

The Heart of GRN:

Telling the story of Jesus

The heart, mission and purpose of Global Recordings Network are quite simple - "Telling the story of Jesus in every language".

From humble beginnings in the 1930s to the cutting edge technology of the 21st Century, GRN has continued to move forward in its quest to go into the whole world and preach the gospel to every person.



Humble Beginnings

Missionary Joy Ridderhof served faithfully in Honduras for many years. Forced to leave her precious work and return home to the United States because of sickness, the desire to share the gospel stayed with her. GRN USA was born out of the need to have records with evangelistic messages in local languages.

Arriving in Australia a number of years later, Joy met Stuart Mill and inspired him with her idea for a hand wind "motorless" gramophone. In 1953 Stuart Mill developed the Austrophone known as the "Mill's Bomb", because of its striking similarity to a landmine, or "The Cake Tin Player" for obvious reasons! It was capable of playing records (78 rpm) that were 7 minutes in length. Recorded by "mother tongue" speakers, the records contained the good

news of the Bible in the people's heart language. Mission work was revolutionized! People groups unable to read, heard the Good News in their native language in a way that spoke to their heart.

As time passed, so did the technology available to GRN. Hand wind cassette players were introduced in 1977 and played cassettes that were up to 90 minutes long. The design of the cassette players continued to improve, offering greater features. They were used extensively by missionaries throughout the world. Many are still in use!

In 2000, with cassette technology in decline, Ray Mackaway recognized the huge potential of the new MP3 player technology. MP3 technology was changing the face of playback because of the capacity to hold so much more data than previous technologies. The initial cost of using MP3 players as a missionary tool proved far too



Using the Messenger hand-wind cassette player

expensive to contemplate, however three years later, Ray assessed that they were becoming a viable option as the prices of components had decreased dramatically. The development of a handwind MP3 player began in 2003, with Rob Nathan doing a lot of the initial design work.

Finally, after years of planning, partnership with colleagues in the USA, collaboration with the Christian Technology Centre, hard work and the commitment of many people, we have [the 'Saber'!](#)





Building the Saber in our Australian factory

The Saber players cost about the same as the [Messenger II](#) and are assembled by volunteers at the GRN Australia office in Castle Hill, Sydney. They are designed to withstand the hot and humid tropics or dry and dusty deserts.

The high volume output makes it perfect for gatherings of large groups of people in village meetings, churches, hospitals and schools.

What does all this mean?

In simple terms, the Saber players are cost efficient, hard wearing, easy to operate and simple to recharge. Most important is its amazing capacity to deliver God's word in music or speech. It is possible to put a recording of the New Testament (about 20 hours) on the onboard memory or an entire Bible (about 72 hours) on a 2 gigabyte SD card at reasonable sound quality.

When can we have one?

With production having just begun, many missionary workers are excitedly waiting to receive Saber players. The missionaries will be using the Sabers to present the gospel to many people groups. Sometimes they will leave a Saber with a village group and instruct the local people on how to use them. This encourages them to continue the spread of the gospel to their own people and see many people come to a saving knowledge of Jesus.

GRN looks forward to hearing many inspiring testimonies about the Saber.

Delfin Ovalle and several colleagues went to the remote jungles of Peru in July. He was excited to be one of the first field workers chosen to test the Saber in the field. Not only is Delfin a willing missionary, but he has also been actively involved in the production and assembly of the Saber in the GRN factory. He says of the Saber, "The technology is great and it is so much lighter to carry without all the tapes. The onboard memory and 2GB memory card can hold

messages in many languages or dialects, it is so much better than having to carry a pile of cassettes to suit every different language".



The first Saber in use among the Ashaninka in Peru

Watching Delfin's face glow with excitement as he shares his passion for seeing people reached with God's message is nothing short of inspiring. He said, "Watching people's response to the good news that they've never heard before makes me weep."

Saber Facts

The Saber player builds on the extensive experience GRN has in hand wind audio players. It is more reliable and produces better sound than cassette players, for about the same cost as the Messenger II player. It is a solid-state digital player with a built in amplifier and speaker, so it can play both music and speech at significant volume with good quality.

The Saber is powered by internal rechargeable batteries. A built in generator allows the machine to be recharged by turning the handle. External power devices, such as AC/DC adapters, solar panels or batteries can also be used to recharge the machine.

Operation of the device is simple, and can be easily mastered by people who do not read and are less exposed to technology. This makes it an ideal tool for local Christian workers as well as missionaries to use in remote places.

The Saber plays recordings in MP3 and WMA format, stored on its internal memory or an optional SD memory card. Sound files can be preloaded by GRN prior to shipping or loaded onto the machine via a USB port by the user.

The Saber has been designed particularly to enable the gospel to be presented in audio form to remote people all over the world. It is also ideally suited for other humanitarian and educational purposes.