

projection // communications // events // I.T. // integration // techniques

# PRESENTTECH

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Feb - April 2000



**The Perfect Projector!**  
**4 DV camcorders tested**  
**Inside an MBA Presentations class**

**MAKING A  
CORPORATE VIDEO**

# ENTTECH

Sydney Showground & Exhibition  
Complex, Homebush Bay  
**SUN 5, MON 6, TUE 7 MARCH**

ISSN 1442-7311



04

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## The Biggest AV Tradeshow

# PRESENTECH

Welcome! This is our ENTECH issue, and keen eyes will observe we have adjusted our publishing schedule a little, dropping a month so we can get better aligned with ENTECH.

• **DOLLARS!** We've become alarmed that the US market has no accurate measure of the Presentations market - meaning sales size of the market for presentations equipment like graphics projectors. We reported in issue one that Stanford Resources report the US market will be worth over \$11 billion in 2004. But we cannot verify this claim!

Likewise here in Australia the events industry can't agree on how many dollars or events flow through the place - and this year are too busy to even think about it.

• **POLITE READERS!** Now that PRESENTECH is four issues old we've got some meaningful data on our readers - and some great feedback. For the past seven years we've published Connections Magazine for entertainment technology. Its readers are not backward in being forward, and continually hit us with constructive criticism and occasional negative comments - all of which are taken on board. But this magazine's readership is characterised by people who seem only positive - and that's a pleasant change! By all means DO criticise us, we can take it.

• **NEXT:** Our next issue will be out in April, see you then.  
*-Julius Grafton, publisher.*

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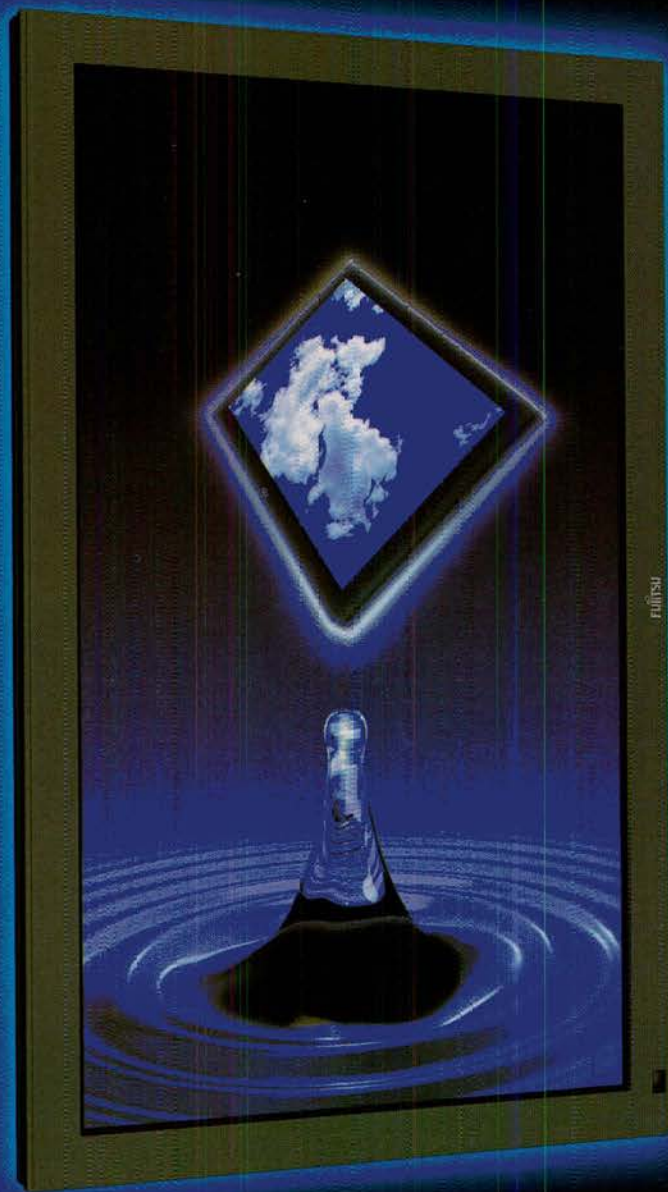
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# World Leader in Plasma Technology



Now HDTV / 1080i ready. Come and see the state-of-the-art in multi-purpose plasma screens at Entech – stand L48.

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# Take control of a major

Apple introduces Desktop Movies.

Combine the Power Mac™ G4 with

Final Cut Pro™ software and you have



*Built-in FireWire lets you import video directly from a digital camcorder with zero loss of quality.*

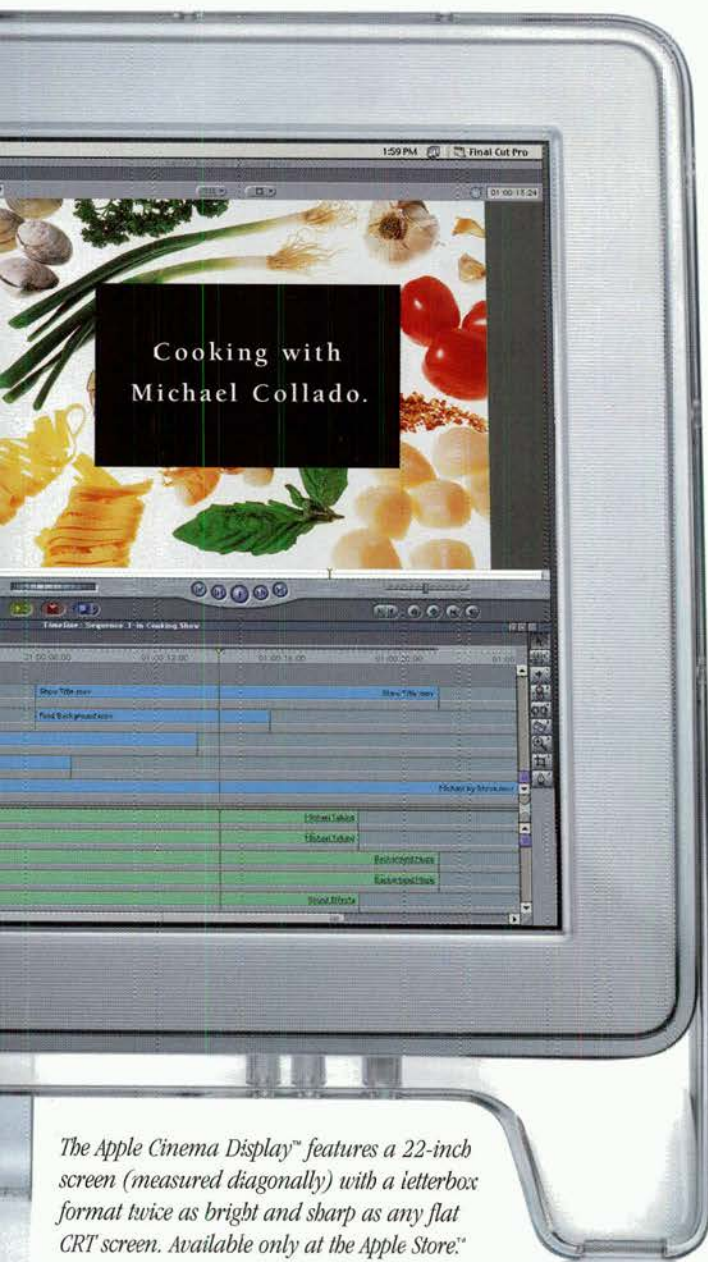
the first pro-quality desktop movie studio for under \$10,000\*.

Never before has so

much digital-video firepower been built into such a small space — with everything you need to create and edit Desktop Movies, develop rich multimedia websites, even host a site serving thousands of concurrent video streams. At the heart of this hard-working movie studio is the G4 processor with Velocity Engine™ — a 128-bit supercomputer on a chip that can perform compute-intensive tasks (like rendering



# motion picture studio.



*The Apple Cinema Display™ features a 22-inch screen (measured diagonally) with a letterbox format twice as bright and sharp as any flat CRT screen. Available only at the Apple Store.™*

disk. So if you want to make it big in movies, forget the power suit. And go for the Power Mac. For complete details, visit [www.apple.com.au](http://www.apple.com.au)

digital video effects) up to twice as fast as the 700MHz Pentium III.† In fact, every part of the Power Mac G4 is built for Desktop Movies.



*Optional Final Cut Pro software has the features of a high-end edit bay, with built-in effects, at a fraction of the cost.*

It has built-in FireWire®, so you can connect a digital camcorder and import video with superior digital quality. It has superfast memory (expandable up to 15GB) and hard disk (up to 27GB), with room for three internal drives. And it offers DVD-RAM, so you can archive up to 6GB on a single



Think different.™

# Any lighter, and we'd have to tie it down.



## NEC's new release Ultra Ultra Portable.

Weighing in from just 2.5kg the **LT Series** are powerful, personal tools for the lean, mean executive on the go. When you need to enter a room with a winning presentation under your arm, NEC's ultra-light notebook projectors give you a personal advantage. Automatic source selection, image adjustment and remote-operated pull-down menus make these projectors a dream to use. The LT also has ChalkBoard. It allows you to use a USB mouse to virtually draw and write on the screen. What's more, with the viewer function, you can save your entire presentation on a Compact Flash card and leave your notebook PC at the office. Now that's the power and freedom of portability.



**LT84**  
SVGA resolution (800 x 600)  
700 ANSI lumens, weighs only 2.5 kg

## *The power of expression.*

### NEC's Portable Projection range.



**MT1040**  
XGA resolution (1024 x 768)  
1300 ANSI lumens, weighs only 5.6 kg

**MT Series** As a market leader in portable projectors, NEC offer a range of 6 LCD models. The MT1045 is the only 2000 ANSI-lumens projector weighing less than 6kg. With 16.7-million-colour active-matrix TFT technology, all the MT projectors produce vivid, life-like images. Advanced AccuBlend technology allows the SVGA MT840 to double as an XGA machine, and gives the MT1040 and MT1045 models workstation-level 1280 x 1024 capability. All models feature a built in PC card viewer, so you can store your entire presentation on a PC card. The PC card can also be used to capture and save various images from external input sources including DVD and video. RGB auto-adjustment, a USB mouse connection and ChalkBoard function, and preset adjustments help insure that your message is always delivered with panache.

# NEC

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## Sony product avalanche at ENTECH

**Sony Australia have announced a dramatic boost** to their range of LCD, CRT and DLP projectors, large screen LCD and Plasma monitors - to be revealed on a large stand at ENTECH. (March 5 - 7 Sydney Showgrounds, Homebush Bay).

The highlight of the Sony stand will be the amazing 10,000 ANSI lumen VPDLE100 DLP projector. This is the first time the LE100 has been shown to the Australian market.

If LCD is what you are looking for, Sony have a new line-up of compact, portable and fixed LCD projectors- starting with the VPLCS1 - it is smaller than an A4 footprint, and weighs only 2.9kg.

The XGA VPLPX1 (1000 ANSI lumens) will be alongside the new XGA VPLPX30 - boasting 2,400 ANSI lumens and pictured at right.

Sony offer more brightness and more resolution with the new VPLFX200 and VPLFE100. With native resolutions of XGA and SXGA respectively, these projectors are ideal for rental, fixed installation and large venue applications.

Sony has also rocked the home theatre market

with the introduction of the VPLW1c. In readiness for the commencement of HDTV transmission, the VW10 combines newly developed 16:9 wide XGA panels with a 200W UHP lamp.

Also on display are the VPHD50 and VPHG90 CRT projectors- not new, but strong performers.

Sony's stand will also feature the KLX9200M & PFM500A2WE presentation monitors for displaying computer and video images.



The KLX9200M is a 50-inch, thin and light-weight rear projection LCD monitor weighing 45kg and measuring only 61cm in depth.

Or take advantage of the emerging Plasma technology with Sony's PFM500A2WE 42-inch flat panel display monitor. Incorporating newly developed brighter 16:9 flat panels,

For a higher resolution flat panel experience, the PFM510A1W features 1024 x 1024 flat panels ideal for displaying any high definition source.

(See Sony at Stand O43)

### ENTECH ARRIVES

IT'S A TRADESHOW that occupies 3 acres of floorspace, and now has over 30 Presentation Equipment stands - as well as over 140 others! The biennial show runs for three days at the new Sydney Showground site, alongside the olympics precinct.

Trade entry is free, and there are also a series of educational seminars and events on sale.

**ENTECH opens on Sunday March 5th, and runs until Tuesday March 7th, from 10am till 6pm daily.**

• Our ENTECH feature starts on page 23

## Clarity go to the markets

The Australian Stock Exchange (ASX) recently unveiled a 250-square-foot colour data wall by Clarity. The data wall displays live information on markets from a number of different sources, received via satellite, LAN, video feed or direct computer feed. The Clarity displays feature ultra-thin mullions, which leave just a 1.5 mm space between images on adjacent displays.

The display system was designed by Peter Blackmore of AVDEC, installed by BRE Australia, and uses an Imtech UltraMAX processor. Image Design Technologies was the system reseller.



## Barco to show mega screens

Barco will introduce a powerful new generation of high-resolution Compact LCD Projection Systems at ENTECH.

Central to Barco's large stand will be the DLite giant outdoor LED screen, visible down the main aisle from the entry at ENTECH.

Barco, a manufacturer of video and graphics display technology, has also added a new member to its family of 6000 Series LCD projectors: the BarcoReality 6400. The 6400 incorporates three ultra-high aperture ratio 1.8" polysilicon LCD panels with a resolution of 1280 x 1024 pixels.

Barco's proprietary Pixel Map Processor enables the projector to display all sources from VHS video to the latest HDTV formats to high-resolution workstations with resolutions of 2000 x 1280 pixels.

Equipped with these ultra-high aperture



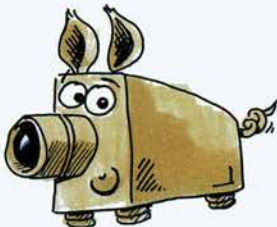
LCD panels and a high performance 400 watt metal-halide lamp, the unit delivers impressive 4,000 ANSI lumens. The BarcoReality 6400 uses the True Colour Reproduction (TCR) system for excellent colour display and uniformity over the entire screen, as well as colour tracking.

*(Stand N51)*

### HirePoint E module

HirePoint Software will release at ENTECH a new e-commerce module that is integrated with their top selling hire package - HirePoint98. The e-commerce module is a web site that includes an online equipment catalogue where clients can select equipment and request an estimate.

*(See them on stand W49)*



### Creston e-control

Imagine the power to control or monitor every projector, every monitor, every VCR in the world-over the Internet!

Creston e-control will be a major attraction at ENTECH.

Log on to the web to control a campus, a building, a room, or an individual projector.

*(Stand S54)*

## Fujitsu offer 8 plasma screens at ENTECH

Fujitsu now offer eight Plasmavision' screens, each designed for a particular multimedia application. New is the AliS, a 42" high definition, high brightness screen. Compatible with Digital TV 1080i, the AliS has achieved the industry's highest level of the video display performance, says Fujitsu, with brightness of 500 candelas, and true XGA resolution (1024x1024) It's equipped with abundant connection terminals and is super-thin (85mm) and light weight (31.5kgs).

At ENTECH Fujitsu will also show off their new LPF series LCD projectors.

*(See them on stand L48)*

## ALL A.V. Pty Ltd hit the water

Put 150 staff and guests on a Captain Cook cruise and add the "Ritzy Eizness" 5 piece band. Then hopefully they all end up looking like this!

• From left to right are All AV people, *Jason Lewis*- Sales Manager, *Dimity Kentwell*- Project Coordinator, *Vanessa Borg*- Sales Support, and *Anthony Jeffcoat*- Director, Technical and Research.





# Quality Shows


The most important item that Gearhouse supplies is not found on our rate card. It's the trust that our clients place in us to get it right.... first time and every time. Through delivering a consistent, high quality service, we strengthen trust and build value into our client's relationship with us.

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In our constant search for improved quality, Gearhouse Australia is pleased to announce the achievement of full ISO9001 accreditation as a quality assured supplier of presentation services. Gearhouse is the only national presentation services company in Australia who is fully accredited to ISO9001. Clients dealing with Gearhouse can now have the confidence that they are dealing with a company that is committed to developing a quality service, and which has been independently verified as conforming to internationally recognised standards.

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## IDT fighting against perceptions

Image Design Technology (IDT), the specialist Sydney vision firm, have been served with legal action by former partner Staging Connections Group.

IDT founder **Gerry Wilkins** told Presentech that since buying the IDT name and departing from premises shared with Staging Connections, he had battled to correct perceptions that the two firms were still partners.

"I guess the writ proves that we are not together any more" he says, while declining to detail the allegations and claims made by Staging against him and his company. The legal action is understood to involve matters relating to the severance of the assets of the company almost two years ago, when IDT was part of Staging Connections.

The partnership was dissolved and IDT has forged a new market in display technology, acting as a wholesale distributor. They don't do installations, preferring to direct all sales through a growing national network of resellers.

But they still encounter some potential new resellers who perceive that IDT are still part of Staging.

## Medialon Manager Software to be launched at ENTECH

Medialon Manager is a software program for creating multi media management applications to control, integrate and manipulate digital video, AV devices, industrial management systems, lighting and many other applications.

See a demonstration at ENTECH of how Medialon Manager *could* control the entire Homebush Site, including PA, lighting, security cameras. See Video Streaming & Video On demand in action on the Dataton / Medialon stand, at Entech.

(Stand W48)

## New Epson projectors to debut

EPSON Projectors have recently launched the 8000 and 9000 series projectors, and these will be on display at the ABI stand - together with a stacking mount. These projectors are stackable up to three units with a total ANSI lumens rating of 6600 and 5100 respectively. The native resolutions are XGA and SXGA with both capable of handling resolutions up to UXGA (1600 x 1200). Long throw and short throw lenses are available and the cost is surprisingly low for such a quality projector, they say.

To encourage your visit to their stand to view the EPSON projectors, EPSON are giving away a colour inkjet printer- just register to win. The winner will be drawn at closing on 7 March 2000.

Also to be seen on this stand at ENTECH are a range of DRAPER screens.

(Stand W45)

## Gearhouse Australia

Gearhouse Australia will showcase its range of services offered to Entertainment & Events Industries. Gearhouse offers a range of products from our large outdoor daylight LCD video screen "OPTISCREEN" and other large screen display systems such as Cube Walls and Projections Systems. Gearhouse also offer a full range of broadcast equipment including Camera Packages for live concerts, Vision Mixers and technical management broadcast events.

The team from Gearhouse Systems will also be on hand to offer advice and assistance with permanent sale & installation of equipment for Exhibitions, Boardrooms, Retail Environments and Entertainment Complexes. Gearhouse Systems are the Australian agents for Digital Projections DLP Video & Data Projection Systems.

(Stand R49)

## VGAV Acquires Equipment Sales business from Caribiner

Christopher Green's new company, VGAV Pty Ltd (Video Graphics AudioVisual) now have the rights for equipment sales and distribution of Communications Specialties' equipment in Australia. Mr Green, formerly an owner/partner in Stagecraft Corporate Theatre (prior to Stagecraft's acquisition by Caribiner International), and the Director of Technical Services for Caribiner until 1st January 2000, is happy to continue to sell and support these products he has long been associated with.

"This line of business was my forte at Stagecraft and Caribiner, so I have over 10 years experience in Australia with providing quality AV products to commercial, corporate and government customers."

"I am presenting (VGAV) at Entech as part of the launch / announcement of this new business." The core of the new business is Australian distributorship of Communications Specialties products. This includes Scan Do Select, Pro & Ultra computer to video converters. New to Scan Do is the option of Serial Digital Video output (SDI) SMPTE 259M standard.

Other products carried by VGAV include Deuce and DeucePro Video Scalers, Math Fibre Optics, and Communications Specialties Splitters.

Also new is Math Fibre Optics for point to point transmission of Video, Data & Audio on fibre optic cable. One of these products, the Beamer V is the entry video product for transmitting video over fibre optic cable.

(Stand R54)

## New Visualisers On Display

WolfVision Pty Limited are displaying their full range of Visualisers, including three new professional models all featuring the patented Wolf "synchronised light field".

The concept of replacing the standard OHP with a device that can display objects and documents or video is becoming the preferred alternative in many institutions.

Top of the range is the VZ-47 with non-interlaced S-VGA output and image freeze function. The VZ-37 has a three-chip camera for flicker-free scanning and perfect colour rendition while the VZ-17 has a single chip camera.

Every day of the show, for visitors who leave their business cards at the stand, a draw will take place with 15 prizewinners. Those lucky enough to win will receive one of the designer "Wolf Pads" which are in great demand and rapidly becoming collector's items.

Intended for use in the quietest of computer environments they are attracting attention wherever they are seen (and heard).

*(Stand O48)*

## Conference Table Accessories

ALTINEX introduces the new Pop 'N Plug Interconnect Box. Designed for installation into a conference room table, the Pop 'N Plug Interconnect Box provides a means of connecting audio, video, and computer video sources into a presentation system. Using a tower-type construction with pneumatic suspension and an electromagnetic latching mechanism, the Pop 'N Plug can "pop up" into a raised position to provide access to input plates.

*(See Axis AV on Stand O49)*



## JVC debut DLA projector

JVC Professional will be featuring the new, HDTV ready, ultra-bright DLA-M4000LE SXGA projector at ENTECH. Utilising proprietary D-ILA technology developed by JVC (reflective liquid crystal device valve), the DLA-M4000LE offers 4,000 ANSI lumens of true SXGA resolution (at 1000 TV lines).

The DLA-M4000LE comes with a built in lens shift capability (horizontal and vertical) and has a range of fixed and zoom lenses available.

The D-ILA is a C-MOS based reflective liquid crystal valve upon which the image is written directly by the driving IC. The liquid crystals change the reflectivity in accordance with the signal level. Light from the xenon arc lamp travels through a polarised beam splitter, reflects off the D-ILA device, then travels through the projection lens onto the screen.

Smooth, clear images are assured through the utilisation of adaptive DPC technology (Digital Pixel Conversion) no matter what input signal resolution (ranging from VGA to SXGA).

*(Stand U43)*



## CALLING ALL AUDIO-VISUAL TECHNICIANS!

- Did you lament the passing of the 35mm multi-image era?
- Do you have experience with projection of slides or film?
- Are you thorough and well prepared with a reputation for attention-to-detail?
- Are you reliable and one who works well under the pressure of live events?
- Do you solve problems with a logical and systematic approach?
- Are you ready for a new challenge and to learn a few new tricks?

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We are looking for someone like you to join our team working in a unique and exciting area of the special events industry.

Sound interesting? Find out more by faxing us a short note outlining your experience.

If you sound interesting, we will contact you for a resume and a face-to-face.

**We look forward to working with you!**  
**Fax us on (02) 9482 8520.**

# The Perfect Projector

By Gary Kayye, CTS

**In the world of the boardroom, conference room and training room, have we finally achieved the perfect projector? If not, we sure are close.**

What's perfect?

Well, good enough for 95% of the installations. Sure, there will always be those esoteric installs and rentals that require huge light outputs and long-throw lenses, but have you considered that the end-user market is now seeing stuff that is good enough - no, actually most even *exceed* their real needs.

What's the 'perfect specification'? Well, that's still up for debate, but it is clear

to me that the new breed of projectors hitting the street right now (i.e. Sony's VPL-PX30, InFocus' LP770 and Proxima's ProAV 9400+) are awesome and would do just fine in almost every installation.

OK, for those videophiles out there and for the benefit of the hard-core CRT'ers, I will certainly admit, as would most manufacturers, that there's nothing like a CRT projector when it's set up perfectly. The quality of the video, the size of the beam spot and the amorphous resolution of the

phosphor make it virtually impossible to beat in the category of image quality.

But, the fact is that most people couldn't set them up perfectly anyway. And, those that could were constantly tweaking them as they continually drifted out of convergence.

So, maybe what we have here is good enough.

Now, I'm not saying that we should quell all product development and improvements as we've hit the benchmark in perfection, but certainly we must be on the verge of eliminating ANSI lumens and size as design concerns.

Think about it, the average installation grade projector in this new generation of projectors weighs less than 8 kilos and outputs more than 2400 ANSI lumens. Do we really need more than that? In fact, studies have shown, and we even proved at INFOCOMM 99 (in the ANSI Lumens room of the Projection Encounter), that the average human couldn't tell the difference between 1000 and 4000 ANSI lumens without a reference (side by side). They may see one as sharper or crisper than the other, but most people don't actually identify one as

**We proved at INFOCOMM 99  
that the average human couldn't  
tell the difference between  
1000 and 4000 ANSI lumens  
without a reference**

Sony  
VPL-PX30



Proxima ProAV  
9400+



InFocus LP770



brighter than the other.

So, what's the future?

The future install projector will probably weigh 6 to 10 kilo's (at the MOST), produce 3000-4000 ANSI lumens (certainly that's all that's needed) and deliver 1280 x 1024 and 1280 x 720 native resolution imaging with compatibility with HDTV, PCs, MACs and, of course, video. I don't think this surprises most as most people agree it's going to happen soon. But, it's almost here. In fact, it will be within the next 8-months.

#### Features?

Well, it needs RS 232 control, component video, NTSC, HDTV and PC compatibility, interchangeable lenses that make it either a drop-in replacement for a CRT in the ceiling or that can zoom from 1.2: 1 and 2.1: 1 and that truly has the ability to adjust the white point so that colorimetry can be set per the ambient environment.

Oh, one other thing, it needs to have better contrast ratio. It's always amazed me how dealers and end-users have always jumped on lumens as the spec to watch for when contrast ratio is really more important. Black needs to look like black, not light gray!

Over the past year and a half, the trend has been to replace the CRT as the dominant installation projection technology with LCD. Well, in case you haven't noticed, it's happened. The next BIG trend will be to install PORTABLES and even ultra-portables in the ceiling? Think I'm crazy? Well consider that the average portable today has 7-10 times the light output of the brightest CRT projector, projects XGA

(1024 x 768) or SXGA (1280 x 1024) and includes most of the features needed to install it. Some don't have RS 232 yet, but they all will soon (kudos to Epson for setting the trend here).

In fact, consider that the average ultra-portables have three to five times the light output of the average CRT.

Still doubt it? Think that quality will win out in the long run? Well, you might not admit it immediately, but how many

people out there are using SUN computers in their houses or watching home movies on a Betamax player? SUN has the top of the line computer and certainly Beta was far superior to VHS. But, in both cases, the best technology didn't win. The one that was good enough did.

• Gary Kaye is Principal of Kaye Consulting, a firm that specializes in providing marketing consulting and training development to the professional audiovisual industry. You can subscribe to his FREE e-mail newsletter about the Pro AV industry at [www.kaye.com](http://www.kaye.com).

**Panasonic**

# A ray of bright light

Panasonic's PT-L797PE/P Multimedia LCD Projector outputs a brilliant 2200 ANSI Lumens of bright light - an increase in brightness that greatly improves colour reproduction and means more impact for your presentations. But the PT-L797PE/P is more than just bright. In true Panasonic tradition, it also offers a host of versatile, convenient functions:

- Ultra-Bright 2200 ANSI Lumens
- Brite Optic(TM) Dual Lamp System
- True XGA (1024x768), Max SXGA (1280x1024) Resolution
- Intelligent Image Resizing for VGA/SVGA/SXGA/Mac Displays
- 10-Bit Digital Gamma Correction and 3D Comb Filter
- Lightweight/Durable Cabinet
- Stackable for Double Brightness - up to 4400 ANSI Lumens

For more information call 13 2600

## Focus on a Panasonic Multimedia LCD Projector

Tried, Tested  
- and Often Abused -

# The Corporate Video!

*The economy, we are told, is happily bubbling along - but there's no fat in today's marketing budgets. Every dollar - whether it be spent on TV, a corporate message, print, posters or catalogues - must work its little socks off. We spoke to Blacksheep Productions in Sydney to get their take on the subject in their special area of interest - the tried, tested and often misused corporate video.*

by **Barrie Smith**

**If your company is about to commission** a corporate video there are a few elemental lessons to follow if you want to maximise the outlay and get your message across effectively to the media, your industry and consumers.

These days a corporate video can have many lives - often it will be used as part of a staged event, part of the show, along with the proverbial dancing girls, fireworks and the laser show. The demands placed on the script and visual content of the video are enormous, and that's aside from the quality requirements of a video image that must cover a screen 10, 15, 20 metres wide with the audio flaring out from high wattage, high quality speaker arrays.

#### **The big show**

As part of their role in events management and video production, Blacksheep Productions often

find that they have to preproduce a CV for showing at launches, sales conferences, expos etc and then shoot coverage of the activities for later showings.

To suss out the message to be carried in a video, Blacksheep Producer/Editor Natalie Wilson encourages her clients to be involved, to give as much information as they can about their operations, their image in the market, their products: 'We get people to give us corporate profiles to gain an insight into exactly what they want.'

One of the first questions she asks her clients is 'what is the purpose of the CV? If it's a video to show other companies what they do then that's different to showing it to their market. If it's a training video, then that's another tack'

It's important, she feels, that the client clearly set out who will watch the video. In her view it is more important 'to know what the audiences will

get out of it rather than what the client wants to get out of it! The client may be paying, but it's the consumers who will be buying!

### Preproduction

If the video's premier screening is to be part of a staged event, the CV must be more planned, with more time spent on preproduction, so that it integrates smoothly into the program.

Recently, Blacksheep handled 'a really big presentation' for the relaunch of Medicine Today magazine to advertising buyers. Much of what would normally have been delivered by on-stage speakers was incorporated into the video so, as Ms Wilson explains it, 'they didn't need to worry about it on the day and what they got was a better presentation of the material they wanted to get across.'

NW: 'It was scripted, structured, they'd thought about everything that they wanted to mention. It was visually interesting as well because they were showing their advertisers exactly what they needed to know.'

With stand alone videos, intended to have a longer life, it's important that the thrust of the production maintains firm links to the client's overall marketing plan - TV ads, print media etc.

It's vitally important that the right production company be selected for the task: a boutique famed for million dollar Coke ads is probably out of the square; a backyarder who shoots weddings at the weekend may be able to make a five minute video for a tiny sum - but the cheapo five minute job may look like a five dollar job!

'There are people who will do a job a lot cheaper' Ms Wilson counsels 'but you should evaluate what gear they're using. If you go the backyard route you will lose that expertise of broadcast quality technicians, equipment, audio and post production polish.' And she warns 'you will only know at the end of the day when the video splashes up on the big, wide screen. It can really hurt you when poor video quality faces a big stretch!'

NM: 'It's important to see some examples of what your production company has done. We

use Betacam SP broadcast quality. Some of our clients will say they want "a cheap shoot, with five or six dubs, so can you just record it to VHS?" We just say emphatically no. We're not going to be responsible for it. A relatively small dollar saving can end up costing the client an expensive quality image.'

A factor often forgotten is that today's audiences are media savvy. They watch high end programming on TV, go to the movies and see top quality entertainment. They may be aware of the technical standards and how big budgets and careful camera work

can deliver sharp, colourful pictures with crisp, CD quality sound - at home or in the theatre. But often missed is the behind-the-camera production work that has delivered a tight, concise story played out on the screen with conviction by players working to a well-crafted script.

According to Ms Wilson, Blacksheep 'takes con-



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trol of the whole thing. I'll sit in and maintain the whole creative control the whole way through - that's a positive thing for our clients. People watch high end material all the time, but there's this crazy idea that poor quality is acceptable on CVs when it's really not. It's not a matter of throwing the CV together. We know what people are looking for, we know what elements work and what don't. When we play it on the big screen it's got to be spot on. It has to be cinema quality. Especially sound, if you're playing it in a big auditorium.

Then, there's the old bugbear - time.

Katies Stores commissioned Blacksheep to handle the launch of their spring collection. For two full weeks three staff members worked full time to make the

deadline - an example of how the company's comprehensive range of services can not only handle a pressure job but, at the same time, maintain careful cost control.

This unusual production aside, Ms Wilson's believes 'the more time clients allocate the better product they will get. The more planning they do before we start then we can schedule the shoot around what is needed. Maybe an aerial is wanted or some preshooting on specific days - the impact of this polish only serves to lift the video above the ordinary.'

#### **Tryout**

Whenever possible, Blacksheep runs the video in the location of the big event. The company's video output is made with the

big screen in mind at the end. A firm preference is for replay from Betacam SP; even if the company is not handling the event the client is encouraged to hire a Beta SP player.

The quality of the projector used in the presentation is also very important. Blacksheep specifies some projectors over others because of their quality, so that when the big day approaches it can be reliably and correctly lined up and the screen masked properly so that you get the full impact of the picture's quality.

If you've gone to all the trouble and expense to make a good looking video - and you're going to put it up on this great big screen - then you've got to use the best projector available. •

Blacksheep Producer/Editor Natalie Wilson



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ICIA's Presentations Academy at ENTECH features Australian presentation pros with years of experience, including:

### **Brett Bower**

*Regional Manager, International Communications Industries Association, Inc.®*  
Brett has been involved in the audio-visual & staging industry for 10 years in Australia, handling accounts for McDonald's and Frito-Lay. He has presented in venues ranging from small boardroom meetings to spectacular product launches by Sydney Harbour. Brett's specialty is on how to select the right venue for a presentation, including the process involved in coordinating an event. Brett served as the NSW chairman of the Meetings Industry Association in 1998–1999.

### **Bruce Brown**

*Technical Director, Audience Motivation*

Bruce is a presentation expert, with more than 25 years' production and technical experience in the Events/Presentation Industry in Australia and abroad. Bruce has launched large-scale outdoor events for companies such as IBM. As Technical Director of Audience Motivation, a firm promoting better public speaking and business presentations, Bruce has a reputation for attention to fine detail and is a true audiovisual guru!

### **Richard Payne**

*Creative Director/Senior Consultant, Online World*

Award-winning presentation and multimedia designer, Richard has over 17 years' experience in graphic design, training, and public speaking. Richard delivers practical training programs and presentations regarding effective visual aids to the business community. He regularly presents graphic communication skills and visual communications for Kodak Australasia.

Richard is a member of the Australian Multimedia Industry Association and a contributor to *Spectrum*, the journal of the Colour Society of Australia.



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# I'll Panic at 3:30

## ***Peter Jones in the dark***

by Madeleine Murray

### **It seemed like a simple job—a product launch for 50 beauty editors.**

The walls of the Cave nightclub would glow, a couple of stylish executives would speak and show a video, then everyone would sip coloured cocktails to sultry music.

Peter Jones goes to every event that his company produces, so he flew into Sydney for the launch, preceded by a laugorous lunch with Presentech.

If David Grant is a greyhound on speed (as Sandra Chipchase described him) then Peter Jones is an airedale on cocaine. Jones is so switched on that he almost levitates. A snappy dresser, Jones was wearing a navy Hugo Boss suit, a starched white shirt with St Andrews cufflinks, a Longines watch, and a moss, red and navy striped bowtie, immaculately tied. "I am a suit man, I am naked without a navy jacket!" he exclaimed, in his fast forward voice.

In spite of his suave image, Jones is a bit of a clown. In September, clients and media around the country received a letter which began, "Dear ..., You may have heard of the newest edition [sic] to my family. His name is Peter Jones and he tells me he organises events for a job. Apparently he's pretty good and I am even thinking of getting him to organise the presentation night at the Buninyong Bowling Club." The letter went on to explain how Peter needed money for his new wife, and was signed by Jones' mother-in-law, Nola Lister.

Jones was happy. The letter got noticed, and gave the right impression...that he is a bit, um, different. His mobile face and hands were going a mile a minute as he moved onto the very important subject of brochures. "We actually did a bit of research with our competitors, and we got all their brochures," he said.



## What they say

**Brenda Lister, his wife, Marketing Manager for the Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre**

Peter only knows one speed, and that's fast. He's the most active person I've ever met. He's extremely enthusiastic about everything. All his creative energies go into work, the events and the planning. He brings a lot of the work home, he's totally a workaholic, and goes into the office on the weekends. He often wakes up in the middle of the night to write an idea down. I'm forever being dragged off to events around Melbourne. He dragged me around theme parks in America and Disneyland, taking photos of ideas. He never really stops thinking about clients and possible events.

"How did you do that?" I asked, having gotten a couple of suspicious reactions when I rang up designer companies last year about the Ceremonies programs, asking to see samples of their work.

"We did it...nicely," Jones laughed. "We actually had a friend ring up and say he was a student, studying events, and could they please post one out. They all did, as I would have done. We looked at what they were offering, and..." The result was a brochure full of pictures.

Jones, who is 38, moves fast, except when it comes to romance. He knew his wife for six years before he proposed to her, on New Years Eve. He prefers to work small, about 65 events last year. "We've never lost a client, repeat business is the key to what we do, and the other thing is—I go to them all." He's had good news this morning—his company just won all fourteen Telstra dinners after the Olympics in October, 2000. Jones loves the Olympics, and has been to several of them. Why? "It's the event! It's the biggest event in the world!"

Strangely enough, considering what was about to happen in two hours, I asked Jones what was the worst thing that ever happened to him during an event. Three years ago, a truck ran into a power grid, and the power blacked out for 25 minutes during the Occupational Health and Safety event. Then there was a heckler in the audience. One event was so sweltering that the children

who were part of the show were backstage fainting in the 43° heat.

"I'm a perfectionist. But I'm fine under stress. I'm actually very good. I sit there and say, 'Ok guys, how do we fix it?'" And true to his words, that is exactly what he did at Star City later that afternoon.

Jones wasn't exactly born with a silver spoon in his mouth, but he had connections. His father was chairman of the Moomba festival, and was on the Grand Prix Corporation Board. His mum is on Opera and Ballet boards, and heads the Melbourne Gallery fundraising.

He used to work in advertising and promotions. On the K-Mart account, he was in charge of store openings. He became famous as Peter the Phantom Puller, going around Australia doing trolley races, and spruiking chocolate biscuits at half-price. He even had groupies when he opened K-Marts in places like Kalgoorlie.

Seven years ago, he got fired from Carlson Marketing, and set up his own event company. "At that time, there was no one doing it. When I started, my phones rang hot with people who wanted events organised. It grew to five staff, about to be six. I don't want to go any bigger." Jones then launched into the virtue of personally being at every one his events. He mentioned how he didn't have to be at this L'Oreal thing, but he wanted to be. It turned out to be crucial.

Mazda MPV Launch



Museum Victoria



He goes to bed with a notepad beside him, in case he comes up with a great idea. A recent brainwave was the 'Tower of Tenors.' He wanted a different name and staging idea for ten tenors singing at a dinner. The curtain opens on one, then pulls back to reveal two underneath, then three, then four, in a pyramid. Mention the Olympics, and out comes a torrent of ideas about how to light the torch, including a giant BBQ, and a giant Hills Hoist. "But SOCOG just won't take me seriously!"

Jones would love to do an Olympic Opening Ceremony, but he has at least done an opening ceremony—for the '95 World Police and Fire Games, in Melbourne. There were 7,500 athletes from around the world and 65,000 people at the MCG—this was his chance to out-Birch Ric Birch!

They flew two police helicopters into the MCG. The cauldron was on the top of a ladder extended from a fire truck. The SWAT team repelled down with the torch, and lit the cauldron hanging from the air.

For his wedding he sent out the invitations as a story. He had an orchestra, choir, bagpipes and four long tables each done as a season. He cheerfully (he seems to do everything cheerfully) admits that he is a technophobe, and only learned to change a tyre last year. His role is to get everyone excited. When he is hiring, he looks for people who can work with clients. His staff mainly come from hotel banquet departments. "95% of what we do is in function venues, and you have to understand those venues and how to look after a client. I would not employ a lighting per-

**John Deeks, Channel 7 personality**

I first met Peter when he was doing a major New Year's Eve Party with international guests and celebrities. An hour before we started, Peter was walking around the huge ballroom relaxed, comfortable, laughing, talking to the crew. I said, "My God, you are so relaxed!" He said, "If I haven't got it right now, then I shouldn't be doing the job!" I thought, "Now there is a good producer." The other image I have of him was at the SCG, before a job for

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Agfa. About 400 seats were cordoned off for the client. A light dew had fallen, and I noticed Peter wiping down the seats in the Agfa area. That is a guy who just does what he does to get the job done, and I think that's why his staff love him so much.

### What we ate

- Risotto with scallops, tomato and leek
- Duckleg confit with beetroot and ginger relish
- McWilliams Hanwood Sauvignon Blanc '98
- One glass Mt Pleasant
- Late Harvest Dessert Wine Bin '93

### Idiosyncrasies

- He won't go anywhere that doesn't have a golf course
- He played golf in Bali on his honeymoon
- He always knew he would meet his wife through work
- He talks in his sleep, and Brenda listens!

son at all, as an event coordinator."

It was 2:30, and the launch was at 5, so we ordered coffee. The waiter went off, and then came back to say, "I'm sorry, we can't do coffee. There's no power in Sydney."

Jones claims to work from a worse case scenario, and to try to foresee everything that could go wrong. But he didn't foresee this.

I'm not sure that Jones immediately appreciated the implications. He called the nightclub, no phone. He spoke to someone on a mobile—no power at the Cave. We took a cab over to Star City—no streetlights. When we arrived, the aptly-named club was dark as a cavern on a moonless night. The only light came from a baby Maglite carried by a wandering tech, and a little fibre-optic shape with glowing purple and orange ends. Jones immediately went into contingency mode, the very subject we had been talking about at lunch. What if it rains, or if it's 43°? We hadn't thought of—what if there's no power in Sydney?

Someone arranged to call base, that is Rosebery, and have 12 candelabra and 100 candles on standby. Jones came out with the great line, "I don't want to panic now."

"Why don't you wait until half an hour is up, and then we might know when the power will be back on?" suggested Edwina.

"OK, I'll panic at 3:30," Jones replied.

He then ran through the drill in a slightly

manic voice, but then he always sounds like that. "OK. We run the presentation without a PA, which is fine, because there are only 45 people. We lose the video. There's no speaker support so it's straight presentation. We need a dozen candelabra and 100 candles by 4."

I was in the foyer doing tech interviews when Edwina came out and said, "We have to evacuate, the building's on fire."

We walked, not ran, out into the hot afternoon, and stood around on the footpath. I hoped people weren't jumping out of the casino, and going to land on me. Across the road, about 2000 croupiers in white blouses and black vests sat on the grass. No sign of flames or people leaping out of fake waterfalls. It turned out the fire was just an emergency measure, a good way to get your attention.

But Jones and his crew were still not allowed into the Cave. At 4 pm, Presentech, Jones, the clients and the crew were standing on the footpath, as Star City had been evacuated. L'Oreal's product manager, Clarissa, was made up on a chair outside. The Jones team was let into the club at 5 minutes to 5, where they went into damage control mode. The neon walls were scrapped, guests were given cocktails, the magician had to be delayed because the smoke detectors couldn't be turned off until 6 pm.

One would have to conclude that Peter Jones handles crises well.

President's Cup



Grand Final Parade, Melbourne





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Enter and look right down the main aisle. At the end is Barco's huge CLite LED screen. But before you head straight for the big screens and projectors, swing left and have a look at Bytcraft's stand. They have the Icon M moving light, which uses the DLP system - in a way, it's a 'moving projector'.

As you walk towards the Presentations exhibits, you'll pass 139 others - everything from staging to lasers, hard disk recording systems, cables, and nightclub equipment.

Aside from the exhibits in the Presentations Zone, some mixed exhibits also carry equipment of interest. Honourable mentions in this category go to Soundcorp (with Crestron, worth a look), and Amber Technology (ElectroHome projectors). Then there are other exhibitors who have many new

products in the audio visual category.

ENTECH is all about audio, and visual. Lighting, staging and support services such as service providers, all have joined together in a huge effort to display more equipment, ideas, and concepts than *ever before* - anywhere in the southern hemisphere!

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Event producers will find a flood of new ideas, new looks and new suppliers too. Many are keen to have the excuse of ENTECH to visit and inspect the new Showgrounds - *or is it the other way around?* In any case, a brand new complex, within the huge - and completed - Olympics precinct, makes for a powerful lure.

And what a great site! The layout of the whole precinct is outstandingly friendly - with a gorgeous contrast of modern architectural designs. Base yourself at ENTECH - and tour the whole site by foot or by bus.

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## Getting to ENTECH 2000

The magnetic attraction of the new Olympics site in Sydney has been enhanced with the opening last month of the new Novotel Homebush Bay Hotel. Just opposite Olympic Park Railway Station, a two minute walk from the Showground, the new Hotel has a surprisingly large drinking facility called The Brewery. Say no more?

ENTECH was swamped with visitor registrations from all around the world at the time PRESENTECH went to press. The site itself features high in emailed questions, and the organisers have detailed tours and attractions with links from their website.

Originally the idea of moving ENTECH 15 kilometers out west from Darling Harbour was daunting, especially as the new site was only a blueprint at the time. But the decision has paid off in spades.

Access to ENTECH is easy, there are six parking stations at Homebush Bay. Use P1, the largest undercover facility, which is located in the north-western corner of the precinct, and well signposted.

The cost is \$3 per hour or \$12 a day. ENTECH have a free people mover/train operating from 9am to 6.30pm on showdays, every 10 minutes from the entry of P1 to the show.

From the city, take a train to Olympic Park. Aside from direct services, a shuttle runs from Lindcombe Railway Station every 10 minutes till midnight.

Comodore Coaches are running 50 free coach trips direct to ENTECH on show days, these depart from Kings Cross (Landmark Hotel, Macleay street) and Star City Casino (Darling Harbour) between 8.45am and 11am on

showdays - and return from 5pm onwards.

Interstate visitors can catch a 50% discount on QF economy class flights from capital cities, and book hotel rooms from the official agent, Stage & Screen Travel. Call +61 2 9383-4533.

Finally, the organisers have a Ferry trip up to ENTECH on Sunday morning, from Darling Harbour. It costs just \$8.00, book by calling 1-800-635-514 or online at [www.conpub.com.au](http://www.conpub.com.au)

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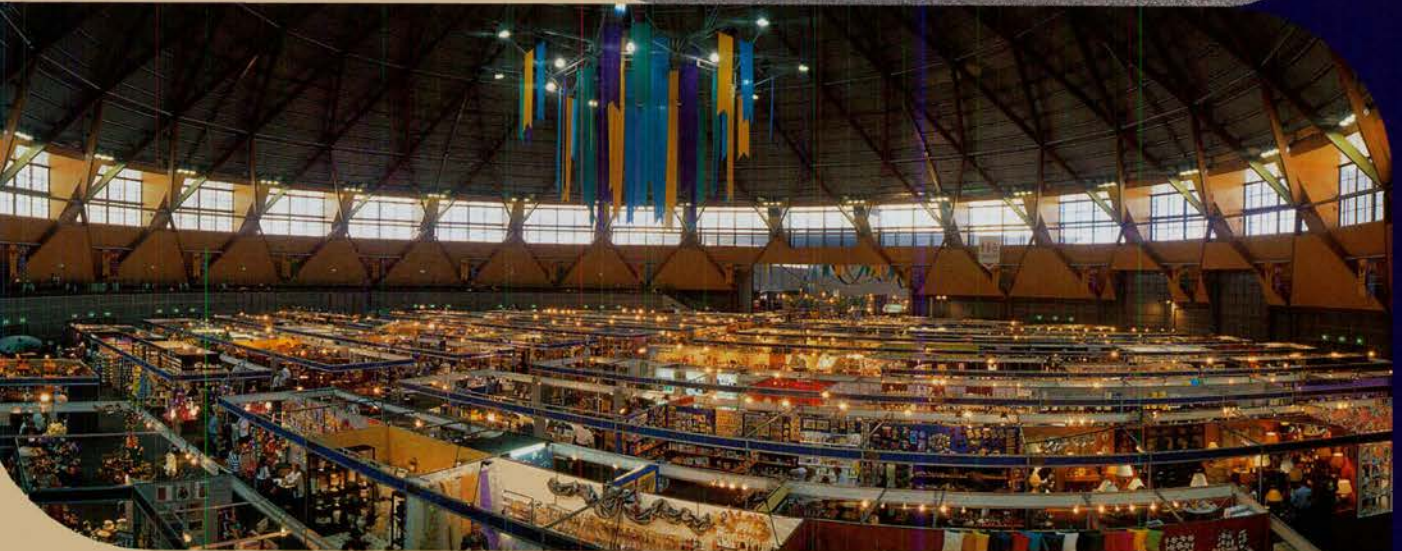
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## Capitol Theatre Refurbishment

**After years of uncertainty about its future**, Melbourne's Capitol Theatre has been given a new lease on life. The 1920s picture palace, designed by Walter Burley Griffin and his wife Marion Mahoney Griffin, was purchased by RMIT University earlier this year and since then major restoration and development has taken place. The finished result will be a multi-purpose venue to be used as a lecture facility for the university while re-establishing its place as an integral film venue in Melbourne.

Steve Love from Rutledge Engineering Audio Visual Systems is the Projects Co-ordinator for the Capitol Theatre technical upgrade. In conjunction with RMIT Project Manager Graeme Martin and Architect Craig Allchin from Six Degrees, major works have been identified and prioritised in order to make the venue operational for lectures for the start of first semester 2000.

In addition to a technical upgrade in order to make it operational for lectures, the theatre was also in need of long overdue structural works including restoration of the entrance foyer which was enclosed and partially destroyed during redevelopment in the 1970s, as well as installation of new safety systems and disabled access to the auditorium and stage.

As the contractors for the technical upgrade, Rutledge Engineering's brief was to develop the Capitol into a standard RMIT lecture theatre without impacting on the existing film system.

"The film system was a bit run down but basically intact, so we left it alone. It has its own history, it's a 70mm Dolby system with full surround sound, and is one of only three systems ever put into Australia. It still is a good film system."

After stage 1 of the project was com-

pleted and all wiring and cabling was replaced, Rutledge upgraded the film system amplifiers to Yamaha P4000 and P3200, and for lecture mode installed a Crestron control system to operate CD, cassette, DVD, video replay, SVHS, or standard speech. All functions are controlled by the lecturer from a touch screen panel on which they are able to call up multi-function audio visual displays.

A second bio box was established at the rear of the seating and a Barco 9200 video projector was installed for lecture use.

Rutledge designed the system so that when the Crestron is switched off it returns to a standard 70mm projection system which allows film groups to come in and run a show without any interference from the audio visual system.

Steve believes eventually a remote operating position will be established

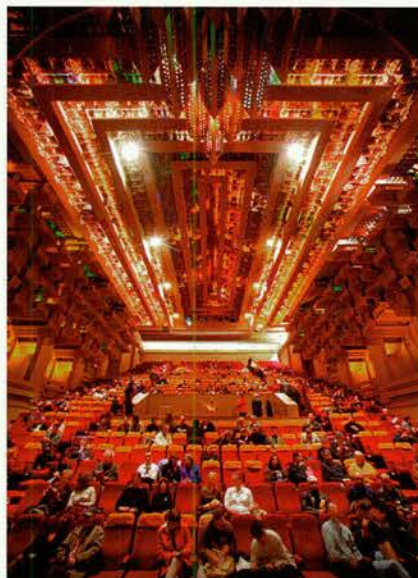
**"...All 3200 globes had to be replaced, and the only way to access the ceiling was by rock climbing techniques"**

somewhere in the stalls area to allow for live entertainment, which the venue is ideally suited to.

The crowning glory of the Capitol Theatre is the ceiling. 3200 individual 40 watt incandescent lamps in red, blue, green and amber set in plaster crystalline shapes which transform the entire ceiling into a jewelled canopy.

"At the time, the people wanted a crystal picture palace and that's certainly what the Burley Griffins' created - they're almost like stalactites."

The renowned ceiling was obviously one of the highest priorities for the resto-



rations and had to be fully functional for the Capitol's opening celebration last October. That meant all 3200 globes had to be replaced, and the only way to access the ceiling was by rock climbing techniques.

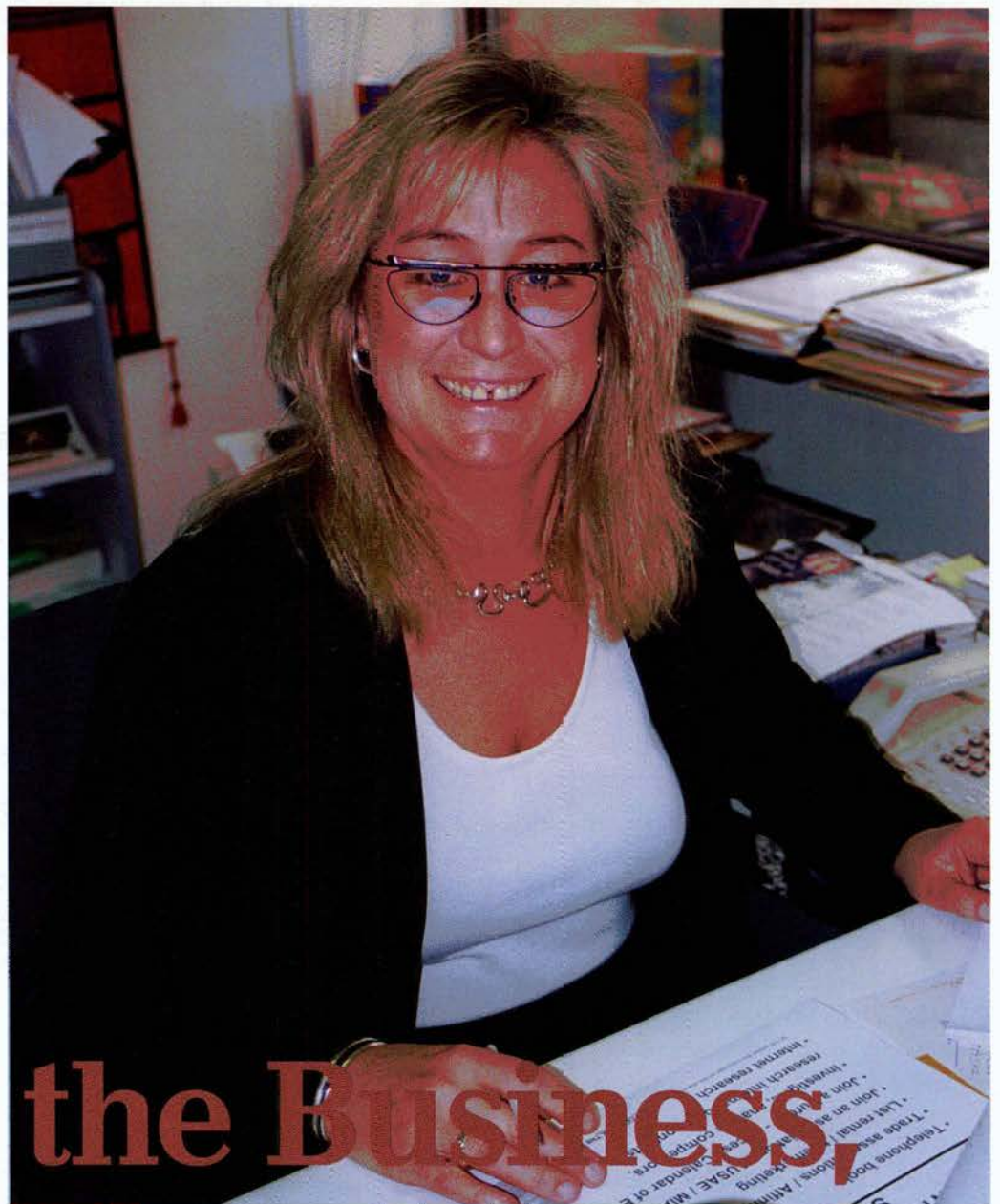
"Scaffolding was too impractical so instead rock climbers were brought in to change all 3200 lamps. It took two men two weeks to replace the lamps."

And getting that quantity of Edison screw globes in time for the opening proved to be quite difficult.

"The project manager from RMIT Graeme Martin searched high and low and eventually found someone in Australia who could hand paint them. Some of them weren't even cured by the time they were being installed it was such a last minute rush."

Although the theatre is now operational for lectures, restorations will occur on a continuing basis until the theatre is returned to its former glory.

- Mandy Jones



# Win the Business, Then Move On

**Sandra Chipchase  
in action**

by Madeleine Murray

**The aptly-named, gap-toothed Sandra Chipchase** is a live wire. Ideas poured out of her faster than I could write them down. When I asked Chipchase for a few ideas for Presentech, she jumped straight in. "What about the competition between Australian convention centres? Or food and beverage—the days of the rubber chicken are over. You might want to talk about AV, the technology being used in production conferences. Or events like James Morrison being lowered from the ceiling playing his trumpet! Once again I can give you a list of people you can talk to, so that's another angle! How many of these do you want?!"

Whew, she could have gone on all day. She

wants a T-shirt that says, 'I demand a 100-hour week!' At the moment, she is wearing silver jewellery, a casual white blouse with open draped neck, and a black jacket. Even though the outfit is elegant, she still looks as if she "just got off a motorbike," as she put it. If you were in a team, any kind of team, you'd definitely want Sandra Chipchase on your side. She is a phenomenally persuasive, indomitable, and tenacious hustler, as well as being fun.

Chipchase made her mark with the Sydney Convention and Visitors Bureau, first as Director of Marketing, then General Manager, Marketing. For the past six years, she has won hundreds of multi-million dollar bids, and wooed thousands

of delegates to Sydney. Then in late November, she dropped a bombshell. She gave her notice, and took the big Hanover job. Chipchase is now Executive Director of the Australian pavilion for World Expo 2000. Working with Caribiner, she is in charge of every aspect of the pavilion, from catering to marketing to shipping off containers of video screens.

She moves fast, but I managed to catch up with her before she left the SCVB, and find out some of the secrets behind her high octane, immensely successful strategies. The harbour shimmered and glistened in the blue distance, a perfect advertisement for the city, which was named the number one convention destination in the world by the International Congress and Convention Association in '97.

### Persuading the local association

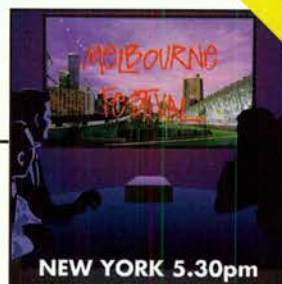
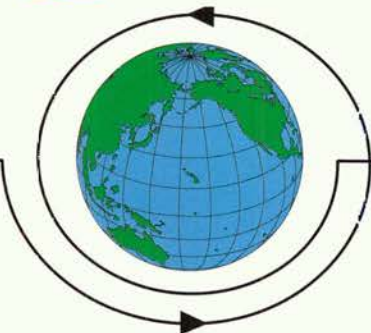
Luring delegates to Sydney is a complex and long term process. To get a convention here, the SCVB has to schmooze many different organisations—work the floor at the preceding convention, persuade and coach the local association, make bid documents and pitch to the international association.

The SCVB deal purely with the MICE industry—meetings, incentives, conventions, and exhibitions. With offices in New York, London, Melbourne, Asia and Japan, they sell Sydney to the world. They identify potential MICE business, and then pitch—anything from writing and submitting a bid document or proposal, to a fullon presentation, à la Olympics. “We do a Rod McGeogh somewhere in the world

every week, but without the same financial support!” Chipchase said. Though they have been running for 30 years, the SCVB just started training with Rogen.

The convention world is wildly diverse, so every bid is different. There is an association of everything from Baptists, to hearing impaired athletes, to lactation consultants. Each bid has to take into account the target group and their interests. How do lactation consultants relax? How do the SCVB woo them?

“We identify a piece of business,” Chipchase explained. “Then we have to go to the Australian association, because as the Bureau, we can’t invite the international group. So we have to get the Australian association enthused about hosting an international event—forming



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a committee, and so on. That is easier said than done. You'd think people would be really proud and excited about bringing the world here. Nope!

"We run into all sorts of things, like 'I don't have the time, What if it loses money? If it's not a success, my professional reputation might be impugned.' We get every excuse under the sun. We even get the excuse that, 'If we had the event in Australia, that means I'll miss out on my annual overseas trip!' But some committees are fabulous, and just grab the

not only for them personally, but also for their association and the country.

"Once we get them hot on the idea, then we work with them in developing a bid document. The international association might have a site inspection team who goes to all the bidding cities, and has a look at the facilities. We host that site inspection, and it's an chance for us to showcase our city's best points. We may get an opportunity to present to the international committee. If we do, fantastic! Because that's when the bells and

to spend more. We don't have a lot of money, so we certainly are not about lavishing gifts on people. If you've got to buy the business, I think you really have to ask yourself, should you be in the business!"

### Targeting the individual

One tactic is to target each committee member around the voting table. "Now I don't want to say that we do a psychological profile on every member every single time. But if the piece of business is worth \$50m, I think you're going to ask some questions. So we try to find out, what their issues are."

"How do you do that?" I asked.

"Well," she roared, "that's the \$64m question. Let's just say that where there's a will, there's a way!"

Some people may be concerned about safety, or distance, or perceived cost. Someone may feel that Australia doesn't have a great track record in their particular industry. "Well to me that's the perfect reason why they *should* come down here and help us!" If she doesn't appeal to you on one level, she switches seamlessly into another.

"There are counter-arguments to all of these perceptions. We are very fortunate, we have a beautiful city and a wonderful country—but it's a long flight from Europe. We say, 'We are three meals and two movies away.' There are all sorts of ways and means around this."

The SCVB identifies what the issues are, and then moves in with marketing campaigns, customised to the members' concerns, and their personal interests. "That works well. And we look for the alliances. We try to identify the voting blocks, if the executive committee is making the decision."

In some bids, all the members of the association are making the decision, and it is voted on at the preceding conference. "Then we have to really work the floor at that convention, talking to people and try and enlist their vote. It's a very involved process." Sometimes they have rounds of voting, and the SCVB will move around negotiating getting preferences.



### Bidding rule # 1: Make sure they GET IT!

opportunity.

"Then we've got to sit down with them and go through all the reasons *why* they should get involved." Chipchase then gave a barrage of convincing reasons. A Sydney convention would highlight Australian concerns; showcase Australian technology and innovation; make money for the Australian association; increase their membership; focus government attention onto their issues. Whew! When Chipchase gets going, it's daunting. She pulled out all the stops, including a social conscience. "There are so many fabulous reasons!" she continued. "Plus the fact they are going to create a few jobs for some young kids, and bring foreign revenue to the country."

A lot of people think 'What's in it for me?' Then they meet Chipchase. "We sit down and explain to people what is in it for them. Then usually the penny drops, and people realise this could be a fabulous opportunity,

whistles can come out. We can do PowerPoint presentations, show videos, host a cocktail party the night before the vote. There are all sorts of things that you can do. This is where it gets very creative, and extremely competitive."

### Creative and competitive

Sometimes the bid document will be the only representation of Sydney. "So there are all sorts of things to think about. Is English the first language? If not, it's no good having pages of flowery prose. Most people are older, big print helps. Don't have this tiny little print that is annoying to read. Use big bold pictures, sections of information. It's about making a document user-friendly.

"We establish very early on whether gifts are acceptable or not. Is there a dollar limit? You don't want to offend people. Some people may think a little clip-on koala might be acceptable, or you might be able

"That can be very interesting," she grinned.

### Big business

The 14th World Congress of Cardiology will be held in Sydney in 2002. The largest medical meeting ever held in this country will have 15000-2000 doctors, plus their partners. The SCVB worked and lobbied on this for three years. "So we will have about 30000 people in this city for a week. Now that's a *huge* piece of business.

"That one piece of business is worth \$60m. Now if you had to work hard for three years to make \$60m, I think you'd do it. And for \$60m, you'd try and find out how people were going to vote, who the key decision makers are. It's a lobbying exercise, a strategic marketing exercise. It's also about delivery."

International competition has never been fiercer. People are building convention centres all over the world, and all over Australia. And they are all competing with the SCVB!

MICE is the highest yielding sector of tourism, and there are a lot of spinoffs—for exhibition companies, lighting, cater-

ers, taxis, hotels, even magazines! It permeates every sector—Sandra Chipchase was keeping us all in work! And she was doing it on a budget. The Las Vegas Convention Centre has a bigger budget than the Australian Tourist Commission. "Here we are in Sydney trying to compete with that. We have an operating budget of about \$5m in cash and contra support. Las Vegas' budget is around \$20m. Like, hello! What's wrong with this picture?"

### Skulduggery

This is where skulduggery comes in. Not the SCVB, but some cities stoop to 'chequebook marketing'. Some places will simply write a cheque, a 'donation' to the association. "Thankfully, this is rare. There's a lot of debate in our industry at the moment over this. Some people say it's a bribe, some say it's a business decision. Quite frankly if you are prepared to 'underwrite' a \$77m event with \$10m, one could say that's actually an investment. Do you call it an investment, an incentive, a bribe? At the end of the day,

it's about getting business into your city. We're fortunate that we have not had the money, to pay bribes! Not that we would anyway!"

But Chipchase is under no illusions about the nature of lobbying. "There are certain deals you can do, sponsors you can bring in that will make your bid more attractive. We do what we can to win a piece of business.

"We have to show them that we are value for money, that we are not just about winning the business and walking away. We are about helping make their event a success and getting maximum delegate attendance. At the end of the day, we want to get as many people as humanly possible to come to that event."

Chipchase was candid about her tactics. "We can target them through their newsletter, their individual associations, or their major travel planner. We have a website—there are a multitude of ways we can get them turned on the destination. It's a complex process, but it's fascinating, and it's incredibly rewarding." •

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# MY GIG



**Alistair Hamilton is 37**, he can certainly claim career diversity, having worked everywhere from Bendigo to Buckingham Palace. This includes stints for Gary Hackett (before Staging Connections), Audience Motivation, and eight years freelance in the UK. Job now: Technical Director, Caribiner A.V. Services, Sydney

Time on Job: 24 hours per day, 7 days per week  
 Best thing about job: The walkout music after a perfectly tight show  
 Worst thing: 5am bump ins and bumpouts  
 Fav item of gear: JVC - Hughes projector, if you have a day and all night to set up. Sony X2000 (projector) for best all round performance.  
 Your one great Powerpoint tip: Use Director!

**Tony Hulme is also known** as 'Surf', and at 33 years of age has worked in all five continents. He is a Technical Director and Technician at Gearhouse in Sydney, with 10 years experience. "The best thing about the job is the variety - you gain knowledge on all areas of life", he asserts. The worst thing is "lack of respect from people who do not know what the job entails, and expect the impossible". We all relate to that!



**Paul Zinn is 29**, and has experience as an AV Tech in the UK, Cairns, and on the Gold Coast. These days he describes his job as Project Manager (Tech, Sound Engineer, Gaffa, Roadie, and Truck Driver) for Gearhouse. He loves the variety of work, and suggests the best item of equipment is gaff tape. We agree!



## Andrew MacColl

**Age:** 40  
**Experience:** Staging Connections 2 years  
 Intercity Staging 3 years  
 Freelance AV 5 years  
 Band Audio 4 years  
 Theatre LX 5 years  
**Job:** Technical Director  
**Time on job:** 2 years  
**Best thing about job:** The first cue on a really big show, and the last cue on a really big show.  
**Worst thing:** The hours  
**Fav Item of Gear:** Anything that works every single time! Really like the new Barco 6300 projector, which does just about everything.  
**Fav Customer:** Design Troupe  
**Why?** Well organised, give us all the information we need, have a realistic understanding of budgets.  
**Power Point Tip:** Get it done professionally, not by the CEO's PA!  
**Best Presenter:** Bill Gates  
**Why:** He did nine shows in seven venues in two days, and fielded lots of detailed technical questions from people in the audience who were keen to 'catch out Bill'. He answered all of them instantly, without assistance - despite his position, he has a programmer's understanding of his products.

**Leon Minervini is 43, he trained at ABC Radio in Adelaide and Sydney,** then moved to Seven Network Sydney before joining Wavelength (Now Caribiner) as a Technical Producer in 1991.

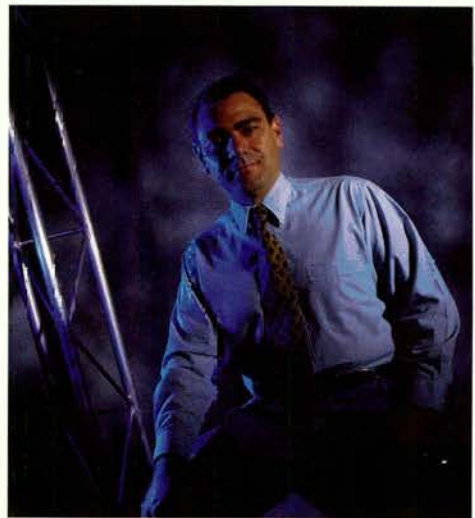
Best Thing about his job: Variety of work - One day you're doing a presentation to 50 people in Port Douglas and the next you're at the Sydney Entertainment Centre with a full Concert rig and 8,000 screaming kids

Favourite Item Of Gear: Epson EMP-8000 LCD Projector - 8kgs- 2200 ANSI lumens!

Favourite Customer/Client: Nokia, 'they're always willing to try something different to communicate to their audience and we have great fun making it happen for them'.

One great Powerpoint tip: Never put anything on the screen that a person in the back row can't easily read.

The Best Presenter he's ever seen? Charlie Bell - Former Mc Donalds CEO - "A Consummate performer and a natural showman".



**Tony Jericevic is 34, and has** been a Project Manager with Gearhouse for one year. He started as an AV Technician at Darling Harbour in Sydney, then went on to become a project manager. He likes interacting with the crew at Gearhouse, and meeting new people on the job - but dislikes schizophrenic clients. Rupert Murdoch ranks as a favourite customer - because he is a good tipper, says Tony!

**Paul Moreland has his** priorities correct at age 30 - he describes his job as "Senior Technician - and Dad!" he works for Gearhouse, with seven years on the job there. His speciality is large screen video, for anything from large corporate conferences to live rock and roll events. "The best customers are the ones who say thank you after a job".



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## DisplayMate helps setups

For both ProAV and Home Theatre, this test pattern, demo and set-up software for HDTV and Digital Displays is a good idea.

**The Kayye Consulting version of DisplayMate** - a widely used software test program - is now available - it includes both the capability to display every pattern in every HDTV resolution/rate (480p, 720p and 1080i) - as well as the ability to output the 128 test patterns in any PC resolution from 640 x 480 up to 2500 x 2000.

Each test pattern is selectable via a user-friendly designed GUI (graphical user interface) window that literally takes less than 30 seconds to learn how to navigate.

It will display over 125 custom test patterns, but fit on a standard floppy disk. This version uses barely a half a Meg of storage and needs virtually no memory to

run it. That's because the test patterns are not stored as bitmaps but are rather generated real-time from a set of equations, so they will work for every resolution and aspect ratio. In addition, each and every test pattern includes a detailed description on how to use it.

The Kayye Consulting edition of DisplayMate is HDTV-ready, and will automatically produce a complete set of accurate 16:9 test patterns, when it is run on HDTV video boards, all of the test patterns will output at HDTV (16:9) aspect ratio as well as the standard PC 4:3 and 5:4 aspect ratios.

In addition to the patterns found in the standard edition of DisplayMate sold over the counter in many PC stores, the Kayye Consulting edition includes the following EXCLUSIVE patterns:

### **Extreme Gray Scale with Colour Bars**

Examines the extremes of the Gray Scale, which are difficult to reproduce. A great pattern for setting and checking the black and white points of any projector or monitor.

### **Circular Geometry and Cross Hatch**

A combination pattern that includes 5 circles inscribed within the Cross Hatch pattern.

### **Anamorphic 1.78 Geometry**

The circular Geometry and Cross Hatch pattern rescaled so that it appears correctly when Anamorphically stretched to a 16:9 Aspect Ratio (via an Anamorphic lens on an LCD or DLP - or through any lens on a CRT projector).

### **Screen Halos**

Designed to search for halos that arise from internal reflections within the display optics.

### **Pixel Tracking and Timing Lock**

A pattern that is used to adjust digital fixed matrix displays like LCDs, DMDs/DLPs and plasma displays that use analog inputs.

### **Multiburst Test**

A digital version of the standard multiburst test pattern that is used to measure frequency response in television systems.

These patterns are also in the Video Edition: *PLUGE Pattern* with a Log Gray-Scale and a *PLUGE Pattern* with a White Bar for setting Black and White levels.

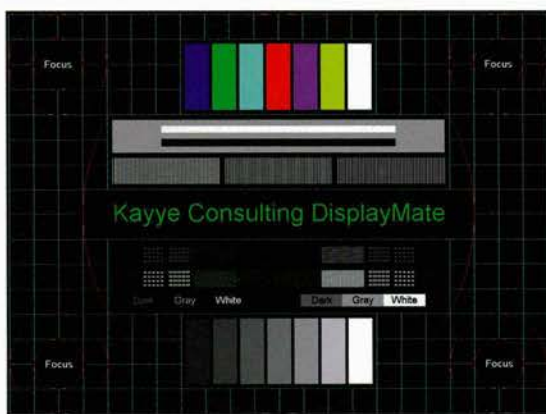
*Needle Pulse Pattern* for checking blooming and screen regulation distortion.

*Two variable intensity Window Patterns* for adjusting color balance and color tracking.

*Set Up Crosshatch* with centre and 5% overscan markings for video projectors, HDTVs and televisions.

*SMPTE Color Bars* instead of EIA style Color Bars, which include reverse blue bars for adjusting color saturation and tint, -I and Q blocks for checking chroma phase and amplitude, and *PLUGE stripes* for checking the Black-Level.

*Five ANSI* (American National Standards Institute) *IT7.215* test patterns for measuring the Lumen light output and Contrast Ratio of LCD, DLP and CRTs.



• *DisplayMate Kayye Consulting Edition* is available for purchase from [www.kayye.com](http://www.kayye.com) - or by calling them at +1 919.969.7501. The cost is US \$90.

## Computer, DVD, VideoCD, CD, TV and VCR - in one box

*With professional video non-linear (computer) editing solutions getting cheaper and cheaper, it will not be long before the distinction between domestic semi-professional products become blurred. Every now and then a high end domestic product will come along and challenge the status quo. **John Grimshaw** looks at the ATI 'All in Wonder' video card...*

ATI's "All In Wonder 128" video card for PC's is a solid attempt at bringing together the various ways of watching a vision source into one device. While this card is aimed at the domestic market, its abilities would be very well suited to anyone that needs to make a video or presentation at reasonable quality.

With special thanks to Gateway 2000 Computers, we were able to put both the 16 and 32MB versions of these cards through their paces, and the results were quite good. Gateway supplied a Pentium III 500MHz with DVD for the test.

### About the card...

Primarily, the card is a video card for the PC and as such, it has some quite impressive specifications. The powerful 128-bit 3D & 2D graphics acceleration is provided by the ATI RAGE 128 GL chip. The card is capable of photo-realistic 32-bit true color and 16.7 million color 3D graphics with-

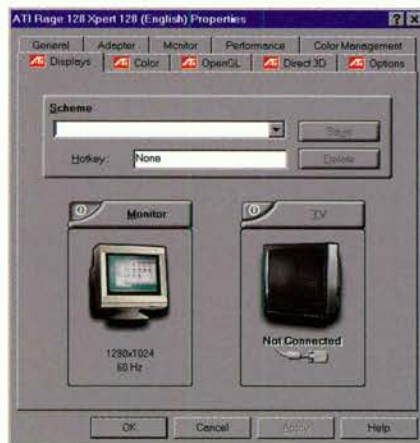
out missing a beat. However, this is only the tip of the iceberg.

The card and associated software have been designed to be able to provide hardware decoding of DVD and other MPEG sources, hardware MPEG-1 and MPEG-2 video encoding, avi format video capture, still capture and a television tuner.

### AVI Video Capture

The card will allow direct capture of video and audio to AVI files. There are a large number of preset options for different types and sizes of video files, and four of these options have been singled out as being the primary capture options. In the first version of the software that we were sent, these were preset to the American aspect ratios and a frame rate of 30fps. The second version provided presets for PAL type captures. All of these used the "ATI VCR2.0" avi codec. The user can specify much higher quality attributes, or

different compression formats using the one custom option. Unfortunately there



is no provision for saving these settings, but it will remember the last one used. For each of the video compression options, the software will tell you how much time you "have left on your hard drive", but as there is a 2Gb limit to the size of AVI files.



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### MPEG Encoding

One of the biggest limitations in working with AVI's as a video format is the size of the files required to make any reasonable length video. While you will still need a considerable amount of hard drive space to get the best out of this device, the user will be able to capture video and television signals in real time and directly to MPEG files. To help counter possible processor lag, the software gives the user the option to capture the "I Frame Only". As this option increases the bit rate by 2 or 3 times, the resulting files are much larger, but there is significantly less demand on the CPU. A fast CPU can cope with the full "I, B, P frame" capture at higher aspect ratios, thus maintaining the quality of the image while still keeping the file size down.

The documentation indicates that the highest quality MPEG-2 encoding can only be achieved using a Pentium III 500MHz.

### Hardware MPEG Decoding

Unless you are using a Pentium III, for those of you who have tried to use software decoders to play a DVD, the typical result has quite a bit of lag as the CPU struggles to keep up with the processing load. The card takes over the job of

processing the image and audio, resulting in a much smoother image. It also easily copes with Video CD's and MPEG files from other sources. The supplied software provides two options for playing MPEG sources, "DVD Player" and "VideoCD Player". Individual MPEG files can be also displayed using these players - MPEG-2 files are played back using the DVD Player, and MPEG-1 files use the VideoCD Player.

### Video Editing

There is a simple video editor supplied with the software for this card, and although it is quick and easy to use, its functions are limited to trimming the start and finish of an AVI file. It cannot be used to edit MPEG files.

Use other developer's software such as Adobe's Premier for editing AVI files, or Vitec's VIDEO Clip for editing MPEG-1 files.

### Still Capture

The still capture facility is a quick and efficient way to turn a video still into a 640x480 bitmap. Care should be taken to specify "interlaced" video to capture, otherwise you will end up with a squashed 640x240 image.

### Television Tuner and Digital VCR

This feature is what will give this device appeal to the general public. The television tuner is easy to set up and operate, as is the "VCR" side of the system. It has been designed so that you can record quickly and easily record your favourite programs to the hard drive, but you can "program your VCR" to do it in your absence.



#### System Requirements

- Windows 95/98
- PCI version: Pentium/Pro/II/III or compatible with 33 MHz PCI local bus 2.1
- AGP version: Pentium II/III or compatible with AGP 2X bus (AGP 1.0 compliant)
- Sound Card supported by Windows 95/98 with available Line Input
- Installation software requires CD/DVD-ROM drive
- DVD movie playback requires DVD ROM drive

#### TV-Tuner Requirements

- TV signal from amplified antenna or cable

#### Connectors

- PC monitor: 15-pin VGA
- Composite audio/video and s-vidc inputs & outputs

## Extron Electronics



### Products

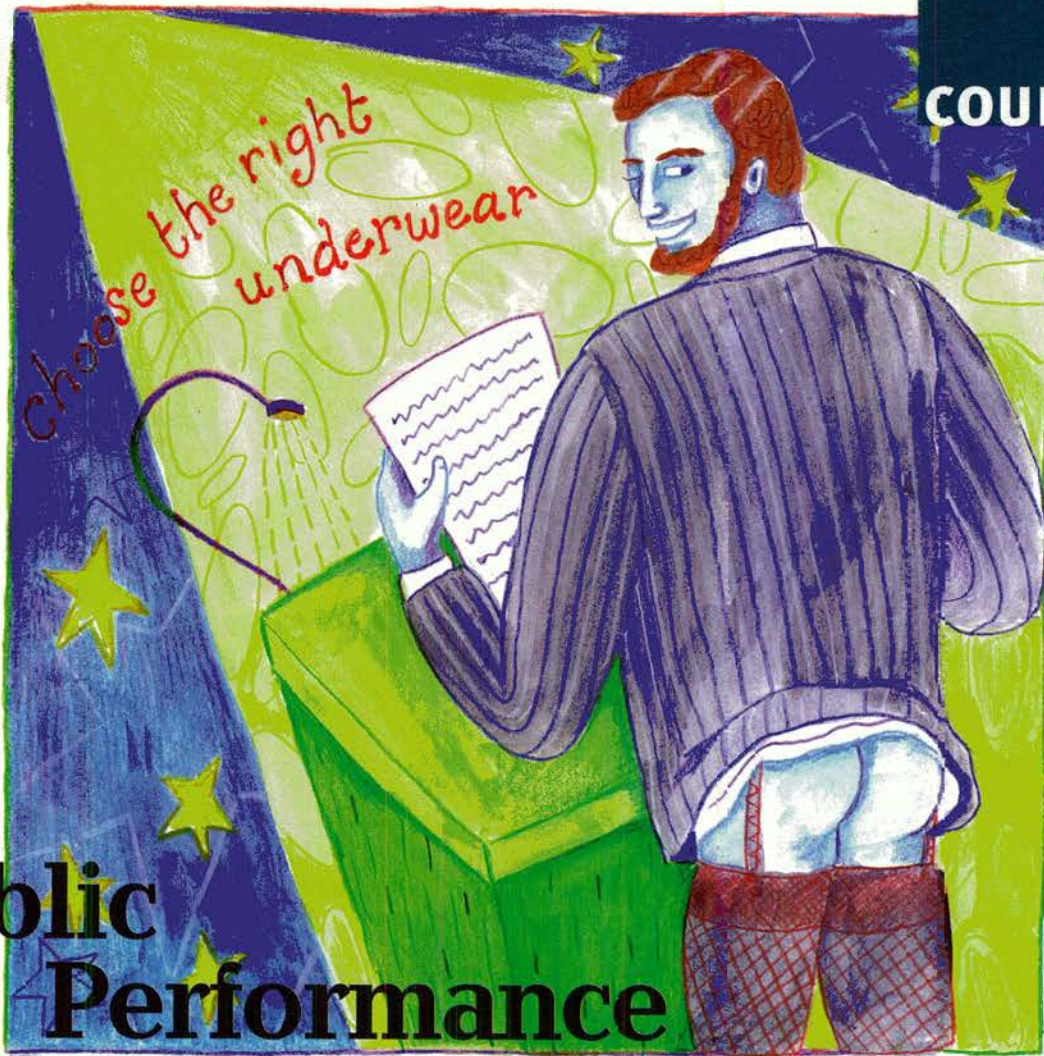
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- \* Matrix Switchers, RGBHV, Video/Audio
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# Public Performance for Managers

Ever wondered how HARD an MBA (Master of Business Administration) class is? We went to Uni to find out....

By Caroline Fitzmaurice-Grafton

With sixteen courses to complete, many MBA students elect to do Public Performance for Managers, a so-called 'soft' course at the management school I attend, MGSM (Macquarie Graduate School of Management in Sydney).

It's also offered as a stand alone course, costing a little over two thousand dollars for five days of classes. The university says that the forty hours of class makes up one third of the total time commitment, so doing this course potentially involves three weeks of time.

I paid up and went along to the term four class of 1999. I have to present more often these days, sometimes to pitch for an account, or to give a speech. I was trepidatious about this study course. I had

previously completed five study units at MGSM, and only had, what I consider, two lecturers capable of imparting knowledge.

The class of forty-two students covered a broad psychographic, fairly typical of management school. Mid to upper class and income, late 20's to mid 40's, twice as many men than women.

Day one started ominously with the lecturer, Mike Barnacoat, preoccupied with the AV equipment as we entered the theatre. He was dressed poorly—not what you'd expect from a presentation lecturer. Then he announced he would leave the theatre while we considered a mythical marketing proposition to engage him, Many were flummoxed. I verbalised to others that I would not even consider hir-

ing someone that looked like him, or someone who delivered a confused communication as he had just done.

Of course, Mike re-entered after ten minutes in a beautiful suit, and had taught us the first lesson of the day - that perception is everything! No matter what you sell, think about your image- "it's your packaging"!

Before formal classes began I had read the course notes and was a little perturbed by the theory behind 'presentations and speeches' and the possible direction that the course might take. In addition, we had recommended readings. Because I'm that kind of gal, I read all the course notes - plus 'Pitch Doctor' by Neil Fleet and 'Aristotle, the Art of Rhetoric'.

Uncommonly, our class syndicate group met twice before the first lesson, to plot strategies for our group projects. This uni puts a lot of focus on group projects. They expect five or six different people to work harmoniously as a team, for up to half your total mark. But I've met absolutely brilliant people whose team have let them down, resulting in a B or a C mark.

During class we had an 'impromptu' session where we each had to deliver a three minute speech. As I walked to the lectern, my subject was called out: "Drugs in Sport!" Great.

On Day 4 we each delivered a major individual presentation, which was videotaped, and limited to eight minutes, plus or minus thirty seconds (but absolutely no more!). Some crashed, but

no-one burned. I was very proud of the class, everyone took it very seriously and dressed to impress. I took particular care of my garments, make-up, hair, nails - even my toenails! You've got to sell the package. Want to feel really special? Choose the right (or maybe not) underwear. According to author Neil Fleet it's an old trick for the presenting femme fatale.

Through the lessons, we dealt with language, vocabulary, semiotics (symbols or word images), abstractions, vocalics and use of metaphors. It was fascinating!

On the final day the class delivered the twenty minute group presentations, plus or minus sixty seconds (but absolutely no more!). My group's topic was 'The Effects of Globalisation' (cultural, environmental and individual). We went pretty well,

although one of our group - the second in line - spoke well over time, causing a bit of a chain reaction through the rest of our team.

Finally I had an individual written assignment to complete within two weeks of the end of classes, and our group had a final group project which wasn't too tough, but due in the same period.

I'd recommend this course, the lecturer was brilliant. But it is more suited to those with experience in working in groups and with people they don't know.

I attended this course to improve my presentation skills but I came away with something better- confidence in myself and my memory. And that's good. Because if you don't like the product your selling, ... how are you going to persuade someone else to buy it.

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# FOUR VIDEO DV CAMCORDERS

In the lab with AV Avenue test reviewer: Jeff Sauer

## Canon comes up short

The color scheme of the Canon XM1 (AU\$5,999 RRP inc. tax) might match its older sibling, the XL1, but it doesn't quite measure up in the ways that really matter. Picture quality is very good, but its low-light performance and lack of manual audio gain don't befit the semipro label.

With Sony's discontinuation of the DV stalwart VX1000, Canon's timing in its release of the XM1 couldn't be better. While Sony's newer semipro models have moved toward consumer designs and features, the XM1 maintains a professional yet compact design that will appeal to serious users.

As with the VX1000, a microphone juts forward off the handle above the fluorite glass lens, and the XM1's large lens housing features a responsive manual-focus ring. But Canon has updated the familiar design with an LCD screen that swings out from the left side of the camcorder for alternative shooting angles and in-the-field playback. At 2.5 inches, it's not a large LCD by any means, but it's sure to come in handy for certain situations.

Unfortunately, small size isn't the only thing separating the XM1 from the venerable Canon LX1. The XM1 also lacks any manual gain control - a serious drawback from the viewpoint of any professional videographer. Canon does provide microphone and headphone jacks, albeit with no manual audio gain to help capture a soft-spoken subject or to counteract any oppressive background noise.

### Design score: B

In well-lit environments, the XM1's color reproduction and image quality are both good. As is typical with Canon products, the XM1's colours are generally a little

hotter than natural, though the saturated colours create that vibrant look preferred by some videographers.

But while the XM1 boasts a new fluorite glass lens for extra resolution and light intake, we found its low-light performance quite disappointing for a semiprofessional camera. In fact, many single-CCD camcorders do a better job in low light.

### Performance score: B

The Canon XM1 boasts a very handsome and relatively compact design for a semiprofessional camcorder. Unfortunately, its poor performance in low light limits its appeal, and its lack of manual audio gain restricts its use as an "interview" camera. For convenience, Sony's TRV900 or a much less costly single-CCD model are better choices.

### Value score: C



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## Canon XM1 - Good image quality, but not quite "semipro" (B-)

### SPEC LIST: CANON XM1 DV CAMCORDER

#### Test results - AV Avenue Labs

Apparent image clarity Very good  
Apparent colour reproduction Very good

#### Manufacturer's specifications:

Weight	1250 grams
CCD configuration	3 x 1/4-inch CCD, 270,000 pixels (with pixel shift)
Viewfinder	3.5-inch color, 180,000 pixels
LCD screen	2.5-inch color, 122,000 pixels
Lens aperture	F/1.6 - F/2.9
Lens focal length	4.2mm - 84mm
Zoom magnification	20x optical, 100x digital
Focus mechanism	Manual (ring), Auto (TTL)
Image stabilizer	Optical
Illumination (minimum)	6 lux
Audio gain	Auto
Shutter speed (maximum)	1/15,000 sec.
Scan rate (progressive)	30 frames/sec.
Output ports:	IEEE 1394, S-video, composite video, RCA stereo audio, headphone
Input ports:	IEEE 1394, S-video, composite video, RCA stereo audio, microphone
Dimensions (HxWxD)	135 x 117 x 272 mm
Accessories (included):	Battery pack, power adapter, shoulder strap, remote, video cables
Warranty	1 year parts and labour



## Where's the jack, Jack?

Sharp Electronics' VL-PD3E (AU\$3,299 RRP inc. tax) is one of the smallest horizontal-design camcorders on the market and a top choice for portability. However, its lack of a microphone input is a serious drawback for recording public-speaking events and other audio-sensitive content.

**Review by Jeff Sauer**

Sharp Electronics's Viewcam line was the first to introduce LCD screens to consumer camcorders, and the VL-PD3E now adds a valuable viewfinder for traditional shooting. Even with the added features, the PD3E is one of the smallest horizontal-design camcorders on the market. It's just over 5 inches long, making it similar in size to tiny vertical-design camcorders but with the more customary (and generally easier to hold) horizontal orientation. The viewfinder pulls out about an extra inch from the back, allowing easier use, and tilts upward to support varied shooting angles. The 2.5-inch LCD screen is not as large as the LCD on the sibling PD20, but the size reduction saves \$100.

For professional users, the most serious drawback of the PD3E is the lack of a microphone or headphone jack for monitoring audio while shooting. Since the unit has no manual audio gain, a headphone jack may be superfluous; however, this is not the case with the missing microphone.

The audio from the built-in mike captures ambient noise, but it won't provide clear enough audio for recording talking head shots, a potentially fatal flaw for presenters.

A less serious, though somewhat annoying, design flaw is the placement of

the record/pause button, which is too close to the battery pack and unnecessarily awkward to depress. You'll probably get used to it, but you may find yourself using two hands to hit record or pause.

**Design score: B**

Sharp uses a 660,000-pixel CCD in the PD3E. Its colours are quite full, rivalling the performance of older three-CCD camcorders. Blacks are rich and deep, much better than those produced in most single-chip camcorders. Image quality is also excellent for a one-chip camcorder and is almost comparable to some inexpensive three-CCD units (and for a much lower price).

**Performance score: A**

If you're looking for small and portable, the PD3E is a winner, with good picture quality and sharpness. Unfortunately, the lack of microphone and headphone is a serious flaw for anyone needing the high-quality audio that only a microphone can provide.

**Value score: B**

**Sharp Electronics VL-PD3E  
- Excellent portability, but  
no mic jack (B+)**

### SPEC LIST: SHARP PD3E DV CAMCORDER

#### Test results - AV Avenue Labs

Apparent image quality	Excellent
Apparent color reproduction	Very good

#### Manufacturer's specifications

Weight	495 grams
CCD configuration	1 x 1/4-inch CCD, 660,000 pixels
Viewfinder	Colour
LCD screen	2.5-inch color, 123,200 pixels
Lens aperture	F/1.4 - F/3.0
Lens focal length	4.7mm - 47mm
Zoom magnification	10x optical, 100x digital
Focus mechanism	Auto
Image stabilisation	Digital
Illumination (minimum)	1.5 lux
Audio gain	Auto
Shutter speed (maximum)	1/10,000 sec.
Scan rate (progressive)	(No progressive scan)
Output ports	IEEE 1394, S-video, composite video, RCA stereo (optional RS-232)
Input ports	IEEE 1394
Dimensions (HxWxD)	99 x 71 x 129 mm
Accessories (included)	Battery pack, power adapter, shoulder strap, remote, video cables
Warranty	1 year parts and labour



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## A tight three-CCD package

Sony's DCR-TRV900 (AU\$5,149 RRP inc. tax) DV camcorder eases the entry price-point for three-CCD image quality, but its small, consumer-oriented form is sure to repel some professional three-CCD users.

Review by Jeff Sauer



The DCR-TRV900 from Sony Electronics bundles three-CCD performance in a compact, rectangular, consumer-model design. At less than 2 pounds, it's the leader in image quality in its size range, and if you're looking for the best picture in the smallest package, the TRV900 is a great choice.

Typical of Sony, the TRV900 is packed with features (many of them quite useful). Standard extras include a PC Card slot for storing still images from photo mode, a smart accessory shoe, and Sony's clever infrared "NightShot" mode for shooting video in otherwise complete darkness.

The TRV900 also includes analog in and out for recording and mixing analog material with native DV footage.

For some, the drawback of the TRV900's design is that it looks and feels more like a consumer camcorder than a semiprofessional model. The large 3.5-inch LCD is great for playing back shots, but in putting menu controls behind the LCD in its closed position, the TRV900's design leans heavily toward shooting with the LCD over the more accurate and professionally favoured viewfinder.

On the other hand, Sony has equipped the TRV900 with a manual focus ring, exposure, white balance, and shutter speed controls as well as a manual audio gain control. While the manual audio gain control requires menu navigation, which can be awkward, the ability to turn off automatic audio gain can be critical and gives the TRV900 a leg up on Canon's similarly priced GL1.

**Design score: B**

The TRV900's image quality is very good, although ultimately not as good as its older cousin, the more professional and expensive VX1000. The CCDs produce a lower resolution; appropriately, image sharpness falls between the higher-end VX1000 and Sony's single-CCD TRV8 and TRV10. As is consistent with Sony's past camcorders, color reproduction is excellent.

One unpublicised feature of the TRV900 is its ability (rare for an NTSC camcorder) to play back a PAL DVD tape. We tried the reverse with a PAL camcorder and found that was able to play an NTSC tape from the TRV900. Don't expect either to record the other standard properly; however, this feature is handy for travelling professionals because it allows them to view tapes in the other format and, at worse, record them onto an analog deck.

**Performance score: B**

For affordable three-CCD performance, as well as portability, the TRV900 is an excellent choice.

Its low-light performance handily beats Canon's competitive GL1, although Sony's consumer-model design may dissuade otherwise interested buyers. The real question about this unit is whether the three CCDs offer significantly better performance than the far more affordable (and surprisingly high-quality) single-CCD units from Sony, Canon and Sharp that share a similar design and feature set.

**Value score: B**

## Sony DCR-TRV900 - A tight 3-CCD package (B)

### SPEC LIST: SONY TRV900 DV CAMCORDER

#### Test results - AV Avenue Labs

Apparent image quality	Very good
Apparent color reproduction	Excellent

#### Manufacturer's specifications

Weight	855 grams
CCD config:	3 x 1/4-inch CCD, 380,000 pixels
Viewfinder	Color, 180,000 pixels
LCD screen	3.5-inch color, 184,000 pixels
Lens aperture	F/1.6 - F/2.8
Lens focal length	4.3mm - 51.6mm
Zoom magnification	12x optical, 48x digital
Focus mechanism	Manual (ring), Auto
Image stabilisation	Optical
Illumination (minimum)	4 lux (0 lux with NightShot setting)
Audio gain	Manual, auto
Shutter speed (maximum)	1/4,000 sec.
Scan rate (progressive)	30 frames/sec.
Output ports	EEE 1394, S-video, composite video, RCA stereo audio, headphone
Input ports	EEE 1394, S-video, composite video, RCA stereo audio, microphone
Dimensions (HxWxD)	128 x 61 x 108 mm
Accessories (included)	Battery pack, power adapter, shoulder strap, remote, video cables, floppy disk adapter
Warranty	1 year parts and labour



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## Small, but oh-so-sharp

Canon's MV20i (AU\$3,499 RRP inc. tax) DV camcorder comes in an extremely small and portable package, but still manages to provide very good picture quality, especially for a single-chip unit. You can overlook the minor design flaws in favor of its image quality and reasonable price.

Review by Jeff Sauer

The MV20i is the first vertical-form-factor DV camcorder from Canon, and it's fairly well designed to fit in your hand. However, the MV20i designers clearly aimed for portability first and put ease-of-shooting second. For example, the zoom control is somewhat awkwardly positioned for access with your thumb rather than the more traditional index finger. This awkwardness goes away if you use the pop-out LCD screen (rather than the viewfinder) for shooting, and the viewfinder itself pulls away from the unit - but those zoom controls remain very close to your face.

The MV20i's onboard AV inputs are limited to IEEE-1394 (FireWire), S-video and a proprietary jack with a splitter cable for composite video and unbalanced audio. All ports support both output and input to allow dubbing from one camcorder to another; this configuration also makes it possible to use the MV20i to digitize analog video into the DV format for computer editing - a handy feature for mixing old and new material. (But be forewarned: While DV offers very good quality on native footage, analog material contains much more signal noise, and digitizing it to DV does not yield results directly comparable to native DV.)

Regrettably, while the MV20i supports a microphone input and headphone output, it does so only via an optional US\$60 docking unit. This is a clear example of Canon's marketing ambitions winning out over product design. After all, it's the microphone and headphone jacks (not the studio equipment jacks) that you'll need in the field, and with the MV20i's design, mikes and headphones are considered tools for serious users - users that

Canon apparently sees as willing to pay the extra money.

**Design score: B**

The MV20i offers excellent picture quality in normal lighting situations for a single-CCD camcorder (and especially for one that's so small). The MV20i produces colours that are quite full and rival the quality you'd get from an older three-chip camcorder. Blacks, a serious weakness for most one-chip units, are rich and deep with the MV20i. Image quality is also excellent for a one-chip.

The analog inputs work fine, although - as with analog-to-DV digitisation - their performance is highly dependent on the quality of the analog source material. DV's 3.6 MB/sec is a borderline data rate for preserving analog picture quality, and complex or noisy footage will expose artifacts.

**Performance score: A**

The MV20i list price is a little higher than average for a single-CCD camcorder, but the camera's image quality ranks near the top among single-CCD units, making it a solid value.

**Value score: A**

**Canon MV20i - Good image quality, value in compact package (A-)**



### SPEC LIST: CANON MV20i DV CAMCORDER

#### Test results - AV Avenue Labs

Apparent image quality Excellent (for single-CCD)

Apparent colour reproduction Excellent (single-CCD)

#### Manufacturer's specifications

Weight	590 grams
CCD configuration	1 x 1/4-inch CCD, 380,000 pixels
Viewfinder	0.55-inch colour, 113,000 pixels
LCD screen	2.5-inch colour, 180,000 pixels
Lens aperture	F/1.6 - F/2.5
Lens focal length	4.1mm - 49.2mm
Zoom magnification	12x optical, 48x digital
Focus mechanism	Manual (knob), auto
Image stabilisation	Optical
Illumination (minimum)	3 lux
Audio gain	Auto
Shutter speed (maximum)	1/4,000 sec.
Scan rate (progressive)	30 frames/sec.
Output ports	IEEE 1394, S-video, AV splitter cable (optional headphone dock)
Input ports	IEEE 1394, S-video, AV splitter cable (optional microphone dock)
Dimensions (HxWxD)	128 x 61 x 108 mm
Accessories (included)	Battery pack, power adapter, shoulder strap, remote, video cables
Warranty	1 year parts and labour



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**FLYING SAFELY**

Readers have been emailing and calling us for the latest word on airline safety.

As you will recall in earlier issues, we reported **Malaysia Airlines (MAS)** were being investigated at Heathrow for some 747 arrivals from KL which were somewhat depleted of safe reserves of fuel.

The editor is a private pilot and generally prefers to stay alive, so this is a topic of interest.

The latest issue of Flight International (surely the Airline bible) reports on safety last year. **Korean Air** and **China Airlines** (Taiwan) top the list of airlines in our region that we say you should really seriously avoid. They appear to suffer cultural problems in the cockpit.

But of concern (to us) is the **Qantas** Bangkok runway overshoot, which is still being investigated. Whatever the outcome, the spate of unchallenged letters in the Australian Financial Review from passengers on the flight is a real worry.

Passengers allege they were finally dumped at Heathrow at midnight without any connecting flights or baggage—and say they were told by staff at Bangkok that they were lucky the 'incident' happened on QF!

*Most scary of all*, the crew kept the pax on-board for up to 30 minutes AFTER the 'incident' - rather than order an immediate evacuation.

## Business Class Compared

By Julius Grafton



**We've flown J class on Singapore Airlines** quite a number of times over the years, most recently to and from InfoComm Asia in Singapore.

As usual, Presentech purchased the ticket, although this time it was obtained in exchange for 90,000 Global Rewards Points from our frequent flier account. So without the constraint of the airline PR department reading, vetting and arguing about this story, (which is what happens when a journalist takes a free review flight), we can say what we like. So here goes!

Singapore Airlines is a very good outfit, in terms of equipment, timely schedules, and general approach.

But the Chinese cost cutters have gone a little far, when before you even leave the ground in Sydney, you are told they have run out of omelette! And this a breakfast flight too! Choice two was seafood crepes and choice three a similarly unappealing noodle something. Funny, but this is the second half-full SQ flight on which I've been denied a food choice in recent times.

World Gourmet Cuisine is the new name for SQ's food. "Dishes specially created by our very own International Culinary Panel of world-renowned chefs and food critics" they say. Well, I'm a critic, and I reckon I could do a better job on this lot of tucker!

Coming back from Singapore, my choice of 'Beef in black bean sauce' was very poor, almost inedible meat and a few stringy vegies on a sea of noodles. Yuk. And a surly male flight attendant, who was reluctant to dispense more than one slice of garlic bread too.

In the air the cabin is great, the new Ultimo seats are very good. They've got a little pull out anti-halitosis screen from the headrest, which allows you to not see - or smell - the person next to you. The headrest itself isn't as good as the all folding, tilting and ear wrapping device we found on **Lauda Air** (see last issue).

You can sleep in these seats.

SQ were the pioneers of superior interactive in seat entertainment, with a choice of seemingly endless movies, audio and games. They have an even better system rolling out soon, which downloads the whole program to your seat, so you can stop, start and pause any movie, any time.

Since first experiencing KrisWorld (as the movie system was called) in 1995, I've seen SQ almost triple their flights into and out of Australia, no doubt at Qantas' expense. How QF has gotten away without introducing in-seat entertainment (in economy class) is beyond me. It'd be the main reason SQ has taken a lot of market share from them.

And anyone with enough FF points to burn really should sample the new SQ first class, featuring the most over the top seat/bed/compartment thing in the air. These come with a 14" screen too, which'll make Presentech readers happy. We haven't been into this rarefied space, but our mates who have say the flat bed seat, the silk jammies, caviar, and the endless fawning attention is worth the 300,000 Global Rewards points to Europe! Or the 11 grand.

- This makes an international first class air ticket the best redeeming value for your FF points!

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## NEW BUZZWORDS FOR THE MILLENNIUM!

Following on from the *sensational JerkWords™* game in our last issue, reader **Peter Robins** has forwarded this assembly, which - we admit - has been bouncing around the internet for at least a short while now. So we don't know whose copyright it once carried - sorry!

**404** - Someone who's clueless. From the World Wide Web error message "404 Not Found," meaning that the requested document could not be located. "Don't bother asking him . . . He's 404, man."

**ADMINISPHERE** - The rarefied organisational layers beginning just above the rank and file. Decisions that fall from the adminisphere are often profoundly inappropriate or irrelevant to the problems they were designed to solve.

**ALPHA GEEK** - The most knowledgeable, technically proficient person in an office or work group.

**ASSMOSIS** - The process by which some people seem to absorb success and advancement by kissing up to the boss rather than working hard.

**BLAMESTORMING** - Sitting around in a group, discussing why a deadline was missed or a project failed, and who was responsible.

**CHAINSAW CONSULTANT** - An outside expert brought in to reduce the employee headcount, leaving the top brass with clean hands.

**CHIPS & SALSA** - Chips = hardware, Salsa = software. "Well, first we gotta figure out if the problem's in your chips or your salsa."

**CLM** - Career Limiting Move - Used among microserfs to describe ill-advised activity. Trashing your boss while he or she is within earshot is a serious CLM.

**CUBE FARM** - An office filled with cubicles.

**DILBERTED** - To be exploited and oppressed by your boss. Derived from the experiences of Dilbert, the geek-in-hell comic strip character. "I've been dilberted again. The old man revised the specs for the fourth time this week."

**FLIGHT RISK** - Used to describe employees who are suspected of planning to leave a

company or department soon.

**GENERICA** - Features of the American landscape that are exactly the same no matter where one is, such as fast food joints, strip malls, subdivisions. Used as in "We were so lost in generica that I forgot what city we were in."

**GOING POSTAL** - Euphemism for being totally stressed out, for losing it. Makes reference to the unfortunate track record of postal employees who have snapped and gone on shooting rampages.

**GOOD JOB** - A "Get-Out-Of-Debt" Job. A well-paying job people take in order to pay off their debts, one that they will quit as soon as they are solvent again.

**IDEA HAMSTERS** - People who always seem to have their idea generators running.

**IRRITAINMENT** - Entertainment and media spectacles that are annoying but you find yourself unable to stop watching them. The O.J. trials were a prime example. The Cash for Comment hearings were another.

**MOUSE POTATO** - The on-line, wired generation's answer to the couch potato.

**OHNOSECOND** - That minuscule fraction of time in which you realise that you've just made a BIG mistake.

**PERCUSSIVE MAINTENANCE** - The fine art of whacking the heck out of an electronic device to get it to work again.

**PRAIRIE DOGGING** - When someone yells or drops something loudly in a cube farm, and people's heads pop up over the walls to see what's going on.

**SALMON DAY** - The experience of spending an entire day swimming upstream only to get screwed and die in the end.

**SEAGULL MANAGER** - A manager who flies in, makes a lot of noise, craps on everything, and then leaves.

**SITCOMs** - (Single Income, Two Children,

Oppressive Mortgage) What yuppies turn into when they have children and one of them stops working to stay home with the kids.

**SQUIRT THE BIRD** - To transmit a signal to a satellite.

**STRESS PUPPY** - A person who seems to thrive on being stressed out and whiny.

**SWIPE OUT** - An ATM or credit card that has been rendered useless because the magnetic strip is worn away from extensive use.

**TOURISTS** - People who take training classes just to get a vacation from their jobs. "We had three serious students in the class; the rest were just tourists."

**TREWARE** - Hacker slang for documentation or other printed material.

**UMFRIEND** - A sexual relation of dubious standing or a concealed intimate relationship, as in "This is Dyan, my ... um ... friend."

**UNINSTALLED** - Euphemism for being fired. Heard on the voice-mail of a vice president at a downsizing computer firm - "You have reached the number of an Uninstalled Vice President. Please dial our main number and ask the operator for assistance. \*(Syn - decruitment.)"

**VULCAN NERVE PINCH** - The taxing hand position required to reach all the appropriate keys for certain commands. For instance, the arm re-boot for a Mac II computer involves simultaneously pressing the Control key, the Command Key, the Return Key, and the Power On key.

**XEROX SUBSIDY** - Euphemism for swiping free photocopies from one's workplace.

**YUPPIE FOOD STAMPS** - The ubiquitous \$20 bills spewed out of ATM's everywhere. Often used when trying to split the bill after a meal, "We each owe \$8, but all anybody's got are yuppie food stamps."

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