



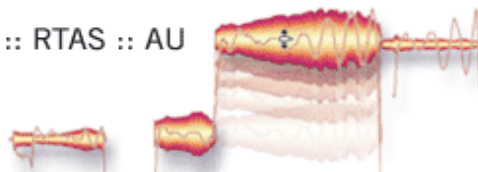
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## Tritech Light and Sound

By Sarah Benzuly

Feb 1, 2006 12:00 PM

WHERE CUSTOMER SERVICE IS KEY

New York City, Los Angeles, Miami, San Francisco — in each of these major cities, you would expect to find at least a few dozen sound reinforcement companies supplying crew and gear for major club tours, corporate events, summer festivals and the like. But you'll also find the same class-act companies in smaller cities. In Middletown, Ohio, John Hutton's Tritech Light and Sound (<http://tritechlightandsound.com>) offers a diverse range of services and has become quite a force in this growing area.

"Diversity in production helps," Hutton says. "You know, everybody's a sound man! [Laughs] With the advent of powered speakers and corporate music stores that sell entry-level 'pro audio,' you have to work your niche and strive for excellent customer service from the time you deliver to the time you strike. I offer sound reinforcement, lighting systems, speaker re-oning, some on-site analysis and repair of church sound systems, contract installation on system light or sound and a local recording studio that also has band rehearsal space for rent with an innovative good-tenant program that can earn bands studio time or rent credits. I also do Red Book mastering for some local bands."



John Hutton at the M3000, working the 2005 Cincinnati Blues Festival

On the SR front, Tritech has garnered a satisfied customer base with such annual events as the Cincinnati Blues Festival, the New Year's Festival in nearby Columbus and the Jerry Lewis MDA telethon. In addition, Tritech has supplied for such major acts as Iron Butterfly, 50 Cent and Dave Chappelle, and for ongoing customers with regular live sound needs such as Ohio's Miami University.

"I try not to turn down any type of work," Hutton says. "At times, if it is more than what I can do, I always tell the customer up front that I might have to 'source that for you.' That way, the customer has an increased trust in your ethics and timetables on gigs. From clubs to



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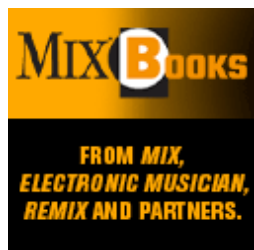
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college and church events, and even promoters that do local shows at parks and fairgrounds for special-interest groups, I try to fulfill them all, as long as it looks like customer service will not be compromised."

And Hutton maintains these satisfied customers with a huge stock of pro gear, including a JBL front-loaded P.A., which "is a proprietary company box designed in the early '80s," he explains. "It's an active two-way, but has a passive highpass between the 15s that helps eliminate comb filtering at about 300 cycles. To complement this are 10 front-loaded 2-18 trap subs, all powered by Crest." Also available are 18 Sound Physics Labs TD1s and 12 Bass Tech 7 ServoDrive cabs. From rap and R&B (Twista's performance in Chicago in early October) to Béla Fleck Acoustic Trio (in mid-September) and Latin (Inti-Illimani, early November), Hutton says that the SPL system performs with excellent unity summation and image correlation. Powering the SPL system are Crest 10004s and 8001s. Boards offered are Yamaha M3000s for both house and monitors; for more intimate gigs, Tritech can supply smaller Yamaha and Studiomaster consoles.

But beyond these choice pieces of gear, Hutton takes pride in his large selection of trucks. "Early on, I realized that trucking was a significant cost [for clients]," Hutton explains. "I regularly maintain five trucks that I use to provide timely delivery schedules to my customers."

With all of the work coming in and equipment to maintain, one would think that Hutton has a large staff of engineers and service techs. However, his staff changes every year, with some employees coming back for certain gigs. "Each year in the spring, I get calls from student grads from trade schools who would like to give [this type of work] a try," Hutton says. "Usually, two will be enough to get things going, and then as the season progresses, I just call on a list of part-timers who might be freelancing with other companies.

"Through the years, by giving basic training in loading and unloading trucks, soldering of various types, woodworking and, yes, from time to time mixing, several past employees have moved on to work in the industry at other levels: on tours with larger companies and some in the broadcast field and boat cruises," he continues. "It is this that chirps my pride the most. At a young age, lots of them reach their goal. They always return and tell tales of horror gigs that we all chuckle at. I guess sometimes [sound reinforcement work can be] simpler at a local or regional level. You always get to come home after the gig."

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