

VOLUME 9 // ISSUE 4

# **TOUR LINK** MAGAZINE

**MASSSES GATHER FOR “THE END” OF  
BLACK SABBATH**

**SOLOTECH OPENING IN NASHVILLE**

**MOJO BARRIERS SUPPLYING CROWD  
CONTROL BARRIERS FOR MUSE ON  
‘THE DRONES WORLD TOUR’**

**THE END**



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## MOJO BARRIERS SUPPLY MUSE WORLD TOUR

Muse is the latest band to benefit from Mojo Barriers' specially-designed touring barrier as 160m of the system keeps crowds safe throughout 'The Drones World Tour'.

Mojo Barriers was contracted to ensure audience and artist safety at all the US and European dates of Muse's nine month tour. Mojo supplied 160m of barrier, ADA and heavy duty cable ramps along with custom designed Double Flex Corners to allow the Muse production team to pass cabling under the barriers safely.

Mojo's JB Dolphin and John Wagoner oversaw all 27 Mexican and North American dates, whilst Stanley Jilesen oversaw the 50 shows in Europe. Muse played in the round, with a circular stage in the middle with two catwalks at either end. To compliment the unique stage layout, Mojo's Vario Corners were widely used to work with the contours of the stage. The tour has been celebrated for its use of the latest drone technology by Motion Business, who worked with the production team to fly giant drones above the audience throughout the show.

Mojo US' John Wagoner comments: "The Drones World Tour has been groundbreaking with the bands use of technology and we're proud to have been involved with such a spectacular production. During rehearsals the production team had some last minute changes that augmented the barrier layout, however we were able to deploy the crucial parts to accommodate these changes and ensure the tour didn't miss a beat."

Mojo's Stanley Jilesen comments: "Muse's stage design allows the band to offer greater intimacy and get as close as possible to their fans. We were able to accommodate this layout using specialist equipment from our stock list, as well as custom

designed barrier pieces, which enabled us to install the desired barrier configuration. Muse's use of technology within their stage show has enabled them to produce a truly brilliant spectacle and we're proud to play a part in this."

Chris Kansy, production manager commented: "Muse's Drones World Tour isn't a straightforward one-size fits all show. The tour is sculpted around a bespoke stage layout with multiple entrances and multiple cable routing in and out. The set up depends on a number of factors including the venue, where the band enters and how we need to feed equipment in and out of it. We rely on carrying a range of spare equipment Mojo Barriers has supplied us to enable us to adopt the configuration that we need for the show, and having the right parts to do this is important.

"My relationship with Mojo Barriers has been a long one and I have huge trust in the team and their kit. Mojo understand our requirements and have gone out of their way to ensure we have all the special corners and gates needed to stage this impressive show."

The Drones World Tour officially begun on the 17 November 2015 in Mexico's Palacio de Los Deportes and will end at Hungary's Sziget Festival on the 10 August 2016.





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## LARRY SMITH PUBLISHER



[larrysmith@tourguidemag.com](mailto:larrysmith@tourguidemag.com)

In this issue, we conclude our coverage of the last Tour Link Conference. In addition to the highly social and entertaining portions of the event, the discussions are becoming more significant every year as we continue to identify and explore important issues facing the Industry in an ever-evolving global platform. We are trying to be as comprehensive as possible in giving some coverage to all of our great conference panels—but it just wasn't possible to get everything into one issue!

Our cover story is another in our continuing focus on significant tours. We hope you like the profile ad we thank the touring professionals who appreciate and support our mission to present a snapshot of the shows currently on the road and the people and companies involved in those efforts.

Throughout the year, we continue to schedule coverage of shows, festivals, conferences and events of significance. As we progress, we are challenged to keep with evolving changes in technology, internal staffing and the explosive growth of our conference. Clearly, we are in the middle of a pivotal time for our company as we work to remain a service to the Industry we care so much about. We hope you bear with us as we tackle these issues and refine our operations to respond to these challenges. We believe we are on track to deliver a bigger, better and more relevant series of products and events.

Finally, please keep your dates open for the next Tour Link Conference to be held again, by popular demand, in Palm Springs, California. Tour Link 2017 will be January 26th through the 28th and we'll be sharing opportunities for sponsorship and participation in the coming months.

Larry Smith  
PUBLISHER

## STAFF

Editor ..... JJ Janney - [editor@tourlinkpro.com](mailto:editor@tourlinkpro.com)  
Accountant ..... Sharon Baldwin - [accounting@tourlinkpro.com](mailto:accounting@tourlinkpro.com)  
Ad Traffic ..... Rachel Janney - [adtraffic@tourlinkpro.com](mailto:adtraffic@tourlinkpro.com)  
Layout / Design ... **Warehouse Multimedia Inc.** - ph: 615.420.6153 • f: 866.929.9651  
3050 Business Park Circle suite 500 Goodlettsville, TN 37072  
[www.warehousemultimedia.com](http://www.warehousemultimedia.com)  
Websites Graphic Design Online Marketing Video

Contributing Writers..... Peter Ferguson Jordan Haymaker Debi Moen  
Contributing Photographers ..... Shelby Cude Debi Moen Scott DeLancey Jordan Haymaker





## ELITE MULTIMEDIA HELPS BRING “SHOCK AND AWE” TO COLE SWINDELL TOUR

*One of country music's hottest acts embarks on his first headlining arena tour with his largest production package to date to accentuate the experience of the music*

**A**s many fans are getting their first look at one of country music's hottest performers, Cole Swindell is quickly winning over crowds nationwide on his first headlining tour. With his undeniable abilities as both a performer and songwriter, the production team needed to create an impactful tour design that would best accentuate the experience of the music. Wanting an expansive gear list that also included HD LED video, the production turned to Nashville-based Elite Multimedia who provided quality lighting and video solutions, along with a custom set cart design as well, all fitting in a single truck for travel.

“On this tour, it really all starts with the music and the artist behind it,” began production manager James “Mo” Butts. “As a passionate songwriter, Cole is also a high-energy performer so we wanted to incorporate quality HD video into the tour design to heighten the experience for this headlining tour. When looking for a tour provider, I knew Elite Multimedia has an extensive inventory of lighting and video, plus they have a custom set cart operation too, so they could really provide everything we needed.”

With a tour design that would rely heavily on the performance of the HD LED video, the production began reviewing the extensive stock of award-winning PixelFLEX LED video technologies at Elite Multimedia. With content, technical and logistical criteria in place, the team chose a video package that included 32 FLEX-Lite 6.9mm LED Panels and two PixelFLEX SU-401 master controllers.

“As an artist, Cole tends to like real-world video content so whichever video product was chosen, it had to look good with flesh tones on screen,” added Butts. “I’ve been using PixelFLEX video products for a while now and I really feel they are better than others on the market. Therefore since we will be playing mostly indoor venues, we decided to go with the 6.9mm FLEX-Lite LED video panels for their high-definition display, ease of set-up and tear down, and their robust nature which is perfect in a touring environment.”

Now turning their attention to the lighting rig which would be controlled by a GrandMA2 light console and hang on Tyler GT Truss, Elite Multimedia also provided the tour with a full lighting package that included Clay Paky Sharpy and A.Leda K10 Wash luminaires, Ayrton Magic Panel R luminaires, Showline SL NITRO 510 strobes, and G13 LED PAR fixtures.

“Cole has really grown as an artist and this is the largest production package we’ve had to date, so we had to make sure everything was working in complete unison,” said lighting designer Justin Kitchenman. “To do this, we chose fixtures that offered pixel-mapping capabilities, plus had an effects engine for an extra layer of creativity. The Ayrton Magic Panels worked great because we could run them through our media server to really coordinate their looks with the video, and our lighting director Ben Shockley is doing an awesome job making it all come to life on the road.”

“I really just try to make sure the show is one cohesive event night-after-night,” added Shockley. “I don’t want the lighting or the video to be overpowering because it has to be the support behind what Cole is doing onstage. While we have to match the intensity and the emotion behind his music, all the production elements have to be working with the one vision to support Cole as an artist.”



Now that the video and lighting elements were all in place, the production needed to find a creative way for the complete touring package to travel safely across the United States. Also keeping in mind that the crew would need to load-in and out as quickly as possible, Elite Multimedia worked with Accurate Staging to create a custom set cart design that made it all possible.

“As our first headlining arena tour, we would not be traveling with a large number of crew members and truck space is at a premium,” continued Butts. “We had to have a convenient and safe solution for the gear to travel, so Elite Multimedia and Accurate Staging worked to develop custom cranking set carts that allow us to quickly deploy the LED video walls. While we typically trim at 13 feet, the carts allow us to really scale up and down dependent upon the venue, and since the LED walls are prebuilt, we can roll them in each night, wire them together, and they are ready to go.”

Shockley added, “Since we are a smaller crew everyone is involved with the daily load-in and load-out, and we don’t have a lot of time for onsite maintenance issues. The sets carts are working great and they make it very easy to load-in and load-out, and we haven’t had any issues with the lighting or video which is usually up and running in only a few minutes.”

With current tour dates that stretch until October 2016, the Cole Swindell tour is now in full swing solidifying his stature as one of country’s most compelling performers, and through their backstage perspective, the production team is enjoying the moment every step of the way.

“The audience really doesn’t think about how the tour rig travels or how it loads-in and out, they just want to see a good show and really immerse themselves in Cole as an artist,” said Kitchenman. “We’ve been working with the team at Elite Multimedia for a few years now and they do a great job of helping us design custom elements specifically to fit the needs of our tour. In this design, there is depth and layers and it makes for a genuine environment for Cole to entertain and interact with his fans.”

“We have a saying on this tour that we want the ‘shock and awe’,” concluded Butts. “As fans leave the venue, we want to see wide eyes and dropped jaws, and we really want them to have the feeling that this was one of the best shows they have ever seen. As a tour provider, Elite Multimedia always seems to be the most

willing to really help make our expectations a reality, and this show looks great.”

Elite Multimedia is a privately-owned, leading supplier of the most up-to-date audio, video and lighting technologies today. With a combined 85 years of industry experience, our team of dedicated professionals knows how to pair the right technology with your vision whether partnering with you in a rental, systems installation, or sales relationship. Through an unconditional desire to make your production or project a complete success, their passion and knowledge to innovate knows no bounds. For more information on how Elite Multimedia is the right partner for you, visit [www.elitemultimedia.com](http://www.elitemultimedia.com), follow them on Twitter at @EliteMultimedia or find us on Facebook or Instagram.





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## SOLOTECH SETS UP IN NASHVILLE

Pursuing its expansion plan in North America, Solotech announces today the opening of a new office in Nashville, Tennessee. Led by Paul Owen, the office will develop new business opportunities in international touring and special events.

“Nashville is the music city. We have several clients in this city and it was important for us to have a storefront there, to be closer to their reality”, explains Martin Chouinard, Executive Vice-President of the Rental division of Solotech. In addition to serving existing customers, the Solotech Nashville office offers international tours and special events customers turnkey solutions, more specifically solutions in rental of audio, lighting, video and rigging equipment.

Paul Owen acts as Managing Director of the Nashville Solotech office. Recognized for his work in the biggest stages and stadiums in the world, Paul Owen has over 35 years of experience in touring. During his career, Mr. Owen worked as Vice-President of Thunder Audio, Monitor Engineer and Production Manager. “I am delighted to have the opportunity to work for a company of this size. I have always admired Solotech’s work and I intend to lead the Nashville office towards unprecedented success”, says Paul Owen.

Paul Owen will work jointly with Lee Moro. Mr. Moro joined Solotech in September 2014 as Senior Project Director for tours and special events and is very active in the touring industry. Mr. Moro has been based in Nashville for the past ten years and has worked with many renowned international touring artists. “Paul and I bring years and years of real-world experience to our clients. We have been in their shoes and we know what they expect,” says Lee Moro. “That’s why we make sure we have the best staff. Our people are some of the best on the market. They are proud and take their job seriously. They work together and are passionate about what they do”. Finally, Dianna Mariotti, is also part of the Solotech team in Nashville. As an Administrative Assistant, she will assist Paul Owen and Lee Moro in their day-to-day tasks.

Paul Owen and Lee Moro invite touring and special events customers to contact the Solotech Nashville office for more information. The office is located at 6107 Centennial Boulevard, Nashville, Tennessee and can be reached at the following phone number: 615-457-1506.

## About Solotech:

For over 35 years, Solotech has been developing technological expertise and making it available to artists, producers and events in Quebec, Canada and around the world. These artists and events include Céline Dion, Cirque du Soleil, André Rieu, Bruce Springsteen, Britney Spears, Michael Bublé, Lady Gaga, Mumford and Sons, Robert Plant, Sochi’s Winter Olympics, 22nd Central American and Caribbean Games, Justin Timberlake and The United Arabs Emirates National Day.

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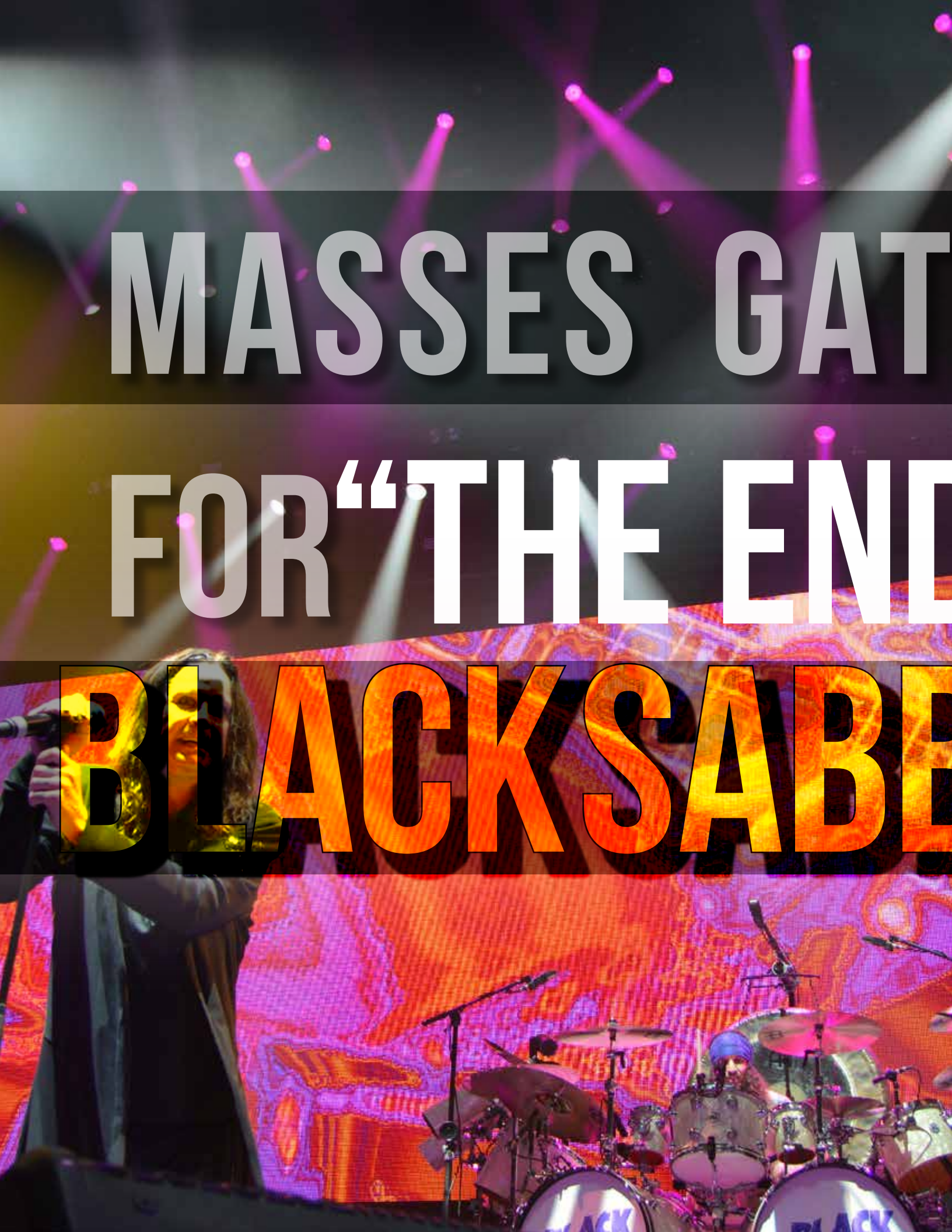


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MASSSES GAT

FOR "THE END

BLACKSABER



## MASSSES GATHER FOR “THE END” OF BLACK SABBATH

*Photos and story by Jordan Haymaker*

The godfathers of heavy metal, Black Sabbath, have reunited one final time for THE END Tour. Original members Tony Iommi, Geezer Butler, and Ozzy Osbourne hit the road with a set list of all of the songs any fan would hope to hear, all accompanied by a classic, straightforward rock and roll show. Even after nearly 50 years, the band still shredded through each song with raw energy and pure emotion. Each one sounded incredible and was paired with equally breathtaking lighting design, modern video effects, and perfectly timed pyro for moments of completed sensory overload making certain that the band went out with a powerful bang. Tour Link Magazine caught up with the production crew at Chicago's United Center at the second stop of the tour.

### **George Reeves, Production Manager**

A Detroit native, George Reeves discovered his lighting interest in high school before moving to Sacramento to work in theater. He craved more excitement, which led him to Morpheus for a while before transitioning to Upstaging. In 2004, he landed his first stage manager gig for Shakira and also worked with Jake Berry on Walking with Dinosaurs and for U2's 360 tour. His first Black Sabbath tour was in 2013; first as stage manager, then eventually taking over as production manager after proving his adaptability for different roles depending on what Production Director, Dale “Opie” Skjerseth, required.

Opie has worked alongside Sharon Osbourne and the band for years and allowed George to take over vendor coordination, scheduling, and overseeing everything with production. For their crew, they handpicked mellow people who just want to get on with their jobs. He joked, “There’s no more strippers and blow, so everyone is all about becoming more educated in their respective departments.”

They’re using 4 Senators crew buses for the 40 touring crew and 11 Upstaging trucks. George’s admitted bias as a former employee aside, he really loves Upstaging for lighting too not only because they’re good guys who consistently provide quality trucking and lighting, but they always go above and beyond. For sound, Clair’s Cohesion 12 PA system has been designed from the ground up to meet all requirements as far as shipping weight and ability to pack and hang easier. He thinks, “It’s just phenomenal. We couldn’t ask for anything better.” TAIT was the clear choice for staging because he appreciates that, “TAIT always puts in so much consideration in design and deployment of artistic concept while figuring in travel and packaging. There aren’t any others that pay attention to assembly of equipment like that.” Finally, he chose PRG Nocturne for video because, “They’re always ahead with technology and support. The equipment somehow works in smaller portions

with big impact for live manipulation of video and cutting edge technology.”

For THE END Tour, the lighting system and back wall were completely custom made and are given mobility with a TAIT Navigator tracking system. “Any shows with automation will always have risks,” explained George, “but everything is redundant and there are always safety backups. We make sure to pay close attention to engineering, follow guidelines, and always keep people safe.”

Stage Manager, Sean Robinson, started driving trucks in 1988 for U2. He worked his way up to Opie’s lead driver, and eventually Opie tried him out at other jobs too. This is his first Black Sabbath tour, though he also worked with Shania Twain and Cirque du Soleil.

For Sean, “It’s about getting it all in and making sure things are done in a timely manner.” From hiring local labor to assist the 48 stagehands, 8 truck loaders, 4 fork lifts, 24 riggers on the roof, and 8 ground workers, to getting everyone on the floor ready, his motto is to always stay ahead of the game.

The riggers first chalk the floor, trucks are unloaded, and then local riggers pull the motors up as the stage is assembled. It only takes 2 hour to unload 11 trucks because Sean knows the importance of multitasking. “We’re never waiting,” he laughed. “Even during the encore, we start loading the trucks up and finish in 3 hours.” He loves the challenge of some of the more difficult venues in that everything revolves around load out and is dependent on how things are initially positioned.

The Production Coordinator hails from Brazil, but has been in the US for 15 years. Maya Gas started with sound when she was 17 and then transitioned to lights. Her cousin was a sound engineer, giving her the opportunity to intern at an audio company. In her 24 years in the touring industry, she’s worked with Aerosmith, Ben Harper, and this is her first time with Black Sabbath, though she worked with Ozzy once at a festival in Brazil.

She takes care of the crew and ensures they have everything they need to get to the location and do their job including travel, logistics, food, catering, day to day office work, per diem money, etc. As a lover of travel, she couldn’t imagine going to the same place day after day for a

normal job. She said, “Things change every day, but I see it as just part of it...that and the camaraderie. It’s like we’re in a gang or a secret society.”

## Video with PRG Nocturne

Lindsey Haney, Video Director with PRG, is responsible for the cameras, getting each shot, the switcher desk, and the final images on the screens at show time. She moved from Portland to attended school in SoCal for TV production. A few friends needed help shooting a concert, and her career took off from there to include other projects like Walking with Dinosaurs, Miley Cyrus, and Ed Sheeran. She stressed, “I didn’t want to grow up stuck in a normal job. I wanted to be able to do something fun.”

Lindsey enjoys working with her team and playing around with different video effects. By using Notch software, the cameras themselves are fed directly into the powerful D3 server to manipulate with camera effects and live rendering. They use a 12mm LED screen in the center and four 20k BARCO projectors (2 on each side for IMAG) and two 40k BARCO projectors at FOH for the kabuki intro. The 2 Grassvalley cameras in the pit, 1 long lens, 1 robo, and 2 POV cameras are controlled via a Panasonic AV-HS450 switcher.

She is especially excited about being a part of this historical tour. Lindsey added, “It’s a great crew. It’s fun and everyone just clicks. Every show is different with the effects, so it’s fun to experience something new each night. Overall, just a lot of fun is being had.”

## Lighting with Upstaging

Lighting Designer, Terry Cook, was originally a child actor for a TV show in the UK. After graduating uni for lighting, he worked at the Millennium Dome where he met Adam Bassett. Through Adam, he was introduced to Patrick Woodroffe, with whom he worked as project



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manager/associate in 2012 lighting the Olympics. He is with the band for their first 3 stops to ensure creative consistency.

Sharon Osbourne called Patrick Woodroffe with her vision of THE END Tour having old fashion rock and roll looks, but with great tech and clean, crisp, and strong linear angles. They worked with Ray Winkler, owner of Stufish Set Co., over a 4-6 week period to hash out different ideas and decide on the size and how feasible the end result would be.

Terry's and Patrick's design is created using 37 Robe BMFLs, 105 MAC Viper AirFX, 36 Clay Paky Mythos, 63 Solaris Flares, 14 SGM Q7s, 24 Vari-Lite VL3500 Wash luminaires, 2 grandMAs at FOH, and 2 Mbox studios. The 14 ft automated video wall was designed to compliment the lighting and pull the eye just above the drum riser. They went with staggering 1-2 colors per song and finished with a stunning all white design.

Terry said of his favorite aspect, the opening, "Everything harmonizes beautifully with the video intro on the 57 ft high kabuki that drops to discover the band silhouetted as the wall moves up with the huge guitar intro and smoke leads us into the first song 'Black Sabbath'. They really bring the audience along for a journey."

The biggest obstacle with the massive custom rig is making the show fit, but it's been made modular so the wall can actually change the height of the show. Talking about the show creation process Terry said, "You can put all kinds of lights in the air that you want, but without an LD like Michael Keller, it just falls flat. He has been around for a long time and knows the band and setlist. He feels the music and can change where queues go like very few others can." He added, "Also, we have all these great ideas, but it comes to the crew's hard work night after night to help paint our picture."

### **Audio with Clair Global**

According to FOH Engineer, Greg Price, everyone who

has toured started in a bar somewhere. He's gone from the bar scene with his brother's band, Pablo Cruise, to worldwide, this being his 40th year on tour. He was also mentored in the recording studio by greats like Bill Schnee and Tom Dowd.

Greg's objective with every band is to research and listen to their records to get a feel for their body of work. He has worked with Ozzy for 20 years, and also with Glen Campbell, KISS, and Glee for a very diverse career and is now also co-owner of the digital recording company Diablo Digital with Brad Madix.

He uses ProTools 12 with the new Avid S6L console, which allows for the digital collection of audio and video. Greg said, "The FOH engineer can help with monetizing live performances, so it's like having a recording engineer/producer on tour now too."

At first, he wanted to use the Avid S6L console alone to listen to see what it could do. Greg is proud that, "There's no EQ and no plug-ins. It's like beaming ourselves back in time to analog days. Instead of EQing, I just select a different mic." With years of expertise, he advised, "I recommend building the static mix when you start, which is nothing more than mic pre-gain, high pass/low pass filtering, and stereo panning down to the stereo buss. Fine-tuning before thinking about any plug-ins or gates, along with some HP/LP filtering helps you build a foundation for your mix. There's a right time and place to add to the mix, but we can't force technology into the sound. The process is to build."

Greg mentioned, "The days of doing this all by yourself are over. We have to learn to build a workflow around a community of audio people that creates a much bigger picture for the show. Simon Bauer, Dave Skaff, and the engineering department at Clair Global...these are the people in my effort that create the success I enjoy."

Dave Skaff from Clair was on site for a few shows to make sure the brand new Avid S6L console and Clair Cohesion 12 PA system were running smoothly. He started in the early 80s as a monitor mixer and has





been a FOH mixer for 25 years. Black Sabbath was the first band to officially take the new Clair Cohesion 12 PA system on tour, but it can also be heard with Carrie Underwood and Bruce Springsteen.

The system is comprised of double 12 monitors measuring 45 inches wide, 12 inches tall, and weighing 132 lbs. With 120 degree and 180 degree dispersion, 10 degrees in the vertical, and Cohesion CP 218 subs, Dave said, "There is an astonishing amount of reaction. The name is based on the fact that they're very coherent reference speakers. What you put in is what you get out." The sound quality is unmatched from the 16 high hang in the front, 12 on sides, and 6 subs in the air. "Even the lighting department notices it," he laughed. "It's the biggest sounding PA we've heard in a long time."

Simon Bauer, System Engineer/Crew Chief with Clair, took apart scrap electronic gear and re-assembled it when he was 14, which lead to him starting a sound company out of his garage back home in Switzerland. According to Simon, "I was working for the promoter of the St. Gallen open air festival in Switzerland when AudioRent in Europe hired me on the spot. 17 years later, here we are." He's toured internationally with Sting, Paul McCartney, and Pink, with this being his 2nd Black Sabbath tour. As the head of the audio crew, he is in charge of the crew, load in, and figuring out where the PA goes along with tuning it. Simon works closely with Greg to guarantee everything runs smoothly technologically and socially.

### Pyro with Strictly FX

Reid Nofsinger, Pyro Designer, started out singing in various

bands between the ages of 14 to 27 until he found engineering. He then began designing panels and building flame systems for theme parks before moving from Florida in 1999 to help with effects for sports teams. His previous music clients include Roger Waters, Rob Zombie, Slayer, and while this is his first tour with Black Sabbath, he was in charge of the water canon for the first Ozzfest as well.

On this tour, Reid triggers and makes sure the cryo fog and all pyro operate safely. His crew has mastered working around the custom built lighting rig with their own custom built pyro. Using a FireOne firing system, twenty 10 shot Comet Plates and 200 pieces of product all fire in 10 seconds during 'Iron Man'. Afterwards, thirty-six 10 shots and 360 pieces fall 35 feet out of the sky in 35 seconds. For 'Children of the Grave',

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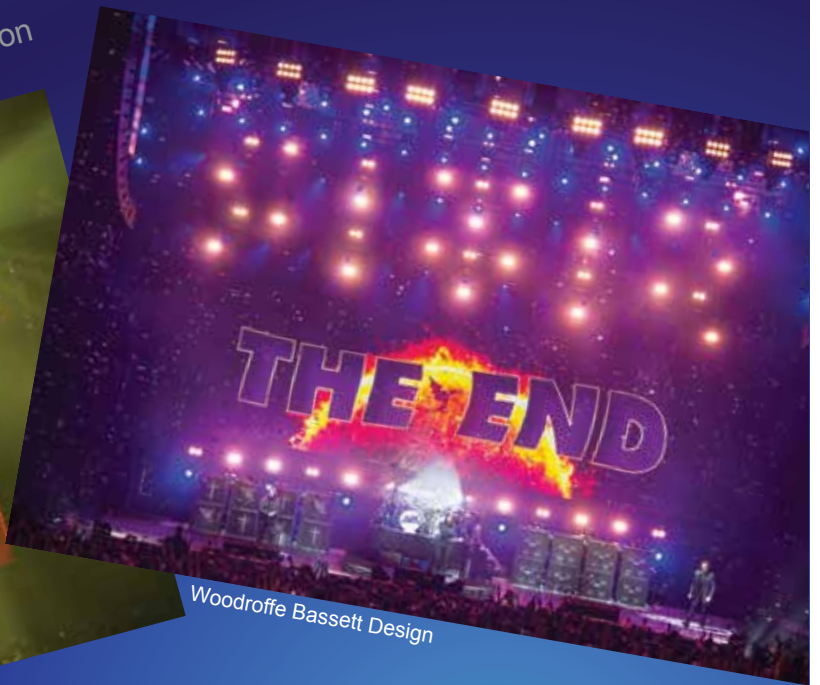




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Black Sabbath - THE END Tour



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they utilized chasing flames, while 8lbs of imprinted confetti drop from the sky for 'Paranoid'. Finally, the band takes their final bow underneath a firework waterfall. Reid admitted, "This isn't a pyro heavy show, but the cues are really big and in your face. It's suited to Sharon's desire for 5 times as much pyro in shorter bursts."

### Staging and Automation with TAIT Towers

Freelancer TK Woo, Head Carpenter/Automation, toured locally for 10 years in Montreal with his dad and grandpa, who helped with production, and his mother, who was a ballet dancer. He's been in and out of touring since 1994 with acts like Beyoncé, Cirque du Soleil, and Celine Dion. He's in charge of the automation, programming, and motors.

Though time consuming, his job is to take everything step by step to get all of the moving bits working and keep up communication with the other departments. The 10,000 lb lighting wall moves via 8 variable speed motors and 4 trolleys. The intro also makes use of a kabuki and sniffer. TK beamed, "The start of the show is where all the hard work pays off as the crowd goes wild."

TK loves Black Sabbath, but also how cool everyone is between management and production. "There's no nonsense, and everyone is always on time," he added, "There's no fluff. You just come in and do your job."

Head Rigger, Robert Slepicka, earned his degree in biology. He was unemployed and riddled with student loan debt, so he happened into the business thanks to an old lighting friend. It was at a Boys II Men rehearsal where he stepped in when they needed carpentering help. He also dabbled in lighting and video to be a well-rounded stagehand.

He is in charge of hanging the entire show safely, worrying about sight lines with the soft screens, getting the stage in the right place, the cable drops, and making sure everyone gets what they need for each department with accurate precision. Working in a 60ft by 24ft space, Robert and his crew start loading the lighting pods in at 5 am and maintain cooperation with all other departments to get the job done in around 4 hours.

Robert worked 10 years as a local before heading out on his first tour and continued with 10 years of straight touring. He mentioned, "It's the hardest I've ever worked, but also the most rewarding and most fun. I've gotten to work with some truly amazing people."

The opportunity to catch Black Sabbath live one final time for THE END Tour is one that should not be missed. This show leaves the perfect lasting impression of the legacy of one of the most important rock and roll bands of all time.

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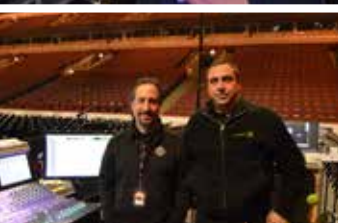
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## BLACK SABBATH CREW LIST

Dale 'Opie' Skjerseth.....Tour Director  
 George Reeves.....Production Manager  
 Maya Gas.....Production Coordinator  
 Sean Robinson.....Stage Manager  
 Dave Sauter.....Venue Security  
 Robert Slepicka.....Head Rigger  
 Willy Williams.....Rigger  
 TK Woo.....Head Carp / Automation  
 Brittany Kiefer.....Automation  
 Dion Pearce.....Carp / Teleprompter  
 Greg Price.....FOH Engineer  
 Myles Hale.....Monitor engineer  
 Simon Bauer.....FOH Tech/ Crew Chief  
 Thomas Morris.....MON Tech  
 Katie Hughes.....Audio Tech  
 Kory Lutes.....Audio Tech  
 Martha Heckman.....Dressing Rooms  
 Kate Williams...Dressing Rooms Assistant  
 Michael Keller.....Lighting Director  
 John Chiodo.....Lighting Crew Chief  
 Bart Buckalew.....Lighting Tech  
 Logan Hutchins.....Lighting Tech  
 Yoshi Shinohara.....Lighting Tech  
 Kenny Rutkowski.....Lighting Tech  
 Brian Reed.....Lighting Tech  
 Lindsey Haney.....Video Director  
 Jason Lipton.....Video Engineer  
 Eric Geiger.....Video Crew Chief  
 Mark Woody.....Video Tech  
 Steve 'Bone' Gray.....Video Tech  
 Reid Nofsinger.....Pyro/Confetti/Shooter  
 Eddie Romack.....Pyro / Confetti  
 Mick Clement.....Guitar Tech  
 Terry Welty.....Bass Tech/Key Board tech  
 Brent 'Panda' Cook.....Drum Tech  
 Big Dave Moscato.....Stage Assistant/VIP  
 Trevor Robinson.....Protools  
 Richard Carter.....Merch  
 Emma Saxby.....LN VIP Person 1  
 Yvette Uhlmann.....LN VIP Person 2  
 Sunil Sinha.....Promoter Rep  
 Vince Grecco.....Lead Bus Driver  
 Rick Smith.....Bus Driver  
 Rick Burnett.....Bus Driver  
 Garrett Hagin.....Bus Driver

Fred Rice.....Lead Truck Driver  
 Don Rolofson.....Truck Driver  
 Joe Harrison.....Truck Driver  
 Wayne Havelin.....Truck Driver  
 Greg White.....Truck Driver  
 Mike Edwards.....Truck Driver  
 Kevin Thompson.....Truck Driver  
 Randy Davis.....Truck Driver  
 Mike O'Neal.....Truck Driver  
 Mike Benson.....Truck Driver  
 Richard Johnson.....Truck Driver  
 George Hewitt.....Merch Truck





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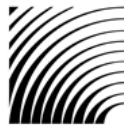


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## KEEPING UP WITH EVOLVING DESIGN CONCEPTS

by Jordan Haymaker

In this day and age, it's not always enough to have a great sounding show. Concertgoers expect a completely mind-blowing experience with video, lights, pyro, and other stage effects each time they set foot in a venue. With artists trying to outdo not only each other, but keep their own shows exciting and fresh, it takes a team of professionals and sometimes a reality check to make their visions come to life.

Experts in design Patrick Whalen, Production Manager for Russian Storm; Jim Risgin Vice President of OSA; Jim Runge, Tour Manager for The Black Keys; Dizzy Gosnell, with Bandit Lites who, amongst other things, turns concept napkins into a reality while helping young people understand the logistics; and Rocco Vitale, Creative Director of Pyro-Technico FX who makes sure designs also promote safety, provided some insight as to what it takes to make massive productions not only safe and mobile, but also continue to evolve.

**Patrick:** Every artist is trying to stand out with a new look. Everything is changing rapidly, and production companies are trying to outdo each other. It's a battle between designers and companies. Artists are more involved now. They're savvier and want to have input with designers.

**Risgin:** The show is now the main means of income instead of recorded music, which is partially why they're more involved.

**Runge:** It's important to keep finances in mind when trying to find what works artistically and also within the budget.

**Dizzy:** Back in the par can days, artists used to try to test the crew to see if they were willing to give it everything they had for each show. For instance, while working with AC/DC they'd say, "If you can't get the 1 ton Hells Bell in the venue for Hells Bells, then we're not doing the gig." That's not the case anymore. With the importance of tour revenue, bands will make concessions where needed.

**Rocco:** Artists always want to see what's new technology wise and to see what we can do with pyro. We have to think how to design a show by taking old products and creatively firing them in a different and new way, which leads to out of the box thinking.

**Dizzy:** Sometimes it does happen that the design just doesn't fit in a venue. I do try to rationalize with artists on their ideas because it doesn't do any good if the equipment is left sitting outside in the truck, but I also have to remind them not to flip out if they can't fit it in. After all, it's just light bulbs.

**Runge:** The important thing is to offer multiple options in the

design process. Sight lines are also something important to keep in mind.

**Rocco:** Trim heights with pyro can be a big concern too. You have to get good at communicating with the artists in regards to safety.

**Runge:** Also, make sure everyone is sober when discussing any design aspects. You obviously tend to be more imaginative when you're drunk or high, so the ideas aren't always realistic.

**Risgin:** Audio is the core of the message, but we also have to visually translate what the artists want. Audio works as the canvas for artists to paint their vision on.

**Patrick:** Nowadays, you're also working in non-traditional spaces with unique productions, like on top of a mountain in Greece for the Olympics for example, so you have to learn to adjust. Huge semis won't make it up a mountain, so you would probably have to rely on sprinter vans in that scenario.

**Risgin:** People are always going to find new opportunities to play in weird places, and it's our job to adapt to that while still making it safe and fun.

**Dizzy:** Artists now are rushing to buy the next big thing, and sometimes that means new models of equipment haven't been road tested or won't really last.

**Risgin:** The future is dependent on maximizing the profit for the artists, but also keeping things realistic. LEDs are the future because they're light and versatile, but how much can we shrink everything down until it all just blows up in our face?

**Dizzy:** It's not what you've got; it's what you do with it. To lower the weight, one answer is to use aluminum carts instead of using cases. Some people are trying to save money on control of shows by saying, "Hey let's just use a midi machine instead," but that leaves a robotic feel. That's like asking. "Why do we need a guitarist then? Can't we just use a recording?"

**Patrick:** It's not always about all the massive amounts of equipment; it just boils down to the concept. At the end of the day, the vision and creativity are what's important to the artist regardless of cost.



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## STAYING HEALTHY ON THE ROAD

By: Peter Ferguson

The demographics in the touring industry are shifting. Years of traveling are starting to catch up with veteran road dogs, whom now face the fact that their bodies can no longer bounce back from road abuse like they used to. At the same time, younger crewmembers must decide how they will take care of themselves on a daily basis. To address these growing concerns of health and wellness, Tour Link included “Staying Healthy On The Road” in the 2016 panel session lineup.

Dr. Damian and Suzie Brezinski, Chris Mitchell, Harold Owens, and Heidi Groehlich sat on the panel, which was moderated by Chris Musgrave.

The session began with a discussion on the difficulty of recovering from unhealthy habits. After a long life of rock n’ roll, the smoking, drugs, and poor diets can put an individual at high risk for fatal disease. To address this risk in touring populations, Dr. Damian Brezinski explained how the nonprofit organization Keep The Beat Alive is working on an initiative to get an AED, or Automated External Defibrillator, on every bus, truck, or aircraft used by a tour. This lifesaving device is simple to use and can make the difference between life and death when an individual is experiencing cardiac arrest.

Ideally, that AED would never see any use. By focusing on healthy lifestyle decisions, risk can be minimized. The panel challenged individuals and tours to adopt four components of healthy living: cultivating healthy diets, accountability in exercise programs, checking in on mental health, and eliminating the industry addiction.

Simply choosing to eat healthy doesn’t always work on the road. Catering may not support a particular diet. Beyond this, the idea of choosing a salad over fried chicken does not always fit in with the image of life on the road.

Despite the difficulty of choosing to count calories as the miles pile up, there are many great resources to help the mindful eater. Most fast food restaurants have healthier options available, and tour buses often come fitted with kitchenettes. Suzie Berzinski explained how Hinder took advantage of this and grilled veggie burgers rather than grabbing something from fast food restaurant.

As Chris Mitchell pointed out, “The road is no place to learn how to eat.”

The sedentary nature of bus travel does not pair well with intense physical exertion in the arena. Dealing with the extreme of sitting for hours and then sprinting from monitors to front of house is



easier if crewmembers make an effort to get some exercise before the work begins each day. While a thought-out exercise program is ideal, this can be as simple as taking the stairs, a quick jog, or 10-15 minutes of yoga poses makes a huge difference.

Checking in on mental health is everyone’s responsibility. Life on the road is stressful – you are away from home, away from your kids, sleeping in a coffin-like bunk, and wake up in a new city every day. Owens advised that finding time each day to pray or meditate makes a world of difference. Individuals must proactively reserve that time, however. Free time is valuable for a busy tour.

Breaking and preventing addiction solves many of the health and wellness problems that pop up on the road. Everyone is afraid to touch this elephant in the room, but calling out unhealthy habits in a crew must be a priority. MusiCares offers resources for dealing with addiction through counseling, support groups, and more.

Touring pushes humans to the limit, not just in terms of productivity, but also in mental and physical wellness. The “Staying Healthy on The Road” panel agreed that adopting healthy lifestyles bit-by-bit is the first step to changing the way that the industry approaches health on the road.



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## CONTINUED GROWTH AT ROCK LITITZ

by Jordan Haymaker

Having already established a state of the art production rehearsal facility that opened back in September of 2014, Rock Lititz is currently expanding the production campus in Lititz, Pennsylvania with a brand new project. Construction for the new 250,000 sq. ft. building, named Pod # 2, is now underway and scheduled to be completed by late 2016.

Andrea Shirk, General Manager of Rock Lititz, discussed how the plan started as a collaboration a few years ago with everything eventually falling into place. "Our intention is to bring companies together to promote growth," she explained. Pod # 2 will be constructed as a multi-tenant facility for a variety of different companies. Shaun Clair of Clair Global observed, "When you step back, there's a certain energy present when you get people together to share ideas."

Daniel McPhillips, President of ATOMIC, loves the idea of being able to work closely alongside other companies. "It pushes us to a level of innovation and trust. I can just walk down the hall into another company and have a conversation." CM-ET, another company that will be housed in Pod # 2, specializes in rigging with a strong focus on the voice of the customer. Ken Tilson, CM-ET's Vertical Marketing Specialist, noted, "You hear a response from the customer through surveys, but you can get better feedback by having a conversation with these different companies and the folks that work with our products." Alongside ATOMIC and CM-ET, others joining together in Pod # 2 will include Clair Global, Tour Supply, Upstage Video, Rock-It Cargo, TFB Catering, Pyrotek Special Effects, and Project Opus Films, among others, with companies still continuing to join.

Pod # 2 will give clients the ability to connect with several companies and elements of production at once. According to Andrea, "It's really powerful. We're all right there. You'd think we'd be fighting for the same clients, but really we compliment each other so well." Shaun added, "Since this industry is transient by nature, we needed a sense of permanence so conversations can continue and Pod # 2 will provide that."

One important element of Rock Lititz will be education, and everyone is very excited to see how this



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will grow. Andrea was clear, “We made education a priority to continue growth. It’s important and critical to keep the workforce up to date with technology. It’s neat to recognize what everyone brings to the table, and we’re excited to grow in a specific fashion with emphasis on high quality and safety.” Luis Garcia, Vice President of Full Sail Online, is familiar with this collaborative style and agrees that having all this expertise under one roof “just makes sense.” Plus, with the 52,000 sq. ft. rehearsal studio next door, there is the opportunity to utilize the space for larger company training and education. Ken has already been thinking of the possibilities for CM-ET, “We can schedule our training courses to cater to road crews while they’re in town.”

Lititz, Pennsylvania may seem like an odd location for this type of collaborative set up for the touring industry, but the town has been home to several major production companies for decades. At its roots, Lititz is very community oriented, and everyone has rallied to help support this evolving project. Luis noted, “It’s a fascinating mix of small town and big city, and Rock Lititz feels like a quasi college campus.”

Andrea admitted, “I get more excited hearing success stories from people coming out of Rock Lititz, and we encourage sharing ideas because there are so many things we could do to utilize this space that haven’t even been talked about yet.” Collaboration isn’t always easy since there has to be structure and communication for it to be successful. That’s not an issue at Rock Lititz due to

the massive amount of respect these companies have for each other. Andrea did however mention that, “There’s always going to be natural competition, but that makes us want to continuously be better. We’re starting with a great foundation, so we all want to challenge each other to continue to grow.”

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PHOTO BY VISIONELIE - THE WEEKND'S THE MADNESS TOUR

# DON'T FORGET THE LOVE BIT!

By: Peter Ferguson

The terrorist attacks in Paris on November 13, 2015 struck a nerve in the touring and production community. The horror that took place at the Bataclan Theater that night claimed the life of veteran merchandise manager Nick Alexander and caused crew members and concertgoers alike to question their safety and security in venues across the globe. Charlie Hernandez, Jim Digby, and the rest of the Tour Link 2016 conference staff knew that a panel session would present an appropriate environment to discuss the implications of these terrible events.

A reverent atmosphere permeated through the room as “We’ll Always Have Paris” began. Hernandez and Digby sat across from each other, angled towards the audience, with a lone empty road case filling the void between them. Bathed in purple light, Hernandez opened the discussion.

“We’re going to start talking about Paris,” he said. “We’re not going to dissect it, we are not going to go through the events. All of you know what happened, and how things go. We are going to talk about some realities that are very important to everyone that is on tour and everyone that was in that venue.”

Hernandez’s initial thoughts were humanitarian in nature. He urged panel attendees to recognize that these were the acts of the few, not of the many, and that their responses must be rooted in love – for each other, our friends, and our neighbors. “There is very little that can be done about people who are highly motivated and have access to automatic weapons,” he stated. “Love will fix it.”

Digby agreed, acknowledging how industry relationships went from “fun and friendship to love and compassion for each other” in one short night. He proceeded to shift the conversation to the ongoing reaction in the industry. “We can do anything. That’s who we are as people,” he said. “We can’t do everything. That is not our job. That being said, what is the reasonable response for us, and what should be left to the people who are in the anti-terror business?”

Active shooter response training boils down to “run, hide, fight.” Digby advised the attendees to use this method on their tours and in their personal lives. Both Digby and Hernandez agreed that arming tour personnel is not reasonable. The complex nature of roadwork makes carrying a firearm a risky proposition, and an individual wielding a firearm during an emergency situa-



tion in a crowded venue could be mistaken as a terrorist.

As head of the Event Safety Alliance, Digby also touched on ways that tours can prepare for emergencies. These included developing contingency plans for the worst imaginable situations. Effective credential usage, case marking, and bag tagging can help a crew identify anything or person that does not belong in the venue. Encouraging crewmembers to partake in first aid training so they are familiar with CPR and AED usage can save lives in critical situations. Finally, making sure the crew is familiar with multiple rallying points and escape routes can supplement instinctual reactions with organized execution.

In an emergency situation, an individual may refuse to leave loved ones that are injured. This was particularly difficult for the attendees to hear. In these situations, it is vital to leave that person behind in interest of saving yourself.

Jörg Phillip of Beat The Street received a panicked phone call from his driver during the attacks. Phillip and two office workers worked remotely via phone with the driver and local embassies to secure all of Beat The Street’s personnel and ground assets. He was shocked



to find out that Nick Alexander had died.

"After [we found] out that the main band, support band, and most of the crew managed to escape from the building safe, the tour manager reported that he found Nick Alexander shot dead, which stultified our minds," he recalled.

Beyond this, Phillip was unable to locate another bus driver who was inside the venue when the attacks took place. It was almost 24 hours until he received a call from a hospital with the news that the driver was alive, but seriously injured. This driver is still recovering from his injuries.

Phillip's experience emphasizes the importance of keeping tabs on a crew at all times, in addition to making sure that drivers are aware of the quickest escape routes from a venue. These simple preparations can make a huge difference in an emergency situation.

Not far from the Bataclan, U2 and crew were in rehearsals for an upcoming HBO special. Production Manager Jake Berry explained that they quickly evacuated Paris, but were back soon thereafter to perform and offer a ray of hope to the wounded city. Digby and Hernandez acknowledged that while any band and crew would do the same thing, it was truly impactful to have U2 in that position.

The memory of the Paris attacks still stings, especially with the loss of Nick Alexander. Well known and loved by the touring community, Digby referred to him as "everybody's merch guy." Much of the remainder of Tour Link 2016 was dedicated in his memory. During the Top Dog awards, he posthumously received the Merchandiser award. As drinks were raised in his memory, the touring community prepared to move forward through a truly difficult time.

"We are, for better or worse, all family in the business of production," stated Digby. "Paris has served to make our bonds even more meaningful and poignantly

remind us that we must look out and care for each other."

For many, the dialogue at "We'll Always Have Paris" was a healing moment. It represented an overdue catharsis that strengthened individuals and companies alike. The reaction to this evil would be to drive, hang, light, and mix with fervor, while embracing the connections that uniquely bind the touring community together. As Hernandez would say, "Do something against the bastards every day, but don't forget the love bit!"



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## ESSENTIAL WEATHER SERVICES WITH DAX COCHRAN

by Peter Ferguson

Dax Cochran, Director of Business Development for Weather Decision Technologies, Inc., led an informative panel on weather preparation and safety during Tour Link 2016. Topics included: planning for dangerous weather situations, what a weather support service provides for its customers, and how to apply the information provided by a weather support service.

"Without a plan, any weather information is a façade," Cochran explained. Event producers, managers, and department heads must develop protocol for weather emergencies in order to take full advantage of a weather support service.

Since each event is unique, no weather support service can provide a comprehensive evacuation or weather safety plan.

In the past decade, the touring industry has seen music festivals multiply in number and size. Multi-stage festivals, such as Bonnoroo or Electric Daisy Carnival, require systematic procedures for evacuating spectators, securing artists and crewmembers, and protecting equipment assets. Additionally, the process of re-admitting these parties and ensuring operational safety after a storm has past presents another challenge.

On the third day of Lollapalooza 2015, a rapidly approaching thunderstorm prompted festival organizers to evacuate Grant Park. The process went off without a hitch, as tens of thousands of festivalgoers entered into three underground shelters. This efficiency, which characterized the Lollapalooza evacuation, set the bar for other major festivals.

A weather support service (WSS) provides forecasts and warnings to prepare event managers for potential severe weather. Cochran explained that a quality WSS has access to multiple respected forecasters, provides customized trigger charts for each client, and builds redundancy into its communication and notification systems.

All weather information should be site-specific. Regional terrain and elevations can skew weather data, so the WSS and event management must address factors that alter a forecast's accuracy.

Most importantly, a good WSS keeps a human in the loop at all times to sort through data. It is well known that even the best forecast is not 100% correct. It takes human expertise to identify and respond to inaccuracies,



contradictions, and anomalies that a computer model can't detect.

No one should assume that someone else on the festival or tour has weather support. Management is responsible for the safety of those who work under them. For example, a major festival could utilize a WSS immediately before, during, and after the event, but the company that installs electric and water infrastructure on site months before load in may not have an eye on the sky. The manager of that company's ought to either invest in weather support or discuss extending the festival's weather support to his crew.

Every morning, the event or tour management should check the emails sent from their WSS. If any of the trigger charts, which use a green-yellow-red coding system, indicate the potential for severe weather, that information should be communicated to the appropriate departments immediately.

The more the event or tour management communicates with the WSS, the more safety is enhanced on-site. If a trigger chart shows an enhanced probability of high winds, the management should request hour-by-hour updates from the WSS as the situation develops. No one is left in the dark.

A prelude to the upcoming Event Safety Alliance Severe Weather Summit, Cochran's panel session on severe weather educated touring professionals on the importance of severe weather planning, awareness, and support. As the popularity of outdoor festivals increases, utilizing reliable weather support systems and planning efficient emergency procedures becomes an essential step for the industry.



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## BUDGET & SETTLEMENT 101

Story by Debi Moen, Photos by Shelby Cude  
moderator Chuck Randall

### PANELISTS:

**Ken Denson:** *Brian Setzer tour*

**Jim Runge:** *tour manager*

**Morgan Dentch:** *tour accountant*

**Jorden Yousem:** *Concerts West*

**Tim McKenna:** *Live Nation*

Moderator and tour manager Chuck Randall explained the four main types of settlement deals and how to figure them:

- 1) The Flat deal is often seen in corporate events, casinos, soft ticket events.
- 2) The Gross deal was the most common deal and is coming back.
- 3) Promoter Profit was for the longest time the most common type of deal.
- 4) Net/Versus is becoming a more common deal especially for "bigger" bands.

Security costs became a major topic. Following the Paris attacks, security is frequently tightened city-wide with more cops added to the event. Who pays for extra security at venues?

Randall answered, "Security is a line item. If it costs extra because of the world we live in now, it's going to cost. Security is a show cost. Sometimes you get billed for it, sometimes you don't. If you are doing it properly, you ask for a pre-settlement so you know what your expenses are going in."

Another sticky topic brought up was different ticket prices from different ticketing sources. Randall said, "Secondary ticketing - via ticket scalping - means there's a lot of people getting a piece of the pie. It's no longer guys in the parking lot with a few tickets. There's hundreds of thousands of dollars there. I've seen venues, artists, AMEX be accused of scalping their own



tickets. Now third parties are trying to capitalize on it. A lot of them are getting burned, though, and it costs us."

Another big topic was the amount of money an artist would take home at the end of the tour. "At the end of the day, all of the money collected, less their expenses, what is left over is what the artist is going to put in their pocket, and the band will split it. My artists expect 30-40 percent. A lot of European bands make less money. International taxes are huge; it could be 40 percent," Randall said.

Giving your artist an estimated take-home pay may lead to trimming production expenses beforehand, Randall noted.

"Have a good tax accountant," Randall advised. "I tell the artist you can have anything you want. A jet? Fine. It's your money and you're spending it. Would you rather be more conservative and take it home or come home without money?"

An audience member asked, "How out of control are the riders?" Panelists agreed:

"It goes back to whatever the artist wants. A rider is on the show budget, it's a show expense. At the end of the day if you are spending that money to keep the artist happy, then I want a happy artist. As a promoter, there are two things to always make note of: Make sure the house looks good and make sure the artist is happy."

To sum it all up, someone suggested that budgets, settlements, riders, security and all the other expenses need to be figured by someone with hands-on experience. "Anyone who deals with money on a tour needs to spend time on the road." All agreed.

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## TOUR TRANSIT TEAMWORK

by Peter Ferguson

All seats were filled in a smaller conference room for the Department of Transportation Regulations panel session. Joerg Philipp from Beat The Street Bussing, David Kiely from Roadshow Services, and Mark Larson from Heaphill Brothers led the discussion. Trucking and bussing are essential to keeping the entire touring industry on the road. Trucking and bussing companies face several major changes in the business. Government-mandated usage of electronic logbooks, reduced speed limits, and driver shortages were the primary topics addressed.

The discussion began with information on electronic logbooks. By 2017, American trucking and bussing companies will be required to have phased this technology into their fleets. These logs will enforce a 14-hour "workday" with a 10-hour break. While the panel attendees recognized the benefits of safer travel for well-rested drivers, several potential issues were raised.

The biggest concern mentioned was that these devices start with the truck. This means that if a driver simply moved his rig to the venue for load-out, the 14-hour workday will tick away. A three-hour load-out would quickly eat into precious driving time. Those 14 hours were previously tracked by paper and pencil, typically starting when the driver departed for his next destination.

Congress attempted to pass this regulation in 2013, but was halted for a lack of driver protections. The FMCSA coercion law resulted protecting a driver pressured by an outside party to stretch for a destination and disregard the 14-hour limit is not liable under these regulations. The FMCSA coercion law, which goes into effect January 29, 2018, holds any or all of the following parties culpable for coercion: the trucking company, the client, the shipper, or the receiver.

Coercion may be found to have taken place even if a violation has not occurred.

Trucking and Bussing companies in the United Kingdom are currently required to use electronic logs. Advice was exchanged with the US-based companies, some of which had already begun to phase in the new devices.

To adhere to the new regulations, tours will have to carefully consider their routing. If a longer distance needs to be covered, the trucking or bussing company will have to exchange drivers at a half-way point or use a driver team to finish the shift. These are just three options that trucking companies can present to tour management when faced with an extended drive. While they will all increase

the cost of transportation and logistics, "fudging the books" is no longer an option for drivers.

Another topic discussed was operating speeds. Many companies operate their trucks at 65 miles per hour rather than 75 or higher. This reduced cruising speed also reduces driver fatigue, and, consequently, the overall time on the road.

Driver wellness was a huge priority for all of the companies at the panel. Most of those present, from drivers to managers, had spent many nights pounding the pavement with a load of gear in tow. Brotherhood among the drivers and managers was strong, fueled by strong mutual respect. The road can be brutal, and it was recognized that everyone must get home safe.

On the other hand, the attendees mentioned that they are having trouble hiring quality drivers. As current fleet members age out, companies are struggling to rapidly refill their ranks. The grueling nature of driving for a tour makes it particularly difficult to find quality drivers. A driver may not be home for months at a time, just like the rest of the tour's crew.

The discussion on the new Department of Transportation regulations for trucking and bussing companies was heated. Electronic Logs will change the way that these companies do business, but having a few years to adopt the regulations will be useful. The collective resources of multiple transportation companies were also recognized to be of great importance moving forward. Collaboration was strong on logbooks, truck speeds, and new hires.



# EVERYONE SHOULD COME HOME

by Jordan Haymaker



Gearing up for a tour takes a ton of work and planning, but one of the most important elements that is continuously overlooked is basic first aid training. Dr. Damian Brezinski even admits that using an AED (Automated External Defibrillator) is incredibly simple, but people are just afraid to use them. He was perplexed that touring professionals can set up and operate complex equipment, but are afraid of a simple AED containing only 3 buttons. This life saving device safely monitors the heart rhythm and determines if it is necessary to administer an electrical shock in an attempt to synchronize the heart's rhythm. AED's are compact, portable, and require very minimal maintenance.

The chance of survival is 1 in 256 if a person has a heart attack outside of the hospital, but with CPR it's 50-75%. If someone reacts within 3 minutes during an emergency, their survival rate increases to 75%, while waiting 12 minutes for an ambulance to arrive cuts the survival rate in half.

Touring professionals are burning the candle at both ends, and stress, poor diet, and lack of sleep all are major risk factors for heart disease. Chris Musgrave is proof that training is absolutely necessary for all roadies. He survived a heart attack while on tour thanks to immediate action and now advocates for an AED in every tour package, on every tour bus, and in each venue. It only takes an hour of training to be certified in CPR and to use an AED, so every Tour Manager and Production Manager should make it a priority to learn these lifesaving skills.

Chris started Keep The Beat Alive to help prevent unnecessary deaths by means of education. This organization will come out to provide training at no charge at for crews and also at venues. Damian observed that, "We have too many remembrance slides at Tour Link Conference, and those need to be shortened. We need to bring people home from emergencies."

Chris pleaded, "Overcome this fear because, trust me, it's a lot scarier waking up in ICU than it is performing CPR." Due to Good Samaritan laws, a person cannot get in trouble for trying to help out. Production Manager, Charlie Hernandez, brought up a good point; it's not all heart attacks, but also choking, over-doses, etc. He believes that, "You should simply be educated to know how to react to help someone in need."

Harold Owens is the Senior Director of MusiCares, an organization that provides help in a different way for professionals in the music industry in times of crisis. If someone gets sick on the road, MusiCares helps with income flow for families of touring professionals, financial assistance with medical bills, and even addiction recovery. For 17 years their philosophy has been focused on helping others.

According to human rights activist, Jack Healey, "One person can make all the difference. Those who step in when help is needed really set the bar. Training and education are the keys to eliminating fear." Charlie concluded, "People are afraid of what they don't understand, and fear is paralyzing. Think about how you can help save a life by educating yourself and donating. You know what to do, so just go fucking do it." The show must go on, but everyone must also go home.

[www.musicares.com](http://www.musicares.com)  
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## TOUR MASTERS: FESTIVALS AND THE FAN EXPERIENCE

By: Peter Ferguson



Several hours before the Top Dog Awards banquet, the best and brightest in the touring industry sat down to wrap up the conference's panel sessions. Moderated by Charlie Hernandez, the panel consisted of Chuck Randall, Bobby Schneider, Jake Berry, Scotty Ross, and John Procini – all industry veterans with great stories and interesting ideas.

Hernandez began by discussing festivals. This topic, which came up in multiple panel sessions, was given careful consideration throughout the conference. As their numbers multiply and sizes expand, music festivals are becoming a central feature in the touring industry. Hernandez simply asked the panel, "Are we good?"

Overall, the response was positive. Rising stars in the industry are jumping on board with the festival scene and are working to make festival production safe, economical, and entertaining. However, as the number of festivals is increasing, the price for good talent proportionally responds. Festivals must find room in their budgets to accommodate the higher prices of a-list performers.

Randall chimed in, "Festivals have been increasing exponentially in number and size. How long does it take that event to pay out? Three, maybe four years! Overpaid acts will not help the festivals survive."

The entity that ends up picking up the tab for increased talent costs is the fans. Berry raised concerns about this trend, noting that it is not a sustainable model. Hernandez agreed that high prices directly affect the fan experience. He reminded the attendees that festivals could decrease costs by encouraging talent to reduce their production needs at a festival. He declared, "If you have good songs, you don't need all that!" Citing the Rolling Stones' crazy, larger-than-life production, Berry echoed Hernandez's sentiments. "They've cut down their production from 38 trucks to 19," he explained. "The show is just as good, and they are making more money than they ever did before. The quality of the fan experience was never diminished."

Berry also expressed concerns that the growing passel of poorly produced festivals will undermine their well-run counterparts, such as the major EDM gatherings.

"The major EDM festivals are the heavy metal shows of the 80s," mentioned Berry. "While the music is different, we like the fans are in it for the same thing! We are having a great time!"

Randall reassured the attendees that the recent prevalence of festival dates on tours would not compromise jobs on the road. "When we started, the artist toured to support the record, now the artist tours to support themselves," he said. "[Touring] is their largest income stream. It is now more contingent on us to figure out how to [tour] for the biggest bang for the buck. My artists have an expectation that they will make 35-40% of their debt."

The conversation then delved deeper into the fan experience. In general, the panel agreed that it was vital to use new technologies to enhance the fan experience. However, no technology will ever replace the feeling of being in the audience at a big production. "Even if you are using your phone [at a concert], you are still experiencing it," noted Berry. "The fan experience was never deterred by a war in the 40's, wars throughout the world, or any technology. You can only get that release by hanging out with a bunch of people watching a show."

In reference to the growing prominence of live streaming shows and festivals, Randall agreed that the traditional concert-audience model is not in danger of being replaced. "As nebulous as that feeling is, that concentrated simultaneous consciousness in that venue, watching that show – it can never be duplicated, no matter what kind of computer you've got," he explained.

As the panel session wrapped up, the consciousness in the room was clear – these industry masters confidently spelled out their visions for the future of touring and production. While they recognized that things may look a little different as festivals grow, the common sentiment was that the industry is here to stay.

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