

ACCORDIONS WORLDWIDE

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by Director Harley Jones

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The Importance of the Internet in Today's Accordion World and the Future

Good morning to our excellent Chinese hosts, overseas visitors and all Chinese accordion enthusiasts here today.

I have decided to begin my address, most unusually, with the internet negatives. The reason I decided to focus firstly on the negatives is their importance in holding back the speed of internet expansion and therefore holding back the benefits of internet. Therefore, many items in this paper are not accordion specific but are listed, as I believe they will have very important effects for accordionists of today and in the future.

Negatives

- Cost, too much for $\frac{2}{3}$ of the world; (especially when many do not even have enough food.
- Too difficult to use;
- Unreliable, user unfriendly computers;
- Viruses;
- Spam hassles, email time wasting;
- Friends sending large jokes;
- Another entertainment/education development competing for the time/money of young people;
- Built a web site but no one visits – you have to also promote your web site;
- Slow internet in many places, www stands for “world wide wait”!

In spite of these very serious negatives, the internet has enjoyed incredible growth, but imagine, if any of these problems are solved (ie internet computers, US\$75 for education in the 3rd world), the growth rate could easily double again.

Benefits

- Huge amounts of accordion internet content is available free and the knowledge base for accordion has probably tripled in the last 10 years;
- Internet information is searchable, catalogued in many ways by search systems. This even has an impact on businesses ie Printed Yellow Page directories rapidly being overtaken by internet search systems;
- Huge population reach potential with internet – “talk to the world”;
- Accordionists see on the internet, lots of very successful accordion activity. They no longer feel alone, isolated, or that the accordion is unpopular. With internet, they see great success;
- Internet is the ONLY medium enabling easy and rapid communication to large numbers of accordionists (I define large numbers as 20,000 plus people per week).
One of the reasons that I started Accordions Worldwide in 1996 was the great frustration organising Air New Zealand Accordion Orchestra concert tours. There was no efficient inexpensive means “to

communicate” to large numbers of accordionists. Today, internet enables that - ie **Accordions Worldwide reaches over 50,000 people each week and huge numbers annually.**

- Inexpensive advertising. Return on internet is a about 10 times other forms of advertising in “bang for the buck” and especially in “reach the people” terms;
- Putting sellers/buyers together. This is much more significant than most people realise.
 - o Many niche products for accordion are only commercially viable for a world market;
 - o New accordion sales via internet; huge potential impact
 - o Used accordion sales via internet; Ebay is just one example of used selling via the internet.
- Putting performers/concert organisers in touch with each other;
 - o Tours can be organised using the Accordion Yellow Pages, other internet searches, to contacts associations, teachers, orchestras etc; *One friend told me that with the Accordion Yellow Pages (www.accordionworld.com) and email, he quickly made all the contacts necessary for a tour in Africa.*

*A plea here for conservatories/students who spend huge amounts of energy, hours practising, to only fail with communications. Young artists must know how to use email, Skype, so that they are easily contacted for concert tours, festivals etc. Each year, the NZAA invites artists to the South Pacific Accordion Championships and its amazing, how many are **very difficult** to find, communicate with? Young artists must know email/internet/Skype, and be found, OR see others more easily contacted, touring instead.*

- Putting accordion enthusiasts in touch with each other – very important in a world of ever increasing travel;

Future

So what about the future? Where is the marriage of technology and the accordion going? To predict the future is enormously difficult as technology does not follow a straight line – it charges off in all sorts of unexpected directions, as technology developments abruptly change.

I believe that internet usage will more than double in the next 5 years with huge significance for accordion businesses, accordion performers and accordion teachers. I have listed below some ideas for the future, which I believe will happen sooner rather than later:

Performance

- Accordion performances live on the internet (radio/video) for major concerts, competitions, festivals etc in future;
- Cyber events without any live audience in a hall;

Artists

- Internet will allow the suitable “great young artist” to catapult into fame and also onto the stages of the worlds festivals. The size of this potential international market is expanding daily with the reach of the internet;
- Artists have a much greater chance to make a living when they can sell their CD’s and DVD’s to a world market;
- Artists being accessible (found easily) to accordion event organizers worldwide, increases their potential to make a living.

Music/Repertoire

- Huge expansion in original compositions/arrangements, made available via the internet;

- Latest songs/music, modern repertoire, important for attracting young children to the accordion will soon become available via the internet;

Education

I predict, some of the greatest changes are coming for teachers/students.

- Regular (weekly, monthly) tuition and Masterclass type tuitions using DVD, CD, Skype, VOIP, live video via the internet. This has already started for learners through to advanced tuition, but it will expand hugely and become much more important in the future;
- Teacher aids (ie CD, DVD, video, teaching masterclass) via internet will greatly improve middle/advanced tuition levels, in even the most isolated areas of the world;
- Tuition will enjoy a huge spread of high level skills/tuition. Internet will allow you to have:
 - o Learner teaching systems using internet for delivery;
 - o Hear the sound using CD, video, DVD, internet radio & TV, Skype, VOIP – all internet based;
 - o See the performing skills on internet TV, DVD, video;
 - o Internet master classes and master lessons using the Skype, VOIP – internet;
 - o Many more master teachers will offer these internet related teaching and masterclass services;
 - o Specialised tuition assistance for particular pieces ie contact an expert for a lesson/s via internet.
 - o Different master teacher for different works for advanced students;
- Hugely expand the knowledge base of our instrument;
 - o Repertoire
 - o Recordings
 - o General Information

Business Advertising

- Internet advertising spending (web sites, hosting, advertising banners, sponsorship advertised via internet) will become the **dominant advertising spend** for accordion manufacturers and all accordion related businesses within the next 10 years. At present, internet spend is greatly less than other competing media such as brochures, accordion related media, travel to music fairs and events, event brochures etc. However, the reach of the internet **already exceeds** all these other advertising forms.
 - o The accordion manufacturers with the largest internet spend are growing the fastest and/or maintaining their markets most effectively – this trend will accelerate;
 - o Accordion manufacturers will make many more direct sales to the public in the future;
 - o Totally different business plans using internet technologies will be the norm;
 - Direct marketing by a new accordion manufacturer using almost exclusively the internet; as computer and other businesses have done.
 - New accordions being sold in quantities via the internet;
 - Email marketing hugely increased;
 - Talking for virtually free all over the world - Skype, VOIP;
 - o Reedless accordions in combination with internet promotion making major changes. Example of digital keyboards, electronic cheap beginner piano or similar instruments, Roland success, lightweight instruments for older people.

Interactive

- Internet radio;
- Internet TV;

- Live websites, text, sound (talkback radio/TV style) essentially the public providing their own activity. While these technologies exist, the economics do not enable “free to the public”, an essential in my opinion for these to succeed;

Using the Internet

Accordionists will become much more skilled and educated in using the internet.

- See attached information sheet on free web sites that help accordion businesses and help accordionists find the information they are looking for;
- Internet used much more to shop for the best price;
- Most countries will have credit cards freely available within 5 years increasing online accordion related sales enormously.

Then, most of all, look out for the unexpected development!!! No-one can predict where a new technology might go and its potential effect.

Whatever technologies do appear, our accordion world, so far, has shown great responsibility in its use of internet technology to communicate more and benefit our instrument enormously, with virtually **no downside**. To date, this combination of music and technology being **almost 100% positive** for the accordion gives me great hope for the future benefits we will all enjoy musically from future technology development.

Thank you very much.

Harley Jones
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Are there any questions?

Free Promoting of Your Accordion Service Free on the Internet

Contributed by Harley Jones for the Accordions Worldwide news, 09 Dec 2005

The Internet is changing the way your customers are searching for services. The days of lugging out a 12 lb. telephone book to find very limited and outdated business information are coming to an end. People are still letting their fingers do the walking, but they're doing it over a computer keyboard. Below are some revealing facts from the Kelsey Group.

- 74% of U.S. households use the Internet as an information source when shopping.
- Approximately 45% of searches had a buying intent.
- The percentage of respondents who used yellow page directories decreased from 75% to 62%. If you have a yellow page ad, it is time to consider buying a smaller ad and shifting your marketing dollars to the Internet.

Accordion Yellow Pages

The Accordion Yellow Pages www.accordionworld.com offers free of charge listing for all accordion businesses, teachers and for every type of service for accordionists. On the Accordion Yellow Pages site, you do not need to have a website for accordionists find you and contact you.

Search-Accordion

The search-accordion.com site is also free of charge, being a listing service for every type of accordion service but you must have a website. Viewers of search-accordion.com can click to your website.

AccordionLinks.com

Very popular is the AccordionLinks.com site where those accordion service providers with a website, can attract accordionists free of charge to their website.

All it takes is a little effort, to make sure your information on these three popular and very effective accordion sites is up to date. Your future success may well be determined by your ability to effectively adapt to the Internet. Should it be your New Year's resolution for 2006?