

SPECIAL ISSUE
Volume 8 Issue 2

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CONTENTS

Volume 8 Issue 2

On The Cover

6 Tour Link 2015



pg

Features

- 6 Tour Link 2015
- 11 Tour Link Testimonials
- 16 Desert Springs Golf Club Hosts Tour Link Golf Tournament
- 22 Easy Riders Design Thursday Morning Bike Run
- 24 Jim Risgin Sets the Stage for Tour Link
- 28 Opening Night Party Kicks Off Tour Link 2015
- 35 Panels, Workshops, Demos and Training
- 40 Tour Masters: Advice from Touring Veterans
- 44 Lessons from the Breaking and Entering Panel
- 47 Dedicating Your Life to a Career...
- 50 Transportation BBQ
- 54 Awards Ceremony and Top Dog Awards
- 66 Interview with 2015 Top Dog Touring Hall of Famer Harvey Goldsmith CBE



Notes from the Publisher

What a conference! This issue is a re-cap of the Tour Link Conference and the Top Dog Awards. We had the largest event in our history with over 700 attendees representing all facets of the music industry in production, management and services. This diversity in attendees is a goal we have been building for 17 years. But the most gratifying part for me was the huge influx of young up-and-coming tour personnel. These young people represent the future of our Industry and they have embraced our event. As a result, I am confident

that our work will continue long after my time has passed. (Don't get excited...I am not going anywhere yet!)

We are immensely grateful for the support of our returning Title Sponsor, OSA International, whose own Jim Risgin served as our Production Manager and our newest Title Sponsor, the brand new, Tour Ready. Have you checked out their new service? Whether you are hiring or looking to be hired, Joey Gallagher's Tour Ready will be a great resource to our community. A special thank you to our Title Co-Sponsors, Delta Airlines, EPT and PRG Nocturne. Delta is a returning sponsor and addressed the Travel Agents closed door meeting with some exciting new programs to better serve the touring community. Phil McDonnell's EPT organization returned not only as sponsors but brought a contingent of twenty people and we absolutely could not do what we do without the support of PRG Nocturne.

Rather than re-hashing what you can read for yourself in this issue, I want to take this opportunity to thank some key people for all their hard work in making Tour Link the most impressive conference I have produced in all my 35 years doing this work. Specifically, Lori DeLancey our Event Director, Nick Gold our Location Manager, Jim Risgin our Production Manager, Wendy Catto our Registration Manager and Award Show Liaison, Chuck Randall our Co Host and long-time contributor, JJ Janney our Editor, Debi Moen one of our writers, Jim Digby of the Event Safety Alliance and all the staff and volunteers who tackled different parts of the event and donated hours of time and energy.

I also want to commend the registration staff who, along with Wendy Catto, made sure registration ran smoothly, that everyone received their credentials, drink tickets, and personalized Poken and provided superb customer service to all throughout the weekend. These were: Melissa Allgood, Mikayla Foote, Julia Borden, Carrie Wright, Antoine Cholette, and Alex Prince.

Our team of writers worked hard to present a synopsis of the event. I think you will find this issue very interesting. We are trying to expand the content of the conference each year and although it is a challenge to improve over the previous year, clearly, we hit our goal this time. Now we have a real problem facing us... how do we top this next year? Stay tuned, we intend to do just that!

Larry Smith
Publisher



mobileproductionpro.com

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Anvil Productions, LLC
740 Cowan Street, Nashville, TN 37207
ph: 615.256.7006

mobileproductionpro.com
tourlinkconference.com

HOME OFFICE STAFF

Publisher: Larry Smith
larrysmith@tourguidemag.com
Director of Operations: Lori DeLancey
officemanager@mobileproductionpro.com
Associate Editor: J.J. Janney
editor@mobileproductionpro.com
Contributing Writers for this issue: Debi Moen and Jim Digby
Contributing Photographers: Scott DeLancey, Chris Miller and Debi Moen
Layout / Design and Website Design:
Warehouse Multimedia
ph: 615.420.6153 • f: 866.929.9651
3050 Business Park Circle Suite 500
Goodlettsville, TN 37072
www.warehousemultimedia.com

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TOUR LINK

2015





Tour Link 2015

by JJ Janney

This year's Tour Link Conference was held for the first time in Palm Springs, California at the JW Marriott Desert Springs Hotel. Any initial grumblings about connections to the Palm Springs airport soon gave way to a chorus of, "we love this hotel!"

By any measurement it was a great success—by numbers of attendees (biggest yet) and by types of attendees (Young Guns and Seasoned Warriors were well represented.) But most importantly it was a success because so many of you gave your time, your expertise and your production and financial support so the rest of us could be inspired.

Larry Smith, publisher of Mobile Production Monthly, the Road Book and the man behind Tour Link held court from his wheelchair, looking on like the proud papa of his firstborn. Lori DeLancey, Tour Link Event Director, was permanently attached to her radio for the duration of the event to make sure everything ran smoothly. Nick Gold deserves special mention as Hotel Coordinator, Transportation Coordinator and Panelist to boot (and that's only a fraction of what he does for the Tour Link Conference year-round.).

Of special note was the participation of the legendary and visionary producer and promoter Harvey Goldsmith. Harvey received the 2015 Top Dog Touring Hall of Fame Award, humbling noting at one point, "it's still nice to be recognized."

Anyone who only knows what a professionally busy and in-demand producer and promoter Harvey is, having worked with seemingly every iconic band and artist since the 1980's (Sting, Pink Floyd, Pavarotti just to name a few), might have expected to see Harvey at the awards show and little else. Anyone aware

of even an inkling of Harvey's charitable and leviathan efforts toward improving this world for all humankind, wouldn't have been surprised at all to see Harvey attending panel sessions like everyone else and offering advice to frustrated up-and-comers.

And "everyone else" included over 700 tour managers, production crew and vendors in addition to the volunteers and production support who spent their Tour Link working to make it all happen. Jim Risgin was this year's stage guru. Please see Debi Moen's interview with Jim in this issue.

The Tour Link registration desk was staffed by interns and volunteers who made sure everyone got their schedules, their swag, and directions to each night's late night hospitality bar if they were so inclined.

Included in each registration, all attendees received a Poken device. Special thanks to Armel Reyes and Commune Hotels for sponsoring these devices for the 2nd year in a row. Seems everyone really enjoys getting "poked" with this interactive and fun addition to the Tour Link Conference. We also want to thank LMG Touring for sponsoring our lanyards, also for the 2nd year in a row

Thursday: Balls, Bikes & the Echoes of Toto

While most of the conference was still checking-in or sipping coffee on the private patios of their hotel rooms, there were two groups of early risers who didn't need yoga pants or running shoes. Starting at 8 a.m. were those early birds who competed in the annual Tour Link Golf Tournament organized by Dave Paiva of Tour Badgers and Michelle Pekrol of Star Gift Alliance. Seventeen teams competed for three team awards and two individual awards. I had nothing to do with legitimate golf awards or my personal leanings would have been to give a prize to Jim Digby from ESA for most outrageously bright golf socks. You can read more about the golf tournament and find out who won in the Golf Tournament article in this issue.

The second group of early risers included John Aiken of Senators Coaches and

Pierre Guillotte, production manager with Cirque du Soleil who organized a bike run for themselves and others since those Harleys, Hondas, BMW's and Indians can be rented directly at the hotel from EagleRider Palm Springs. For a summary of this year's ride, please see the article in this issue.

With a warm welcome from Larry Smith of Tour Link, he noted the Opening Night Reception was the official kick-off for dining, drinking and the celebration of all things related to entertainment production. Bobby Kimball, an original member of Toto and personal friend of Larry's, played a live set. Sky Fire Arts provided an electrifying performance using a tesla coil that (purposely) shot ribbons of electricity toward grounded performers. Long-time supporters, Pyro Engineering, provided an incredible fireworks display. Firing from the front of the stage and the desert, the fireworks were enjoyed by locals and attendees alike and even made local news!

Friday: Keynote Address, Panel Sessions, Audio Demos & Transportation BBQ

Harvey Goldsmith gave the Keynote Address Friday morning. He shared a humorous ride down memory lane of some of the weird and crazy things he'd had to do in his career, especially in the early days. He then addressed the "strange and difficult times" the Rock-n-Roll industry has found itself in but also inspired attendees to change the world through charitable endeavors.





There was an entire day of panel sessions, workshops and audio demos at the stage. The main “G” sessions in the largest room were frequently standing room only, for example sessions on “Breaking and Entering” and “International Touring.” The sessions in smaller rooms grabbed attendees who wanted the focus or training they offered. There were live mixing lessons, CPR certifications, and massages for those who just needed to relax.

That evening, attendees were transported by coach, courtesy of sponsor EmpireCLS, to a nearby airport for the annual Transportation BBQ. In addition to a great spread and desserts catered by Latitude 45, attendees got to check-out a variety of ground and air transportation options (see the Transportation BBQ article in this issue).

XL Video’s Gareth Jeanne and Phil Mercer standing in front of a Gulfstream GIV at the Transportation BBQ, were just two of the attendees smiling while visions of charter buses and jet planes danced in their heads.

Saturday: More Panel Sessions, Audio Demos & Top Dog Awards

Panels, workshops and audio demos continued on Saturday before the big event in the evening. We have to thank panel coordinators Taylor Wettlaufer, Ray Amico and Mitchell Kellman for all of their hard work on expanding topics and recruiting great panelists.

The 2015 Top Dog Awards Ceremony brought a fantastic weekend full circle, ending on a high note....a memorable weekend for all!

Already Planning for Next Year

If you want to be involved next year, it’s never too soon to reach out to us and let us know. We’re already at work on Tour Link 2016 and are looking for new panel and workshop ideas as well as panel participants.



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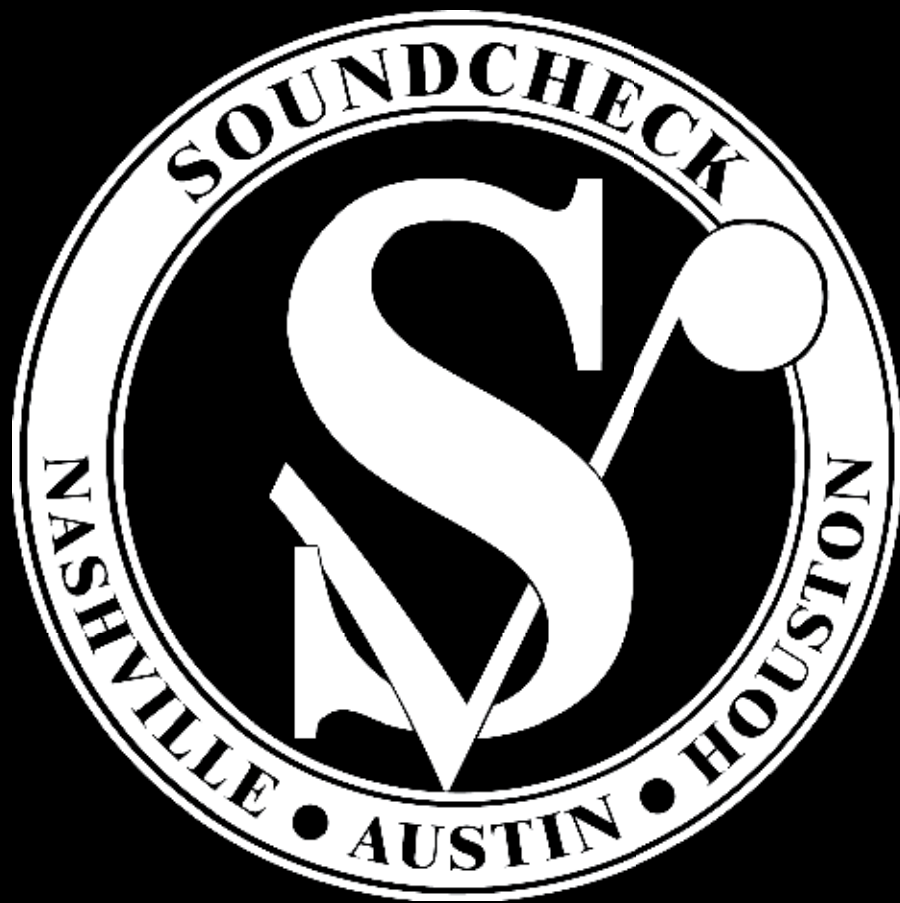
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Tour Link Testimonials

Story & photos by Debi Moen

One of the most popular and standing-room-only panels - with plenty more stragglers coming in hugging the walls - was the You Can't Make This Shit Up panel hosted by Bob Daitz. You had to be there. I mean, really, you had to be there in person if you wanted to hear the crazy stories from the road. That's because, as usual, there were to be no reporters or recorders in this session. It was all about sharing the unusual, the unexpected, the "can you believe this happened?" moment. And it was all about protecting the innocent. Oh sure, you may hear those stories repeated again in a bar. You might hear them retold in a hospital suite. But you won't read about it anywhere....including here

What you can read however, are some of the comments people shared with Mobile Production Monthly in other spots throughout the conference.

Doug Adams - Pyrotek Special Effects: I've been to all of the Tour Links. What brings me back every year? Friends, networking, getting in touch with the people behind the scenes.

Alan Dyer - EPT/Horizon Entertainment Cargo: Tour Link has matured into a seriously powerful event, nicely melding knowledge sharing, networking and industry developments with achievement recognition, social events and the bringing together of friends new and old. Touring is an industry that cannot tolerate mediocrity; each service provider must be at the top of their game to ensure a show rolls to schedule. Tour Link gives me the opportu-

nity to talk to an industry specific group of people, promote my skills, share ideas and experience. One-on-one personal contact with 700-plus people keen to take their business to another level, it's a powerful opportunity. I attended with 20 of my network colleagues from EPT/Horizon Entertainment from Germany, the USA, Taiwan, UK, France and Brazil. This attendance speaks volumes on Tour Link's worth as a marketing/promotional opportunity.

Dennis Haack - Stage Door Transportation: Tour Link is an important part of the Industry we are in and it is great to connect with all areas of the industry while at the event. The network connections we make are extremely valuable to our organization and we will continue to be involved in the years to come.

Eric Loader - Elation Professional: I'm here to meet lighting designers, production managers, touring professionals and to understand how our products can meet their needs for the touring market. There's

a lot of planning going on now for spring tours, the festival market is big across the US, production companies are spending money buying new technology, and so we had to be here with our presence.

George Masek - A.C.T Lighting: This is my second time at Tour Link. It's a nice, laid back, relaxed atmosphere. There are some great people in the industry whom we can visit with outside of the normal stressed-out backstage environment. It's a great way to see them and socialize.

David "5-1" Norman - Control Freak Touring: What I like about going to Tour Link: Reconnecting with friends I haven't seen all year; Learning new things on all of the different panels; and networking. This year's was the best by far. It was better paced, the hotel was much better, the awards show moved quickly, the food was 10 times better and there were more people.

Pierre Luc Rompré - Stageline: I've been coming the past five years now but Stage-



line is a longtime friend of Tour Link's Larry Smith. To have our products in front of key customers' faces so they can touch it and feel it is one of the greatest assets. In this particular manner, when the industry can see our product being used (for the outdoor stage events at Tour Link), with lighting and pyro, that's the key.

Robert Roth - Christie Lites: I've been coming to Tour Link since before it was Tour Link and it was the Performance Summit conference. The networking is great!

Ross Rylance - Summer of Love 50th Events Sponsorship Coordinator: I came to this year's Tour Link after a 10-plus year hiatus. I had great expectations for the conference and every one of them was met! The caliber of attendees was excellent, the panels were highly informative, the venue was superb and the food was incredible. The value for the price paid: priceless! I will be back next year and will bring some associates. Great job Tour Link team. This is the touring industry's Top Dog event!

Scott Scoville - MooTV: Tour Link more than any other convention seems to attract the people that I enjoy connecting with. Partly for work, but mostly it's just great to have so many old friends in the same place.

Smoother Smyth - Delicate Productions: Each year I go to Tour Link I get to see someone else's son in the business.

Howard Ungerleider - Production Design International: This is my second Tour Link. I'm here to network and to meet people, especially those I haven't met before; to check out what's out there, what they're doing, and see if there's a blend. There are also great seminars.





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Desert Springs Golf Club Hosts Tour Link Golf Tournament

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WINNERS

1st Keith Mitchell, Joey Gallagher, Dominic Anderson & Jimmy Russo Score: 60

2nd Devon Murray, Terry Murphy, Jay Curiel & Keith Conrad Score: 62

3rd Mike Llewellyn, Stephen Botting, Brian Sullivan & Tom Bateman Score: 63

Closest to the Pin

Brian Conway (won the bag from Ameristar)

Longest Drive

Patrick McGlynn

by JJ Janney,
Photos by Scott DeLancey

Michelle Pekrol of Star Gift Alliance and Dave Paiva of Tour Badgers have been coordinating the annual Tour Link Golf Tournament for five years now and said this year's friendly competition on the Thursday before the conference was a great success. Michelle described the 18-hole, par 72 golf course designed by Ted Robinson as "beautiful" while Dave gave it a rating of "superior." As the golf course is adjacent to and managed by the Marriott, convenient was another description.

Eighty players participated in the tournament organized as a best ball scramble, meaning only the lowest score counted for each hole among groups of four players. If you have avoided signing up for the tournament because you are worried about your skill level, keep that format in mind for next year since it means you only need one decent player in the group—or as Dave puts it "someone can carry you as long as everyone doesn't suck."

Players could buy Mulligans for \$5 each or 5 for \$20. Michelle nodded seriously, "everyone bought Mulligans." When asked what makes them keep volunteering to coordinate the tournament year after year, Dave quipped "free golf" while Michelle added, "we get worshipped."

Far be it for us to deny anyone their volunteer perk. Therefore, a special note from Michelle and Dave-- the Tour Link staff and Mobile Production Monthly make it known that we worship you as the Gurus of Golf.

Networking & Fun

Dave and Michelle organized groups by whether players categorized themselves as serious or fun golfers. Players also had the option to form their groups, giving old friends a chance to catch up and in the case of company groups, a fun way to relax together and do some team building. When I casually asked a group of the players if they were networking or having fun, someone said, "Is there any difference? Should there be?"

Bryan Venhorst, Charlie Alves and Paul Becher from PRG Nocturne were spotted on the golf course having fun and networking. When asked if they had anything exciting going on in the coming year that they wanted to share, "Chaos—that's the big thing" they all agreed. They said PRG's acquisition of Chaos would give PRG more talent, more equipment, and an even bigger global support network, "and that is going to help us satisfy the needs of the concert touring industry."

Joey Gallagher from Gallagher rode along with Keith Mitchell from A.C.E.S (Air Cargo Entertainment Services). When asked what they were look-



ing forward to in this coming year, Keith called back from the tee, "Expansion, expansion, expansion!" Joey nodded his head laughing, "yeah, that."

Golf Tournament Sponsors

PRG, Star Gift Alliance and TOURtech were generous enough to Co-Sponsor the Tour Link Golf Tournament. Golf Hole sponsors were Ameristar Jet Charter, Best Western International, The Grafton on Sunset and Oakwood Worldwide. Swag bags were provided to all players by Tour Badgers and Star Gift Alliance and included swag from All Access Staging & Productions, PRG Nocturne and Upstaging.



Joey Gallagher, Keith Mitchell,
Dominic Anderson & Jimmy Russo

Score: 60



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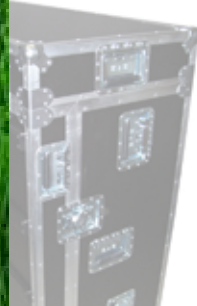
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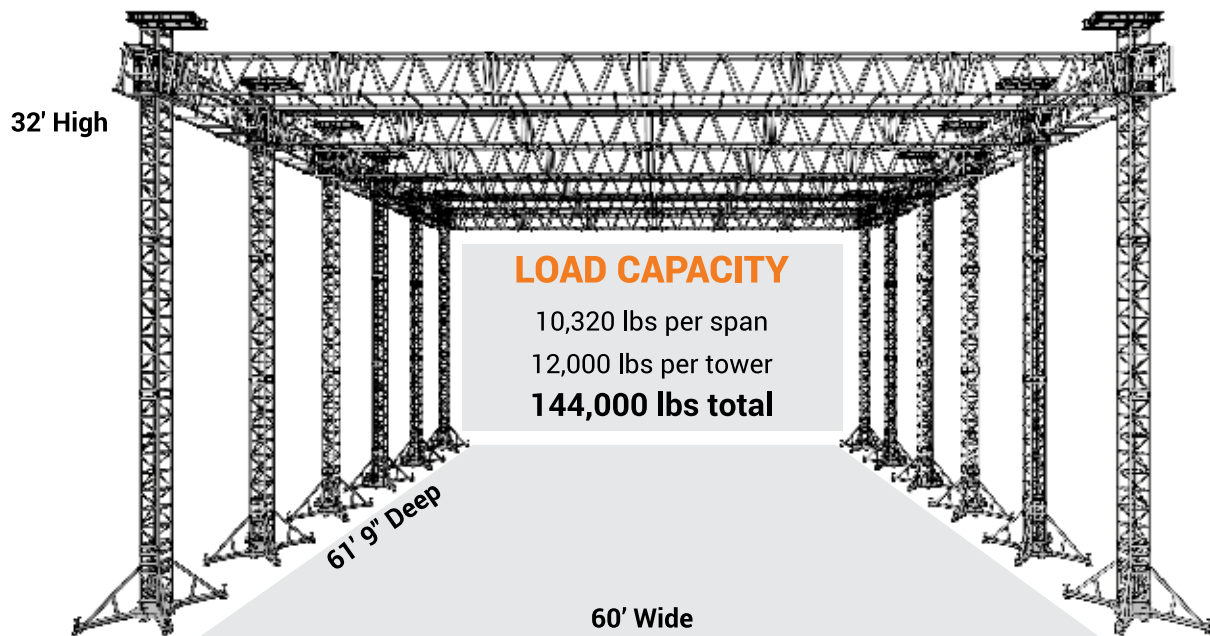
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EASY RIDERS DESIGN THURSDAY MORNING BIKE RUN

Story & Photos by Debi Moen

As Tour Link attendees teed off Thursday on the resort's golf course, others revved their engines in front of the hotel on the cool desert morning to ride. The goal was to hit the road for a 200-mile motorcycle day trip to take in surrounding scenic views before Tour Link officially started.

John Aiken of Senators Coaches and the event's "ringleader" Pierre Guillotte, production manager with Cirque du Soleil, gathered about 20 industry professionals from around the world, drawing in one from London, others from Germany. Jim Silvia of VanY Tours - and also Tour Manager for Judas Priest - followed the group with a sprinter van equipped with accoutrements of food and beverages to enhance the day.

Guillotte designed the riding route, taking them on a scenic drive around the Anzo Borrega Desert through Aguanga, Warner Springs, Ranchita, Borrego Springs, and cruising around the lake crazily called the Salton Sea.

"It's the perfect location to go for a ride," said Aiken. "We're more motorcycle people than golf people."

Guillotte gathered the bikers at the front of the hotel to review the rules of the road.

"This is not a race," he reminded them.

The group has ridden at various other Tour Link Conferences. This year's ride was made easy, Aiken said, by the Eagle Rider Motorcycles rental shop, located in the lobby of the host hotel.





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Jim Risgin Sets the Stage for Tour Link

by Debi Moen, Photos by Scott DeLancey

Production Manager Jim Risgin's role at Tour Link was as self-proclaimed "kitten herder." He was responsible for wrangling all the wild production elements and guiding them into one basket, Chris Musgrave assisted. The opening reception on Thursday night and the awards show Saturday night both used the same stage, set up on the lawn of the JW Marriott Desert Springs Resort & Spa.

This was the second year for Risgin, with OSA International, to be involved with Tour Link. As such, he was familiar with the procedure. Rather than have a production designer create a set and a lighting designer to specify fixtures for the rig, there was a different method used here.

"The Tour Link event sponsors got together and said, 'These products are what we would like to showcase, let's make a party out of it.' So it was design by reverse engineering," Risgin explained.

And again, rather than Risgin picking his team, the sponsors provided their own staff to handle their own products. "Everyone played together well to make sure we were a cohesive team. No egos, no attitudes. It all worked," Risgin noted.

OSA's role was to coordinate it all, to make sure all the pieces worked, he added. Other departments were done by other sponsors and key partners. "I was brought in to make sure all the kit merged into a straight line. I was herding kittens."

From four up to a dozen stagehands were hired on depending on what needed doing.

Though it might have looked out of place having a full concert stage set up on the hotel's lawn, Risgin said it wasn't difficult.

"We set it up where the hotel sets up events so they were no strangers to what we were doing. As far as challenges, it was the same challenges you would find in any non-standard performance venue," he said. "My job was to make sure we were good neighbors."

G2 Mobile Structures provided the Stageline SAM555 mobile stage which measured 55 feet by 50 feet. With a full covered wing package and a full crossover loading dock on the back end as well, the entire structure measured 72 feet wide by 62 feet deep.

Outine, DAS, CADAC and Powersoft each played a role in providing sound while Me-

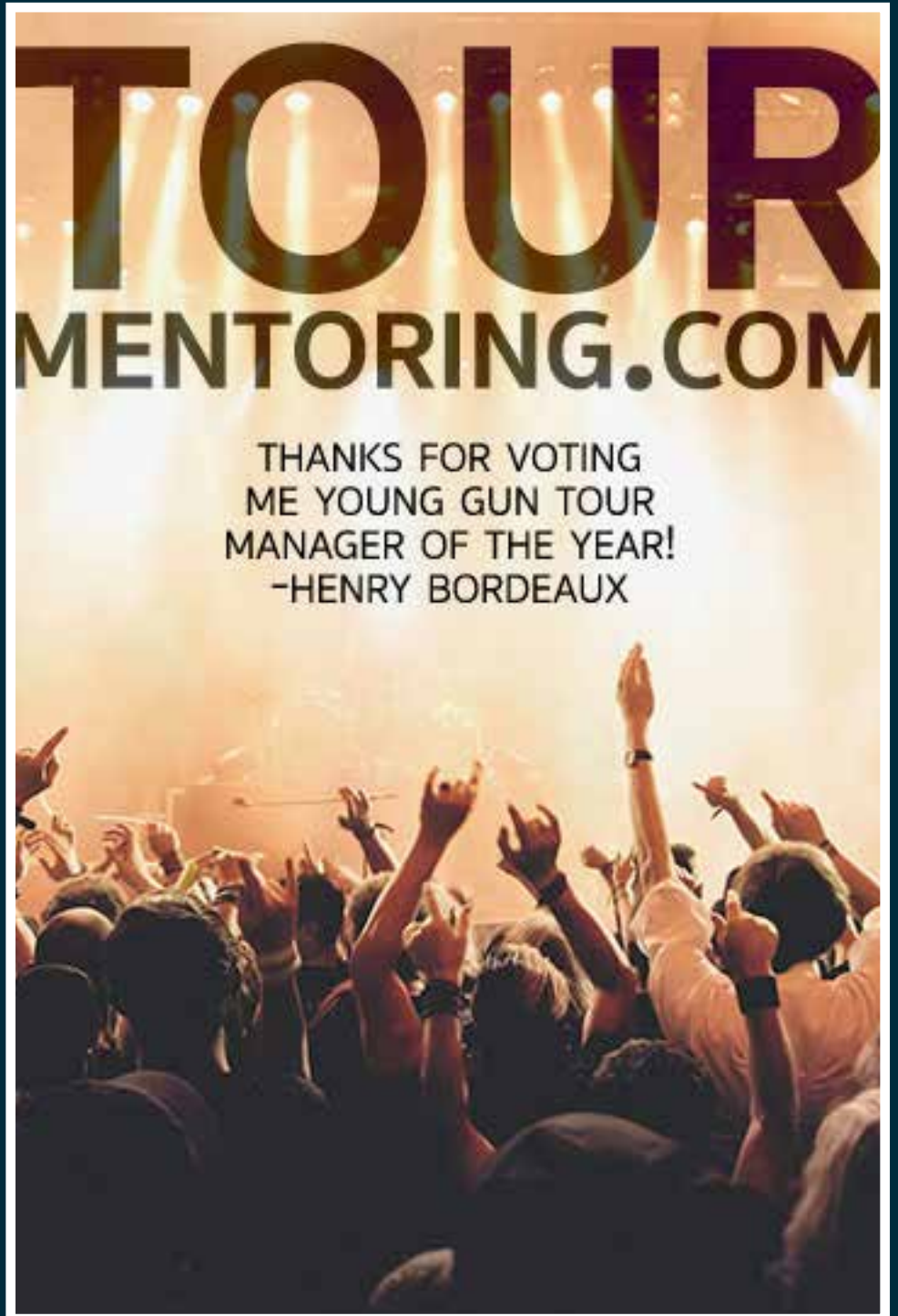


dia Visions provided the Absen A7 LED screens onstage. Media Visions and PRG Nocturne provided the graphic content, which featured sponsor promos, logo graphics, live camera feeds, event information and awards ceremony content.

Atlanta Rigging Systems provided the automation equipment from Kinesys. David Martin of Kinesys USA coordinated the rigging design, equipment specification and installation with the Tour Link production team. Martin also worked closely with other technical suppliers including Media Visions, CYM Lighting and PRG Nocturne to integrate the Kinesys automation into the show. Kinesys USA provided Kinesys Vector control software, which ran the rigging automation for various cues in the show and alternate screen positions.

Morpheus Lights, Hand on Labor, Gallagher Staging, Spider Ranch Productions, Garibay Brothers Systems and Event Tex also played crucial roles in bringing the stage to life.

“I was happy with the way it turned out,” Risgin said, “It looked good, and I got lots of comments and feedback. I look forward to new and interesting challenges at next year’s Tour Link.”



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OPENING NIGHT PARTY WITH FUN & FIREWORKS KICKS OFF TOUR LINK 2015

by Debi Moen, photos by Chris Miller



“We have three days to be together,” said Tour Link founder Larry Smith. “This is the party that starts it off.”

A large stage was set up on the Tennis Lawn area of the resort, comprised of a number of lighting, video, audio and staging products being shown off by sponsors. (See separate story on the outdoor stage.)

There was ample time for networking, mixing and reconnecting with old friends before the evening entertainment. Food stations featured gourmet mac and cheese, create your own quesadillas, caesar salad and potato mashups in martini glasses - served up in easy to carry dishes while strolling the grounds.

Before the main attractions onstage, recorded music through the PA served as the background dinner ambiance.

SkyFireArts entertained with a fiery performance of their new product, followed by Dave Paiva of Tour Badgers and Michelle Pekrol of Star Gift Alliance, who announced golf scores for the day’s tournament.

Bobby Kimball, original lead singer of Toto and longtime friend of Larry Smith’s performed. The veteran musician performed hits with a backing band, drawing attendees to dance at the foot of the stage for “Rosanna,” “Africa” and other favorites.

Adding a celebratory symbol to the night, Pyro Engineering set off an amazing assortment of fireworks over the heads and to the delight of the 700 attendees who came. Another Tour Link conference had officially begun.





On behalf Delicate Productions we would like to thank:

Everyone who voted for us; Larry and the entire staff at Tour Link; our talented staff who work so hard to give our clients the best shows possible; and the manufacturers we work with, because without their support we would not be able to offer great products. We also wish to thank the freelance audio, lighting and video techs who deserve to share this award and the other vendors who were nominated in our category. We thank our families who put up with our crazy hours, never ending emails and calls. We want to thank every one of our clients - the Foo Fighters, Chicago, Barry Manilow, Above & Beyond, the Black Crows, Tool, Silver Sun Pickups, the Neighborhood, Another Planet, Live Nation, Nederlander, AEG/Bounce, Latitude 38, CBS Radio, Queens of the Stone Age, and all the others who help keep the lights on. We thank the people who make up this industry - we are all connected and need to look out for one another. Thanks to Smoother, Steve, Spy and Gus for keeping Delicate a family owned and operated company; to F1 racing for coming to the US; to UCLA football for getting it together and beating USC three years in a row. Thanks for good BBQ and the cool smoker that George got for the Holiday party, the company that makes the English pies. Good books, reading is important. Whoever brings in doughnuts on Fridays, nothing like something sweet to end the week. Blah, Blah, Blah, Blah and Blah... Toys, New Toys!

"Everything around you that you call life was made up by people that were no smarter than you, and you can change it, you can influence it, you can build your own things that other people can use." - Steve Jobs

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A BIG THANK-YOU TO SOME OF THE BIG STARS OF OUR EVENT!

Panelists, Presenters & Moderators for Tour Link 2015 included:

Alan Dyer ★ Andrew Leavitt ★ Andy Bailey ★ Bill Rahmy ★ Bob Daitz ★ Bobby Schneider ★ Brande Lindsey ★ Buford Jones ★ Cary Todesco ★ Chad Schyvincht ★ Charlie Hernandez ★ Chris Musgrave ★ Chuck Randall ★ Craig Mitchell ★ Darcy Lynch ★ David Kiely ★ David Norman ★ David Vandenhuevel ★ Dennis Haack ★ Dr. Darian Brezinski ★ Dr. Paul Pepe ★ Gary Bowman ★ Gino Collins ★ Grady Lee ★ Harvey Goldsmith ★ Henry Bordeaux ★ Howard Ungerleider ★ “Jersey Joe” Skarzynski ★ Jim Digby ★ Jon Jim Runge ★ Jon Gottlieb ★ Jon Pleeter ★ Joerg Philipp ★ Joerg Black ★ Julie Kees Brouwer ★ Ken Denson ★ Ken Lyman ★ Loren Wilkins ★ Kevin Haas ★ Lori Tierney ★ Marie-Claire Cazorla ★ Mark Larson ★ Mary Jo Kaczka ★ Mary Lou Figley ★ Michael Brammer ★ Michelle Rubio ★ Mike Savas ★ Mitchell Kellman ★ Nick Gold ★ Nicki Goldstein ★ Patrick Whalen ★ Pete Healey ★ Pierre Guillotte ★ Ray Amico ★ Rick Canny ★ RJ Stillwell ★ Ron Shirley ★ Rutger Jansen ★ Sarah Costa ★ Scotty Ross ★ Steve Lemon ★ Steve Mattioli ★ Sue Brezinski ★ Taylor Wettlaufer ★ Tim McKenna ★ Tracy Williams

Schedule **Tour Link Conference** *Schedule*
JANUARY 8-10, 2015

Friday	Saturday
8:30 Mentoring One on One (Full Day)	8:00 Mentoring One on One (Full Day)
8:30 Opening Remarks	8:45 Opening Remarks
8:45 Keynote Address - Harvey Goldsmith	9:15 Festivals: A New Age
9:15 Everyone Comes Home	10:30 Travel Agents & Hotels
CPR and AED Training	10:30 The Design Process
9:30 Breaking & Entering	10:30 CAPS Workshop
10:30 Storming the Stage	10:30 Principles of Live Mixing
Intro to Severe Weather Planning for Events	
10:30 Hotels (Closed Door)	12:30 Everyone Comes Home
10:30 Travel Agents (Closed Door)	CPR and AED Training Rm H
10:30 Principles of Live Mixing	1:30 The Art of the Deal
12:30 Everyone Comes Home	2:45 Travel Agents and Tour Management
CPR and AED Training	2:45 Ethical Touring
1:30 International Touring	2:45 Everyone Comes Home
1:30 Everyone Comes Home The	CPR and AED Training Rm H
Settling of Shows and Tours	
CPR and AED Training	4:00 Tour Masters
1:30 Ultimate Ears Pro Workshop	
2:45 Navigating the Affordable Care Act	
2:45 Trucking and Coach Regulation	
2:45 Everyone Comes Home	
CPR and AED Training Rm H	
4:00 You Can't Make This Shit Up	

Panels, Workshops, Demos and Training

Compiled by Debi Moen & JJ Janney
Photos by Scott DeLancey

Besides mentoring and networking, something Tour Link strives to do is give people working in the entertainment industry a one-stop shop to get and share technical and administrative resources.

Taylor Wettlaufer, Ray Amico and Mitchell Kellman coordinated panels. We have to give a special thank you to our previous Panel Coordinator Henry Bordeaux who was too busy being a master of his craft this year to be able to coordinate the panels, but was still available for calls and to make connections, and as always to step into whatever shoes we asked him to fill.

When people think about production careers first thoughts for many are likely about the travel, how many destinations, and which arenas they'll be working in. They might not think how the U.S.'s Affordable Health Care Act affects people on their crews or how payroll gets done or what's the best way to contract to make sure things get done right and on-time.

That's why Tour Link brought experts like R.J. Stillwell to discuss important topics like Navigating the Affordable Care Act and gave opportunities for people to discuss payroll and taxes in the CAPS Workshop. It's also why the Settling of Shows and Tours was discussed in the Art of the Deal.

We brought travel agents, hoteliers, tax specialists, production experts, health care providers and visa specialists into the same discussions with the tour managers, production managers and vendors who have lived experience.

Two panel discussions focused on advice for people who want to get into production and advice from people who got in, are still in, and do it well. These are profiled in other articles in this issue (See Tour Masters, Breaking & Entering, and Jim Digby's personal story, Dedicating Your Life to a Career).

Only at Tour Link can you get mentoring, massages from Doctor Dot and Hands on Massage, catered meals sponsored by Backstage Networks, BearCom Wireless Worldwide, Flex Rental Solutions, The InterContinental, Times Square, Powersource Transportation, Road Radios & Road Wifi, and Weather Decision Technologies, and 'important stuff' like what you need to know when your drivers cross back and forth between the U.S. and Canadian border as explained at the Trucking and Coach Regulation panel:

We have a 16-hour work day in Canada. So when your driver crosses the border, he now runs on Canadian regulations. The biggest thing when a tour goes across Canada and then into the U.S., drivers must take a 10-hour break before crossing the border into the U.S. [and the] Canadian reset is 36 hours whereas the U.S. is only 34. Also, once every 14 days, a driver has to have 24 hours off duty in the last 14 days. Trucks must be set to 65 mph. – Dennis Haack of Stage Door Transportation

Tour Link sponsors D.A.S and Outline provided audio demos on both Friday and Saturday using the awards stage (see related article in this issue on Jim Risgin) as a working laboratory.

Buford Jones of Meyer Sound was on hand

to present a live audio workshop in Principles of Live Mixing and challenged attendees to give fans the experience that will get them back to the live concert and away from their 60-inch plasma TV's. Mike Dias with Ultimate Ears gave a workshop to show how their custom line of ear monitors and how individuals can tune them using digital technology.

The Design Process began with the premise that show design needs to include all parties involved including creative, funders and production. Panelists took questions from the audience who wanted to know how big is too big for a production? How exactly do you structure a design team? And of course multiple questions on budgeting.

When discussing whether increasingly bigger productions are necessarily better or even wise, Mary Lou Figley from StageCo said depending on time constraints, "Anything can be accomplished with the right amount of money and personnel [but] when it gets too much, you have to reel the client in."

Howard Ungerleider warned, "Never tell the client they are making a mistake. Offer suggestions to steer them in another direction and convince them why." While Craig Mitchell, who noted he is a believer in having multiple design options, summarized "anything is possible with time and money. Hopefully, common sense eventually wins out."



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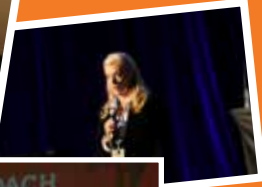
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ski, R.N. provided CPR and AED training to the sounds of the Bee Gee's "Stayin' Alive." Susy Vento of the Thompson Hotel of Miami Beach and Archana Natha of the Westin Grand Vancouver Hotel both said they were thrilled to take the training as AED's had recently been installed in their hotels.

Chuck Randall moderated Festivals: A New Age with a panel that represented experience with the biggest and best festivals in the world: Mary Jo Kaczka, Coachella's Kevan Wilkins and Mary Jo Kaczka, Warped's Kevin Lyman, Manager Rick Canny, Tomorrow-World's Rutger Jansen and ICM's Jon Pleeter. They discussed from both the artist's standpoint and the festival standpoint, how and when it makes sense to book particular kinds of artists for a festival and debated whether and how the big festival's have changed ways live music is produced, promoted and experienced.

Lyman advised those looking to get into the industry to look at festivals. Mary Jo Kaczka agreed. "Festivals have created a whole new niche of jobs. Last summer I got called to manage the vehicle fleet for Bonnaroo. There were 400 vehicles. That's a whole new industry. We're beyond a bunch of people in a field."

Jim Runge, who works with the Black Keys, voiced the shared frustrations of many in the International Touring panel when he explained, "Just in trucking regulations alone, you need a PhD to keep track and understand them, then a new PhD the next year because things change every year." Kees Brouwer of Pieter Smit Trucking acknowledged difference in regulations between continents and countries can be difficult—which is why it is important to use the vendors who are experts in those locations. But the main take-away from this panel was, in spite of the headaches with visas, regulations, travel, ever-changing artist entourages and schedules, there is more international touring than ever and fewer

2015 Top Dog Touring Hall of Famer, Harvey Goldsmith, in the Ethical Touring panel started the conversation on charitable events by making two suggestions. Firstly, he advised attendees not to be afraid to publicize charitable activities in spite of the irony that "today, with so many more opportunities to get the word out, it's 10 times harder. Today everything has a more a scatter gun approach. You have to be lucky that info spreads virally." Secondly, he cautioned, "You have to know where the money is going, rather than going into the ether and hoping someone else will spend it wisely."

Panelists discussed ways they have incorporated charitable events into their professional lives through intentional, planned and well thought-out in every detail fundraising and spending plans—and sometimes, though, giving artists and production crews an unplanned opportunity while touring. Mike Savas recounted after Hurricane Sandy, for example, "With Bon Jovi, a dozen roadies got together, we rolled down the shore and we built a new house. We came in with carpenters, riggers - and built half a home in four hours. It's inspiring to see roadies come to you and say how incredible it was to be connected to society."

In the Everyone Comes Home workshop, Damian Brezinski, M.D and Sue Brezin-

places in the world where a tour won't go. Huge growth is expected in India and Russia is a hot destination.


In Storming the Stage, a panel that represented the Event Safety Alliance (ESA), Weather Decision Technologies (WDT), the National Weather Service (NWS) and Nashville Live Productions and Event Safety Operations provided an Intro to Severe Weather Planning for Events. Best practices, legal responsibilities and training opportunities were discussed.

And finally, in the Travel Agents and Tour Managers panel great tips were shared like remember to designate your tour manager as 'group leader' when speaking with hotels so they can get an upgraded room and whenever possible, use a corporation's entertainment division so you aren't hassled at a local level with things (like why you need to have a rental car at the hotel by 2 a.m. and no, nobody from the tour is there right now because they're on a tour bus) that can be easily approved in a division that understands what you need.



Tzell Travel congratulates Debra Copelan on her Tour Link Top Dog Award for Best Travel Agent! Rock on, Deb!


Debra sends her thanks and sincere appreciation to her artists, clients and friends she has worked for over the years. Thanks to all who voted!



TOP DOG 2014 MERCHANDISER OF THE YEAR

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-Richard






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ADVICE FROM TOURING VETERANS



by Debi Moen, Photos Scott DeLancey

Veteran industry members gathered for a Saturday question and answer session from the audience.

Most questions centered on career advice: how to break into the industry and how to get to higher levels in the field. It makes sense because, as Steve Lemon pointed out, “When we started it was a lot easier to break in. Now there’s a lot of competition.”

Bill Rahmy advised, “A lot of it is just patience and perseverance and you have to like it. People who have been doing it as long as we have, have found a place or a team camaraderie. A lot of people don’t want to do this kind of work. To me, it’s driven by the love of art and music and people.”

Bobby Schneider agreed. “It’s not for everybody. I started and did it for free. It’s all I wanted to do when I was 13. I hung around, I asked questions, all of a sudden I wasn’t the pain in the ass kid—I

was the pain in the ass adult.”

Chuck Randall added, “There are times we did it for free because we wanted to be part of it; that is why we are still doing it today - besides not being qualified for doing anything else in life.”

Charlie Hernandez pointed out, “Everyone up here started with a broom and worked their way up. We’ve all done the same thing in our business our whole lives. That shows how much commitment, love and insanity lives inside our melons.”

When the panel was asked, what took you to the next level? Hernandez answered, “Promoter Alex Cooley told me there were three things you do: you work your ass off, you keep your word, you protect your friends. That’s it. And you’ll go far.” Randall chimed in, “And if you don’t, you won’t have to worry about your future. The key to success in life is: the ones who make it don’t quit. Find out what you’re passionate about and do that.”

asters:



An audience member asked about women in the industry and how, for women aspiring to be production or tour managers, it seems to be a hard road. Hernandez acknowledged that when it comes to being a production or tour manager, “gender shouldn’t matter in this conversation. We have a long way to go but that’s societal.”

An audience member advised women to get a job as a production runner and commented, “as a woman it’s the best way you can get started. You need to learn a little of everything and strive to be the best. First, fake it ‘til you make it. Know a lot of people you can ask, and don’t let anyone intimidate you.”

Rahmy agreed and noted that nowadays “women are more vital and are represented” but that didn’t mean there still weren’t slights. He suggested that jobs like “production assistant” which are filled by a lot of women should be called “production coordinator” to acknowledge just how much vital work goes into that position.

Schneider said, “We see women in all aspects of our industry now and it balances things out...on the bus.” An audience member called out, “To the ladies, keep it professional and take no shit. You don’t have to soften up and get run over.”

Several audience members were offered direct help in response to their questions.

Gino Collins from Houston said, “I want to be the next Jersey Joe. There’s no blueprint to get to where you guys are sitting. What’s the number

continued on next page

An advertisement for Four Star Wire & Cable Inc. and My Star Sound. The ad is framed in a metallic border with the text "BUILT TOUGH - TOUR TESTED" at the top and "MADE IN AMERICA" at the bottom. It features a green star logo for Four Star Wire & Cable Inc. and a blue star logo for My Star Sound. The text includes the websites FourStarWire.com and MyStarSound.com, and lists services: PRO AUDIO CABLES, CUSTOM SNAKES, PLATES & PANELS, CONNECTORS, VIDEO CABLE, STAGE & LIGHTING, BULK WIRE, DATA/FIBER, LOW-VOLTAGE, COMMUNICATION, INDUSTRIAL. Contact numbers are provided for Michigan (877 789-1626) and Tennessee (877 853-8106).

one piece of advice?"

Charlie Hernandez offered him a start to work with him at a festival in Houston. "Right off the bat you will get some experience. You can say that it does work to come here and ask questions."

A Canadian lighting designer questions how to break in to jobs in the US because of immigration papers.

Audience member answered, "Finance your own visa. Pay for it - it's not cheap but it's valuable because they look at your resume and say 'she can go now' It's an asset to your employability."

Someone in the audience offered a start, saying, "I work for a regional production company. Come talk to me."

Someone who works with a promoter asked what she could do in Los Angeles to further her career. Bobby Schneider offered her a hand. "You can

help us at a rehearsal in LA and be an intern with us." To which Scotty Ross added, "and if you want to do this, be persistent."



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BREAKING & ENTERING



GETTING A JOB IN PRODUCTION & WHY YOUNG GUNS MATTER

by Debi Moen, Photos Scott DeLancey



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Getting a Job in Production & Why Young Guns Matter

by Debi Moen, Photos Scott DeLancey

In the spirit of an important theme for the Tour Link Conference—creating job advancement opportunities for touring professionals of all ages—we at Mobile Production Monthly decided to use a little more space than usual to focus on this session topic.

Event Safety Alliance Founder and Production Manager, Jim Digby began his Friday session with just one panel member, “Jersey Joe” Skarz, someone who quit his job and came to Tour Link three years ago wanting to break into and enter the business. “Jersey Joe” got his industry career start at Tour Link thanks to a panel session like this.

“I’m looking for 20-somethings,” Digby said, roaming the audience. He began handpicking youngsters from the audience to take the stage.

“What have you done?” “Nothing,” answered Gino Collins. “Perfect. Get up there,” Digby said.

When the panel filled, Digby recounted, “I, a 30-year veteran, have a relatively high functioning team. We all get along; it’s a team effort, not a lot of bickering. But Jersey Joe came along and spent two weeks with us with youthful enthusiasm. Everyone got more enthusiastic because Jersey Joe showed up saying, ‘Sure, I can do it, no problem.’ That enthusiasm, that excitement, is what is common for me on this panel.

“Enthusiasm has a great amount of value that may be more important than the job itself,” Digby continued. “People like this make people like me better.”

In the audience, Production Manager and Founder of Just A Bunch of Roadies, Charlie Hernandez agreed. “Great to have youth here listening to guys who invented the business. You show up with energy, ‘no’ is not in the vocabulary. If

you bring that to the table, the door will open for you.” Hernandez added, and “when you do succeed, you have to give it back. Be successful, work hard and then give it away.”

Black Keys Tour Manager Nic Close said, “I’ve been pleased and lucky to work with young kids coming from these vendors. They are figuring it out and doing great. As long as we continue to learn, it’s a great business to be in. I’ve been at it since age 18. I’m 46 now, so, that’s my story. What Jim is saying is to be excited to see young kids take it seriously and give it as much love as I try to do.”

Close offered reassurance for people learning the ropes and making mistakes, “when it goes wrong, it depends on the nature of your screw up. There is almost nothing that you are going to do that will stop the show. We are not curing Ebola, we’re not solving malaria. Whatever it is, we’re not putting our young

guns in harm’s way.”

Close advised older crew and managers to reject training and mentorship that demeans new crew. “Hazing of young ones on tour wastes time and energy. I don’t buy into it. There’s no left handed screw driver.” Close added, “There’s a level of joshing and teaching, but you have to treat them like intelligent adults.”

Digby turned it back to the panel. “What are you facing that causes you concern? What is it you are being haunted by or are calling into question by older leadership that doesn’t feel right to you?”

Andrew Leavitt said he was once on a tour that he felt wasn’t safe. “The concept was to mix water with electronics - fountains, water screens, etc. - and put it on stage. A kid stepped into a pool barefoot and it was the scariest thing to watch that. In my head, I was about to watch someone die. I was dumb

continued on page 71



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DEDICATING YOUR LIFE TO A CAREER

...Is it just your life you're dedicating?

by Jim Digby, seen here with wife Maureen & their two children

Through the magic of social media, we now regularly peer in on each other's lives and find ourselves comparing our own condition to those we voyeuristically follow. Although few would argue that other peoples' lives should set the standard for our own, the ease with which we can see how the Joneses are doing (or at least how they APPEAR to be doing) makes for a compelling distraction. Unlike those who browse the Internet from the comfort of home, however, we roadies may actually reap a benefit from remote engagement tools such as Facebook. They allow us to nurture our physically disconnected friendships and relationships in spite of our nomadic lifestyles.

As someone who by choice and circumstance maintains a relatively high profile (in roadie terms, anyway), I have been frequently asked how my family and I manage to maintain a satisfying life together. It's a complicated question; one that can't be answered with simple declarations or numbered lists. Like any great novel, shedding light on one's own family often uncovers complexities, peculiarities, and suggests more questions than it answers. However, I've decided to take a crack at an unfiltered snapshot of our life in hopes that what we've learned over my decades-long life on the road might help those early in their careers realize that although far from easy, it CAN be done.

The disclaimer: I am not a relationship counselor--in fact, FAR from it. My wife and I have had decades to get it right and our relationship continues to evolve and grow as we age gracefully together.

SHOWTIME...

Waking at 3:30 am to prepare once again to leave those I love so dearly for yet another five week separation, I wonder, as I have so many times before, how long it will be before I'm in a place where I can just stay home and shower them with the full time love I desire and they deserve.

The voice inside my head reminds me, "This is my chosen career. You love it and you've dedicated your life to it." Then it hits me: I've not only dedicated my life to it, but to a very large degree the lives of those I've enlisted to be on the team with me. In short, through my career choice, I have unwittingly committed the lives of my loved ones to my calling, with all its joys— and warts.

Now, and because of this realization, I have to modify the way I perceive my actions. I must acknowledge this is a conscious choice by me and those around me have had little say in the matter. Are they enjoying the journey as much as I am from their seat in the bleachers? What collateral suffering are they silently enduring as I depart for potentially warmer weather, luxurious destinations, potentially dangerous political hot zones, and distances sometimes so great that should they need me urgently it would take at least a full 24 hours to get home? Is this fun for them? Are they masking, so that I stay strong, a genuine anxiety about my absence? Is my choice to dedicate so much of life to this career actually causing people I truly love to suffer in ways that I don't see? Am I doing all that can be done to ensure their happiness as they support my passion for my work? These are very real concerns that one should address before choosing a career on the road.

IT'S ALL IN THE ADVANCE...

As with so many things in our profession, the difference between a good day and an easy one starts with a great advance. This is true at home as well.

If you are blessed with children, as my wife and I are, a direct "matter of fact" approach to Daddy's travel works best. We integrate the conversation about the trip into our exchanges with the kids long before departure day. We do a countdown "clock" that counts down the days before Daddy goes away, and the same for the number of days until Daddy returns home. This prepares the kids for the inevitable and gives them many opportunities to necessarily express their emotions. We talk about where Daddy is going, what they will be doing while I am gone. We look at the map, make Daddy's travel a part of the human experience for them and try our hardest not to feed into their already varied emotional soup. We tell them it's OK to cry, it's OK to be sad because of the separation,

but let's do lots of fun things between now and the time I have to go away again.

You may also find these actions helpful if you don't have children--adults talking about their feelings in the face of important relationship needs is a good thing. It's not uncommon for our significant others to rely on us, to need us and to be concerned about us while we are gone. Some of these concerns may lead to uncomfortable questions, but if your communication is effective-- your advance--the chances are good you can support and encourage your loved ones as they experience their very real emotions.

I leave a hand written note, in Sharpie of course (it's amazing how bad hand writing gets if all you do is type), telling my family how much I love them and how proud of them I am every day. The note acknowledges my son's sixth birthday, the actual day of which I will miss, though I did leave Tour Link early to be with him on the party day. Being there for the important times, though not always possible, is a must, it's not a choice. We all have someone at home who loves us, is thinking about us and is worried for us while we pursue the most fulfilling career we know. Being there for them in real times of need and for the "once in a lifetime" moments is the least we can do to show that our heart is with them.

I keep them well informed, whether they are listening or not. Trying not to upset the routine and the machine of the home job, which my wife production manages, I recognize that I am a novelty to the family. When I am home I try to remind myself that my actions by being there can actually cause a disruption. It's therefore important not to completely destroy all that your home production manager has worked so hard to establish as routine, perhaps my wife should slap a guest sticky on me when I get home to remind me I'm on her stage. Tread lightly while on your loved one's stage, be respectful of the boundaries, the established routines at home. These have taken a long time for the home production manager to get into place and disrupting them takes valuable time and energy to repair and/or restore.

THE HEAVY OF LEAVING (LOAD OUT)...

Before walking out the door, while the humans in the house still sleep, I make the rounds to each of their rooms, my wife included, with a kiss on their foreheads and a whisper of "I'll miss you - see you soon." Then I take a minute to be at peace with our rapidly aging 11 year old, dying, black lab "Holly," telling her "it's OK if she has to go while I'm gone," thanking her for having been a loving companion through incredibly difficult times and "I'll see you in doggy heaven some day for a nice long walk." With tears in my eyes, she and I sit head to head for a minute or two taking in each other's

breath in a kind of knowing acknowledgement of the inevitable. I take the time for this fully accepting the likelihood that she will not be here when I return. Even more concerning and upsetting is the possibility that my family may have to deal with her death without me home. Being true to the mantra "it's all in the advance," we have, since learning of her condition, done everything we can to make sure that we've made peace with her, the kids are as prepared as they can be for her eventual death (we talk about it, instead of hiding from it) and every attempt has been made to strengthen everyone's ability to deal with her passing in my absence. Let's not kid ourselves, it's going to be tragically difficult for all of us, but we've done what we can to prepare for it openly and together while I am home, we've advanced it.

WHAT ARE THE PRIORITIES...?

- Love
- Quality time - being "present" when you are present
- Communication - verbally acknowledge the conditional facts of the job, develop coping mechanisms for everyone. You're going to spend at least one-third of your life away nfrom home, what do "we" do to make that OK?
- Health insurance
- Life insurance
- Nest egg
- Escape - find ways to provide an "escape" for your loved ones. For my wife it's running, golf, neighborhood gatherings and for our kids it's a variety of age appropriate activities. Make these escapes as much a priority as your career. Provide the tools to ease the difficulty of single parenthood, babysitters, cleaning help, adult diversions without the kids, whatever it takes.

The dedication it takes to succeed and the personal fulfillment we gain in a successful career is unparalleled. But, few of us do it alone, it's imperative that we nurture those who may unwittingly be on the journey with us and who, in blind commitment, support us through all of the here and gone and ups and downs.

For we show-folk, this is a calling not a job. And for those who devotedly support us through it? *It is unselfish love.*



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Tour Link Transportation BBQ 2015

by JJ Janney, Photos by Scott DeLancey

The 2015 Tour Link Transportation BBQ proved again that wings and wheels go great with brisket! All catering and that fantastic spread was provided by Latitude 45 Catering. Chris Mitchell, owner of Latitude 45, has 28 years experience working in catering and restaurant industries. He showed he's got the talent, the staff and the equipment to provide any tour with great tasting food.

PLATINUM Sponsors were Apollo Jets, EmpireCLS, United Airlines, and Youngjets & FUGA. GOLD Sponsors were Hemphill Brothers Coach Company, Private Jet Services, and Starbase Jet. The Early Air Way, Music Express and Swift Aircraft Management & Swift Air were our SILVER Co-Sponsors. BandWagon RV Rentals was a BRONZE Co-Sponsor along with Stage Coach Production and VanY Tours.

United Airlines promoted discounts and rewards for production travel. FUGA was on hand promoting a wide range of services they offer in private aviation, everything from charters, management of aircraft, to sales and acquisitions. EmpireCLS promoted the newest addition to their fleet, memorably named "Ground Force One," it's a custom Mercedes Executive Sprinter Van outfitted with tech friendly additions like HDMI inputs, wifi and a mobile theater sound system.

Curly Jones helped show off Stage Coach Production's "portable production office trailer." The trailer comes pre-equipped with everything one would expect in office cubicles including a bathroom with shower. The trailer can also be used for VIPs and was a popular walk-through at the Tour Link BBQ with festival and touring staff alike.

Private jets to safely transport your artists in style were provided by Starbase Jet and Youngjets & FUGA.

VanyY Tours showed off two 7-8 passenger splitter vans powered by fuel efficient Mercedes diesel engines that have 4 and 5 bunk options and come with IN MOTION SAT TV, fridge, cooler and shore power. Luke Van Wyhe said they're ideal for smaller touring groups who want all the luxury but lower cost. Also promoting affordability was BandWagon RV Rentals with their BandWagon that functions like a tour bus but was specifically designed to fall under the 26,000 lb. Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW) limit that would necessitate a CDL.





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TOUR LINK SETS RECORD FOR AWARD SHOW NIGHT

by Debi Moen, Photo by Chris Miller

The 2015 Tour Link 'Top Dog' Awards set a record in awards show performance time, running through 51 awards, 2 special presentations and speeches in one hour and 40 minutes thanks to an incredible production team.

In addition to Production Manager Jim Risgin, credit goes to Wendy Catto and Chris Musgrave for their on stage assistance and PRG Nocturne's Charlies Alves and Bryan Venhorst for video content creation and to many others who made this evening such a success. Co-hosts were Bob Daitz, David Scheirman, and Lori DeLancey. Awards were sponsored by DPS, Inc.

The event was to honor "the best and the brightest" in the industry, said Tour Link Co-Host/Tour Manager Chuck Randall, while KROQ radio personality Ted Stryker urged those award winners to "keep it moving."

The honor roll - listing those souls we lost in 2014 - was accompanied by Jackson Browne's "The Load Out" song. It ended with the on-screen note: "It's not good-bye, it's see you down the road." Special segments included the Induction into the Touring Hall of Fame. Producer Kevin Wall introduced this year's honoree, Harvey Goldsmith. A short video included congratulatory wishes from Sir Bob Geldof, Sting,

producer Trevor Horne, personal manager Bill Curbishley, Jools Holland, Rob Light of Creative Artist Agency and more. Goldsmith told the audience, "You guys (on the production side) make it work. Without you guys it does not happen."

Earlier in the evening, Megumi Kusano received a custom made workbox from Jan Al Cases (Muffie and Jan Alejandro) that the two presented to her along with Bobby Schneider as part of the Modern Newtonian Award. It was quite amusing that Megumi, not knowing she was winning the award, was stuck in traffic, arrived late and sprinted through the parking lot with Melissa Allgood leading the charge all so she could slip into her seat approximately 20 seconds before being called to the stage. Congratulations Megumi!

Also earlier in the evening, Larry Smith challenged the attendees to promote Tour Link in the future. "Everyone brings something to it. If you value the time you had here, find one person next year to come. That's how we build it."

Smith said the goal of the awards show was to start by 8 pm, finish by 10 pm. They beat the record at one hour, 40 minutes, he said. Feedback from past awards shows directed this attempt to speed things up, he added.





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Scott Scovill-Brad Paisley

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Omar Montes Rangel-Katy Perry

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Bob Davis-Drake

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR/ASSIST.

Adriane Biondo-Black Keys

PRODUCTION MANAGER - YOUNG GUN

Joel Forman-Bruno Mars

PRODUCTION MANAGER

Jim Digby-Linkin Park

TOUR MANAGER - YOUNG GUN

Henry Bordeaux-Jason Derulo

TOUR MANAGER

Jim Runge-Black Keys





ROCK-N-ROLL IS DEAD. LONG LIVE ROCK-N-ROLL!

Interview with 2015 Top Dog Touring Hall of Famer, Harvey Goldsmith CBE
by JJ Janney

Legendary producer and promoter Harvey Goldsmith received the 2015 Tour Link Hall of Fame Award in recognition of his long history in and ongoing contributions to the music industry. “Sometimes when you get these awards you feel like it’s the end of the run, but it’s still nice to be recognized,” laughed Harvey when asked how he felt about receiving a ‘lifetime achievement’ recognition.

Harvey has worked tirelessly to bring the music of the greatest rock-n-roll acts to the fans through live performances and television broadcast. But he also uses his notoriety, influence, and expertise to make significant and lasting differences in the world through charities. He is responsible

for two of the largest music events in history, Live Aid and Live 8, and has already helped raise more than \$300 million for various charities and causes.

During his keynote address at Tour Link, Harvey challenged professionals in the music industry to create even more formal and responsible charitable opportunities within music touring to help organizations tackle global social and health problems. For this interview, Harvey was kind enough to speak with *Mobile Production Monthly* about another issue he is passionate about, the price of concert tickets and how exorbitant pricing is bad for long-term fan and artist development.

Shelling Out High Dollar Figures for Tickets Doesn't Equal Artist Appreciation

Harvey scowled when talking about promoters who argue the opposite—that ticket prices are in fact too low. He disagreed and was particularly frustrated with the proliferation of the high price ticket add-on. “But then people say I’m old fashioned. I keep arguing that a ticket should be an entry into an experience, not a commodity for people who’d rather stay in the VIP area drinking cocktails than attend the actual concert,” explained Harvey.

A downside for the acts is having their most visible and prominent sections available to people more interested in impressing the guest or corporate client they’ve brought with them than really experiencing the show if they do show up. “Meanwhile some of the most passionate fans are priced out due to the exorbitant cost,” said Harvey, “and forget about the youngest fans being able to build experience and appreciation for a range of live music artists.”

Rock-n-Roll Has Forgotten the Basics of Building up Demand

With the exception of a handful of newer acts like Ed Sheeran or Michael Buble who can consistently fill the big venues on a tour, Harvey noted how many of the headliners are the same ones who were on the marquees thirty and forty years ago or more. But when it comes to Rock-n-Roll, “it’s all the old dinosaurs who are out there filling the stadiums and like it not, they can’t last forever,” said Harvey.

Harvey acknowledged the growing festival scene in the U.S. and growth in other genres like EDM and Latin Music. “Right. Other genres. But what about rock? Rock is dead. Long live Rock-n-Roll.”

“There’s not enough big acts who can sell out arenas and stadiums because the industry won’t invest in long-term artist development,” explained Harvey, “we’ve forgotten the basics of building up demand.” For Harvey that means

helping new artists through a process of moving to progressively larger venues as they hone their skills and build their fan base. It doesn't mean thrusting them from the C markets to the A while bypassing the B or plucking them from the internet and sending them on their first tour at the stadium level. He acknowledged, "Yes, yes, there are always exceptions," at mention of Justin Bieber's ongoing success. But Harvey pointed out thrusting artists into stadiums before they're musically ready can set them up for failure or lead to over-the-top productions to distract from sour notes and off-pitch performances — thereby increasing ticket prices and fan dissatisfaction yet again. "High production costs aren't always about artist ego," he explained.

Fans Aren't Off the Hook Either

Harvey didn't let the music consumers off the hook for their part in high ticket prices. "It's payback for their demand for free online music," said Harvey. "The concept of an album is gone. Even when fans are willing to pay for music, they cherry pick a favorite song or two. Since acts can't make money selling their music, they make it up through the live tour." He added, "the irony is, at a time when there's more live touring than ever, the average stiff can't afford to see the show."

Another segment that doesn't get let off the hook either are ticket re-sellers—whether it's the fans doing it, companies snapping up tickets online to resell, or the artists themselves trying to make extra cash by "skimming off the top." Asked to comment on the fact so many people are willing to pay greater than face value for tickets, sometimes by thousands of dollars, Harvey said, "just because there is a market for it, doesn't make it moral."

It also doesn't address the problem of how to make sure artists and produc-

ers can both make money through live entertainment without excluding anyone who isn't rich enough to pay the resell price or computer savvy enough and lucky enough to get a face-value ticket in the first place.

Are There Solutions?

Comments on the few big acts "sucking the money out of the whole thing" or how it used to be about sharing the music with passionate fans, but "now point one, two and three, it's about money" almost made Harvey seem cynical. But someone who didn't truly believe in the good of his fellow mankind or that things can't be improved, wouldn't have been at Tour Link encouraging people toward charity or offering positive advice and mentorship to young music industry professionals. Either way, a friend told me once with a nod to the comic George Carlin, a cynic is just an idealist who has experienced disappointment.

Harvey was sure currently available solutions could help the industry find that sweet spot where artists, producers, and production can all make money and get fair priced tickets into the hands of both the true fan and the young person just starting to develop a taste for live music. He noted for example, "every cell phone has a sim card. I can buy ski tickets tied to an individual cell phone, but why not concert tickets?"

Solutions are available, but the industry would have to be ready to address the issue of secondary resales and not just talk about it. Fans would need be educated on how choices they make in refusing to buy albums while supporting scalpers and re-sellers just exacerbates the ticket price problem.

*I hope Harvey isn't disappointed.
Long live Rock-n-Roll!*

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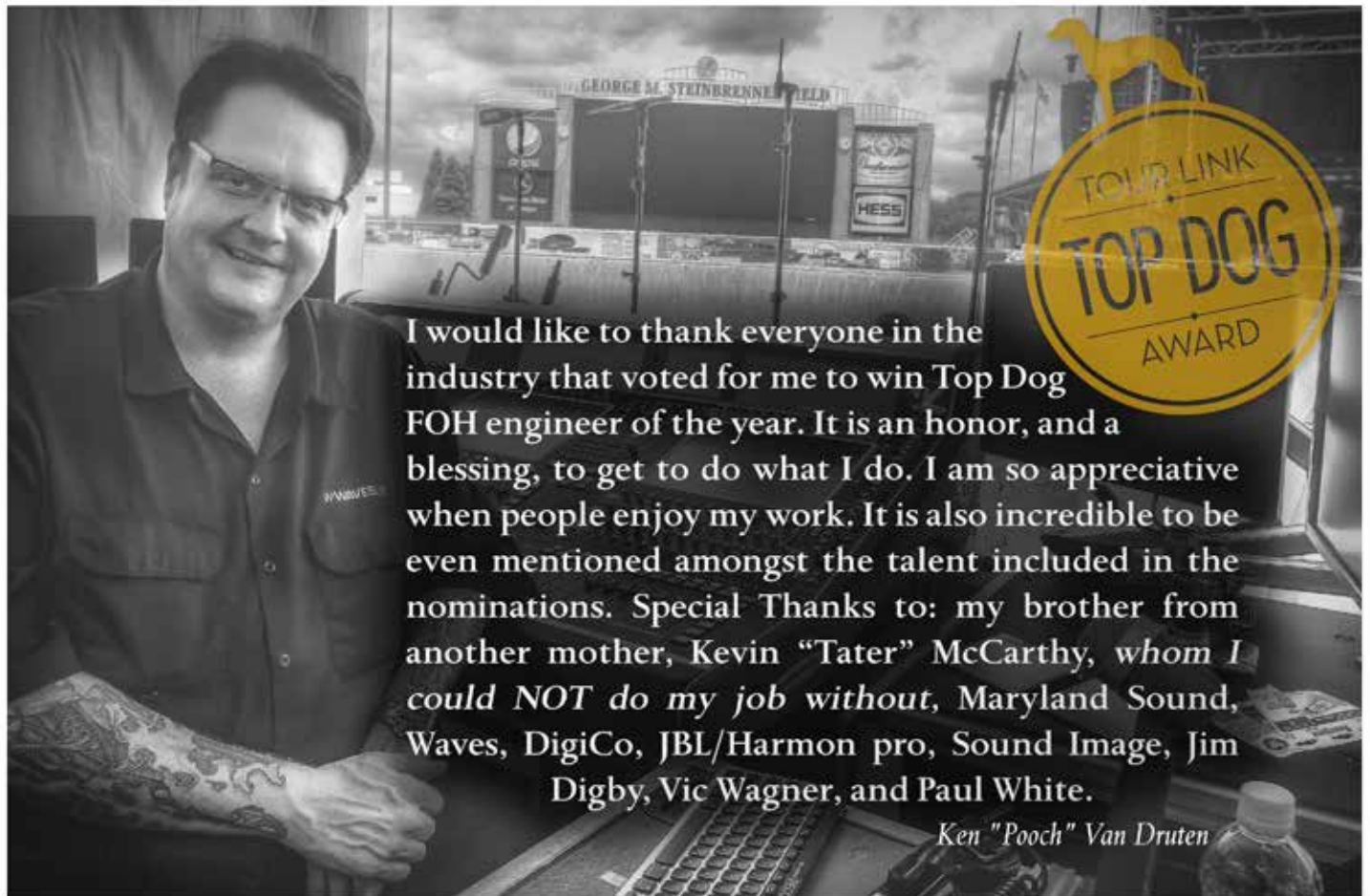
Our profession is a collaborative endeavor, and success is born on the backs of others equally "Top Dog". I am blessed with amazing players in our highly dedicated core team, our vendors and their staff - each individual highly motivated to contribute positively to the whole.

Thank you to Larry Smith, Lori DeLancey and everyone at Tour Link for the honor of this year's Top Dog recognition.



Jim Digby

2015 Production Manager of the Year



I would like to thank everyone in the industry that voted for me to win Top Dog FOH engineer of the year. It is an honor, and a blessing, to get to do what I do. I am so appreciative when people enjoy my work. It is also incredible to be even mentioned amongst the talent included in the nominations. Special Thanks to: my brother from another mother, Kevin "Tater" McCarthy, *whom I could NOT do my job without*, Maryland Sound, Waves, DigiCo, JBL/Harmon pro, Sound Image, Jim Digby, Vic Wagner, and Paul White.

Ken "Pooch" Van Druen

enough to agree to go on this tour because I saw the money and the chance to elevate my career. I regret that.”

Marie-Claire Cazorla said being a female on tour can be a problem. “You can tell immediately how people are going to judge you -[they think] you don’t know what you are doing or don’t take this personally. Fix that by walking in with authority and confidence and have solutions before they ask a question. It’s unfortunate that it still happens but it does and it won’t go away. You have to know what you’re doing but have confidence.”

Education was stressed by Charlie Hernandez who advised those breaking into the industry to “stay in school, don’t be like me. The idea of having a college degree and the discipline to complete a curriculum spells out an amazing amount of perseverance.” Hernandez stressed that nowadays, “you need an education because equipment has gotten more complex.” He advised people breaking into the industry to assume responsibility to acquire knowledge, work their way through the process, and look for opportunities with companies like Clair Global that offer onsite training.

John Brown of Brown United jumped in. “If you want to start at the bottom, give me a call. It’s a very physical entrance into the business but it’s somewhere.” Muffie Alejandro of



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And many others!**

Bobby Savage (678) 934-0165
bob@fivepointsproductionservices.com

John Fletcher (678) 641-4344
fletch@fivepointsproductionservices.com

Daniel Grove (615) 767-8904
daniel@fivepointsproductionservices.com

Jan-Al Cases encouraged young people to send her their resumes.

An audience member asked, “There’s a lot of turnover in this industry for young people. It’s a job of long hours, it can be dirty and stressful. Where do we go to find the good people who are serious?”

Joe Gallagher of Gallagher Stages answered, “There’s a new company called Tour Ready (www.tour-ready.com) which launches next month. It’s a database of entry level as well as experienced crew. You can look for certain qualifications to staff your tour.”

Ross Rylance said he needed help producing the free 50th anniversary of the Summer of Love

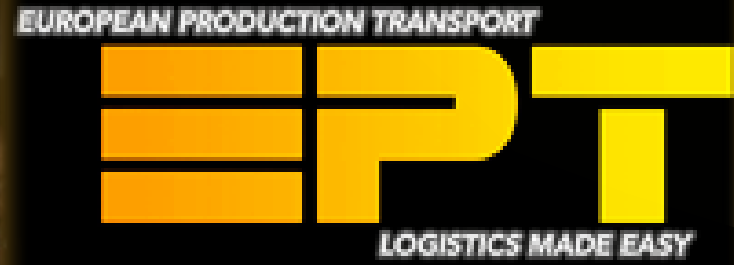
in Golden Gate Park. “We need young guns to bring us current to an industry that has changed since 1967,” he said, putting out the call to be contacted.

Digby ended the session by mentioning a one-on-one mentoring opportunity with info available at www.tourmgmt.org for vendors, veterans and young guns alike. The program links experts in the field to those seeking advice. It also offers a Shadow Program, giving professionals an outlet to pay it forward to one seeking mentorship or a “shadow” in their home city with the tour comes through town.



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Advertiser's Index

Volume 8 issue 2

AJL International.....	5	Moo TV.....	14
All Access Stages.....	14	Outline.....	26
APEX Stages.....	48	OSA International.....	62
Beat the Street.....	52	Prevost.....	BC
Bill Kenney Productions.....	18	PRG.....	63
Bordeaux, Henry.....	25	Pyrotek Special Effects.....	60
Center Staging.....	14	R&R Cases.....	18
Carter, Richard.....	39	Road Radios.....	36
Clair Global.....	10	Roadhouse Coach.....	4
Crown Seating.....	39	Rock-It Cargo.....	19
Cube Services.....	15	Senators Coach.....	32
Delicate Productions.....	29	SES.....	42
Digby, Jim.....	70	SRae Productions.....	46
DPS Inc.....	20-21	Soundcheck Nashville.....	9
Engine Power Source.....	5	Spider Ranch Productions.....	45
Enterprise Car Rentals.....	43	Stage Call.....	27
Entertainment Travel.....	8	Stage Door Transportation.....	35
EPT (European Production Transport).....	49	Starbase Jet.....	14
Five Points Production Services.....	71	Strictly FX.....	68
Four Star Wire.....	41	Tater Audio.....	11
G2 Mobile Structures.....	IFC	Tour Badgers.....	67
Gallagher Staging.....	IBC	TourReady.....	13
Garibay Brothers Systems.....	36	TransAm Trucking.....	30-31
Hands On Labor.....	44	Truck'N Roll.....	42-43
Hemphill Brothers.....	27	Tzell Travel.....	38
Hutton Hotel.....	23	United Airlines.....	69
Jumbocruiser.....	23	Upstaging.....	33
LeParc Suites.....	5	Van Druten, Ken "Pooch".....	70
Midway Car Rental.....	39	Warehouse Multimedia.....	68
MM Bandservice.....	59	XL Video.....	53
Mobile Production Pro.....	36		

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