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Subject: Outlook for professional Piano Technicians

To whom it may concern:

I am a self-employed Piano Technician, tuning and repairing pianos fulltime since 1977. In that time our economy has gone through many ups and downs, Black Monday of 1987, the Dot-Com crash of 2000, the bank failures of 2008, Covid, etc. Through it all my business has remained remarkably stable, the number of tunings I do annually does not change.

There are several sources of work available to pianos technicians. Obvious among them are retail piano stores, schools, music studios, piano teachers, churches, concert venues, theaters, recording studios, and private homes. Aside from the straight forward work of tuning there is always a demand for repairs because most pianos we work on are older instruments. Repairs can range from simple repairs that can be completed on site, to more complex repairs that require the resources of a shop. Many of the pianos we work on can be quite valuable, many being family heirlooms that have been handed down, and people are often interested in having those pianos restored. There is a healthy market for restoration. The cost of a complete soup-to-nuts restoration can be as much as \$50,000. After such a restoration the owner would have an irreplaceable instrument, such as a 1930's vintage Steinway, in virtually new condition. A comparable, top-quality new piano would cost considerable more.

The US Bureau of Labor & Statistics estimates that there are about 8,000 piano technicians in the U.S., their annual salaries ranging from \$46,700 to \$59,120. Those salary numbers would correspond with full-time employment, the employer contributing to Social Security, as well as providing health care, retirement, and vacation benefits. A self-employed piano technician can gross considerably more, but after deducting the cost of providing those benefits their net income would be roughly equal to the employed technician.

There are approximately 30,000 new pianos sold in the U.S. every year. Back in the 1980's I read that there were some 15,000,000 pianos in the United States. I would guess that number has declined somewhat, but it's safe to say that there are still millions of pianos. It is estimated that 50% of Americans play piano. With numbers like these it is reasonable to say that the demand for competent piano service isn't going away soon.

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