

The Printed Song Goes Digital

Sunhawk.com Offers Digital Sheet Music and Innovative Features to Musicians of All Levels

By Fran Vincent

Anyone who's been a working or hobbyist musician for more than a second has had to throw together music for a last-minute audition or a gig. It's never fun trying to find the music you need... in the key you need it... *and* the tempo you need it in. I often hear about great opportunities a day or two before the gig, with little time to prepare. I used to either decline, knowing I could never find the music in time, or I end up spending the next morning calling music retailers in the area and pouring over the stacks at the local library hoping to find the elusive tune I need, only to find I was out of luck.

But, my friends, life is looking up for us harried musicians. The world is moving into paperless mode, and sheet music is no exception. In steps digital print music giant Sunhawk.com, a 24/7 sheet music store with a top-notch selection of jazz tunes in various instrumentations, as well as a plethora of Broadway, pop, and classical works.

Sunhawk.com is owned by FreeHand Systems Inc., makers of the Music Pad Pro, the innovative technology tool that holds and displays all of your print music in a portable computer tablet. FreeHand's penchant for music tech that makes the life of performers hassle-free carries over into their digital sheet music business. Not only can customers download and print their songs, but Sunhawk's Solero® Viewer will even transpose it into a key of your choosing. You can print out your newly transposed music just like that. No hassling with transposing it yourself or hoping the musicians you're gigging with will not only remember to play it in the key of G instead of D, but actually know how to change keys on the spot. Many a vocalist has flubbed an audition due to an accompanist that can't transpose. It isn't pretty.

Thankfully, Sunhawk's Solero Viewer plays the song for you and offers tempo controls for the perfect playback. I use this feature all the time to help me prepare for auditions. Solero acts as my own personal rehearsal pianist, which makes practicing that much easier.

Most of the songs offered by Sunhawk have

accompanying MIDI files so you can hear what it sounds like. The next step in the digital print download realm is offering mp3 files for playback. For instance, when you download Mike Garson sheet music, you can hear him performing his music and the sheet music follows along.

In support of its commitment to growing its catalogs, Sunhawk has acquired SheetMusic-Now.com which boasts the world's largest selec-

net connections. Customers are able to get titles that the store wouldn't normally carry because eMusicExpress.biz expands the inventory of retailers without requiring more floor space.

The obvious benefits of digital print music are the convenience and variety. However, think of all the songs that never have to go out of print now. With digital downloading, songs can always be made available. If what you want is not currently offered, you can make a request to Sunhawk and their team will look for it. It's like having your own research team scouting material for you. Some out-of-print jazz gems that Sunhawk offers include music by Dave Brubeck, Marian McPartland, André Previn, David Benoit, Neal Hefti, Teddy Wilson, and Curtis Mayfield. I was thrilled to find an exclusive collection from *Singin' in the Rain*, a movie many regard as the most popular musical of all time. Strangely, a songbook cannot be found in print anywhere, *but* a 12-song collection is available on Sunhawk, and I was able to find the audition songs I needed and transpose them to the ideal key for my voice.

You can download individual songs, as well as whole songbooks. They offer the same folios you would find at the store, as well as some exclusive collections. There are fakebooks, piano/vocal, guitar, and collections for just about any instrument, as well as instructional material. Major participating publishers including Alfred Publishing, EMI, Mel Bay, Jazz Workshop Inc., Kurt Weill Foundation for Music Inc., Oxford University Press, Schott Digital Music, Universal Edition, and Sammy Nestico Music, among many others, provide almost 100,000 titles, and growing.

More and more consumers are shopping from the comfort of their own homes, and the digital music market is growing in spades. Legal digital downloading is the answer for the music enthusiast or professional performer looking to source popular, hard-to-find, and out-of-print music, in every genre. Whether you're in a bind, looking for an elusive tune, or just a connoisseur of the printed folio, visiting Sunhawk.com may be the best cyber stop you can make in your quest.



Sunhawk staff: Jason Beals, Stephen Westerhout, Clyde Beswick, Bruce Donnelly, Wallace Rutherford

tion of jazz and classical sheet music. This new catalog expands Sunhawk's offerings by more than 32,000 titles and adds to the roster top jazz and classical artists including Chick Corea, Joe Lovano, Sir James Galway, and Steven Isserlis, among others.

"Sunhawk.com is a great resource for all types of musicians, whether you're into jazz, pop, classical, Broadway... an instrumentalist or a vocalist. And the feedback we've received has been tremendous. Our customers come first, which is why we offer so many unique features with our Solero Viewer and retailer tools. And, with the acquisition of more catalogs, our selection just keeps on growing," said Kim Lorz, CEO of FreeHand, Sunhawk.com's parent company.

Both consumers and retailers can benefit from the advent of digital downloading. If you happen to be at your local music retailer and they don't carry the sheet music you're looking for, just ask them to download it for you. Retailers can download music for their customers through a new service from Sunhawk called eMusicExpress.biz. It's an excellent value-added resource, especially for customers without Inter-

