



## *News Release*

*For more information, contact:*

Barbara Gould  
**Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems LLC**  
(440) 329-9609 / (440) 225-6869  
barbara.gould@bendix.com

or  
Ken Kesegich  
**Marcus Thomas LLC**  
(888) 482-4455  
kkesegich@mtllc.com

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **UPSTAGING INC.: EVOLVING AND GROWING WITH A FOCUS ON SAFETY**

*Illinois Fleet Supports Drivers with Bendix Air Disc Brakes and Full-Stability Technology*

**ELYRIA, Ohio – Dec. 10, 2020** – The story of Upstaging Inc. is one of constant evolution and growth: Founded 48 years ago as a stage lighting company, Upstaging has expanded to provide event production and management, custom displays and scenic work, signing and graphics, and – with a fleet of 175 drivers, 200 tractors, and 400 trailers – trucking.

“There are now two sides to our fleet’s business: touring and logistics,” explained Chip Warterfield, fleet safety manager. “Our Touring division carries production equipment for most major concert tours from the southern U.S. border to the 60th parallel north – lights, sound, video, guitars, you name it. Look out back of any big event, and you’ll probably see our trucks. The Logistics side is currently working Freight All Kinds (FAK) hauling in the lower 48 states, moving everything from groceries to tractors.”

And no matter where the road takes Upstaging’s drivers, Warterfield said, the company is always aiming to do everything possible to provide the men and women behind the wheel with a safe vehicle. That means running the Peterbilt Model 579s that make up 99% of its fleet with Bendix® ADB22X® air disc brakes on all axles, and the Bendix® ESP® Electronic Stability Program full-stability system as standard equipment. Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems LLC is the North American leader in the development and manufacture of active safety, air management, and braking system technologies for commercial vehicles.

“We purchase trucks through our fleet rep at Peterbilt, and I trust them to provide me with the best,” Warterfield said. “When the decision to step up to ADBs on all axles came around, I was plenty confident from our experience with the steer axle ADBs that we have been

running for years. With the exceptional performance that we have seen, there will be no need for me to look anywhere else.”

## **Safety Culture**

Based in Sycamore, Illinois, Upstaging has six yards around the United States and employs roughly 200 people, with the lighting department adding up to another 200 employees in peak times. Safety is always paramount.

“It’s a mindset,” Warterfield said. “From day one, we define safety – it’s risk avoidance, plain and simple – and I’ll tell people, ‘Remember that, because I’ll call you up and ask it.’ We try to reinforce it all the time to keep people thinking about it in a positive sense: Like a math number line, ‘risk’ is over there in the negative, and ‘safety’ is over here in the positive.”

In pursuing safety on the road, Upstaging is selective in its hiring, seeking those with excellent driving records and the ability to showcase their professional best every day. The company also provides safety training and driver improvement programs designed to keep the focus on safe vehicle operation.

Warterfield has been in Upstaging’s safety department for four years, but he’s been in the entertainment transportation trade since 1981 – and he still holds his Commercial Driver’s License and pulls the occasional load. “I know what goes on out there, and I know what our drivers are facing every day, and what it takes to keep them happy, so I do a lot of test drives myself when it comes to choosing new equipment.”

## **Truck Talk**

Bendix® ESP® and ADB22X® air disc brakes on the steer axle have come standard on the Peterbilt 579 since the truck’s launch in 2012. The ADB22X achieved standard position on all axles on the vehicle in 2017.

Where drum brakes can fade during heavy stop-and-go traffic situations or during mountain descents – extending stopping distances as they heat up – Bendix ADB22X air disc brakes virtually eliminate brake fade. They provide shorter stopping distances, and deliver greater reliability with more consistent stops, while also delivering ROI in the shop through longer friction life and quicker pad changes than drum brakes. The ADB22X also has an internal self-adjustment mechanism as opposed to an external slack adjuster.

“When I started getting driver feedback on how amazing the Bendix air disc brakes were performing, that’s how you know you’ve hit a home run – and it’s tangible evidence that the drivers really understand how committed we are to safety and safer technologies,” Warterfield

said. “Plus, we train our drivers on what to look for when brakes may need maintenance, and the discs make it one step easier, because I’m confident they’re always in adjustment.”

Upstaging’s technicians have also appreciated the ease of working on the disc brakes, Warterfield noted, and longer ADB friction life makes it within the realm of possibility that a tractor might go through its entire duty cycle at Upstaging without needing a friction change.

The Bendix® ESP® Electronic Stability Program – a proven active safety technology assisting North American commercial vehicle drivers since 2005 – uses a comprehensive system of sensors that can address both roll and directional stability, quickly recognizing factors that could lead to vehicle rollovers or loss of control.

Full-stability technology also functions in snowy, ice-covered, and slippery surface conditions. Additionally, full-stability systems can utilize automatic brake interventions involving the steer, drive, and trailer axles. Slowing the vehicle quickly helps mitigate rollovers faster, while slowing and redirecting can help the driver maneuver in loss-of-control situations in a manner the driver cannot duplicate.

## **Building Safety**

“Rather than implement ‘sea change’ transitions, we bring proven technologies onboard with each new model year,” Warterfield said. “We have a lot of experienced drivers who can push back on ‘newfangled contraptions’ until they experience the benefits themselves. But when they learn how well these technologies work, they embrace it. I introduce these things gradually, brick by brick – but that’s how you build a foundation of safety.”

Like Bendix, Upstaging’s safety philosophy emphasizes that no technology can replace a safe, alert, professional driver practicing safe driving habits, supported by proactive, ongoing driver training. Active safety systems are not intended to enable or encourage aggressive driving, and responsibility for safe vehicle operation remains with the driver at all times.

“They really are a special team at Upstaging, and we’re incredibly proud to work with them,” said Lance Hansen, Bendix vice president – aftermarket sales, fleet, service, and field operations. “Covering so much territory, running varied, interesting, and vital loads in demanding time conditions – and doing it all with a laser focus on supporting their drivers and prioritizing safety? Standing ovation, every time.”

Through its ever-growing portfolio of commercial vehicle technologies, Bendix delivers on areas most critical to fleets’ success – including safety, vehicle performance and efficiency, and unparalleled post-sales support. Bendix pursues a constant goal of helping enhance the safety of everyone sharing North America’s roads by strengthening return on investment in the

equipment and technologies that keep trucks and drivers safe and lower their total costs of vehicle ownership.

**About Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems LLC**

Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems, a member of Knorr-Bremse, develops and supplies leading-edge active safety technologies, energy management solutions, and air brake charging and control systems and components under the Bendix® brand name for medium- and heavy-duty trucks, tractors, trailers, buses, and other commercial vehicles throughout North America. An industry pioneer, employing more than 4,100 people, Bendix is driven to deliver solutions for improved vehicle safety, performance, and overall operating cost. Contact us at 1-800-AIR-BRAKE (1-800-247-275) or visit [bendix.com](http://bendix.com). Stay connected and informed through Bendix expert podcasts, blog posts, videos, and other resources at [knowledge-dock.com](http://knowledge-dock.com). Follow Bendix on Twitter at [twitter.com/Bendix\\_CVS](https://twitter.com/Bendix_CVS). Log on and learn from the Bendix experts at [brake-school.com](http://brake-school.com). And to learn more about career opportunities at Bendix, visit [bendix.com/careers](http://bendix.com/careers).

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