With equipment theft in Los Angeles occurring at a higher rate than in any other city, PERG called a meeting, which took place on October 17th at the ARRI Creative Space in Burbank. The meeting enjoyed a strong turn out from the local rental community and the earnest interest of fifteen detectives from various Los Angeles law enforcement jurisdictions. Detective Martin Pastor of the NYPD Major Case Squad played an integral role in bringing the meeting about by inviting many veteran LA-area detectives. The detectives were attentive to the issues and provided their insight and experience to the assembled group. The meeting followed a summer in which PERG’s Rental Guard website tracked an unprecedented level of losses from theft. Other stakeholders attending the meeting included the major insurance underwriters and representatives from NBC/Universal, Paramount and Sony Studio’s corporate security offices. More than fifty individuals took part in the meeting.

The meeting’s agenda was to raise awareness about equipment theft. PERG met the objective with a series of demonstrations that were especially impactful for the police detectives. In a pre-meeting briefing ARRI President Glenn Kimmel demonstrated the value of professional lenses and cameras standing next to a fully assembled camera package and breaking down the value of each part. During the main meeting Det. Pastor showed just how quickly and easily the equipment is stolen by presenting security camera footage of an actual truck theft. PERG manager Harry Box showed statistics of losses tracked by RENTAL GUARD—almost $7m of losses to equipment theft in 2016 to date, with $2.8m of losses occurring in California, and those are just the losses that were reported to RENTAL GUARD. PERG chair, Paul Royalty (Litegear), led the group in a wide-ranging discussion to which many attendees contributed (see page 3). Rental houses shared their experiences of thefts, insurance
questions, and discussed the impediments to prosecuting investigations.

Det. Pastor traveled to LA for the event with PERG’s sponsorship. He presented an award of appreciation to Det. Richard Dickard of Burbank PD, Det. Mark Zavala of LAPD, and Terri Hernandez of Allianz insurance for their rolls in recent recoveries and arrests.

PERG gratefully acknowledges all who participated in the LA theft summit. This marks the first time ever that rental companies, law enforcement, and insurance representatives have been brought together in the same room for an open dialogue. People were able to meet face to face and establish contacts that will facilitate cooperation. We expect that this event will pave the way for more dialogue and events in the future.

_Demonstration equipment was provided by ARRI, Inc. and The Camera House._
Notes from the LA Theft Summit

Prior to the LA Theft Summit, PERG made an assessment of recent theft activity, both nationally and in California. A summary of conclusions appears on page 4 of this newsletter. Here are some of the other ideas discussed during the LA theft meeting.

Insurance Questions
• Unattended vehicles. Do not accept a certificate of insurance if it has an exclusion for theft from an unattended vehicle. Ask for that exclusion to be removed or don’t rent to them. Rental companies report success getting this removed.
• Voluntary parting/conversion. When you rent you are voluntarily giving the property to the people who are stealing it from you. You will not collect from their renter’s policy. (The renter’s policy does not cover theft by the renter).
• As a Rental House you should not have a “voluntary parting” exclusion in your policy. Call your broker and make sure.

RENTAL GUARD
• We need rental companies to help in the recovery of equipment. To work, RENTAL GUARD must have accurate serial numbers. Theft alerts should be posted immediately (Don’t wait. The equipment can change hands very quickly).
• It is imperative for rental houses to look out for each other and protect each other because everyone is hurt by theft.

What to do in Cases of Fraud (Rented not Returned)
• Who should you call first? Call local law enforcement agency. If the case gets more involved then they will make a call to Commercial Crimes or another specialized unit. Uniformed officers will give the case to a detective.
• How do you demonstrate that the equipment has been stolen (rather than a late return)? How you articulate it to the police will make a big difference. Tell them if credit card was shut off, they deleted their Facebook account, their phone is turned off, etc.
• The DA wants a certified mail demand letter sent. If it is returned as undeliverable - give that to the officer. Then it is a permanent depriving of your property.
• If a rental company is approached by an individual who has appeared on a RENTAL GUARD alert, call the local police to try and arrange a sting.

Short Term Insurance Policies
• The “due diligence” provided for short term insurance from online insurance companies has proved inadequate. Many theft reports to RENTAL GUARD involve this type of insurance.
• Rental Houses cannot rely on insurance companies to do their work for them. It is up to Rental Houses to protect themselves.
• PERG has a checklist on the website for vetting customers. Scott Taylor (Taylor and Taylor Associates) is not aware of any thefts that have occurred when people follow all the items on the list.
• The rental company should always verify the policy with the insurer or broker. But understand verifying the policy is not the same as verifying the customer.
• Check the customer’s address on Google Earth. (Short term insurance does not let you use a PO Box).

Vetting Customers
• Seeing recruitment of young people with no back-grounds to commit thefts so they would not show up in the police’s system.
• If you think the guy is sketchy ask to see more than two forms of ID – most bad guys won’t have that many.
• Rental companies should talk to their staff. Be sure they understand it is appropriate to turn down a rental to protect your company’s assets. When a customer raises a red flag, pay attention to that.
• You can check to see if a commercial customer is an AICP member or a member of the Independent Film and Television Alliance.

Recommendations of Law Enforcement
• Do background checks.
• Make sure addresses match.
• Get a photo. Police can use facial recognition software. Law enforcement can also post photos on social media if a theft occurs. Make copies of two forms of ID (e.g. DL and passport). Take a picture of person at the rental counter or have a video camera at the rental counter.
• Get a thumbprint (might sound extreme, but this gives police something they can work with).
• Work together with law enforcement and with other rental companies and network.
• Be sure the alarm system is adequate. In recent burglaries thieves have disabled alarms, and cameras and cut phone and power lines. Have a system that communicates via cellular signal and runs on battery backup.
• When you call 911 a police person will show up – generally not a detective. You must have the information available to give to police including accurate serial numbers.
• Keep the scene of the burglary intact. Do not enter if you find you have been broken into.

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The following figures reflect the thefts reported to RENTAL GUARD, which represent only a portion of total industry losses.

**2016 (Jan 1 to present) TOTAL**
- Reports: 69
- Est. Losses: $6,882,168
- Break-in / Burglary: 11
- Est. Losses: $4,046,500
- Rented not returned: 26
- Est. Losses: $1,531,546
- From vehicles / from set / in transport / other: 32
- Est. Losses: $1,304,622

**CALIFORNIA**
- Jan 1, 2016 to present: 24
- Est. Losses: $2,803,727
- 2014 to present: 39
- Est. Losses: $4,841,278

**ALL REPORTS IN THE PAST 34 MONTHS**
- Reports: 142
- Est. Losses: $14,678,873

**Other details:**
- Reports from 20 US States and 14 different countries.
- Recent trend of break-ins through walls. Power and phone lines cut.
- Fraudsters use false identities, buy real insurance, have fake websites, provide bogus references and can be pretty convincing.
- Thieves follow trucks from rental facilities and break in while unattended or overnight.
- Two recent incidents of street robberies at gunpoint.

**Theft is an industry-wide problem that affects everyone:**
- Pressure on everyone’s insurance rates. Companies face being dropped by insurance.
- Loss of vital assets. Equipment is difficult to replace. Rare, specialty lenses are simply irreplaceable. Such losses can severely damage business and affect production.
- Theft while on production can cost the production a day’s work or more.

**How can our industry push back?**
- Establish bulletproof procedures for vetting of new customers. Do not rely on insurance cert as evidence they are legit. (See RENTAL GUARD website member resource area).
- Report questionable customers on RENTAL GUARD Questionable Customer Alert.
- Independently verify new customers via industry references or RENTAL GUARD New Customer Inquiry.
- Reassess physical security: rollup doors, windows, cellular alarm system, battery backup, cameras, exterior walls, skylights.
- Respond to Theft Alerts, New Customer Inquiries and Questionable Customer Alerts. The information you contribute can be valuable to law enforcement.
- Help raise awareness about theft with your rental customers (PERG theft flyer).
- Use RENTAL GUARD logo on website and at rental facility.
- Report thefts to rental guard ASAP. Critical items: accurate serial numbers, description of the event with all relevant detail, value of equipment.
- Preserve evidence for law enforcement.
- Tip fund available to law enforcement.

**RENTAL GUARD SPONSORS**

- Allianz
- CHUBB
- Hiscox
- OneBeacon
- Prosight

[www.missingequipment.org](http://www.missingequipment.org)
Taylor & Taylor is and has always been an insurance advocate for the professional equipment rental company servicing the entertainment industry. We are experienced in the types of claims routinely incurred, the specific insurance requirements when servicing live events and the settlement of claims when things go wrong. It is no small coincidence that many of our customers became customers after we helped them resolve a claim or obtain necessary coverage that they were not able to secure elsewhere.

We pride ourselves on setting the standard and helping people in any way we can.

TAYLOR & TAYLOR ASSOCIATES INC.

271 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10016
(212) 490-8511

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(818) 981-9700
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2475 Northwinds Parkway
Alpharetta, GA 30009
(770) 753-6038
AICP and PERG Celebrate Fifth Oktoberfest

For the fifth year running, the AICP and PERG co-hosted the annual Oktoberfest party in New York city. With over 240 attendees the event brought together New York’s production community—production executives, producers, freelancers, service and support companies and PERG’s equipment rental companies. Matt Miller, President of AICP, told the crowded room, it is a party with no agenda except to enjoy one another’s company and celebrate over sausage and beer. He congratulated PERG on its work on Fraud and Theft on behalf of our industry, and recognized “rock stars” Detective Martin Pastor and Detective Lieutenant John Rogan (in attendance) for their significant contributions to that effort. Mark Wofford, PC&E Atlanta (and PERG council member) welcomed everyone to the event on behalf of PERG.

The day began with AICP’s town hall on Foreign Production. Marks Paneth hosted the AICP-member event. The panelists discussed the ins and outs of shooting abroad, how to find local film support, mitigating risks, and other challenges producers face when shooting outside the US. Panelists included Philip Bartolf, Senior Underwriting Officer, Chubb, Michael Moffett, Director of Production, Production Services Network, and Scott Taylor, President, Taylor & Taylor Insurance. The Panel was moderated by Charlie Cocuzza, Executive Producer, Imperial Woodpecker.

The AICP/PERG Oktoberfest Party is sponsored by:

PERG Annual Sponsors: Allianz, ARRI Rental, Chubb, Panasonic, Panavision, Taylor & Taylor Associates, Vitec Videocom

Oktoberfest Event Sponsors: Caps, Marks Paneth, Talamas, Feature Systems, NeeD Financial Services, Production Consultants & Equipment, Technological Cinevideo Services, Inc.

Get Found on ProductionHUB

PERG and ProductionHUB are partnering to bring PERG members significant discounts on their ProductionHUB listing.

Use code ESTA16 to get 20% off a Featured Profile

www.productionhub.com

A featured profile gets you 14 times more exposure than basic profiles, first priority access to targeted leads and more. Create a profile to get found by the thousands searching for your production services online today.

ProductionHUB is the global network of local crew & vendors, for all your production needs—from corporate media and live events to film, television and digital media, and everything in between.
Few sets are more hectic than the set over at Saturday Night Live; just ask cinematographer Alex Buono. After working on SNL for 17 seasons, Buono lives off the fast-paced, complex workflow of the show and there are no signs of him slowing down anytime soon.

“The show is unique in that we’re doing something new every week and have one day to do everything. We get the script on a Wednesday, prep on Thursday, and then shoot on Friday so it can broadcast on Saturday. It’s a lot of pressure,” commented Buono.

One of the DP’s more recent productions happened when former UFC Women’s Bantamweight Champion Ronda Rousey hosted the show. Positioned as an anti-bullying parody, the “Love Struck” sketch that week was not only popular and socially compelling; it also entailed a hectic schedule for Buono.

“In this case, the cast was not available until nearly midnight on Friday so it’s literally just a matter of how fast you can shoot because Ronda Rousey needs to go to sleep so she can perform live tomorrow night,” mentioned Buono. “Everything we do needs to be as fast as possible and the gear choices we make reflect that.”

For the past few seasons, Buono constructed an effective workflow by matching his camera – often a Red Dragon or ARRI ALEXA Mini – with the new 2560 fluid head from OConnor. Carrying the same functionality as the 2575, the 2560 head is specifically designed to match the needs of any portable configuration or lightweight digital cinema cameras.

According to Buono, the development of the 2560 marks an impressive step forward for OConnor Engineering. “OConnor filled a hole in the market with the 2560 – usually you’re just forced to make a choice between the two extremes. All of the cameras now, even at their most built up, are probably under 50 lbs, so the 2560 is a perfect fit.”

Because of the immediacy of the SNL workflow, Buono stressed the importance of being able to move fast during production. Having the 2560 fluid head with the
same patented sinusoidal counterbalance system and famous smooth pan and tilt fluid drag as the 2575 – but 30% lighter – helps his camera crew move faster and get the work done on time without worrying about control and stability.

“There’s a lot of gear from other companies that feels like they’re just trying to hit some incredible tech spec, yet it’s ergonomically impossible to use. But OConnor does a good job of identifying what actually is going to work in the field and what we need and don’t need. It feels like they listen to camera operators and not every manufacturer does that. I’ve used a lot of different fluid heads, but OConnor is just so far above and beyond the performance of every other fluid head in the market.”

From the red carpet to the stage or the screen, Allianz Global Corporate & Specialty provides innovative entertainment insurance solutions and flexible risk services to meet the needs of the Entertainment industry worldwide.

Since the silent film era in the 1890s, Allianz has insured thousands of films for the industry’s top studios. With more than 100 years of entertainment insurance dedication, we insure a broad portfolio of risks including Hollywood blockbusters, independent films, music tours, festivals and other live events.

We are proud to be the recognized leader in film and entertainment insurance. Our centers of expertise in the US, Canada and the U.K. combined with a local presence in close to 200 Allianz locations around the world means we have the reach to work with productions and live events wherever they may go.

Our division comprises more than 60 specialist Entertainment underwriters, claims adjusters, auditors and safety experts averaging 25 years of experience in the industry. At Allianz Global Corporate & Specialty we insure a variety of events and productions for many of the hottest acts and top film producers — whether a live performance or with cameras rolling on location across the globe.

Apart from entertainment insurance solutions, Allianz provides unique risk solutions for property, casualty, aviation, energy, marine, financial lines and mid-corporate risks as well as international insurance programs. Taken together, our expertise, global reach and superior network make AGCS an industry leader in providing first-class insurance and risk management services to corporate clients and mid-sized businesses.

Interested in becoming a PERG sponsor?
Please contact PERG Manager, Harry Box, at harry.box@esta.org for more details.
2017 PERG Event Sponsorships Available

PERG has sponsorship positions available for our 2017 events. We would love to have your company sponsor a PERG event.

What you get: sponsor logos appear on signage/projections, on event invitations, the RSVP webpage, and on the PERG webpage for the event(s). Sponsors receive a verbal thank you at the events. Company name is listed in event press releases and articles. Sponsors of our NAB or Cine Gear events are included in an email blast highlighting product announcements and activities of our sponsors.

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About our events:

General Membership Meeting at NAB. April, Las Vegas. This meeting brings together rental companies from around the world to discuss topical issues affecting their businesses. In 2016 the event was attended by nearly 200 industry professionals. The event is held at the Embassy Suites Hotel, a short distance from the convention center. Wine, beer and appetizers are provided. The time is split between socializing and a prepared presentation, panel or discussion.

Pre-Cinco de Mayo Party. End of April, Los Angeles. Like our fall event in New York, it is co-hosted with the AICP. It is held at the historic Culver City Hotel. It is a social/networking event in which all the key Los Angeles commercial production companies come together with our members for great Cinco-de-Mayo-themed food, churros, wine and beer. It is a fabulous dress-up occasion. The event IS NOT actually held on the 5th of May.

Cine Gear Breakfast. June, Paramount Studios, Los Angeles. In 2017 we are planning a breakfast at the Paramount Theater before the show opens on Saturday. It is a great opportunity for rental companies and vendors to network outside the confines of the exhibition booths, and to skip the lines and grab a close-by parking spot early.

Oktoberfest. October, New York. This is a very popular annual event co-hosted with the AICP. The German-themed event features great food, Oktoberfest beer, and wine. Attendance has increased each year. We expect between 200-300 guests to attend. Like the Cinco de Mayo party, it is a social/networking event that brings New York commercial production companies together with our members. It is a great party, enjoyed by all, and a terrific opportunity to build relationships with industry partners. In previous years this year the event has been enhanced by an informative town hall or forum taking place the morning of the party.
PERG Member Resources

RENTAL GUARD –  
http://www.missingequipment.org

AICP/ESTA Sample Terms and Conditions –  
http://www.esta.org/PERG/Initiatives/terms.html

ESTA Job Board – A full-featured employment resource.  
http://jobboard.esta.org/  
• Job postings  
• Resume search  
• Self service management of postings  
• Notification of new candidates with the qualifications you are looking for.

Members receive one free job posting on the new job board.  
Additionally, members receive 25% off subsequent purchases using your member discount code.  
Contact membership@esta.org for information.

Media cards and storage devices are commonly returned with sensitive images still on the device. PERG brought together representatives from every side of the industry to discuss the issue and created the Recorded Content Disclaimer and the Media Handling Guidelines for Rental House Employees.

Membership Benefits –  http://www.esta.org/join/membershipbenefits.html  
Take full advantage of your PLASA membership.

PERG Website –  http://www.esta.org/PERG/  
Learn about upcoming and past PERG events and programs. Connect to other members.

Become a Member –  http://www.esta.org/join/membershipbenefits.html  
Please contact Harry Box (harry.box@esta.org) to learn more about joining ESTA as a PERG member. Join the growing international network focused on the challenges and opportunities faced by professional rental companies in the film, television and commercial production market.

Save Money with American Express  
ESTA is delighted to welcome a program with American Express which will offer members the low rate of 2.8%. If you already accept American Express and want to lower your rate, or if you would like to begin accepting American Express, email Frances Thompson (frances.thompson@esta.org).

Help Your Colleagues in Need  
Learn more about Behind the Scenes – a charity that provides grants to entertainment technology professionals who are seriously ill or injured. See the video, Behind the Scenes: In Their Own Words, an informative and moving testament to the success of this unique charity. If you know of someone in need please tell them about Behind the Scenes. Visit http://www.behindthescenescharity.org.