



PRODUCTIONS
Show Choir Products and News

**DEVELOPING
A SUCCESSFUL
AND RELEVANT
WEBSITE FOR
SHOW CHOIR**

**SHOPPING FOR
SHOW CHOIR
MUSIC**

**THE SHOW
GOES ON:
THE RETURN
OF BROADWAY**

**BACK-TO-SCHOOL
SHOW CHOIR
GUIDE**



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TRANSPORTED & DAZZLED: BEAUTIFUL AND FUNCTIONAL COSTUMING

Mercedes Bergman is the owner of Satin Stitches, a custom costume design and production company for dance and performance apparel. The previous owner and founder, Deborah J Nelson "passed the baton" over to Mercedes in 2020. Mercedes had worked with Deborah as a designer and continues the company's commitment to quality and attention to detail.

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In today's world of technology, it is important to utilize the new tools that are available to us in a way that helps us to organize, communicate, advertise, and promote our programs. As families become more accustomed to using technology, it is in our best interest to stay ahead of the curve. With careful planning, using these tools can help free up valuable time that can now be used to continue to build, grow, and promote our programs.



Cover photo by Stephen Stair / stephenstairphotography

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It's time to return to schools and stages everywhere. Our guide covers fundraising, costuming, stages, music, and technology—all the items that make a show choir award-winning.



editor's letter



PHOTO BY ANGEL BAKER / VESTAVIA HILLS SINGERS

Back to School! I was a little different as a kid, and many of you will say I still am. But I loved going back to school. I loved the excitement of new things, seeing friends after a long summer off, and meeting new people. Now, please keep in mind that I went to school before social media, so keeping up was a little harder then than it is now—that might have been a factor in my excitement.

This year is even more exciting because we are looking at the return of a live Show Choir Season. Yes, we have challenges, but I have seen you rise to meet everything that has been thrown at you over the last eighteen months. How excited are you about the new performances, the practices, and the hope—it is rough right now—we have the tools to overcome and make the performance year happen? I am waiting with unmitigated excitement.

It seems like an eternity since we last sat in an auditorium and got to be active participants of the pageantry and joy all your groups bring. I want to again tell each one of you how much joy you spread. Sometimes in the past, it might have been taken for granted, but I have learned how special these wonderful performances are to me and the amazing wonder I have missed watching you perform and tell your musical stories.

As you start planning and laying out the new programs, I want to say thank you to the directors who work long hours outside the regular school day to design and come up with the concepts that become visual vanguards. Thank you to the parents and boosters who spend numerous hours building sets, helping with fundraising, and supporting the students and staff, the stage crews who work diligently in the shadows so that the performance runs smoothly (many times unrecognized), and to the school administrations who recognize the wonderful gift that the arts are to us all.

My final thought to you this month is that when you are sweating in the rehearsal halls learning choreography that seems impossible, but you know will be so cool, and singing the same songs over and over again to get every little part right and to perfection, know that you will be touching lives in ways you can not even imagine, and your work will have a lasting effect on us all. In a world yearning for positivity, you deliver!

Thank you, one and all.

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Transported **Dazzled**

BEAUTIFUL & FUNCTIONAL COSTUMING

by Lisa Gibbs

“The audience wants to be transported and dazzled!”

—MERCEDES BERGMAN

Mercedes Bergman owns Satin Stitches, a custom costume design and production company for dance and performance apparel. The shop’s founder, Deborah J. Nelson, “passed the baton” to Bergman in 2020. Having worked with Nelson as a designer, Bergman continues the company’s attention to detail and commitment to quality. The client base has expanded from dance teams and show choirs to include cheer teams, skaters, and people auditioning for many types of shows. In addition to creating custom designs, Satin Stitches hosts an online store offering budget-friendly styles and a wide choice of fabrics and colors.

Bergman is drawn to the challenge of creating designs that are beautiful as well as functional. I interviewed her to learn more about her approach to show choir costuming.

First of all, Mercedes, thank you for your time and insights. Will you tell us a personal story that relates to show choir?

“I never had a chance to participate in show choir, but one of the fondest memories from my youth was the time I spent singing and dancing in a gospel youth choir. We toured the country performing, had elaborate costume changes, and even recorded a live album at the Fitzgerald Theater in St. Paul, Minnesota. I like to think that the hours of hard work, the exhilaration of a live performance, and the camaraderie it built along the way is not unlike the show choir experience!”

I was in show choir in high school and went to a few competitions. It definitely was a lot of fun! What have you seen change over the past ten years regarding costuming for show choir?

“I was just talking with Deborah Nelson about all the changes over the years! In the past, it was typical for show choirs to perform in formal attire—tuxedos for the guys and pretty stage dresses for the girls. Now custom-themed costumes have become common, especially for competitive show choirs looking to stand out from the crowd. We have also seen more inclusivity in creating designs that can accommodate different body types.”

Being able to customize really helps the performers look and feel good in their costumes. What should the director consider when choosing costumes?

“Look for stretch fabrics! Costumes that stretch will more easily accommodate a variety of body types, minimize the need for alterations, and allow for movement. Occasionally we create costumes using non-stretch fabrics, and in these instances we make every effort to include extra seam allowance wherever possible and design the garment in a way that allows for easy alterations.”

In my performance career, I often had to change costumes quickly. What are things to consider if the performer needs to change costumes during the show?

“Long back zippers are important so you can step into the costume without messing up hair & makeup! Velcro closures or hooks can be useful for garments that need a quick removal. Always test your prototype costume for functionality by performing your entire routine in the garment.”

Great suggestions! I especially like the zipper recommendation—it also makes it less likely to get makeup on your costume during a quick change. Budget is typically an issue the director



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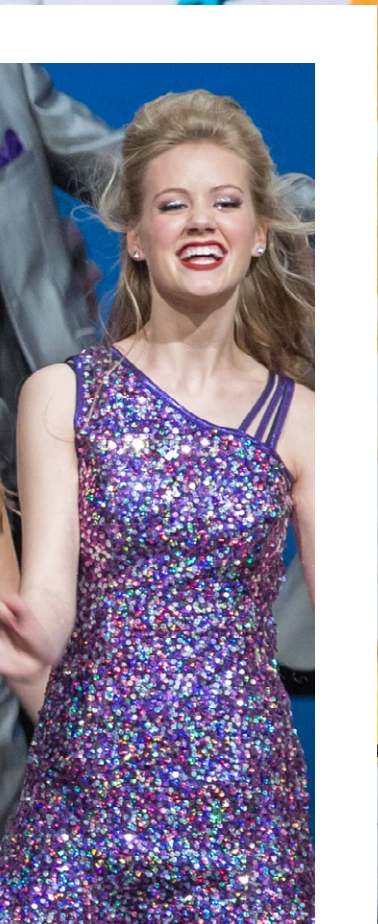


PHOTO COURTESY SATIN STITCHES

Custom-themed costumes have become common, especially for competitive show choirs looking to stand out from the crowd.

We have also seen more inclusivity in creating designs that can accommodate different body types.

deals with. What budgeting strategies would you suggest?

“You can get the most bang for your buck by mixing and matching pieces from different suppliers. Use your custom manufacturer for your unique and memorable pieces, but save the basics for a retailer that does larger stock quantities. We recently created an elaborate dress for one of our show choir clients, but the desired skirt had a lot of volume. Rather than building in an attached underskirt with layers and layers of tulle, we recommended that they purchase a separate petticoat from a retailer that specializes in petticoats. This saved our client money, and now they have petticoats that can be used again with another design!”

I love that you help your clients solve problems by referring them to a different retailer! I think that sort of generosity really enhances your business. Okay, costumes are made, the show is performed. How does the performer or director care for the costumes after the performance?

“Always follow the instructions on the care tag! For most of our costumes, we recommend spot cleaning only whenever possible to prolong the life of the garment; however, most of our costumes can be hand washed in cold. To reduce the risk of color bleed, never soak your costumes. Hang or lay flat to dry, and make sure the costume is fully dry before putting it away. Odor neutralizer sprays (such as Fresh Again for Uniform & Costume)

can be used between washings. Some of our customers successfully dry clean their garments, but not all dry cleaners know how to properly clean costumes, so beware! Give the dry cleaner one garment to test launder before turning over all your costumes.”

This may seem an obvious question, but I want to ask anyway: How do costumes help tell the story of the show?

“Usually less is more... but for costumes, more is more. A colleague said this to me when I was new to the costume design world, and I think of it often. The audience wants to be transported and dazzled... costumes are so important to make that happen!”

Be transported and dazzled! Thank you so much, Mercedes.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR: PUPN staff writer

Lisa Gibbs earned her Ed.D. in Higher Education Administration in 2018. She

is an advocate for arts, particularly dance, in education and for increasing the financial well-being of artists through financial education.

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SHOPPING FOR SHOW CHOIR MUSIC

by Garrett Breeze

If you do not have relationships with arrangers, shopping for show choir music can be a daunting task. This article outlines the four major sources of music for show choir to help you navigate the sometimes confusing network of websites, companies, and licensing requirements.

THE
COMPLETE
GUIDE
2021

by Garrett Breeze



The cheapest source of music for your show choir will be stock arrangements available from the traditional major music publishers such as Hal Leonard or Alfred. These are great options for non-competitive performances or for prep groups that are still learning the basics. If you intend to use a stock arrangement in one of your competitive shows, it should fit the following criteria:

- The voicing should be high enough that your singers can easily project while dancing. Alto parts below middle C and bass parts below G3 tend to get covered easily.
- If it is going to be used as an opener or closer, it must have dance breaks—or moments you could vamp or leave the vocals out to create one.
- It should have instrumental accompaniment that is comparable to the rest of your show—it is a real downer if you only use the full band on some of the songs in a set.
- And finally, the less repetition a chart has, the more effective it is going to be in competition. Many stock charts repeat

large sections note for note—that does not go over great in competition.

The main disadvantage of using a stock arrangement, of course, is the inability to go back to the arranger and request changes. However, there are still minor edits such as the following that can have a big impact: choosing a more appropriate tempo, making a cut that shortens the arrangement, doubling parts—or leaving parts out—for the sake of voicing, or adding an extra note occasionally to embellish an important chord. It is also permissible to change the key of the arrangement if this can be done without recreating the sheet music.

Arranger Catalogs

It is common practice in the show choir industry for arrangers to maintain a list of all the custom arrangements they have written in past years. This list is typically updated each summer at the end of competition season. Some of the most prolific arrangers have built websites to advertise their catalogs where listeners can hear audio samples and sort by voicing, genre, theme, function, and other identifiers. Examples of these include

breezetunes.com, bmkmusic.com, ericvancleave.com, and showchoircharts.com.

Purchasing music from an arranger's catalog will require the exact same kind of copyright license as a new custom arrangement, but the arranger's fee will be much lower. This option is a great way for choirs with lower budgets to perform highly competitive music; it is also a great way for you to "audition" a new arranger and get to know their style before investing in a custom arrangement.

The biggest advantage of using previously arranged titles is the time saved. Even though custom arrangement licenses are still required, the fact that a song has been cleared previously is generally a good sign approval will be granted again. Furthermore, since the music is already finished, rehearsal and preparation of other show elements—such as choreography, costuming, and lighting—can begin right away!

Using catalog arrangements in your show does not make the design process any easier—in fact, in many ways it is more challenging! It is much easier to hire one arranger, give them all the information about your group, pick songs together, and then let

them do their magic. As with most things, communication is key. The arrangers themselves are the best resource for helping you find something that is a good fit. Not only that, but many arrangers will also adjust charts in their catalog for a nominal fee.

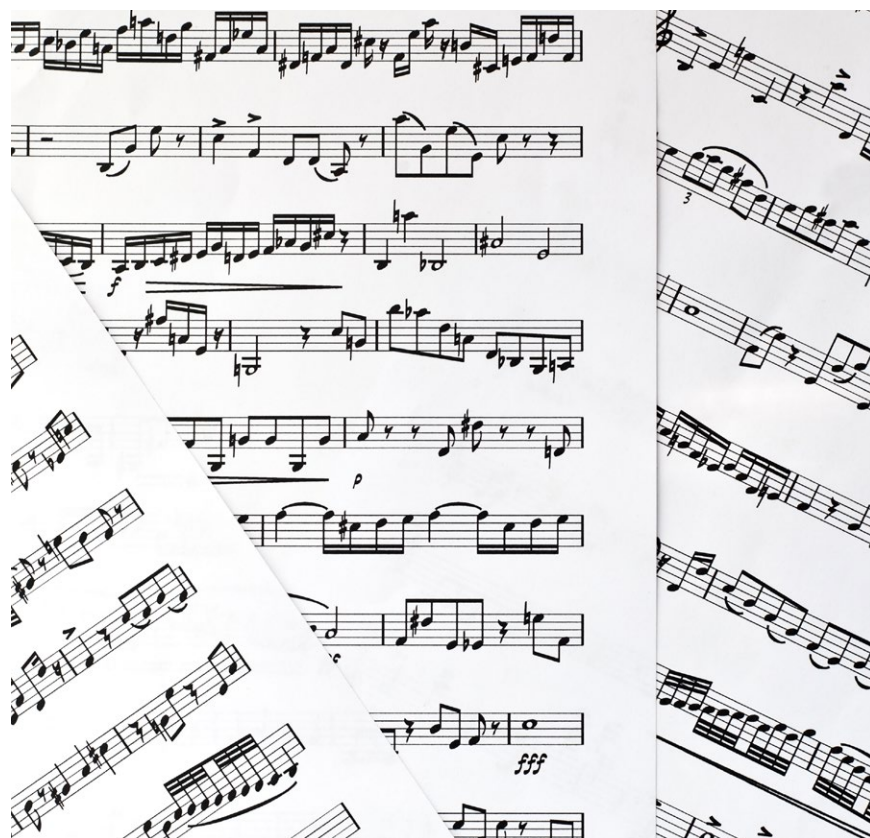
As you browse arrangers' catalogs, make sure you are thinking about the following:

The voicing has to be right for your choir. Many custom charts are written with unusual part combinations because they were originally written for unbalanced ensembles. Check ranges for sopranos and tenors; and make sure there is not more division in the chart than your group can successfully handle.

Is it in a good key? Do not be afraid to ask for the chart in a new key if that will make your life better. Notation software has a magical button that modulates everything in an arrangement with one click.

Get the right band parts to satisfy your instrumentation. The configuration of the band, especially horns, can vary greatly from chart to chart. When in doubt, always ask. There may be an easy solution to missing parts, for example, copying a trombone part into a tenor sax part if you have more saxes than bones.

ALWAYS put show function first. It does not matter how much you like a song; if the arrangement was designed as a transition number and you want it to be a closer, it is not going to do what you need it to do.



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Independent Publishers and Nontraditional Music

Due to the costs associated with licensing, there are a small but growing number of composers and arrangers who maintain independent catalogs of competition music that can be purchased and performed without requiring additional permissions. This category includes composers who have written original songs for show choir, arrangers who have struck deals with independent artists to arrange and sell their music, and others who have done the hard work of pre-clearing arrangements to sell directly (the most popular of which is showchoirstock.com.) Many groups get creative and widen their search for music even further, incorporating a cappella arrangements, concert choir, gospel music, folk songs, or patriotic tunes into their shows.

Custom Arrangements

The best—and most expensive—way to buy music for show choir is to have it arranged specifically for your show. There is simply no substitute for having an experienced

arranger on your staff who can be a part of the creative team, get to know your program, and craft something unique and memorable. The benefits should be obvious, but they include:

- The ability to highlight the strengths and avoid the weaknesses in your singers
- Having a person who can make edits and tweak things as needed
- Getting the exact parts you need for your instrumental accompaniment
- Being able to execute a creative vision with few limitations

Because every arranger does things differently, knowing how YOU like to collaborate—and how you like to communicate—is the key to working together effectively. Make sure they know the areas where you want something specific and the areas where you want them to be creative. Keep them in the loop as things develop, as things change, and as you learn more about the needs of your choir.

It can be hard to find an arranger who is the right fit. Of all the players in the show choir community, arrangers are perhaps the least visible. Additionally, because they are not required to travel and do their work in person like choreographers, it can be harder to forge those relationships. Some directors and choreographers treat arrangers like just another vendor—a store where they can buy music—but making the arranger a full and equal member of the creative team will work wonders for your show.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: With more than 1,000 show choir arrangements in circulation, Garrett Breeze is a sought-after clinician and adjudicator whose credits include film and television, Broadway stars, and Grammy-winning classical artists. His show choir music is available at breezetunes.com and he recently launched a new catalog of music for concert and church choirs at holidaychoirmusic.com.



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My husband and I went to Italy on our honeymoon over 25 years ago where our love of pasta & Italy began! We were young and a little naïve, so we quit our corporate jobs to start a pasta company. We wanted to bring the Old-World Italian quality back to the States but create pasta shapes that appealed to American families. Our first shape was "Music City Pasta"—boots & guitars sold to tourist shops here in Nashville. We've grown into making college logos, holiday shapes, and so much more!

WHAT SETS YOUR PROGRAM APART FROM OTHERS?

Fun Pasta is a unique product, not widely distributed, and is really a one-of-a-kind program. It's healthy, affordable, and makes great gifts too. Plus, everyone loves pasta! Our service is exceptional, and we work with lots of repeat leaders every year. Our in-office fundraising guru is Joann, who everyone knows and loves. She can't wait for the fall season to begin every year!

Fundraising evolved naturally as people saw these fun shapes and knew they would appeal to families. Pasta was healthy, wouldn't melt, and was easy to distribute. Also, the uniqueness was always a selling point. Now this was before the internet existed, so we'd get phone calls and decided to set up a program that we knew would work—all paper and regular mail. Wow, seems like a century ago!

Today's fundraising model combines traditional with technology. You can show a brochure to a customer and take orders on the app, or just share a link via text, email, Facebook, or other social platforms. Fundraising has become easier and certainly Covid has forced companies to evolve their technology even faster.



WHEN A GROUP CHOOSES YOU WHAT CAN THEY EXPECT FROM FUN PASTA FUNDRAISING?

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WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO LEARN MORE ABOUT FUN PASTA?

Go to our website, FunPastaFundraising.com and you can download our brochure and read more details. Feel free to call us with any questions 800-247-0188, or email jo@pastashoppe.com. We'd love to help your group achieve its goals this year!

Carey Aron is President of The Pasta Shoppe & the Fun Pasta Fundraising team. For more than two decades, they have been creating happy & healthy pasta for families! Fun Pasta offers a unique, online, and contact free product fundraising program for groups of all sizes. When not in the kitchen whipping up a pasta recipe, Carey can usually be found hiking in local parks, ripping recipes out of food magazines, or binge-watching Netflix with her husband and 8-pound Maltipoo.

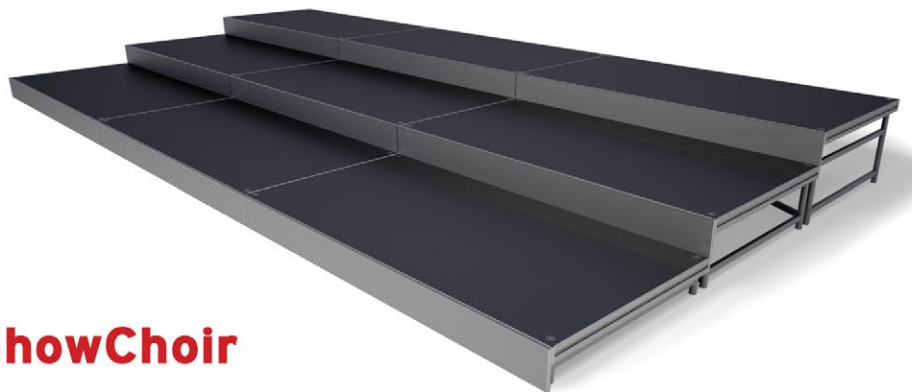


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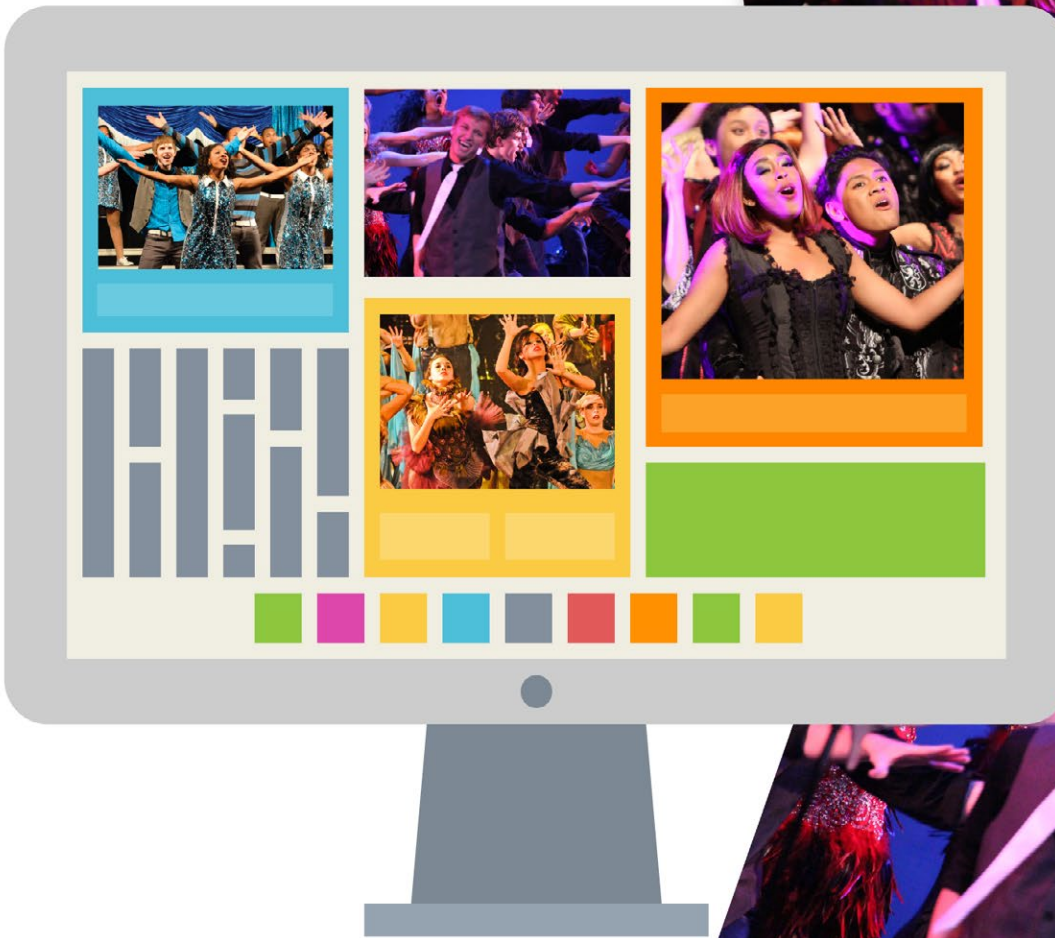
DEVELOPING A SUCCESSFUL AND RELEVANT WEBSITE FOR YOUR SHOW CHOIR



In today's world of technology, organizations must employ the tools that are available in a way that helps to organize, communicate, advertise, and promote their programs. As families rely more and more on technology, organizations must have useful, interactive websites to serve them. With careful planning, these tools can help free up valuable time that can instead be used to continue to build, grow, and promote our programs.

by Aaron Olson,
David Wesbecker,
and Keith Griffin





Our music program has just poured a great deal of resources into building our website which will serve as the foundation for all of our technological tools. The website houses contact management, email, group texting, student accounting, social media, video and picture content, ticket sales, and branding—just to name a few.

Building a website that is useful, visually appealing, and easy to navigate is essential if it is going to be consulted on a regular basis. Not only should the site be user-friendly for your families, friends, and fans, but also for whomever is going to be providing the updates for the site. For people who are not tech savvy, this domain can be a whole different environment to work in. However, with careful planning and a small amount of training, basic computer knowledge should be enough to keep your site up-to-date and serving its purpose for several years.

First Attempt

Our first attempt at a website, while ambitious, fell far short of our goals. Updates were a challenge, and we simply did not put enough thought into the design and layout. This situation not only left us with outdated and broken links, but also created more work than it was worth. This attempt, however, was not

in vain, as we learned a great deal from our mistakes and created a large library of content that we are using in our website today.

Second Attempt

For our second attempt at a website, we realized that it was important to work with a professional web developer. In Waconia, we were fortunate to call upon the expertise of a parent who was able to help us build a website that was professional in appearance, yet easy enough for us to make any necessary updates. If you are not so fortunate to have a parent in the business, we strongly encourage you to seek out professionals. It can be an expensive up-front cost to you, but it will pay dividends to you in the end.

Guidance for Building a Website

After going through the website development process twice, we generated the following list of aspects to address in website creation.

Build a Strategic Plan

One of our first steps was to gather as much information as possible from the Director of the music programs to ensure that the website incorporated the vision and objectives of the entire vocal music program, including the curricular and co-curricular show choirs. Additionally, the Director wanted to make

sure the website reflected the passion of the program.

We had many discussions about who the audience for the site is and how the site needed to satisfy the needs of many groups. We asked questions that generated both answers and more questions! These questions and answers helped us put together a comprehensive site that does as much as possible for our website users. We then gathered Booster input from a select group of parents, since they would be the largest users of the website. We wanted to make sure that we were meeting the needs of the parents as well as the leadership team. We asked, “What would you like to be able to do on a website as a parent?” In addition to parents, we wanted input from a select group of student choir members, as we really wanted the students to also be proud of their website.

The information-gathering process included asking questions like this: “What information do you wish you could get to on the current site?” We were then able to prioritize based on how much time and effort we were able to put into creating the site. We knew that we could not include everything, so we set out to create a website that could include those items highest on our wish list immediately but was scalable to meet the future needs, as well.

We began to create our wish list. We wanted and needed a site that met the following criteria:

- Could be changed by anyone, not just someone trained in HTML
- Was designed to be visually engaging, with clean pages
- Was easy to navigate
- Had lots of video and imagery
- Contained downloadable schedules and important information for our parents and kids
- Included mini pages for each of our choirs
- Allowed us to add information about the leadership and the program, so parents and kids new to the program would be able to understand the processes and commitment to the choirs
- Provided information on fundraising activities
- Promoted concerts
- Had branding
- Had PayPal integration
- Could handle contact management along with email and texting integration
- Provided for ticket sales
- Incorporated social media



The information-gathering process included asking questions like this: "What information do you wish you could get to on the current site?" We were then able to prioritize based on how much time and effort we were able to put into creating the site. We knew that we could not include everything, so we set out to

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PAST PERFORMANCES

The information-gathering process included asking questions like this: "What information do you wish you could get to on the current site?" We were then able to prioritize based on how much time and effort we were able to put into creating the site. We knew that we could not include everything, so we set out to create a website that would include those items highest on our wish list immediately but was also scalable to meet the future



Once the input was taken from the various groups, we were able to create a site map with recommended navigation and pages laid out in a visual format. The sitemap was approved before any design or production began on the website.

Choose a Platform

With all the input from the different groups, we recommended that we created a Content Managed System (CMS) that could grow, be flexible, and allow multiple people to change things on the site without knowing how to code. There was a toss-up between using WordPress and Joomla. While both are great systems, Joomla was recommended based on its flexibility and endless supply of modules to add functionality in the future.

Design the Site, Using Organizational Branding

Parents, competitors, and your community know your choirs by their names, logos, and colors, all of which make up the brand of your organization. We needed to incorporate our brand into the site to make it look and feel like our choirs. The approach we took was to capitalize on the stars, purples and

gold colors, and plenty of images. We really wanted to have the kids' images reflected in the design. We left the background white, so the vibrant colors of the performances could pop visually. We also added large hero images on the individual choir pages and made the homepage a kind of Billboard for information about all choirs and events, so it was user friendly to the parents and the kids to find what they were looking for quickly.

Coordinate the Production

We had to have a good process to make sure we got all the images and information from the right people while the site was being created. As the site framework was being created, the task of the Directors, the Boosters, and many kids enlisted from the program was to find imagery and content for the site. While the Choir Director was busy writing the content for the pages, many parents were enlisted to gather and organize imagery for each of the events, and the choirs needed to fill in the site pages. This multi-directional collaboration is one of the most difficult tasks in creating the site, mostly because all the assets are spread out over so many people. This part should be well planned and organized. Luckily, we have a wonderful videographer parent who

has been very good about video capturing events and programs, so we were able to embed the video from *YouTube* as needed.

Proof and Publish

Parent volunteers and Booster members did the proofing. Once all the proofing was done and we were ready, the site went live and has been used by both parents and students alike. As with most websites, ours continues to evolve. Our next big move will be to incorporate a contact management and student account module into our website. We have looked at a number of options but will most likely transition into using the Charms Office Assistant. By using Charms, we can easily put students into groups and target our communication specifically to groups or to the entire musical organization. Charms will also provide a secure and easy way for parents to access their student account balances.

We are just beginning to "wet our toes" in the social media world by starting *Facebook*, *Instagram*, and *Twitter* accounts. I have sent out a few teaser emails encouraging families to "like" our *Facebook* page and to sign up to follow us on *Twitter* and *Instagram*. I believe



this will become even more valuable as the we begin the competitive season.

According to Dave Weisbecker, another parent with extensive experience with social media and branding, "We are taking a multi-step approach to our use of social media on the web site. First, we wanted to establish the channels and get people familiar with the fact that we had content available for them to enjoy and share. Next, we looked to leverage that awareness into a real-time communication vehicle. And as we evolve the process, we hope to be able to use the power of our performers and our community to crowd source content, quickly communicate, and bring our performances to life. We started out by working first to engage our students and parents with photos and videos on *YouTube* and *Flickr*. We posted original videos and photos of student camps, clinics, and exhibitions, as well as parent videos of performances. This had the immediate benefit of allowing the students and family members that could not make the trips to enjoy the experience. As we have built awareness and followers, we have also started to build our site contributors."

Earlier this year, we started a *Facebook* page to engage our students and parents on productionsmag.com

a more real-time scale than email allows us to do. We posted pictures and video links from competitions and events, sometimes within hours of the performance. This platform allows us to share news and highlights with both our student performers and family and friends. This summer, we added a *Twitter* account to the mix to help expand our reach. Between the two platforms, we can now communicate to most of our performers and many of the parents. By linking our *Facebook*, *Instagram*, and *Twitter* accounts together, we can now have a singular post reach almost all of our show choir community. With the ever-present smart phone today, we can get news, highlights, updates or changes to everyone almost immediately.

As we go forward this season, we have three main goals in mind: First, we want to continue to increase our "likes" and followers so that we know that everyone is getting our message right away, every time. This audience development will help us to quickly move the dial when need be.

Second, we want to increase our real-time engagement at events and competitions. One of the great things about social media is the ability to build upon the moment of any given occasion. Using *Facebook* and *Twitter*

to share the excitement, from both in front of and behind the scenes, can help to give everyone a true feeling for the experience.

And finally, we hope to turn all of our sites into true crowdsourced platforms. With all the cell phones, cameras, and video equipment at any given event, we hope to have many members of our community using our various sites as true repositories. This crowdsourcing will serve the dual task of giving us multiple images and experiences for every event, while at the same time building a great photo and video archive for years to come. It will be interesting to track our usage of these tools as the season progresses. Only time will tell where we go from here, but we hope to continue to use these tools to better communicate, promote, and grow our programs well into the future.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Aaron R. Olson has served as the director of vocal music at Waconia High School in Waconia, MN since 1998. He is the Executive Director of the Power Company Family of Show Chairs encompassing nearly three hundred student participants in four show choirs as well as a summer show choir camp for aspiring show choir serving over 100 Waconia kids.





THE SHOW GOES ON

STAGING CONCEPTS CELEBRATES THE RETURN OF BROADWAY

Following more than a year of empty auditoriums, silent music halls, and dark theaters, stage lights and sound systems are turning back on in performance spaces across the country. To celebrate the official return of Broadway this fall, Staging Concepts—a leading national provider of staging solutions and equipment—has joined forces with SiriusXM’s Broadway Channel personality Seth Rudetsky and his husband, producer James Wesley, to host a special live event at New York City’s Town Hall Theater featuring appearances and performances by some of Broadway’s top talents. The live production of Rudetsky and Wesley’s popular *Stars in the House* series will take place on Monday, October 25th, courtesy of title sponsor Staging Concepts, a division of Trex Commercial Products.

As Cindy Albrecht—director of sales and marketing for Staging Concepts—says, “Few industries have been as impacted by the pandemic as live theater and events.” She continues: “We work intimately with theaters and performance venues of all types, and we know what a long, dark period of pause and uncertainty this has been for the entire industry. We share in the excitement of this much-anticipated return of live productions and are pleased to have this opportunity to share in the celebration by giving back to the wonderfully resilient community that we serve.”

The *Celebrating the Return of Broadway* event will be a special live version of *Stars in The House*, an online series launched by Rudetsky and Wesley during the pandemic to help support the Broadway and performing arts community. Episodes feature stars of stage and screen sharing stories and performing live—from home—to promote support for charitable services for those most vulnerable to the effects of COVID-19. The Town Hall event will mirror the show’s typical format, featuring interviews and presentations by prominent Broadway and New York personalities, along with live musical acts by some of Broadway’s best and most beloved performers.

Among the stars currently slated to appear are Chita Rivera, Kelli O’Hara, Laura Benanti, Liz Callaway, Dana Delany, Andy Karl, Anika Larsen, Bebe Neuwirth, Brenda Braxton, Charlotte d’Amboise, Christine Pedi, Marc

Shaiman, Orfeh, and Schele Williams. The event will be livestreamed on starsinthehouse.com for the viewing pleasure of audiences around the world.

As Wesley states, “Seth and I are so excited to bring the show that we have been doing from our house for the past seventeen months to The Town Hall in New York City, in front of a live and in-person audience.” Wesley also points out the additional benefit of the show: “We’re going to look back at some of our favorite moments from the show with the artists actually on stage beside us and, of course, celebrate the return of Broadway with live performances—all while celebrating the work of everyone at The Actors Fund.”

Since the first episode aired on March 16, 2020, *Stars in the House* has raised more than \$1 million to benefit The Actors Fund, and over \$264,000 for other charities, including the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, the Trevor Project, the Humane Society of New York, the Waterkeeper Alliance, You Gotta Believe, Cancer Support Community, New York City Gay Men’s Chorus, Youth Pride Chorus, and more. Proceeds from the Town Hall Theater event will benefit The Actors Fund as well as Your Kids Our Kids, a non-profit organization providing funding and support to organizations who are working to defend basic civil and human rights to marginalized groups. Additionally, Staging Concepts is donating a large block of tickets for the event to be given to stage crew and theater professionals significantly impacted by the pandemic so that they may join in the celebration.

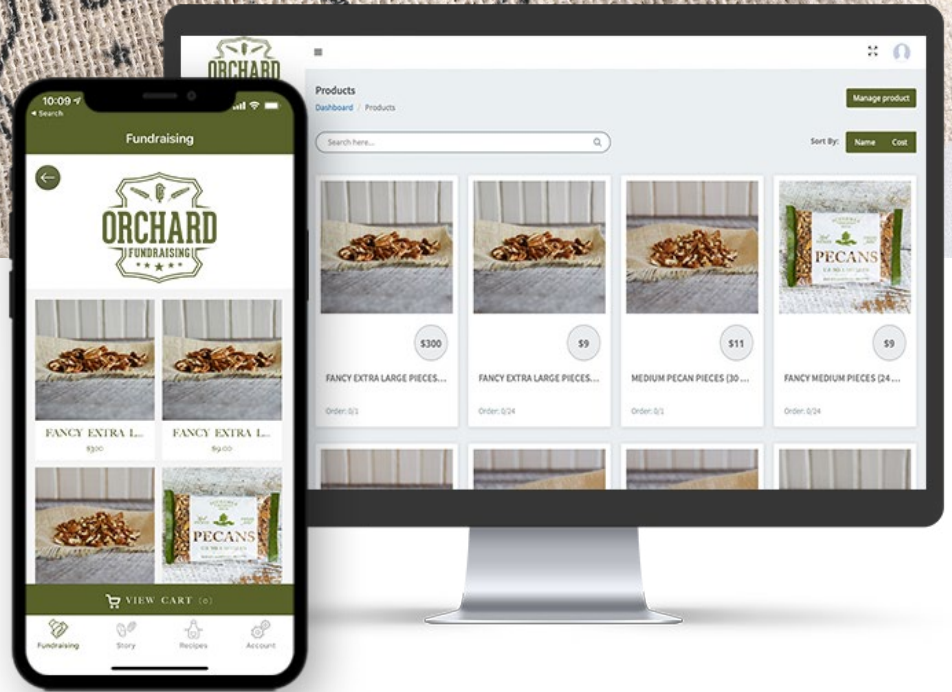
Albrecht notes that “The mission of Staging Concepts is to elevate the abilities of all people to safely access and enjoy amazing life experiences, and we can only do that when there are amazing live events to experience.” She goes on to say, “We are so grateful to Seth and James for the tireless work they have done to support the performing arts community during this difficult time and are proud to be part of such a momentous and meaningful event.”

Tickets for the live “Stars in the House” event are available through Ticketmaster starting at just \$25. For additional information, visit starsinthehouse.com. To learn more about Staging Concepts, visit stagingconcepts.com.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Staging Concepts is a national leader in engineering and producing the most advanced modular, custom portable staging solutions for all types of venues, including performing arts spaces and production companies, sports facilities, worship venues, convention centers, hospitality settings and special events. Since 1990, the company has been committed to elevating the abilities of all people to safely access and enjoy amazing life experiences. Based in Minneapolis, Minn., Staging Concepts is a division of Trex Commercial Products, Inc., a subsidiary of Trex Company, Inc.

ORCHARD

FUNDRAISING



GROWING SUCCESSFUL FUNDRAISING ENGAGEMENT

Schermer Pecans shares some exciting news with the readers of *Productions Magazine*, about how their app can help you and your team with your show choir fundraising.

Why Develop A New App?

Aron Wimberly from Schermer Pecans explains, "We wanted to develop an innovative platform for fundraisers. Orchard fundraising allows customers to sell Schermer Pecan products through this online platform. This platform creates a shareable link that makes sharing your fundraising information quick and easy. No need for brochures anymore, just share the link on your social media. Friends and family can use your link to purchase products and the funds go straight to the desired bank account."

Wimberly continues, "We've shared the idea with many different organizational groups who are looking for new way to fundraise. Many organizational leaders are eager to learn about what is to come from this platform. We offer the ability to add their own products, which is even more exciting."

Easy and Intuitive

Orchard fundraising is built on simple and intuitive web and mobile app platforms, which allow your fundraising organizations to present, order, and track their shipments in real time. A mobile-responsive link is also available to share on all social media platforms to further their reach.

Fundraising administrators select from and set up specific products available for sale, along with setting the price per unit and minimum order requirements associated with the selected products. The administrator has ability to adjust pricing, view individual fundraiser activity, and track all orders in an easy to use web-based content management system.

Accounting Made Simple

Once processed, revenue collected is automatically sent to you electronically and the product owners at the same time. No more waiting to collect money, create reports, and send out checks.

Team Member Gamification

For each fundraiser, your organization has its own unique URL to send via text message, email, or share on their social media platforms. Team members have their own log in where they can see their fundraising stats compared to other students, allowing for friendly competition.

Wrapping Up the Sales

Once minimum order levels are achieved, your fundraising organization and Orchard will receive a notification email stating the order is complete. The product is then shipped, and appropriate funds will be distributed to each organization.

Aron Wimberly can be reached at aron@schmerpecans.com or by calling 1.800.841.3403. Contact Orchard at info@orchardfundraising.com, call 833.850.8324, or visit www.orchardfundraising.com



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Back-to-School Guide

FUN PASTA

www.funpastafundraising.com

Need a great show choir fundraising idea? Earning up to 50% profit, you can sell from our brochure and also online with your webpage link with free shipping! Prizes include iTunes or Wal-Mart gift cards. Some of the benefits of our program include the following: One-of-a-kind products, made in the USA, affordable price points, healthy and fun, long shelf life, easy distribution—no melting or refrigeration—Online Leader Dashboard, and Auto Alert Marketing Tool for sellers. Fun Pasta Fundraising is both new and unique—a chance to sell Pasta in "fun shapes" like musical notes, sports, holidays, and more.

Our fundraising program is simple and effective—the #1 Brochure Sales + Online Sales. Your participants will sell from a colorful brochure and also share an online web page link with out-of-town friends and families.

You can earn 50% profit with your total brochure sales over \$4,000, earn 40% profit with your total brochure sales less than \$4,000. All online sales earn 40% profit, and you can earn Bonus Cash Prizes based on total gross sales!

SCHOOL SPIRIT COFFEE

www.schoolspiritcoffee.com

School Spirit Coffee uses only the highest quality Arabica Beans from Central and South America. All coffee products are roasted specifically to your order at our Roastery, Creative Coffees, and guaranteed to be roasted fresh within days of delivery! Since 2005, School Spirit Coffee has been providing a quality product with private label packaging at a great price to help raise funds for school groups and civic organizations.

The idea for School Spirit Coffee came to owner Debbie Hohman as a result of her school spirit and frustration with typical fundraisers. As an active booster mom for fifteen years, with two wonderful daughters, Debbie has helped organize and sell all the typical fundraising products—candy, nuts, wrapping paper, candles, and the list goes on and on. Because of the high cost and low quality, often the items

were difficult (or embarrassing) to sell to family and friends. If you are looking for an easy fundraiser that incorporates great products with your private label at a competitive price, give us a call at 800-570-1443 or submit a request form from the contact page of our website. We would appreciate the opportunity to help you have a fantastic fundraiser.

SCHERMER'S PECANS

www.schermerpecans.com

Harvested from Georgia orchards that have been in our family for over seventy years, our pecans are always hand selected and fresh shelled. We take pride in our pecans from start to finish; we plant and care for the trees, shell the pecans, and candy the delicious varieties.

Schermer's Pecans offers a healthy and delicious option, a fundraiser you can feel good about! In a nutshell, here's how it works: First, call, email, or download our easy app to sign up.

We offer free shipping in the continental USA, no money up front with approved credit, and 30 days to pay. We will mail you printed order forms to use for selling, or—to make it even easier—you can use our new app to set up your sellers with a link they can share with friends and family on social media or for door-to-door selling.

Our app, "Orchard," is an innovative fundraising platform that is changing the way your organization can raise money. With its mobile platform, Orchard allows fundraising organizations to present, order, and track their fundraising sales and shipments in real-time online. Orchard is built to elevate fundraising activity and results in an easier and engaging manner.

DORNINK

www.dorninkshowchoir.com

Dornink, a custom design fashion house in Des Moines, Iowa, can create your show choir costumes to perfectly complement your set. Choose from our many styles or design your own and let us make your vision a reality. Dornink styles can be customized to fit your set and your budget.

Dornink has over twenty-three years of experience creating show choir costumes for schools through

the Des Moines and surrounding areas. Founder Faythe Dornink began custom sewing costumes for her daughters in show choir in 1992 when she realized their need for a unique look. Since then, designer and daughter Sarah Dornink, educated and trained in New York, has joined the business. Sarah and Faythe will personally work with you to custom design your costumes and create the perfect set. Work with our design team to custom design the perfect look for needs.

Whether you're looking for show choir or theatrical costumes, we can design and create just about any style. Be inspired by the many fabric selections on our fabric page. And if you don't see what you're looking for, just ask!

Let Dornink set your group apart from the rest. Dornink can design and create the look you need. Our design team is always sourcing new fabrics, styles, and the latest trends to keep your group looking amazing on stage.

COFFIELD COLLECTION

www.coffieldcollection.com

Hello, I'm Diana Coffield. It's been my pleasure to spend the past thirty adventurous years in creative show choir costume design and manufacturing. Quality construction, superb fit, and flattering styles for all body types are the legacy of my work!

Coffield Collection offers my most loved classic dresses with matching high waist dance briefs for your singers offered in pre-made bundled packages. You pay one fabulous price per pre-pack and receive thirteen Coffield Collection dresses and thirteen dance briefs with free shipping. Choose as many pre-packs as needed to dress all your performers. Quality in every seam means more value for each dollar with the ease and convenience of shopping online. All Coffield Collection dresses are cut and sewn by my highly trained team with quality materials in our facility in Zionsville, Indiana.

Browse our designs online to find the pieces you like, select the quantity of pre-packs, check out online, and wait a couple of weeks for your





dresses to arrive! Hassle free and thrifty, save now on your classic show choir looks for high school, middle school and girls groups. Visit my website at now to see what I have dreamed up for you!

Many amazing fabrics are limited and available on a first come, first serve basis. Order early and save. Choose your favorite today or contact me if you need help at 317-973-5828 to get started.

BREEZE TUNES

www.breezetunes.com

Garrett Breeze is a media composer and arranger living in Nashville, TN. He is known primarily as an arranger for many of the top competitive show choirs throughout the United States and travels regularly in that role as a clinician and adjudicator. In addition to his choral work, Garrett frequently writes for high profile media projects including film, television, video games, and corporate media. He holds a bachelor's degree in Media Music from Brigham Young University and a master's degree in Commercial Composition and Arranging from Belmont University.

We are proud to have supplied music arrangements to more than 110 choirs throughout the United States and Canada, contributing to over 86 championship wins to date! Breeze Tunes Productions specializes in creating high-quality, competitive arrangements tailored to fit your choir's show design, skill level, and budget! You can search our full catalog of previously arranged titles from our site. To order a new custom arrangement, license a previously arranged title, or to book Garrett for a clinic or workshop with your choir, you can just fill out the contact form on the site, and he will respond within twenty-four hours: <https://breezetunes.com/contact>.

MUSIC ARRANGEMENT SERVICES

www.showchoirmusic.com

In the late 1980's, Jeffrey Bowen began arranging for competition show choirs as extra work. During the 1990's, the arranging grew into full-time work and was established as Music Arrangement Services. In 2012, the company became incorporated as Music Arrangement Services, Inc. with the same concept of providing high-quality competition arrangements as well as ensuring the legal licensing of each and every title.

Arrangements have been purchased by schools in over thirty-five states, several European countries, and Australia. Music Arrangement Services, Inc. provides quality Show Choir arrangements to competition Show Choirs all over the country. With hundreds of



Back-to-School Guide

Peace



titles to its credit, directors will be able to see the wide variety of styles created to make your show choir sound the best!

Music Arrangement Services, Inc. can assist in all licensing and arrangement permissions to ensure the legality of making copies for your rehearsals! Currently, there are hundreds of titles on file that have been created over the decades, including original pieces by Jeffrey Bowen that have been purchased by show choirs around the country.

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ShowChoirStock.com—the only website that sells nothing but show choir arrangements you can purchase and use immediately!

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Can't find a song that's right for your show? Contact us to see if we can license and add your desired title to our catalog—or have a custom-written original song created just for your group!

We accept credit cards as well as purchase orders, so don't miss a beat—order, download, and start rehearsing your music in minutes!

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Let us know how we can help you solve the challenges of the ever changing environment. Please contact us for design consultation, budgeting

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With an endless array of products, StageRight can help you convert any classroom, hall, theater, auditorium or gymnasium—for a performance to remember.

STAGING CONCEPTS

www.stagingconcepts.com

Staging Concepts is the industry leader in portable staging equipment. Since 1990, we've provided superior staging product solutions for facilities and venues with custom needs. Our company and team of devoted engineers strive to ensure that we produce the most superior and advanced modular, lightweight custom staging systems in the industry.

Staging Concepts' performing arts systems and products are designed to maximize any venue. We specialize in building modular stages to seamlessly look and feel permanent. Our customization options can maximize the functionality of your space while giving you the capability to choose a system that perfectly matches your venue. Our equipment is of the finest quality, requiring no tools, making it easy and efficient for set-up and take-down.

Performing arts centers, theatres, auditoriums, and other performance facilities demand durable and high-quality equipment for their venues—and Staging Concepts can perfectly fulfill this need. Whether it is a small portable stage for a choir room, orchestra pit filler for a theatre, or flexible seating risers for a black box, Staging Concepts will provide the ideal equipment to match the project.

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www.wengercorp.com

Wenger Corporation provides innovative, high-quality products and solutions for music and theatre education, performing arts and athletic equipment storage and transport.

For more than sixty years, Wenger has been listening to what our customers need and then designing and manufacturing innovative, durable, and functional products to meet those needs.

Wenger pioneered sound isolation in practice rooms and now offers modular rooms with virtual acoustic technology (VAE) and built-in digital recording/playback. Products include pre-engineered acoustical doors, sound-isolating music practice rooms, acoustical shells, instrument and equipment storage cabinets, audience seating, portable stage platforms and staging systems, tiered risers, music furniture, and more.

No other company meets and exceeds the product needs of the music education, performing arts, and athletic markets like Wenger. Our expertise, design capability, and level of service are unmatched in the industry.

FAME/SHOW CHOIR NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

www.fameproductions.com

For over twenty years, FAME has produced national show choir competitions and today is the clear leader in producing professional level events for the nation's best show choirs.

Three essential philosophies are woven into the foundation of each of our events: encourage innovation, inspire creativity, and reward excellence.

The Show Choir National Championship Series was developed to provide a "true" national champion!

Six qualifying events take place in Hollywood, Orlando (two weekends), New York, Chicago, and Branson. The top three mixed and top two single-gender show choirs from each world class division at each event will be invited to participate in the National Show Choir Finals the last weekend in April.

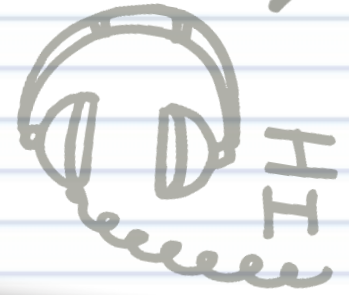
In addition, qualified groups that have not competed at one of the qualifying events may apply to compete at the Show Choir National Finals. Learn more about the upcoming events by visiting www.showchoirs.org.

MANHASSET SPECIALTY STANDS

www.manhasset-specialty.com

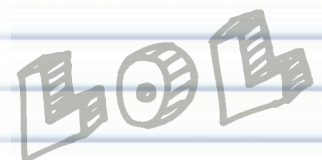
The Manhasset Specialty Company began in 1935, when inventor and

musician, Otto Lagervall, dissatisfied with the quality of the existing music stands and their inherent problems and shortcomings, set out to develop a better music stand. He succeeded in developing the initial Manhasset® music stands.



Over the years, new stands and various accessory products have been added to the Manhasset® line, and countless improvements have been made to the manufacturing processes. Today at Manhasset, we continue working to research and develop new and unique products to fit the needs of musicians of all ages, as well as to improve upon what has always been the finest quality line of music stands available.

The Manhasset Specialty Company is an "Employee Owned" business—all of us care about the company and our products and take great pride in what we produce. We value very highly our company's reputation and are strongly committed to continuing our "Tradition of Exceptional Quality." From our full line of music stands to our innovative accessories that answer our customers' needs, at Manhasset we are continuing in our efforts to bring you the very best.





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Qualify for the Show Choir National Finals



March 10-13



March 24-27



Mar 31 - Apr 3



April 30

www.showchoirs.org
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