



Piano entrepreneur enters luxury market

By: Adina Genn February 15, 2017

A Long Island piano entrepreneur is forging in a new direction by entering the luxury market.

Bohemia-based Sonny's Luxury Art Case Pianos now specializes in restoring and selling pre-owned art case pianos which Sonny Stancarone, the company's president and chief executive, described as "high-end pianos that decorative works of art."

Stancarone said that he's "always appreciated the artistic aspects of pianos."

The new direction for the company, which also has a strong Internet presence, comes at a time when online sales of luxury goods are projected to grow, according to a study by Walker Sands, a communications firm whose specialty is looking at technology and consumer behavior.

"Luxury goods have been the clear laggard when it comes to consumers' willingness to shop online," according to the study. "But the product category has seen a dramatic spike over the past few years."

Online sales of luxury goods may triple in the next decade, accounting for more than \$73 billion, according to McKinsey & Company, the global management consulting firm.

Walker Sands said online sales of luxury goods could reach \$80 billion by 2025, making it "one of the fastest" growing categories.

Stancarone said his company's online presence has helped the firm market its pianos.

“With our online presence we have been able to bring pre-owned Steinway pianos to a nationwide and worldwide market, where without the Internet, people cannot find reasonably priced Steinway pianos in their areas,” Stancarone said.

Stancarone’s showroom includes the “Prince’s Love Piano,” a million-dollar Steinway, hand-painted in the Vernis Martin style, which the piano entrepreneur said was purchased by a Prussian prince in 1900. It also includes “Green Chi,” a hand-painted chinoiserie-style Steinway, featuring landscape scenes.

Many of the pianos, he said, are collectors items.

“Steinway has only made 600,000 pianos and most of those are on the east and west coast of America and Europe,” he said. “So here is a prime example of how the Internet has helped increase the availability and recognition of a luxury brand.”

The company also launched a gemstone collection, featuring a rare “Steinway made in 1928,” Stancarone said. “This piano is one of only 100 created, and features Rocco-style hand-carved medallions reminiscent of royalty, which we enhanced with cultured pearls and 14-karat brooches with rubies.”

The pianos also feature optional player systems, enabling music lovers to enjoy the sounds of live piano music without actually touching the keys.

One deterrent in the luxury market, however, is privacy and security concerns, with consumers hesitant to use mobile payment applications, according to Walker Sands.