

volume 7 issue 1 2014

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Henry Bordeaux and
Artisan Trucking



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Photos by Bran Safer



Photo by Hank Woods

FROM THE *Publisher*



2014??? What happened to 2013? Perhaps it is a sign of aging, but it seems to me as though last year flew by at the speed of sound and here we are ready for our annual Tour Link Conference. An incredible amount of time and effort has gone into planning the conference this year. I cannot thank everyone enough for their hard work and tireless dedication. Please be sure to help me in thanking the incredible Tour Link Staff (found on page 13) for the great work that they do.

We kick off this year with the Nine Inch Nails tour. Without question, this was one of the premier productions of the year. Featured in this issue are our dear friends and Tour Link Conference Co-Title Sponsors, PRG/Nocturne, Award Show Sponsors, Senators Coach and long-time supporters and friends, Latitude 45 Catering Company. While we love profiling new up-and-coming companies, we like to revisit the "Big Dogs" now and then and this group certainly qualifies.

Also in this issue is a profile on our own Henry Bordeaux and his recent work on the Miguel tour. He had a challenging opportunity to create a "big show" in a small space as part of the Drake tour, and we fill you in on the details. Part of this feature focuses on how openers and headliners can work together, and we hope this will open the door to additional panel discussion at Tour Link. Included in this coverage is a feature on Artisan Transport, a company quickly making their way up the ranks of trucking companies in our business.

In addition we have a couple of conversations with Production Manager and Event Safety Alliance's, Jim Digby. We hope that you will take time to read our expanded coverage on the Event Safety Alliance and a number of new initiatives and partnerships that will be launched and discussed while at Tour Link. The Event Safety Alliance is helping all of us to work more safely and we all need to be a part of the discussion and action plan. We are dedicated to working closely with this organization and will continue to provide expanded coverage as well as opportunities for engagement with them while at Tour Link.

Please be sure to check out our four page Center Spotlite on Gallagher Staging in this issue. They are a true testament to everything that is right in this business.

Many of you will be receiving this issue while attending Tour Link. If you are there, enjoy yourselves and learn all you can while you can. If you were unable to attend, we will recap the conference in our next issue and have photos and videos on the website as soon!

Publisher
Larry Smith



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PRODUCTION
by TOUR GUIDE

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event
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alliance

2014: A Look Ahead

by Jacob Worek

With the arrival of Tour Link 2014, we mark the two-year anniversary of the unveiling of the Event Safety Alliance. Thanks to the overwhelming support of professionals like you, what began as a small group of concerned individuals has become a thousands-strong voice for safety and responsibility in an industry more often identified with its excesses. Together, we've begun to change the way people perceive safety in the event world, and started a conversation that we hope will positively influence the direction of the industry for years to come. As we enter our third year of existence, the Event Safety Alliance continues to build on our past successes, with a number of important announcements and activities planned for 2014.

Partnership with Fireman's Fund Insurance

The Event Safety Alliance is pleased to announce that we have entered

into a strategic partnership with Fireman's Fund Insurance. Fireman's Fund Insurance is the leading provider of insurance services to the entertainment and special-events industry. Founded in 1863, Fireman's Fund began as an organization dedicated to helping the families of fallen firefighters. Although the scope of their services has expanded throughout the years, Fireman's Fund has never forgotten their founding mission of supporting those who protect others. We are honored that they see a similar dedication in the mission of the Event Safety Alliance, and have pledged their support to help us protect the lives and livelihoods of those working in live events.

OSHA 10 and 30 Training for the Event Industry

In consultation with the Event Safety Alliance, Arizona State University's Western OSHA Education Center has developed the nation's first OSHA 10 and 30 Hour OSHA Outreach Construction courses tailored to the live event industry. These programs provide OSHA-recognized training for workers and employers on the identification, avoidance and prevention of workplace safety hazards, with a focus on those conditions commonly encountered during the production of live events. The creation of these courses demonstrates Arizona State University's understanding of the unique challenges our industry faces, as well as their leadership in helping to improve safety in the event world. It is our hope that ASU's program will serve as a model for similar training programs across the country. For more information on these groundbreaking programs, contact the Western OSHA Education Center at (480)727-5024 or www.asuotiec.org

The Event Safety Alliance Institute and "Summit for Safety"

This weeklong safety leadership training will take place in December at the headquarters of TAIT Towers in Lititz, Pennsylvania. Made possible in part through the generous sup-

port of Fireman's Fund Insurance, participants in this program will learn not only what it takes to be good safety practitioners, but also how to be an effective safety LEADER. Successful completion of this program will result in an accredited certification in event safety leadership, as well as the OSHA 10 Construction for a Live Events certificate. The event will also feature a tradeshow showcasing the latest in safety-related equipment and services. Space for this inaugural event will be limited to 50 participants. However, we hope to expand this program to additional markets over the coming years, with designs on creating a year-round "Event Safety Alliance Institute". More information on the "Summit for Safety" will be released in the coming weeks.

Establishment Event Safety Trade Association and Donor-level Memberships

The Event Safety Alliance has experienced incredible growth over the last two years. In order to continue this success, the Event Safety Alliance has undergone the process of becoming the industry's first 501(c)(3) safety trade organization. As part of this evolution, we now offer donor-level memberships to the Event Safety Alliance. For an annual membership fee of \$249, Alliance members will receive a copy of The Event Safety Guide, inclusion in the ESA's online professional database, discounts on select ESA programs and events, and exclusive offers from our growing list of partner organizations. Most importantly, becoming a donor-level member will allow you to help the Event Safety Alliance develop additional resources and training programs and to promote our message of life safety first in this country and around the world.

Public Availability of The Event Safety Guide

Since its unveiling this past November, many people have inquired as to when The Event Safety Guide will be available to the general public. We are happy

to report that the guide can now be purchased in print and digital formats through the Event Safety Alliance website, as well as at online retailers such as Amazon, iTunes, and Barnes and Noble. Additionally, an agreement with Skyhorse Publishing will allow The Event Safety Guide to be distributed in brick and mortar bookstores throughout the country, further expanding its reach.

These are just a few of the exciting developments we have in store for 2014. To stay abreast with all the latest news and information regarding the Event Safety Alliance, please visit our website at:

www.eventsafetyalliance.org

Here's to another safe and successful year. Be safe out there.

Western OSHA Education Center at Arizona State University to offer Event Focused training

Arizona State University is taking the lead in event safety education by offering the nation's first OSHA 10 and 30 hour OSHA Outreach Construction courses tailored to the live event and special event industry.

After consulting with the Event Safety Alliance, James Rodgers and the leadership of the Western OSHA Education Center created this program to match the requirements of OSHA's Construction Outreach training program.

The OSHA Outreach Training Program for the Construction Industry provides training for workers and employers on the recognition, avoidance, abatement, and prevention of safety and health hazards in workplaces

in the construction industry.

"The Event Safety Alliance is excited to be part of this groundbreaking educational opportunity," said Jim Digby, Executive Director of the Event Safety Alliance. "For a university such as ASU to recognize the value of this training and to take the initiative to create this program speaks volumes about ASU's leadership."

Arizona State University has a long history of live event success. From major concerts to Presidential visits; to being one of the largest film production sets, to hosting Super Bowl XXX, Arizona State University has come of age with the live event industry.

Adding Live Event safety education is a natural fit for this world class educational institution. The Western OSHA Education Center at Arizona State University is part of the Ira Fulton School of Engineering.

"We recognized early on that the Event Safety Alliance was advancing the cause of this specialized area of the construction industry. ASU is proud to be supporting the men and women of the live event and special event industry," commented ASU's Jim Rogers.

The 10-hour class is intended for entry level workers, while the 30-hour class is more appropriate for supervisors or workers with some safety responsibility. Through this training, OSHA helps to ensure that workers are more knowledgeable about workplace hazards and their rights, and contribute to our nation's productivity.

For more information, the Western OSHA Education Center can be reached at:

**480-727-5024 or
www.asuotiec.org**



A New Partnership to Promote Safer Events

By: Fireman's Fund Insurance

Fireman's Fund Insurance Company, a leading insurer of the entertainment industry, has entered a new partnership with the Event Safety Alliance. "It's important to lead the charge as we all take responsibility for ensuring that everyone involved in producing events has the proper education and tools to make them safe," said Lauren Bailey, Fireman's Fund Entertainment Division Vice President.

Two years ago, entertainment industry members and safety experts founded the ESA with a mission to create a common safety protocol for assessing hazards and controls at live events in the United States. The group's long term goal is to promote safer events through training and education.

The ESA's initial focus has been the development of The Event Safety Guide, providing best practices for every aspect of live events. A diverse team comprised of tour managers, stage technicians, weather experts, firefighters, legal experts, insurance professionals and other event safety experts, synthesized information from several established safety guides into a single document that is easy to understand and apply.

"We are grateful for the support from Fireman's Fund on this important initiative. This is just the beginning. Their sponsorship allows us to distribute The Event Safety Guide more broadly as well as build training tools and an accreditation program. Together we will make the productions of live events infinitely safer for all involved," said Jim Digby, Founding Member and President of the Event Safety Alliance.

To order The Event Safety Guide and to stay up to speed with the latest ESA developments, visit:

www.eventsafetyalliance.org.

You can also follow ESA on LinkedIn and Twitter.



Weather Decision Technologies, Inc.

by Steve Miller

In the early morning hours of June 8, 2012, Linkin Park tour management was notified that the band's headlining appearance at the Nova Rock Festival in Nickelsdorf, Austria might be interrupted by hazardous weather. Expected impacts of the storm included lightning, severe wind gusts and heavy rain.

As the day progressed, festival attendance grew to over 60,000 people. Bands filtered fluidly across multiple stages. However, at 4pm local time, Tour Manager Jim Digby received an additional alert that two of his predetermined criteria for lightning and wind would be exceeded, meeting his predetermined criteria for delaying a show. The forecasted severe weather conditions would enter the area within an hour.

At the venue level, promoters safely evacuated the crowd to more protective camping areas while the band activated their StormReady plan, remaining on their tour bus pending further notification. Well after this plan was initiated, the Austrian equivalent of the U.S. National Weather Service issued a Severe Thunderstorm Warning for the area – far too late to ensure safe evacuation of such a large crowd. By being "Storm Ready", Linkin Park management had avoided a potentially catastrophic situation.

Earlier that year, Digby commissioned a specialized team of expert meteorologists called "WeatherOps," employed by Weather Decision

Technologies (WDT) in Norman, OK. This agreement guaranteed that not only were venue and band-level operations be warned of threatening weather in order to protect fans, talent and assets, they were also advised of the expected duration of the situation. This particular storm would pass out of the festival area within 30 minutes, allowing the show to continue and avoiding the potential for significant revenue loss.

WeatherOps meteorologists updated the forecast during the weather event, determining that winds would not exceed preset threshold levels. Digby stated, "Not only did we evacuate the event side, keeping everyone safe, but knowing that the wind would not exceed thresholds after the weather passed, allowed the band to take the stage. Without WDT WeatherOps, I would have canceled the show entirely."

Large venue management is an all-encompassing balance of facilities, personnel and the ticket-buying public. WDT's WeatherOps team works alongside touring artists, venue managers and production companies, varying the information disseminated based upon precise weather triggers and the specific needs of each client. Forecasts and alerts are provided to key personnel via multiple push alert types, and at any time tour management maintains direct phone access to a Meteorologist 24/7.

For more information on WDT WeatherOps, please visit:

www.wdtinc.com



Do I Really Need to write an Emergency Plan?

by Joseph Pred/David VandenHeuvel

Prior to setting sail, Captain EJ Smith was quoted; "When any one asks me how I can best describe my experiences of nearly forty years at sea I merely say uneventful. Of course, there have been winter gales and storms and fog and the like, but in all my experience I have never been in an accident of any sort worth speaking about. I have seen but one vessel in distress in all my years at sea, a brig, the crew of which was taken off in a small boat in charge of my third officer. I never saw a wreck and have never been wrecked, nor was I ever in any predicament that threatened to end in disaster of any sort. " I will say that I cannot imagine any condition which could cause a ship to founder. I cannot conceive of any vital disaster happening to this vessel. Modern shipbuilding has gone beyond that." (Captain USS Titanic).

At times we all think some of the same thoughts when it comes to safety and planning – "It will NEVER happen to me". We also know that the time to write and develop a plan is not when the tornado warning sirens are sounding, or, as a shooter is moving through the crowd. The best time is before you ever hit the road, or well before the first roadie begins to unload that case. Federal OSHA and at least 24 states require written safety plans for specific workplace activities.

In addition to spending time writing your Safety and Emergency action plans, reviewing and practicing them is necessary as well. OSHA recommends that each written plan include the following elements:

- Policy or goals statement
- List of responsible persons
- Hazard identification
- Hazard controls and safe practices
- Emergency and accident response

- Employee training and communication
- Recordkeeping

There is now an organization that can help you write your plans, manage your documents, and keep all your recordkeeping in one centralized place. Event Safety Operations (ESO) is putting together a set of templates and tools to ensure that you're ready for the iceberg before you set sail. As veterans of the live event industry, we can customize these plans/templates to your individual needs. Venue, Artist, or Touring Manager - we can help! Contact us at:

www.eventsafetyops.com



Joseph Pred has been affiliated with the Event Safety Alliance since 2012. His background is strongly rooted in emergency and risk management, serving almost 18 years as the Chief of Emergency Services for the Burning Man festival and as the founder and CEO for Mutual Aid Response Services for that past 14 years. His consulting work has included the largest festivals and EDM events in the world. Joseph is also an author and regularly speaks at conferences on matters of public safety and temporary mass gatherings.



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OSA International, Inc.



OSA International, Inc., one of the industry's leading audio visual solutions provider for live events and entertainment, is proud to be the Tour Link 2014 Conference Title Sponsor. Tour Link is the event of the year for concert and touring professionals, as well as those in related industries. As OSA continues growing in this market, we feel being a part of Tour Link is an important way for the company to show its support and dedication to the industry.

Importance of Sponsoring

This industry needs more events and networking opportunities, such as Tour Link. Too often we lose sight of the importance of simply getting together with peers. By supporting these types of events, we get the opportunity to share experiences as well as the "face time" Tour Link stimulates. The industry is vast - and as a whole, we rarely get the chance to interact with each other as everyone is running across the country (and the globe) in small packs to the various venues and events. Tour Link gives all of us an opportunity to get together and share experiences, issues and solutions.

Continued support for education and mentoring is critical for this industry as it continues to mature. Tour Link provides the opportunity for industry professionals to learn about what's ahead in the next generation and find support as well as new mentors, teachers and potential employment. OSA wants these efforts to continue and Tour Link is a premier platform for these efforts to grow and make our industry stronger.

Additionally, the "Top Dog" Awards show brings recognition to the unsung heroes of the industry - the movers and influencers who get little recognition for keeping all the tours on the road and rolling smoothly, year after year. Without Tour Link and the support of the sponsors, these people would not get their time in the spotlight next to their artists - the time they truly deserve.

OSA is proud to support Tour Link and all it stands for and hopes that this is the beginning of a long and strong relationship with Tour Link and Mobile Production Pro.



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TOUR LINK 2014 CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Thursday

From	To	Event Location
7:00 AM	2:00 PM	Golf Golf Course
12:00 PM	5:00 PM	Registration Ballroom Area
6:00 PM	9:00 PM	Opening Night Reception Fire Garden
9:00 PM	2:00 AM	Late Night Hospitality Shadows

Friday

7:30 AM		Early Morning Run	Front of Lobby
7:30 AM		Yoga	
7:30 AM	10:00 AM	Beverage Bar	Ballroom Area
Morning Beverage Bar with Coffee, Tea, Juice, and Water.			
8:00 AM	5:00 PM	Registration	Ballroom Area
8:00 AM	5:00 PM	Mentoring: 1 on 1	Coffee Garden
8:30 AM	4:30 PM	Dr. Dot Massage	Redbird J
8:30 AM	4:30 PM	Stage Hands Massage	Redbird L
9:00 AM	9:15 AM	Opening Remarks	Salt River 3

An action packed 15 minutes with Henry Bordeaux covering the days top stories.

9:30 AM 10:30 AM The Artform of Budgeting & Settlement Salt River 6

A workshop focused on the ancient artform of Budgeting and Settling. Discussing how to foresee the future, plan accordingly and implement standards into your tour. Settling is an artform much like the art of war. Come learn about various types of deals and what to look out for when settling any size show.

9:30 AM 10:30 AM Coach Association Quail

Closed Meeting - coach companies only

A meeting of the minds. A closed door meeting for coach companies to discuss the state of the union.

10:30 AM 10:45 AM Break
10:45 AM 12:00 PM The Design Process Salt River 3

In the design process we aspire to meet the demands and push the limits of a concept in an ever evolving industry. This panel will provide a comprehensive analysis of a tour from conception to reality.

10:45 AM 12:00 PM International Touring & Transportation Salt River 6

24 hours a day, 7 days a week wheels are turning, planes are flying, people are moving all over the world, all in the name of live music. Our team of specialist will cover the challenges and customs of international touring while looking at ways in which it can be done more efficiently.

10:45 AM 12:00 PM Travel Agents Quail

Closed Meeting - travel agents only

10:45 AM 12:00 PM Hotels Dove

Closed Meeting - hoteliers and hotel representatives only

12:00 PM 1:30 PM Lunch Break Middle Ballroom
1:00 PM 1:25 PM MusiCares Salt River 3

MusiCares® was established in 1989 by The Recording Academy® to provide a safety net of critical assistance for music people in times of need. MusiCares® offers a variety of resources aimed at providing support for financial, medical and personal emergencies.



1:25 PM 2:25 PM Closing the Gender Gap Salt River 6
The trajectory that needs to be successful to attain parity on tour, for women production managers, stage managers, all touring departments and the level of importance that production coordinators, VIP experience / public interface are to the matrix of a successful touring production.

1:30 PM 3:30 PM Change in the Air: The State of the Event Safety Alliance Salt River 3
Officially unveiled during Tour Link 2012, the Event Safety Alliance (ESA) was formed to draw attention to the critical issue of life safety at live events. Two years later, the ESA has evolved from a small consortium of concerned individuals into a thousands-strong voice for cultural change within the event industry. Join us as we make several exciting announcements regarding the future of the ESA, discuss solutions we have developed to help strengthen safety within our industry, and how you can become involved in growing and promoting this essential mission.

1:30 PM 2:30 PM A Case Study of Tour Taxation Quail
CAPS Vice President Ron Shirley will cover the key issues surrounding taxation on tours and how certain choices can affect the taxes tour staff pay.

1:30 PM 2:30 PM Hotels: Maximizing Event Space Dove
2:30 PM 3:30 PM Support for Support Salt River 6
An in depth discussion on the necessity of collaboration between support acts and the headliner. Our team of panelist will discuss ways in which support acts can overcome production challenges and budget restraints.

2:30 PM 3:30 PM The Challenges of Outdoor Sound Roadrunner
As local sound ordinance become more common at outdoor venues, how do audio companies maintain the quality that the client demands while also addressing the lack of understanding for audible emissions?

2:30 PM 3:00 PM Budget Workshop Dove

3:30 PM 3:45 PM Break

3:45 PM 5:00 PM You Can't Make This Shit Up Salt River 6

Over 18 only

A Tour Link favorite, the story telling session that will make you laugh in disbelief that the touring industry is capable of such things. You'll hear first hand accounts of some of the most outrageous things that have ever happened on tour. What's said in here stays in here. 18 and up only.

5:00 PM 6:00 PM Break

6:00 PM 9:00 PM Transportation BBQ Scottsdale Air Center

Saturday

7:30 AM Early Morning Run Front of Lobby

7:30 AM Yoga

8:00 AM 5:00 PM Registration Ballroom Area

8:00 AM 10:30 AM Beverage Bar Ballroom Area

Morning Beverage Bar with Coffee, Tea, Juice, and Water.

8:00 AM 5:00 PM Mentoring: 1 on 1 Coffee Garden

Interested in getting one-on-one mentoring? Whether you're a vendor, veteran, young gun, or new to Tour Link let us know what subject you'd like to know more about and we'll pair you up with an expert in that field.

Sign-up sheets will be located at registration. Mentors will be assigned based on availability.

8:30 AM 4:30 PM Dr. Dot Massage Redbird J

8:30 AM 4:30 PM Stage Hands Massage Redbird L

9:00 AM 9:15 AM Opening Remarks Salt River 3

An action packed 15 minutes with Henry Bordeaux covering the days top stories.

9:25 AM 9:55 AM Special - FX Salt River 3

Equipment, Safety, Logistics: The bigger the bang the better the show.

9:30 AM 10:30 AM Electronic Dance Music Salt River 6

Electronic Dance Music has rapidly progressed from a once isolated and splintered genre, to a \$4.5 Billion dollar industry. As the genre has grown so has the complexity of the tours. Our panel of experts will discuss the trends of the electronic dance music industry and the challenges currently being faced.

10:00 AM 12:00 PM "You Are the ESA" - An Event Safety Alliance Round Table Discussion
Salt River 3

Help set the direction of the Event Safety Alliance. Join other industry professionals for a sleeves up, open format discussion of the latest issues and trends in event safety. Discuss your ideas and concerns for the future of the Event Safety Alliance with leading members of the organization. All are encouraged to attend and make their voice heard as the ESA continues to build consensus and memorialize industry best practices.

10:30 AM 10:45 AM Break
10:35 AM 11:05 AM Weather how you want it, weather how you need it Salt River 6

It's time for the live entertainment world to have access to state-of-the-art weather that is specific to its needs. The impacts of weather on live events is obvious.

In this session we will discuss the many possibilities for improving weather observing and forecasting. This isn't your everyday generic weather forecast from someone or something far far away. This is weather information in your language for your issues by experts in the live entertainment and applied meteorology fields.

10:45 AM 12:00 PM Settlement Workshop Quail
10:45 AM 12:00 PM CASHét - Money for Nothing, Control for Free Dove

CASHét Card is the first custom credit card designed for the entertainment industry's multi-billion-dollar production sector. This workshop will provide an introduction to CASHét and the CASHét card.

11:10 AM 12:10 PM Audio: A Victim of Its Own Success? Salt River 6

In the beginning concerts were a spectacle of enormous walls of sound, lighting was static and video was still a concept. The panel will look more closely at the evolution of the audio industry and the challenges being faced as a result of technological improvements.

12:00 PM 1:30 PM Lunch Break Mdl Ballroom
1:30 PM 2:30 PM Tour Masters Q&A Salt River 3

An All Star cast of industry leaders with over 1000 years of combined experience will take the stage to pass on their wisdom and answer any questions you have for them. Everyone is welcome.

2:15 PM 3:30 PM I'm All Ears Roadrunner

In the music industry your ears are one of your most valuable assets. No one understands that more than industry veteran and In-Ear expert Mike Dias. With over 15 years of experience Mike will discuss the ways you can protect yourself while also providing valuable insight into the latest developments in earplug and In-Ear technology.

2:30 PM 3:30 PM Security Discussion Dove

The role and responsibilities of a security guard or security team are multifaceted and vital to an artist. In this workshop we'll walk you through the ways security procedure are written and executed; and discuss the ways those that work on the outside of the artist perimeter - i.e. hotel staff, travel agents, sales representatives etc. - can be accommodating to artist security.

2:35 PM 3:30 PM The Evolution of Event Medicine Salt River 3

Today, expert medical security for major sports and entertainment tours has become a key component of overall venue and personal security. These medical experts are not only specialists in day-to-day emergency care and related training, but also well-versed in travel, environmental, protective and tactical medicine as well as mitigation of mass casualty incidents, public health threats, infectious diseases, hazardous materials (haz-mat) challenges, toxicological poisonings and counter-terrorism events. In this talk, Dr. Paul Pepe, an event medical expert and advisor to major professional sports teams and entertainment tours will provide his recent experiences with dozens of mass gatherings and major national disasters and what he predicts the future holds for this evolving medical specialty.

2:35 PM 3:30 PM Travel Agents & Hotels Salt River 6

A lively discussion covering the relationship and protocols between the hotel, travel Agent, and the Tour. BYOB

3:30 PM 3:45 PM Break
3:45 PM 5:00 PM Ethical Touring Salt River 3

You won't want to miss this panel or your chance to get involved. Just A Bunch Of Roadies and the Hands That Rock will share their efforts and ways we can all pay it forward. Doing our part is as easy as making a phone call.

5:00 PM 6:00 PM Break
6:00 PM 8:00 PM Dinner
9:00 PM 11:00 PM Awards Show
11:00 PM 2:00 AM Late Night Hospitality

TOUR LINK 2014 STAFF



Larry Smith, Executive Producer



Lori Meadows,
Director of Operations



Wendy Catto,
Operations Assistant



Anna Cherry,
Creative Director/
Content Manager



Scott Delancey,
Video and Photography
Coordinator



Nick Gold,
Hospitality Coordinator



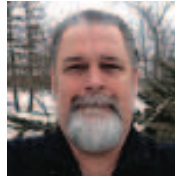
Henry Bordeaux,
Panel Sessions Coordi-
nator



Taylor Wettlaufer,
Panel Coordination



Joseph Farriella,
Production Manager



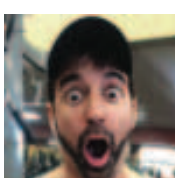
Jim Risgin,
Production Coordinator



Chuck Randall,
Master of Ceremonies



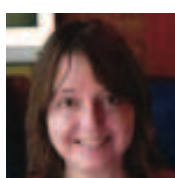
Michelle Pekrol,
Golf Tournament Coordinator



Dave Paiva,
Golf Tournament Coordinator



Melissa Allgood,
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LMG PROMOTES CRAIG MITCHELL TO DIRECTOR OF TOURING

Orlando, FL - LMG, Inc., a national provider of video, audio, and lighting support, announces the promotion of Craig Mitchell to director of touring. Mitchell directs the concert touring division for the firm, overseeing sales and management in all office locations, with a focus on ensuring customer satisfaction, developing client relationships, and planning long term strategy for future growth.



Mitchell joined LMG in 2008 as part of LMG's logistics team, coordinating audio equipment for clients worldwide. Shortly after he started, LMG launched LMG Touring, and he began developing clients for the newly formed division, including tours for Train, Fall Out Boy, Smashing Pumpkins, and Boys Like Girls, to name a few. He was later promoted to touring sales, and has managed the division for the last few years in the role of national sales manager.

"Craig's exhaustive effort and commitment to high end service for our clients has been key in the success of LMG Touring since we launched the brand in 2009," said Les Goldberg, CEO/President of LMG. "His new role will focus on continuing to develop long term relationships and strategic planning to expand the presence of LMG

Touring both nationwide and globally."

LMG Touring, a division of LMG, provides a full range of video, audio, and lighting solutions for concert tours. We specialize in high end, 24/7 customer service and custom package development utilizing innovative concert touring equipment such as audio systems, lightweight LED, video flypacks, and lighting systems.

Update on "Jersey Joe"

Throughout the year we've been asked many times about Jersey Joe who many remember from last year's Tour Link Conference. Here's the update we recently received from everybody's favorite newcomer:

This year was industry school for me. I packed trucks, ran sound at venues, and oversaw lighting of shows.

I made my way in the local scene the best I could, followed up with contacts, and reviewed pollstar. Then I was awarded a runner position at my local amphitheater.

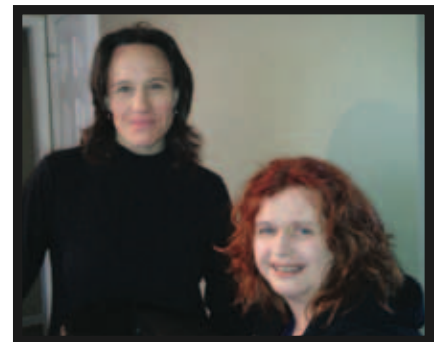
From there I ran at the NYC venues like Barclays and MSG, giving me a feeling for the arena scene.

Through a connection chain and much training, I finally landed a tour!

I'm currently in a IT/PA Position on the Jay Z Tour through North America.

I deploy internet and phone services to the tour and work in the production office.

I'm still learning every day and taking in as much information as I can.



Fabulous Fatigue Fighters

We cannot thank Heidi Froehlich and her Fabulous Fatigue Fighters enough for stopping by and providing massage recently for the Mobile Production Monthly and Tour Link Conference Office Staff. After many hours working around the clock, this was exactly what we needed. Thanks, Heidi!

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MAKING IT WORK with Henry Bordeaux

by Michael McLaughlin

Back in the day, the headliner would soundcheck, move the pedal boards to the side and everyone in sight would head to catering. Whatever time and space was left, often while the audience filed in, was the opening act soundcheck. Cruel? Yes, it was the way it often was back then.

As time went on, sometimes the headliner let the opener use the side fills too. Then came a backdrop to mask the headliner's gear. Rarely did the opening act get the upstage truss, never the truss spots. Sometimes it was simply logistics and time, more often than not, it was egos that brought on the opening act blues.

Fast-forward to a sold out concert in a major league ballpark on a beautiful Saturday in August. Hometown hero singer tells other bands hometown hero singer he can't use the catwalk downstage center. Reason intervenes, but the vibe killed any chance for an ensemble show finale; rock history that never got to happen!

More often than not, acts

touring together shared some common ground, both onstage and off. Perhaps they shared an industry connection like record label, producer, management or representation. Perhaps there was a social connection, often a history of collaboration or mentoring. Instances of the headliner coming out to jam with the opener were not rare, it was easy to do, it required little or no technical adjustments.

Today, the opener is known as the Support Act, an accurate title. More and more frequently there are two support acts. They may have sold some of the tickets, providing financial support. They may become the headliners of tomorrow and one day soon be the source of your support.

You would think that in today's world it would be easier for support acts, Right?

Wrong! Not even if it were the one mic, one light comedian, because he no longer exists. Where once it was a big production if the support act had a trailer behind the bus, now the support act has their own truck or two. They have their own in-ear rig, risers and sets, moving lights, video, pyro & FX cues. If the opening act is not a comedian then we must add the rolling rigs for keys, percussion, guitar, add the back up singers, dancers and dance floor.

Eventually, we are good to go.

All of this still has to be done in the space allocated. The headliners (and often the other support acts) sets are already in place, so just getting your set in place is a complete set of logistics.

You also have time constraints, particularly during the running of the show - this thing has to be able to just disappear during the changeover!

Want to know how all of this is done right?

Meet thirty-one year old Henry Bordeaux, a native of Jacksonville, Florida. Henry's first production gig was in 2002 as a backline tech for the band "Yellowcard" (our IATSE members will enjoy the irony in that name). As the band grew so did Henry's responsibilities, culminating in him becoming their Production Manager.

Busy ever since, Henry's production resume includes Fall Out Boy, Korn, Jessica Simpson, Big Time Rush, Jennifer Lopez, Miley Cyrus, stints with both AEG Live and Live Nation, and recognition in Guinness Book of World Records 2008 for producing the first ever attempt at 7 concerts on all 7 continents with the band Fall Out Boy. In 2012 & 2014 Henry was nominated for Tour Manager of the Year and for the past two years has served as the Panel Coordinator for the Tour Link Conference.

Henry has recently completed an outing as Tour Manager / Production Manager / Tour Accountant with Miguel as one of the support acts for Drake. The tour ran for 41 shows over 64 days in 37 cities in 27 states, logging 18,000 miles.

Miguel's recent single "Beautiful" is his third million-seller in the USA. Drake's "Would You Like A Tour," produced by Live Nation, started in October, 2013 is scheduled to run until the end of March 2014. Henry called it "one of the most challenging productions I have done, headlining

or support.”

Miguel’s rig was designed by Butch Allen, Barry Lather, Nathan Davis, and Henry himself. The design came with the concept of the sets strike in mind. Henry said the custom Gallagher Staging hydraulic moving arms, furnished with LED Nexus Lights, resemble “Transformers” as they come up a small lift and unfold to a far bigger set piece. They then fold back up for strike. Pre production included six weeks of dialog with Tait Towers, Drake’s production team, Gallagher Staging and Miguel’s production team. During this time the fine tuning of the design was accomplished. “Every inch mattered, even the 1/2 inch mattered”. Even after working off the CAD drawings, we weren’t going to know if it fit until the first day of tour” Henry said.

The set-up included a full band, with rolling risers for DJ, guitar, bass, drums, plus three additional risers for Miguel, a marley floor and set pieces including moving lights. All this had to fit on the headliners stage thrust 30’ wide and 12’ deep, downstage of the headliners Austrian drape masking, with other support acts in front of them. Everything had to be put onstage via a downstage center TAIT Towers 5’ X 7’ lift, accessed from below the stage deck, allowing 4’ 11” height. This required the risers to go up empty and then the various instruments and gear had to be installed once the risers were placed. The route to the lift was just as challenging as there were height restrictions and diagonal supports for the stage which one had to negotiate under.

Originally Henry had an hour before the house was open to pre-set Miguel’s gear onstage, and the crew mastered the setup. Three dates into the tour, having proven that the set up did work, the allocated set up time was reduced to twenty five minutes, and was scheduled after the prior support acts set up. Throw and go as we call it. This was done to provide a clear stage for the earlier support acts to perform without Miguel’s set becoming the backdrop.

Henry expressed his great gratitude to Drakes Production Manager, Chris Reynolds, Tour Manager, Steve Kidd and Stage Manager Rich Barr. “They were incredible about sharing every bit of information and resource I needed to make our show work, both in pre production and during the tour run. They allowed more time for changeover whenever possible and assigned some of the headliners crew from back line, carpenters, and audio departments to get it done. Henry recalled that a total of thirty people were required to complete Miguel’s show including six of Miguel’s own crew, twelve local stagehands, four local spot ops and various other tour personnel. “ It was a very tactical operation that we eventually mastered”.

As always, the set change had to happen cleanly and quickly. In practice not everything could go down the lift in the fifteen minutes allowed, so the back-line was

stripped off the risers and sent off the stage left side, moving lights went off stage right. Miguel’s entire rig went on one truck, with hardly anything stacked, a floor pack; roll on / roll off. Henry made a point of commending Artisan Trucking for their excellent service on a long and challenging tour.

Henry cites his involvement in attending Tour Link since 2006 as the perfect foundation for where he is now. Tour Link provided networking and mentoring opportunities with seasoned pros like Judd White, Jay Sendyk, John Nevins, Benny Collins, Stuart Ross and Bobby Schneider. The experience had a huge influence in shaping his career.

Henry is currently working on his Tour Link responsibilities, and multiple tours. He is handling pre production for Miguel’s upcoming swing through Australia supporting Bruno Mars and is preparing to hit the road with Jason Derulo through out Australian, New Zealand, and Europe. His plate is full!

I asked for Henry’s closing thoughts. He said that being a Support Act will always come with the challenge of whether or not there will be enough stage space or sound check time; those are things you have to accept and adapt to. It shouldn’t be stressful, look at it as a welcoming challenge. It is the beauty of our industry; we always get the chance to rise to the occasion.

I guess that is why his plate is so full!

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A Headliners Perspective on Support Acts

by Michael McLaughlin

It is an infrequent luxury that one's tour is "An Evening With"; usually there is a line item on every production manager's schedule: Support Acts.

I recently had the opportunity to speak with Jim Digby about his view of "The Openers". Digby's resume includes Genesis, Phil Collins, Marilyn Manson, Bon Jovi, and Linkin Park, since they made the progression from a support act to an arena act. Grammy winners, Linkin Park have sold over 60 million albums worldwide. Jim is a founding officer of the Event Safety Alliance (ESA), and for that alone we all owe him a debt of gratitude.

Jim said the approach, as decreed by management, production and the band members themselves, is we

are "all one family moving forward".

"The kids should get a great show from the support act, just like they are going to get a great show from Linkin Park...we think it makes the show better for the ticket buyers; that's the Linkin Park approach."

"... I've been in camps where that is not the approach and I think, from my perspective, that is a mistake; that support act may be next year's headliner that you may be needing a job from... that is one of many reasons you should be treating the support act in the right way... We don't in any way restrict the use of lighting, audio or video."

Jim told me that it starts with management's responsibility to communicate with potential support acts to determine what it is you want to do; how big do you want to go?

Next, the headliner's production team must begin an open dialog with the support act (or act's) production team to determine what can or cannot be accommodated,



particularly "for those with a massive show component that requires an intricate ballet to be used around the headliner's equipment." He noted that it is essential this be done prior to inking a deal.

Jim believes that a successful production manager sees this as an opportunity to enhance the show. From Jim's own experience, he has learned that compromise is necessary, and a good compromise is always attainable.

Jim laments that in his 30 years in the industry, he has seen this inclusive approach is not the approach taken by many of the old-school nor the current majority of tour management. Yet, he feels that a paradigm shift is possible, just by discussions with our colleagues and peers in the industry.

Alan Toussaint wrote, "The same people you misuse on your way up, you might meet up, on your way back down."

Most of you Old Road Dogs will remember the Little Feat version of "On Your Way Down," great track on the CD 'Dixie Chicken', and a life lesson to be learned.

Thanks Jim, for all you do for our production community.

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Artisan Transportation

By Mike Wharton

Type in the words Artisan Transportation in your internet search engine and you won't get directed to the company's website. You'll find numerous sites listed with information and details regarding Artisan's locations and services.

Among these various sites to check out, you will find that the company has a Facebook account. That pretty much sums up Brian Higgins, owner of Artisan, philosophy of how he operates his business. Old school in a way, face to face, creating genuine relationships, then sealed with a handshake. He is very much a believer in word of mouth recommendations. The fact that most of Artisan's early clients are still with them, along with a roster of newer acts like Avicci, is a testament to the company's commitment to providing their clients with the best personal service possible.

"We are a 'boutique' operation," says Higgins. We have about fifty to seventy trucks on the road, depending on the season. If necessary, we can field twenty to twenty five trucks for a tour as well as take care of tours that only need one truck, like Miguel. Regardless of the size, I can always be reached if necessary. When production managers need decisions made in 'real time,' we can make that happen. Our customers prefer that, instead of having to leave voice messages, or getting the 'support will call you back' answer that is so often encountered elsewhere."

Not that this is a one-man band operation. Higgins employs fifty seven people with Joe Reid at the helm as Operations Manager. He and

Higgins have worked together for many years and Reid, as a driver, has logged a lot of miles over the years.

Not many people easily make that transition from the road to a desk. There are still challenges and logistical deadlines to be met, however it is a different mindset, one which Reid possesses. It is truly a comforting feeling to have someone on the other end of that phone who grasps what you are talking about. There are many competent drivers out



there hauling freight who do just that, drive. The sense of urgency, realization of the extreme importance of timeliness of arrival and people skills are unique to the concert touring industry.

Of course Higgins' twenty one years of experience in the transport industry has taught him that accurate record keeping and paper trails are necessary, in fact even more so on the freight end of the business. Laws and regulations of the DOT are facts that do not go away.

Higgins is quick to point out that all his relationships are with production managers and production people. "They make the decisions, not the band so much."

When he gets onsite to checkup on or visit a show, he makes a point to pay attention to all of the crew. "You never know which production assistant or carpenter is going to be the

next Jake Berry or Opie. I've seen it happen again and again."

Higgins' entry into the entertainment business started in high school. A desire to see free shows drove him to be an usher and ticket taker at Poplar Creek Music Theatre. He stayed there, moving up through the ranks as a runner, production assistant, and then production manager of the facility. When Poplar Creek closed and became Sears World Headquarters, Higgins went to work for Upstaging, who at the time, had about six trucks. After fifteen years at Upstaging, Higgins went on to pursue real estate development projects in the Chicago area.

He quickly discovered this line of work was not for him.

"Real estate kind of runs itself. I was like a soldier with no war to fight. I thrive on challenges."

In 2006, Artisan opened its doors. The company's first tour was Cirque du Soleil. Many others soon followed. Mariah Carey, Kiss, Motley Crew, Sheryl Crow, Lenny Kravitz, and Weezer, to name a few.

"Patrick Whitley was one of our early clients who has stuck with us and brought us a lot of projects. We rely on referrals and repeat business. You won't find us running around, chasing people down, stuffing our business cards in their faces."

Higgins notes that 2013 was a banner year for Artisan as well as the industry in general.

"It looks like 2014 is shaping up to be a good year also."

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Senators Coaches

By Mike Wharton



Senators is one of the best and well known Entertainment Coach companies in the industry. Founded over thirty five years ago by George Pillow, and still completely

owned by just Pillow, this has allowed Senators to avoid some of the pitfalls that come with multiple investors.

John Aikin, Executive VP with Senators attributes the company's success to another simple factor as well. Aikin started with the company as a driver in 1981, then in 1987 was brought into operations to handle leasing. He is the point of contact for clients and has a team to help him with the process.

"We just try to treat people the way we would want to be treated. We have no enemies and don't want to create any. Back in the old days competition was fierce," says Aikin. Companies were trying to underbid each other. Some of the people that started had no road experience or had any idea of what it took to keep a bus company running. Consequently they and their investors were under pressure to generate cash flow, and they ran into trouble doing that." Aikin is of the opinion that is just plain backwards. Ultimately the client suffers in the long run, as does the industry.

"There is enough work out there these days to keep us all busy. We

should be friends, since we have so much in common. I'm striving towards working together with other companies. We all get overbooked or have breakdowns. We should be able to pick up a phone and fix the situation to mutual advantage."

While the company has grown steadily, Aikin notes that being the "biggest" has never been a goal. The company has worked at providing consistent quality coaches and drivers to their clients.

As he says, "providing the best of the best to the best."

Being able to control their inventory and keeping great drivers employed helps with that. The facility in Muscle Shoals does all the conversions, and maintenance. The fleet is entirely Prevost models, which Senators has been running since 1987. At the time Silver Eagle was the industry standard. Senators was the first to introduce the Prevost to the entertainment industry.

"We've been in this business over 35 years," says Aikin, "and our staff know these buses inside and out. They have twisted every bolt, and installed every light. When a client calls on us, they know exactly what they are getting. Also, this is the entertainment industry, so we keep upgrading to the best and latest technology on the buses. The buses look good on the exterior too, when lined up beside one another. The entire fleet is silver and has a limousine streamline like appearance."

This reputation is well known outside of the touring industry as well.

Repair shops that Senators deal with know the importance of getting a bus running, should a problem occur. The repair shops know that a bus is the crew's home and that deadlines are critical. This coupled with the solvency of Senators will push their emergencies to the head of the list.

The company does a good deal of work with ESPN. The Executive coaches are deployed for College Game Day, Monday Night Football, and Major League Baseball. These coaches stay out with ESPN during their seasons. Interiors of the bus are set up for interviews, as well.

Drivers, of course are a core part of Senators reputation as well. Aikin points out that more often than not the client is more concerned if a certain driver is available than a particular bus.

"Many of our drivers have been with us over ten years, some longer. We have been to all the venues in North America." Aikin laughs, "We know how the movie ends."

Coming off the two biggest years in the company's history, Aikin named at least ten tours already on the books. These tours range from a Journey/Steve Miller/Tower of Power extravaganza to Def Leppard, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Alice Cooper, Huey Lewis, Tegan and Sara, and Goo Goo Dolls. Perennials Chicago and Jimmy Buffet will be going out, and Nine Inch Nails will continue into 2014.

Aikin feels Senators is on the right track but refuses to become complacent.

"We still want to continue with innovations to improve our service not just with transport but making the whole business more user friendly," concludes Aikin.

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45 Degrees to a Healthy Crew

by Richard Bennett



When Nine Inch Nails headed out on the road it was not only the band who needed to stay fit and healthy, their hardworking crew needed to as well. So it was a good job that a forward thinking Kiwi and his company, Latitude 45 Catering were on hand to help out.

It was the great Napoleon Bonaparte who coined the phrase "An army marches on its stomach". Now while I am sure the iconic French General was much happier to head towards the battle of Waterloo with a professional army, as opposed to a gang of LD's, riggers and techs, the reality is that the tour industry is a worldwide army marauding across the world, who also march much happier on a full stomach.

With the increased demands of modern touring, keeping your crew fit, healthy and well fed is not only the right thing to do, but can be a costly oversight if you don't. For California based catering company Latitude 45, their philosophy of great service, high quality and nutritional food, combined with their active eco-friendly and green credentials has not only seen them become the touring industry's premier catering company, but has also established a level of company integrity and reliability that is second to none.

Like any forward thinking business, it was Latitude 45's New Zealand born founder Chris Mitchell's discovery of a gap in the American touring market, as far as outstanding and affordable catering was concerned, which led to Mitchell's initial venture into tour catering in the US in 1997. "Myself and an old business partner saw a hole in the US touring catering market. It just wasn't being taken care of the same way it was in Europe, there was virtually nothing available at that stage. I was doing stuff like restaurant consulting

and things in the movie industry at the time, so we decided to set up a catering company. Over time we went our separate ways and I took my half of the business and created Latitude 45."

From day one, Latitude 45 has followed a simple set of beliefs that has firmly established the business as one of the top go to companies in the US.

"Latitude 45 is nothing without my guys, so it's important to me that we look after them, with health care and 401k plans. Our people are out on the road a lot, if we as a company don't look after them and don't take an active interest in the wellbeing and futures of our crew, then how can I expect them to look after our clients. We have built a family and a culture within the business, we are just not in it for the money and we try to put that culture into any tour we do," says Mitchell.

It's this simple understanding and respect which has helped Latitude 45 keep hold of its staff for so many years. With a loyal foundation like that, it's a lot easier to deal professionally with the demands of the touring industry. Having the intelligence to build on that foundation Mitchell and his team approach their responsibilities from a number of different angles.

"It's a double edged sword being in this industry, because by the very nature of the travelling machine that we are, there is a need to be somewhat expedient in the way that we do things. We can't go farm to

table as much as we would like to, although when we can, we do. We find that our forward thinking clients, who not only had the forethought & professionalism to look after all aspects of their tours, from equipment and more importantly the crews as well, are also forward thinking about feeding those crews with good, healthy and nutritional food. Being on tour we pull into a lot of towns and cities, so we try to educate the venues and everyone involved about what we should eat, how we shop and about being green. For example, you'll find yourself in certain parts of the country that require a bit more education around recycling and being green than if you were in, say in San Francisco or New York" Laughs Mitchell.

Like any vendor in the industry Mitchell and his team have become more and more aware of the need to be cost effective. When it comes to dealing with the tour accounts and more importantly the spectre that is the touring budget, he explains:

"We are part of the family and we will work for you, we won't double charge you, you will only pay for what you use, anything not used will be reused where possible. In the old days it was a case of just no limits, that's changed, which is why we employ an open book policy, you can see what everything costs and only pay for what you use. We are just trying to help your tour make money by keeping your crews and artists fit and healthy. The more we help you do this, the more inclined

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you are to have us back on your next tour”.

Mitchell has a lot of respect for the long serving guys at the helm of a good live touring ship, and firmly believes that it is their change in attitude that has spread down to the whole crew, which has helped Latitude to continue to pursue their business philosophy, with such great success.

“There are a group of production managers who want the same people back tour after tour and they want them to be healthy, so they can come back. It is these older and more experienced production guys that have also come to the realization that maybe they need to eat a bit healthier than they used to, and that filters down to the crew” says Mitchell.

Unlike the garlic loving emperor of France, Mitchell and his team do not harbour a World domination plan, well not right now anyway.

“My company has grown at the right pace, carefully and not too quickly, by focusing on the US market, and we are now moving more into the North American festival market. We see that as our growth area and do not plan on moving into Europe, that market has enough good companies already. It’s also often not cost effective in getting all the gear and crew out there .

For us it is about integrity and showing that we are part of a tour that makes financial and nutritional sense within the context of the longevity of a tour. People need to compare apples to apples (no pun intended) when it comes to tour catering, there are so many different levels out there. Sometimes, because we understand the entire picture and quote accordingly, this can work against us at the negotiation stage. What is being perceived as pricier, is actually just a real understanding of what is required, there are no hidden costs and we will get the job done professionally and efficiently” Says Mitchell .

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Pushing the Envelope of Technology with Nine Inch Nails

There is a school of thought that with the advancements in technology, the factory of the future will have only two employees, a man and a dog. The man will be there to feed the dog. The dog will be there to keep the man from touching the equipment. With that concept not yet a reality, it is down to groundbreaking companies like PRG Nocturne to not only create the technology, but to push it to its limits.

Within our industry, as in many others, technological advancement is at times, like waiting for a bus in the city of London, you hang around for ages, with nothing on the horizon, and then all of a sudden six of the bloody things turn up at once.

The sheer volume of new developments within this area, has increased at an incredible rate during the past decade, confusing some and giving opportunity to others, or as Technology guru Mike Trout puts it "Technology is ruled by two types of people: those who manage what they do not understand, and those who understand what they do not manage."

When it came to creating something special for the North American leg of the Nine Inch Nails tour, PRG Nocturne not only rose to the occasion, but were determined to push the envelope. Taking out the prototype custom built V-Thru 28mm screens, the experienced Nocturne crew on the tour certainly had their work cut out, but what they achieved was not only outstanding but visually mind blowing, something that could not have been

imagined when the project started way back in May, a process that PRG Nocturne President Bob Brigham explains:

"Roy and Trent's management spoke to me about their concept, which was around two screens 13' high curved and 54' wide, one down-stage and one mid-stage with a high-res screen at the back. The priority was for them to be transparent, so what we did was set up a demo with a 9 mil V-9, and then we brought in five different products ranging from 18 mil to 40 mil. The problem we had with everything that existed was that they had power supplies, cables and frames on the back, which of course affected the transparency.

There was nothing out there that met the requirements, so I went back to my business partner Ron Proesel, Co-President of PRG Nocturne, to solve the problem. We build all our own LED whether its V9, V18, V28 and the brand new V-Thru with SLI International of Montreal, Canada. So Ron and their designers collaborated and came up with the idea of what we call a grid, machined out of half inch aluminium stock, so each grid panel would be 448 millimetres high by three times that wide and three of those would go on one frame and that would make a section 4'5" by 6' wide and it became about 70% to 80% transparent.

We then built strips of LED that would go on to this grid and the power and transfers from strip to strip were hidden in the routed out aluminium frames. Then on the edges we had data on one side and power on the other. We had truss beams brought in which we then dropped the power down to. When we showed this set up to Trent & Roy they said yes, from that moment to delivering the screens took only 86 days."

It's this ability to think outside the box and the ability to attack a challenge head on that has seen PRG Nocturne become a go to vendor of choice for a growing number of production designers.

"It all starts with the artist and a designer who have a vision combined with nothing in the market that will compare. If we had not pushed the boundaries to fulfill what they wanted, then the show they have just toured with would have been different. We had worked with Roy before on the Paul McCartney 2005 tour, creating something that at that time didn't exist. When we created a stage that looked like it had a skateboard ramp in it, we had invented what became the V9. Once again SLI came up with the goods, they are so creative that it borders on the crazy," laugh's Brigham.

With PRG's vast experience and knowledge of the demands and requirements of the touring industry, the V-Thru screens are also practical.

"The system itself is pretty hardy, because the sections are six feet wide and they are three sections tall, so you

set up your truss beams first which are all six feet wide, then you clip on your panels across the top and then plug in the third panel and you're ready to go," says Brigham.

While it is true that any production is greater than the sum of its parts, the introduction of PRG Nocturne's V-Thru screens enhanced the visual concept of the NIN tour to an unprecedented level, and proves once again why the company is at the forefront of achieving the near impossible. As Brigham so eloquently puts it:

"Very few companies are able to do what we do, we are the only company who designs and manufactures in-house. Our competitors have relationships with companies in China who build LED for 50 other companies, and then put on a company sticker. The investment we put in is huge, for NIN the screens were in the millions and you don't know how long they are going to use them, so you better have someone else lined up to take them."

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NINE INCH NAILS

By Mike Wharton/Photos by Hank Woods

One of the design driving forces on Nine Inch Nails Tension 2013 Tour was not only the use of latest technology, but to push that existing technology to limits previously unused on other shows. Two developments came out of that directive from band leader and creative visionary Trent Reznor sought to present. One was the creation by Nocturne PRG of the V-Thru LED screen, of which more will be spoken of later in this article.

The other was the fact that lighting, video and rigging were so pronounced that each element could have stood on its own visual dynamic. This is not to say the show is not cohesive. All the elements work together. Chris Fussell, NIN production manager, begins the

explanation of this unique and forward thinking show.

"Trent Reznor is the artistic genius behind everything that happens out here. He is a pretty amazing guy to work for because he is so creative and has such great ideas. The history of Nine Inch Nails has been to put on an amazing show, not only musically and sonically, but visually as well," says Fussell.

The video content for the show is a collaborative effort, though again, it is Reznors vision that is ultimately seen on the screens. He and his art director, Rob Sheridan used Moment Factory to build the visuals during design conception and rehearsals. Reznor and Sheridan have collaborated on projects since 1999.



Morgan Brown handles the media programming duties on the show. His residence is in Switzerland, but he possesses dual citizenship with the USA. Midway through the UK festival run, he came on board, then continued with the North American rebuild, rehearsal, and tour. Brown utilizes hippo media server hardware. Although the show was written during rehearsals, songs still get tweaked on the road. Sheridan, who travels with the show, will have updated content for Morgan from time to time to insert. It's not that the show wasn't completely written before it left rehearsal. Sheridan sees how something might look or work better, just as a truly professional and dedicated lighting director will do during focus each day after noting something from his vantage point at front of house each night. Set list

changes which Reznor has a penchant for, also necessitate changes in content.

Brown describes Sheridan as "the filter" between Reznor and the crew.

Fussell adds, "This production has been great to be a part of. It's been pretty taxing with the idea that we worked really hard to put together a festival rig that we did fourteen shows around the world with. It was really an amazing show, as is the arena show in North America, which was put together under serious time constraints. The logistics of getting this out the door were tough."



The day the tour got back to the States, a completely new production, specifically designed for the North American leg, was launched. The only carry over from the UK was backline and audio control. The upstage video back wall which previously set on the ground and rolled into position on outriggers became a series of pods which bolted together and were flown. These pods contained 270 fixtures, of which 126 are the SGM white LED X5 strobe. The midstage overhead structure houses the 126 magic panels.

The V- Thru 28mm screens on the tour are new technology custom built specifically for this tour. In fact a prototype had just been signed off in a demo in June. These screens were not completely manufactured and delivered until a week into rehearsals. The screens were manufactured in Montreal, Canada then, driven down to New York to load onto a plane. They were delivered to rehearsals in LA. The Nocturne crew on the tour were joined by a local crew call to hang them.

These two screens play down stage and midstage for certain songs with the band working between them. They are transparent enough to do exactly what their name implies...see through them, while the screens enhance the video projection resolution that is bright as well as intricate. These screens are jaw dropping in their capabilities, while the content displayed on them is

articulate, well defined and simply beautiful at times. It is hard to choose a "star" of the rig as so many elements in the show stand out, but these are certainly close to the top of the list.

When asked if the opening acts that came on board caused any logistical problems, Fussell states flatly, "no," adding that "support act setup time and stage footprint is allotted as a matter of course."

"My personal philosophy is that opening acts get treated with the same respect I would want, and besides, you never know when you may be working for that opener as the headliner," says Fussell.

He sets the tone crew wise as well, with regards to respect and team work approach to getting the show done. "Everybody has a bad day at one time or another," Fussell says. "If the video crew is running a bit behind and needs help, Team lighting will jump in as soon as they're available. Vice versa, the same applies across the board to the other departments. There are no lines in the sand."

Through the design changes and the last minute builds for the North America transition, Fussell has had a constant that has been with him almost twenty years. Stage Manager Dave Heard is the guy he relies on to

be his eyes, to keep the trucks dumping on the load in, anticipate the flow needed on stage, then at the end of the night, safely and efficiently oversee the load out..

The two met in the summer of 1999 on the Lilith Fair. Heard was the tour rigger at the time, while Fussell was handling duties as the Tour Manager for Sheryl Crow. Over the course of that tour they grew to know one another and how each other works without actually working for each other.

"Fussell kept trying to get me to go out on tour with him after that, but I was pretty locked into the Phish camp. We finally



hooked up on a Beck tour in 2002. Since then we have done many shows in many cities together. We are a pretty solid team," says Heard.

"Stage managing came into my life I guess," continues Heard, "in a weird way. I toured from 1991 until 2000 mostly as a lighting guy and rigger. Each winter the tour included a run across Canada during January/February. So after building that kind of experience, my friends in the Production Manager roll decided that I would make a decent SM, and that's where they put me. I had no idea what I was doing, but everyone on the tour was a long time friend and let me cut my teeth at their expense. I still to this day don't know the definition of Stage Manager!"

Heard describes his show duties as, the "human fail safe." He and Fussell split stage left and right to alert the automation operator for any obstacles that may occur before the V- Thru screens fly in. These screens play in only during certain songs.

"It's dark up there on stage and the musicians are more often than not focused on the next song in the set. They have been known to be absent minded, so Fussy and I are the extra set of eyes for safety's sake."

The eighty point production is carried by eleven trucks. A super grid supplied by Show Group Production Services is deployed every day from which the show hangs. This structure is overseen by John Lunio. With the help of an additional forty-four local hands the load-in takes 6 hours. Lead Rigger for the tour, Joel Gburek, oversees 24 local riggers to hang the show. Adding another dozen hands to the load out shortens it to 2 hours.

Mike Prowda, the Monitor Engineer, is another long time member of the Nine Inch Nails production team having been involved with the organization since 2005.

"My main concern on any project," says Prowda, "is to satisfy the criteria for that particular situation. The technology for providing stage monitoring has steadily improved. The in-ear systems have come a long way and there are always new challenges. Frequency allocation is a major issue while involved in a world tour. We use the Shure Axient AXT600 Spectrum Manager which is one example of how we use current technology to deal with our day to day setup."

Everyone in the band uses the JH16 in-ears monitor. In addition there are 4 D&B B2 Subs on stage. The Shure PSM1000 Transmitter/Receiver system is used in conjunction with the wireless microphones each band member projects through. "Certain aspects of audio will always be a black art," says Prowda. "Using what you know works is your base line but some

experimentation is necessary to deal with what comes up working with Nine Inch Nails. After 35 years in the business there is still, "I've never experienced that so let's try this."

Prowda runs the stage system on a Digidesign Profile Console.

There is a saying in the touring world, "There are no tourists on this bus." The same can be said about the equipment on this tour. Every piece of equipment has an active part to play during the performance. The cyber hoists on the tour are a case in point.

Cyber Motion North America provides the cyber hoists. PJ Visser is the Crew Chief from Cyber Motion travelling with the tour. Early on in the design stage, it was decided that elements would move during the show. Renown Production Designer Le Roy Bennett had worked with Cyber Motion on various projects in the past so the company was included in the bid process. After a couple months of phone calls, a meeting in LA was arranged. The Cyber Motion team laid out to Fussell their plan and how they would attack it.

Says Visser, "A couple weeks later Chris called us to say he felt so comfortable with our presentation and the bid that we were in."

Automation includes movement of fourteen lighting pods with the magic panels in them, three video walls, and two side trusses. So, on the show 19 "objects", as Cyber Motion refers to items that articulate during the performance, move. There are 68 active cyber hoists on the entire show. Cyber hoists have been around about ten years. In Europe it is a well established product. The North America depot opened in 2009. Visser came over from Europe with the opening of that office at that time.

"We're trying to not stay in a mold that's been set. You know, presently, some movement is done for a flying gag on shows. Or it looks like it's almost an after thought...'hey lets change the position of that truss, maybe even do it a couple of times.' With this tour, the



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automation is an integral part of the show," beams Visser with a huge smile.

"That is the nice thing about this show. Everything, I mean everything, moves. There is movement on every song, either live while the band is playing or during black outs."

This keys into Reznor's philosophy of utilizing the latest technology to its fullest. If the cyber hoists were static and maybe only the video screens moved up and down as needed, it would not do justice to the performance. Their movement is an integral part to the presentation. The hoists are controlled through a laptop. Each day after trim height is determined, trim is reset on all the hoists for that venue. Simple reprogramming of the up and down parameters is done on the laptop. Trim height in the venue is determined each day and then each cyber hoist is updated to that new parameter. All the programmed moves stay intact, much like resetting focus presets on an automated fixture.

Ryan Tilke, Upstaging's Lighting Crew Chief on the tour, when forced to choose a favorite moment in the show, points to the song "Disappointed" as do many of the other crew. With a show that is full of moments of 'wow, what's next', it's a hard choice.

This will be the show that ends that seemingly ongoing battle between lights and video. Originally lighting was to play a supportive roll to video in the overall design. Reznor again turned to the band's long time Lighting Designer Le Roy Bennett to best execute his vision. However, as the design and show developed in rehearsals, it was quickly determined lighting needed to take on a much larger roll.

As for favorite fixture, hands down Tilke points to the Magic Panel 602. This fixture is very new to the market. It can tilt and pan infinitely, as well as be pixel mapped for video content. The magic panels have 160 DMX channels so each of the fourteen mid-stage pods practically take up one universe, as there are three panels per pod.

Explains Tilke, "Each of the fourteen pods gets three universes. A rack of MPU's that process all Grand MA net-



“ Using what you know works is your base line but some experimentation is necessary to deal with what comes up working with Nine Inch Nails. ”

work are at dimmers on the floor. Signal flows out of MPU into a gigabit switch which then passes signal up to a another gigabit switch in the air, There are actually two data racks on grid that have MA nodes. This is a new signal processing device built by MA. Each pod has a four channel snake running from it down to the MPU's on the floor.”

The data nodes were put in the air to resolve the “latency” problem first encountered on another tour. The system on The Tension Tour processes 60 plus universes of dmx when all was said and done. So much information was flowing through the rig that when the “go” button on the console was hit you could literally see a stage right to left fixture flow, rather than the correct timing of the look that was programmed desired. The ultimate solution was to send a MAnet system up to the grid to boost signal flow.

Tilke was finishing up the last few UK festival dates while the North American rig was being built. He was not actually in the shop while these problems were ironed out. He delivered paperwork to Daric Bassan, the shop foreman heading the prep for this and spoke with him daily.

“Upstaging realized the intricacy of this tour’s

rig and put Daric in charge of this. Plus several of the guys on this leg were prepping it as well. So there was a really strong team watching this very closely as it was built.

The other great thing about Upstaging is that all the paperwork I was generating, would have been the same as Daric’s if he were the Crew Chief. It’s the “Upstaging Way”. As you come up through the ranks in the company you are taught this way. If I had to leave tomorrow for some unknown reason another Upstaging Crew Chief could step right in and know exactly how the rig went together, what went where, etc...because all shows



are prepped the same way.

Between the automated mid-stage pods and the articulating magic panels the show literally takes on a completely new look. At one point a curved roof shell is created by their movement and repositioning.

Add in the video screen elements with their content and you have whole new dimension in stage looks. Video Crew Chief Omar Montes Rangel talks about those elements, how they lay out, and his crew.

"I have a crew of three techs and myself. All three techs deal with the hanging and maintenance of the screens. One of the techs, Will Stinson, is also our Video Media/ Server Operator. Morgan, our Hippo Operator, sits at FOH with the spare triggering manual cues from the back up GrandMA console. The hippos sit backstage in video world. Brian is triggering the hippos through the lighting GrandMA console. This console also triggers the hippos through ArtNet. It's a full integration with video and lighting at FOH. Any issues that we may have with the video screens is up to me and my crew to fix them and get them back up and running."

Rangel reiterates another aspect in his department of pushing the envelope, following Reznors lead.

"We have a 70' wide X 20' tall V9 upstage center LED wall. We are pushing the limits when it comes to pixel count for that LED wall. Our resolution for the upstage wall is 2304 pixels wide by 528 pixels tall. The LED screen is hung by 12 one ton cyber hoist motors. Our V-Thru screens have a resolution of 576 pixel wide by 144 pixels tall. And of course, this is the first time these V-Thru's have ever been used."

"It is a great looking show," continues Rangel. "I think the quality of the show and production NIN is touring with sets this tour apart from others. It has a very different feel to it considering the fact that you can enjoy a rock show and a visual show at the same time."

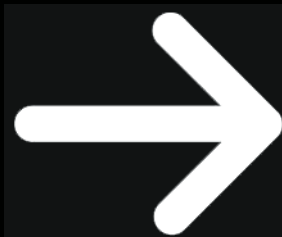
Fussell says that comes from the top down. "Working with Trent is really awesome. He really is a creative genius. When he puts on the show as a musician and



us as the production team, we build the show around his musical performance to give it an all in one encompassing show, that is pretty awesome. And he notices everything. He knows what's going on around him. Just playing a guitar and singing takes a lot of coordination. He's also aware if a lighting cue or fixture is off, whether the keyboard is off key, or if a screen doesn't move on time."

He continues, "We really have a fantastic team of people out here and they play off that effort he puts out. We've had great reviews from local media. I've had building people email me saying what a great show it was and how smooth the day went. I'm happy to be a part of this. Everybody out here works hard and does it with a smile on their face. You can't ask for more than that."

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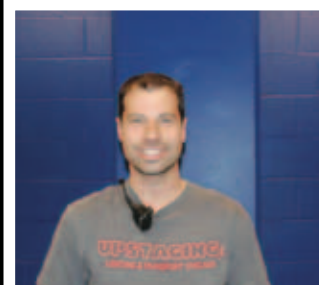
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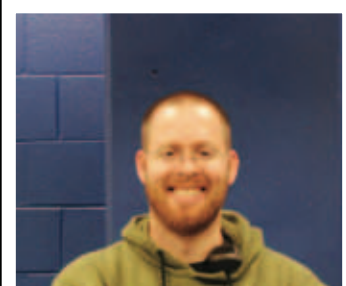
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- **Log-in / My Account** When logged in, you can list and categorize your own businesses, adding expanded data relevant to your business type(s) by choosing **"Add My Contact"** from the **"My Account"** menu. Once listings have been added AND approved by our staff, you can access and manage them by choosing **"Manage My Account"** from the **"My Account"** menu. Logged-in users can modify their user account information from the same page. Employee information and photos can be included in any contact listing. Coach leasing companies and venues can add availability calendars. Hoteliers can add hotel-specific information. Companies handling production equipment can list and describe their equipment. If your business listing is already in our database and your user account has not yet been paired with your listing, please call us at 615.256.7006 and we'll pair your account with your business so that you may edit and expand your data.
- **Contact Search** Once you're logged in, your contact listing search results will include contact email addresses and expanded information. To search our database of contact listings using a combination of criteria, choose **"Contact Search"**
- **News / Event Calendar** the website provides other valuable resources such as current news on concert production topics and an industry event calendar.
- **Publications** When logged in, you can subscribe at no cost to our magazine, Mobile Production Monthly for one year by choosing **"Subscribe to Mobile Production Monthly"** from the **"Publications"** menu or download issues freely by choosing **"Mobile Production Monthly"** from the **"Publications"** menu.
- **Advertise** Advertising on our site and in our print publications is a great way to get your company's brand in front of all the people who work in the mobile production industry. Our advertising rates are still the lowest in the WORLD for the Live Event Production Industry. To purchase advertising you may call us at 615.256.7006 or email your inquiry or request to advertising@mobileproductionpro.com.



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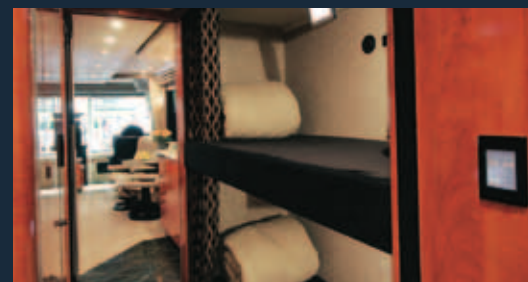
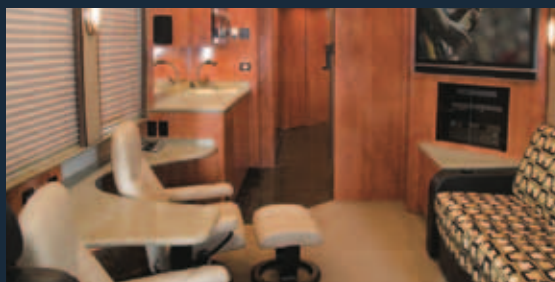


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