



TRADESHOW

INTEGRATE /2022

It's The Little Things

INTEGRATION / AUDIO / LIGHTING / VIDEO / STAGING

INSTALLATION

PHASE SHIFTING INDEX

L-Acoustics speakers power Jeremy Shaw's monumental video work at Mona

PROFILE

LIZ

ANDERSON

Trailblazing Domie in the Spotlight

News

- / Vale Peter Wilson and Michael Knapp
- / ACETA Conference 2022
- / Illawarra Production Services invest in Adamson
- / Enter The Drag-Ens
- / Harman Changes JBL's Top End in Australia

Regulars

- / Andy Stewart's Listen Here
- / Jenny Barrett covers NZ
- / Tech Talk
- / John O'Brien's Backstage
- / Brian Coleman: The Gaffa Tapes

THE INSTALLATION ISSUE

- / WINERIES AND CLUBS
- / IMMERSIVE ART AND GALLERIES
- / THEATRE
- / CORPORATE



SRX900

POWERED SOLUTIONS

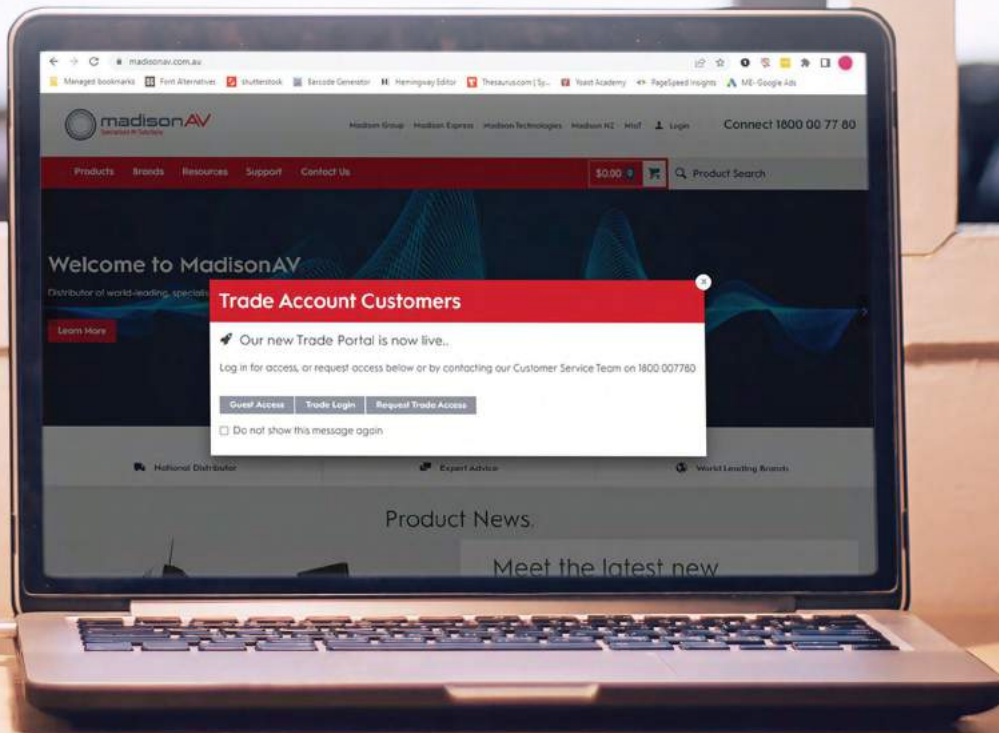
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CONTENTS

News

Vale Peter Wilson	4
Vale Michael Knapp	6
Enter the Drag-Ens	8
Illawarra Production Services Invest in Adamson	10
HME Services Upgrade the Australian Museum's Hallstrom Room	12
Harman Changes JBL's Top End in Australia	14
ACETA Conference 2022	16
Movecat Distribution and New TheatreQuip Hoists	18

Features

Liz Anderson – Trailblazing Domie in the Spotlight <i>by Allee Richards</i>	28
Integrate 2022 - It's The Little Things <i>by Jason Allen</i>	31

The Installation Issue

Lake Breeze Wines	44
So Fresh and So Clean: King Street Newcastle <i>by Fiona Davis</i>	47
Wisdom of AI Light: Illuminate Adelaide 2022 <i>by Jason Allen</i>	50
Brown's Mart Levels Up <i>by Jenny Barrett</i>	56
L-Acoustics at Hobart's Mona <i>by Jason Allen</i>	58
Jay Productions x NEXO x Dior	61

Regulars

Listen Here: Channel Nine & Three Quarters <i>by Andy Stewart</i>	22
MEETINGS 2022 <i>by Jenny Barrett</i>	24
Backstage: Ode to the Installer <i>by John O'Brien</i>	71
The Gaffa Tapes: There's No Business Like Trade Show Business <i>by Brian Coleman</i>	72

Tech Talk

The VL3000 Spot (Almost) 20 Years On <i>by Kurtis Hammer</i>	66
Crash Course on Live Streaming Encoders <i>by Alex Zids, COO of Bettercast</i>	69

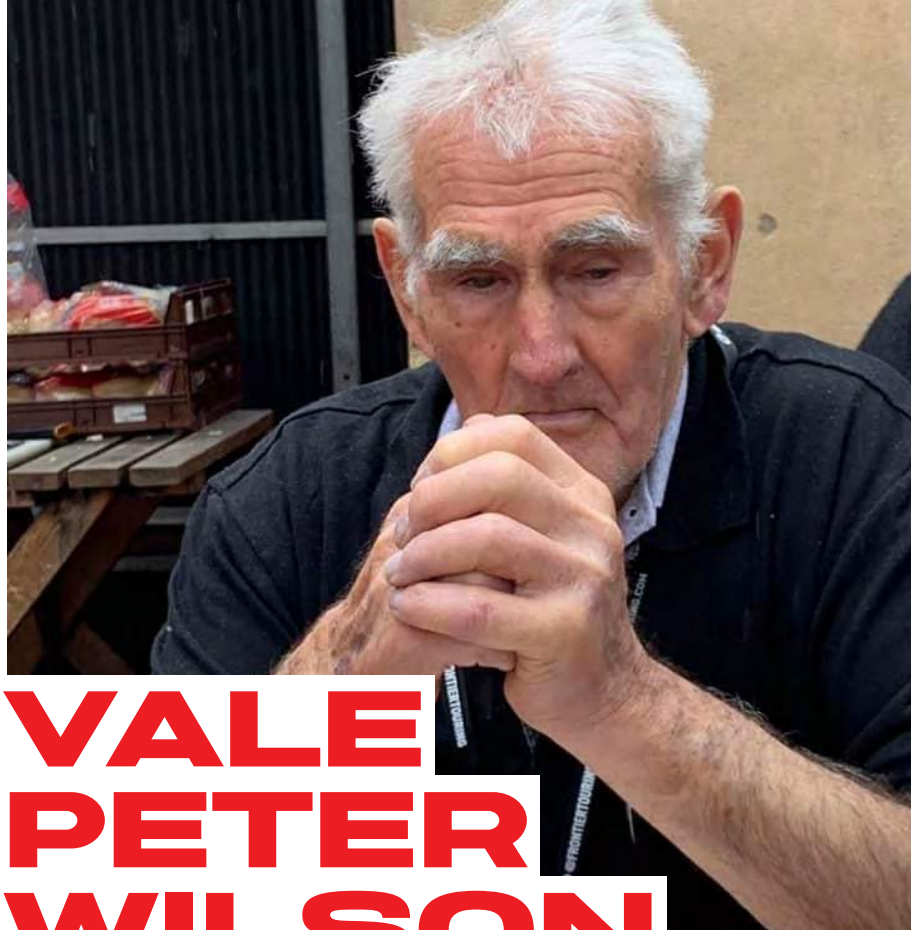


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VALE PETER WILSON

April 29, 1942 - July 28, 2022

Peter George Wilson was regarded by the Australian live production sector as its best electrician.

For over 55 years, Peter who was also a lighting designer, was the go-to-guy for big players like Dainty Corporation, Artist Concert Tours, and Jands.

"He was very, very good at what he did," asserts Bill McCartney, another high achiever.

In the '60s, Bill was crewing for the likes of Zoot and Lotus before heading to America to work with Elvis Presley, Lou Reed, and Lynyrd Skynyrd.

Peter was doing lights for half a dozen nightclubs, carting his assortment of mirror balls, colour wheels, and lighting effects he devised.

Adds Tom Orchard, founder of Zap Lighting; "As an electrician, everyone would say he was the best there ever was."

"I got the feeling he knew a lot more than most people realised. He'd just come in and do it."

McCartney emphasises what a hard worker Peter was, juggling work as a maintenance electrician at Cabrini Hospital and at the Palais.

But he was on top of his game. "If Peter said he'd take care of something, you knew it'd be taken care of. He was 100% reliable."

ARCA co-founder Adrian Anderson agrees; "Totally reliable. If he said he'd pick you up at 5

a.m. at your place, he'd be there at 5. Not 4.59 or 5.01."

As an example of his work ethic, Adrian relates how Peter was asked to work with a pre-fame Bee Gees' residency in a Sydney club.

"Every day he'd finish his day job and fly to Sydney to do the Gibbs. He'd catch the first plane back to Melbourne, and then come up again the next day. This went on for weeks."

Peter attended Collingwood Tech, and prided himself more in the fact he was a certified electrician than someone in the music industry.

He thought crewing was inconsistent work, and would warn young newcomers not to take out loans and ensure they put at least 70% of their earnings in the bank and save for a house.

"He was my mentor," says Orchard. "The biggest advice he gave me was something I thankfully ignored – and that was not to get into the music industry but just do it as a hobby!"

Ironically Peter got Tom into the business. Tom was 16 when a mate's band needed a lighting guy. The mate knew Peter from Scouts.

Peter taught Tom to do lights. "I ended up doing lights for other bands, using his gear and getting my own."

"We lived near each other. If he needed a hand, he'd call on me. After the show we'd go back to his mum's and cook up raisin toast...those were nice!"

Peter was involved in some major shows, and earned a reputation for meeting challenges.

At a KISS show at VFL Park in Glen Waverly which needed extra power, he organised with the State Electricity Commission to supply huge cables which came on a massive drum, which he ran to the centre of the ground.

In 1988 for Soundcloud in Sydney for the Australia Bicentenary, he worked for three weeks setting up 33 generators around the Harbour, making the switching gear himself.

Orchard recalled the time Peter got a call at the Cabrini from road crew friends in New Zealand struggling with a sound problem.

"Peter in his overalls hopped on a plane with his tool box as a carry-on, flies to New Zealand and fixes it. He knew instinctively what had to be done. He then flew back."

In his Roadies book, Stuart Coupe related a rain-drenched ABBA show at the Showgrounds when Peter went up the towers to hook up the power.

Promoter Michael Chugg and Jands' Eric Robinson walking below saw a blue flash going up the pole.

They couldn't find him. He'd been thrown 2.5 metres. When they ran over, Peter, who had a pronounced stutter, exclaimed, "D-d-did you f-f-fucking see t-t-that?"

Two stories associated with Wilson have done the crew rounds for ages.

When Pope John Paul II arrived at the MCG, he saw a roadie on his knees rolling up electrical cords, walked over, looked down and said, "Bless you my son."

Another was apparently during a Rolling Stones show, and a tired and irritable Peter found a quiet place to have his lunch.

Mick Jagger interrupted with a question. "Piss off Mick!" he snapped, chewing on his sandwich.

Bill; "I hadn't heard that story. But with Peter you got what you saw. He didn't suffer fools easily."

Tom: "If that was true, it wouldn't surprise me. That was Peter."

Like most in crew circles, Peter was known for always lending a hand and saying yes to charity work.

His death from kidney failure took friends by surprise.

He never drank or smoked. He kept fit with 20 mile walks. He never married but was close to his family. He loved attending steam rallies and journeying on trains through North America and Europe.

Peter George 'PPPeter' Wilson was laid to rest on Monday August 8 at Stratus Chapel, Bunurong Memorial Park.

"Travel safely old mate."

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VALE MICHAEL 'SNAPPER' KNAPP

1956 - 2022



L-R: Roger Barratt, Chris Yates, Derek Coutts, Toby Sewell & Snap

In the early hours of Sunday 24th July, we lost a friend. Snap became a legend of the industry and was so well respected and loved by so many. He was one of the good guys. He was a musician, a creative, a designer and lighting technician, sometimes all at once, in a career that spanned over 40 years both in Australia and New Zealand.

I first met Snap when I joined the Australian Opera in 1992 and boy did we all have some fun; oh those tours to Melbourne with a pocket full of touring allowance. Snapper organised parties for any occasion and could get names on the door at almost any club that was worth being at. He arranged parties to the Victorian countryside to some historic hotel for the weekend. These became the stuff of legend and what happens on tour, stays on tour. "We've got a pile of pyro left over from Dream! Ok, lets take those and we can have a display...."

He had a very keen eye and loved a bit of 134 and maybe a bit of half colour and a breakup gobo.

From Leon Dark: Some people remain as friends even when the distance is far and the

frequency of catch-ups is few. Snapper was a rather special bloke who many will miss. His willingness to support his colleagues is a trait that I'll always remember; he covered my arse on more than one occasion, and his delight in organising out-of-town functions for opera company and venue crew is legendary. Of late I've recalled some of the tales he related to me of his days as a drummer, but to relay them in a public forum would be inappropriate. The world is a lesser place on his departure. An oft heard reference; "he was one of the good ones".

Derek Coutts recalls: I remember so well teaching Snap what a Pattern 23 was, how the shutters worked and what back focused meant, what a Fresnel was and how to size it. All done in the SOH dock. He picked it up like the natural he was and was a welcome member of OZOPLX soon after. Always eager to learn and impart his 'Zhuzh' to everything he did.

Karen Norris recalls: Now I'm going way way back..early in our relationship. Michael asked me to operate the lights for his band one night, (unbeknown to me that at the age of 17, this would become the trajectory of my career). He

would run around the stage teaching me how to set and focus the lights; all things technical. The drums always had 4 x floor parcans, 2 x backlighting and 2 x uplighting the cymbals. I would smash these lights to the beat! Michael shone like a star! Over those years of various gigs, Michael introduced glitzy draped fabrics as backdrops, newspaper cycs, and haze for daze, anything to up the ante! He had an infectious enthusiasm for the theatrics of theatre. Beautiful energy that will stay with us always. He has taught us well.

From Chris Yates: Michael Knapp "Snap" was one in a million. Full of life and happiness, he brought a little bit of flair, a little bit of Spinal Tap and a whole lot of 'Zhuzh' to the OA LX department. Never a dull moment with Snap and a whole lot of fun! I can honestly say that the 10+ years I spent working with him and the team in the lighting department at Opera Australia were the most enjoyable of my career - we worked hard, played hard and had many adventures. I miss him greatly and hope that he is still bringing joy to those who may be resting with his soul.

RIP mate.

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The annual Rattletrap hot rod event in New South Wales deployed highly directional CP Beam Antennas from RF Venue's line of wireless audio essentials to insure solid wireless mic signal capture



ENTER THE DRAG-ENS

RF Venue CP Beam Gets Hot-Rodded

The vehicles are most definitely vintage, but the event is relatively new: Rattletrap, an enthusiastic convocation of owners of classic pre-1941 hot rods and motorcycles (patterned after the classic U.S. event The Race of Gentlemen), had its first few pilot outings on the beach at Crowdy Head, New South Wales in January 2016. They were followed by the first official Rattletrap event that May, and ever since then the now annual event, organized by the Drag-Ens Hot Rod Club, has drawn dozens of pre-World War II hot rods and motorcycles running races up the beach as thousands of spectators cheer them on. The events include bracket sprints, grudge matches, and an Exhibition Class for unique or historic vehicles. But with that much metal and the growing number of wireless devices that the popular event deploys each year, the event's RF microphones, used for announcers and other applications, have grown increasingly challenging to handle. Luckily, a solution was achieved in the form of RF Venue CP Beam directional antennas from the company's line of wireless audio essentials.

This year's Rattletrap, held on May 14, saw crowds returning to the event in greater numbers. Tom Benson, General Manager at Port Macquarie-based integrator In Phase Productions, says he had been struggling with his older omni antennas, having to use line amplifiers to boost their signal. He became frustrated with excessive dropouts and interference issues plaguing his outdoor sporting events. Many of his events, such as Rattletrap, require a large coverage area and wireless mics to be further away from antennas, which themselves had to

be constantly moved around to keep the announcers' microphones from being overwhelmed by engine noise. After consulting with RF Venue's experts to find a solution, however, Benson decided to upgrade his wireless setup with a pair of CP Beam directional antennas. These enabled him to eliminate the old line amplifiers and focus the signal exactly where it needs to be at all times.

With this new antenna setup, Benson was able to deploy his wireless rig, utilising multiple wireless mics, seamlessly and successfully for the Rattletrap 2022 at Crowdy Head. Even at distances of as much as 400 metres, all things RF went smoothly from beginning to end using

the newly acquired CP Beam antennas. "We set up early and built the perfect mix position and antenna placement in the lifeguard tower," Benson explains. "It was high tide and the beach was covered so we had to dodge the waves to set up, but by 10 a.m. the tide was out and there was enough beach to start. The event finished about 3:30 p.m. when the tide came back in, and everything worked extremely well, including, and especially, the CP Beam antennas. They made all the difference."

rfvenue.com
jands.com.au



Wireless announcer mics at the Rattletrap hot rod event, at distances of more than 400 metres and with frequently shifting positions, were captured seamlessly with RF Venue CP Beam Antennas

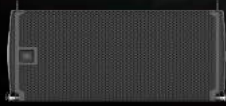


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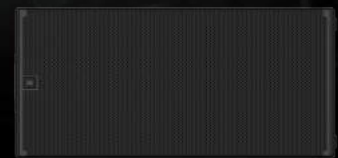
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SRX910LA



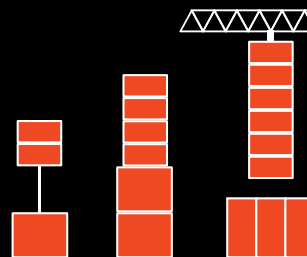
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SRX928S

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INVEST IN ADAMSON



Quality audio reinforcement is a blend of technical and subjective elements. In a hire environment, it should cover a broad range of use case scenarios and be easy to use. Primarily, it must sound and feel good. These were all features that Illawarra Production Services (IPS) owner Tim van den Berg was looking for in a new line array.

His old rig was “clean, but its shift in dynamic range was not good. We do a lot of orchestral and jazz shows where that’s quite an important component.” He also found that; “The market was pretty much covered for rock style or dance oriented systems but not something that could reproduce the harmonic density of acoustic music. Once I heard the Adamson - that was it.”

He’d been in touch with old colleague Scott Angove from CMI, who arranged a demo of the Adamson S7 series. While Tim found these impressive, he’s “not a fan of 3-inch compression drivers and asked: “Do you have anything with a 4-inch?” Scott said: “yes we do” and that was S10. Sold on the spot.” Adamson S10 are a full range line array cabinet with two Kevlar Neodymium drivers and the aforementioned 4-inch compression driver.

Tim is absolutely rapt with the excellence of what he has purchased. The system gives “a sense of ease that has allowed me to look deeply into the mix in a way that I’d never been able to do before.” The speakers’ clarity allows him to “know precisely what all the reverb tails are doing in the mix” and clearly hear how “the harmonic structure of a brass or string section is just thrown into very clear relief. The only problem that I would find is that you have to re-evaluate the way you mix, because, there is no masking. There is none.”

This Adamson rig offers IPS operators great dynamic range. Tim finds that “you can run them at very quiet levels and all of the detail is still there. As you push the faders up, all that happens is that it simply magnifies the sound. It doesn’t change in focus at all. This I find extraordinary. When you consider that the

THE SPECS

S10

2-way, full range line array cabinet

2x ND10-LM Kevlar Neodymium drivers (2x 16 Ω)

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Power Handling (AES / Peak) HF 160 / 640 W

Maximum Peak SPL** 141.3 dB

S119

Companion subwoofer to the S10

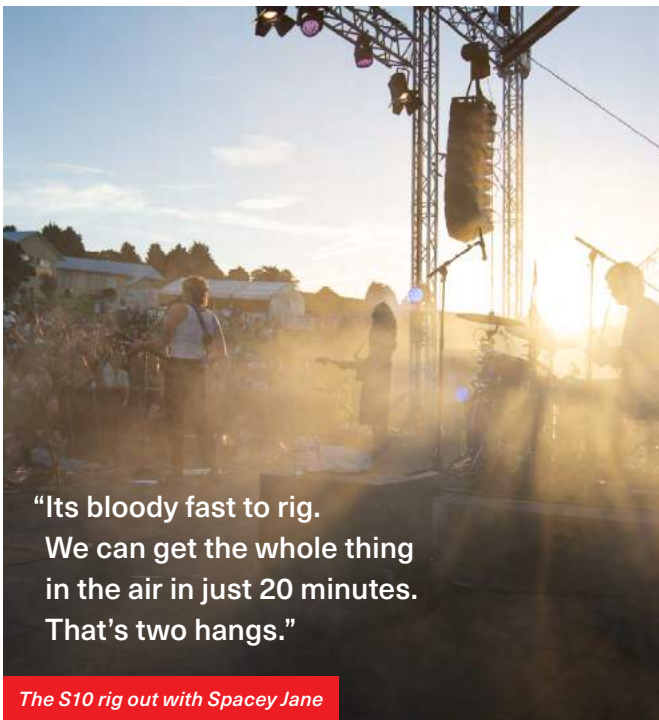
Light weight, long excursion, 19” ND19 Kevlar Neodymium driver

5” voice coil

Power Handling (AES / Peak) LF 1200 / 4800 W

Maximum Peak SPL** 138 dB

**12 dB crest factor pink noise at 1m, free field, using specified processing and amplification



**"Its bloody fast to rig.
We can get the whole thing
in the air in just 20 minutes.
That's two hangs."**

The S10 rig out with Spacey Jane

driver complement consists of two 10s and a horn!" High praise from an accomplished engineer.

IPS have paired the S10 full range cabinets with S119 subs. Also constructed of marine grade birch plywood and aircraft grade steel and aluminum, Tim is equally impressed with the bottom end boxes from Adamson. "There are no artifacts. Every subwoofer I've ever heard suffered from group delay of some sort. This thing doesn't. All you get is the signal." A long-term practitioner of the arcane theory and practice of speaker design, he finds the S119 have "fantastic radiation resistance."

Tim attributes this to speaker sizing and material choice: "19 seems to be the sweet spot. The kevlar drivers certainly help with a very linear response. And the (S10) tops - that magnificent 4-inch. It loads into a 1.5-inch aperture, which gives much greater linearity in your top octave. I got very excited when I saw they had gone to the trouble of doing that. Everybody else uses a 2-inch."

Not only do the S-series sound great, but they are also a breeze to deploy in the field. The gear is light, compact and quick to setup, using Speakon NL8 connectors and updated SlideLock rigging technology. "Its bloody fast to rig. We can get the whole thing in the air in just 20 minutes. That's two hangs." For IPS, "truck space, the mechanics, flying, everything about it is wonderful. It ticks every box for what we do." This speed and efficiency at every step in the process pays off the investment in the equipment.

Capex on new lines is always a conundrum for PA operators. Part rational economic choice, part gut feeling. For Tim, with Adamson "the product just simply sells itself. As soon as you hear the thing you go wow."

Which leads to the next link in the chain. He finds "the one problem I have with it is we are now having to go through our entire microphone inventory. Because it's pulling apart microphones. Now we are in the market for better mics to match the PA. What a great problem to have!"

Tim is a very technically oriented person with an early background in high-end HiFi. Having now used the Adamson S10 and S119 units in several different gig environments, he is blown away: "I'd like to have them at home! They are extraordinary." Those are strong words from someone so experienced in both home and pro audio.

These seem stronger: Tim is "very, very happy" in his choice to go with Adamson.

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HME SERVICES UPGRADE THE AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM'S HALLSTROM ROOM

When the Australian Museum decided to upgrade their Hallstrom Room, the turnaround for HME Services was only eight weeks. However, despite the problems currently plaguing our industry such as product delays, the project was completed within time and budget.

"We had to call in a lot of favours from our suppliers to meet our client's expectations," commented Nick Cook, HME's Project Manager. "It meant adjusting the brief to meet deadlines but without compromise and the client was very happy with the result."

The consultant for the project was Craig Gamble of Setting Line Theatre Consulting; the ideal choice due to his extensive background working with museums. Craig delivered the full specifications for all the performance and presentation systems.

The room is used for a variety of events including science presentations, school programs and community engagement. Commercial operations also use it as a prep space when they are holding functions in the foyer.

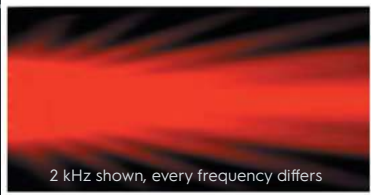
"They wanted a super-functional, super-flexible space that was super-easy to use," remarked Nick. "Now, if someone wants to give a presentation they can simply plug their laptop in, it comes up on the screen, and with the provided microphone, they are set to go."





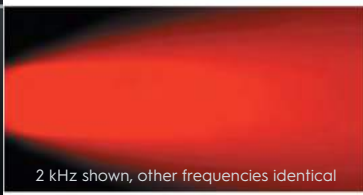
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beyond connected



On the other end of the scale, there is now the ability to plug in an audio console, a lighting console, video matrices and deliver a full production."

HME was tasked with providing and installing the lighting, PA system, camera infrastructure and rack work. The lighting comprises three 2.4m HME JLX Lite bars plus two Elation FUZE

SFX LED Spot FX fixtures and four Prolights VersaPar LED Zoom PARs.

Craig selected LED fixtures not only for their low power draw but also because the fixtures do not emit UV light that degrades museum artifacts. Control is a ChamSys QuickQ10 LX console with an additional SnakeSys 10Scene Gateway and wall plate. "All of that was

patched in with the Dynalite for controlling the houselights so they have full theatrical control out of the space," added Nick. "For audio, a QSC PA capable of surround sound and full Dolby was added to the space."

The PA comprises two QSC AD-S12 and four QSC AD-S8T loudspeakers, two AD-S112-SW subwoofers, and a Q-SYS Core 110f processor to provide a fully integrated audio, video and control solution for the room. A QSC CX-Q 8K8 Network Amplifier allows seamless Q-SYS integration with audio transport and control via standard gigabit Ethernet protocols and hardware.

An Allen & Heath QU-16C compact 22 in, 12 out digital mixer with remote wireless control is supplied for mixing. Three Sennheiser EW-D wireless mic sets are available for presentations, and HME also provided an award-winning Lectrum CTL Aero Lectern. Two QSC PTZ cameras enable live streaming internally and externally as well as conference calls on the LED screen.

"It's all Q-SYS control with touchscreens and ease of use," said Nick. "We also provided a Blackmagic ATEM Television Studio Pro4k vision mixer that enables the museum to fully scale and position multiple inputs onto the screen. This will be ideal for the presentations that happen within the space."

HARMAN CHANGES JBL'S TOP END IN AUSTRALIA

Direct from the show floor at the Integrate expo last month, HARMAN Professional Solutions announced "a strengthening and refinement of the JBL Professional Performance Audio distribution in Australia."

In a nutshell, the top-of-the-line VTX and VRX line array series will move from being distributed by CMI Music & Audio to being distributed by MadisonAV. CMI has been a Harman distributor since 2017, and MadisonAV came on board to handle the install portfolio in 2020.

CMI Music and Audio will continue to distribute BRX Modular Portable Line Array Systems and will distribute the new JBL SRX900 Series of powered line arrays. The family, which includes dual 6.5-inch and dual 10-inch powered line array elements and 18-inch and dual 18-inch powered subwoofers, is ideal for rental companies, fixed installations and musicians seeking the ultimate combination of performance and portability.

MadisonAV will distribute the JBL VRX900 Series of Constant Curvature line array loudspeakers and the VTX family of products.

This includes the newest members of JBL's VTX line array series, the VTX A6 subcompact dual 6.5-inch passive line array element and the B15 compact, arrayable 15-inch subwoofer.

"2022 has been an exciting year of product launches from JBL Professional with both the SRX900 Series and VTX A6 line arrays being launched. Australia is a very important market

for HARMAN Professional Solutions and we are focused on growing and strengthening our line array business there," said Amar Subash, VP and GM, APAC. "The refinements to the Australian distribution announced leverages the strength of the brand, our products and the strengths of Harman's two well established distributors: CMI Music and Audio and MadisonAV"



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ACETA CONFERENCE 2022



Frank Hinton and David Bell

After a two-year hiatus, the industry peak body ACETA (Australian Commercial & Entertainment Technologies Association) once again gathered for its annual convention and Annual General Meeting in Wangaratta, Victoria, June 17 to 19.

As our industry peak body, membership is an attractive proposition, coming with strength through representation, industry standards accreditation, and the market now preferring business partnerships with ACETA members.

The 2022 convention offered professional development sessions free of charge to members, along with the opportunity to discuss market conditions, business sentiment, and growth opportunities at a time of significant upheaval in our relatively small but extremely diverse industry.

ACETA is a body that can help shape change and lobby for (and against) laws pertaining to products and services. A wider, united industry voice with more effective reach is necessary to positively affect policy makers to improve member conditions.

"From an organisational perspective most things went right given the overall intensity of the program, and this was undoubtedly due to the facilities, environment, the quality of presenters, facilitators and positive attitude of committed attendees," said Frank Hinton, ACETA President.

"After the long hiatus between industry events and our convention in particular, participants were clearly looking forward to being together in a neutral, non-commercial environment, but also ready to equip themselves and their companies for change moving forward. At the closing plenary there was an instant and unanimous vote to present the fourth ACETA industry convention in 2023 and at the same venue. For me the convention brings out the best in the industry, and it is most gratifying and grounding to be with friends and colleagues both old and new, which provides the impetus and ideas to deal with what lies ahead."

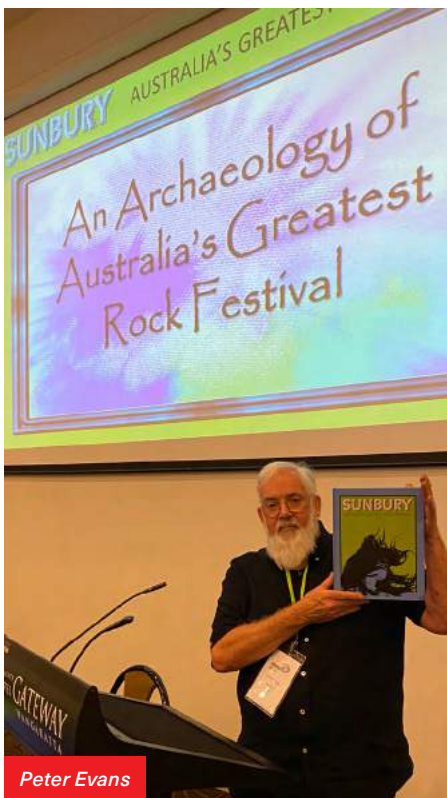
Celebrating Excellence and Innovation

One of the best initiatives of ACETA is the acknowledgement and celebration of milestones in the Australian industry, and on the 50th anniversary of the seminal Sunbury Music Festival, lighting pioneer Peter Evans was guest of honour to describe the birth of the festival and its international relevance at the time, with insight into behind-the-scenes machinations and political forces.

"Australian Music for an Australian Audience on Australia Day" as it was promoted was put together anecdotally by "amiable eccentrics". Thank goodness it was, because when technology doesn't exist, innovation takes over with none more startling than the invented practical theatrical lighting effects shown and described, and in particular the custom lighting console built to control it. Inspired combinations, which included overhead projectors, coloured water pumps and liberal doses of ingenuity, delivered a world-class experience to musicians and festival goers alike.

Peter Evans has written a fabulous book, titled "Sunbury: Australia's Greatest Rock Festival" which was published by Melbourne Books in October 2017.

In recognition that our industry doesn't exist without end users and artists, one of Australasia's pre-eminent musicians Roger McLachlan was asked to provide insights into his career with a view toward his relationship with technology. In a fascinating discussion, Roger (member of Little River Band, Stars,



Peter Evans

and Pyramid, plus a host of studio session credits) described various eclectic recording sessions and touring experiences, notably the description of the events at Montreux Jazz Festival with Pyramid and his involvement in the recording of the John Farnham hit song

“You’re The Voice” where he wowed the ACETA conference attendees with a live re-creation of the improvised bass lines, with of course the intro lick that was recorded in one take and instantly recognisable the world over.
 “My best advice is to be absolutely fearless and trust your instincts” – Roger McLachlan

ACETA Archive of Excellence – Preserving our Heritage

David Bell – The Australian who left his mark on the International Audio industry

From humble beginnings in Sydney’s inner west cover band scene, where he started out and later toured as an aspiring drummer, the ever astute David Bell recalled how he could never make a living out of that and moved into the sales arena for the late Maxwell Roberts at W.C. Wedderspoon, where he was involved in introducing AR, Bose, Eventide and other brands to the Australian market.

“I would listen to speakers, understand who would want them and go and talk to people” – David Bell

To the point of building and operating an anechoic chamber, this successful relationship eventually led to David founding a subsidiary manufacturer arm – Bose Australia. Success not only continued, it soared, with this extension of Bose Corporation notably selling more per capita than anywhere else in the world. This did not go unnoticed at head office

where after seven years David was asked to move to Boston where he was asked to “do something with the Professional Products Division.” David’s first office was the Electrical Riser, a reflection of the relative tensions between consumer and professional divisions at the time, but that soon changed as the professional division went from strength to strength, to a true industry heavyweight.

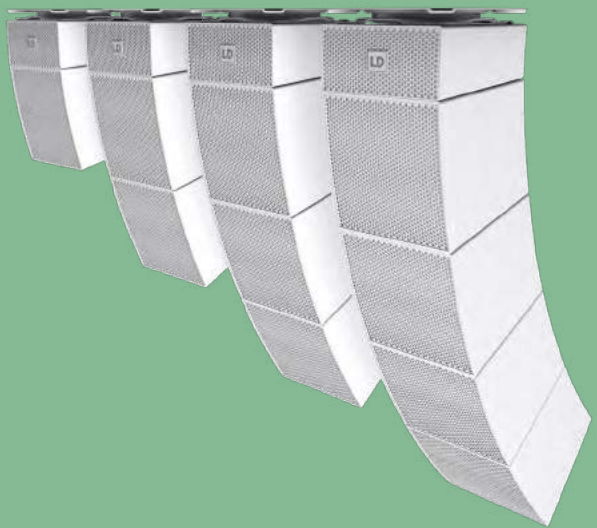
This incredible effort was followed by a two-year stint over on the west coast as Vice President of Sales at JBL Professional before moving into a start-up company - high quality satellite streaming music service Xtra Music, as Director of Sales and Marketing, which was eventually purchased by DMX Music, where David became Vice President of Marketing for the group.

2002 saw David move back home to Australia as Director for Sales and Marketing at Jands and then to Syntec International as the Manager of the Professional Division until 2012.

More recent times have seen David begin a Business Mentoring consultancy, working with business owners in micro, small to medium in size, as well as a foundational role within ACETA to help write the Constitution.

The interview of acknowledgment and celebration of David Bell was recorded and will be available via the ACETA website soon.

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MOVECAT DISTRIBUTION AND NEW THEATREQUIP HOISTS

The P.A. People's Venue Engineering Arm Gears Up

Movecat Moves

The P.A. People have been appointed exclusive distributor of Movecat Motion Control products in Australia and New Zealand. Movecat are Germany's number one supplier of specialist entertainment hoists including D8+ and BVG-C1 rated chain motors and SIL3 compliant motion control systems suitable to lifting and moving loads over audiences.

Over the past three years, The P.A. People have worked with Movecat products on a number of hoisting projects, including the design and supply of the 10-tonne motorised Gondola supporting four LED screens at Sydney's Ken Rosewall Arena. Supported by four 2.5-tonne Movecat PlusLite chain hoists with 25m height of lift, the system is rated D8+, but also features full load monitoring and position encoders on each hoist for additional safety and a unique bespoke cable management system.

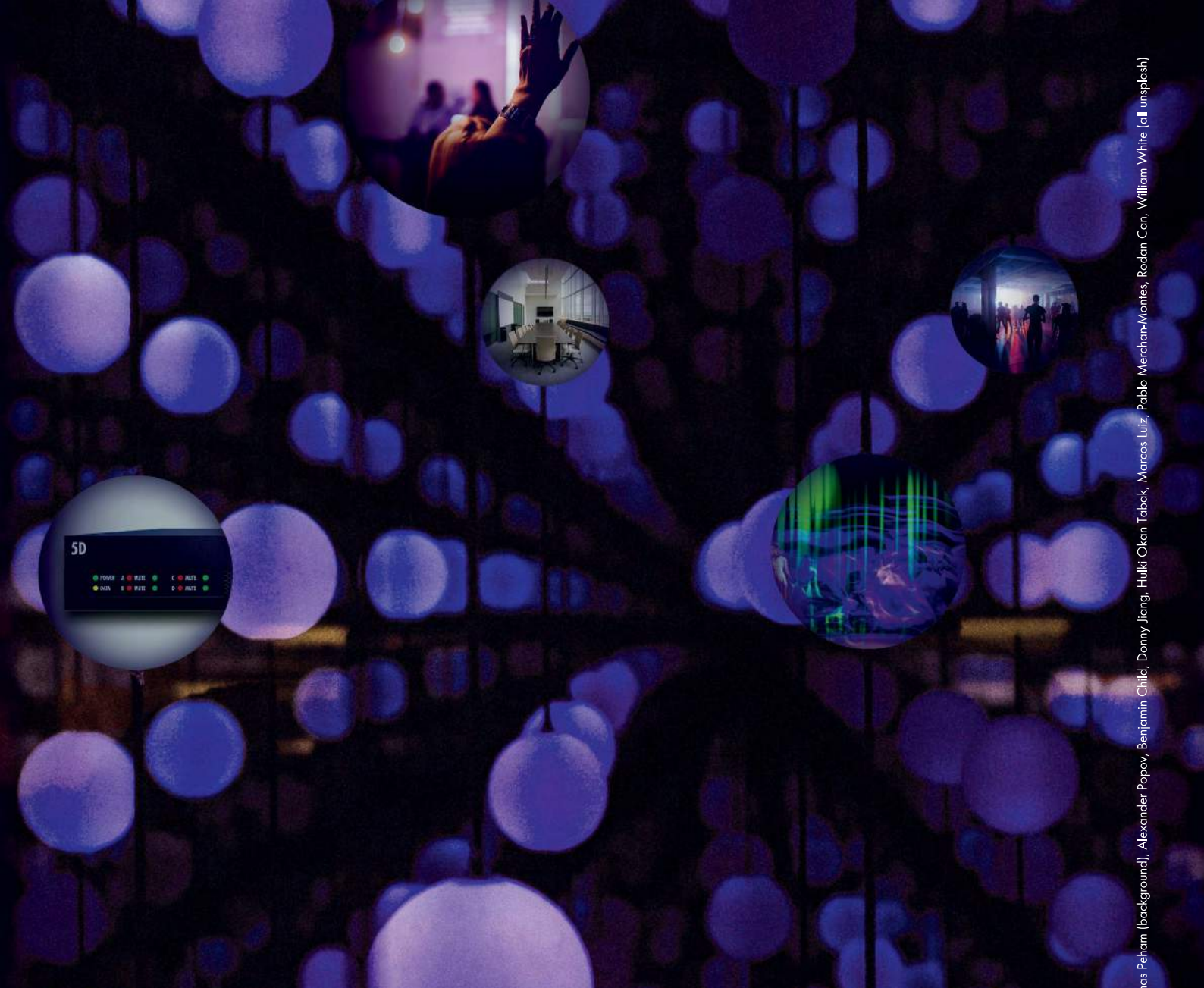
During the COVID-19 downturn The P.A. People also added 16 Movecat PROstage+ 1000kg hoists with 36m chains to their rental rigging inventory. "I first saw the PROstage+ hoists a few years ago," said Chris Dodds, Managing Director of The P.A. People. "They are significantly lighter than any other D8+ hoist on the market. Around 85kg for a one-tonne D8+ hoist with 36m of its unique 'D' shaped chain is remarkable. It was a simple decision to add them to our rental fleet."

"We are delighted to appoint The P.A. People as our new Australian and New Zealand distributor," commented Peter Streicher, CEO for Movecat. "Movecat has a large installed base of chain hoists and control systems around Australia and New Zealand. The P.A. People have the knowledge and understanding to represent our product and to support our existing and new customers. We look forward

to a long and productive relationship with The P.A. People."

Movecat provide a complete range of chain motor products and hoisting control systems from the entry level ECO-X range, though the D8+ PROstage+ and PLUS-X range to the OMK BVG-C1 compliant and VMK variable speed models - along with load monitoring systems and their SIL3 compliant I-motion control systems.

The P.A. People are able to provide system integration and full automation solutions and will soon carry a broad range of Movecat products and spare parts in their Sydney office. Their Venue Engineering team includes factory-trained Movecat technicians and service personnel, who are able to provide design assistance, periodic maintenance, certification and ad-hoc callout services.



Photos: Thomas Peham (background), Alexander Popov, Benjamin Child, Donny Jiang, Huki Okan Tabak, Marcos Luiz, Pablo Merchán-Montes, Rodan Can, William White (all unsplash)

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Reference Hoists

Following on from The P.A. People's recent acquisition of the TheatreQuip business, the team have been busy creating a unique range of motorised hoists designed to span a range of applications, from a simple bar in a school auditorium through to the most demanding professional theatre installation.

The new range will be known as Reference, with each product meticulously designed and independently certified to comply with Australian Standards and with the new EN17206 Standard "Entertainment Technology - Machinery for stages and other production areas".

"When it comes to safety in hoisting and winching systems, especially those in theatre spaces which invariably require the suspension of loads above people, we regard it as our duty of care to ensure that we follow the most rigorous of standards," commented Andrew

Mathieson, Chief Engineer at The P.A. People. "The safety requirements of the 2021 edition of the Australian Standard (AS1418) have been relaxed to the point where an appropriate level of safety for a theatrical hoist may not always be realised by complying with this standard alone. We have decided to continue designing and certifying our hoisting products to comply with the 2002 requirements for Special Lifting Applications. This approach exceeds the requirements of the more recent version of AS1418, and ensures we deliver the most rigorous safety outcomes."

The Reference range will include a series of drum hoists that span capacities from 350kg up to 1,800kg and drifts in excess of 20m, alongside the next generation of pile-winding hoists.

The first model from the TheatreQuip family of hoists was on display at Integrate. The

TQP-K650/12 is a novel balanced drive eight-line pile-wind hoist rated at 650kg @ 12m/minute. It has a redundant double-braking system, a certified 4-pole safety limit switch and encoder, slack wire detection, and load monitoring. With a range of unique features including self-balancing twin chain drives, large stepless piles, symmetrical mounting and a simple cable reeving system, the new Reference TQP-K650/12 Pile Hoist is set to become the new standard for pile hoists in the region.

In October at the ENTECH trade show, TheatreQuip will also launch its TQD-A750/12 drum hoist. The TQD-A750/12 is a six wire zero fleet moving carriage drum hoist, rated at 750kg, with a 12m drift and operating at 12m/minute. It features a redundant double-braking system with a full load failsafe brake on the motor and a second silent brake on the drum, a certified 4-pole safety limit switch and encoder, cross and slack wire detection and load monitoring. Higher speed and longer drift variants of the hoist will also be available for special applications.

For further details please contact info@theatrequip.com.au or venueengineering@papeople.com.au

"Both models are in production now, and The P.A. People are taking orders for delivery later in the year."



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CHANNEL NINE & THREE QUARTERS

Is a music production really just the sum-total of its individual audio channels? Or should we be reconsidering the magical space between those channels – the ‘human crosstalk’ of musical interaction? When we track everything as a series of individual overdubs we’re missing out on a huge aspect of musical performance: the complex, subtle interplay that exists between musicians. Or do we ascribe no value any more to this musical exchange? We need to talk...

Some of the producers and engineers I know seem more concerned with phase relationships between microphones than they are with musical relationship between players! Maybe it’s because we can analyse phase; even run a tape measure out to mics if necessary... but how do we quantify the complex human relationships between musicians? Basically, we can’t... and consequently, don’t.

But having no scale of measure for it, separate tracks on which to record it, nor the ability to quantify how much is present in a room at any given time, doesn’t mean the magical mojo (or vibe) between players doesn’t exist, or worse, has no value. On the contrary; live recordings of multiple musicians can bring a song to life in ways that a series of individual overdubs can never hope to replicate. Whether or not we care about this mojo’s absence from a recording, or perhaps more importantly, can

hear the difference, is the real issue at play here.

If we like the way a song sounds when it comes together one bolt at a time, then fine; I guess live performances don’t really matter in that circumstance. But I would assert that ‘live takes’ (with two or more musicians) can add an unquantifiable X-factor to almost any production, irrespective of its style or genre. Saying that it’s not relevant to a production without even trying it is often just a veiled attempt to deflect focus away from another issue like, for example, that the studio lacks a decent recording space, or the band has never played well together!

Like dark matter, the physical space between performing musicians is an invisible gravitational force that binds music together. When we capture it well, it’s a magical thing. For the players involved, live performances in

the studio are often far more exciting, gratifying and memorable than sitting in a booth playing along to a click track ever was. In part, this is what you capture in the room when a group of musicians perform together; not just sound waves, but their own memories of the event.

Home Suite Home

Probably the greatest loss ever inflicted upon music in the last 30 years was the demise of the large commercial recording studio. Although the ability of a band to track a live performance in a purpose-built space was expensive and came with its own list of limitations, not least of which was money, at least it was an option at one’s disposal back then. And it counted for something... in many cases, crucially.

Meanwhile, in the home recording epoch we live in today, live performances have mostly

been replaced by overdubbing, in some cases endless amounts of it. That's not to say there wasn't plenty of overdubbing in the past, or that no-one tracks as a live band anymore. Obviously, that still happens; just not anywhere near as often as it did in the past.

Why it happens is the real question. People assert it's because live performances always involved too many compromises: imperfect takes, too much crosstalk between microphones, not enough time to record the one great take, etc. And of course, all of that is true... still is. But the real issues at play now are more about the fundamental lack of space, the cost of building a studio that's quiet, and the dearth of recording equipment sufficient to capture a room full of acoustic and electric instruments. That's what has killed off the live take.

But if you think I'm here to preach for the return of the commercial studio, replete with all its accoutrement, smoke and mirrors, you'd be wrong. I'm merely trying to remind everyone that live studio recording, even if it's just two people in the room, can add an edge to the music you're producing that no gear, plug-in, mix wizardry or editing can ever match. When you're not capturing the aural effects of this dark matter that exists between musicians, you're simply rendering one track at a time and foregoing everything that might have otherwise existed, or been sparked into life, by the live interplay between musicians. An opportunity wasted in many cases...

And the losses are incalculable in so many respects. Not only does the loss relate directly to how the music is performed, but also how it's arranged and developed in the first place.

Now of course, I'm not trying to lobby for everything to be recorded like it was back in the '60s and '70s, or to claim that every style of music or every individual's musical circumstance should be thrown into question. Not at all.

But neither is it cool to argue that the ad-hoc arrangement style, individual overdubs and the 'develop-the-music-one-overdub-at-a-time' philosophy is always better. When producers or engineers try to run the argument past me that performing a song live in the studio only adds technical headaches to the equation, that's when I arc up. To say that live takes are anachronistic, too hard, or merely a quaint approach to recording, is rubbish, mostly asserted by people who don't know any better.

The New Model

But anyway, here we are... at home, looking at the all-too-familiar walls. Most of us are recording in our own spaces now whether we're happy with this arrangement or not, and indeed, whole generations of musicians have known no other way. Moreover, the approach has countless positive benefits I can't begin to list here that make recording in a professional studio seem like a gigantic waste of money.

But ponder this for a moment. Like the shift from working in an office to working from home that so many experienced recently, there's a reason why musicians moved to home recording, and it wasn't just about revolutionary new technology or saving money. On the contrary, it was about spending it, in some cases far more than what it might have cost to enjoy countless sessions in the big studio down the road.

When enough companies realised they could sell every single musician a microphone instead of having them pay good money to stand in front of one in a commercial studio, it was all over for the big recording spaces. Like the planet-killing asteroid that wiped out the dinosaurs, the large studio was made extinct by the thousands of individuals who bought their own gear, turned their houses into studios, their partners into receptionists (whether they liked it or not), and their musical passion into a low-paid recording career. And did they save money? In many cases they spent 10 times more... (and I should know. I'm one of them!)

From that moment on almost no-one who sold professional studio equipment wanted to promote the idea that recording as a band in a big, quiet studio was cool, because the recording space was the one thing they couldn't sell you. They wanted everyone to buy their own setup for the obvious fact that it would grow their market a thousand-fold. Why try to sell 400 expensive microphones to studios when you can sell 400,000 to individuals?

The world of recorded music is the home studio now, with very few exceptions... even for some of the biggest acts in the world. Every company that sells you stuff tries to convince you that everything they sell and everything you own now is better (and 100 times cheaper) than anything that existed 30 years ago. And hey, in many respects that's true, apart from one: none of them can sell you a big, quiet space where you and your friends, or the band you're working with, can have a memorable night where you knock four songs right out of the park. It's a luxury that most of us can no longer afford, which is a pity.

I have an (unproven) theory about this that links the world of endless overdubbing back to the live take: that people who do endless overdubs in the pursuit of the right song arrangement are often seeking out the dark matter of live performances without even realising it.

Particularly when a song is born in the studio out of thin air and the arrangement doesn't yet exist, the tendency is for the production of that song to begin almost immediately, regardless.

Rather than develop the arrangement first (assuming that's appropriate) there's an immediate impulse to start tracking the first things that spring to mind. And hey, there's nothing wrong with that impulse, per se – I do it myself all the time. But there's occasionally

a severe downside to this methodology, and it's this...

You record the first impulse and it seems cool, exciting in fact. From there we're onto the next thing that springs to mind, and then the next... and so on. Eventually however, though not always, we find ourselves trapped in a maze of overdubs, none of which are necessarily great for the song, and many of which don't sit particularly well together. The next endeavour is to dive deep into editing, cutting parts, rearranging the performances and cutting up countless takes on playlists. Lots of time can be soaked up diving down this rabbit hole, sometimes for no great outcome.

Is this necessarily the best approach? Sometimes it is, sure. In many cases there's no other option. But if you spend days, weeks or months working like this, who's paying for it? You? I thought computers were supposed to make things faster, cheaper and better? Hmm...

So maybe now, in an ironic twist of fate, we've spent far too long on the song, we're no closer to knowing what the arrangement is or how the song should best come together. We've overdubbed 'til we're square-eyed... and yet somehow we remain convinced it's the only way.

Sounds like it might have been quicker (and in some cases cheaper too) to develop the song's arrangement with some like-minded mates, and record the song live... as a band.

Just saying...



Andy Stewart owns and operates The Mill studio in Victoria, a world-class production, mixing and mastering facility. He's happy to respond to any pleas for pro audio help... contact him at: andy@themill.net.au or visit: www.themillstudio.com.au



MEETINGS 2022

NZ events business booms as Auckland fights to retain access to historic venue

At the same time as New Zealand's national events trade show MEETINGS 2022 connected a record number of exhibitors with over four hundred buyers, including over one hundred from Australia, suppliers in Auckland went to court to prevent the loss of the iconic Auckland Showgrounds as an exhibition venue.

New Zealand takes off again as a business events destination

A post-MEETINGS 2022 survey by Business Events Industry Aotearoa (BEIA) showed \$107.5 million worth of business was provisionally secured during the two-day exhibition held at Te Pae Christchurch, an over forty percent increase on MEETINGS 2021 with four in five of all buyers saying they were booking business as a result of the event.

BEIA Chief Executive Lisa Hopkins says the numbers reflect the skyrocketing popularity of Aotearoa New Zealand as a business events destination and showed the huge demand for face-to-face meetings in inspirational settings, "This is an extraordinary result and speaks highly to the quality of the exhibitors and buyers who travelled from around New Zealand and Australia to Christchurch. Aotearoa New Zealand is wowing event organisers with cutting-edge new infrastructure across the country, air connectivity which continues to expand every month, incredibly diverse regional character,

strong cultural values, and innovative sustainability practices."

With pre-departure testing ending and international visitors returning, New Zealand firmly planted a stake in the ground in the global market for conferences, meetings, trade shows, and incentive travel. Yet at the same time the stark contrast between facilities in New Zealand cities was laid bare. With Te Pae Christchurch Convention Centre now open, and Tākina in Wellington set to open next year, Auckland lags behind. The New Zealand International Convention Centre (NZICC) remains under construction and the potential loss of Auckland Showgrounds as an exhibition venue was grabbing news headlines as MEETINGS 2022 came to a close.

Battle for the future of Auckland Showgrounds

A year prior to MEETINGS 2022, the Auckland Agricultural Pastoral and Industrial Shows Board that ran the historic Auckland ASB Showgrounds went into voluntary liquidation with debts estimated at \$4.6 million due to the impact of Covid-19, coupled with increasing rent being charged by its landlord the Cornwall Park Trust Board (CPTB).

CPTB gained ownership of the showgrounds and issued a media statement announcing that the venue was set to continue operating

as an events and exhibition centre under a one-year license agreed between CPTB and the NZ Exhibition & Events Company (NZEEC). CPTB proposed that this would minimise disruption to exhibitors and the public whilst a long-term solution was sought. CPTB chair Adrienne Young-Cooper cited it a "tremendous outcome" and NZEEC director Mark Frankham, who had managed the showgrounds for the previous operator, reassured exhibitors it was business as normal.

A year later and the license ended with CPTB embroiled in a High Court battle with a local exhibition operator fighting to stop the new owners from leasing the showgrounds to Auckland firm Xytech Studio Management. Xytech run X3 Studios and would use the venue for filming activities, potentially jeopardising Auckland's multi-million dollar events and exhibitions industry. The High Court challenge was brought by XPO Exhibitions, the largest hirer of the Auckland Showgrounds, who argued a forty-year-old statute, the Cornwall Park Endowment & Recreation Act, dictated that the eastern portion of the showgrounds, about five hectares of the eight hectare site, were to be protected for use in hosting exhibitions and events.

XPO's Managing Director Brent Spillane noted that Auckland Showgrounds had received a large amount of rate payer funding and there



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Brent Spillane



Lisa Hopkins



were no other centres that could provide the same facilities, including load-bearing floors which were essential for some trade shows, air reticulation systems and large access ways. Even when the NZICC was finished in 2027, it would still only provide about half of the area of Auckland Showgrounds, potentially resulting in the disappearance of the Food Show, Home Show, Easter Show and many other industry-specific shows from New Zealand's largest city.

Justice Peters agreed with Spillane, ruling that the CPTB must stick to the intended purpose of that portion when entering into any lease, "Any filming or other activities on the eastern portion must be secondary to that use," she said in her judgement. Peters acknowledged the financial burden the CPTB had suffered as a result of Covid-19. Scores of events and exhibitions were cancelled, and the Auckland Agricultural Pastoral and Industrial Shows Board went into liquidation after being unable to pay a major rent increase proposed by

CPTB. She recognised that CPTB needs to pay for the upkeep of Cornwall Park which is not publicly funded, the only sources of income being leasehold properties near the park and the showground's lease. As a result, she put her final ruling on hold for a short period to give CPTB, Xytech and the events industry a chance to see if they can work around the eastern portion provision.

Spillane declared the judgement a moral victory for the events industry and the many SME business exhibitors whose livelihoods had been at risk. He implored CPTB to get on with the task of leasing the site to the remaining compliant lease bid option on the table from Coast Group, a major player in the industry including Carlton Party Hire, Exhibition Hire Services, and Showlight & Power.

In a statement following the ruling Spillane dismissed CPTB's claims that overdue 'scheduled maintenance' for the site currently prevents use as an exhibition venue. Spillane

says his company XPO and other event organisers have been primed and ready to pay more than \$1.35m in venue rent for a range of events in the coming six weeks alone if CPBT would simply re-open the gates, a figure that would pay for the entirety of urgent maintenance needed on what are currently certified compliant exhibition halls, "What is astonishing to our loyal exhibitor SME businesses is that while these buildings remain vacant, this substantial revenue for the venue will evaporate along with the recreational enjoyment of many tens of thousands of business and consumer visitors missing out on shows such as the Auckland Food Show this year."

In the meantime, XPO has been forced to relocate two smaller shows, The Baby Show and Spring Gift & Homewares Fair, to other venues around Auckland. Larger upcoming events have no such alternative in the Auckland area and The Auckland Food Show recently announced it would postpone to July 2023.



Spillane's disappointment is tangible, "The upcoming shows normally scheduled at this venue are essentially sold out and visitor demand for our events has never been stronger, yet the venue remains closed. Our recent shows held prior to CPBT's 30 June shutdown of the site had record attendances."

Spillane himself has just returned from the US where he says exhibitions and events are similarly back and booming, "As an esteemed industry colleague pointed out, Trade Shows and Exhibitions have survived world wars, the bubonic plague, the Spanish Flu and many other epidemics and pandemics. Two decades

ago, trade shows were going to be wiped out by the internet. They were not replaced by Gutenberg's printing press, not radio, nor TV, not social media and they will continue as they have for eight centuries. People are craving a return to events. New Zealand needs this vital exhibition venue infrastructure back online as it has been for over 150 years."

Will the shows go on – or not?

With a favourable High Court ruling under their belt, both Spillane and the events industry remain confident that sense will prevail and a lease to a compliant events-

focused lessee will eventually unfold. "With the greatest respect to Cornwall Park Trust and its esteemed Board and to the legacy of Sir John Logan-Campbell, it's time to re-open the Showgrounds gates and let our communities reconnect with live events. Let the shows go on!"

MEETINGS 2022 culminated with the announcement that MEETINGS 2023 would be held in Wellington for the first time, at the capital city's new-generation venue Tākina - Wellington Conference & Exhibition Centre. Meanwhile Auckland still waits to hear if it will retain its own celebrated exhibition space.

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LIZ ANDERSON

TRAILBLAZING DOMIE IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Liz Anderson began her career in the public service working for the tax department. In order to get promoted, she was going to have to go to uni, so that's what she did. She never finished her degree and never returned to the tax department, but her involvement in student theatre set her up for what would be a long career. Liz was the first female dome operator to work at Her Majesty's Theatre, Melbourne in the Seventies. In April 2022, on the closing night of Moulin Rouge's Melbourne season, she faded out for the final time.

That first production that Liz worked on in 1978 was A Chorus Line. Famously, this production is always performed on a bare stage, the only 'set' a line drawn across the floor. Without changing set pieces to distract an audience the lighting is very exposed and has a lot of work to do. Liz had no experience on a dome. She was told, "You've got a week. If you can do it, you're in and if you can't, you're out." Liz says it's just as well she was thrown in the deep end, as doming is the kind of thing you have an aptitude for. "You can do it or you can't. I was lucky; I could do it."

The qualities of a good dome op, she says, are good concentration and a good memory. While it is called 'follow spotting', you're not meant to be following performers, you need to be on them. If you have good muscle memory you are better positioned to be able to remember a performer's blocking and anticipate their movements. Concentration is key as if an operator starts listening to the dialogue on stage or their mind wanders entirely, as is perhaps likely to happen well into a months-long season, they can miss a cue. "For every show I've ever done there are parts I've never

seen as I was busy focussing on what I was doing."

A good aesthetic doesn't go astray as you need to be able to appreciate the design and your light's role in it. You need to bring your lamp up in time with the lighting state and to make your levels match. While it's easy enough to bring up a lamp to fifty per cent, different performers can mean that one night's fifty per cent is the next night's sixty-five per cent. "Some people have very reflective complexions and they look a lot brighter, while other people tend to suck

“The best thing you can do when you make a mistake is try to make it not look like a mistake. Try to make it look intentional.”



Come From Away

the light in. It's hard to balance the brightness when you have two people next to each other with different skin qualities. It's possible to have two lamps at the same intensity but one looks duller than the other."

This is one example of why, while there are now moving lights that can track and follow performers, a set of eyes and a brain will never be able to be entirely replaced. A lighting desk won't know to adjust for the fact that a swing with a different skin-tone has stepped in for the night. Liz acknowledges that the performer tracking technology has its place. It's rare nowadays for rock concerts to make use of truss operators. But no matter how

good the technology gets you always need a person there who can respond on the fly and fix problems.

This is what happened to Liz and her fellow domes on opening night of *Come From Away*. One spot went down pre-show. Stage management held off opening for as long as possible while they tried to fix it, but eventually the show had to go on. The operator whose dome had broken remained in the dome room on comms and the two other operators had to attempt to cover the work of three. "I don't really remember what happened that night, but we had a few stiff drinks at the afterparty that's for sure."

While on opening night for *Come From Away* there would have been a lighting designer and director sitting in the audience, likely having kittens, it's important for operators to remember when things go wrong that most audience members are seeing the show for the first time. "The best thing you can do when you make a mistake is try to make it not look like a mistake. Try to make it look intentional."



At the Melbourne production of Come From Away L-R Steph Cantrell, Kareena Dhaliwal, Alasdair Mitchell-Ferguson, AJ Hemmingsen, Liz Anderson, Zen Fletcher, and Hugh Hamilton.



On the set of Book of Mormon. Top Row L-R Ashlee Hood, Erika Yeonhwa Kim, Ryan Sturgeon, Tracey Baird, Madeline Allan. Bottom Row L-R Scotty Madden, Lisa Stockdale, Liz Anderson.

This skill is one of the instincts that Liz has developed over her decades of work. The parts that aren't inherent qualities, but are learnt, end up feeling second-nature for a seasoned dome operator. Irising in and out to keep the beam consistent as performers move up and down stage, avoiding hitting set pieces, or moving in time with the music. Although, no matter how skilled, at the end of the day an operator must above all listen. The job is to realise a designer's vision, so even if you think you know better, you do as they say.

When asked of her career highlights, Liz has many to list. She was witness to Australian

history in the eighties when she was working on Peter Allen's one man show Up in One. On closing night of the Melbourne season Allen performed I Still Call Australia Home for the first time. Liz recalls thinking, "Well, this is going to go down well."

The most technical show she has operated on was Matilda the Musical. The dome plot was extremely busy and made use of every colour frame and the extra dipstick slot (a separate gobo slot on the back of the colour magazine on Lycian spots). As a fan of Queen's music Liz fondly recalls We Will Rock You. Moulin Rouge was an apt swansong as it included a lot of

featured spot work, such as irisng in and out with hard edges. It was also a very fun show. "That's what people need at the moment, a bit of escapism and a bit of fun."

Liz is now looking forward to being able to enjoy going to the theatre after years of not having the time to fit it in. She's planning on seeing both Hamilton and Six the Musical. "It's going to take a long time to enjoy it in the way it's intended. I will have to learn to sit back and take in the experience and concentrate on the performers. You can miss a lot of the dialogue when you're focussed on the lighting states."



On the set of Harry Potter and The Cursed Child. L-R Back: Aimee Newton-Greene, Lisa Stockdale, Liz Anderson, Front - Nathaniel Sy



Come From Away



"That's what people need at the moment, a bit of escapism and a bit of fun."

Peter Allen

INTEGRATE IT'S THE LITTLE THINGS

It was a bit of a gamble for everyone, Integrate 2022 at Sydney's ICC August 17 to 19. A gamble for the exhibitors, who pay serious money to be there, a gamble for those who chose not to exhibit, and also for those who chose to attend. Or not. Despite people's personal lives having returned more or less to normal post-COVID, business decisions and business travel have a longer path to walk back.

As such, Integrate 2022 was actually quite a small exhibition compared to pre-pandemic. The co-location with the Security Exhibition & Conference was a clever tactic; it made both shows look much bigger than they were, even if most on both sides had no professional interest in the other. We knew our eyes were being deceived to a certain extent, but we didn't mind.

And we didn't mind because we were all just so damn happy to be there. It was the vibe of the thing. It was good for the soul and the mind to catch up with people that we in many cases hadn't seen since 2019. I heard this all over the show floor; "So great to see you! Haven't seen you since..." There was back slapping, hand shaking, and smiles all round. "We really needed this," was a sentiment expressed universally.

Days one and two were extremely busy, with high-quality people and conversations. I'd say that it felt just as busy as the recent InfoComm exhibition in Las Vegas. Exhibitors and attendees were absolutely feeling their lack of practice at the end of day two; "I've lost my match fitness" was the common refrain.

Supply chain conversations were...interesting. Anyone with reliable supply and stock was very, very vocal about it. Anyone who was facing shortages and long lead times was "actively managing" the situation and really didn't want to elaborate any further.

It was all about the little things; the smile on a familiar face, the respect between competitors that each had pulled through the last two and half years, the honest conversations about what we've all been through. For me

personally, it was little things like the airport being busy, the airline lounge being full, the flight schedule normal, and the planes running on time. As someone who has spent a lot of my professional life flying between Sydney and Melbourne, having this part of my routine finally return to pre-pandemic predictability was mentally soothing.

In terms of gear on show, the industry's ongoing struggle for parts and supply and the recent spate of overseas show and online releases meant nothing on the floor was particularly new or surprising. What did get my attention were the literal little things – tiny bits of tech that are often overshadowed by the big ticket items. Here's my rundown of my show highlights; the small, useful, clever, affordable, and surprising Little Things.

Evoko Kleeo Desk Manager

Integrating with the rest of Evoko's room and office management system, as well as Microsoft Outlook, this cute little desk manager signals in colours and text if a hot desk or other is occupied, booked, or free, and by who. In fitting with the times, you don't have to touch it; it has a proximity sensor, RFID, and is connected to the network.



Amber's Richard Neale



Nicolaudie Stick KE-2 and CW-4

Nicolaudie Architectural Stick

With Swiss lighting control brand Nicolaudie having landed at Eventec after their acquisition of LSW Imports, there was a lot of new gear for the team to show off. The Stick family of DMX controllers are five wall mounted controllers with easy Ethernet or Wi-Fi connectivity for controlling RGB and RGBW lighting systems. You can recall 36 presets, or create your own colours by scrolling!

Blustream Dante Encoder/Decoders

Dante chip supply, or the lack of, was the talk of yet another trade show. Manufacturers who can supply, either by sheer market size and buying power, or agile rat cunning, are very keen to point out they have stock. Australia's own Blustream, distributed by Jands, are one of them, and definitely in the cunning category. They've basically made their own AVIO adapters. The two Martyn is holding here are the DA11ADE Decoder (Dante in, analog out) and DA11AEN Encoder (analog in, Dante out). Their most noticeable feature is their plentiful existence, and the fact you can buy them!



Blustream's Martyn Shirley with Dante Encoder and Decoder

JBL Control Contractor SLP

These Red Dot Design Award winners use the cones and drivers from JBL Control Contractor ceiling speakers and mount them in a cool, sleek surface-mount package. There's little on the market like them, and they give off an ultra-cool 1980s Bang & Olufsen high-end hi-fi vibe.

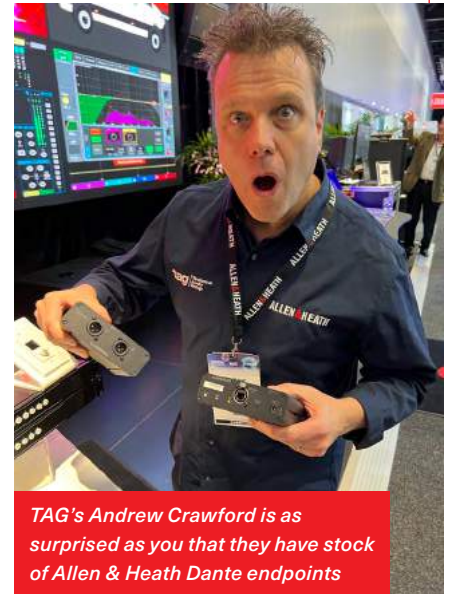


Sennheiser Team Connect Intelligent Speaker

This little collaboration system is capable of some pretty clever moves. With seven beamforming mics and an omnidirectional speaker, it integrates into the Microsoft Teams environment, and can provide automatic transcription of meetings with up to 10 participants in 34 languages. The Microsoft Cortana voice assistant built in means you don't even have to touch it.

Allen & Heath Dante I/O

Along with all their rack and stagebox options, Allen & Heath make three small Dante endpoints in a DI box form factor; the 2 analog out DT02, two mic pre in DTO, and 2 in, 2 out DT22 with Euroblock connectors. Andrew Crawford here is obviously excited that TAG have plentiful stock of these items, which is not something everyone can say right now!



TAG's Andrew Crawford is as surprised as you that they have stock of Allen & Heath Dante endpoints

Yamaha AG01 and ZG01

It was nice to see Yamaha Commercial Audio back at a trade show after a long hiatus. While their stand was displaying their mighty Rivage PM Series mixing desks, in reality, if you want to buy one, you're looking at a mighty wait. In true Yamaha fashion, there were two devices on display that made you say "I didn't know Yamaha made things like that!", which is a bit silly when you realise the Japanese company also manufactures things like golf clubs and kitchens.

The AG01 is a USB microphone aimed solidly at the live streaming market. It's got an external input, built-in DSP and mixer, loopback, and can connect directly to mobile devices via USB-C. The ZG01 is a live streaming mixer for gamers. It includes 2 in and 1 out HDMI ports and can function as a 2 input HDMI switcher and HDMI conversion adapter with audio extraction. Audio capabilities include surround processing to stereo, and flexible and easy routing for game and voice audio.



Astera Pixel Brick Rear



Astera Pixel Brick Front

Astera PixelBrick

Less than 10cm square, the Astera PixelBrick has any many uses as a designer could imagine. They can bolt together to form shapes for cool looks. Because they're battery powered they can go anywhere and do anything. The ones in this pic are wearing one of their many accessories – the BrickDome. Control via the app, wireless or wired DMX, or the control panel on the back.



Yamaha AG01



Yamaha ZG01

AUDIO BRANDS AUSTRALIA

Optimal Audio

Optimal Audio is part of the Focusrite Group, which includes Focusrite, Focusrite Pro, Martin Audio, ADAM Audio, Sequential, Linea Research, Novation and Ampify Music. With a mission statement to "enliven the rather traditional and unnecessarily complex world of commercial audio" the range concentrates on the hospitality, retail and institutional markets, offering an easy-to-install and use suite of integrated products. Pictured here are the Zone audio controllers with DSP, ZonePad controllers, SmartAmp amplifiers with DSP, Cuboid wall-mount loudspeakers, and Up ceiling speakers. The whole range is tied together with the elegant and simple WebApp.



Optimal Audio Cuboid speakers



Optimal Audio SmartAmp amplifiers with DSP



Optimal Audio Zone Series



Optimal Audio Up ceiling speakers



Optimal Audio ZonePad controllers and WebApp

AVPro Edge MXNet

With the AVoIP sector hit hard with supply issues, AVPro Edge is one of the brands that is very keen to point out they have stock. The MXNet range includes encoders, decoders, control and its very own preconfigured switches, which are also quite importantly in stock and ready to ship! There's also an extremely impressive 10 year warranty for peace of mind.



AVPro Edge MXNet video wall



AVPro Edge MXNet switch



AVPro Edge MXNet range

AUDIO VISUAL DISTRIBUTORS

Absen LED

Absen's Aurora Series are made for DOOH (Digital out-of-home) applications, including advertising, wayfinding, and signage. These panels are specially modified for the Australian market, and include serious UV-proofing and weather resistance. They're capable of kicking out 10,000 nits, and come with a five year warranty under Australian conditions!

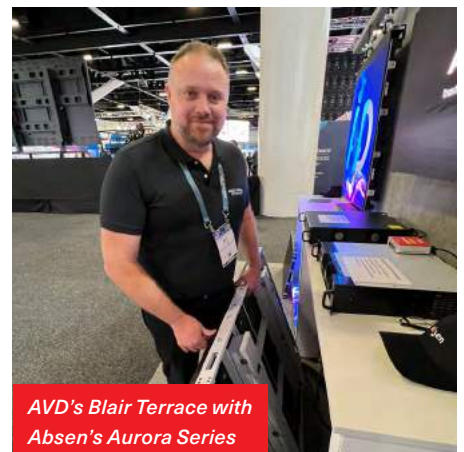
The Absenicon is an all-in-fine pitch LED display for conference rooms, reception areas, and auditoriums. Available in four standard sizes of 110", 138", 165" and 220", the range supports up to 4K/UltraHD resolution and a contrast ratio of 5,000.



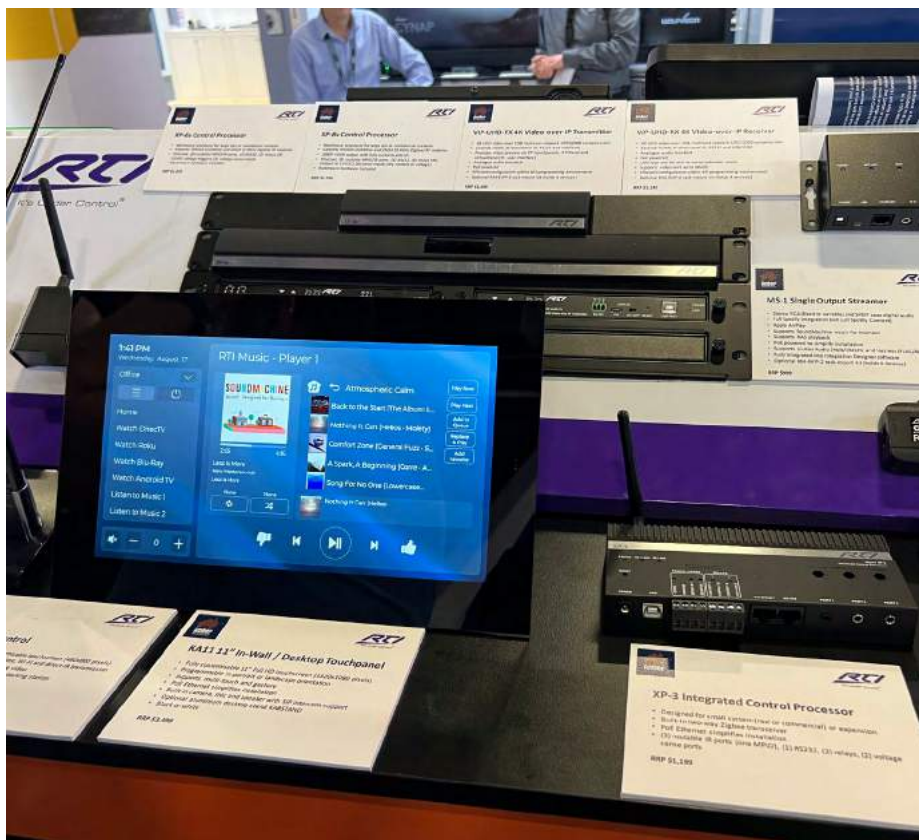
Absenicon Series



Absen PL Series



AVD's Blair Terrace with Absen's Aurora Series

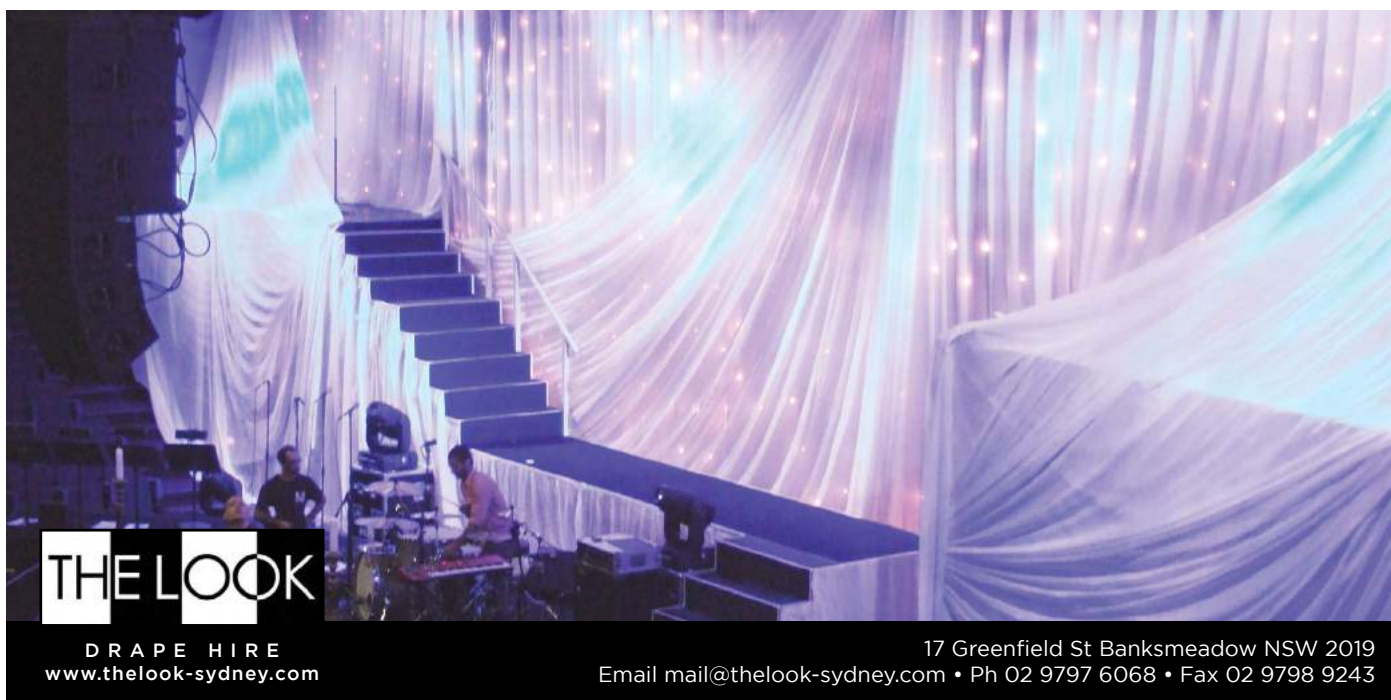


WyreStorm NHD-110-RX-S with Sealoc

We're suckers for a novelty tradeshow display, especially if there's water involved. The WyreStorm NHD-110-RX-S is an AV endpoint decoder that supports either H.264 or H.265 video encoding/decoding of up to 1080p60Hz content. The NHD-110-RX can natively process up to a 16x16 video wall. The reason it's sitting on an aquarium with water pouring over it is because it's been treated with Sealoc's Weatherloc technology to resist water, dust, salt, acidic and more. Perfect for the next time you have to put a networked AV system into a Surf Lifesavers club at the beach.

RTI Music

RTI are well known for home control and pro AV automation, but they're currently making a big noise in music streaming, which is a must-have for a lot of commercial installs. The MS-3 or MS-1 Music Streamers deliver hi-res audio (24bit/192kHz) with a tap on a touch panel, remote, or the RTI control app on a phone. RTI Music supports multiple independent sources and allows for three concurrent streams. Streaming sources include Pandora, Spotify, iHeart Radio, SiriusXM, SiriusXM for Business, SoundMachine, TuneIn, Qobuz, and BBC Sounds. The AirPlay interface enables streaming from Apple Music and Amazon music. The Music Queue features Play Now, Play Later, and Play Soon options to build an on-the-fly song queue while the Favorites playlists integrates songs from multiple services and local devices.



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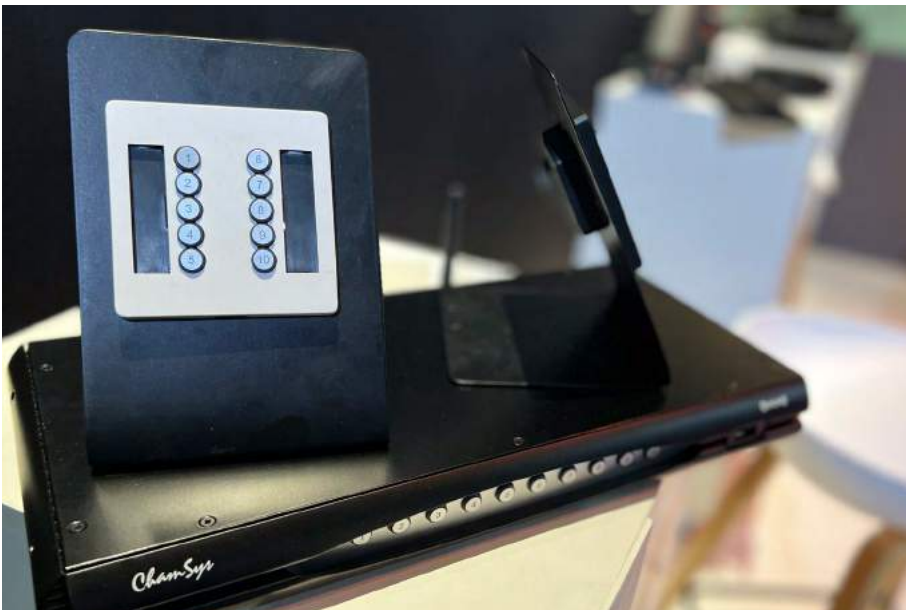
Cameo ZENIT W600 D-SMD

Cameo ZENIT W600 D-SMD

This IP65 rated unit claims to be the “world’s brightest strobe” according to local distributor AVECorp. It’s capable of 90,000 lm luminous flux and was barely turned on at Integrate lest it blind everyone in proximity. Also, this explains the terrible photo. Apparently it’s been specced on Bruno Mars’ current tour, so we should be seeing it on riders soon.

ChamSys QuickQ Rack

QuickQ Rack is a small, rack mountable version of the QuickQ console designed for installations. It features the same operating system as QuickQ series consoles, but is designed to operate as a remote system without physical user control. Featuring 10 playback/execute buttons on the unit, the QuickQ Rack is ideally paired with 10Scene wall plates. Supporting four universes QuickQ Rack is ideal for installations, control rooms and bars. The unit can be used as a desktop box or rack mounted with the supplied rack ears.



ChamSys QuickQ Rack

LD Systems DQOR

These sleek installation speakers are available as 3”, 5” and 8” versions in black or white. There’s 8 ohm and 70/100V versions with multiple power taps, and they can also be run at 16 ohm. There’s an ingenious slide-and-lock wall mount with concealed integrated connections that means the speaker just slides and snaps into place. The front grille is made of corrosion-resistant aluminium, and the bracket allows you to tilt the angle up to 27° vertically and 45° horizontally.

AVECORP



LD Systems DQOR

BARCO



Barco's Sander Buys with the stunning TruePix

TruePix

Barco are a premium LED manufacturer, and do not do things by halves. The range of TruePix screens are control room, mission critical spec and come in four pixel pitches, from 0.9 to 1.9 mm. Apart from the stunning image

quality, what really impresses is the back-end engineering. A unique mounting system sits independently out from the wall, eliminating the problems caused by walls not actually being straight, which most aren't. Panels can be removed from the display for maintenance

with a push of a button in the control software and float out seamlessly. They go back in just as easily, thanks to excellent design. The clever cabling redundancy is not just dual daisy chain; it's more like a mesh network. Extremely clever stuff!

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MADISONAV

As covered in the 'News' section earlier in this magazine, MadisonAV announced from the show floor that they will be taking on distribution of the top end of JBL's line array range, VTX and VRX. Up to this point, Harman had drawn a line between the installation and live production/retail ranges, with MadisonAV handling the former and CMI Music & Audio the latter. CMI retains access to the BRX line array and new SRX range of powered line source.

AMX Enova DVX-3266-4K

Having only started distributing Harman in 2020, this was MadisonAV's first chance to show off the range at a trade show, and the still-pretty-new AMX Enova DVX-3266-4K made its debut on the stand. It's an all-in-one presentation switcher; a unified audio, video, and control device that replaces the need for numerous individual components and eliminates the integration and reliability challenges that accompany them. In 2RU, it supports 4K60 4:4:4 video, HDMI 2.0, HDCP 2.2, and HDR. The DVX leverages Harman's audio technology with a 120W Crown DriveCore amplifier, audio processing by BSS, and the latest dbx feedback suppression.

JBL Control Contractor

In addition to the nifty SLP models we covered in the intro to this coverage, JBL's Control Contractor series expanded to include the outdoor models pictured here. Those GSB 'mushroom' type subs Rodney's leaning on here are design to be buried in the ground to about halfway up the 'stem' of the 'mushroom', in case you were wondering. Also hanging around (literally) were the new high-powered 68HP two-way pendant loudspeakers that kick out an impressive 114 dB.

Philips 37BDL3050S

This Philips display is so new there is zero information about it anywhere, including on the MadisonAV stand! We did manage to find out that it's a bar type display (obviously) with Android SOC on board, and HDMI loop through. It's very much targeted at retail, and is super fun. And according to this high score graphic, MadisonAV's CEO Ken Kyle is pretty good at Street Fighter.

PTZOptics SuperJoy Controller

Sticking with the video game theme, the PTZOptics SuperJoy may look like the best gaming control device ever, but is in fact a PTZ camera controller. However, just like a game, you can run it in 'hard' or 'easy' mode, depending on your level of experience as an operator, making it great for places like churches who have both tech gurus and kind-hearted but unqualified volunteers operating the equipment. Its HDMI video output provides a 1080p video preview for any camera connected to the local area network, so it can be set up anywhere as a PTZ camera control with low-latency, live video preview.



Harman's Rodney Houston with new outdoor JBL Control Contractor models



New high powered pendants from JBL's Control Contractor series



MadisonAV's Robert Lackey with Rodney Houston and Dan Anderson of Harman with the VTX line array



PTZOptics SuperJoy Controller



AMX DVX-3266-4K



Philips 37BDL3050S

Evolution Wireless Digital

Sennheiser's EW Digital range has...evolved. Now called EW-DX, its capable of supporting hundreds of channels in dense RF environments, and every component is networked and reporting to Control Cockpit, Sennheiser's monitoring and control software. A lot of the new features and improvements are aimed squarely at large-scale users like universities, and there's some really nice touches. For example, The transmitter's screens are e-ink, so all the info stays there when the transmitters are powered off, which they can be set to do on schedule. Transmitters also get paired to their network chargers, so if one goes for a walk and ends up in the wrong charger in the wrong room, Control Cockpit knows and tells you.



Sennheiser EW-DX Digital transmitters



Sennheiser's Jason Grbevski with TeamConnect Ceiling 2

SENNHEISER



Sennheiser EW-DX Digital receivers

JANDS



Jands on the floor



Clear-Com's Peter Fong with the Arcadia Base Station



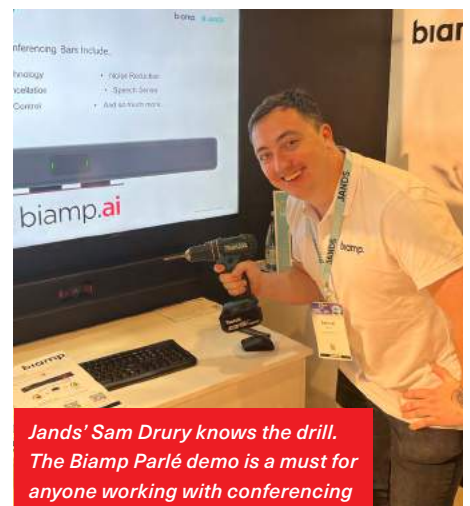
Jacob Mumford with the new MXA920



Robe and ETC upstairs



Jands' Anthony Murdoch, Thomas Kelly, and Nicholas Shaw in the PA and Lighting demo room



Jands' Sam Drury knows the drill. The Biamp Parlé demo is a must for anyone working with conferencing



Blustream IP50-HD

Straddling the divide between Integrate and the Security Exhibition & Conference, Jands' stand sought to unite the integrators who work in both camps. Solutions from Blustream, EV, Shure, Clear-Com, Ampetronic and Furman were all on display.

Upstairs in their own room, live production and hospitality were catered for with lighting and PA that could be showed off and turned up without bothering the neighbours. ETC and Robe lit the room, while you could listen to PAs from small EV systems right up to premium L-Acoustics.

Highlights on the stand included the absolute 'must hear' demonstration of Biamp's Parlé VBC 2500 Conferencing Bar, hosted by Sam Drury, and including the mind-blowing AI trained noise reduction that can do unheard-of things like removing the sound of a power drill in real time.

The new MXA920 ceiling array microphone also got its own demo room, which appropriately, was 'acoustically difficult', just like 95% of real-world meeting rooms. Apart from the fact the MXA920 now also comes in an architect-pleasing round model, Shure have totally updated the algorithms that run the unit, offering a hybrid operating model where the mics can be steered manually, set to automatic, or somewhere in between; it's totally up to the integrator and provides the flexibility to deal with almost anything.

Clear-Com's Peter Fong, Director of Sales, APAC was on hand to show how Arcadia unites the entire universe of comms. Traditional 2-wire and 4-wire systems can interact with wireless, IP, and Dante audio systems. The system can be expanded by simply purchasing licenses to activate FreeSpeak, HelixNet, and Dante ports.

As we mentioned in the intro to this trade show report, Blustream are very proud of the fact that despite ludicrous cost increases for chips (if you can find them) and shipping costs through the roof, they are very much manufacturing as normal and have lots of stock. In particular, their best-selling IP50-HD video, control and KVM endpoint is on the shelves and ready to ship!

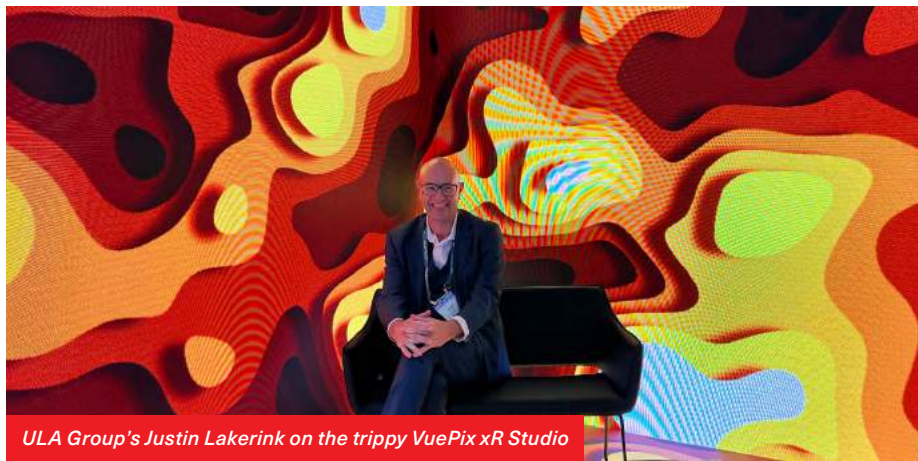
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ULA Group's Justin Lakerink on the trippy VuePix xR Studio



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UV Medico UV222

UV light is dangerous – that's why it gives us skin cancer and kills things. Except when it's at the wavelength of 222 nanometres, when it's harmless to humans but fatal to bacteria and viruses like COVID. UV Medico's Far UV-C lamp consists of a tube filled with krypton chloride gas. This gas has the unique property of emitting UV-C-light at 222 nm when a discharge is applied to it. A unique and patented safety filter in the UV222 blocks dangerous sidebands at 235 nm and 250 nm before they are emitted into the surrounding environment. All of this means you can leave these disinfection lights on anywhere, anytime, with no safety procedures or risks to people.

VuePix xR Studio

It tripped us out in Vegas, and did it again in Sydney. This is VuePix's premium solution for virtual film production, using DB Series panels for the walls and DF Series LED panels for the floor.

VuePix Digital Wallpaper

This LED product is simply beautiful. It's VuePix Infiled's flagship ultra-thin, ultra-high resolution digital LED display, and it shows. With a panel ratio of 16:9 and a pixel pitch ranging from 0.9mm to 3.1mm, the ultra-thin edge thickness and an intuitive slim line mounting system make this a premium solution with premium look and feel.

ACME Pixel Line IP

The really interesting thing about the Pixel Line IP is that it uses Smart Glass Technology to create a filter/frost that you can turn on and off by triggering a DMX channel. They're equipped with 672 x 0.5W RGB LEDs and 112 x 3W Cold White strobe tubes hiding in between the RGBs. The RGB LEDs are divided into 32 sections while the Color White LEDs are divided into 16 sections.

ACME Gemini

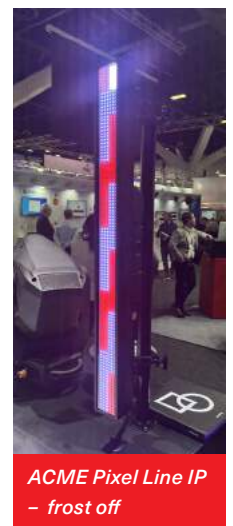
There are apparently 102 of these on tour with Billie Eilish, as I'm informed by ULA Group. The ACME Gemini is strobe and zoom bar, all in one. Pan and Tilt have full movement for infinite loop. Its running 5x60W full-colour LEDs and 36x18W cold white LEDs.



UV Medico - like hand sanitiser, but better



ACME Pixel Line IP - frost on



ACME Pixel Line IP - frost off



ACME Gemini



VuePix Digital Wallpaper

TECHNICAL AUDIO GROUP

Having successfully launched their all-new “five brand Latte glass”, TAG proceeded to fill hundreds of them at their café throughout the show, all ordered via QSC’s Q-SYS on a giant touch panel. One showgoer told me that he reckoned the hardest working person on the entire show floor was TAG’s barista.



A flat white and complimentary copy of CX, please



TAG’s Ewan McDonald points at all the new Q-SYS gear, just out of shot

Audio-Technica ATND1061

Audio-Technica do things a little differently. Their beamforming ceiling array mic isn’t 600mm x 600mm like the other ceiling tile sized arrays, it’s 227mm by 227mm. You can however get a mounting kit to flush mount it to ceiling tile size. You can also surface and VESA mount it. It’s roughly the size of a wireless access point, and I can’t shake the impression that if I stood on it, it would tell me my weight (N.B. DO NOT stand on it).

Q-SYS SPA-Q

SPA-Q, too? QSC’s QSYS “rightsized” network amps are half-U width to fit anywhere they need to go. With GPIO for control, two flex channels (either mic/line inputs or line outputs), and 60 W per channel, the Q-SYS SPAQ 100-2f (two channel) and Q-SYS SPAQ 200-4f (four channel) provides the utility to centralise your processor’s connectivity across more spaces, all within a trusted native Q-SYS network amplifier.



Audio-Technica ATND1061



QSC Q-SYS SPA-Q



Allen & Heath Dante endpoints sitting atop AHM16 and 32 processors

Allen & Heath AHM

We pointed out the availability of the DI-sized Dante endpoints at the start of the piece, and joining them on the stand for the first Australian showing were the new AHM-16 and AHM-32 audio matrix processors. Compatible with A&H’s range of controllers and I/O, AHM processors deploy next-generation FPGA technology and run at 96kHz, bringing Allen & Heath sound quality and sub-millisecond latency to installation. They deliver more processing than the usual open architecture platforms, and include 8-band PEQ, gate, compressor and delay on all input channels, and 8-band PEQ, 30-band GEQ, compressor, ANC, source selector, limiter and delay on all zone outputs.



LAKE BREEZE WINES

A Winery Blossomed From A Family Enterprise

Lake Breeze Wines is an integral part of a long-time, family-run farm enterprise. The farm, based in the South Australian grape growing region of Langhorne Creek, has grown grapes since it was established in the 1880s. It wasn't until one hundred years later that Lake Breeze Wines was established.

Each year Lake Breeze selects only the best 40% of the grapes from the older vines on the estate. The remaining harvest is sold to other wineries.

An Unexpected Business Venture Reveals New Needs

More recently, Lake Breeze almost reluctantly entered the wedding reception market. Visitors fell in love with Lake Breeze's barrel shed and booked it for receptions, but as Venue Manager Ashleigh Hocking shared, it was no small job to accommodate such requests.

"The barrel shed is a part of a working winery, not a reception area. It took days to get the shed ready and to bring in what we needed. Even then, the barrel shed has no climate control, no modern audiovisual capability," Hocking stated. "It has charm and authenticity but not a level of comfort and amenity needed to reliably and comfortably accommodate a wedding reception."

The Lake Breeze function space comfortably accommodates 160 guests banquet style. Although a large space, it still feels warm and inviting. This is attributed to the design and vision of Lake Breeze Wines' owner, Roger Follett. "We really wanted this space to be as flexible as possible," Follett explained. "We have an operable wall to adjust the space to the desired size, but even without it smaller parties are comfortable, and it stills feel intimate."

A big contributor to the intimate feel is the acoustics. Often ignored or minimised, the impact of acoustics in a large function space are profound. The high ceilings and heavy reliance on brick, stone, and timber all add up to an acoustic environment that, if left untreated, would be clamorous in a large event setting.

Bose Professional Creates Superior Audio Suitable for Any Event

The winery awarded the project to AV integrators, Home Digital Systems, who thankfully understood how to best design the system needed. Directors Sam Pergoleto and Adam Andary, and the team worked meticulously to meet the exacting standards Lake Breeze envisioned, ensuring the best possible audio solution for their flexible venue space.

To reduce sound reverberation and increase clarity, they first installed sound absorption above the battens and behind perforated board in the pitched ceilings. Next, the team strategically placed Bose DesignMax DM5 surface mount loudspeakers in the ceiling among the rafters and split the space into several audio zones, creating a high-end audio experience with the ultimate control.

"Even coverage was key for the best audio experience," Pergoleto explained. "We knew we wanted the loudspeakers in the ceiling and the

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Bose DesignMax range proved to be the best solutions for the space.”

For dancing and mingling, DesignMax DM8C flush mount subwoofers provided higher-energy volume while still allowing for a calmer, quieter zone for conversations. To ensure no one at the event misses a beat, Home Digital Systems installed the DesignMax DM5 loudspeakers in the outdoor area and DesignMax DM2 in-ceiling loudspeakers in the restrooms.

“It’s important that people can hear each other and any speeches, regardless of where they might be,” Andary noted. “Lake Breeze wanted top-quality audio regardless of where the guests were.”

Along with the requirement of superior sound, the winery desired a system that was intuitive and easy to use. The Digital Home Systems’ team could think of none other than the ControlSpace CC-64 Control Center.

“We’re big fans of the ControlSpace CC-64 Control Center. It’s just so easy to use,” Pergoleto raved. “Ashleigh and her team can simply call up a source or select a zone and

change the volume. It’s all clearly labelled and straightforward for everyone.”

To finish, the team chose two PowerSpace P4300A amplifiers to power the system and added the Bose

ControlSpace Remote app for ultimate user control and ease of use

“Providing an iPad with the control app to the master of ceremony during a wedding often helps everyone relax,” Hocking explained. “Our staff doesn’t feel under the pump, and our guests feel they have the level of control they need.”

A Sound Solution Befitting An Elegant Venue

The venue space went through quite the transformation architecturally, leading to an increase in functionality and business demand. Before the project completion, Lake Breeze Wines organised less than 10 weddings a year

in the old barrel shed. Now, a venue complete with audiovisual on par with the venue’s prestige, the barrel shed is proud to host a wedding or function almost every weekend; serious scaling up for Lake Breeze Wines.

“There isn’t much we can’t accommodate here; it’s so flexible,” Follett exclaimed. “Weddings are such an important celebration, and you will get a lot of interesting requests, and it means we can say ‘yes’ to a lot of our clients on just about everything. That ability stems from a well-designed space and a well-designed AV system. The flexibility and ease of use lowers the temperature all round when passions are high, and the pressure is on.”

SYSTEM COMPONENTS

- ControlSpace CC-64 control center
- ControlSpace Remote app
- DesignMax DM5 loudspeaker
- DesignMax DM2C-LP loudspeaker
- DesignMax DM8C-Sub subwoofer
- PowerSpace P4300A amplifier



SO FRESH



& SO CLEAN

If we could attach a theme to a recent installation at Newcastle's premium dance music venue King Street Newcastle, it would be "So Fresh and So Clean". Peter Wohlrab from Key Player Productions shared the recent upgrade to this venue that Outkast would be proud of. Key Player Productions, an audio-visual company specialising in installation, repair, and service for the majority of Newcastle's nightclubs and pubs, have ensured there are now some very happy clubbers thanks to a long overdue Adamson PA.

Being Newcastle's number one dance music hotspot and sprawling over three levels with an 850pax capacity, King Street Newcastle plays host to top dance music touring artists on its second level, which has now experienced an audio upgrade that can finally handle the music that's being pumped out every weekend.

Peter recalls his relationship with the venue spanning back fifteen years, when they asked what they could do with their ancient PA speakers powered by Perreaux amps. If you're suddenly having flashbacks to the 70s, you're in the right ballpark. Peter suggested hanging some Lab Gruppen amps off them as an interim solution till they had the money to do the whole job. This changed things completely, but eventually got to the point where the system couldn't handle the new music, having to replace horn drivers all the time. Eight years later, the over-stressed sound system was in desperate need of an overhaul. Out with the very old and in with the new.

For premium quality sound, Adamson were suggested to the venue, despite its premium

price tag. According to Peter, the price tag matches the product which the venue was happy to take their advice on. Being a small room with a 300 pax capacity, two IS10p top boxes and four A218 subs were installed, which meant pulling out bigger boxes and replacing them with smaller ones, providing one of the tidiest PAs for sight lines available. This has enabled better sight lines to the video screen behind the DJs since they're no longer blocked by speakers, providing an opportunity to grow the screen with fresh panels.

More importantly, how does it sound? According to Peter "the general consensus is OMG, that's so fresh and clean." Super clean and undistorted best describes the new audio, which is especially noticed once leaving the room. Being a small room, there's also a plan to put in a delay fill at some stage and some CS10ps to the outer perimeters.

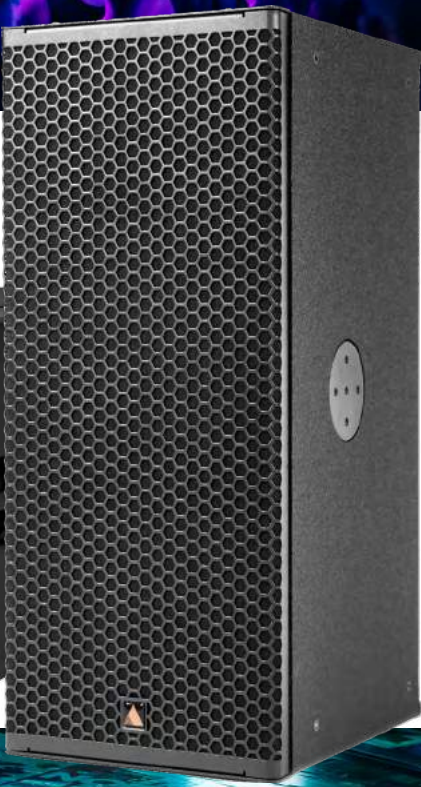
With four subs gracing the room, it's not only the punters who are moved by the bass. The DJ decks need to be ratchet-strapped down and a control room at the back of the dance floor,

which includes a grandMA desk and all lighting and vision systems, has required a front to be installed on the bench so all the equipment doesn't end up cascading onto the floor. Even the monitor brackets have had to be screwed to the desk to avoid toppling over. This is some serious low-end good vibrations.

Peter's praise of the Adamson rig also extends to their mounting system, which he sums up in one word: "beautiful". You can also disregard having to use a pesky level when mounting these boxes,

CMI worked with Key Player Productions to help determine the best gear for the venue and provide great support for the project, as they have done over the years through their long-standing relationship.

As an extra happy ending to this story, the old faithful Perreaux amps that dutifully served their purpose for many, many years have been recycled into another venue and will live out their remaining years on background music duties. We wish them all the best in their quiet retirement.



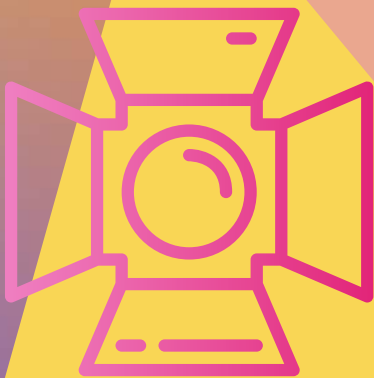
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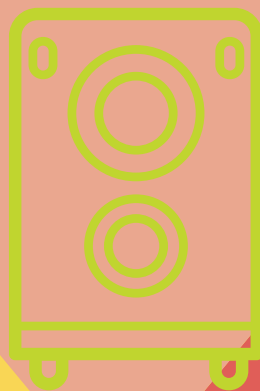
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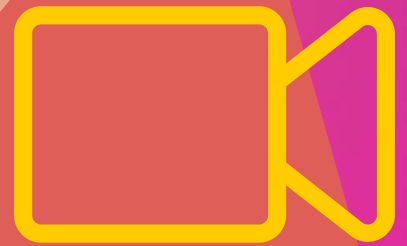
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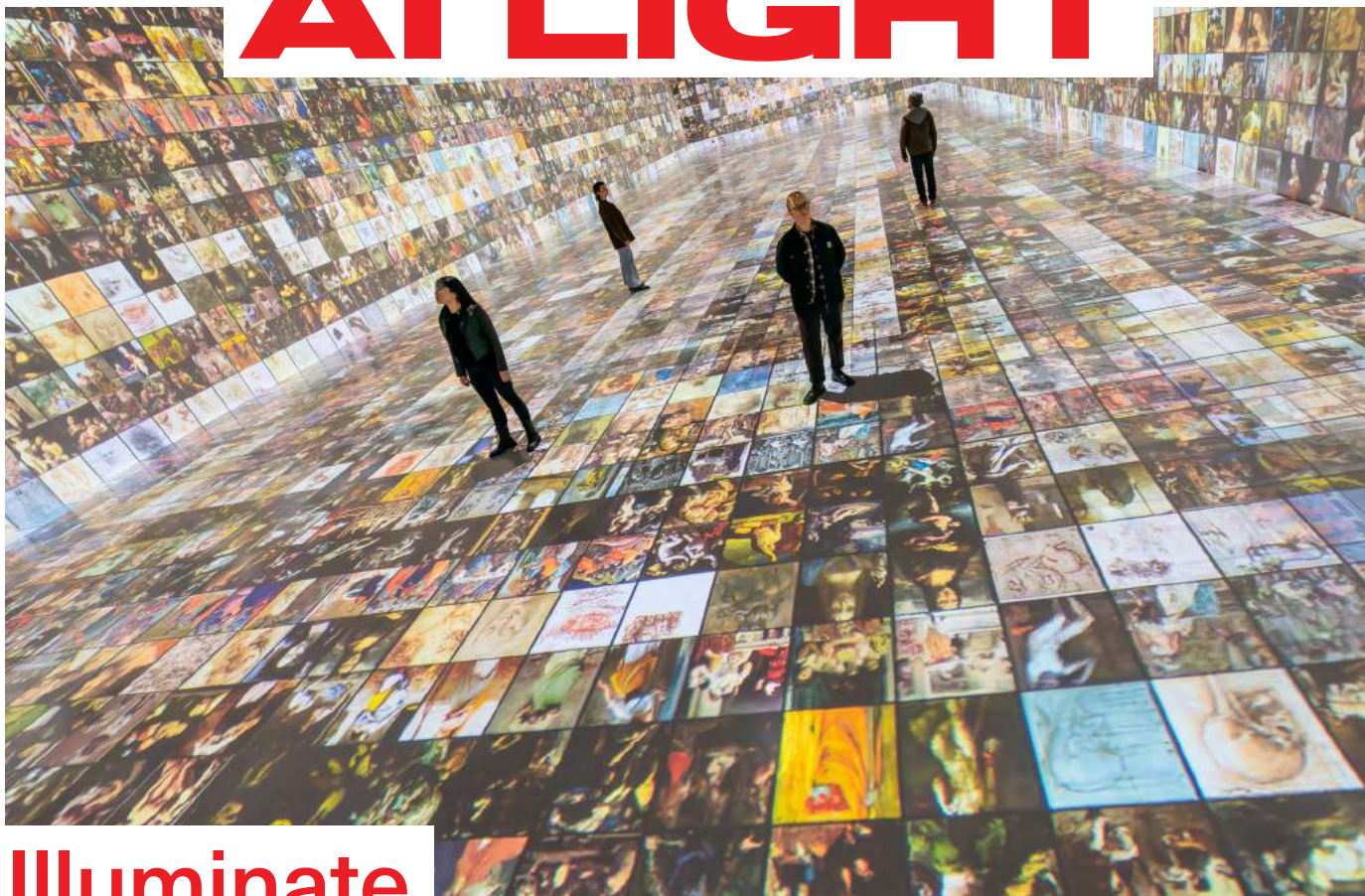
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WISDOM OF AI LIGHT



Illuminate Adelaide 2022

Back for its second year, **Illuminate Adelaide** took over the SA capital's streets from 1 July to 14 August; quite literally in the case of Ouchhh Studio's monumental **Wisdom of AI Light** in Rundle Road. Housed in the purpose-built 'Illuminate Pavilion', measuring a whopping 60 metres long by 22 metres wide and up to 13 metres tall at its peak, the multimedia work blended art and science with artificial intelligence, immersing audiences in a 360-degree projection canvas with accompanying soundtrack.

Turkey's Ouchhh Studio have won multiple international awards for their work, which uses data and AI across new media platforms including video and projection. **Wisdom of AI Light** is a 36-minute experience divided into five chapters. Sources of data and art used for the piece include Leonardo Da Vinci, Galileo, Einstein, the ancient Göbekli Tepe archaeological site, CERN's Large Hadron Collider, and NASA's Kepler telescope. Millions of data sets were fed into AI to generate the work, and it's all soundtracked by the famous Italian composer Ludovico Einaudi.

Illuminate's Technical Manager, Jayden Sutherland of The Bakery Design Co., was responsible for orchestrating the massive effort to stage the work, which included Nexstage building the Pavilion, Theatre Safe Australia constructing the projection surface, Novatech installing and calibrating the video and audio, and Ouchhh's director Ferdi Alici visiting to ensure it was delivered correctly. And all of this in just under three months...

"We had about 12 weeks from the idea for the work being talked about to being on site," reports Jayden. "While Ouchhh had presented similar works in Germany, the US and Turkey, this iteration was designed especially for Adelaide, and re-rendered for the Pavilion's canvas. We provided all of the modelling and

content workflows, and Ouchhh matched our canvas, which came to about 135 million pixels and four terabytes of content."

Blocking off a major throughfare in Adelaide's East End with a massive structure was no small feat. The site was scanned with LIDAR, and public entrance and exit points mapped. Some lampposts had to be removed to accommodate the Pavilion's height. VectorWorks was the software tool of choice for physical design, with Autodesk 3ds Max for modelling, and a combination of VectorWorks and disguise for projection design.

The heart of the projection design utilises four disguise 4x4pro media servers with another as backup. The servers feed 14 Barco UDM-4K22 projectors beaming along the length of the structure, with two Barco UDX-4K32 projectors covering the end walls. "We had to use 4K projectors because of the audience's proximity to the projection surface," explains Jayden. "Pixel size was the most important factor, then brightness. We painted the walls with grey projection paint to improve contrast, and we managed to get the pixel size down to 3.5mm."

In order to cover the projection canvas from the designated rigging points, Novatech invested heavily in new Barco TLD+ Ultra Short Throw lenses to be fitted to every projector. "They look like a weird snorkel, and have a

"It was such a short timeline, and one of the most challenging gigs I've ever worked on. There was a big collective sigh of relief when we opened!"



Photo Credit: David Solm Photography

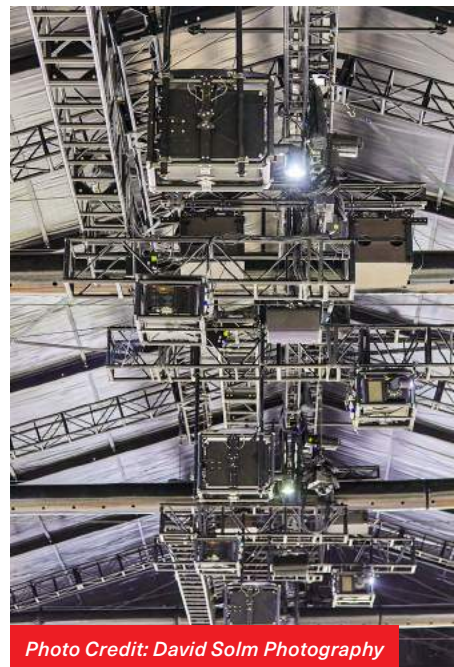


Photo Credit: David Solm Photography



Photo Credit: David Solm Photography

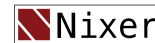
0:4:1 ratio," says Leko Novakovic, Novatech's Managing Director. "There's four 4K outputs on fibre from every disguise 4x4pro to every projector, with an HDMI fibre backup. We used our Lightware UBEX hardware for signal distribution; their matrix got us 4K 60p to all projectors."

To create the best possible immersive environment, there's a custom black marquee roof and extrusions, and everything that runs the show is black; the truss, the chain motors, the projector sleeves, the loudspeakers, and the cabling. Everything is trimmed to maximum height. The projectors are organised into 'pods'

of five, so if anything needs to be lowered to be replaced, only one set would need to be re-aligned.

The sheer scale of the resulting canvas is daunting. "When we were building it, it seemed big," observes Jayden. "But the more

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Photo Credit: Xplorer Studio



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that went up, it just kept feeling bigger and bigger. Ultimately, the projection surface is a whopping 52 metres long, 16 metres wide, and eight metres tall."

The accompanying soundtrack, which moves from gentle contemporary classic to thumping industrial, is relayed by four hangs of three L-Acoustics Kiva down each side of the room, focussed down. Four pods of L-Acoustics X15 HiQ and SB180 subwoofers cover the centre, and a pair of X15 HiQs at each end of the Pavilion to cover the extremities. There's a couple of wireless mics on hand for announcements, and a foyer audio system to set the ambience for the audience on the way in. While the soundtrack to Wisdom of AI Light was provided as a stereo mix, the Pavilion's sound design by Adam Budgen is immersive audio capable, as the structure was designed with re-use for future exhibitions in mind.

Novatech also provided lighting, with Dreamstrip LED pixel strips in the foyer, LED Pars in the main room, LED birdies for signage, and LED strip extrusion around the outside



Photo Credit: Xplorer Studio

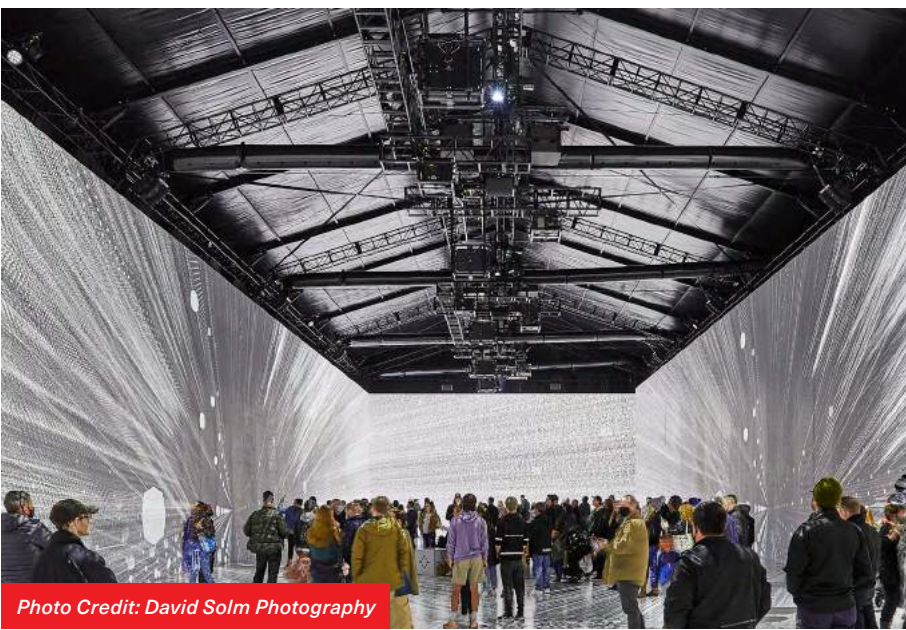


Photo Credit: David Solm Photography



Photo Credit: Xplorer Studio



Jayden Sutherland

edges of the building. ETC Source Fours fitted with custom gobos wash the external walls.

Physically, the Illuminate Pavilion is constructed around Nexstage's 2M stage deck integrated with a Layher scaffold platform "It's an adaptation of Nexstage's 16 metre truss roof grid with an external pavilion shell that was custom made for this project," elaborates Jayden. "It's basically six bays

together, to get us out to 60 metres. Nexstage provided the shell, and Theatre Safe Australia provided the internal fit out using 115 8x1.2 metre aluminium and timber flats. There are separate outer structural and inner projection walls to minimise movement from wind and vibration. There's still challenges keeping the projection in check due to temperature and humidity, but the on-site techs just need to

tweak the projection line-up on their laptops occasionally."

Ouchhh's director Ferdi Alici came onsite two days before the media preview, which followed a full week of technical work by Jayden and Novatech. "Our team worked on the internal structure during the days and Novatech spent the nights on line-up and content," relays Jayden. "It was such a short timeline, and one

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of the most challenging gigs I've ever worked on. There was a big collective sigh of relief when we opened!"

The 36 minute show ran with an eight minute turnaround between audiences, six days a week for almost five weeks from 11 am to 10 pm. An operator from Novatech was on site at all times to run the show, which was triggered by FOH staff by a simple button push. Weekends were more often than not sold out, with huge crowds every night. The success of the Illuminate Pavilion and Wisdom of AI Light means Illuminate now have an epic, show-ready canvas to pitch to content creators and artists globally, for festivals yet to come.

Photo Credit: Illuminate



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BROWN'S MART LEVELS UP



Brown's Mart, standing on Larrakia land in Darwin, delivers a year-round arts program with a focus on Northern Territory artists. They have championed new work and new voices through residencies, creative developments and presentations since 1972. Securing Northern Territory Government funding through the Community Benefit Fund, Brown's Mart instigated a significant lighting upgrade to its 100-200 seater performance space to align with its strategy to support diverse communities and artforms, and to simultaneously reduce its carbon footprint.

Brown's Mart produces several shows a year, funding the development of Top End artists and supporting the creators from inception through design and production. These are then premiered at Brown's Mart with some successfully touring the region. One of the annual shows has an educational focus, aligning with a text on the NT syllabus, providing an opportunity for local students to see a play come to life. It also hosts smaller touring interstate productions as well as hiring out their various performance spaces to a variety of local community arts organisations.

Using the first portion of funding, Brown's Mart upgraded the backbone. Brad Fawcett, Technical Manager recalls that it just "made sense" to go ETC, "The Darwin Entertainment Centre as well as the Araluen Art Centre at Alice Springs where our performances frequently tour are all running Eos-based systems, so we did the same and approached Jands and local company E3 Productions for assistance."

With advice and support from Jeremy Lassemillante at E3 productions, they opted for the compact ETC Ion XE20-12k lighting control console. As full-featured as the Gio- and Apex-class consoles, the Ion Xe offered Brown's Mart the full Eos experience at a great price point.

Without any movers in their rig, the second stage of the upgrade saw Brown's Mart secure

moving lights to satisfy touring companies and level up opportunities for local lighting designers, "We also wanted to establish a small not-for-profit hire business to support Darwin's diverse cultural community groups and cultural festivals, and NT artists."

Opting for Robe, they purchased four T1 Profiles and four T1 Fresnels. Brad explains his decision, "The most attractive feature was the low noise profile. They are incredibly quiet fixtures and also have the framing shutters in both the Fresnel and the Profile." As a small black box production space this was incredibly important, "Moving lights weren't something that we could really facilitate before we got the Ion but occasionally we would borrow or hire a desk and moving lights for a production, the fan noise was always noticeable in our very intimate space, especially during quiet moments! There is none of that with the Robe T1's."

The team at Brown's Mart were also swayed by the dimming curve (an 18-bit dimming system on the Profiles and the new L3™ Low Light Linearity dimming system on the Fresnels) and of course switching to LED fixtures reduced the average energy consumption and carbon footprint, an important driver for the cost and sustainability-conscious organisation.

Having the lighting fixtures for hire has created excitement amongst the community and they have been used on a number of shows during

the Darwin Festival and Darwin Fringe Festival, with bookings in place for future cultural events.

Local lighting designers have relished the variations of colour they now have at their fingertips. With CMY colour control, DataSwatch filters containing a selection of pre-programmed colours via the new generation RCC (Robe Colour Calibration) algorithm and a wide ranging 2700K to 8000K CCT control, anything is possible. The Profile's animation wheel has also been a hit, "Darwin-based Tomm Lydiard, the lighting designer on The Hypotheticals, loved how he could create a moving starscape for his night sky with the Robe T1 profiles."

Brad himself has used them on two shows, "I absolutely love them. They are a fantastic light with so much bang for buck in one unit."

Brad can attest to the support and service from both Jands and E3; "Both Jeremy at E3 Productions and Eddie at Jands have been fantastic to deal with. They've both been incredibly supportive in the face of the current supply chain delays. When our T1 delivery from the Robe factory to Australia was delayed, Brown's Mart was supplied with showroom models in the interim to get our shows across the line!" Jands and E3 Productions also generously provided in kind on-site training at Brown's Mart on the ETC ION and Robe

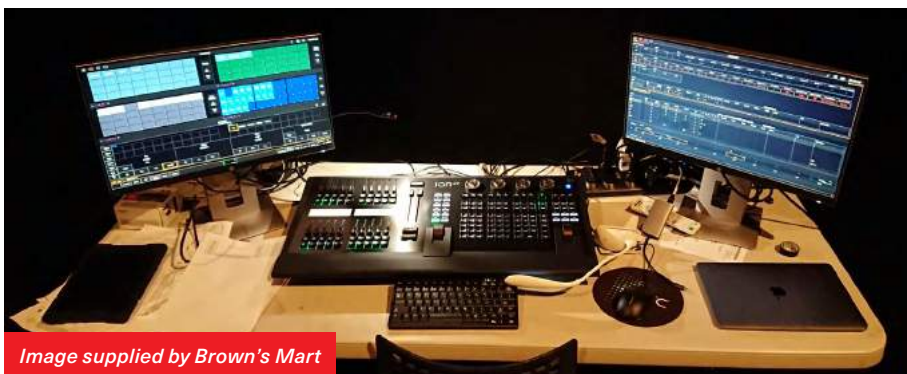


Image supplied by Brown's Mart

T1 lights. Brad explains; "Eddie Welsh from Jands did two days of fantastic training with a group of technicians and the word has spread about what Brown's Mart has on offer for the community. It is exciting as more and more of the shows coming for the Festival are running Nomad and Ion software on their machines."

Brad, himself a self-confessed "audio guy", has found the lighting software well-resourced by ETC too, "In addition to Eddie's sessions, the online learning series on YouTube is well structured and perfect for visual learners. I've also used the workbooks and found them really helpful to be able to visualise the software and interface and follow along. I've also picked up tips and tricks through my own research and happy accidents!"

Brown's Mart is very happy with their purchase, "With the Ion Xe we have upgraded our capacity to have DMX channels available so we can have LED fixtures and reduce our carbon footprint. The Robe T1s have provided us with a dimming curve that works in a black box theatre space. It is the closest thing to tungsten lighting I have ever seen, and we are also saving on gels and bubbles. The built-in gobos and the animation wheel have all armed the designers with a really versatile package to work with. And they are so quiet!"



Chris Kluge participates in ETC ION training at Brown's Mart Feb 2021



Nyasha Ogden

THE SPECS

ETC Ion Xe20 (12k) - Lighting Control Desk w. 20 Faders & 12,288 Outputs

The Ion Xe is available in either 2,048 or 12,288 outputs (the 12k model) and provides support for up to two external monitors. The master playback faders can be supplemented with virtual faders or a variety of other options.

Robe T1 Profile

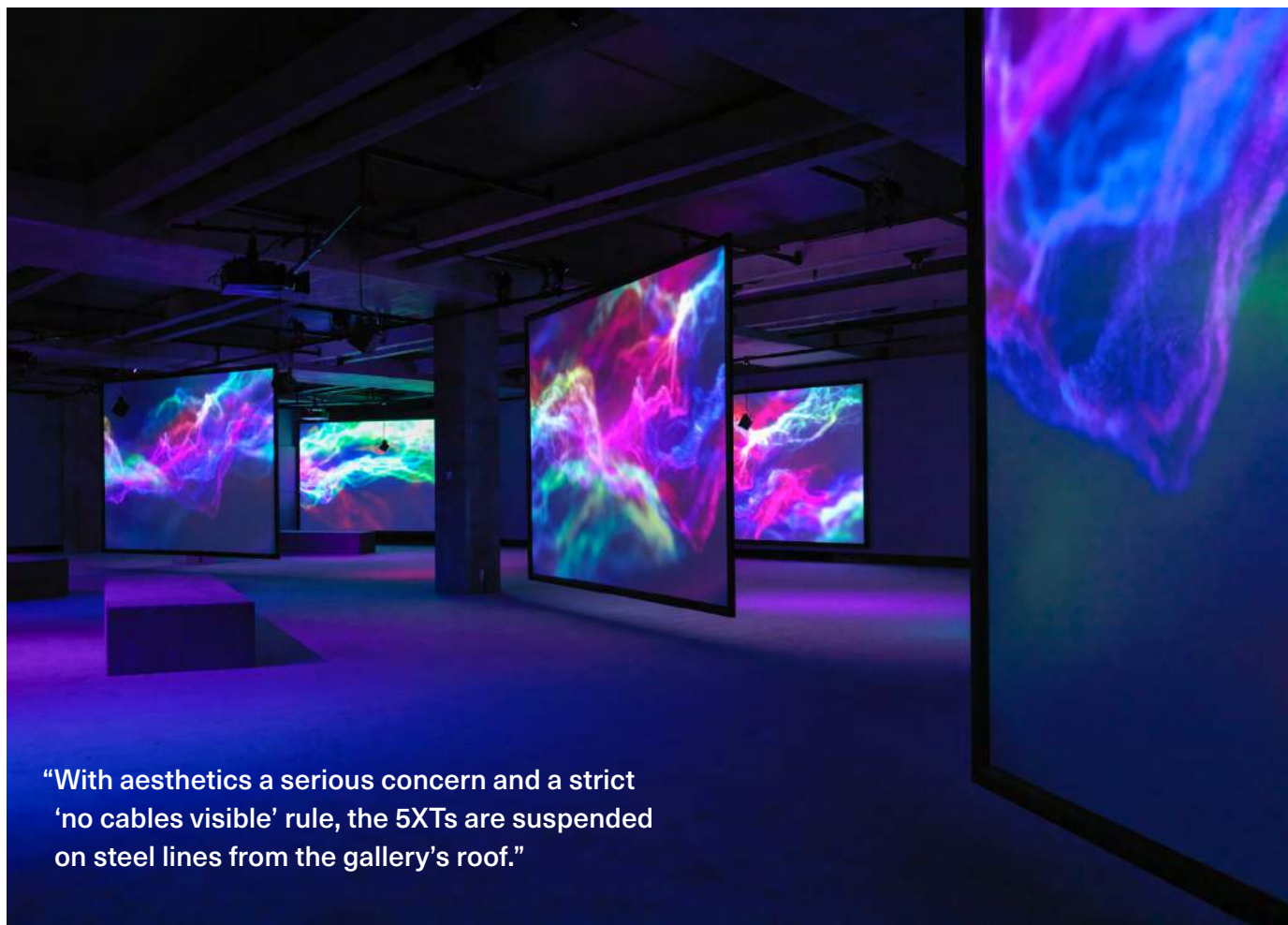
- Light source: MSL 550 W Multi-Spectral LED engine
- Light output: up to 12.600 lm, CRI 95+, + - Green Correction Function, Cpulse™ special flicker free management for HD and UHD cameras
- Zoom range: 7° - 49°
- Effects: Rotating gobo wheel, Animation Wheel, Framing Shutters, 6-facet rotating prism

Robe T1 Fresnel

- Light source: MSL 550 W Multi-Spectral LED engine
- Light output: up to 12.900 lm, CRI 95+, + - Green Correction Function, Cpulse™ special flicker free management for HD and UHD cameras
- Zoom range: 8° - 60°
- Effects: Beam Shaper (internal barndoors), Scrim Module



Stevie Jean & Clementine Anderson



“With aesthetics a serious concern and a strict ‘no cables visible’ rule, the 5XTs are suspended on steel lines from the gallery’s roof.”

L-ACOUSTICS

AT HOBART’S MONA

Hobart’s Museum of Old and New Art (Mona) plays by its own rules. Owned and run by professional gambler, businessman, and collector David Walsh, the museum houses his extensive collection of ancient, modern and contemporary art. Pieces are displayed, or removed, at David’s whim. That being said, some have been there years. And may be for many more. Or not.

Mona’s international reputation as a leading cultural institution means it attracts touring exhibitions from international artistic heavyweights. One of these is Canadian-born, Berlin based Jeremy Shaw, who’s monumental seven-projection-screen video work ‘Phase Shifting Index’ is currently running at the museum.

With sound integral to the piece, the artist was very specific about the brand and models of loudspeakers necessary to reproduce the work as he intended. Baked into the design are 14 L-Acoustics 5XT passive coaxial 5”s, eight 112P powered 12”s, and four SB15M compact 15” subs, with the passive speakers run off four LA12X amplifiers.

The L-Acoustics rig has been provided by local sound and vision company Alive Technologies Group. “Mona are a longstanding client of ours,” says David Bell, Account Manager at Alive. “Our relationship started when we were doing live production for their one-off concerts, then production on their festivals, Mona Foma and Dark MOFO. This rig has gone in as a long-term hire, with the possibility of it being deployed on future exhibitions.”

The work’s design sees the 5XTs run as stereo pairs local to each of the seven screens. Each screen is telling a different story and running different material as part of the broader work. A separate soundscape envelops the room, courtesy of two pairs of 112Ps mounted on

opposite walls, augmented by the SB15Ms. Playback is from two WavePlayer8 hardware playback systems, into three Outline Newton 16-out processors.

With aesthetics a serious concern and a strict ‘no cables visible’ rule, the 5XTs are suspended on steel lines from the gallery’s roof. The 112Ps are mounted on their own fly brackets and bolted to the walls. Keeping everything this visually clean was a challenge in what is essentially a big concrete room.

“The quality of the acoustic result is exceptional,” says Mat Ward, Exhibition Services Technology Manager at Mona. “While there’s some sound proofing and carpet in the gallery, it’s still something of a concrete bunker. The loudspeakers needed to cover very precise areas, with the seven screens, soundtracks, plus ambience. When you sit in front of screens, the dialogue, music, and ambience are all separated nicely. These loudspeakers were just great for this purpose.”

With multimedia works planned for future exhibitions, Mat and the team have evaluated

Sometimes it all gets too much...



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the L-Acoustics solution with a critical ear. "We've been experimenting with sound sources due to our need for loudspeakers," confirms Mat. "We've found the 5XTs are very compact and hang from the ceiling nicely. I think we'll definitely be using them in the future. We're currently testing bits and pieces for an upcoming exhibition, which we're still discussing with the artist."

This was the first exhibition where Mat Ward was responsible for delivering the majority of the video and audio backbone of the show, and worked closely with Alive Technologies Group to make it happen. "David and Alive were fantastic," reports Mat. "Their team is fast and knowledgeable, and they handled all the installation. The artist was very specific, as he should be, and there was so much going on with gear and cabling. It's a testament to the quality of everyone's work we've been running

for seven weeks already, totally in sync, with zero failures. Exhibitions of this complexity have plenty of scope for errors, and there's been none."

This isn't Mona's first experience of L-Acoustics; there's a work called 'Super Symmetry' running in the main gallery that Mat describes as "very bass heavy". That work also uses 112Ps and SB15Ms. L-Acoustics products are distributed in both Australia and New Zealand by Jands, who David Bell is very impressed with; "We've had absolutely fantastic service from L-Acoustics and Jands," relates David. "Jands initially couldn't supply the speakers in the colour we needed, so they flew them in and painted them. There were tight timeframes to get all of this up and running, and they went above and beyond to make it happen against a COVID-affected supply chain."

Alive Technologies Group has been servicing the Tasmanian industry for 20 years, initially based in hire and production, and expanding into fabrication and installation over the years. The powerhouse that is Mona has been responsible for a huge upswing in work in the Apple Isle, particularly as COVID restrictions have eased. "Production work is definitely back with vengeance," concludes David. "We're now finding it hard to keep up with the growth in the industry in Tasmania. A lot of this has been focussed around Mona and the festivals. I haven't seen this volume of work in 20 years."

mona.net.au

alivetechologies.com.au

www.l-acoustics.com

www.jands.com.au



Jeremy Shaw



Photo Credit: Mona/Jesse Hunniford. Images Courtesy Museum of Old and New Art, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia.



JAY PRODUCTIONS DELIGHTS WITH NEXO'S ID24 SPEAKERS FOR DIOR

Employing the latest in audio, visual and lighting technology, Sydney-based Jay Productions & Events consistently crafts electrifying experiences for its corporate, outdoor and large-scale event offerings. Delivering dazzling production quality and no stranger to working with industry-leading audio brands, Jay Productions chose to utilise NEXO's ID24 loudspeakers for the House of Dior's garden pop-up event in March.

Luxuriating in its setting, the event celebrated Dior's Miss Dior Eau de Parfum and enjoyed a breathtaking backdrop by the iconic Sydney Opera House and Harbour Bridge. Bursting with abundant blooms, the pop-up included a delightful melding of sights, scents, and soundscapes to form an immersive sensorial experience for its visitors.

Described by Dior as a "digital journey through a multi-coloured field alive with thousands of flowers," guests were invited to explore the

space and, in doing so, uncover several unique zones. Each area offered its own distinct aura, with the shift in mood afforded by various peaceful sounds played through NEXO's ID24 speakers across each space.

With refinement and sophistication underlying the event's design, it was imperative to select a speaker that would blend seamlessly into its surrounds – imparting ambience without eclipsing the showstopping visual aspects. Tasked with creating an atmosphere of calming

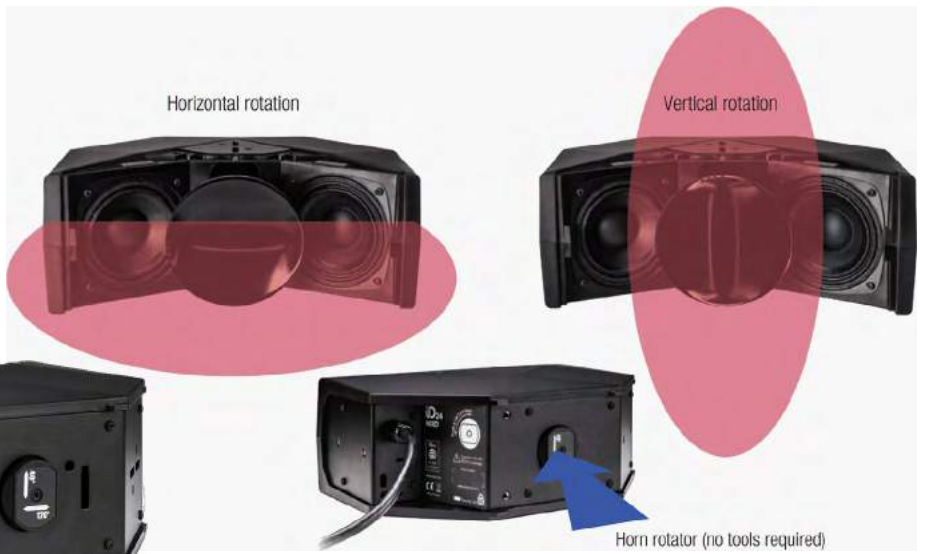
luxury, Jason Ghazal, managing director of Jay Productions explains why NEXO's ID24 speakers stood out as the right choice. "It was exactly what we needed for the space," he says, "having white suited the launch and we were looking for a punchy speaker that would be discreet but still have power."

The decision proved a perfect fit, with Jason reflecting on the "easy install" and performance, "This was the first time using the ID24 speaker. We assessed its performance

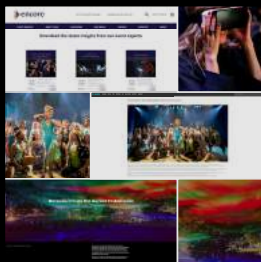
during demos in Melbourne and were really impressed. When in use at Dior, we found the ID24 really fit the application and exceeded expectations." Entirely pleased with the outcome, Jason proudly announced that he has "ordered more of the ID24 speakers for another luxury brand activation coming up!"

Unmatched in its flexible functionality for system designers and installers alike, the ID24 delivers a range of horn positions and settings that can be used without removing the grille or opening the cabinet. Easy HF configuration can be achieved via a 'screw head' system featured on the rear panel.

"For the mood of this walk-through activation, we ensured every area had a different style of music," explains Jason, his team capitalising on the ID24's directivity options to ensure superior coverage for visitors as they moved through each area. The ID24s enabled Jason and team to fine-tune the unique nature of each space, creating distinct moments of harmony across "different zones with backing tracks."



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Ever championing the collision of practical solutions with solid engineering, NEXO's dedication to producing quality sonic solutions is unmistakable in the ID24. Boasting a compact cabinet that offers an extremely high power-to-weight ratio, the ID24's precision performance and unobtrusive design makes it an ideal asset for high-end professional installations and touring.

Exuding prestige and infusing aural excellence, the Miss Dior event transported its guests to a flourishing escape amongst a field of flowers. Sensationally sensory at its core, the garden pop-up was a stunning exhibit of the Dior brand, Jay Productions' meticulous expertise and another flawlessly fitting application of NEXO's ID24 speakers.

www.nexo-sa.com
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“having white suited the launch and we were looking for a punchy speaker that would be discreet but still have power.”





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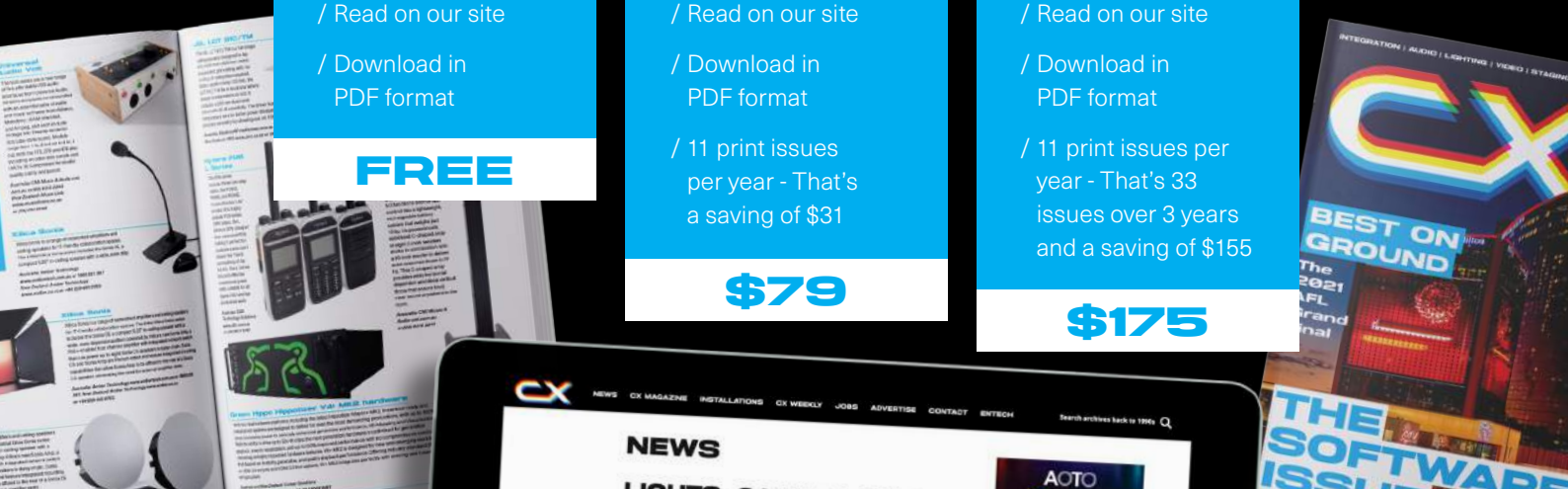
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THE VL3000 SPOT (ALMOST) 20 YEARS ON



The once popular VL3000 spot is fast approaching its 20th birthday. Also known as the VL3K (VL stands for Vari-Lite), it was introduced to the global market in early 2003. It would take a few more years until it caught on and was a common sighting on gigs in Australia. They were very well known; so well known that they arguably became the industry standard in moving head spots. The VL3000 spot set the bar for a moving head spot in the industry during the mid to late 2000s and even into the early years of the 2010s.

The VL3K offered operators and designers a solid all-round light with a good range of break up and beam gobos. Colour changes were crisp and fast. Rich, saturated colours could be achieved creating a whole new range of states and looks. Zoom range was respectable and the

output was fantastic, even after frosts, colours and gobos were added. For what it was, it was a reasonably quiet light, provided it was well maintained. Pan and Tilt range was amongst the best on the market at the time and did its movements smoothly, quickly and accurately.

Unlike many moving lights of its era and beyond, the VL3K did not have the option to be patched with a standard and extended mode, instead opting for one mode only, which had a DMX footprint of 28 channels.

It stacked up well comparatively to the lights of its era. It did not have too many direct competitors. Arguably the closest competitor at the time was the Clay Paky Alpha Spot and later, the Viper Profile.

As the VL3000 got older, it came to be known as a reliable workhorse unit. With regular maintenance and cleaning they would continue to shine (pun intended). There was more than adequate cooling, both in regards to fans and empty space. Parts were robust, durable and easy to source when required. When there were faults, some of the more common issues included cracked head covers which led to light bleed, indexing issues where gobos and colour wheels could not find home, and ballast issues which would cause the light to intermittently lamp off, or not lamp on at all.

They were relatively easy lights to work on as well. Lamps were easy to access and replace, although getting the back cap back on afterwards could prove to be a little tricky at times. Changing gobos was as simple as opening up the head case with a Philips head screwdriver and popping the gobo out with a finger. Although they took the rather common E size gobo, it has a unique housing which made them quite distinctive. They were built as modular lights. Modules themselves were well laid-out, quite simple to remove and replace, again with nothing more than a Philips head screwdriver and remembering what plugs into where.

Cleaning and servicing the lights was also reasonably straightforward and simple to do. It was clear that thought was given to the job the technicians would have to do to be able to maintain the fixtures.

The design of the light allows for options for bracket orientation, very handy when it comes to hanging the light. The VL3K could be hung at any orientation. The brackets or rails also give many different options as to where to place clamps and what type of clamps to use. The safety chain was a custom length which allowed for minimum drop should it be required.



The VL3000 was capable of producing a range of deep, saturated colours. Here we see cyan....



here we see yellow...



and here we see magenta.

Nostalgia: Those who worked with the VL3000 may remember...

- A number of wheel based indexing issues (such as gobo and colour wheel positions) could be fixed with a black sharpie
- On the onboard menu on the light, pressing the 'Enter' and the 'Up' buttons at the same time was a shortcut for lamping the fixture on
- Conversely, pressing the 'Enter' and the 'Down' buttons at the same time would lamp the fixture off
- The rather distinctive chattering sound heard on start-up, which was the shutters calibrating
- The struggle of trying to lift one into the case and get it to sit right, especially the early cases

- The 'Alpha Rays' gobo
- Trying to figure out how to get the back cap on after a lamp change

Weighing in at 37kg, it was one of the heavier lights on the market at the time, despite featuring a lightweight, plastic head cover and numerous alloy components. It was definitely one of the more difficult lights to handle, not

Are you concerned about your mate's mental health?

FACT: Most Australian tech crew and roadies have attempted or considered suicide¹!

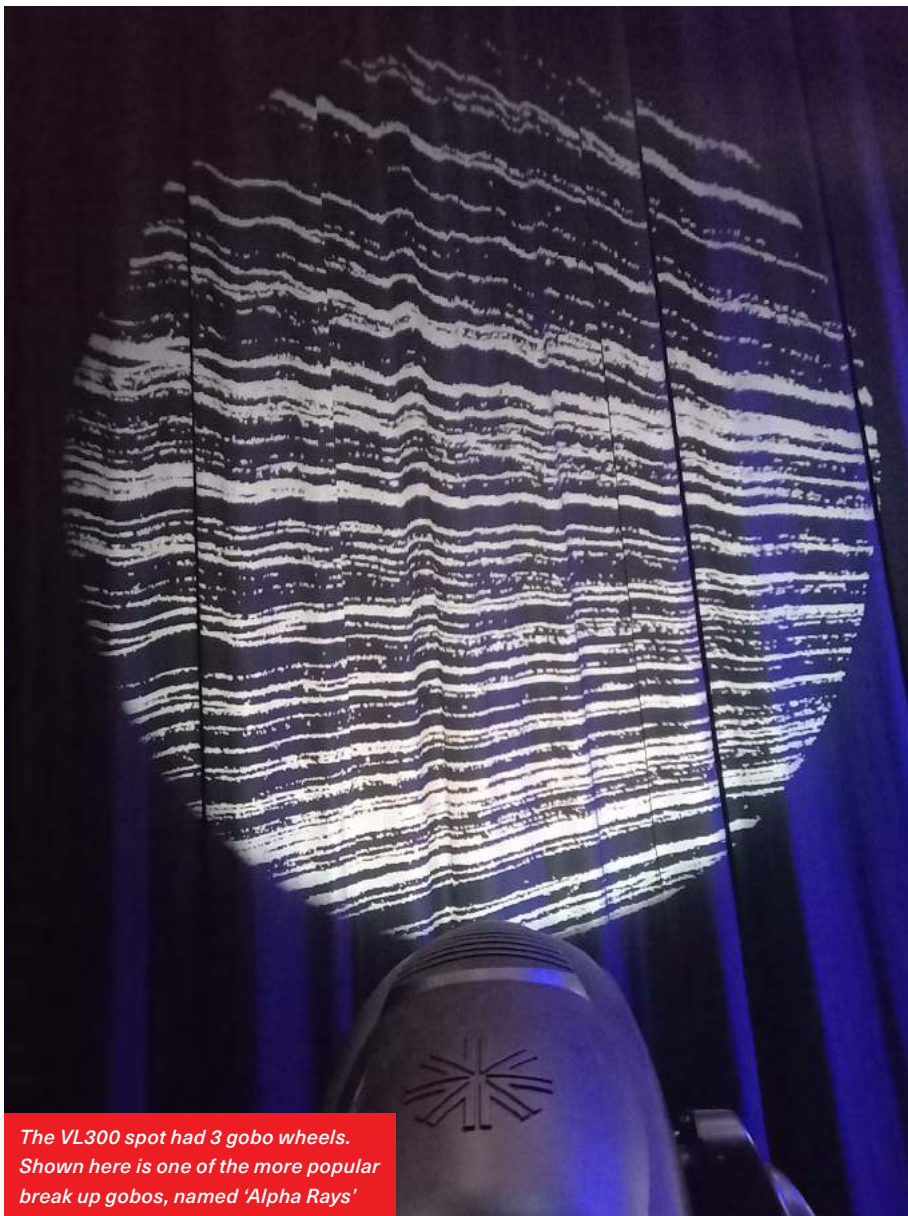
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Supporting the mental health of Australian entertainment industry workers



The VL300 spot had 3 gobo wheels. Shown here is one of the more popular break up gobos, named 'Alpha Rays'



A VL3000 in a road case. The rails could be reconfigured to allow hanging at any orientation



The VL3000 menu screen on start up

VARI-LITE FACTS

- Vari-Lite is unofficially credited for inventing the first modern moving head fixture for entertainment purposes, the VL1
- It was rumoured that English band Genesis invested \$1 million USD in research and development for the VL1. Fittingly, the first use of the VL1 would be on their tour with their album Abacab in late 1981.
- 860 VL1 fixtures were produced.
- Vari-Lite has won 3 Emmy awards for technical achievement; 1991: Outstanding Achievement in Engineering for the development of the 200 series; 1994: Outstanding Achievement in Engineering for the development of the VL5, and; 2000: Outstanding Achievement in Engineering for the development of the Virtuoso Console

just because of the weight. No pan and tilt lock could make things a little unpredictable when lowering into a road case or flipping the light. The weight itself warranted a two-person lift/flip more often than not.

Although materials have gotten lighter, and components have gotten smaller and more efficient, moving lights have gotten heavier. Some of the heavier moving lights around today include the PRG Best Boy at 50kg, Clay Paky Axcor 900 at 45kg, Ayrton Domino at 52kg and Martin Mac Ultra Performance at 44kg.

The VL3000's lamp was a Phillips 1200W/S metal halide lamp. At 6000K it was classed as a cool white (or day white), similar to the colour temperature found in office buildings and shopping centres. They were readily available, easy to source and reasonably priced. Lamp life is listed as 750 hours.

When the lamps did explode or expire, they generally did not damage reflectors, flags, or cause issues with other components in the light, as is the case with some of the competitors.

The design and set up of the optical system gave the user the option of whether to utilise a flat field or a peaked field. That could be done using three lamp aligning screws located on the back cap of the light. A flat field is where there is no detectable hotspot in the beam of the light, and a peaked field is where the intensity of the beam is greater on the centre of the beam than the outer edges, therefore creating a 'hotspot' in the centre of the beam.

The VL3000's colour system has a colour mixing mechanism and a fixed colour wheel. The colour mixing mechanism was made up with four graduated colour disks; Blue, Amber, Magenta and CTO. They provided full spectrum colour crossfades as well as pastel to saturated colour. The colour wheel had seven positions, one being open (white), the others being Congo Blue, Orange, Kelly Green, Dark Fuchsia (Purple), Magenta and Deep Red.

Although ground-breaking at the time it was introduced to the market, much of the technology found in the VL3000 spot has been superseded by more modern technology such as LED light engines. These days, most of them sit unused, collecting dust, many with cracked covers, others in pieces. Although mostly redundant today, some can be found still in service in theatre shows and in venues around the country. Safe to say however, 10-15 years ago, almost any lighting operator would have been very happy to walk into a gig to find VL3Ks in their rig.

LIVE STREAMING ENCODERS



The success or failure of a live stream is often decided by the quality of the stream. Of course, the same is functionally true of any video-based production; bad audio, low-resolution footage and mountains of lag is just as likely to kill a Netflix special as it will a live streamed event. However, with live streaming, it all needs to be right on the night. You can't go back for a reshoot later.

Fundamental to those factors listed above (as well as dozens of others) is the encoder. The process of taking raw footage and converting it into a digital stream that can be broadcast around the world is perhaps the most pivotal. It is effectively the technology that live streaming is built upon. Get something wrong here and failure is almost guaranteed.

What is a live stream encoder?

Given the audience of this magazine, it's probably fair to assume that the overwhelming majority of people reading this will already know the answer to the question posed by the sub-heading above. However, for the benefit

of those just coming into the live streaming industry, we will very briefly summarise it. Or, to be more accurate, Phil Cluff of MUX did in a recent interview with Bettercast CEO Ben Powell on the BetterPODcast:

"We kind of think about it in three phases. Firstly, a stream comes to us live through an RTMP stream; a very old protocol from the Flash video days that has stuck around in spite of its many modern competitors. There, you're sending up one high-quality stream from your encoder on site."

"That's then picked up by our video processing stack. The first thing we do is transcode that.

We're taking that inbound stream and we're creating a bunch of different qualities of that content with different bitrates and resolutions. We're doing that because peoples' internet connections change all the time and they might not have the same bandwidth at the end of a stream as they did at the start. As an example, I genuinely once lived somewhere where the Wi-Fi router was sat on top of the microwave, so the Wi-Fi would just drop dead whenever someone was making porridge."

"The next step is packaging. We cut each of the different versions of content into chunks of anything between two and six seconds, always in a regular cadence. So, if it starts as

two seconds, it will be two seconds all the way to the end. We then host and deliver those through content delivery networks to ensure reach and quality across large footprints of users. Every request that goes to MUX goes through one or many content delivery networks, which then feeds those video chunks and feeds them into your player.”

Of course, not all encoders are created equally. Firstly, there’s the difference between hardware and software encoders. Beyond that, you have the inherent differences you find in different platforms created with different mentalities and priorities. Even though they’re all encoders and achieve the same ultimate purpose, how they achieve it is what separates them and can spell either simple success or devastating failure for a live stream.

Buffering...

Perhaps the most important part of the encoding process is chunking. The size of the chunk determines how much latency there is in the stream; basically, how far behind live events the footage being shown on the stream is. However, it also impacts the need for buffering - the time taken for the player to download and play the next chunks.

“Generally, a player is going to have a few chunks in buffer at any one time,” explained Phil. “Apple’s iOS will have three so, if your chunk size is two seconds, iOS natively adds six seconds on top of that as the minimum buffer. It’s tuneable in a lot of players, though not iOS specifically. If you have a bigger chunk

size, you’re going to have more latency.”

So, while longer chunks will certainly reduce buffering as there is more time for the next chunk to download and be queued up in the player, it also creates significantly more latency. This point was vividly illustrated in a previous article about WebRTC with the example of watching a major football match and reading about each goal scored on Twitter long before it has been shown on the stream. There are solutions to these issues, but that’s a whole article in its own right.

Encoders in Bettercast

We could try comparing the many, many encoders available to try to come up with a conclusion of which is best. However, aside from the fact that this article would take about an hour to read, our conclusions might not be the same as yours. A good encoder for one type of event might not work so well with another. Instead, we can explain Bettercast’s choice.

“We built our very first version of Bettercast on IVS, purely because it was incredibly simple and relatively low-cost,” said Bettercast CEO Ben Powell in the same podcast that featured Phil Cluff. IVS is Amazon’s Interactive Video Service, which is a capable and widely used platform.

“We have moved to MUX and I’m really happy to have done that, not only because of the simplicity of what you guys are doing, but for the level of data feedback we get from your systems,” he added.

Phil, who is the Product Lead at MUX, listed off some of the many ways MUX and IVS differ. In fairness, he praised the flexibility of the Amazon platform, as well as its integration with AWS Media Services and other aspects of Amazon Web Services. However, MUX went for a plug-and-play approach.

“Compared to IVS, we see ourselves as providing much more of an ecosystem. Any live stream you do in MUX is instantly available as an on-demand asset, for example. You don’t have to download it from S3 and process it. It’s all just in that ecosystem.”

One of the key differences, and arguably the main reason why Bettercast shifted to MUX, is the data feedback Ben mentioned above.

“The first product we went and built was and still is a data platform,” said Phil. “This is a platform to understand how well your video is performing. That’s used by some of the biggest streaming platforms in the world. It’s even been used on the Superbowl for the last three years.”

“It helps people to understand the experience people are having when they watch a video: are they experiencing buffering? How long does the video take to start? Is the video low-quality? All these sorts of things aren’t common in video applications, so the first product that we built was a product to enable people to monitor their video applications. That now informs everything we build. We use that data to make decisions. Data is critical to the feedback loop of building better video.”



MUX / VIDEO

Phil Cluff of MUX featured in a recent interview with Bettercast CEO Ben Powell on the BetterPODcast.



ODE TO THE INSTALLER



With apologies to Fezzik and Inigo

I'd been running short on inspiration on what should I write about installation. So, I've decided to have a short conversation about the intriguing topic of tech integration.

Now this might be a broad generalisation but plans do work better without alteration.

When the client makes a surprise visitation, and in a fit of exuberant excitation, adds extras without qualification, keep those features out of specification else you'll see no profitable reparation.

Scope creep is the abnormal deviation that comes from constant augmentation of the system's agreed configuration.

This can be fixed with up front negotiation relieving the need for later (re)mediation when goal posts move without consideration.

Instead, plan well right from formation. Conduct a thorough evaluation to achieve the optimal novel mutation of parameters unique to your situation.

This way you avoid the odd complication that comes when reality meets false expectation.

Aside from client disorientation, the lure of AV gear needs no great explanation. Particularly when the right combination of components you've given amalgamation works out better than your wild expectation.

Savour the moment of purest elation, like a signal with absolute rectification, when you end up installing sweet automation.

Skills gain value with constant replication practice makes you better with each iteration.

Year upon year of talent distillation heightens the feeling of self-validation

that grows with your professional reputation. It's not quite cause for mad celebration but talk to the boss about compensation.

Sometimes the results of careful calculation don't quite match those of your mind's illustration.

Cos other times it's only exasperation.

Mistakes can be made in any vocation. Like wasting time on equalisation instead of fixing poor polarisation.

When air gaps present invalid relation of components connected to amplification or you have uncertain cable unification, a quick tweak or setting improvisation won't result in system normalisation.

When the back of the rack gives you deep consternation and you're covered in layers of dank perspiration from the grief pulling cable to its end destination, it's tempting to quit in rage and frustration when you can't get comms with the bloody door station.

Take stock, walk outside, perform soul purification, whatever it takes for calm continuation for your ongoing work forms characterisation. Your approach, like the gear, requires sophistication to keep on progressing career continuation.

When installing the latest tech innovation - remember to do your top preparation. Read the manual for the best interpretation of mad engineers' thoughts made manifestation through the rigours of commercial experimentation.

Then your programmers do their own computation, from a dusty cardboard topped workstation assembled from boxes found on location. With line after line of coding equation to give the end user a heart palpitation when they turn on their house while away on vacation.

It matters not where you do mechanisation: K-12 to tertiary - it's all education, it could be boardrooms of a big corporation, or recording the words where they do litigation. Enhancing the sound of liturgical oration or connecting emergency evacuation.

It's all the grand theory of unified communication.

Working so long at the edge of innovation can tax your brain muscles beyond stimulation until each new release is less a sensation.

As you build your business over a generation then get caught in a wave of corporate predation, do accept payout for your amortisation. Retire with a quaint rationalisation for golf and boredom in synchronisation.

If all of this sounds like pontification, on AV I have some justification of knowledge beyond just book education.

From the hellfire of black box relocation that once formed a full time occupation, I took a long path of distinct transformation into the world of AV consultation. This has endowed a deep appreciation Of how to proceed with tech implementation.

From characters deep in Reiner's imagination, I offer this finest of fine creation:

Anybody want a peanut?



CX and TAG side by side ENTECH 2011

THERE'S NO BUSINESS LIKE TRADE SHOW BUSINESS

Broadcast and AV trade shows in Australia have long been the harbinger of technological change in an atmosphere where some semblance of formality was the norm. But in 1994 Julius Grafton's inaugural ENTECH trade show blazed onto the exhibition scene at Sydney's Darling Harbour Exhibition Centre, and things began to change.

ENTECH's foray into the exhibition world couldn't have been timed better in an industry where broadcast and entertainment technologies such as wireless microphone technology, mixing consoles, lighting, and an array of products were converging at a rapid rate; and this became apparent years later in 2011 when SMPTE and ENTECH (sold in 2004 to Exhibition and Trade Fairs P/L) collocated in adjoining rooms at the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre.

ENTECH's 1994 debut was an instant success along with being noticeably different. Navigating through the myriads of exhibition stands you might be mesmerised by rotating laser lights whilst inhaling volumes of machine manufactured fog, or be assailed by synthetic snow or a burst from a confetti cannon. You could be engulfed in a shower of bubbles belched out of a bubble machine or even dragged into a conga dance with a troupe of Caribbean dancers. And if you managed to tune out the resounding rhythms belted out

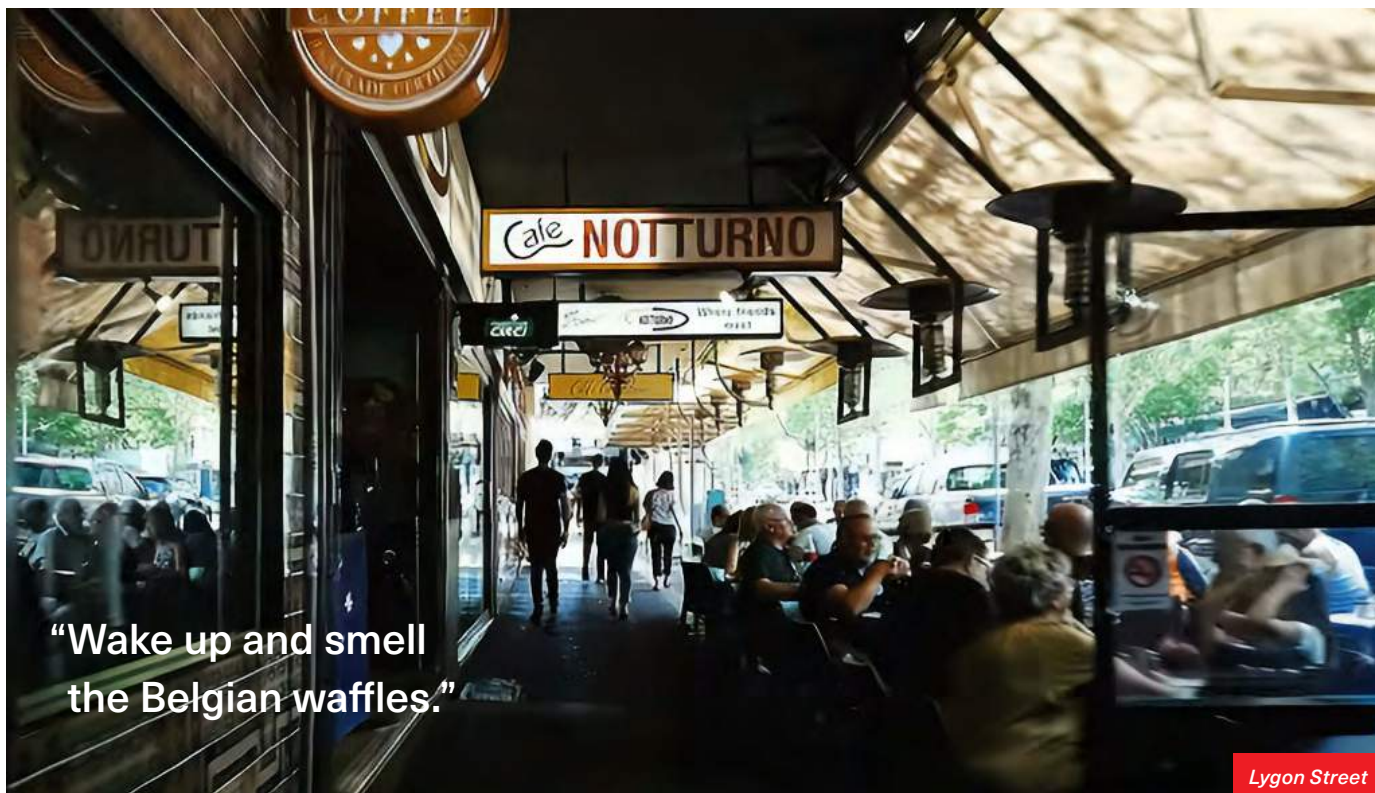
by the all-too-tuned in DJs, the accumulated onslaught of stimuli would inevitably deliver a significant craving for coffee, or perhaps some gourmet experience. Thus began the era when TAG's (Technical Audio Group) cafe style exhibition stands were the go-to place.

Long before attending SMPTE or ENTECH, my first trade show at Melbourne's Royal Exhibition Building was just a short stroll from Lygon Street. Trade shows in those days were a little more mundane. You couldn't get a decent cup of coffee, and exhibitors and attendees had no expectation of a fine culinary experience at the venue. So my colleagues and I delighted in the evening's indulgences on great food, coffee, and alcoholic beverages on offer throughout the myriads of eateries that dotted Lygon Street's famous restaurant strip.

The year was 1989 and the exhibition was IREECON (Institution of Radio and Electronics Engineers Convention). There was an airline strike at the time so I drove the nine hours

from Sydney, finally arriving with a voracious appetite. I checked into a Lygon Street hotel and asked the desk clerk crudely, "Is there anywhere around here to eat?" However, in a matter of minutes after my embarrassing faux pas I was dining on veal parmigiana and drinking Peroni beer in Melbourne's 'Little Italy'.

Adjacent to our stand at IREECON I recall chatting with Anthony Russo who manned a modest (probably 6x3m) stand featuring products distributed by his then company, AR Audio. However, Russo recently stated that his earliest exhibition stand at the Royal Exhibition Building was a jerry-built endeavour made up from his uncle's fruit boxes, which he disguised by draping them in velvet theatre curtains. A few years later AR Audio would morph into TAG (Technical Audio Group), and earn acclaim for outstanding exhibition stands. "When we did our cafe stands, we would win 'best stand award' against some of the giants," Russo told CX.



“Wake up and smell the Belgian waffles.”

Lyon Street

After years of manning exhibition stands, I revelled in reporting on them together with photographing product and personnel; however it was a draining experience. For instance, I'd go from a Sony interview where I'd be engulfed in an in-depth discussion on the technicalities of the 45mm interaxial distance of a 3D camera, and then move on to the next stand where I'd be drilled on how Arri's like-for-like LED Fresnel drew only 200 watts but was equivalent to a 1000-watt incandescent Fresnel. So by lunchtime on day two of a three-day exhibition I'd be looking for some form of escape. If in Sydney I'd head for the Capitan Tores Spanish restaurant in Liverpool Street where a dish of Paella Valenciana and several stubbies of Estrella Galicia could restore some cerebral stability before returning to the job.

Anthony Russo and the crew at TAG realised the need for an oasis amidst the mayhem, and they launched what was to become their trademark exhibition stands offering great coffee from a commercial coffee machine along with other comestible items in a relaxed atmosphere complete with cafe style tables and chairs and couches.

“We were the first company to do hospitality properly on an exhibition stand. We had a proper cafe with a black and white tiled floor. We took all-comers, and the stand was all themed around meeting and greeting, with people sitting around drinking coffee, and they could stay as long as they wanted. We also had a guy making Belgian waffles at one stage,” said Russo.

TAG's idea was to draw people to their stand without projecting a 'shiny suit salesman' image, instead presenting a hospitality image that would keep people from just browsing and moving on. Professional staff served the coffee and Belgian waffles. “And it was all free. Even today, people remember the Belgian waffles because the smell would permeate throughout the exhibition,” added Russo.

Russo noted that some stands did have coffee, but it was usually for their VIPs and dealers, and if they had a coffee machine it was only in the private areas where the public rarely ventured. He cites a problem he saw with some of the bigger stands: “If you've done your marketing properly most people should know every new product that you've got. Once you

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had met your rep and had been shown what was new there was little reason to come back again and look silly standing around on a giant white-on-white stand.”

TAG’s idea was that you could meet someone on the stand in the morning, show them what was on display, then invite them back for sandwiches at lunch time. Russo felt this would ease the awkwardness of someone saying their goodbyes and then returning to the stand later.

To save on costs a contingent of exhibitors would use their sales staff to do the load in and out at exhibitions. The call of duty could also include driving the delivery truck to the venue. “We’ve progressed a lot since those lean times of sleeping in the back of the truck outside the exhibition buildings,” said Russo. TAG now employs specialist stand builders. “Typically, a stand would probably cost us \$100,000 these days,” he added.

TAG distributes four major brands, which are Allen & Heath, QSC, Martin Audio and Audio-Technica. And in a world of exponential technical change, who would have foreseen that the resurgence of vinyl records would see TAG’s distributorship of Audio-Technica’s turntables account for around 100,000 sales per year?

TAG and a host of other industry leaders will be exhibiting at the forthcoming ENTECH Roadshow in October 2022. Although ENTECH was sold to ETF in 2004, they in turn sold it back to CX Network, headed by ENTECH founder Julius Grafton in 2015. The exhibition

now operates as ENTECH Roadshow and gets on the road in October of this year visiting Sydney Monday October 10th The Concourse, Melbourne Wednesday October 12th MCEC Bay 22 near Goldfields, and Brisbane Monday October 17th RICC at RNA, Showgrounds.

A list of exhibitors at ENTECH Roadshow 2022 can be found at <https://www.entech-roadshow.com/who-is-exhibiting>



Caleigh Distin at SMPTE 2011



SMPTE 2011

The industry event everyone is talking about.

"People seemed **buoyed up** and ready for another convention next year!"

Desley Lodwick - Aberrant

"It felt **empowering** to part of such a highly knowledgeable group, **passionately** talking about direct industry issues and processes that need resolution for us all to **move forward**"

Martin Bowman
Clearlight Shows

"**The convention shows us what can be experienced and achieved when we all come together with the industry's best interests at heart.**"

Deb Sloss
Studio Connections

"*The Roger McLachlan interview was an absolute piece of magic*"

Murray Tregonning
Murray Tregonning & Associates

"*I **still** can't get over the quality of the food at the Convention Venue.*"

Gary Pritchard
LSC Controls Systems

"The presenters were very engaging, the topics most applicable and the entertainment 1st class. **Don't know how you are going to top this!**"

David Di Muzio
Production Audio Visual Technology

"The convention content was **great** - would have liked to have been able to attend all the presentations. **Really need more staff to attend all of it**"

Tiny Good
Showtech Australia

"*The convention proved once again, that it is **people** who inspire and make the world go round, not money.*"

Anonymous

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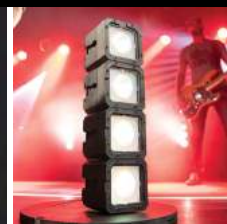
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