ROLI extends leadership in music technology innovation by acquiring FXpansion, a sound and software pioneer

ROLI will continue development of FXpansion products, as it integrates technologies to create musical instruments of the future

September 1, 2016

London — Music technology leader ROLI has acquired FXpansion, the renowned maker of software instruments, as it accelerates development of the musical instruments of the future.

London-based FXpansion adds a vast collection of sounds and effects to ROLI's growing ecosystem of music creation tools. The Seaboard, ROLI's touch-responsive instrument that is acclaimed as "the future of the keyboard," will now be developed alongside FXpansion's virtual instruments including BFD3, the world's largest collection of acoustic drum sounds, and Strobe2, the analogue-modeled software synthesizer. The combined ROLI team will integrate its technologies, as ROLI creates a new class of digital instruments that are more expressive and versatile than anything before it.

Deepening ROLI's capabilities in sound and software, FXpansion products also extend ROLI's stack of technologies — which is already more diverse than any other in the music technology space. Beyond the Seaboard ROLI has developed Equator, the software synthesizer; NOISE, the free app that turns iPhones into musical instruments; Blend, the social platform for music collaboration; and JUCE, the C++ coding framework for audio developers.

Roland Lamb, founder and CEO of ROLI, said, "We are creating a Connected Music ecosystem of devices that will change the way people make and enjoy music. Our leadership in music technology innovation — across both software and hardware — strengthens with every link we add to ROLI's toolchain. We're excited to continue pushing the boundaries of musical expression and technological innovation with FXpansion, which has been at the forefront of audio software development for the past 15 years."

Angus Hewlett, founder and CEO of FXpansion, said, "This acquisition is a momentous opportunity for FXpansion. Together ROLI and FXpansion can create best-in-class instruments, even as we continue to develop the FXpansion products our users know and love."

The acquisition follows ROLI's $27 million Series B fundraising — led by U.S.-based Foundry Group — in May 2016. It concludes a transformative 12-month period during which ROLI released the Seaboard RISE, a touch-responsive MIDI controller that the Consumer Technology Association hailed as the most innovative Computer Peripheral product of 2016.

ROLI will support and develop FXpansion's family of products which also includes Geist2, the beat production system, and a range of sound effect plug-ins such as Maul and Bloom. FXpansion products will continue to be sold in their current form. Customer support and product maintenance will be available on all of the current channels. Anticipated updates — including the release of BFD 3.2 and Cypher2 — are progressing.

All FXpansion team members will join ROLI, where they will take on new roles as they continue to develop FXpansion's products. Angus Hewlett will become Head of Sound Synthesis and Lead Software Engineer. Rhiannon Bankston-Thomas, FXpansion's Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer, will become ROLI's Head of Software Program Management. Skot McDonald, Chief Technology Officer, will become ROLI's Lead Software and Research Engineer.

Roland Lamb, founder and CEO of ROLI (third from left), chats with Angus Hewlett, Skot McDonald, and Rhiannon Bankston-Thomas, the founders of FXpansion and new ROLI team members.

ROLI's Seaboard RISE and NOISE app with FXpansion's Strobe2 software synthesizer

About ROLI

ROLI is a London-based technology company that is creating a Connected Music ecosystem. The award-winning Seaboard RISE and Seaboard GRAND are revolutionary musical instruments that let music-makers express more on a soft, touch-responsive surface. NOISE, the free app, turns the iPhone into a fun and powerful handheld instrument. Equator, ROLI's groundbreaking software synthesizer and sound engine, enables multidimensional musical expression on a range of compatible instruments. JUCE, the leading C++ framework for audio applications, is making music programs run faster in real time. Blend is building a community for music collaboration by letting artists share their projects on an open social platform. Through hardware, software, social, and audio-developer products, ROLI is creating a chain of music-making tools that lets people express more.

About FXpansion

FXpansion is one of the world's leading developers of audio instruments and effects for software platforms. Its mission is to push the boundaries of audio software and provide professional-grade products that are also accessible to prosumers. Founded in 1999, FXpansion's first products included DR-008, a powerful drum synthesis and sampling instrument. In 2003 it released BFD, a revolutionary acoustic drum sample instrument that has been continually updated, offering the world's largest collection of studio-quality drum sounds to musicians, composers, and engineers. FXpansion's industry-renowned synthesis products include Strobe2, which features accessible user interfaces that make sound design more intuitive. Geist2, its beat production system, released in April 2016. Other products include Tremor, Bloom, Etch, and Maul.

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