

Generating a Bells Used Chart for Dorico

Long ago, Finale didn't have a plugin for generating a BUC (Bells Used Chart, also HUC = Handbells Used Chart). That meant we quasi-prehistoric users typically made a spreadsheet on which to track the bells in the score and built the BUC by hand.

Then along came Our Hero, Tobias Giesen, Finale software wizard. He built the BUC generator plugin that we've come to know and love. If you're a long-time Finale handbell composer, you've been amazed and thrilled at how your life became easier; if your Finale experience started more recently, you've ALWAYS had Tobias' plugin at your disposal.

In the face of Finale's sunsetting, the option of switching to Dorico has been in front of us. But there has been a bit of balking, because Dorico doesn't have an oh-so-precious BUC generator! That also means that we're hearing "when I was running Finale on stone knives and bearskins..." a bit.

But! you can actually have your cake and eat it too! Here's how to compose in Dorico while still having a BUC generator available:

Save your Dorico project to MusicXML. The command is File -> Export -> MusicXML... That will bring up a panel where you define your project export. Specify the folder and MusicXML filename, and then export your project. For the purposes of this procedure, I'll call that file **project.1.musicxml**

Import project.1.musicxml into Finale. Finale should then display your score.

Use the Finale BUC generator plugin to generate the BUC for your score. If you use the options I like, then you'll get one BUC bar for each type of notehead (so, one for bells, one for chimes, etc.)

Export the Finale file to MusicXML. I'll call this second MusicXML file **project.2.musicxml**.

Import project.2.musicxml into Dorico. Just like magic, you get a copy of your original Dorico score, but with your BUC. Note: You probably don't want to use this score to replace the original one, because there might be things that don't translate will through the export-import process.

If you haven't already done so, create a new flow for each type of notehead in your BUC. The interface that you get in Setup mode will display boxes at the bottom for each flow in your project. You can drag these horizontally to put the BUC flows before the score.

Copy-paste the content of each BUC bar into your original score. Copy the chart for the bells into the bell BUC flow, etc.

Clean up each BUC flow. Often the BUC bars will have one or more extra rests at the end; this is normal because of how Finale generates BUCs. A nice, clean way to deal with this is to set the time signature in the BUC to fit everything before the rest(s) (so, 17/4 if there are seventeen notes). This will put the rest(s) into their own bar, which you can then delete. Then in Edit mode, you can select the time signature and click the "Hide time signature" option in the bottom zone to make it invisible.