

Clair Global Delivers a Powerful Live Entertainment Experience Every Time with Cisco



Clair Global

Industry

Technology and Entertainment

Location

Lititz, Pennsylvania; 11 locations across the U.S., U.K., Latin America, and Asia

Website

www.clairglobal.com

Exceeding constantly evolving expectations

At a live performance, there are no do-overs. Artists and their audiences expect to be thrilled and inspired at every event. Nobody understands this better than Clair Global. Founded by two brothers, Roy and Gene Clair, who built one of the first traveling sound systems for Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons, the company has helped define the live entertainment industry. After 50 years and three generations, this innovative touring production support company has expanded beyond audio to support major multimedia productions such as Justin Timberlake's Man of the Woods tour. The company is also a primary developer of Rock Lititz, the only campus of its kind in Amish country. This facility offers private rehearsal space and production testing and is shared with other companies in the live event industry.

As a concert production company, Clair Global provides technical consultation for audio, backline, communications, data, and rehearsal studios. The firm applies decades of expertise to renting spaces and equipment and hiring people to support and service live events, and its employees share a passion for transcendent performances.

"Currently, as we roll into the summer, we have about 350 tours happening," explains Matt Clair, CIO of Clair Global. "This isn't just a tech story; it's about pushing ourselves to exceed the vision of the artist and delivering on that vision, without fail, to the fans, each and every night."

Speed and agility are key for Clair Global. Speakers need to be lighter and more powerful, packaging must be organized for quick load-ins and load-outs, and road personnel need the tools and skills to handle the latest sound and media technologies. Clair Global is under increasing pressure to set up each event fast, under tighter timelines.

"In our line of business, we always need to get it right the first time, every time," says Matt Clair. "As soon as the gear comes off the truck in the morning, it needs to roll into place, be plugged in, and everything

needs to come up and be working the exact same way that it was the night before in a city that could be thousands of miles away."

Efficiency and cost savings are also top priorities. Artists' needs are constantly evolving and changing, and the cost of putting out a full arena sound system today is much higher than it was years ago. At the same time, many tours are putting downward pressure on what they are willing to pay, so Clair Global is constantly evolving its operations to introduce efficiencies wherever possible.

Technology and networking are essential components of live touring and providing the music experiences fans and artists demand. In order to service the next generation of live events, Clair Global needed a partner whose technology is secure, reliable, intelligent, and automated, to keep up with a fast-paced environment.



Complete communications onsite and on the road

To enable the rich communication required by its touring production teams and at its Rock Lititz site, Clair Global deployed a comprehensive network and collaboration solution from Cisco.

“We support around 1000 artists in a given year,” says Matt Clair. “We have always used Cisco switching, Webex, and phones internally. Cisco moving into more of the cloud and collaboration really tied all those pieces together for us.”

To support point of sale, communication, and collaboration for its global touring productions, Clair Global employs Cisco Meraki wireless access points and switches, as well as Cisco Meraki high-density Wi-Fi solutions. Cisco Meraki wireless networks automatically optimize and deliver superior performance in the highest-density wireless environments and under intense interference conditions, without the bottlenecks of hardware controllers. Their efficient capabilities enable the Clair data services team to build modular, scalable networks quickly and easily to support live touring productions.

For complex festival and high-density touring deployments such as the BottleRock 2018 Music Festival, Clair Global uses a variety of Cisco core networking solutions, including Cisco Catalyst switches, Cisco UCS servers, and Cisco Nexus core switching.



“We know we can trust the quality, reliability, and visibility offered for a mission-critical network,” says Shaun Clair, chief of business development at Clair Global. “So much so that our entire Rock Lititz campus – where we host rehearsals and test out new tricks – is completely Cisco.”

Clair Global collaborates with its global campuses and mobile teams every day. To help these dispersed teams work smoothly together from any environment, Clair Global uses a variety of Cisco Webex solutions, including Webex Teams, Webex Board, and Webex Meetings. Cisco Webex makes it easy for employees to participate in video meetings anywhere, on any device, as well as work together and share documents and other content—individually and as a team.

Gaining visibility and agility to power global tours

Since upgrading its network infrastructure, Clair Global has confidently employed its Cisco solutions at more than 500 shows, to support over 150 clients and festivals. With consistent, secure, and reliable Wi-Fi connectivity enabled by Cisco Meraki wireless solutions, Clair Global can successfully meet the demands of artists and fans, even in fast-moving tour environments.

“Our artists push us, and when they do, we need to have a team that can deliver globally,” says Shaun Clair. “At Clair, it’s important that we boldly advance the live entertainment industry. It has to be lighter, it has to be smaller, it has to be more reliable. Cisco understands that. They’re everywhere, and we’re everywhere, so the partnership just makes sense. Together, we are able to be flexible, but we are also able to think big.”

For more complex environments, Cisco Catalyst switches in the network core and edge deliver the visibility, performance, and reliability Clair Global requires. Maintaining maximum network performance is essential in situations where downtime is not an option—like in the middle of a show in a sold-out arena, or when supporting hundreds of point-of-sale locations during a high-profile festival.

“The needs of the entertainment industry are ever-changing. Our clients require extremely tight deadlines and turnaround times. In order to service our clients and maintain our global inventory, we need systems that can keep up with our people. Cisco has enabled us to build a fast, strong, and resilient network to keep our people—and equipment—moving.”

Matt Clair
CIO, Clair Global

In the years ahead, Clair Global plans to continue to leverage the cloud and collaboration platforms offered by Cisco in its touring production IT solutions.

“Improving visibility into our network deployments as they come online in a different city every day is groundbreaking for the industry,” says Matt Clair. “Better clarity and seamless network deployment acts like a catalyst for improved technology adoption and better understanding of benefits.”

“It all started as a hobby, and to us it is still a hobby,” concludes Troy Clair, president and CEO of Clair Global. “So if you provide the best technology to people who love what they do every day, they are going to succeed, because every day is a good day.”

For more information

To learn more about Cisco wireless and collaboration solutions, visit:

www.cisco.com/go/wireless

www.cisco.com/go/collaboration

Products and solutions

Wireless

- Cisco Meraki™ wireless access points and switches
- Cisco Meraki high-density Wi-Fi solutions
- Cisco Aironet™ access points and WLAN controllers

Routing and Switching

- Cisco UCS® server chassis
- Cisco® Catalyst® switches
- Cisco Nexus® core switching

Collaboration

- Cisco Webex® Meetings
- Cisco Webex Teams™
- Cisco Webex Board
- Cisco Voice