

Return On Investment?

The new rig a year later

By Gary Gand

A year has now come and gone since my company took the plunge (or should I say wrote the check) with an investment in line array technology.

The rig (Nexo GEO T Series) and our reasons for the investment (numerous) were outlined in the November 2003 issue of *Live Sound*. It seemed prudent to me that we follow up and discuss how it's *really* going with the system.

Recently, we (Gand Concert Sound) were contracted to provide a good-sized concert system for "Zone Fest," sponsored by Chicago's newest metal radio station. Clear Channel promoted the five-band festival-style

show, appearing at the company's Tinley Park, Illinois shed called the "Tweeter Center." (This would also be a good name for our warehouse, come to think of it.)

As one of the first concert events of the 2004 season for the venue, we literally had to blow the cobwebs out of the place, along with several birds and some rusted staging left all winter on the loading dock. The headliner (or should I say final band to perform) was Godsmack – about as far from our then-new rig's premier gig (Lutheran Youth Conference at the Georgia Dome) as you can get.

Godsmack presents its own particular brand of "fire and brimstone" as a lifestyle, spending most of their time in "drop D" tuning over a constant earthquake of double bass drums, Ampeg SVT stacks (stage right) and Mesa Boogie Triple Rectos (stage left).

I mention this because metal, like most forms of music, seems to fit a pretty rigid profile:

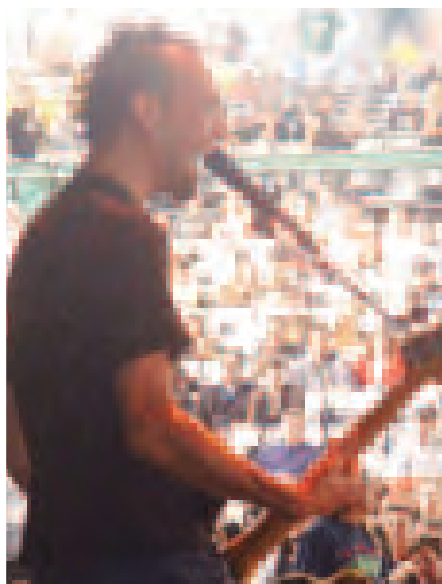
"Thou shalt not play in a key higher than D."

"Humbucking shalt be the choice of guitar pick-up."

"Thou shalt wear all black from head to toe."

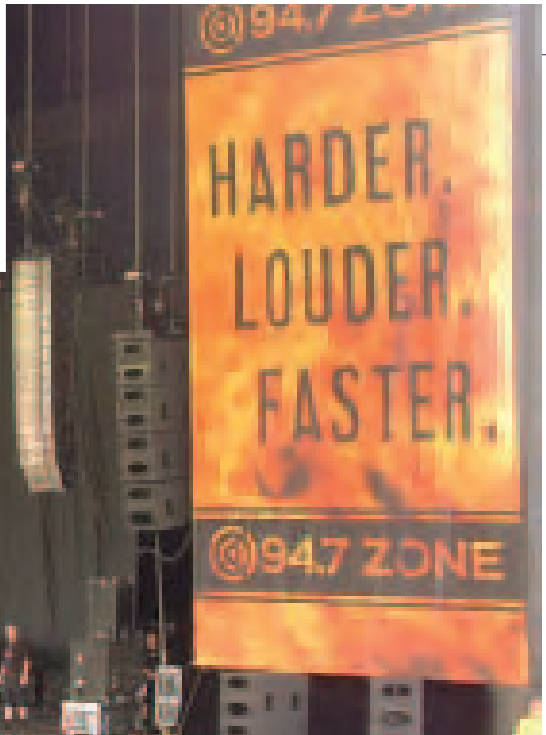
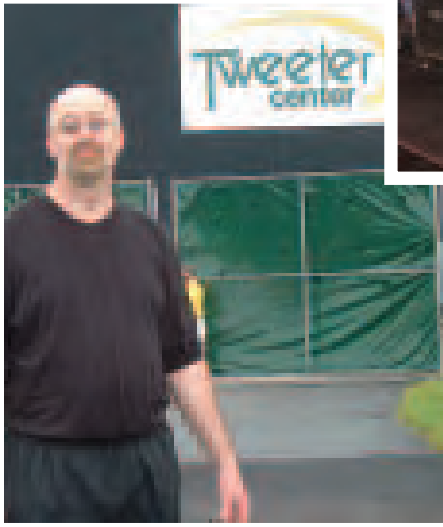
"Drums shalt be of the Sonar variety with patterned coatings such as snake skin or exotic wood (well, every band except the guys who used our DW kit... which is BLACK)."

"Thou shalt shave your head, especially if overweight."



Metal fire from headliner Godsmack, while Joe Smith cranks a metal anthem earlier in the day.

On Location



Left to right: The look of metal; plenty of bass (this is just one rig!); banners are quite "de rigour."

"Tattoos shalt be fruitful and multiply."

Not surprisingly (and really, after 30 years of doing this, it's hard to be surprised about most anything), despite the "metal 'tude" everyone we worked

with was extremely polite, only using the "F-bomb" when performing (mostly as a sing-along tag line).

And for all of these guys' tough outer skin appearances, their taste in women ran to the very conventional.

Most of the "backstage babes" looked like Paris Hilton clones. (I mean, how much more mainstream can this be?)

I'm not picking on anyone, but what happened to J-Lo? Or am I just so out of touch?

PLENTY OF SPACE

A welcome feature of the Tweeter Center is a huge backstage area. Five bands on the bill – Dropbox, Soil (local faves), Drowning

Pool (who we gave the award for "Anger Management NOT"), Tantric and Godsmack – with enough space to have them all completely set up ahead of time.

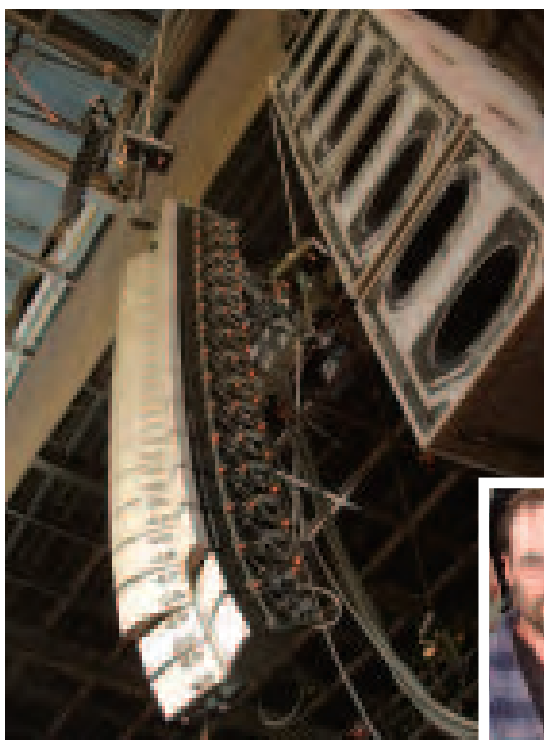
Six full drum kits (Godsmack has two), mic'd and ready to roll (literally, on rolling risers), multiple monitor rigs, four by 12-inch guitar amps stacked up like small city skylines, guitar test benches, along with pyro, video world and case storage. With room to spare.

These bands carry more guitars between them than most cramped-up guitar shops, and with more varieties of that "candy sparkle flame finish" than can be seen anyplace else on this planet. Except, perhaps, at custom hot-rod shows.

And don't get me started on wireless frequencies.

The house system, fortunately, proved a whole lot less complicated. Loudspeakers consisted of two flown columns, each with 14 GEO T4805 cabinets and two under-hung T4815 boxes for the front rows. Four Nexo CD18 subwoofers were flown on each side (courtesy of Thunder Audio of Taylor, Michigan), and four more stacks of two CD18s on the deck for "power alley."

We also flew two more columns of nine GEO S Series cabinets (courtesy of Edge Audio, Northbrook, Illinois)



In tandem, GEO full range array (left) next to flown subs, and a happy sound guy showing the flat EQ setting that was a constant for the main rig.



