discuss the Cryo look and came up with a unique idea of synergizing lighting with Cryo. Cornacchia explained; “*At night when everybody would leave (11pm – 7 am) lighting and lasers had their window to program during dark-time. I had several conversations with Daunte. As we’re discussing the lighting during the Cryo effect Dante purposed to trial a lighting effect with the Cryo. When we did it looked really cool, and made the effect look that much bigger.*” The effect is shot in multiple colors with several single hits, and chases leading into all-fire cues through out



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the choruses. "Picture Perfect" also includes a number laser looks of scanning effects and beam chases. During the guitar solo for the final performance of "Kiss Kiss", the entire stage is engulfed with beams and ends in a Machida effect with concussion simultaneously on the last accent. In creating a barrage of beam effects, a total of 48 mirrors were positioned in the trussing, on the pipe and base of stage right and left, throughout the floor of the main stage, on the scaffold structures, and along the down stage edge. An additional six diffraction gratings we used along with two fiber remote scanners positioned stage right and left to create a multiple layered effect.

The pyro effects added an explosive and alluring look to the set design. Attached to the stair cases are two 7-foot long dragon tails to extenuate the two 14-foot flame walls. A 20-second silver gerb waterfall is designed into the show; the effect is cascaded from the trussing across the stage and drops approximately 20 feet to the song "Cinderella". Eight fire balls units burst out to create a mushroom cloud of smoke, 6-8 feet in diameter and 12 feet in height to "Run It". In addition, eight of Pyrotek's infamous Dragons were designed into the set. Two are positioned on a 45-degree angle symmetrically on the scaffold structure which shoots diagonal flame columns over the main stage entrance. Two others are positioned stage left and right on the main stage, along with two at each side of a seven-foot dragon tail located on the upper scaffold under the center video wall. The multitude of Dragons allowed Cornacchia to encompass a number of flaming single hits, chase sequences, symmetrical and asymmetrical looks, as well as all fire cues.

Cornacchia who was also involved in the effect designs for Chris Browns

CONTINUED ON page 52

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Coach Quarters Entertainment Transportation Let the Journey Begin

by DESLEE GONZALES

Who doesn't like having options? Well, now in the entertainer bus industry there will be one more option for artists to choose from. Coach Quarters Entertainment Transportation officially opened its doors in February 2007 when Olan Witt partnered with Ken Klekamp. The company has recently purchased a facility in Goodlettsville, TN (exit 98 off I-65) and has already made significant strides. Klekamp is an attested supplier of upscale corporate coaches. Witt has expertise in the entertainment coach industry and Timmer Ground, an industry veteran, completes the team.

Witt told *Mobile Production Monthly*, "I started traveling on tour coaches at the age of 17 as a gospel musician. When you are a drummer for a gospel group you learn to drive the bus, wash the bus and fix the bus - that's called job security." Witt began buying, selling and leasing coaches from Jerry Calhoun after his days as a musician. He continues, "Jerry and his brother Jack basically pioneered this industry, I have learned a lot from him and I have a tremendous amount of respect for him." Witt met Timmer Ground when Ground moved to Nashville and assumed management of a large tour bus company four years ago. At the time, Ground was both the road manager for the Oak Ridge Boys and a client of Witt. He was ready to switch sides of the desk and come off the road after almost 30 years. Ground would prove to be a perfect fit for the team. With nearly 30 years touring experience, he understands and has a passion for this business.

The facility maintains offices and offers both wash and service bays. In the office, Carolyn Kanafani takes care of accounting and Dean



pictured Olan Witt



pictured Timmer Ground

Pickering serves as director of maintenance. The maintenance facility is a full service garage and wash bay. Witt confirms, "We are extremely proactive on maintenance as well as DOT rules and regulations." The new company's fleet consists of 21 coaches made up of 2003-2008 Provests with several slide out

coaches. The plan is to continue adding to the fleet with controlled growth. Witt boasts that the buses are "the true definition of class on the road. You'll discover a lot of little extras designed to make each of our coaches a little nicer home away from home." It seems these little extras have proved beneficial as Coach Quarter has had great success adding new clients. Its clients include Jill Scott, Ted Nugent, Lee Greenwood, Candlebox, and just recently provided two coaches for Senator John McCain. In addition, Coach Quarters networks with other companies to provide buses for the likes of Bow Wow, Linkin Park and Dave Matthews Band.

"Everything is team, we all can overlap to ensure customers are taken care of. From the office, to the shop to the drivers, we are all family."

Coach Quarters is a brand new company with new visions. When asked what his company brings to the entertainment bus industry, Witt explains that Coach Quarters offers individualized, hands-on service as he personally inspects each bus before every tour. He stresses that his team is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Also, he assures that this company provides the best quality buses and has the safest, most reliable drivers in the industry. Ground adds that the drivers are "seasoned show drivers" who are veterans of this business.



After just recently returning from the Tour Link Conference in Arizona, Witt says it was great to meet and interact with people from the industry. Now, the team at Coach Quarters is very excited to watch the company grow and being able to implement changes that weren't possible at previous companies. One of the things Coach Quarters wants to stress about the new company is that it's all about teamwork. Witt reiterates, "Everything is a team, we all can overlap to ensure customers are taken care of. From the office, to the shop to the drivers, we are all family." This "family" emphasizes that Coach Quarters will be your number one choice for all your entertainment coach needs because it has the strictest driver safety standards in the industry, stressing that cleanliness is always a top priority, and having expert operators that know every inch of your coach. It has the flexibility to work within your schedule and budget, and last but definitely not least, it is trusted by industry insiders. Coach Quarters assures that it does it all - everything to help ensure your tour is successful, and to make getting there as comfortable as possible. ☺

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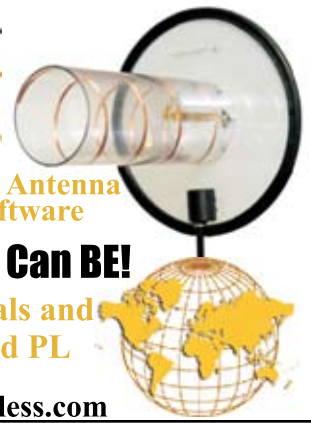
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SHOWPRO/GFI New Kids From The Old School

by BILL ABNER

Every touring pro has had to endure the agony of wondering whether the truck with his livelihood riding on it will show up for the gig. Will the gear he so carefully and tediously strapped in to the E-track on that 53-footer yesterday in Denver make it through the bad weather to show up for the gig in Albuquerque by 8 AM? Does the driver know his way around the streets of Chicago well enough to meet him and the I.A.T.S.E Local 2 stagehands at the McCormick Center on time on load-in day? And, once his show is in, what if the truck is late for load-out?

These are the kinds of questions that Jack Pumphrey and Bruce Bergmann of ShowPro/GFI were contemplating when their paths first crossed on the WinterJam Tour. When they met, Pumphrey (President and CEO of ShowPro/GFI) had been in and around the entertainment industry for most of his life. His father drove Senator Coaches in the 70s for a little band called Humble Pie, and Jack would tag along for the ride. Since 1994, Pumphrey has been the drummer for Christian music artists *New Song*, and in 1999 he began his own trucking company, GFI. So, it would be safe to say he has seen a few load-ins and load-outs.

Bruce Bergmann, National Sales Director for the Marietta, Georgia-based company, also knows his way around a loading dock. His years of touring in the entertainment industry include stints as lead driver for

practically every act imaginable -- from Kenny Chesney to Metallica to Phish.

Together the team heads up ShowPro/GFI, the "New Kids" on the tour transportation block. "We recognized the need for a transport company that is in tune with the needs of the entertainment industry," says Bergmann. "We take an old school approach to our slate of services, while offering our customers viable transportation solutions for the twenty-first century." Their business model is smart and straightforward: hire only the best, most experienced drivers; supply them with top quality tools and equipment; and treat the customer as they themselves would like to be treated.

Speaking of equipment, the fledgling company has only 2003 or newer trucks in its inventory, which means their equip-

CONTINUED ON page 52

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DETROIT HAS THE PEOPLE MOVER

The Atheneum Hotel Has Cherie Henry

by ERIKA HAGY



The Detroit People Mover is a 2.9 mile automated people mover system that operates a single-track, one-way loop through the central business district of downtown Detroit, MI. Downtown is home to Ford Field, Joe Louis Arena, Orchestra Hall, Fox Theatre, Fillmore Theatre and the Atheneum Hotel. No wonder Detroit is second to New York for entertainment venues. And it's no surprise that The Atheneum Hotel is the winner of the Top Dog Award for Artist Hotel of the Year. Mobile Production Monthly interviews Cherie Henry.



door that shuts between the parlor and bedroom; good for entertainment groups because they can shut the door and get space from one another. Guests share the beautiful oversized marble deep soaking tub; something a lot of our guests love. The Premium Suites start at 780 sq ft and offer a Jacuzzi. A spectacular open-floor plan features an elevated marble Jacuzzi whirlpool tub, overlooking a king-sized bed and sitting area. The ceiling-to-floor windows offer great views of Detroit. The Senators Suites start at 1500 sq ft and include a living room with two sofas and flat screen TV, dining room table for six, one-and-a-half baths, and a wet bar. The Governors Suite has two-rooms and is on the 10th floor. Under the 24 ft ceilings are leather furnishings, desk area, bar, king-sized bed and a marble whirlpool tub. The two Penthouse Suites are 1600 sq ft with a living and dining room. There's also a stunning view of Detroit. The Presidential Suite is a two-bedroom suite with upgraded amenities.

MPM: What do you think sets you above



Cherie Henry
Assistant Director of Sales

Cherie Henry is the Assistant Director of Sales. Henry started as the Sales Manager six years ago and her current responsibilities include the Entertainment Market and City Wide Events. Most surprisingly, Henry has been working in the Entertainment Market for The Atheneum for two years, yet managed to snag an award away from some big hotel names.

Mobile Production Monthly: I hear that The Atheneum is undergoing renovations. What are you changing?

Cherie Henry: Exciting thing is we have 174 suites and we're going to renovate 24 rooms at a time. We'll have 42-inch

flat screens in bedroom and parlor areas; all new carpeting, window treatments, beds, linen packages, and furniture from top to bottom. All new bath amenities, coffee pots, and mini-bars in each guest room. Looks fabulous. A new service is complimentary high-speed internet for all guests.

MPM: Are all the suites the same?

CH: We have seven types. The first one is the Studio. It's an oversized guest room with a deep soaking marble tub. These seven rooms are handicap accessible. Next is the Junior Suites, almost like studio apartments. A parlor with a half-wall overlooks the king-sized bed. A sofa and coffee table, along with two televisions and two-lined phones are available. New this year is ability to hook your MP3 player or iPod into the radio speakers. The Deluxe Suites have a wall with a

and apart from the major players in the industry?

CH: I really think customer service. I think from the time the entertainer / artist / group checks in, the valet folks, front desk people, suite service room service, housekeeping, our entire staff does a great job. A big role is my interaction with tour manager and travel agents and the accessibility of me as a salesperson. I make sure every detail is taken care of as promised. Our staff does a great job honoring the Do Not Disturb sign and screening phone calls, our security ensures the safety of the group and their security from the fans when they come back [from the venue]. I think the entire staff here contributed and it was recognized.



I make sure that I'm up to who they are and what they do and where they're performing, making sure the staff doesn't ask for autographs. They don't want to be hassled. They want to be anonymous. If we have someone with special needs, I make it happen.

MPM: Speaking of special needs or requests, have you had any interesting requests?

CH: An artist was here in the hotel and had a sore throat. He was due to go out and perform in a few hours. His doctor said

he needed to go to a sauna or he wasn't going to be able to perform. I knew the only place he could get a private sauna was at the Detroit Athletic Club. It's private; it's like the Harvard Club. Our owner's daughter is a member; however, she was in New York.

MPM: That makes the world of difference.

MPM: [Laughing] Of course...

CH: It really does and that's what I really try to do. You know, even if it's OutKast, Patti LaBelle, Robin Thicke,

CH: I called the Detroit Athletic Club and said I was the owner's personal assistant

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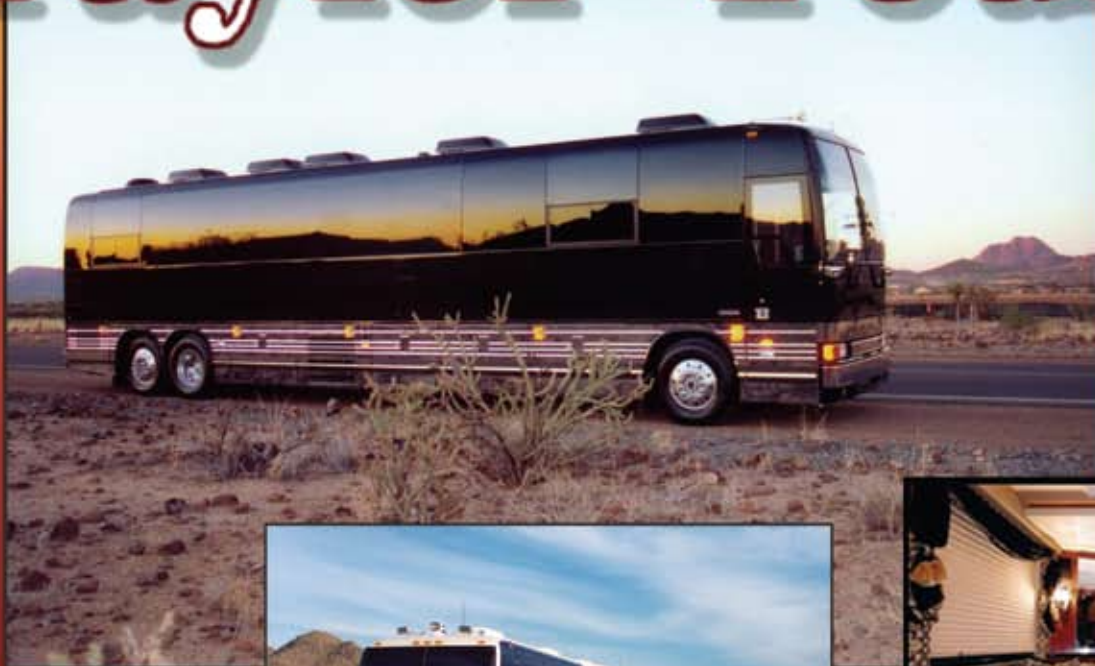


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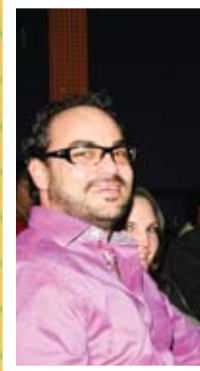
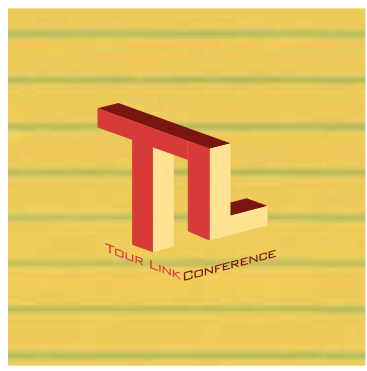
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Tour Link 2008 was a success in every sense of the word. It is hard to be totally subjective when we report on Tour Link because so much of the energy and expectations of our staff and Board of Advisors are involved in producing this annual event. We bring a diversified group of people together for three days of fun, networking and serious discussions every year.

It is rare that an event like Tour Link has such a motivated group representing the interests and expectations of the attendees. Our Board is made up of a group of industry professionals deeply dedicated to the advancement of our mutual goals.

Anyone with ideas for this event, suggestions or any volunteers willing to donate time and energy should contact us at the magazine, and we will direct you to the appropriate Board Member to find out how to become involved. There is no doubt that this event has finally reached the point of self-generation. Next year promises to be bigger and better as we involve more and more parts of the industry.

>> Mark your calendars for next year's conference in Mesa, Arizona January 22-25, 2009.

Log in today tourlinkconference.com





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top to bottom left to right

Nicki Goldstein pointing to her sponsorship sign.

Dave Paiva (Cube Services)

& Michelle Pekrol (Star Gift Alliance)

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Just shooting the breeze while waiting on their fellow putt-putters.

Kelly Baca (Hotel ZaZa)

Moe Padgett & Eric Durrett
(Event Operations Group)

Chuck Randall & Jay Sendyk

“Putt”-ing People Together

Given that the goal of Tour Link is to facilitate relationships, what better way to kick off the conference than by sending everyone to an Arcade. It is a hysterical sight to see people get to know each other by playing with each other.

Ours is an industry of entertainment and the ease the movers-and-shakers of this industry letting their child

out, was a reminder of why this industry is so successful. Whether over laughs at the windmill on the putt-putt golf course, comparing number of kills after a round of laser tag, or challenging each other to air-hockey and other arcade games, most of the Tour Link attendees walked into the Opening Night Reception having already met each other. ●



top to bottom, first and second row, left to right
Amy Keeling (Tzell Travel) & Michael Keeling (project:x)

Katie Mills (Aspen Travel) & Annoucka Roc (The London West Hollywood)

Gary Roberts (Roberts Brothers Coach)

Fire up your engines. TL attendees go racing.

Allison Binnion (Grand Hyatt Seattle)

Brian Clark (Event Operations Group)

Lance Wascom (Tour Supply Nashville)



starting on third row left to right
Richard Battaglia (Flecktone Tours)

Nick Welhorskyj (The Orlando Hotel)

Future Guitar Heros.

Annoucka Roc (The London West Hollywood) & Katie Mills (Aspen Travel)

Joel Tiller (Event Operations Group), we think.

Moe Padgett (Event Operations Group) haming it up.



Tour Link Conference 2008 OPENING NIGHT RECEPTION

HOSPITALITY SUITE

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first row, left to right

Dave Paiva, Nicki Goldstein, Lance Wascom

Lew Blevins & Larry Martin (Tour Supply New York)



starting at second row, top to bottom, left to right

Paul Potenza (Potenza Enterprizes
& Craig Redden (Q1 Technologies)

Benny Collins & Cynthia Ryan (Digital Litho)

Timmy Bolin (TM) & Gary Roberts Jr.

Ziggy, Jason Somerville (Roberts Brothers Coach)
& Timmy Bolin letting their hair down.

Donna Russo (Sportsmen's Lodge)
& Alina Wade (JDV Hotels)

Calvin Johnson (Innovative Illumination)
& Paul Collis (Tour Supply UK)

Ziggy & Jason Somerville



fourth row, left to right
Robert Lessor (MCI)

Mike Jones, Moe Padgett, Rick Jones,
Joel Tiller, Brian Clark
& Eric Durrett (EOG /
the big boys)

Vicky & Joe Gibson
(Gibson Transport)

last row, left to right
Kim Burkart &
Ani Aghamalain (Coast
Anabelle/Safari Inn)

Ron Morisette (Scene
Ethique Design &
Fabric), Benny Collins,
Lee Rosenblatt, Stuart
Ross, Bruce Eisenberg
(Audio Analysts), Bert
Pare (Audio Analysts)

Jon Nevins (Shockwave
Cargo), Kristin Searcy
(TL staff) & Timmy Bolin



first row, left to right

Kari Obernesser (Loews Denver Hotel), Nick Gold (Entertainment Travel)

second row, left to right

Annoucka Roc & Jay Sendyk

Moe Padgett, Melissa Diaz (Crown Plaza Univeral) & Bob Fernholz (UpLight Technologies)

Matt Wald, Allison Binnion (Grand Hyatt Seattle), Brian Clark (EOG)

Bill Bodish & Kevin Kildow (Power A Rangers)

Juan Lepe (Prevost)

Lee Rosenblatt & Kim Burkart
Skip Parker, Dana Galloway & Robin Parker (Executavel)

Michelle Pekrol & Mark Penrod (Red Lion Hotel)



middle row, left to right

Kim Burkart, Junior, Greg Hareld & Pete Cavanagh (Kleege Industries)

Chuck Randall & Stuart Ross

"Sarge" (Roberts Brothers Coach) & Todd Miller (TM)

Allison Binnion, Chuck Randall, Nicki Goldstein & Sharon Larkins (Hyatt Capital Square Columbus)

Bruce Eisenberg, Richard Battaglia (Flecktone Tours) & Matt Wald

Katie Mills & Rob Feagin (Aspen Travel)



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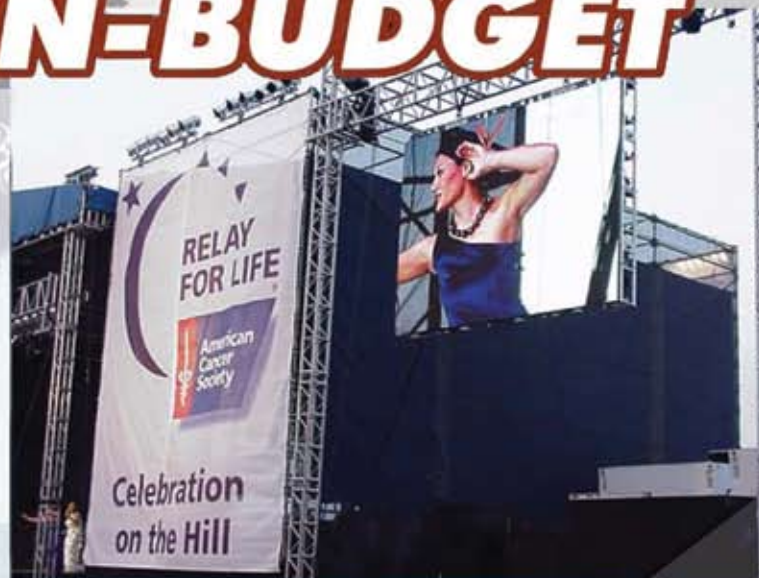
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Panelmonium In Mesa

Interwoven within the fabric of fun and networking, which in large part Tour Link is known for, are industry panel sessions. Year after year these sessions prove to be perfect opportunities for seasoned veterans and up-and-comers alike to talk about everything from the evolution of the industry and its inherent problems and solutions, to being an educational forum for those less seasoned. There is never a question too elementary or statement too profound not welcome, or for that matter not encouraged.

Tour Link panels are amongst the liveliest, the best attended and the most participated in by an audience, than nearly any panel session at any conference one might attend. There is no exaggeration in that statement.

Whether visiting the site of a tour production, audio, video, or lighting company, or any other of the multitude of companies or people servicing this industry, the one constant

is the passion these pros have for their work. To witness their passions crystallize at Tour Link panels when opinions differ, discussions get fervid and spirited, and ideas flow, well ...that's when the fun begins.

There were four panels at Tour Link Conference 08, the Concert Production Panel, Transportation Panel, Accommodations Panel, and Future Of the Industry Panel. Each began general in topic, enabling them to develop into conversations the entire room could engage in. Both the moderator and panelists, and those in the audience brought up discussion topics, interjected thoughts and views, and debated and deliberated the finer points of their given professions.

It is fair to say not everyone walked away pleased with what they heard. But, it is also fair to say that everyone had every opportunity to express his or her opinion. What follows is an overview and some highlights from each panel. ●



jan.25.08

Tour Link Conference 2008 Concert Production Panel

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Transportation Panel

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Concert Production Panel

Moderator:

Bobby Schneider, Accurate Staging & PM

Panelists:

Craig Redden, Q1 Production Technologies; Richard Battaglia, FOH and TM Flecktone Tours, LLC; Brian Hartley, Lighting Designer, Pete Cavanagh, Kleege Industries; Michael Keeling, Project X; and Jim Silvia, TM

Bobby Schneider began the panel with a list of potential topics including alternative touring and economics. Schneider pointed out that bands that in the past used to sell out arenas now find a different way to invent themselves whether it is college gigs or corporate shows. In addition to reinventing themselves as touring artists, they rethink their production needs. Schneider adds to these thoughts, "bands want more. They want more production but they want their bottom line to be larger as well. So where do you cut back?"

Craig Redden's position was that nothing has changed at all. "From my point of view colleges never had any money," interjected Redden, "Everyone always wanted to save money on production and bring home as much as they could.

Where things have really gotten creative is on packaging. How long it takes to get them up in the air, how much truck space they take. How they're packaged whether it's trusses that carry fixtures or boxes and trusses in a truck. It's tough and sometimes you have to do the same quote 25 times. But nothing has changed."

Other topics discussed included ethics, record company involvement and 360 deals. "If 360 deals become the way of our business," said Schneider, "it will be the bane of our industry. Record companies are poorly staffed and in many cases have skeleton offices. If anyone thinks that a record label can do anything but mess-up touring, they are sorely mistaken." In a nutshell, a 360 deal is when a band a manager

Transportation Panel

Moderator:

Jay Sendyk, Business Mgr, Sendyk & Co.

Panelists:

Paul Todd, Freedom Jets; David Kiely, Roadshow; Cindy Staub, Enterprise Rental Car Entertainment Division; Ziggy, Ziggy's Custom Coach; Bob Daitz, Daitz Personal Logistics; and Chuck Randall, TM



and a label all become involved in each other's business. A record label will pay the band a hefty touring advance and all profits are then split, touring, merchandise, etc. The seeming appeal is that it guarantees the band money.

The idea that one could run a successful arena tour carrying little more than backline was brought up. To this Redden said, "it certainly can be done. It would require some flexibility from the design team. Because many designers don't program the entire tour and it would require a num-

ber of different fixtures and programs, perhaps it makes it more challenging."

Pete Cavanagh added, "As we all know, you can get equipment anywhere. It's the same gear. It comes down to the guys running it that are the key to making the difference."

"The key is, you want the same guys running the same equipment night after night," interjected Redden. "It can very easily go south if you don't have that in front of you." ●

Jay Sendyk opened the panel with DOT regulations, overdrives and logs. There is a 250-officer task force in the field just for the entertainer coaches. "What it comes down to," said Ziggy, "is this industry has been out of control for a long time. Most of us sitting here were drivers for a long time and we've all driven from New York to LA straight through. Those days are absolutely over because they are coming down on us. It has come to either having a double driver or we are going to have to stop and give the driver a bed for eight hours."

Chuck Randall aimed the conversation in a more pragmatic direction saying, "The good news is our industry is continuing to grow. Companies are getting bigger and bigger and bigger. The consistency of the equipment has continued to improve. Conversely, the consistency of the service we are getting from you, and certainly the drivers, has not paralleled with that of the equipment. Why is it I spend more time wet-nursing and babysitting truck and bus drivers than I do my own crew?" This comment brought some applause from the room in addition to a few Amen's. Chuck continued, "I don't want the driver to critique how the tour is being run, how his bus company is being run versus how the previous bus company he worked for did things. All I want him to do is drive the fucking bus." To this the room erupted in applause.

In closing this segment of the panel, Ziggy said, "I want to address this with the bus companies. The DOT right now, would like us all to get together and start a driver training school. They will give us grants and are fully behind this. Let's get together and start a driving school and teach these guys how to do their jobs right so we can get a new breed of drivers on the road."

David Kiely pointed out that nation-wide there is a 20,000-driver shortage across the board. "Compound this," said Kiely, "with the fact that all of us are looking for the quality driver. Then we tell that quality driver that we don't know when you are going to get home..."

To which Randall invokes, "It's not a job, it's a lifestyle. The good ones don't want to quit working."

Paul Todd, amazed at the similarities between air charter and ground transportation said, "Our issues are exactly the same as everything I've been hearing, except, mine is in the sky." Todd owns his own fleet of aircraft and has an extensive tracking program both of which enables him to eliminate the dead heads and one-ways. ●





**Tour Link Conference 2008
Concert Production Panel**
*sponsored by AAA Communications

jan.26.08

Transportation Panel
*sponsored by AAA Communications



**Accommodations
Panel**

**Moderator: Stuart Ross, TM and TA
Panelists: Michelle Freeman, Hyatt West
Hollywood; Kari Obernesser, Loews
Denver; Dorothy Weintraub, Rock On
Travel; Dean Lawrence, TM; Rob Feagan,
Aspen Travel; and Chuck Randall, TM;**



Stuart Ross, affectionately known as the Phil Donohue of the panel circuit because of the way he works a room and directs a session with the precision of a surgeon, was once again masterful in his steering of this often-contentious panel.

“It seems to me,” added Rob Feagan, “that a hotel that wants to solicit more band business needs to have contracts designed for band business.”

It turns out for a brief time, Four Seasons and Ritz Carlton’s came out with what was called a confirmation agreement, which was very different than a conference agreement that we see. “I have had hotels send me a contract and say ‘just cross out anything you don’t want’,” said Weintraub. “I take my sharpie out and begin crossing out nearly everything. The bottom line is, we want to work with hotels that want to work with us.”

Donna Russo of Sportsmen’s Lodge brought up one of the concerns shared by the hotels. Rooms are booked for a band, crew, and/or entourage. After the legwork was done at the property to make certain housing would come off flawlessly there is the occasional phone call from the travel agent pulling the rooms for

any number of reasons. Now the sales department has to answer to owners and or General Managers as to why after spending this much of our budget, we lost contracted revenue.

Chuck Randall acknowledged this business is rate driven but adds, “I am going to stay at a hotel that gets us and wants us to stay there. If a hotel doesn’t understand the entertainment business, we are not going to check in at three o’clock in the afternoon, we’re not going to check out at noon and we’re going to smoke in the non-smoking rooms.”

Dorothy Weintraub explained, “Travel Agents don’t make that decision. We get our directives from either the tour manager or member of the band, who is the ultimate decider. A good travel agent will, if they have to pull rooms, explain why this was done because we want to maintain our relationships.”

Buying the rooms the night before to ensure a three a.m. check-in and the various ways to overcome the challenges of a late checkout were a few of the issues also discussed. The point was driven home by Randall who said, “if you want the entertainment business, these issues are going to be faced every day with every tour and every band.”





Future of the Industry Panel

Moderator: Chuck Randall, TM
Panelists: Danny Zielesko, Live Nation; Benny Collins, PM and Site Coordinator; Jim Silvia, TM; John Seihl, Nutter Center; Stuart Ross, TM and TA, Bobby Schneider, Accurate Staging and PM; and Jay Sendyk, Business Manager, Sendyk & Co.

The future of the industry and by virtue the future of those in the industry, was a colorful and fiercely impassioned panel artfully orchestrated by Chuck Randall.

It is difficult if not impossible to dispute that technology is the future. That Internet and emails are an integral part of technology. The inherent problem however with the internet and emails is that the feeling, for example, of an email are the feelings of the person reading it rather than the feelings of the person sending it. "Nothing," said Jay Sendyk, "replaces the contact over the telephone."

On the other hand, the Internet, through ineptness of the record industry, hosed the record industry. "This helps us doesn't it," said Stuart Ross. "Because records don't sell and therefore the acts don't make money on records, they tour more ...and tour bigger."

Cost of tickets and touring was raised to which Danny Zielesko gently combated by pointing out that we live in

a supply and demand country/world. "Everything is cost more and everyone ought to get used to it because it is not going down," he said. "Everyone wants to make more and pay their suppliers less. Look at bid sheets on concerts. Hardly any of the costs have changed in 20 years, apart from the groups."

"This year," Zielesko continued, "is going to be interesting because the economy is so bad. There are going to be lots of acts out competing for that dollar and in the end the big acts will come out smelling like a rose, while the smaller acts will get crushed. Why don't they tour in December through March? There is no competition out there and you spread it out for the fans."

The wrap up for this, the final panel session at Tour Link Conference 08, was perhaps best summed up Bobby Schneider. "The future of our industry is getting back to our roots. The Internet and other technologies are tools to help facilitate us getting back to our roots." ●





Tour Link Conference 2008 BUS BBQ

*sponsored by Taylor Tours, Kleege Industries, Backline Bob, NRG Staging, Event Operations Group & On Cue Services



top to bottom, left to right
MCI's March of Dimes Tour Bus
Every Baby Has a Story Tour 2007

Motor Coach Industries sets up
Ani Aghamalian (Coast Anabelle/Safari Inn) & Dorothy Weintraub (Rock On Travel)

Flutter Fetti flies.

Ellen Livingston (Celebrity Coaches),
Fitzjoy Hellin & Mr. Fitz

Jay Boy Adams rocks the BBQ.

Powersource Transportation

Dustin Templeton (MacSpecialist), Amy Keeling (Tzell Travel) & Michael Keeling (project:x)

Flutter Fetti everywhere!

Chip Huffman (Nitetrain Coach), Peter Tempkins (DeWitt Stern Insurance) & Nick Gold

Jerry Calhoun, Gary Roberts & Jack Calhoun

Taylor Tours co-sponsors the event.

John Aiken & Stuart Ross

Cindy Staub (Enterprise Rent-A-Car) & Nicki Goldstein

Dave Paiva, Louis Escoto (Park Central Hotel) & Michelle Freedmon (Hyatt West Hollywood)



Bar-B-Que Under the Arizona Stars

The Bus BBQ has been a staple of Tour Link since the first conference in 2000. Set in the parking lot of the Mesa Amphitheatre, coaches corralled a buffet of grilled vegetables and a variety of other side dishes, a well stocked bar and a couple of hundred friendly faces. The crisp evening desert air was filled with the aroma of Rib-Eye steaks and Sea Bass being grilled. Kleege Industries provided a stage from which Jay Adams, Jack and Jerry Calhoun and Ziggy graced. What a delightful evening. ●

One Bus BBQ option: Grilled Seabass.

Jim Bodenheimer (EgoTrips)

The Bus BBQ's entertainment.

Jack Calhoun sings to the attendees.

Craig Redden (Q1), Jason Parkin (TM) & Mark Penrod (Red Lion Hotel)

top row, left to right



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LOCK UP YOUR DAUGHTERS



Jay Boy Adams, The Calhoun Brothers & Ziggy ARE BACK!

In a successful return to the Bus Bar-B-Que stage, Jay Boy Adams tore it up again with his unique blend of Texas Rock, Country and Blues. Try as you might, placing Jay into a musical genre is a tough task. Our recommendation is to simply lie back and enjoy the music, which is exactly what the Friday evening audience did.

Interestingly, Jay (owner of Roadhouse Coaches) and his band were carried to the gig by an Entertainment Coach Company unit donated by Jerry Calhoun...go figure! As if that gesture were not enough, Jerry and his brother Jack (Florida Coach) flew in to the conference specifically to take the stage toward the end of Jay's performance and join in the fun. For those readers who were not aware, Jerry and Jack have been recording and performing since the very early days of our business. They regularly show up on stage with other artists - Willie Nelson is just one on the list. Their pure Country duets were clean, striking and memorable.

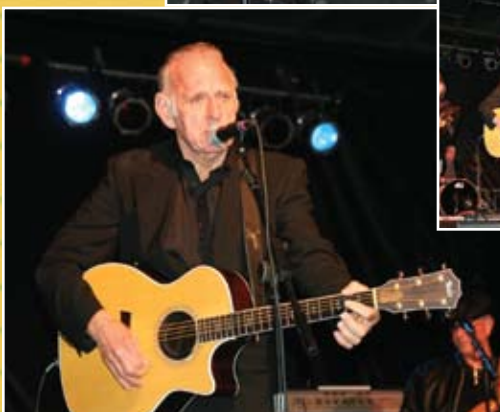
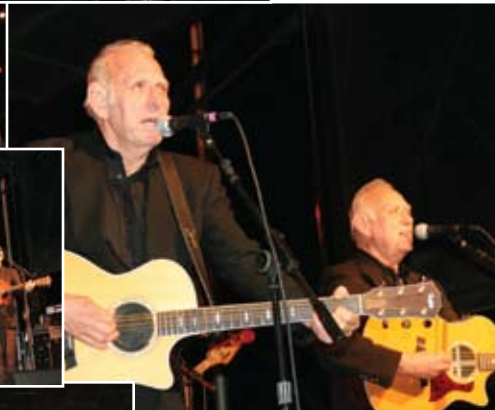
Another coach industry veteran, Ziggy (Ziggy's Coaches) also sat in with Jay, more than holding his own on a stage packed with consummate musicians. A former session player and side man with several major acts, Ziggy demonstrated his talent without upstaging any of the other performers.

Jay left the audience wanting to hear more of his original compositions. This writer's personal favorite was "Water for my Horses." Do yourselves a favor and get a copy of this song. It is

one of those timeless compositions that will stay with you long after you hear the music. I still catch myself singing the lyrics in my head when I'm doing a task or just chilling at home.

It is not rare to find our business populated by former musicians, especially the coach business. Other than Chip Huffman, I don't know any coach owners who are not as comfortable on the stage as they are behind the wheel. What

is rare is to find entrepreneurs who are still actively performing! Good for them. But better for those of us who got to listen. ●





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Photo: Tim McGraw & Faith Hill "Soul 2 Soul Tour 2007"



Tour Link Conference 2008

HOSPITALITY SUITE jan.25.2008

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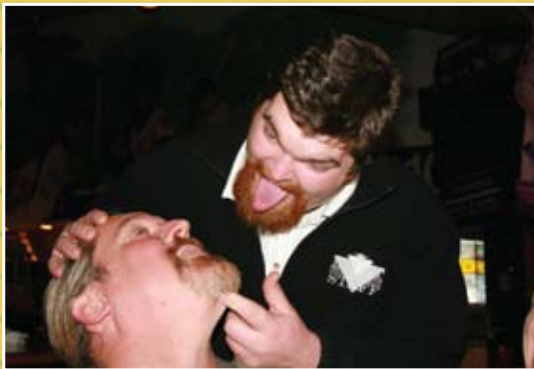
AFTER AFTER PARTY @ Sluggo's

Friday & Saturday Night jan.25-26.2008

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Hyatt West Hollywood, Grand Hyatt Seattle & Hyatt On
Capital Square Columbus



second row, left to right
The London Hotels sponsor
the Friday night Hospitality Suite
Access Pass & Design co-sponsor
the After After Parties at Sluggo's.
Everybody at the bar at Sluggo's.
Jay Sendyk always talking.





first row, left to right
 Brian Clark (EOG)
 Bob Fernholz & Melissa Diaz
 Mike Jones (EOG) & Jessi Wallace (TL staff)
 Fun time had by all at Sluggo's.



third row, left to right
 Sharon Larkins (Hyatt on Capital Square, Columbus)

Moe Padgett (EOG)
 Jim Bodenheimer (EgoTrips)
 Good times at the Hospitality Suite.
 Michelle Freedman rocks the Access Pass & Design banner
 Can I have this dance?



fourth row, left to right
 Oh Moe!

Kristin Searcy, Jessi Wallace & the lovely Peggy O'Neil (Phoenix Marriott Mesa Hotel)

Shockwave Cargo co-sponsor the After After Parties at Sluggo's.

fifth row, left to right
 Carl Cordes (Professional Wireless)

Allison Binnion & Bob Fernholz
 Chris Cogswell loving on Tony Stevens.

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Tour Link Conference 2008
Top Dog Award Show
 *Hyatt West Hollywood, Grand Hyatt Seattle & Hyatt On
 Capital Square Columbus

and the TOP DOG winners are...



FOH Engineer of the Year Ken "Pooch" Van Druten

This is the second year in a row FOH Engineer Ken "Pooch" Van Druten has won the Top Dog FOH Engineer of the Year Award. Last year he won for his work with Linkin Park and now this year for System of a Down. Pooch's past clients have included KISS, Kid Rock, Limp Bizkit, and Guns and Roses.

His discography as a recording engineer and producer includes several Platinum & Gold selling records as well as a Grammy Nomination as

recording engineer for the Tony Toni Tone record, "Sons of Soul."
evilentertainment.net.

Lighting Director of the Year Mac Mosier

Tour Link Top Dog Award winner Mac Mosier has been working in the industry for 34 years. He and 3 partners owned a small sound & light company, M & T Properties, doing shows locally in the south-east living in South Carolina. His company worked providing the P.A. and lighting for bands such as The Atlanta Rhythm Section, Parliament-Funkadelic, and The Commodores, doing college shows and small theaters. Eventually he went to work with an Atlanta based company named Red Wheeler Sound & Lights. There he stayed until 1980 designing and operating shows for bands like The Isley Brothers, Frankie Beverly & Maze, and Confunktion to name a few. He then went to work for Showlights until '83 and then moved to Los Angeles with Vari*Lite.

Mosier met Roy Bennett on the Prince "Purple Rain" Tour. He has been working primarily with Roy for 24 years now along with some of the other designers in the industry. Lately he has been with Madonna, Faith Hill and currently with The Spice Girls which are all Roy Bennett designs.

"I've had the pleasure to work with a lot of people over the years and Roy has been a great friend to me, enthuses Mosier. " He has an uncanny sense of color and visual design that I have the pleasure to operate. Once again it was his design of which I am up for this award and certainly appreciate the consideration from Tour Guide and Tour Link!"

Monitor Engineer of the Year Bill Szocska

Here is a shot of Bill taken during the Jimmy Buffett Live in Anguilla Concert/DVD shoot.



"Thanks again for the award. I am honored."

Bill A. Szocska



Video Director of the Year Deb Collins

Deb Collins was born and raised in the industrious city of Detroit, in spectacular Michigan, where she still resides. Her start in Video Production began at the tender age of 15, under the tutelage of the renowned Russ Gibb in Dearborn Public Schools. The Program was, and is, a unique learning experience, which turns out talented students and awards for their efforts, year after year.

Professionally, Deb has been fortunate to cover territory in Commercial Film, Television, and currently Touring/Live Event Shows. Owing her success to both her company and predecessors, Deb was able to achieve the intent of working for top-notch artists as well as having the support of excellent crews. She honed her craft by training under some of the most prominent Industry Directors in the touring world. In her own words, "You're only as good as the people around you." Thanks to all those who helped make the Josh Groban Tour a success!



Video Company of the Year Nocturne Productions Todd Lepere accepts the award

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Lighting Company of the Year Upstaging Jenni Clark accepts the award

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technicians, and the best professional staff in the industry.

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Production Manager of the Year Chris Kansy

I have gotten to know and have learned from most of the nominees for this award over the years. I am proud of the relationships I have created and the knowledge we have shared.

There is one other production manager I need to mention who has been an important model in my career. In 1985, I met Joe Lennane while working for local bands in the Connecticut circuit. I looked up to Joe because he was one of us who had made it to a higher level in the industry. Joe took me under his wing and helped me get my start with Joan Jett & the Blackhearts. By 1987 I was Joan's production manager taking what Joe taught me and figuring the rest out for myself. I'm not sure where I would be today if I hadn't met Joe. I am just one of many successful people in this industry with a similar story. I dedicate this award to him. As Joe did, I learned that the role of a production manager is to create a strong working environment for the crew. The success of the road crew translates directly to the success of the Artist. I live by that.

Thank you to all who voted for me. Thank you to Tour Guide for creating this forum that honors the hard work we have dedicated our lives to.

Chris Kansy



Lighting Designer of the Year Bryan Hartley

Bryan Hartley is certainly in high demand in the lighting world. His CV includes Lighting Design for so many artists that it boggles the mind. KISS, Marilyn Manson, Aerosmith, NIN, Alice In Chains, Meat Loaf, and even

Trisha Yearwood.

The work that has made him even more legendary in the industry is his Trans-Siberian Orchestra designs. No one can see this show and not be blown away by the dance of sound and lights that make the show so memorable. Hartley is soon to begin a world tour with long-time client KISS. bryanhartley.com



Stage Manager of the Year Award Tom Battista

Tom Battista 'lucked' into the business by volunteering for a show in Indianapolis in 1972 and ended up in New York building a nightclub - The Bottom Line. He first toured as a carpenter on David Bowie's "Diamond Dogs Tour" in 1973. Tom is probably best known for his work as stage manager for Jimmy Buffett, a job he has held for the past fifteen years. "I

enjoy what I do so much that it doesn't seem like work!" said Tom, referring to his love of his job and the lifestyle it has brought over the years. "Jimmy Buffett, through his foundation "Singing For Change", influenced me to get involved in my own community in Indianapolis and help make a change", said Tom.

Today Tom Battista is a member of the Art and Streetscape Committee for the Massachusetts Avenue Arts & Theatre District, a board member for Riley Area Development CDC that develops 'affordable housing', and is the founding President of the Indianapolis Theatre Fringe Festival (IndyFringe), a member of IATSE since 1973, and associate of E1 Limited full service production company located in NYC.

Tour Accountant of the Year Sunil Sinha

Working as tour accountant for Rod Stewart since 2004 and also Lionel Richie, Sunil Sinha has spent all of his adult life working in the entertainment business.

Beginning as a box office teller in the mid-80's at Pine Knob Music Theatre, he worked his way to become a production manager for the Nederlander Organization. In 1991 Sunil went to work for Irv Zuckerman in St. Louis spending 12 years working as a promoter's representative in the midwest. In 2003 an opportunity with Concerts West/AEG allowed him to focus on just the financial side of the industry with Fleetwood Mac. He continues to enjoy the opportunities that now take him internationally while working for Rod Stewart. Touring with Rod Stewart has become a fulltime endeavor as the legendary Artist continues to work solidly year after year. Christmas each year affords him time to continue to work with Mannheim Steamroller as their promoter; a relationship that is now 10 years strong. Sunil currently lives in St. Louis, Missouri with his girlfriend Lauren and their 2 dogs Gretzky and LeRoy. They are happily awaiting the arrival of their first child.



Tour Manager of the Year Fitzjoy Hellin

It seemed just yesterday... a Sunday afternoon at a matinee punk rock show in Belgium where I felt my life and trying to educate and see myself in a medical environment was not going anywhere. I had been spending most of my spare time in '88 promoting punk rock shows and finals for my nursing degree where coming up. So when given the opportunity to jump aboard the smelly van and join this NYC punk rock band on their alternative squat underground tour through-

out Europe, to keep them company and help drive I was IN. Four years and about 20 something times around Europe later, with alternative underground American punk and hardcore bands, I ended up living in Italy.

I studied studio sound engineering at Fonoprint Studios in Bologna for a year. I took the studio knowledge to the road, moved to Berlin in '92 and started engineering all my clients as a learning curve. With a come back of 'punk rock' in the 90's a lot of fairly new American based bands all a sudden hit top 40, the next thing I knew, I was tour managing and FOH engineering the top 2 bands of that revival, Rancid in 93 and the Offspring followed in 94. With the 2 bands managed by the same manager, calendars linked greatly, I ended up the next 7 years between both bands. They imported me into the US, got me a green card, and at some point early on, I turned out to be a better tour manager / accountant than a sound engineer. The hobby turned into a real job with responsibilities and a real paycheck.

After the Smashing Pumpkins breakup in 2001, I got a little bored with the 'rock band' routine and when my partner Jerome Crooks had to pass on Freddy Demann's latest project in 2002, the new challenge I was looking for found me. After promoting Shakira's English language album launch in 2002, the pop world opened up to me. Challenges never heard of before presented themselves to me one after another. The promotion lasted over a year and was followed by a major international concert tour. I enjoyed the mix of the last minute everything chaos and the workaholic attitude

of most of the pop tours and long promotional tours, rather than the entertainment filled rock tours, so the likes of Gwen Stefani, Jennifer Lopez, and Kt Tunstall followed. I dedicated most of my life so far to the comfort of the entertainers that employ me, and my usual goal is to create what I have not been able to do in real life. Create a family atmosphere, a work place where everyone likes to be by choice, so these tours can last long as they need to be and end peacefully. I am turning 40 next year, and that brings me to 2 decades on the road. I will continue to lead tours probably for the remainder of my life. Nothing is better than turning a hobby into a job. I'm currently taking a small break but soon will be out there again with new challenges.



Fitzjoy Hellin



Pyro Company of the year
Pyrotek

Doug Adams accepts the award

There is a fine line between art and arson and with over 25 years of experience in the special effects industry, Pyrotek Special Effects Inc. walks that line with ease. While creating world-class displays and custom designs,

Pyrotek continuously creates new and innovative ideas in special effects. Specializing in close proximity indoor pyrotechnics, permanent installations and fireworks displays, creative designs are provided for a number of industries including touring productions, sporting events, hotel and nightclub installations, award shows, corporate functions, theatre, movies and television, theme parks, and permanent installations worldwide.

In addition to renowned pyrotechnic displays, Pyrotek also offers laser and water screen effects through its sister companies, Laser Design Productions and Aqua Visual FX Inc. All three companies operate out of two facilities, located in Toronto and Las Vegas, and have provided effects for Metallica, Justin Timberlake, Trans-Siberian Orchestra, Van Halen, Spice Girls, KISS, Chris Brown, Fall Out Boy, The Grammy Awards, BET Awards, Detroit Red Wings, St. Louis Blues, Rogers Cup, Grey Cup, UFC, TNA, and many more. pyrotekfx.com



Regional Production Company of the Year
Jonas Productions

Steve Flatt accepts the award

Jonas Productions is a corporate and concert service company. They have been providing high quality

audio and backline instruments for their clients since 1987.

No matter the location, Jonas Productions has the wide ranging experience and knowledge base to draw on. From Canada to Australia, Europe and Asia, their success in the international arena means your production will be memorable for all the right reasons.



Service Company of the Year
Cube Services

Dave Paiva accepts the award



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We could not have done it without you.

It seems like only yesterday, when we approached so many of you to jump on the CUBE bandwagon. Not only did you, but so many others have come along for the ride too.

We are humbled by your faith, trust and belief in us. Not only does it make us warm and fuzzy inside, it gives us the motivation to do nothing but the BEST for you.

We are eternally grateful to all of you for being part of our family.

Lots of love,

The staff of Cube Services
cubepasses.com

Sound Company of the Year
Clair/Showco

Clair Brothers Systems began providing professional audio products and installations to the expanding market, and the projects region successfully expanded outside the US. The strategy was to make available the same products that have made the Clair Brothers touring division successful and to develop new items that would be welcomed by the public, small touring companies and various venues. As the demand grew, the focus was not merely sales, but systems, which were completely designed, built, and installed.



Staging/Rigging Company of the Year
Accurate Staging

Bobby Schneider accepts the award

Accurate Staging is a full-service staging and production company located in the Los Angeles area. They specialize in custom stages and sets that are setting the industry standard and feature the most sophisticated

rental decking system in the industry. They offer full-service truss and rigging packages to meet any design criteria. Their fabricating team are experts in all areas of design and construction and their custom sets and stages are available for rent or sale. Look for their new office to open in Nashville, TN in early 2008.

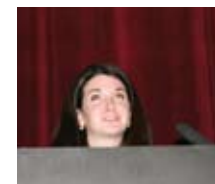
accuratestaging.com



Manufacturer of the Year
Vari*Lite

Inspired by the magic of moving light and changing color, Vari-Lite set about creating complete lighting systems that add subtle nuance or brilliant spectacle to any event. The company offers designers the ultimate tool for creating lighting moments to remember.

Since the beginning, Vari-Lite has led the world in automated lighting technology; developing pioneering products with an unrivaled reputation. Today, lighting professionals in theatre, television, concerts, motion pictures, corporate shows and advertising, look to Vari-Lite for inspiration and support for their productions. vari-lite.com



Trucking Company of the Year
Upstaging

Jenni Clark accepts the award

With Upstaging, you get more than just a truck and a driver. They provide more than 30 years experience, the finest company owner tractors and trailers, reliable professional drivers, extensive insurance coverage and a logistics staff on-call 24 hours a day.

To reduce their carbon footprint, Upstaging has made substantial investments in Auxiliary Power Units for all its vehicles. They are currently the only industry trucking company to have every tractor equipped with APU. upstaging.com/trucking



Coach Company of the Year **Senators Coach**

John Aiken accepts the award

For over thirty-five years, Senators has provided safe, comfortable and reliable transportation for the premier names in the entertainment industry. Those clients expect coaches that are built with the finest and most comfortable interiors available, and they know that Senators will exceed their expectations. They have one of the largest fleets in the industry, and spare no cost in its coach quality and comfort.

Senators' fleet is exclusively Prevosts, and new coaches are regularly added. They constantly update their interiors so their clients have the best amenities, the largest safety features and the most comfortable mode of transportation available.



Coach Conversion Co. of the Year **Roberts Brothers Coaches**

Gary Roberts accepts the award

The Roberts Brothers are large scale visionaries sharing the collective concepts of development in phases. They constantly consider new methods of streamlining their operations and services offered to their clients. The near future holds many exciting advances in technology, design, and operations that will be rolled out in subsequent phases. robertsbroscoach.com

Personal Transportation **Company of the Year** **Enterprise Rent-A-Car** **Entertainment Division**

Cindy Staub accepts the award

Enterprise Rent-A-Car's Entertainment Division specializes in meeting the rental needs of the entertainment industry. We work with many different production companies, entertainment travel agencies, music tours, promoters, record labels, producers and artist management companies. Cindy Staub and Bryn Weller focus on the specific needs of the music industry. Our network of over 6500 rental branches allow us the ability to offer one call service for any and all car, truck, and van rental needs across North America. We not only provide great rates but excellent customer service with a smile.

Cindy.Staub@erac.com



Bryn.A.Weller@erac.com



Crew Hotel of the Year **Sportsmen's Lodge**

Donna Russo accepts the award

The Sportsmen's Lodge Hotel engages and delights travelers of all types. We provide the perfect place to stay and play in Los Angeles-in the heart of Studio City, and just a 15-minute drive from the Burbank airport, Hollywood, Beverly Hills and the beach. Located on dynamic Ventura Blvd, the Sportsmen's Lodge Hotel is nestled between exclusive

boutiques and fine restaurants. We have become the favorite for the Entertainment Industry. Our location and bus parking work well for our music industry professionals.

Michael Spencer, our new General Manager, comes to us from the Grafton Hotel in West Hollywood. Michael and the hotel employees are seasoned professionals with the Entertainment Industry. The Sportsmen's Lodge Hotel's staff would like to take this opportunity to thank the Music Industry and Tour Guide for voting us best crew hotel 2006 and 2007.

For any overnight accommodation needs, please call Donna Russo at 818-769-4700 x 255. The Sportsmen's Lodge Hotel also offers on-site catering services for all types of meetings and events. We look forward to welcoming you to the new and improved Sportsmen's Lodge Hotel.

Tour Guide you Rock!!

Sportsmen's Lodge Staff
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Artist Hotel of the Year Award **Atheneum Suite Hotel Detroit, MI**

Cherie Henry accepts the award

"I would like to thank everyone that nominated the Atheneum Suite Hotel. We were very excited to be nominated and thrilled to have won the Top Dog Award. Thank you to all that voted for us! I personally have worked very hard to make sure

that each and every guest is given the best service and a face to go with the hotel. I am lucky to be the face. The entertainment market is a very exciting market to work in and it has been my pleasure to work with so many Artists!"

Cherie Henry
Director of Sales
Atheneum Suite Hotel
atheneumsuites.com

Large Venue of the Year **US Airways Center**

With soaring glass walls, a 12x20 foot video screen and over 14,000 square feet of indoor space, the new Pavilion creates a grand entrance to the "all-new" U S Airways Center that leaves a lasting impression on all guests.

A uniquely flexible indoor/outdoor venue, the Bud Light PASEO features state-of-the-art sound and projection systems, as well as a stylish bar area and facilities for full stage shows.

As the premiere entertainment venue in the Arizona, US Airways Center hosts a variety of year round events to provide your guests' the perfect combination of entertainment to meet their interests.



2007 TOP DOG AWARD winners

Small Venue of the Year Gibson Amphitheatre at Universal Citywalk

For 35 years, reaching more than 17 million people, the Amphitheatre has been the place for music for both performers and fans. The Gibson Amphitheatre seats over 6,000 fans with the best sight lines and acoustics in the industry. Virtually every star in every musical genre has graced the stage, from Eric Clapton to George Lopez, Beastie Boys to Frank Zappa, No Doubt to Kanye West. The Amphitheatre is also the site for events of worldwide interest, hosting a Pope as well as four Presidents. The Amphitheatre also provides a perfect home for awards shows and fundraisers: MTV Music Awards, Teen Choice Awards, VH1 Honors, the Academy of Country Music Awards, HBO's Comic Relief, NAACP Image Awards, Video Game awards and AIDS Project Los Angeles' Commitment to Life events have all shined at Gibson Amphitheatre at Universal CityWalk.

Gibson Amphitheatre at Universal CityWalk puts on over a hundred shows a year - entertaining over 500,000 fans year-round!
gibsonamp.com



Platinum Award Winner Marty Hom

More than anything I would like to share the award and acknowledge all my road managers and assistants who have worked with me over the past years, most of whom have gone on to be successful tour managers in their own right. I am

proud of all of them and I could not have done this without them: Alan Tate, Bobby Herr, Steve Brumbach, Glenn Matthews, Mindi Pelletier, Ralph Viera, Jerome Crooks, James Taylor, Dennis Sharp, Rome Reddick, Dave Rahn, JJ Erlichman and Fred Kharazzi.

I am going to share this with all of them and, just like the Stanley Cup. I will send each of them the Platinum Award to keep for a month.

Marty Hom



Platinum Award introduced by last year's winner, Danny Zelisko



Top Dog Lifetime Achievement Award Alice Cooper

With 40 plus years of touring under his bullet belt, Alice Cooper was on hand to receive the Top Dog Lifetime Achievement Award. Having worked over the years with many of the people in attendance, Alice was gracious enough to accept the award and thank the crowd for helping him continue to be successful after so many years on the road.



Tour Guide 2007 Sound Company of the Year.



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CHRIS BROWN CONTINUED FROM P. 14

appearance on the American Music Awards explained; “*He strikes me as professional. At the age of 18 he’s into all aspects and was very descriptive, it was very impressive... he knows what he wants and was a pleasure to work with.*” ☺

ment is clean and well-maintained. All ShowPro/GFI tractor/trailers come complete to the customer with straps, loadbars and accessories, and they can accommodate any special requests as well.

As for their drivers, Pumphrey and Bergmann handpick them. They must have a minimum of 5 years driving experience, but many of them have as much as twenty years on the road behind the wheel of a big rig.

“We’re looking to build relationships, and to grow with our customers,” says Pumphrey. “We are the company that will back up what we say, and we take enormous pride and care in doing a great job.”

Pumphrey and Bergmann are courting even more tour business for the future, and are currently in talks with several upcoming shows for the 2008 season. Meanwhile, during the dreary winter months when the concert season dwindles, ShowPro/GFI services the tradeshow circuit and takes production one-offs to tide them over until the touring season is back in full swing. ☺

and I had a VIP that needed to use the sauna. They refused, so I told them that they could call the Fox Theater and tell them that the concert is cancelled because you won’t let him use your sauna for 15 minutes. Long story short, I was able to get the artist in and he was able to perform. That was probably one of my harder requests. And it happened at 5 o’clock for a 7:30 show.

MPM: Wow. Talk about feeling the pressure!

CH: Yeah, I mean I actually drove him there and waited on him then drove him to the venue.

MPM: And I’m sure the show went on successfully, all because of you!

CH: Yes, he actually hugged me and thanked me. He sent me a personal note of thanks. He recognized that it wasn’t just going to the sauna. There was a lot more to it.

MPM: I’m sure they’ll remember that the next time they’re in town.

CH: I had another guest who wanted Snapdragons from a garden in their room. It’s fun trying to meet and exceed the needs of the entertainers.

MPM: Wow! It sounds like you’re able to step up to a challenge.

CH: I’d rather under promise than under perform. Entertainment is fast and furious and last minute and I think you just have to be able to roll with it. Another thing we offer exclusively to our entertainment guest is a comp pass for the brand new YMCA. It’s 90,000 sq ft with three pools, 24 ft rock climbing wall, running track and trails, and wireless meeting rooms. The shuttle will take them there or they can walk the three blocks. It’s a tough job being an entertainer on the road and this way they can stay healthy. ☺

LOOK SOLUTIONS CONTINUED FROM P. 13

and use a siphon tank which is much smaller than a dewer. That option was really important for us. Working on Broadway, real estate is always a huge issue and the compact size of the CRYO-FOG was great. We also learned that we could control the sound of the system fairly easily, too.” ☺

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