

Profile: Reynold Sound and Lighting Services

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A large part of Meyer Sound's recent success in India lies with Reynold Sound and Lighting Services, a company set up in Bangalore by Felix Remedios in 1981 as a branch of Calcutta musical instrument manufacturer J Reynold and Co.

The company, which purchased its first Meyer Sound system in November 2000 and is also an authorized Meyer Sound dealer for India, has a thriving pro audio department headed by sound engineer Michael Furtardo. This was formed in response to complaints from local bands about the poor quality of available PA systems. Loudspeaker products were on a list of restricted imports due to the then Indian government's protectionist policies towards local manufacturers, with import duties as high as 360%. Indian PA companies had two choices: use what was manufactured locally or travel abroad to buy components for their own products. Reynold constructed a PA system for hire powered by a locally-manufactured Ahuja 125 W amp. The company progressed to a 3-way horn loaded system using imported components and amps, which was used until Reynold purchased its first Meyer system.

Felix Remedios first encountered Meyer Sound at the PALA trade show in Singapore in 1998. He recalls, "The systems there caught my fancy, and Mike Cooper came up to me and started explaining the features of the self-powered system – universal voltage, plug and play – that just blew my mind and I thought, 'Gosh, this is just made for India. What with the country's bad voltage conditions, and shortage of trained live sound engineers, this seemed to be the answer I was looking for."

The daunting aspect was the price, especially given the import duty, but Remedios was encouraged by the fact that Cooper took him seriously. "We kept in touch for over two years before I finally made my first purchase," he says.

When the government relaxed its ruling on imports, Reynold placed an order for sixteen MSL-4 Horn-Loaded Long-Throw loudspeakers and eight 750-P High-Power subwoofers. Reynold's work in PA was revolutionized. "After working with all sorts of 3-way horn loaded enclosures, the new Meyer system was a breeze!" enthuses Remedios."

Apart from learning to fly the system properly (until three years ago, everyone in India ground-stacked their PA) other new areas for Reynold included the RMS Remote Monitoring System and the SIM System II FFT Analyzer. "Once we understood the working of systems like RMS we found that it's much easier to use and monitor a self-powered Meyer Sound system than any other," he says. "It wasn't a steep learning curve at all. My team finds it much easier to operate a Meyer Sound system than the old horn loaded 3-way system."

Over time, Reynold phased out its old systems and purchased more Meyer Sound units. Its entire inventory is now Meyer, including Concert Series cabinets with RMS, the UltraSeries and a SIM system. For conference work it has phased out its Bose units in favour of UPAs.

Reynold's first international gig with its new equipment was Deep Purple in April 2001. Meyer Sound sent consultant engineer Dave Dennison to assist. "His experience in putting together our first really big Meyer system and helping us with the SIM system – which had just come in – was great," says Remedios. "The front-of-house engineer was so happy with the system that he didn't go anywhere near the equalization. The visiting engineers were also very happy, and we gained tremendous confidence from that single event."

In just over a year, Reynold's Meyer Sound systems have raised the bar for live sound quality in India. "Once you hear something as good as Meyer, it's very difficult to go back," says Remedios. "Even though we now charge a higher rental price, our clients kept coming back and insisting on Meyer, even though our old 3-way system was also available in the early days. That gave us the confidence to phase out the old system completely."

Indian consumers are undergoing a steep learning curve where sound quality is concerned, fuelled by the growth of CD and better home and car entertainment systems, access to channels like MTV and Channel V and improved sound in cinemas. Public awareness is such that concert promoters will highlight Reynold as the system provider on advertising, and work closely with Reynold regarding both venues' and performers' audio requirements. And the availability of better sound equipment is encouraging international acts to play the subcontinent. "Previously, the only acts that came struggled to work with what was available here, or they brought in their own gear," says Remedios. "Nowadays, we're offering them what's on their tech riders."

Reynold is using its Meyer Sound equipment on increasingly diverse projects. Recently, these have included a Scorpions concert in Bangalore before a crowd of 15,000; Rhythm of Dance, a 30-piece Irish dance group at Bangalore's 4,000-capacity Cathedral School; and Miss India in Hyderabad, which featured performances by prominent Bollywood stars. The Scorpions' engineer, Achim Schulze, had used German PA company Rock Sound's Meyer systems extensively, and was reassured to receive the same backup so far from home. "Bangalore has now got used to such international level concerts, its really going to be difficult for anyone to get away with providing a sub-standard system," says Remedios. "Everyone who is someone in the Indian entertainment industry was at the Scorpions concert, and they all had one word to say about the sound – amazing!"

Looking to the future, Reynold has just placed an order which upgrades its Concert Series with twenty-eight more self-powered speakers including more MSL-4s and 750-P, together with DS-4P Horn-Loaded Mid-Bass loudspeakers and CQ-2 Narrow Coverage Main loudspeakers.

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apart from converting more of India's PA rental companies to Meyer Sound, Remedios is hoping to diversify into the corporate and installation markets. "I see tremendous scope for growth in these areas, and I would like to see Meyer as a very visible brand," he says. "We've already achieved tremendous success in the rental market for corporate gigs with the UltraSeries in the south. I would like to see this success emulated across the country."

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