

Business Times - Buisness on the Net

GREG Chako, a jazz guitarist in Singapore, has set up a Web site where you can book a band for your parties.

His Web site, www.chako.com.sg, offers information on music entertainment services for parties and functions, Mr Chako told dot com. In a few weeks, when his Web site will be revamped, you will be able to choose different types of music entertainment from about 30 different bands in Singapore, ranging from jazz to 60s music to 30s dance music, said Mr Chako.

Mr Chako, born in the US, is both musician and businessman. He plays with a few bands in Singapore, including the Greg Chako Trio which has been performing at the Raffles Hotel for the last four years. As a businessman, he runs a company, Chako Productions, that provides music entertainment services. The full-time staff in his company consists only of him and one other person.

From 1992 to 1994, when he was living in Hongkong, Mr Chako provided music entertainment for prominent individuals such as 1994, then-Governor of Hongkong Chris Patten. In 1994 Mr Chako moved to Singapore and incorporated his company Chako Productions. Since then, his company provided music entertainment programmes to hotels such as Raffles Hotel and the Four Seasons and for social functions of companies such as Citibank and CNN, as well as individuals. "The Web site has definitely increased my business. The Web site has paid off. People call me up," said Mr Chako.

For example, some people in Australia noticed his Web site and contacted him to provide music for their private party on Bintan Island. The Asian crisis has not dampened people's enthusiasm for asking him to provide music for their social functions, he said.

In the last few months, his Web site started selling CDs of music composed or played by him, plus videos of his live performances and his experience of living in Singapore. Sales are still small, he admitted. However, what is interesting is he is selling his CDs under his own company's label, without going through a prominent music label company.

Mr Chako noted a common stereotype of the musician is he is so artistic that his head is in the clouds and he is not practical. Describing himself, he said: "I think I'm an exception to that rule. I've worked in business. I know how to be business-like when I have to."

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