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LIVE

# KEITH URBAN

Chameleon crew win high praise for Keith Urban's tour with flawless lighting design by Rob Sinclair and lighting director Benjamin Silverstein

# INTEGRATE

/ Elite Event Technology's JBL A-Series Investment  
/ Meanwhile, upstairs... MadisonAV, Harman, and Barco  
/ AI - What Comes After the Trough of Disillusionment?  
/ Integrate 2025, live on video from the show floor!

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- / ShowPro EC7 Wash

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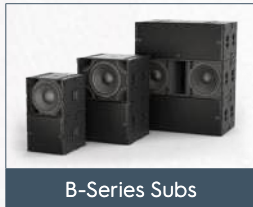


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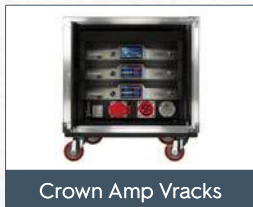
M-Series Monitors



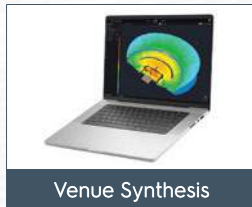
F-Series Fills



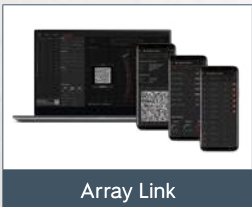
Rigging & Accessories



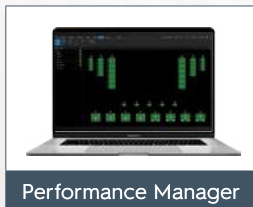
Crown Amp Vacks



Venue Synthesis



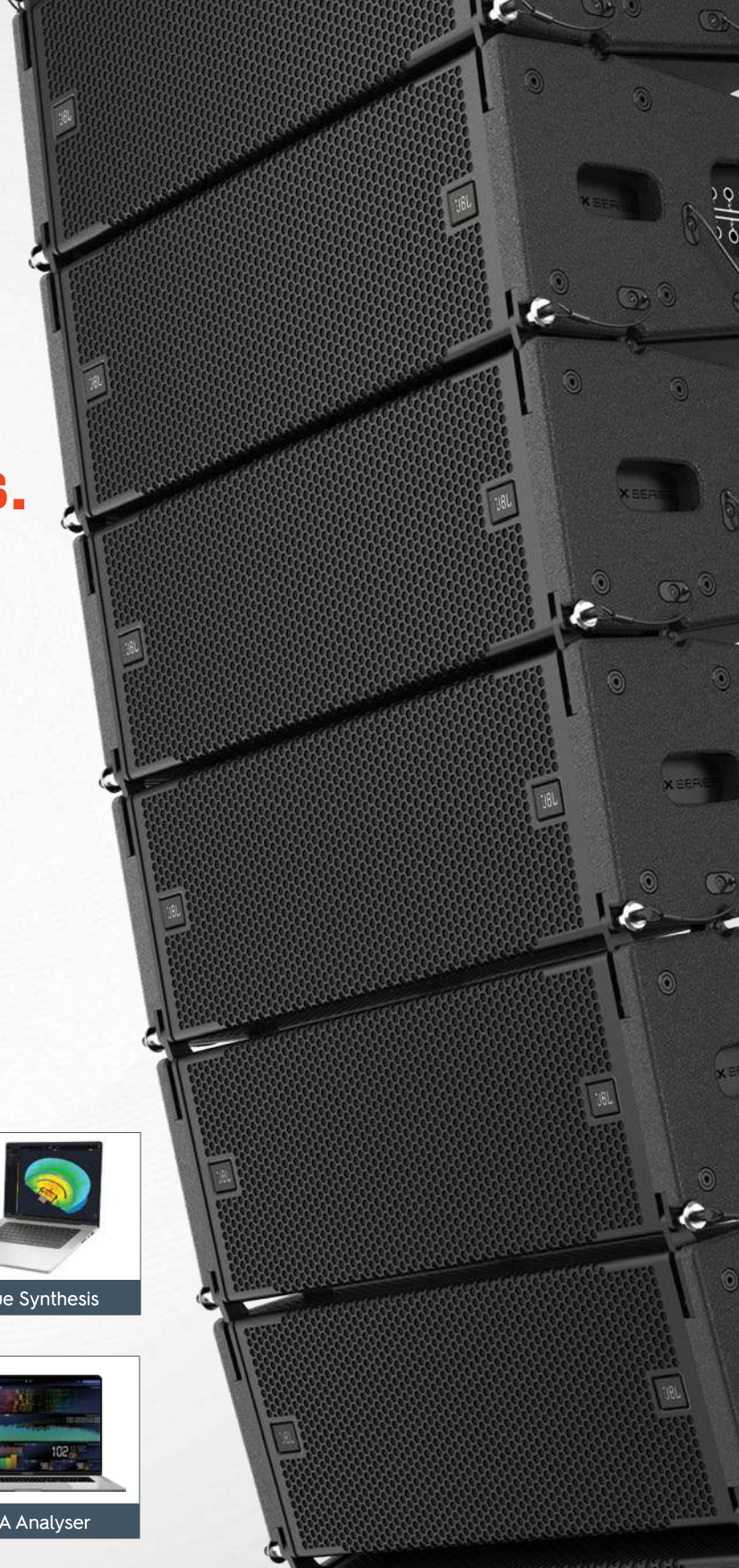
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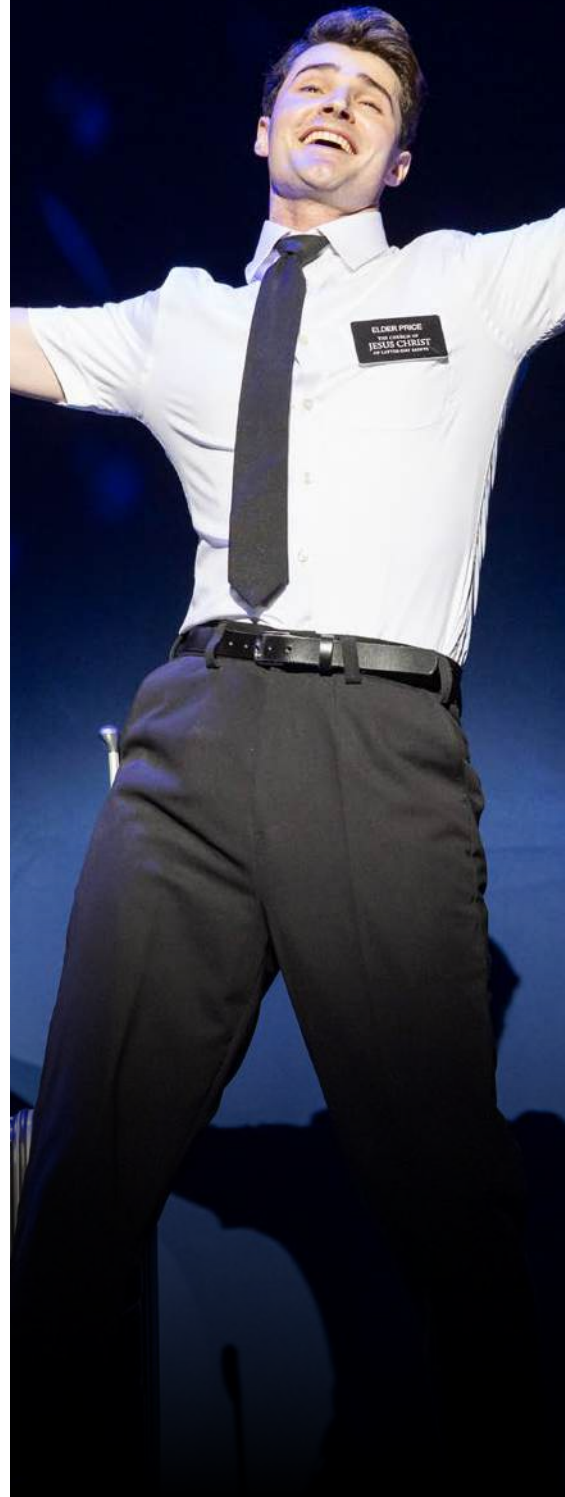
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Cover Photo – Keith Urban Tour

Contents Photo – The Book of Mormon, Capitol Theatre. Photo credit: Daniel Boud

CX is published by VCS Creative Publishing Pty Ltd

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Editor and Publisher: Jason Allen

Layout: Hush Creative Productions – Mark Underwood and Alisha Hill

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# L-Acoustics Announces Group Technologies as New Distributor for Australia and New Zealand

L-Acoustics has announced the appointment of Group Technologies Australasia as its new distributor for Australia and New Zealand.

The partnership brings together two industry powerhouses committed to delivering exceptional audio solutions and support across the dynamic Australasian market. Group Technologies, based in Melbourne, brings decades of specialised experience in professional audio distribution and a proven track record in large-scale installation projects.

## Immediate Market Access

Group Technologies is already operational as an authorised L-Acoustics distributor and ready to serve customers. From

January 1, 2026, Group Technologies will assume full distribution responsibility across Australia and New Zealand.

"We're fired up to join forces with Group Technologies as our distributor for Australia and New Zealand. With decades leading the pro audio market, and a deep connection to their clients, they're the perfect partner to carry the L-Acoustics torch in Oceania," said David Cooper, Director of Sales and Business Development for APAC at L-Acoustics. "Together, through this powerful collaboration, we'll shake up the market,

back our customers with unbeatable support, and make sure L-Acoustics is heard loud and clear across Australia and New Zealand."

---

*Pictured above from Left to Right: Jacob Barfoed, Global Director of Sales & Sales Operations at L-Acoustics; Mark Ladewig, Managing Director at Group Technologies; Anthony Touma, General Manager at Group Technologies; and David Cooper, Director of Sales & Business Development APAC at L-Acoustics*

# *ColorSource* *family*



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## Enhanced Focus and Capabilities

Group Technologies' specialised focus on professional audio positions them ideally to represent L-Acoustics in the region. The company has built an enviable reputation for excellence in supporting high-end professional audio equipment across diverse applications and has an unwavering commitment to providing only the best products backed by best-in-class resources and support.

*"We are thrilled to partner with L-Acoustics, a brand that shares our commitment to excellence and innovation in professional audio," said Anthony Touma, General Manager, Group Technologies. "L-Acoustics' reputation for pioneering sound reinforcement technology and their significant influence in our market makes this partnership a natural fit for Group Technologies' mission to bring world-class brands to the Australasian market."*

This partnership delivers enhanced support and access for L-Acoustics customers across Australia and New Zealand. Customers will benefit from comprehensive local technical support, faster product access, hands-on training opportunities, and expert assistance with custom installation solutions.

"Having worked closely with the Group Technologies team as we've built this partnership, I'm genuinely excited about what we can achieve together. Their deep understanding of the local market and genuine passion for audio excellence makes them ideal partners. I look forward to working hand-in-hand with Anthony and his team to ensure every L-Acoustics customer in Australia and New Zealand receives the personalised attention and technical expertise they deserve. This isn't just a business partnership – it's the beginning of a relationship built on shared values and a commitment to pushing the boundaries of what's possible in professional audio."

## Dedicated L-Acoustics Experience Center

A standout feature of the partnership is Group Technologies' commitment to developing a specialised L-Acoustics demonstration facility in Melbourne, featuring both L-ISA immersive sound technology and Ambiance acoustic enhancement solutions. Scheduled to open in February 2026, this cutting-edge experience center will provide customers and industry professionals with hands-on access to L-Acoustics' most advanced technologies.

"Group Technologies' investment in this world-class demonstration space is a bold statement of vision and passion," said Cooper. "It will be more than a showroom — it will be a destination where customers and industry leaders can step inside the magic of L-Acoustics and experience our technologies at their full potential."

"It will be more than a showroom — it will be a destination where customers and industry leaders can step inside the magic of L-Acoustics and experience our technologies at their full potential."



Mark Ladewig and Anthony Touma at L-Acoustics Global Headquarters in Marcoussis, France



# ATEM Mini Extreme ISO G2 lets you build a high end broadcast studio!

ATEM Mini Extreme ISO G2 makes it easy to create professional multi camera productions for live streaming! Simply connect ATEM Mini Extreme and you can live switch up to 8 high quality video camera inputs for dramatically better quality images. You can even sync your recording to Blackmagic Cloud, so you can edit your live production with DaVinci Resolve anywhere in the world!

## Build the World's Most Amazing Broadcast Studio!

The ATEM Mini Extreme ISO G2 is ideal for building a high-end broadcast studio as it offers all the ATEM Mini features plus extra features! It has a professional style control panel with amazing input buttons. It has 3 independent video outputs that can be routed. The built-in Thunderbolt offers live video capture and playback, enabling real-time effects software or live action replay.

## Get Powerful Broadcast Replay with DaVinci Resolve

Blackmagic Replay uses the ISO files recorded by ATEM Mini Extreme ISO G2 to do replay in DaVinci Resolve. The ISO files are recorded to a CFexpress card which DaVinci can access via Ethernet. You can use multi-view in the cut page to view all cameras in DaVinci Resolve at the same time. The files will even continuously upload as you're recording so you can edit live!

## Share Internal Storage with Multiple Users

ATEM Mini Extreme ISO G2 is not just a switcher, it's also a shared network disk using the 10G Ethernet port to the internal CFexpress memory card or external USB disk! CFexpress cards are extremely fast so they can keep up with recording multiple ISO video files while external network users all work on separate computers for editing, color correction, VFX and audio post production.

## The Most Advanced Broadcast Quality Control Panel

The front panel has buttons for selecting sources, triggering transitions, and setting video effects. It also features an innovative audio mixer control area with live metering on a Fairlight style HDMI status output. You get buttons for recording, streaming, and dedicated output buttons for changing outputs between the 8 cameras, program, preview, multi-view, or Fairlight status.

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John Rostron, CEO (AIF, UK)

Around 150 people travelled to Rivershed, Brisbane to attend the fourth annual Australian Festival Industry Conference (AFIC). Held across 8-9 September, AFIC is the only conference in Australia dedicated exclusively to servicing the thousands of festival industry professionals that produce quality music, arts and culture, food and drink, “intellectual and ideas” and sporting festivals.

# Australian Festival Industry Conference Hailed Another Success

The event pulled delegates from across Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom, representing a range of public, private and not-for-profit festival producers, as well as suppliers, educational institutions and government grant administrators.

Over two full days, AFIC featured two keynotes, 20+ presentations from industry-leading professionals, four panel discussions, a special Q&A chat, a trade exhibition, and two networking events.

Founder and event director, Carlina Ericson, said that she couldn't have asked for a better result.

“The feedback throughout the conference was overwhelmingly positive and I was inundated with people expressing how useful they found the content and the abundance of networking opportunities.”

*“We were especially fortunate to present two keynotes from the internationally recognised brands of Burning Man (USA) and the Association of Independent Festivals (UK)”, says Carlina.*

John Rostron, CEO of the Association of Independent Festivals (AIF, UK) opened day one with his keynote. The AIF is made up of 152 festival members. John discussed the challenges that the UK industry is facing and outlined how the association is working with the UK Government to ensure festivals remain viable.

The UK festival sector is worth around £1.7bn, up 1.9% on the previous year. The sector has also been facing increasing costs, which is why so many have folded in recent years.

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Key initiatives that were discussed included: working hard with the Government to “break up” big multi-national players who are taking “ownership” of the industry and putting downward pressure on smaller, independent festivals. Introducing a one pound ticket levy on tickets from large events; this goes into a fund that supports grassroots and regional festivals. Licensing reform: the UK government simplified red tape through a “licensing sprint”. Developing a sustainability blueprint for festivals that are wanting to reduce their environmental impact.

A second keynote was delivered by Christopher Breedlove, Director of Civic Activation, Burning Man Project. Drawing upon his 10 years’ experience with the festival, he provided an overview of the festival’s delivery model and how they are working to remain viable into the future, particularly in response to the recent climate change impacts.

In summary, Burning Man has adopted a number of sustainably-focussed initiatives and tech advancements to enhance its operations and better respond to adverse weather. For example: adopting a sustainability roadmap, with the aim of achieving the following by 2030: becoming zero waste, being carbon negative, becoming regenerative, and investing in solar-powered infrastructure and renewable



Christopher Breedlove (Burning Man, USA)

propane toilets.

Delegates were also treated to a special update by The Hon. John Graham, MLC – NSW Minister for the Arts; Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy; Minister for Jobs and Tourism. Minister Graham talked about the changes the NSW Government is in the process of making, to reduce the costs associated with running festivals for

organisers, and simplify processes for artists and suppliers. Examples included: investing in outdoor electricity to negate the need for festivals to hire generators. Councils will soon be able to create pre-approved development applications and traffic management plans, cutting average costs by up to 40%. Adopting a streamlined approvals process for buskers and food van operators, etc – one approval for multiple local government areas.

# ACMA LIPD CONSULTATION 2025 OUTCOME

The Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) has announced the anticipated changes to the Low Interference Potential Devices (LIPD) Class Licence that are required to facilitate the use of wireless audio transmitters using wireless multi-channel audio system (WMAS) from 1 October 2025.

## What does this mean?

Prior to 1 October, WMAS devices could not be used outdoors legally. From 1 October they can be used in all circumstances.

However, an integral element of the class licence system is that all users must share the class licenced bands and use the spectrum efficiently. Here at PRM we are expecting to see some WMAS devices in use

during this summer’s busy touring festival season. We are reminding users that they should not use their products in wideband mode where they are only using a few channels of audio, and we are building our spectrum plans accordingly. Narrow band is more efficient in this instance and preferable. Wide band has its usage, but at all times it is important to remember that RF Spectrum is a finite resource and must be used efficiently

- a philosophy PRM actively encourages. These changes herald a new era in wireless audio. WMAS is an amazing technology that will change how spectrum is managed, but the important part here is that spectrum still requires management, particularly at large events and broadcasts.



Australian Government



**Australian Communications and Media Authority**

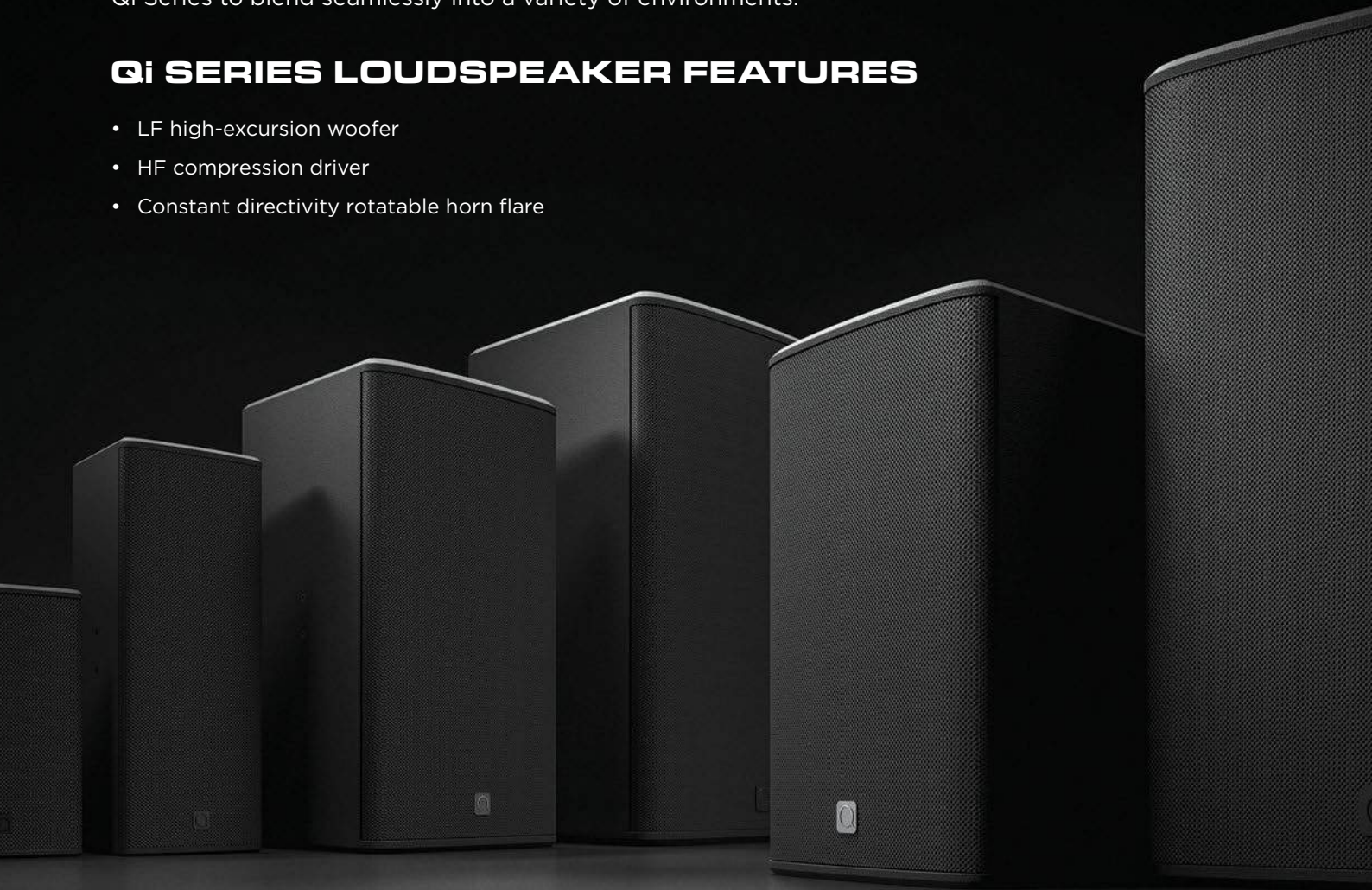


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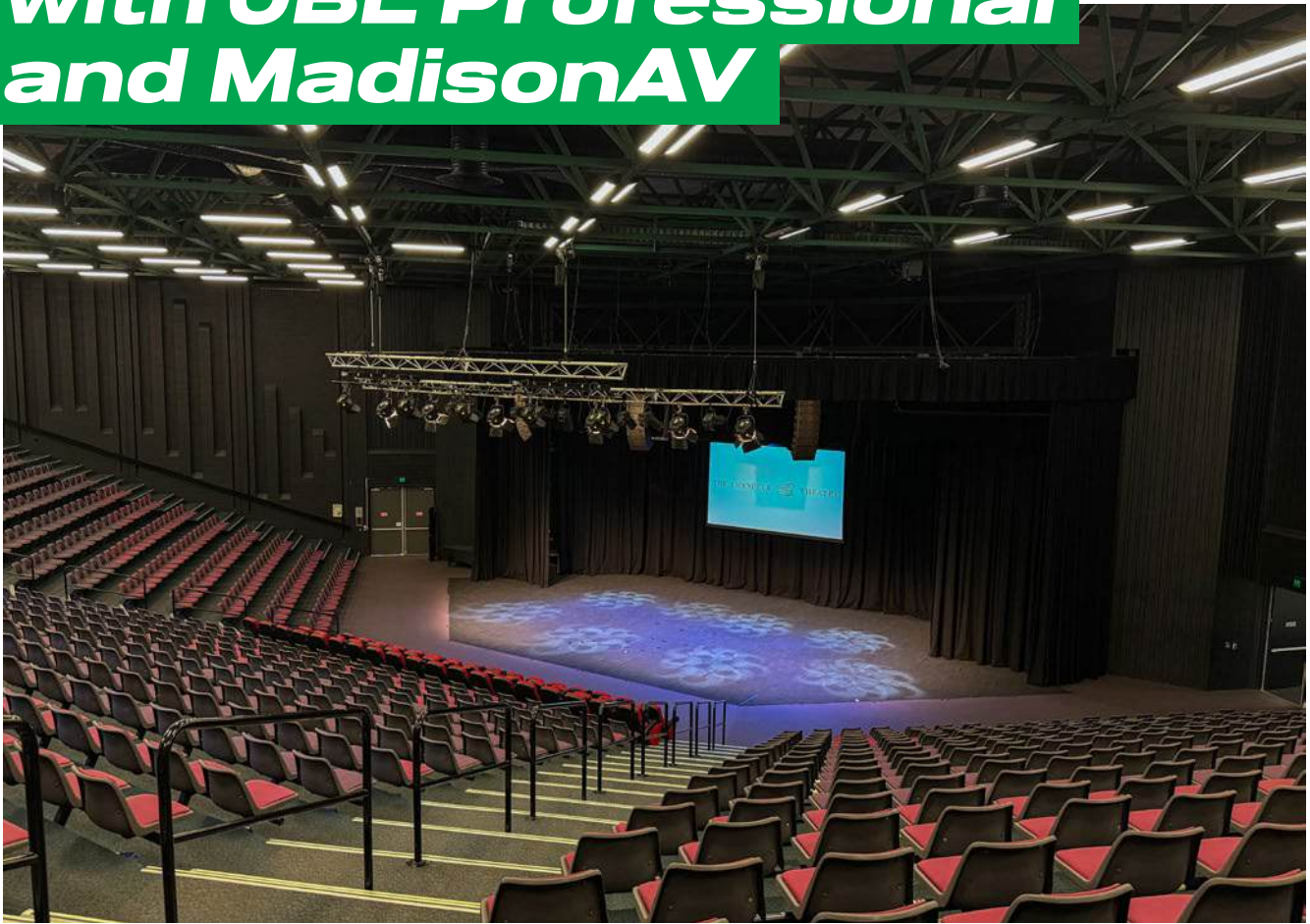
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# Chandler Theatre Revitalises Its Sound with JBL Professional and MadisonAV



**Brisbane's historic Chandler Theatre, first built for the 1982 Commonwealth Games, has unveiled a transformative audio upgrade powered by JBL Professional, Crown amplification, and MadisonAV distribution.**

After decades of service, the venue's original PA system had become outdated, limiting its ability to host the diverse range of performances and community events it is known for. The upgrade, delivered in collaboration with acoustic consultants XConnect Professional Services and audio production specialists High Noon Stage Productions, balances cutting-edge sound reinforcement with respect for the theatre's heritage design.

The installation is the first Australian permanent installation of a JBL VTX A6 subcompact line array system and is paired with cardioid-configured JBL VTX B15 subwoofers and driven by Crown I-Tech amplifiers. This carefully engineered system ensures pristine clarity, optimised low-frequency control, and powerful yet discreet coverage across the entire auditorium.

"Chandler Theatre is an iconic venue, and we're proud to have supported its next

chapter with a solution that delivers both technical excellence and audience impact," said Peter Kubow, MadisonAV. "JBL's VTX A6 was the perfect choice for the space, combining compact design with the power and performance required."

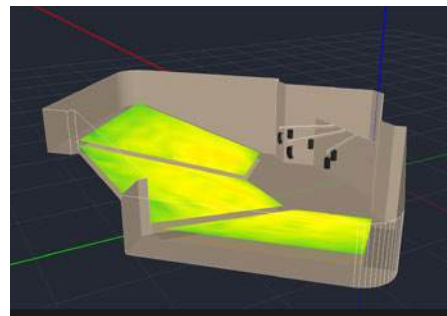
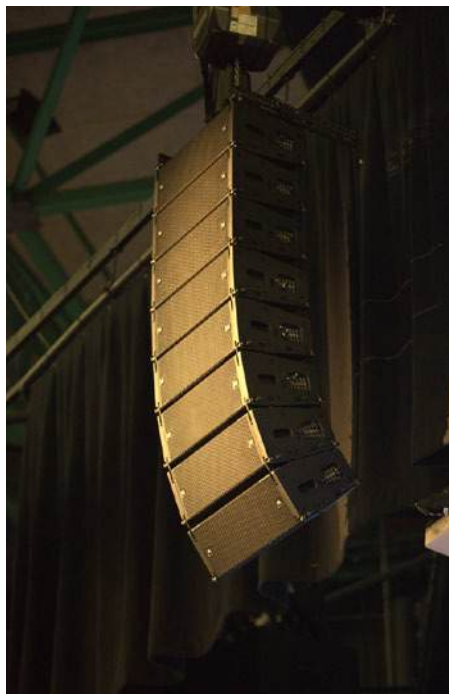
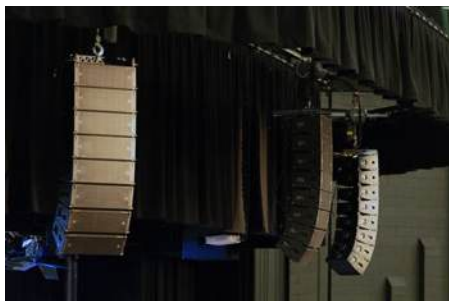
"The VTX A6 subcompact system allowed us to keep the hang height short enough to avoid blocking sightlines, keep weight down, while still delivering the required SPL (105dB)," Glenn Thompson of XConnect Professional Services summarised. "In the same way, we chose the B15s because of their size and hang height suitability. We wanted to run the subs in a cardioid configuration to keep low frequencies off the stage and push them into the audience area. We installed them in hangs of three, and they've been commissioned and tuned accordingly."

High Noon Stage Productions handled the installation, with Operations Manager Locky Young summarising his experience since the

VTX installation: "We're seeing the JBL VTX A-Series on more and more riders. The acts that use it here have been really pleased – some were excited to mix on VTX as it's not yet widely available, and this is one of the first permanent installs. So far, the feedback has been entirely positive."

"We're also heading into the busy end of the year with a calendar loaded with repeat business - schools, dance academies, awards nights - and looking forward to the challenge of mic'ing up 40-odd orchestra inputs or 20-plus headsets through the VTX PA."

Alex Hutchison, General Manager of the Sleeman Sports Complex (in which the theatre resides) can also see the possibilities: "Thanks to our new state-of-the-art JBL loudspeaker system, the venue can now attract new, fresh content while retaining the diverse programming we already host month-to-month. We're genuinely excited about what lies ahead."



With the installation complete, Chandler Theatre is once again positioned as one of Brisbane's premier performance venues, equipped to deliver unforgettable experiences for audiences and performers alike.

The solution consisted of:

24 x JBL VTX A6 - three hangs of eight elements, two elements per circuit for more dispersion control

9 x JBL VTX B15 - three hangs of three subwoofers in cardioid mode

6 x I-Tech 4x3500HD Crown Audio amplifiers

The VTX A-Series line array speakers are renowned for their advanced technology, including the patented D2 dual-diaphragm dual-voice-coil compression drivers and the differential drive neodymium magnet dual voice coil woofer. This combination ensures unparalleled clarity, power, and intelligibility, making them the ideal choice for venues and events of all sizes.

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## ULA Group Lights Up Sydney with the Official Opening of its New Showroom

Sydney's skyline shone a little brighter on 26 August as ULA Group officially unveiled its new state-of-the-art showroom and office facilities in Condell Park, marking another milestone in the company's three-decade success story.

The highly anticipated launch welcomed industry professionals, valued clients, and manufacturing partners who had travelled from across the globe to celebrate this exciting new chapter for ULA Group. Guests enjoyed an evening of authentic Italian cuisine, vibrant networking, and the opportunity to explore the cutting-edge showroom, experiencing first-hand the latest lighting, AV, and LED display innovations.

The night's highlights began with the official launch of Elation Lighting's PARAGON LT, making its debut as the brightest fixture in the award-winning PARAGON Series. The moment was elevated by the presence of

international guests Eric Loader (Global Vice President – Sales) and Jonas Stenvinkel (International Sales Manager) from Elation Lighting, who shared their insights and perspectives with the audience.

Astera's Ben Díaz kept the energy flowing with an engaging presentation of the brand-new QuikPunch, a wireless LED fixture engineered for speed, brilliance, and reliability, setting a new standard for film and event lighting professionals.

The spotlight then shifted to VuePix Infiled with the unveiling of the Black Widow Series, presented through a product demonstration by Jake Horsburgh, VuePix Infiled Product Manager. Black Widow's ingenious versatility and refined engineering captivated guests, firmly setting a new benchmark in LED screen technology.

But the celebrations didn't end with the speeches. As the event moved outdoors, Elation's mighty Proteus Excalibur beams carved striking patterns into the night sky, while a live demonstration of the PARAGON LT transformed the exterior walls of the

complex into a dazzling canvas of light. It was a spectacular finale that perfectly captured the scale, creativity, and ambition driving ULA Group's future.

"Tonight we celebrate an incredible milestone for ULA Group, but more importantly, we look ahead," says Cuono Biviano, Managing Director of ULA Group.

*"This new showroom is more than just a space - it's a platform for innovation, collaboration, and inspiration. It represents our commitment to pushing boundaries and shaping the future of lighting and visual technology, not just in Australia and New Zealand, but on a global stage."*

ULA Group extends its sincere thanks to all who joined the celebrations and to its valued partners who helped make the evening a resounding success.

# STRADALE PROFILE

small in size, immense in power



Stradale Profile embodies the principle of perfect homothety within Ayrton's Ultimate range, standing as the first ultra-compact luminaire of the brand-new 1 Series. Following in the footsteps of Rivale, it reduces its visual footprint by 15%, achieving this through meticulous engineering and extreme miniaturisation. Every detail was optimised—streamlining the structure, refining effect modules, and minimising component size—to push integration to new limits.

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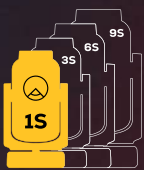
**Variable CRI**  
**70 to 86**

**IP Rating**  
**IP65**

**Beam Aperture**  
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**Front Lens**  
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**Weight**  
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# NAOSTAGE DELIVERS GROUND BREAKING SPATIAL AUDIO EXPERIENCE AT JAZZOPEN STUTT GART 2025



At jazzopen stuttgart 2025, Naostage's K SYSTEM – the first tracking and show control system dedicated to professional audiovisual applications, using computer vision and AI – tracked the performers in real time on the main stage. Seamlessly integrated with d&b audiotechnik's Soundscape, it enabled precise spatialisation of sound objects, synchronised with the performers' movements.

While the K SYSTEM's lighting tracking capabilities had already been widely used at numerous European festivals this summer – from the Manchester International Festival in the UK to Art Rock, Poupet, Solidays, Main Square, Les Vieilles Charrues, and Roi Arthur music festivals in France – jazzopen stuttgart marked a key milestone by leveraging the full potential of the K SYSTEM to offer the audience a groundbreaking spatial audio experience.

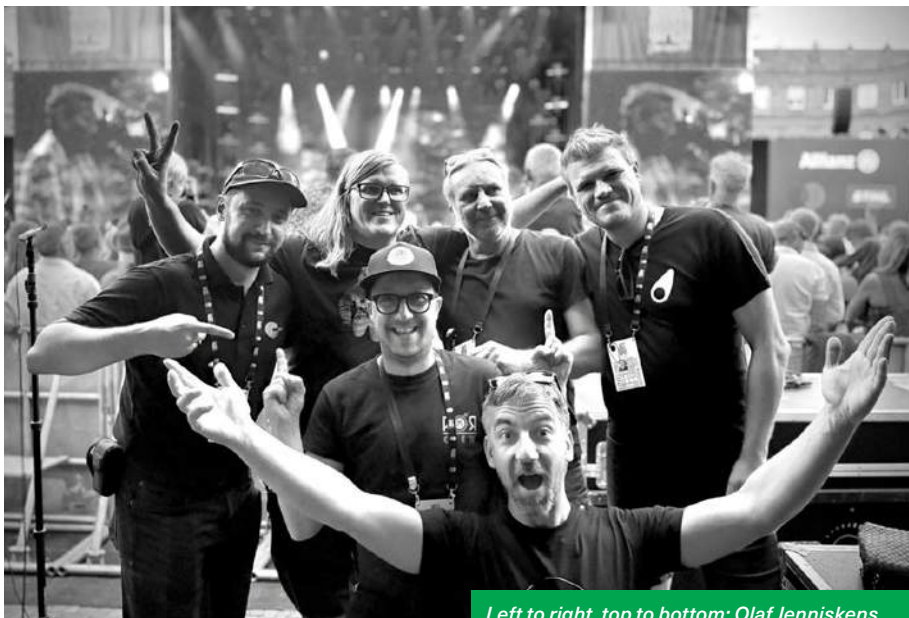
At the request of d&b audiotechnik, the Dutch company So-light BV orchestrated the integration of the K SYSTEM for the event.

"We were invited by d&b audiotechnik to collaborate on the festival," explains Olaf Jenniskens, CTO of So-light and its sister company So-lution. "Our role was to deploy and operate Naostage's K SYSTEM for real-time stage tracking, ensuring perfect coordination with d&b Soundscape and

delivering a new dimension of spatial sound on the main stage."

As Naostage's distributor in the Benelux region and a key partner in Germany for over 18 months, So-light used the K SYSTEM to continuously capture the performers' positions and transmit this data via OSC (Open Sound Control) to the Soundscape engine. The result: precise and natural audio positioning, where voices and instruments seemed to emanate directly from the location of the performers, whether stationary or moving. "We were able to create a vibrant and immersive soundscape that followed the artists' movements," continues Jenniskens. "This precision enhanced the connection between the audience and the performance, far beyond what a traditional stereo mix could achieve."

The audio system was provided by d&b audiotechnik, while So-light/So-lution handled tracking and on-site integration, with support



Left to right, top to bottom: Olaf Jenniskens (CTO, So-light), Serge Gräfe (Soundscape engineer, d&b), Ralf Zuleeg (director of creative community, d&b), Patrick Slots (creative founder, So-light), Ben Blechschied (EAS Germany), Dominik Grimm (EAS Germany)



from a Naostage team led by Sales Director Alexis Reymond.

With over 64,000 attendees and major performances by Kraftwerk, Kylie Minogue, Joe Bonamassa, RAYE and Jacob Collier, Jean-Michel Jarre, and Lionel Richie, this

edition of jazzopen confirmed the central role of immersive audio in the festival experience. "The enthusiastic response from the audience demonstrates that this type of system offers unique value," emphasises Jenniskens.

"Festivalgoers experienced a soundscape of striking realism, where every stage movement was instantly reflected in the sound space."

This stop in Stuttgart was part of the "Naostage on Tour" summer tour, the most ambitious to date, which supported eight festivals between June and August. "Seeing the K SYSTEM operate night after night in such diverse contexts illustrates its robustness, technological maturity, and ease of integration with third-party immersive systems," comments Alexis Reymond. "This confirms that markerless, automated stage tracking is ready for large-scale live productions and seamlessly integrates into established workflows."

Looking ahead, So-light anticipates widespread adoption of this technology. "Markerless real-time tracking simplifies installations and ensures reliable operation," concludes Jenniskens. "This approach, combining time savings, flexibility, and creative freedom, is poised to become the standard for major live events." For the audience, this translates into more interactive, immersive, engaging, and memorable experiences.

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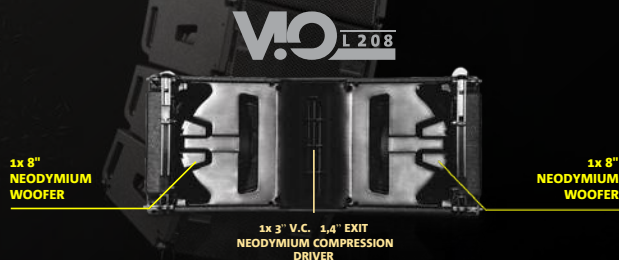
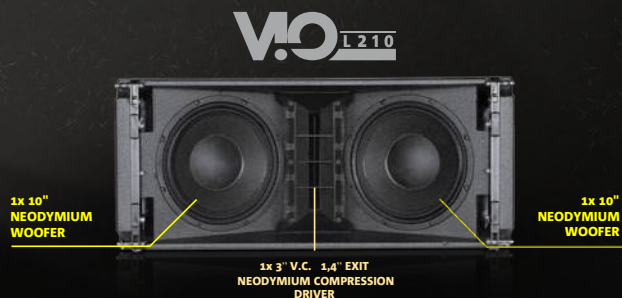
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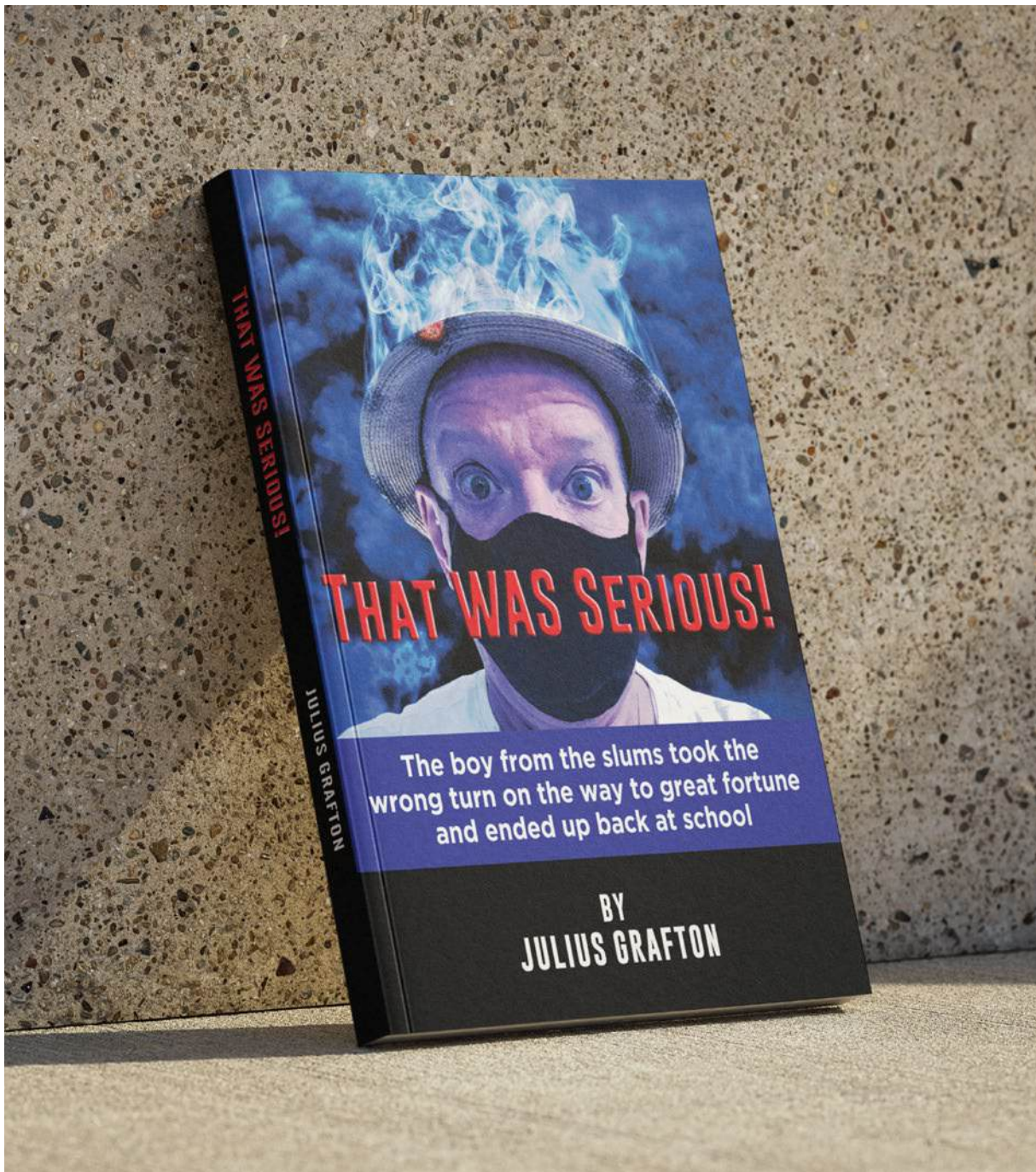
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# That WAS Serious!

## CX's founder releases second book

**CX founder Julius Grafton has just released his second book, 'That WAS Serious' as a sequel to his first, 'This Could Be Serious'.**

Released in Covid, the first book sold almost 1,000 copies with funds donated to Support Act, the charity helping crew and performers in need. The new book also helps Support Act and Grafton says the charity has directly saved lives. "Not just in lockdowns, I know people who've been in desperate need and then S.A. has made a difference. Having no money with

kids to support is gutwrenching, a spiral that is almost impossible to escape from without help."

Spanning 250 pages the book continues the theme from the previous, a mix of bio and random articles Grafton has written, some from CX and others more controversial. "I've been described as a dog with a bone when it comes to exposing mendacity, mediocrity, and malevolence," he says. On that, Grafton has written up some chapters covering outrageous behaviours including the TCP fraud case - which vindicated TCP director Tony Musico; and how Hindley Street Country Club blew up their fame.

Grafton says he designed his books as a collection of mainly standalone stories, since the traditional bio tends to start at birth and continue through decades. Whilst the new book is arranged through years 1957 to now, it doesn't dwell on old family material and has plenty of sex, drugs and rock and roll - the grist of the mill, he says. Copies can be bought on Kindle or paperback via Amazon, or by direct donation of \$15 to Support Act [supportact.org.au/how-you-can-help/donate-now/](http://supportact.org.au/how-you-can-help/donate-now/) and sending the receipt to [juliusmedia@me.com](mailto:juliusmedia@me.com) so he can mail you a signed copy.



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# D&B AUDIOTECHNIK CCL SERIES LAUNCH



CCL



David Claringbold with the CCL



Dave Jacques presenting

Sydney's beautiful City Recital Hall is already home to a d&b audiotechnik sound system, complete with Soundscape immersive processing. Late in August, it played host to the launch of d&b's newest release, the CL-Series compact cardioid line array and subs. Judging by the impressive attendance, the Australian market is extremely interested in this smaller, but still powerful 'entry level' d&b line array.

CL-Series is making good on d&b's promise of 'democracy for listeners', bringing their legendary cardioid directivity to a passive design over the full frequency range. Using a bit of ingenious physical design, the CCL8 and CCL12 elements maintain their directivity from 62 z to above 18kHz, and one 4-channel d&b amp can run up to eight elements or eight of their companion CCL-SUBs.

The CL-Series PA was supplied and rigged up by Sightline Productions, the first in Australia to invest in the new product. After a tight and knowledgeable presentation from NAS's Anthony Murdoch and Dave Jacques, we got into some serious listening. With the CCL8 capable of 137dB, this small system can take on some big gigs. The small size does not diminish the typical d&b sound and punch,

and devotees of the German brand will find themselves totally at home in front of CL-Series.

What is amazing is the rear rejection, especially considering it's being achieved physically. It's not often you see more people at a speaker demo standing behind the system than in front. While the PA was blasting, I stood on stage and had a perfectly comfortable conversation with a colleague. This astonishing performance will make mixing anything so much easier.

d&b's ex CMO and Sydneysider at large, David Claringbold, was home and on-hand to chat all things d&b at the launch. I sat down with him to talk about CL-Series and where it sits in the d&b universe.

*“The important thing about CL-Series is that it builds on the broadband directivity features of SL-Series,” began David. “SL features full broadband directivity control and cardioid performance in GSL, KSL, and XSL. It’s become a leading industry system for tours and installs. d&b’s philosophy is always driven by ‘democracy for listeners’ and a lot of innovation and thinking went into how we could bring that cardioid performance to a form factor like CL-Series. The smaller format can work on regional festivals, as outfills to a larger system, or smaller live music clubs and rooms like City Recital Hall, with around 1000 capacity. We’ve achieved this cardioid performance using passive technology, using only one channel of an amplifier to deliver cardioid performance in the box, which is extraordinary.”*

Previously in the position of Director of Theatre & Events at the Sydney Opera House, David joined d&b in 2016 in a board role before becoming Chief Marketing Officer. “GSL was being introduced in 2016,” relates David. “They first demonstrated it in one of the big arenas in Stuttgart. The leading audio companies on the planet flew in to have a look at it. It was first time I’ve ever seen sound engineers standing behind a system in a demo, but it happens every time we show our systems now. d&b has had a lifelong focus on directivity. In the early decades, we focussed on controlling the high frequencies. As the decades and technology have progressed, we’re now able to control the full broadband spectrum. That’s driven by another principle that’s dear to d&b’s heart, ‘more art, less noise’. We want to put the focus on the audience, and we don’t want to have sound unnecessarily bouncing around a venue or into residential areas. The musicians on stage, people mixing monitors, and people in catering or other production roles behind the system all benefit from the way it operates.”

There was no shortage of interest on the night, and the Recital Hall’s foyer was heaving after the demo, with excited attendees enjoying NAS’s hospitality and sizing up what gigs they could deploy CL-Series on. “A system like CL-Series has pretty broad appeal,” observes David. “It is a market leading technology in a form factor and price point that is accessible. Existing d&b system owners can just add CL directly to their workflow. For people who are looking at an entry point d&b PA, CL-Series’ HF performance is equivalent to the Y-Series; you can do some pretty serious shows with this system. I think a lot of corporate rental companies, medium production companies, and regional production companies will be interested.”

As d&b further democratises good sound, David is seeing more venues and promoters actively seeking superior audio performance. “There’s a direct correlation between making money and good audio systems,” asserts David. “If the audio system is good, people feel comfortable. They want to stay, they want to share, they want to talk, and it’s just a much more emotional and transformative experience. That translates into people wanting to tell their friends, spend their money, and have a great time. It’s great to see the audio industry evolving like this. We’ve come from a position where audio systems used to be a mixed bag. You’d look at an amplifier rack and there’d be two or three brands in it, and the loudspeakers would be two or three different brands, and there’d be some kind of crossover stuck out the front, and someone would dial in whatever settings they thought were good. Overall, the industry has become so much more professional, as has the quality of audio. I’ve been to a couple of big stadium events recently, and I was blown away by the quality of the audio. In such a big environment, with 90,000 people, and wherever you sat or walked around, it sounded fantastic. That’s priceless.”

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ADJ's Encore DBX is a dual-lens blinder. Dual 150W RGBW LEDs scorch the eyes with 11,400 lumens and RGB background LEDs light up the unit itself. Encore DBX is IP65 rated for outdoors and offers variable white colour control (2,700K - 6,500K). Vertical or horizontal array hang options available.

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**ADJ 40 HEX Panel IP**

40 HEX Panel IP from ADJ is a multi-function light that can act as wash, blinder, strobe and eye-candy. It uses 40x 20W HEX (6-in-1) RGBAL+UV LEDs to output 19,590 lumens. IP65 rating keeps them protected from the elements. Linear variable white temperature control (2,700K - 10,000K), 10 zones of pixel control and optional frost and black filters round out the feature set.

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**NEW GEAR**



**Avolites D3 Consoles**

Avolites' D3 range of consoles are designed to be portable, powerful and flexible. D3 uses Titan software to keep operating concepts the same across all models. **D3-010** is an entry-level stand-alone console that handles up to 8 universes of DMX control onboard, offering full programming via 10 faders, 3 encoder wheels and 12 Macro buttons. An external monitor can be added and a D3 Wing (see below) can expand the surface with more faders. **D3-110** is the console for larger shows, with 24 DMX universes, inbuilt touch screen, and the processing and speed to back it up. Also 10 playback faders, 3 encoder wheels, and 12 macro buttons. Robust and designed to tour, it includes a mixture of USB A and C ports for file transfer, device control and systems integration. **D3 Wing** adds 20 high-quality faders to D3-010 and D3-110 workflows for more hands-on and physical control during live playback as well as during cue stacking and speed programming. It is road-ready and install-friendly. **D3 Core** is a D3 processor in a 1U rack mounted version running Titan. It offers Avolites versatility and control practicality to installations, remote controlled shows and space-challenged locations, at a competitive price point. **D3 Touch** is a pre-configured Titan remote control interface for use with any D3 product. It's targeted at venue and installation markets, enabling non-technical staff to switch on/off anything programmed with a simple interface.

*Australia and New Zealand: LSC Control Systems lsccontrol.com.au +61 3 9702 8000*

# NEW GEAR



## ETC Eos v3.3 Software

ETC's Eos 3.3 software update adds new features and enhancements, including Expansion Processing, improvements to Magic Sheets and additions throughout the system. Expansion Processing allows productions to divide the workload of large rigs across multiple devices, with multi-console synchronization keeping the system moving in time. Magic Sheets have received a major redesign aimed at making it faster each time you create or edit a Magic Sheet. Network requirements have been updated to simplify deployment, faders have been redesigned with updated graphics, and the fixture editor now supports curvature adjustments for LED parameters. Eos Fixture Wizard simplifies the process of building a new fixture profile.

**Australia:** Jands [jands.com.au](http://jands.com.au) 02 9582 0909  
**New Zealand:** Jands [jands.co.nz](http://jands.co.nz) 09 941 9780



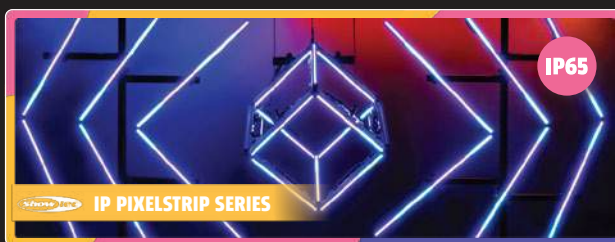
## Astera SolaBulb

SolaBulb is a zoomable LED bulb with 15° - 50° adjustable beam – giving both spotlight and wide-angle beam spreads – and a refined PAR20 fresnel lens. The fixture uses Astera's 5-colour Titan LED Engine for high CRI and the same performance and beam characteristics as other Astera luminaires. CRMX makes LumenRadio's wireless DMX and RDM protocols available for integration with consoles and controllers. It also uses Astera IR WhiteRemote and FX Remote for tweaking colour temperatures or dimming values.

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## Shure DCA901 Planar Array Microphone

The DCA901 Planar Array Microphone from Shure is designed for sports, studio, and live event production. It uses digitally steerable lobes to isolate voices and action, minimizing crowd noise and bleed. One unit can replace multiple shotgun or parabolic mics and deliver up to eight isolated channels of focused, high-fidelity audio. DCA901 can also simultaneously and seamlessly capture 5.1 and stereo conversion. A single-cable Dante or AES67 connection combines audio, power, and control into one source. Integrated DSP with automixing, EQ, compression, and delay deliver consistent quality audio with minimal post-processing.

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## Vectorworks 2026 Software Suite

Vectorworks 2026 is the latest software release from design and BIM software provider Vectorworks, Inc. There are many updates across the suite, affecting the architects, landscape architects and designers, and entertainment professionals who use it. Tools and workflows are updated across all of the packages. Spotlight 2026 is the entertainment specific module and 2026 adds a new LED Video Wall tool to assist production planning. Beyond new functionality, Vectorworks 2026 adds numerous quality and performance improvements.

**Australia:** Vectorworks  
[vectorworks.net.au](http://vectorworks.net.au) 02 8338 8622  
**New Zealand:** Vectorworks  
[vectorworks.co.nz](http://vectorworks.co.nz) 09 610 6990

## Meyer Sound GEN-1 Technology for Networked Loudspeakers

Meyer Sound's Galileo Extended Networking platform, or GEN-1, is a new technology that brings networked connectivity and onboard signal processing directly to the loudspeaker. GEN-1 enabled speakers can receive an AES67 audio stream and perform full onboard GALAXY processing, including delay, EQ, and Meyer Sound's proprietary U-Shaping and Product Integration tools. GEN-1 also returns information with system telemetry, including signal presence, clip, and limiter status, over a network connection.

**Australia and New Zealand:** Meyer Sound  
[meyersound.com](http://meyersound.com) +1 510 486 1166



## Obsidian NETRON Integration Series

Obsidian Control Systems is expanding its NETRON data distribution products for system integrators and fixed installs. EN6D is a DIN rail or wall-mount Ethernet-to-DMX gateway with six RDM-compatible wire terminals or RJ45 outputs. RJ45, screw-terminal or IDC connectivity can be placed on the top, bottom or front of the device. RDM6D is a DIN rail or wall-mount DMX/RDM splitter with six wire terminals or RJ45 outputs. It features opto-isolated outputs and flexible wiring options. DA2410V is a compact DIN rail or wall-mount Ethernet or DMX gateway with 24x 0-10V analog outputs. Configurable from its OLED display, it supports DMX, Art-Net or sACN as the source. BS10 is a wall station for cue or preset recall stored in the EN12i EtherDMX node. It has 10 backlit and numbered buttons, and the RJ45 connection uses PoE over standard CAT5 wiring. Up to 10 button stations can be integrated into a system by using the BS10 Split, allowing stations to be placed in multiple locations and at greater distances.

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## Eventing the Future:

# Politics, Promoters, and the Push for Recognition

Ministers promised, promoters pushed back - and concerts are finally on the agenda.

**At NZEA's Eventing the Future conference in Hamilton, the mood among live entertainment and major events professionals was one of cautious optimism. There was palpable energy but also frustration that the music, arts, and non-sporting side of "events" has for too long been treated as an afterthought. The political hand played a careful game: promising more, signalling change, but leaving many of the details to future announcements. Since then, however, things have moved at pace. Policy shifts have materialised, funding frameworks have opened, and for the first time in years, concerts are on the government's agenda.**

### The Ministers: Recalibrating Investment, Strategy, and Regulation

Tourism and Hospitality Minister Louise Upston took the stage just months after facing significant backlash over a January announcement: a \$5 million boost to major events that explicitly excluded concerts and festivals. At the time, Upston had argued that, "We have to be realistic about whether concerts generate economic value for New Zealand," suggesting that profits often went offshore. The move was roundly criticised across the live music and arts sector, with many pointing out the broader cultural and regional value such events provide, even if not always measurable in GDP terms.

At the conference, Upston shifted tone. She focused on "building strong pipelines" for major events and signalled that a wider investment package was forthcoming. While short on detail, her speech was interpreted as a political soft pivot, acknowledging pressure from the cultural sector without fully reversing course.

That critique, and the conversation about what counts as a "major event", was picked up by Kylie Hawker-Green, Manager of Major Events at MBIE. She outlined the government's refreshed Major Events Strategy, which centres on investment in events that deliver net national economic benefit, support high-performance sport outcomes, and/or celebrate New Zealand's identity, creativity, and diversity.

While music and arts theoretically fall under the third pillar, Hawker-Green acknowledged these areas have historically been under-represented in major event funding. She urged

the sector to focus on future pipeline building, at the same time warning of intensifying global competition, referencing Qiddiya City in Saudi Arabia, a mega-project that combines sport, culture, and entertainment infrastructure on a staggering scale. New Zealand needs to be clever about what it pitches for, clear about its point of difference, and market it well.

Associate Justice Minister Nicole McKee offered more concrete support for the sector, outlining proposed reforms to simplify alcohol licensing under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. These include introducing a nationally consistent, risk-based approach to special licence applications, improving coordination for events that cross district boundaries, and significantly raising the threshold for what qualifies as a "large-scale" event, from 400 to 2,000 attendees. The aim is to reduce red tape and bring greater clarity and consistency to licensing decisions, particularly for mid-sized events, thereby lowering planning risks and compliance costs across the live sector.

### The Promoters: Confronting Cost, Competition, and Demand

David Benge from TEG Live set a grounded, forward-looking tone. Speaking during the "Promoting Our Cities" session, he acknowledged persistent challenges: a tough exchange rate, rising production costs especially when artists insist on importing staging, and intense global competition, like multimillion-dollar offers tied to Formula 1 events. He also flagged withholding tax complexities that make Australia more attractive, and pointed to local councils understandably demanding exclusivity, which hinders the viability of cohesive national tours.

Still, Bengie wasn't downbeat, wryly citing Peppa Pig and Bluey as recent hits. He highlighted strong partnerships with city stakeholders, referenced upcoming blockbusters like the Royal Edinburgh Tattoo and Cirque du Soleil, and spoke about ongoing research to support the sector's value case. His message was clear: things are hard, but the sector is innovating and adapting.

Mark Kneebone, Managing Director of Live Nation NZ, was more direct in his keynote. He described 2025 as "the year of the slow burn," contrasting it with a record-breaking 2024 that drew 1.5 million attendees. His words were pointed, "The allure of New Zealand as a destination and must-do touring market is in a state of flux...Our nation is falling down the global pecking order."

Kneebone cited freight blowouts, the weakened NZ dollar, and a lack of local incentives as key reasons New Zealand is being deprioritised on global tours. He warned that artists now favour fewer cities with higher returns, and New Zealand is becoming harder to justify, "While every artist has their own motivation for touring, the one common denominator is that they need to be able to afford to come here in the first place."

Still, he wasn't without hope. Demand remains strong, audiences are eager, and the infrastructure is mostly there. But without structural support, he argued, that demand might not be enough.

### The Festivals: Legacy, Risk, and Regional Impact

A panel showcased the resilience and relevance of Aotearoa's festival sector, bringing together organisers from Rhythm & Vines, Homegrown, and Duco Events, who collectively argued that festivals do more than fill hotel beds, they build culture, support artists, and activate regions. "We're a rite of passage for young New Zealanders," said Hamish Pinkham of Rhythm & Vines. "That's hard to quantify in GDP." After 23 years, R&V continues to draw thousands to Gisborne every New Year's, with measurable regional spend and intangible cultural capital.

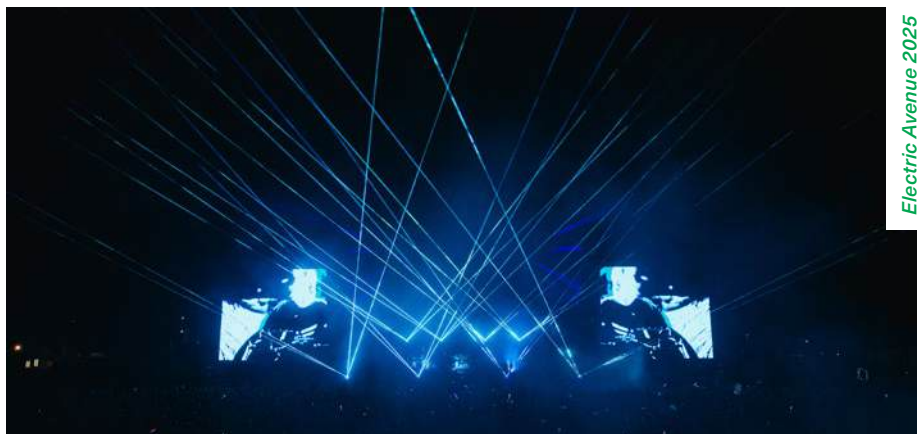
Andrew Tuck, speaking for Homegrown, described the festival's move to Hamilton as a calculated bet on future growth. "We shifted Homegrown to Hamilton not because we had to, but because we wanted to grow. That takes risk," he said. David Higgins of Duco, meanwhile, framed festivals as maturing business ventures. "Festivals now have to be run like businesses," he argued. "You need a brand, a plan, and partners who get it." The trio agreed: festivals are no longer fringe, they're part of the national infrastructure of entertainment, community identity, and regional development, and as such worthy of government support.



Electric Avenue 2025



Electric Avenue 2025



Electric Avenue 2025



Electric Avenue 2025



Synphony 2025. Photo Credit: Chontalle Musson



Synphony 2025. Photo Credit: Chontalle Musson

### Then Came the Announcement

Days after the conference, Minister Upston delivered the hinted-at announcement: a \$70 million events and tourism package that included a \$40 million Events Attraction Package to secure large scale international events and a \$10 million Events Boost Fund to support existing events and attract international opportunities.

Completing the soft pivot, for the first time concerts are explicitly eligible for support under the major events fund, "This level of investment in events represents a significant funding boost and for international comparison puts New Zealand on a par with Queensland.

We know big events deliver." Upston's press release backtracked, "Over three years, 14 Auckland shows (including Coldplay and Pearl Jam) generated \$33.7m for the local economy with 490,000 attendees. We want to see more action like that, and we are stepping up with incentives to promoters to make it happen."

Applications for the Events Boost Fund is now open to promoters, venues, councils, and national organisations. Events must attract international visitors and begin by end 2026, local government must contribute 25% of public investment and domestic-only touring concerts, already-announced shows, markets, parades, or regularly scheduled sport fixtures are ineligible.

### Get Your Bid In

The live events sector came to Hamilton seeking recognition, and in the weeks that followed, it got more than many expected. From a once-dismissive ministerial stance to a \$70 million package that finally includes concerts, the shift shows what collective advocacy can achieve. Yet the challenge is far from over. Festivals, promoters, and venues still face cost pressures, regulatory hurdles, and international competition that money alone won't solve. What's changed is the signal: government is listening, the fund is open, and the opportunity is there. For those ready to seize it, the message is clear - get your bid in.

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# A WEEK IN THE LIFE

**When you mix a band live, what, in your opinion, has the most significant impact on the overall mix? Is it your skill with reverb settings, a mastery of compression release times, an ear for EQ, or what? For me it's all about confidence, and that only comes from preparation. Here's how I usually go about it...**

The first thing I always do when I'm mixing a band live on stage is establish good, early communications so as to be thoroughly prepared for the upcoming gig. Being prepared for a live gig is the best foundation any great mix can ever hope for. The ultimate aim here is to provide yourself with enough gig-specific accurate information, and ample time, to set up the show in a stress-free, relaxed manner. The aim for the band is the same: you want them happy, relaxed and brimming with confidence in you.

This might initially take the form of a phone call to the venue operator, band manager, or individual musicians a week or so before the show to establish early contact. Here you might politely ask for a stage plan and input list for the show you'll be mixing. This will often illicit a generic email response at first, containing a stage plan that's scarcely relevant to the show in question, but that's all okay because now you've got a week to rectify this discrepancy, not four hours!

Once it has been established in a friendly return email or phone call that, "The stage plan for the show is possibly not reflected accurately in the file you've sent," often a newer plan will then emerge that's specific to the gig. This is the point where the email thread – if that's how you're communicating –

can get quite specific, and it's also one of the best ways to contain all the information for the show in one place. As you might surmise from this last comment, I always take my laptop to shows, and one of the first things I do when I arrive at Front of House is open the email thread and read it again.

Closer to the show – the day before, typically – it pays to clarify one last time that everything is still on track for the gig, and that nothing has changed either in terms of the stage plan or band lineup. By then, of course, it's likely something has. Despite your best efforts, most communication and change happens late in proceedings... it's just the nature of the beast. Changes might include an additional band member, a different band combination, a bunch of extra DIs for a keyboard player, an illness... who knows.

Regardless of what it is, it pays dividends to remain friendly and flexible about any 'last-minute' adjustments to a stage plan the band might suggest. Accommodating these shifts right up to the soundcheck deadline is important to establishing a relaxed and friendly working environment. Of course, this inevitably involves having your phone fully charged on the day of the gig too, in anticipation that someone will always be trying to get in contact with you. Don't leave your phone on a desk

somewhere and discover three hours later that you've missed 14 phone calls from the band.

It's not always possible to accommodate change, of course, but whenever it is, the answer should always be 'yes' to any specific band requests. That said, in my experience the more prepared you've been in the week leading up to a show, the less surprises you're likely to encounter last-minute.

## Gig Day Prep

On the day of a gig I like to arrive well before the band, in some cases several hours earlier. Depending on how complex the setup is, the more time I afford myself. I hate being short on time nearly as much as I do being ill-prepared. Actually, I think being time-poor is possibly the worst gig preparation anyone can gift themselves. It nearly always sets up a chain of events that can lead to mistakes, drama and generally heightened stress levels for everyone involved. Avoiding this at all costs is vitally important to the outcome of the show.

My ideal timeframe on gig day is that, an hour or so before the band is due to arrive I will have already tuned the PA, fully wired the stage to reflect the latest plan, setup the console in a way that suits my workflow, had time to fiddle with some reverbs, listened to all the wedges

on stage, and set up the house music. In short, everything works at this point, functioning according to the plan.

With about an hour to the band's predicted ETA – and this is specific to my current role at Archies Creek (formerly the Caravan Club), which is about 90 minutes away for most musicians travelling from Melbourne – I like to give someone in the band who I've already been in communication with a quick call, to firstly put them at ease by letting them know that we're setup and ready for their arrival, but also to establish a more accurate ETA. This allows the band to relax, knowing that they're in safe (professional) hands. Otherwise, the long drive can sometimes provide musicians with time enough to wind themselves up into a stressed frame of mind. It also gives me a clearer picture of who's arriving when, and therefore how I might try and run the soundcheck.

This phone call also gives me time to react in advance to any changes to the stage layout and input list that haven't been previously discussed.

"Oh, we've just found out that Fred is bringing his other synth, so we're gonna need another stereo DI line, and maybe even a keyboard stand if you have one there."

My response to these sorts of requests is always, "Yeah, sure, no problem."

And the reason it's no problem is simple: I'm setup – have been for a while now – and I'm therefore free to do nothing but make changes at this point, if that's what's required. I am not starting from scratch with no spare time. I'm not stressed, the band isn't either, and the changes are usually pretty trivial anyway.

If, by the time the band arrives, all they then have to really do is plug in, make some noise and demand a few levels of the various instruments, by soundcheck's end everyone

will be remarking about how easy that was, and their confidence in you and the venue will have grown exponentially.

This is the best preparation you can give yourself for a great mix.

### On The Flipside

The one downside of this sort of 'well-oiled' preparation is that sometimes you establish such a relaxed atmosphere that it can quickly tip over into a 'party atmosphere'. This mightn't sound so bad on the surface, but occasionally when musicians hit the stage simultaneously, chatting quickly becomes jamming and the result can often be chaos. Pulling back from this to establish a more formal soundcheck timeline can then be quite tricky. Once they start, it's hard to get musicians to stop!

The important thing to remember at this point is that, while it's nice that everyone's feeling relaxed and accommodated, the important incomplete task remains sound-checking the individual instruments, to make sure you're happy with what you're hearing at Front of House. Sometimes you can get rushed by the band at this point, so it's pays to maintain polite control over proceedings. Things shouldn't take too long from here, so you can point that out politely to the band too – "We just need to soundcheck you folks one at a time now, if that's okay – which shouldn't take long because we're all setup."

For any instruments that remain problematic in some way, you now have the time and headspace to resolve them.

### Before The Doors

Once soundcheck is over and the band has cleared off backstage to eat, get changed or drink lemonade, it pays to pop in on them to check that they're all good for the show. You don't have to go around officiously asking a

million questions. Sometimes all you have to do is be visible in the space. They may need something from you, or request something that they previously forgot to mention in soundcheck.

Once these requests have been gathered in my head, I like to pop back to Front of House and guesstimate these changes at the console. After that I like to sit at the board a bit longer and go through all the channels to make sure everything is as it should be: EQs, compressors and gates armed (or switched off) where necessary, foldback sends perused to make sure nothing that's clearly in error has found its way into a send – hey, it happens – and FX sends are being fed by only those things I intended – maybe a main vocal, a snare...

At this point I like to unmute everything and once again push the PA up in level to see if anything takes off. If it does, I can make the requisite adjustments before the doors open. After that, there is to be no more feedback – ever!

I also like to peruse the FX parameters at this point, fine-tuning filter points and reverb times etc. All of these parameters inevitably change during a show of course, but I like to cast an eye over them anyway. It's kind of like my meditation pre-show, allowing me time to relax. It also provides another opportunity for me to spot a mistake while things are relatively quiet, or for my brain to remember something I've overlooked.

Once I'm happy and confident, I save two backups of the show, and now I'm all set.

Mixing is now the easy part!

Andy Stewart owns and operates The Mill on Victoria's Bass Coast. He's a highly credentialed producer/engineer who's seen it all in studios for over four decades. He's happy to respond to any pleas for recording or mixing help... contact him at: [andy@themill.net.au](mailto:andy@themill.net.au)



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# Converting with The Book of Mormon

by Jason Allen



## The Irreverent Musical gets a New PA for the 2025–26 Australian Tour

Photo Credit: Daniel Boud

**Hello! The Mormons are back in Australia, joyfully proselytizing their way around the country. Starting in Sydney's Capitol Theatre back in July, the production is about to wrap up in the harbour city before heading south to Melbourne and then north to Brisbane.**

The international comedy hit from the infamous creators of South Park, Trey Parker and Matt Stone, is now a surprising 16 years old, with original sound design for the first Broadway run by Brian Ronan. Australian Sound Design Associate for the current tour, David Greasley of System Sound, worked on the first Australian production in Melbourne back in 2017 and is once again tasked with getting the show up in Sydney and then transferred to every city. With a view to making the tour consistent, transferable, and fit-for-purpose, he decided it was time to revisit the choice of FoH PA, and started the conversation with Brian Ronan.

As an Associate Sound Designer, responsible for representing the designer on the ground in their absence, it's a matter of trust. "From the initial conversations we had when the show came up again, we started discussing an alternative," says David. "We agreed it

needed to be modernised. It's been running for 16 years, and that's a long, long time in PA technology years. The new UK tour is happening at the moment, and that's been updated, so it was time to do it here as well."

"I've been using Meyer Sound for a lot of big shows lately, and I really like the product," continues David Greasley. "So, I just asked Brian the question: would you consider using a Meyer Sound PA for Mormon? I did the same thing for Groundhog Day: The Musical when it came to Australia, with sound designer Simon Baker. You've got to do a little bit of convincing, and it's been very generous on both their parts to agree to these changes. Brian is a real professional, and he knows his craft. You can't bluff Brian, because he knows what's going on, but he's also very open to what you have to say."

The main left-right PA is divided into two systems; one for the stalls, one for the circle. "That's a real Brian Ronan hallmark," adds David. The main PA hangs 14 Meyer Sound LEOPARD line array cabinets per side. 12 Meyer Sound LINA line array cabinets are used for the downfill, with another 10 in two delay arrays. A truss of eight Meyer Sound UPJ-1Ps is rigged for the back of the hall. Additional coverage includes 10 Meyer Sound UPJunior (six stage foldback, two sidefill, two utility), 12 Meyer Sound UPM-1P (six offstage, four fills, two utility), and four Meyer Sound UPA-1P for rear FX. Subs are two Meyer Sound 700-HP,

four 900-LFC low-frequency control elements, and two 750-LFC low-frequency control elements, rigged alongside the delay LINA arrays. The whole system is processed through five Meyer Sound Galileo GALAXY processors.

The delay and fill system supplements the Meyer Sound inventory with a mix of other loudspeakers: 11 d&b audiotechnik E8, 15 d&b audiotechnik E6, nine d&b audiotechnik E0, three d&b audiotechnik E4, and 12 EAW JF80.

Having installed big Meyer Sound systems into The Capitol before, most notably for Moulin Rouge: The Musical, David knew that the system would go in easily, and deliver. "I've been using Meyer Sound for a long time, so I know what to expect," elaborates David. "That's what I like about Meyer Sound; you don't get any surprises. I put that down to the amplifiers being so close to the loudspeaker – the response is just so fast. I've done other shows where we had to use speaker systems with external amplifiers. Depending on your cable length, you get dampening and you lose your HF. Being musical theatre, when they say it's meant to be 4mm wire with the amplifiers behind the speakers, often it'll turn out to be 2.5mm wire with amplifiers in the basement, and one side of the PA is on 50 metres of cable, and the other side's on 20 metres. Straight away, you're breaking the rules. Sometimes you can't put the amplifiers behind the PA, so we try our best. With delays using in-house cabling, that could be 1.5mm cable over 50



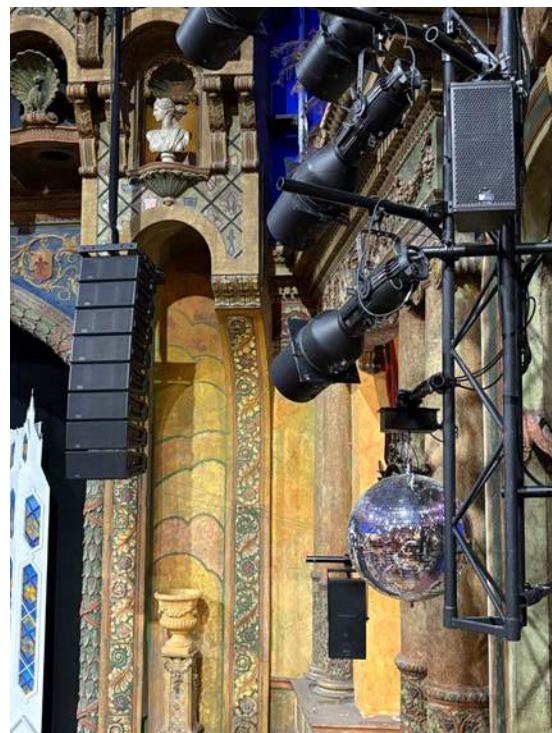
Photo Credit: Daniel Boud



Photo Credit: Daniel Boud



Photo Credit: Daniel Boud



metres with three or four cabinets in parallel. That's why I like Meyer Sound – no matter what room you put it in, it just sounds like itself."

The same goes for the show's bottom end. "It's the most musical sub-bass, again, because the response is so fast," David emphasises. "When you open up a Meyer Sound loudspeaker to look at the amp module, you think 'surely they could have given us another two centimetres of cable?' It is the shortest cable in the world between the amp and the speaker. On Mormon, we've got enough sub to fill the band out, but it's not a huge amount. Equally, the show is about keeping the story moving, so the songs don't really sit around long enough to get into a big bass groove. I think we've done a good job in Sydney; it feels really warm."

Having seen the show, it's refreshing how little the sound design and mix rely on anything but the very old-school premise of making the vocals dominant and highly intelligible, and keeping the nine-piece band in an important but supporting role. This approach is essential





*Photo Credit: Daniel Boud*

for delivering what is a rapid-fire comedy. "Brian Ronan likes the basics," agrees David. "He likes the operator to do the mixing, and the speakers to do the amplifying. He works more with the band, the cast, and the sound operator. He wants the speaker system to do its job and fill the room. He's more interested in what the sound operator is doing."

This makes for a highly engaged, difficult, but rewarding job for the FoH operator. "You're absolutely mixing it," confides David. "There's a little bit of compression happening, but there's nothing tricky going on; you just have to mix the show. The style is all-American, so it has to be really forward and on-point. Same for the performers and the band. It's a small band, and everyone really has to do their part. The whole show needs to be forward and edgy. As the person mixing it, you have to hear the humor. It's super important that the vocals are forward all the time, so the audience don't miss anything. They go through waves of laughter, so you've got to be very dynamic. You're always ahead of the audience because they don't want to slow down the show, and it's up to the sound operator to push it through. As an operator, it's a fun mix because you have to be right there; you just can't sit back and cruise along. Everyone that's mixed it has really enjoyed it because of that – it's proper mixing. There's no auto mixes, no big compression, no parallel compression – it's all up to the operator to do it."

It's these creative imperatives that have driven David to recommend and use Meyer Sound. "I think different loudspeaker systems can bring different things to the show," posits David, "but for me, musical theatre is about the storytelling, it's about hearing the story. With Meyer Sound, it's all about the clarity. We get so much good feedback from all the Meyer Sound shows we do; the vocal clarity is the one thing everyone comments on. The top end from the Meyer Sound loudspeakers is so fast and immediate that it's always super clear."

And how has Brian Ronan reacted to the change? "Because this is the second Australian tour, Brian just came to visit for a week to check up on it," relates David. "He really enjoyed it. I think he's quite curious now,

because he's doing another show in the USA that's going on tour. He's thinking about using Meyer Sound LEOPARD for that, as on a fast tour, it does away with all the amplifiers and cables."



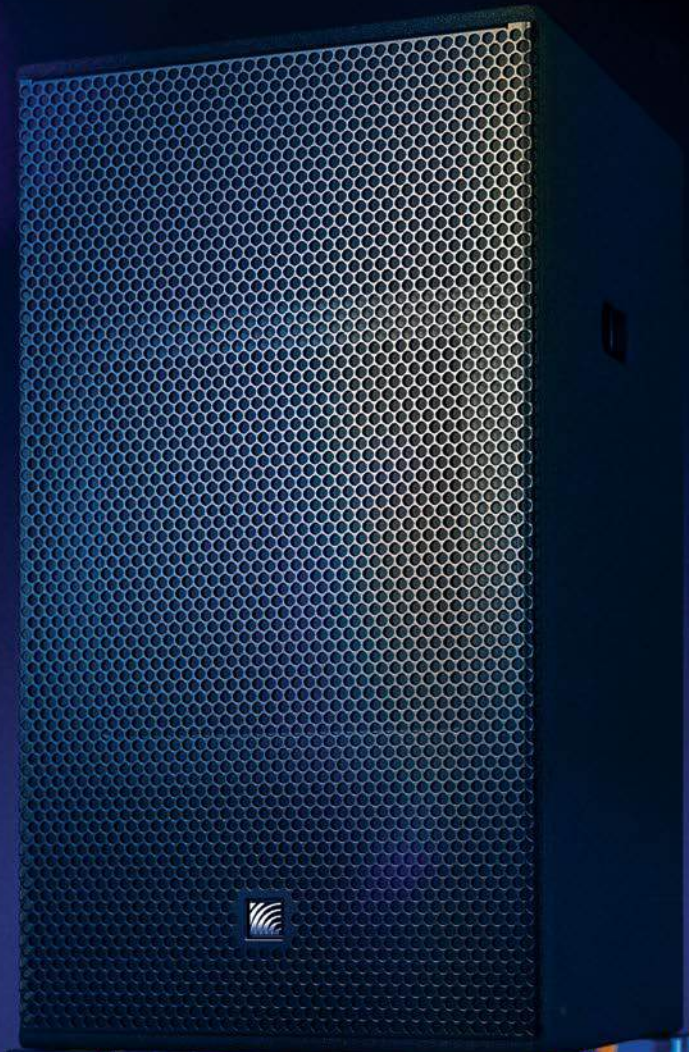
*Photo Credit: Daniel Boud*



*Opening Night. L-R: Rob Taranto, General Manager, System Sound, John Scandrett, founder System Sound, Nathan Santamaria, Head of Department, David Greasley, Associate Sound Designer, Chris Pratt, Production Sound Engineer and former Head of Department*

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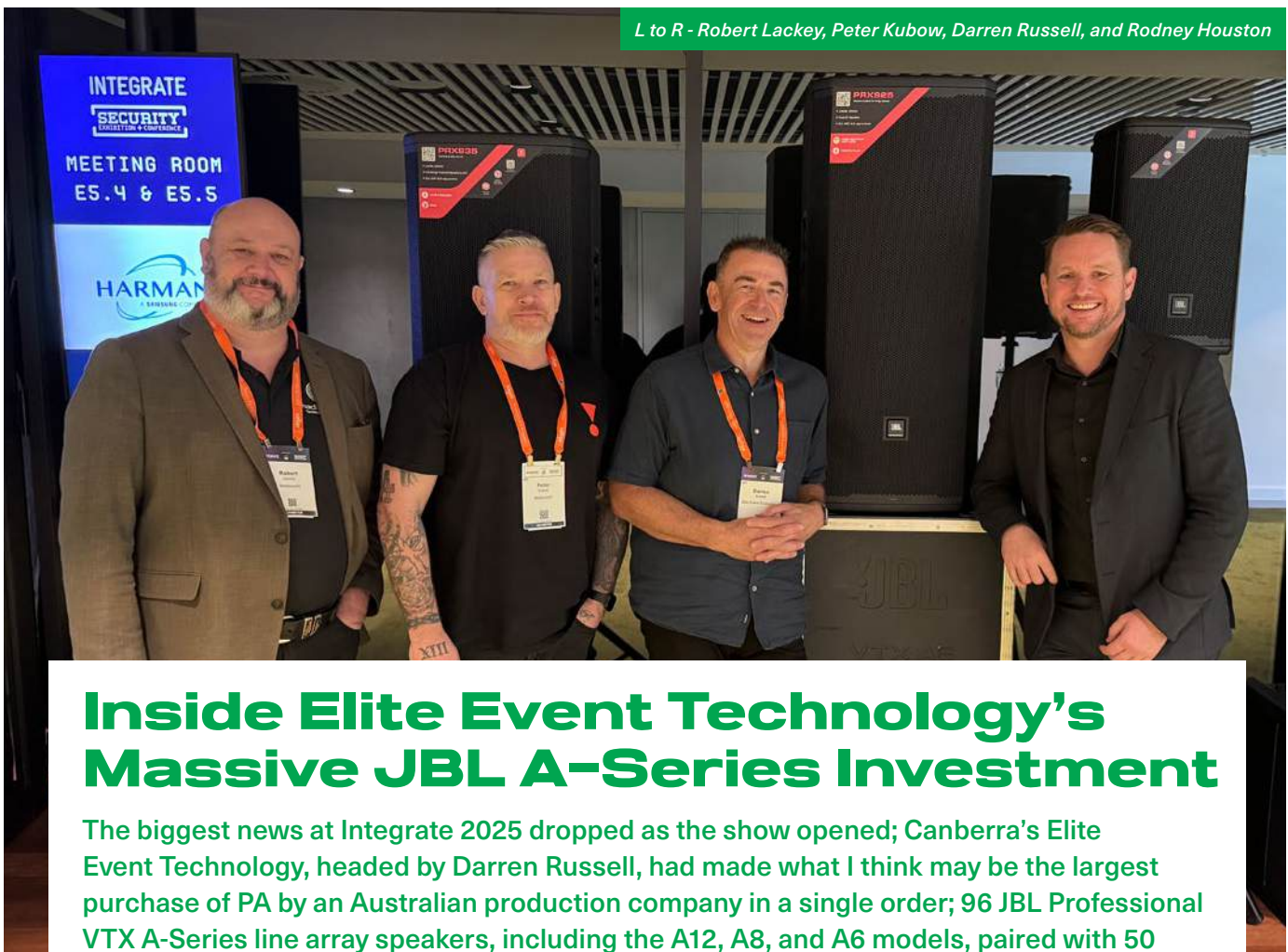
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L to R - Robert Lackey, Peter Kubow, Darren Russell, and Rodney Houston



## Inside Elite Event Technology's Massive JBL A-Series Investment

The biggest news at Integrate 2025 dropped as the show opened; Canberra's Elite Event Technology, headed by Darren Russell, had made what I think may be the largest purchase of PA by an Australian production company in a single order; 96 JBL Professional VTX A-Series line array speakers, including the A12, A8, and A6 models, paired with 50 VTX B-Series 18-inch subwoofers, all driven by Crown amplifiers. All the more remarkable is that it marks JBL's return to the top of riders after years in the pro audio wilderness.

I sat down with Darren Russell, Peter Kubow, head of tour sound for Harman distributor MadisonAV, Robert Lackey, Head of Sales for MadisonAV, and Rodney Houston, Senior Director of Sales, Entertainment, APAC, Professional Solutions at Harman, to get the full story on this bold investment, and how JBL has turned around its fortunes with wise investments in its people and technology.

Firstly, and notably, Darren points out that Elite are not discarding any of their existing PA stock for JBL. "We're not replacing anything," affirms Darren. "We've been with one major PA brand for some time now, and we've decided it was worth having another brand as an alternative. We're seeing a lot of JBL VTX A-Series on riders, both international and local. Given that there was no serious quantity of it here in Australia, we decided to be the people to have a serious quantity of it. It's quite interesting the markets in which it's moved up the chain on riders. It's very big in the KPop market and in the Indian pop (I-pop) market. It's the current tour PA for Lenny Kravitz, Pitbull, Bruno Mars, and Rhianna. In the KPop and the I-pop markets, it's actually the number one preference."

Darren's interest in JBL A-Series was piqued over two years ago, when MadisonAV ran their product launch (which later won an

international award from Harman). "There's an element of nostalgia with me and JBL," admits Darren. "When I started out in the late 80s, pretty much everything I ever mixed on had JBL parts in it. 4560s, W bins, Roy bins, and all that stuff. As an audio guy, when JBL lost its way for a period of time, that was a little bit heartbreaking. MadisonAV's Jeff Shoosmith encouraged us to come along to the A-Series launch, and to be brutally honest, I went along with quite low expectations. I heard it, and saw the presentation from George Georgallis, Senior Director, Product Management for JBL at Harman, about the technology that's gone into it, and walked away very pleasantly surprised and quite impressed."

With MadisonAV wisely investing in a full-size A12 rig to demonstrate it to the industry at large, it was MadisonAV's Peter Kubow's job to get the PA into Elite's hands for a proper evaluation. "Darren and I talked extensively about what gigs he had coming up that would be best for a demo," says Peter. "There was a country music muster in Queanbeyan, NSW, that was perfect. Darren was going to be mixing, and we provided a system with 12 A12 per side, G28 subs, and A8s for front fill."

"There were eight bands on the country muster bill, and I mixed five of them," says Darren. "We got to take VTX A-Series for a really good test

drive, which was great. We had a nice time with it, and we got a lot of positive feedback from the client, the audience, and a few of the other acts that brought their own touring engineers. It was all positive; it went up nice and quick, came down nice and quick, and ticked all the right boxes. One of the things I really like about VTX A-Series is that the voicing of the HF device in all three boxes is nice, smooth, sweet, and very musical sounding, but at the same time, there's no power compression. It doesn't run out of horsepower; you stomp on the gas, and it just keeps going."

The question everyone was asking Darren at Integrate was; how did you decide on that massive quantity and model mix to purchase? "We had the initial conversation with Harman about what a good quantity and mix would be," outlines Darren. "They came back with a good recommendation, but that turned out to be a lot less than we've actually bought. Because this can be seen as a re-introduction of the brand to pro audio, I thought if we're going to do this, we've got to go big or go home. To do it properly, we needed to have enough in the country to do any size arena. Peter Kubow modeled a design for really high SPL at Qudos Bank Arena; that gave us the quantity of boxes, and then we rounded all the numbers up. Then we went through things like numbers of amplifiers, and how many amp racks we're



Queanbeyan Country Muster

going to have. There was the full system model, and then the case to split it up into three A12 systems, two A8 systems, and a couple of A6 systems, all at the same time. Amplifiers, power distribution, cabling infrastructure; we went on a really big journey with all of that."

This purchase has created a hire ecosystem for JBL VTX-A Series virtually overnight. "Elite does a lot of sub hiring; it's a very big part of our business," confirms Darren. "It's across all disciplines; audio, lights, video. For any major purchase like this, it's a big part of our decision-making process." This should make Peter Kubow's job easier in now spreading VTX A-Series purchases to other companies; "I was having a lot of conversations with companies before the Elite purchase," explains Peter. "Understandably, many companies were concerned that if they bought say, 12 per side, where they could get more if they needed them for a bigger gig. There were already a couple of systems in Queensland, but that's not logistically feasible all the time. Now there's this stock in ACT and NSW, I can revisit these people and let them know there's as many boxes as they'll ever need, just down the road."



Queanbeyan Country Muster



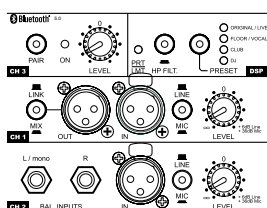
Queanbeyan Country Muster

When Samsung acquired Harman back in 2016, many in the pro audio industry, this author included, assumed that the parent company would adapt its IP for the car and home audio markets and abandon the pro market forever. Not only did this not happen, the exact opposite has occurred. "With the amount of money Harman have put into R&D, they are clearly invested in Harman Pro as a brand," agrees

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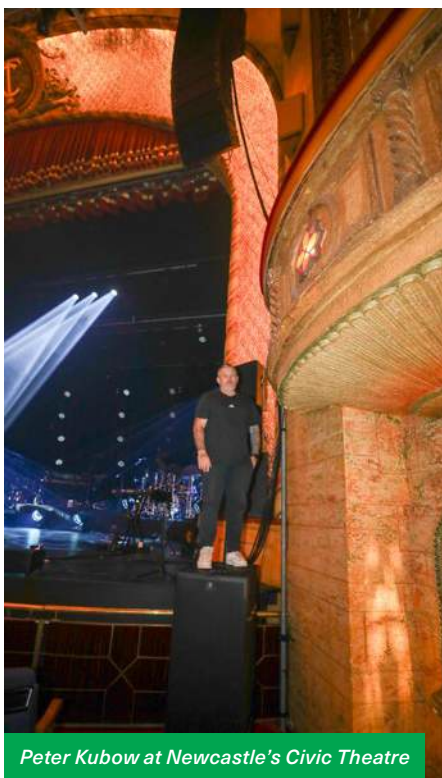
JBL VTX A, Elite, Tina Arena, Penrith Panthers, Sydney

Darren. "It's not just the line arrays; new ceiling speakers, new BSS DSP, and all the other things that we're now aware of that are in the pipeline; they're all good products. Every new thing they're bringing out, they've got right. Their investment in dollars, and in the right people like George Georgallis looking after the products is really good to see, and we're looking forward to the journey."

Robert Lackey, Head of Sales for MadisonAV, is understandably pretty pleased with Elite and looking forward to the future. "If we go right back to before the VTX A-Series launch, MadisonAV originally approached Harman to get access to a wider range of line arrays for our installation business," explains Robert. "We had no idea at that point that Harman would then decide to give us their full product range. We'd already brought Peter Kubow and his live audio experience into the team, and we then started our journey of learning what the broader pro market was about. Darren was a big part of that, and he helped me understand what was needed to build a lasting partnership in this space. It is a big purchase for Elite, but it's a partnership with us, and it's a partnership with Harman. My role was to make sure that we built the trust, we built the confidence, and we had the right people to support it. I think it says a lot about MadisonAV that we look at an opportunity, and then we invest in people, stock, and our partners. We want the JBL VTX A-Series ecosystem to work for us, for Darren, and other companies, as tours and gigs come into the country."



Tina Arena, Penrith Panthers, Sydney



Peter Kubow at Newcastle's Civic Theatre

From the Harman side, Rodney Houston, Senior Director of Sales in Entertainment for APAC, is helping put together the pieces across Australia, New Zealand, and into Asia. "Darren and I have had many discussions through the process," says Rodney. "We've had a lot of detailed discussions around how the A-Series accessories work, and we've been supporting the MadisonAV team on the overall go-to-market. Madison has done a lot of the heavy lifting, with Peter Kubow running the demos and the technical discussions. I've been keeping engaged with Elite and then tying together a bigger discussion across the region and globally about who is using A-Series, what it is being used for, and what shows we're going to see it used on in this part of the world."

Elite had already put out multiple proposals for A-Series gigs by late August. "We're feeling reasonably confident they're going to happen," confides Darren. "Now we've got the ecosystem, we're looking at a few things that we can deploy it on. We're already having a conversation about doing something with JBL's integration with FLUX: Immersive in a big-top at a major EDM festival. Towards the end of this year and into next year, there are a lot of VTX A-Series tours that are coming to Australia, and our current venues and corporate gigs are already planning to run with smaller A6 and A8 rigs."



JBL VTX A, Elite, Tina Arena, Civic Theatre, Newcastle

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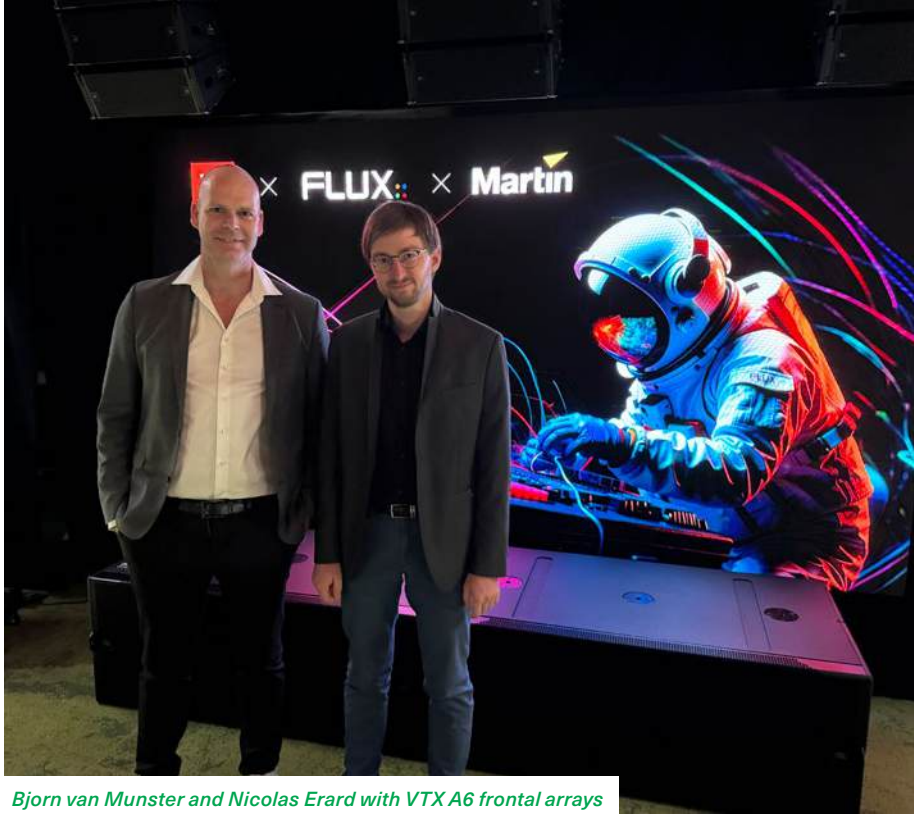
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Bjorn van Munster and Nicolas Erard with VTX A6 frontal arrays



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# MEANWHILE, UPSTAIRS...

Not all of the action at Integrate is on the show floor. Level 3 was home to multiple demo and meeting rooms where companies could make noise, make deals, and feed and water their customers.

## The Harman Immersive Experience

MadisonAV and Harman took full advantage of their demo room to run multiple sessions, including an educational session on AVoIP, a performance venue tech overview, and a listening session for their new Control 400 ceiling speakers and VTX A6 line array. I attended the excellent JBL x FLUX:: Immersive Audio Experience (and networking drinks!) session, which used the whole room and integrated Martin Lighting to show off the immersive audio capabilities of FLUX:: Immersive's SPAT Revolution software, integrated into an all-JBL loudspeaker system powered by Crown amps.

Acquired by Harman in 2023, FLUX:: was founded in France by Gaël Martinet in 2006. The purchase was a savvy one, instantly adding immersive audio capabilities that JBL's competitors were already offering, at a time when their range of high-performance loudspeakers, in the form of JBL VTX A-Series, were gaining acceptance in the high-end production world.

The demo ran through a range of tracks and styles, with some excellent use of object-oriented spatial mixing on an Imagine

Dragons track, and an absolutely stunning bit of sound design that used a choir of Indian vocalists 'speaking the bowls'; a way of learning Tabla rhythms for ragas with the voice. A screen showed us visuals of what the SPAT Revolution software was doing in real-time, and it's user interface is straightforward and eminently useable.

After the demo, Nicolas Erard, Software Developer and Application Support at FLUX::, talked me through the system; "We have five frontal stacks of four VTX A6. On each side we've got five JBL AC18 two-way speakers, with four of them in the back. On top of that we have subs. The presenter is wearing a tracker, which is sending data to SPAT Revolution, which is localising them in the frontal system. For the demo, we are running SPAT Revolution live. We've got a player which will play an ADM file which contains the file object and the metadata. Each track is rendered live in SPAT."

"All signal distribution is Dante, from the console to SPAT Revolution," continues Nicolas. "We have an RME Digiface Dante which sends and receives signal to and from the computer, then sends Dante directly to a BSS 806 processor which converts the Dante signal to analog to patch into the Crown amplifiers."

Bjorn van Munster, Senior Manager Business Development - Immersive at Harman, was on hand to tell me about the developments at Harman as they integrate immersive into their ecosystem. "A lot of things have happened at FLUX:: over the last 12 months," relates Bjorn. "We have been at a lot of exhibitions in the APAC and EMEA regions, showing the tight integration of SPAT Revolution with JBL's Venue Synthesis 3D Acoustic Simulation software. We can export directly from Venue Synthesis into SPAT Revolution; that's a really important step for us in the integration within the ecosystem."

With a big launch at ISE 2025 in Barcelona highlighting the synergy between JBL and FLUX::, Harman then repeated their show at trade events in Singapore, India, and Thailand before bringing it to Integrate. "We've also added Martin Lighting to the mix," explains Bjorn. "We've also added the new eight channel amplifiers from Crown. They were originally developed for the install market, but in immersive, we need a lot of channels! These kinds of small things are big steps for us within the overall ecosystem."

# EXPANDING THE EXPERIENCE<sup>3</sup>



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**BARCO**

### Just Next Door: Barco

Barco commandeered the meeting room next door to Harman and offered both breakfast and lunch to those dropping in to see their new high-performance projectors and video processors. The star of the room was the new QDX range of projectors, with two units in their custom hydraulic housings taking up a serious amount of space.

I had a look at the QDX 4K45, a 45,000 lumens, 4K UHD, 3-chip DLP laser phosphor projector. If you buy it kit format, it comes with a hydraulic motorised frame free of charge. The Connected variant, which is what Barco sell in Australia, comes with 5G for remote control and monitoring via Barco's Insights Management software suite. This is vitally important when these projectors are out working on long running events without operators, like Vivid, or immersive installations. Adding to the remote features are camera and laser-based focusing systems, and shutters.

QDX runs Barco's patented next generation Pulse electronics with bandwidth up to 8K@60Hz or 4K@240Hz, with more processing power. They also include DynaBlack, Barco's frame by frame contrast enhancement feature. Thanks to an internally developed smart algorithm, DynaBlack enhances projector contrast ratio up to 20,000:1. Existing Barco customers can reuse their existing rental frames, flightcases and the TLD+ lens range with throw ratios from 0.4 - 11.6:1.

For those who don't need to light up the Sydney Opera House, the new I600 projector, a single chip laser, may be more your size. The I600 is designed to offer exceptional colour fidelity, 4K UHD resolution, and a long working life. It also runs Barco Pulse electronics and can pixel-shift up to 4KUHD@60Hz. The Pulse platform comes with Barco's patented Supershift technology, which combines Barco's own pixel shift algorithms with the latest developments in super-resolution technology, which is being used to improve the quality of medical and scientific imaging. The Pulse ecosystem also includes various software tools such as Pulse Prospector, Pulse Mobile App, Pulse toolset and Insights Management Suite to enable easier projector control on-site and in the cloud. Barco claim that the I600 is the most compact and lightweight design in its category, making for operational efficiency in logistics and transport.

For those at the pointy end of event operation, Barco's new Encore3 video processors promise to give you the highest quality video with the lowest possible latency. With latency down to 16ms, the Encore3 runs 12 bit 4:4:4 processing with always-available 8x 4K60 layers per screen. With Dante included, operators can embed and de-embed digital audio, while working on screen composition for layered videos. The screen management system is designed to safeguard customer investments through card and controller reusability, and Barco expanded the I/O count of Gen2 cards to 4x4K60p.

The Encore3 is available on 'build to order' basis, meaning companies can select the system that matches their requirements. Thanks to a wide range of modular input or output cards and a flexible slot-based architecture, users can tune the system to the exact configuration they need.



Encore3 with main screen and multiviewer



The mighty QDXs



Hydraulics on Barco QDX



QDX - all the ins and outs



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# AT NO STAGE

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# AI - What Comes after the Trough of Disillusionment?

I'm a big fan of the Gartner Hype Cycle. It was developed by analyst Jackie Fenn at the US consulting firm Gartner in 1995, and describes, quite cheekily, the patterns of hype that surround emerging technologies. While it's been widely criticised for not being scientifically accurate, I've found it to be eerily correct for our industry, while also being funny.

I like to think we in AV tech are a bit ahead of the general tech curve compared to the public. In the general sense, I think the society-wide hype around AI is on the verge of falling into the Trough of Disillusionment, and a lot of multi-billion-dollar investments are about to blow up in people's faces. Over here in AV-land, I think we are emerging from the Trough and now heading up the Slope of Enlightenment towards the Plateau of Productivity.

Around the trade show traps of the last two years, AI has been a total buzz acronym. The first couple of products I saw implement it blew me away – Biamp's AI noise reduction did things no other audio processing can do, and William's instant multilingual audio to text translation looked like the future. Then everyone started promising to incorporate AI. Few did. At this year's Integrate, there was a lot of suspicious 'now with AI' in product descriptions, where I could swear it was for features that existed before, without the AI appellation.

So, with all this AI-hype bashing, why do I think we're coming out of the Trough? I'll give you an interesting case – Insta360.

Those of you who like to film themselves doing extreme sports, or record everything on a small stick to post to socials, will already know Insta360. They've been making 'action cameras' to rival GoPro for years, and are ubiquitous anywhere there are tourists. So, it was a bit of a surprise in 2022 when they suddenly announced they were going to start

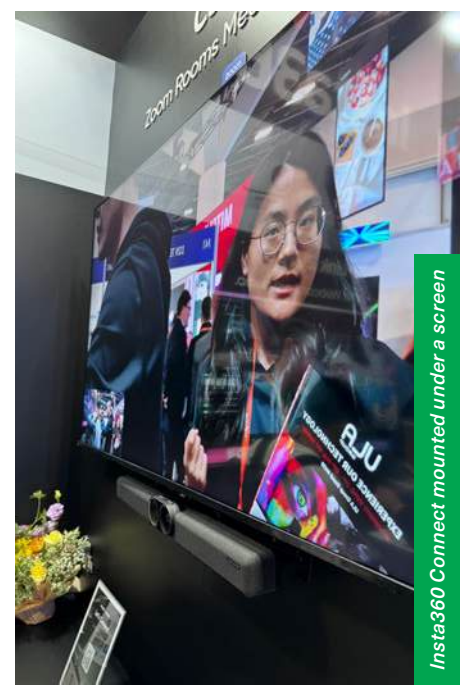
making video conferencing equipment for the AV market. At Integrate 2025, they introduced the Insta360 Wave, a speakerphone and video conferencing device with integrated 4K camera, which looks like a portable Bluetooth speaker with an Insta360 Link 2 camera stuck on top.

All of Insta360's video conferencing products, including their Link 2 and 2C cameras with audio, their Connect video and sound bars, and the Wave, have all come to market in less than two years and have AI built into their core. Insta360 already had the optics; all they needed to add was microphones and speakers. That's easy enough to buy off the shelf - Sennheiser did a similar thing the other way around with their Team Connect bar – but hard to make into a high-quality result. Where Insta360 has really benefitted from AI is in using it to run their video auto tracking, image enhancement and audio processing, including noise reduction and beam steering. This has enabled them to get an entire suite of pro-level product to market and functioning as it should.

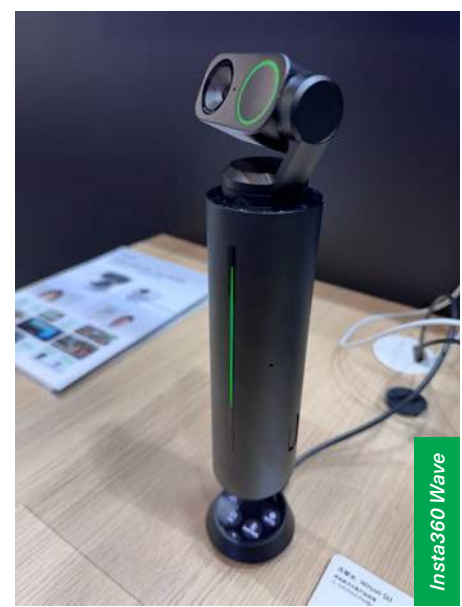
This is the reality of what AI is actually useful for – it can accelerate years of software development. Insta360's story is a lot like that of EV maker BYD; they started as a battery company, supplying mostly mobile phone manufacturers. When the idea of EVs came along, they took their battery making experience and put a car on top of it. Now they're outselling most traditional car makers. So, forget using ChatGPT to write your emails – imagine the ways you can use it to expand on what you're already good at.



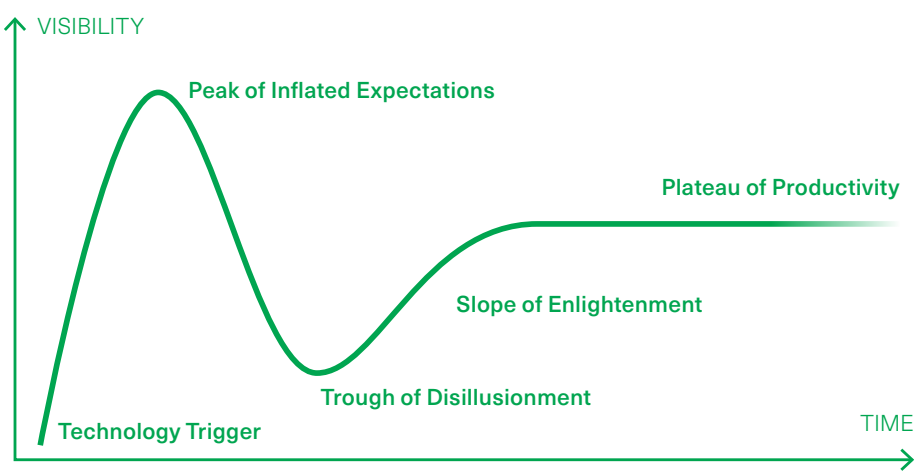
Insta360 Link 2 livestreaming



Insta360 Connect mounted under a screen



Insta360 Wave





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# LET'S TALK ABOUT **DANTE ENABLED END POINTS...**

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# INTEGRATE

## LIVE FROM THE SHOW FLOOR!

Get out your phone, it's time to scan some QR codes and watch some video! We talk to all the technical movers and shakers at Integrate about the latest gear and technical developments, plus a bit of history. There are a lot of brands in new homes, and Hog lighting consoles have come home again to Jands after a couple of decades! The WMAS revolution has come to wireless audio at both Shure and Sennheiser, plus see our Best in Show – the ridiculously tiny Powersoft Nota 142.



### ACME HYPERZONE, MANA, LYRA, and SUPERNOVA

ULA Group's Pascal Bonnet introduces the HYPERZONE wash/beam fixture and ACME's IP65 family, including the MANA, LYRA, and SUPERNOVA.



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## Allen & Heath's new Qu Series refresh

Allen & Heath's Qu series has been updated with 6 new models. With 3 different sizes and Dante options, all models have 96kHz FPGA processing, 38 inputs to mix, 12 mixes (6 mono/linkable, 6 stereo) + LR, 4 mono/linkable matrix, 6 stereo FX engines + dedicated returns, 128x128 intelligent SLink port for Everything I/O, 32x32 USB audio interface, 8 SoftKeys, and AES output.

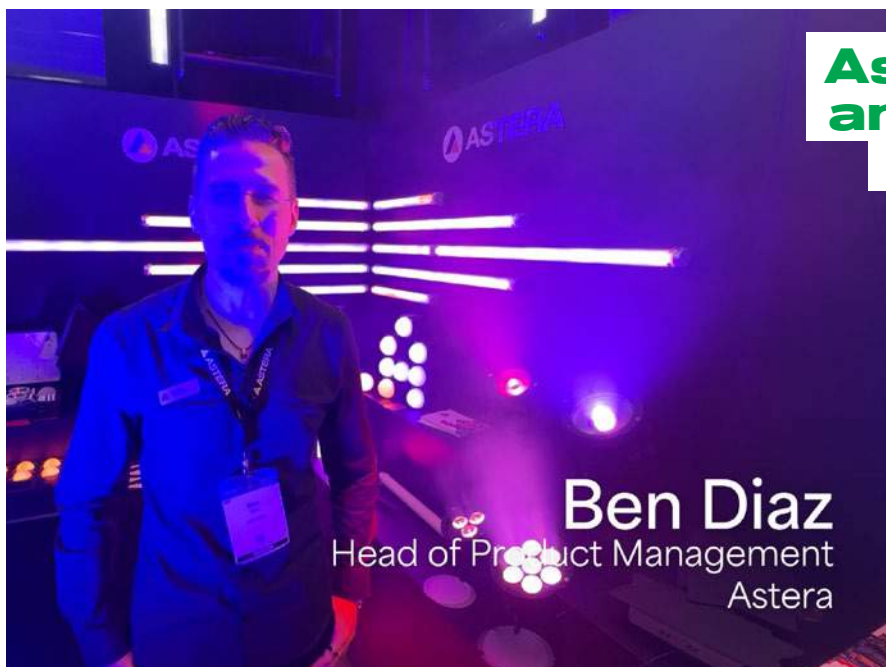
TAG's MixWizard, Andrew Crawford, gives us a tour of the Qu-5D on the stand...



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**Andrew Crawford**  
The Mix Wizard  
TAG



## Astera QuikSpot and the debut of the QuikPunch

Astera's own Ben Diaz, Head of Product Management, made the trip to Australia to show off their QuikSpot and new QuikPunch - the first time it's been shown in Australia. The QuikPunch is a wireless spotlight with Fresnel lens and 13°-60° zoom, delivering 8,000 lux at 3 metres, all with just 75W of power.

**Ben Diaz**  
Head of Product Management  
Astera



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## Auri Auracast takes off

At Integrate 2024, Auracast was the big news - unlimited Bluetooth receivers able to connect to a transmitter, revolutionising hearing augmentation. Now in 2025, the gear is here, and it's already been installed in major cultural institutions and sporting venues. It's also being used by people without hearing loss, including the neurodiverse. Andrew Attard, Business Development Manager, Jands, goes through some of the major users, and talks about applications beyond hearing augmentation.



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**Andrew Attard**  
Business Development Manager  
Jands

## Brompton LED Processors

Sebastian Kanabar, Head of Sales (APAC), Brompton Technology, dropped into Integrate 2025 to tell us why Brompton is the leading manufacturer of high-end LED processing, and how it is keeping the very convention centre we were in up and running 24/7.



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## Clear-Com Updates

Jands' Sam Drury takes us through what's new at Clear-Com, including updates to the Arcadia platform to integrate V Series IP panels, the new Freespeak Icon belt packs, and the new Cloud-based Gen IC platform.



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## Elation Lighting's Paragon, Proteus, and Obsidian Netron

Elation's very own Eric Loader, Global Vice President Sales, introduces the Paragon Series of full featured, flexible moving head fixtures in three sizes up to LT - long throw. Also on the stand, Elation's Obsidian Netron control products, and the Elation Proteus IP65 fixture series.



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## Electro-Voice EVOLVE 70 and 90

Jands' Sam Drury introduces EVOLVE 70 and 90, the upsized portable column and sub PAs. EVOLVE 70 delivers SPL of 133dB, running eight 4.7" neodymium drivers for clear, powerful 120° wide consistent coverage via propriety waveguides. The 15" subwoofer takes low frequency extension down to 35Hz. EVOLVE 90 runs the same top element, and delivers a maximum SPL of 134dB, with an 18" subwoofer running down to 28Hz.




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**Samuel Drury**  
Applications Engineer  
Jands

## Follow-Me at ULA Group

ULA Group's Paul Rumble introduces us to a new addition to their stable - Follow-Me, a performer tracking solution for followspots and audio and video system automation.



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**Paul Rumble**  
General Manager VIC  
ULA Group



## Jands' Executive Chairman Paul Mulholland welcomes Hog back home

Paul Mulholland was there when Jands signed a contract on the back of a beer coaster with Flying Pig Systems to build the early Hog lighting desks. Decades later, Hog has come home, now distributed again in Australia by Jands. Paul gives us the whole story...



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**Paul Mulholland**  
Executive Chairman  
Jands



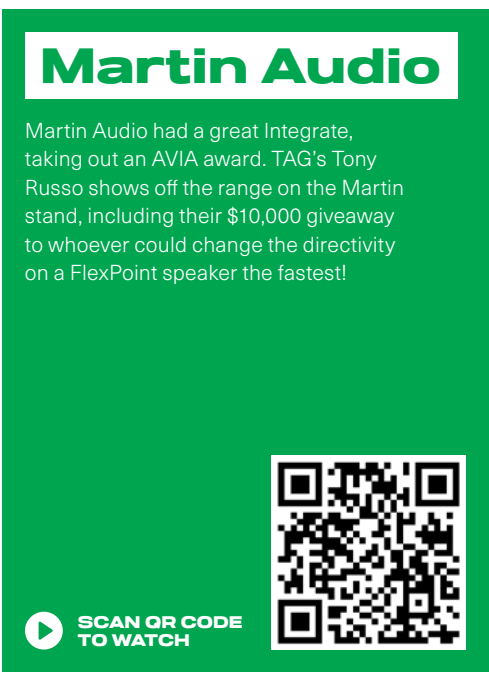
# The Buzz around Hive at ULA Group

ULA Group's Mike Davies introduces us to the Hive media server ecosystem, an innovative new modular framework that uses Intel's SDM card framework to distribute video across a system. ULA have recently taken distribution of the English brand, and cool things are afoot...

**Mike Davies**  
Sales - LED Screen and Digital Technology  
ULA Group



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# Martin Audio

Martin Audio had a great Integrate, taking out an AVIA award. TAG's Tony Russo shows off the range on the Martin stand, including their \$10,000 giveaway to whoever could change the directivity on a FlexPoint speaker the fastest!



**Anthony Russo**  
Technical Director  
TAG



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# Pixotope virtual studio software and solutions

Relatively new to the ULA Group stable, Pixotope create virtual studio software and solutions, enabling broadcasters to do some pretty amazing virtual production. ULA's Paul Rumble explains...

**Paul Rumble**  
General Manager VIC  
ULA Group



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# BEST IN SHOW! Powersoft NOTA 142

The Powersoft NOTA 142 is a ridiculously small amplifier (115mm x 25.4mm x 31.4mm) outputting two channels and 140W. It's powered via PoE and takes AES67 from the same cable, and can also take a USB-C input, which means it's also a USB-C/AES67 bridge and on/off ramp. It's utterly ridiculous and was powering a decent sub and top box at the show. Powersoft's Arthur Soh shows it off...



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Arthur Soh  
Regional Sales Manager  
Powersoft

# RF Venue PA Extension Kit

Jands' Sam Drury shows us RF Venue's latest cool updates including the PA Extension Kit - a rackmount transmitter and portable receiver for connecting hard-to-cable delay speakers!



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# Sennheiser's Spectera debuts

The WMAS RF revolution is here. Sennheiser's Spectera has made its first Australian trade show outing at Integrate 2025. In 1RU, Spectera gives you 32 in and 32 out, and the beltpacks are both transmitters and receivers. Brock Whitton, Technical Application Engineer at Sennheiser, gives us the low-down...



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## Shure's AD PSM WMAS product debuts

More from the WMAS RF revolution! Shure's Axient Digital PSM: four transmitters, each capable of sending out four stereo channels.

ShowLink remote control, networkable monitoring with Wireless Workbench, analog and digital (AES3, AES67, Dante) inputs, internal antenna combining, and CueMode, allowing engineers to easily monitor up to 64 encrypted stage mixes from a single ADXR bodypack.

Jands' Samuel Drury shows us how this is going to revolutionise IEM mixing...



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## The P.A. People – TheatreQuip's TensionGrid virtual floor systems

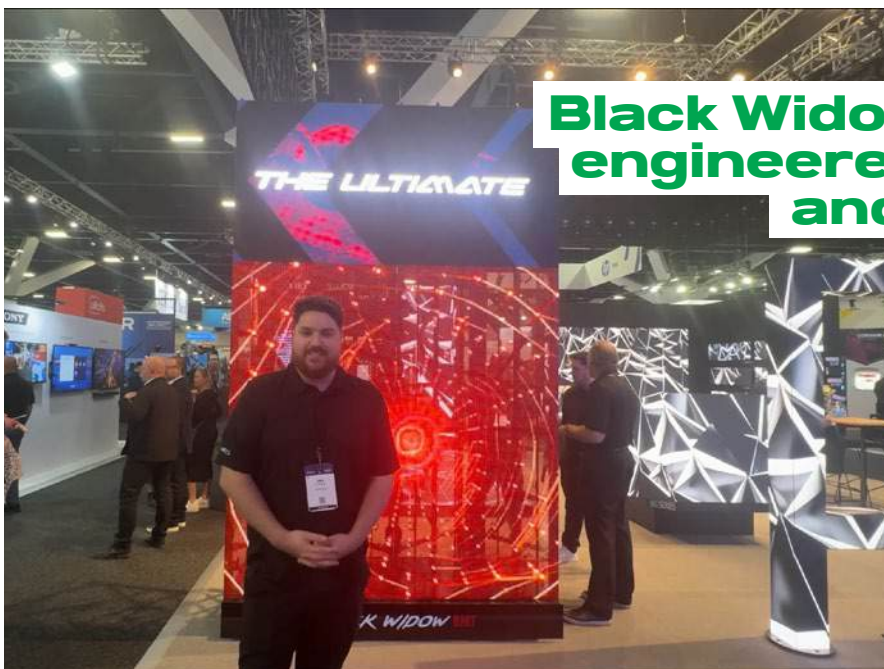
Sam Dodds, Systems Engineer at The P.A. People, demonstrates TheatreQuip's TensionGrid virtual floor systems, a locally engineered and developed tensile wire rope access floor system for theatres and venues.



**Sam Dodds**  
Systems Engineer  
The P.A. People



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## VuePix Infiled Black Widow LED panels – engineered for Australia and New Zealand!

VuePix's Black Widow has taken off in the US and Europe, and now it's been upgraded to fit Antipodean standards. Both solid and mesh modules can be used in the same screen! Australia's own Harry the hirer had a lot of input into the design...



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## VuePix Infiled Orion

Garth Reynolds, New Zealand Branch and Technical Manager at ULA Group introduces Orion, VuePix's new all-in-one LED solution. There's a 110" model with 1.25mm pixel pitch and a 135" with 1.5mm pixel pitch. It comes with a wall mount bracket, built-in speaker and camera, plus options for trolley mount. It's fully touch enabled and has embedded whiteboarding running on Android.

**Garth Reynolds**  
New Zealand Branch & Technical Manager  
ULA Group



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## Xilica at Audio Brands Australia

Jim Seretis, Business Development for Xilica, showed off their new collaboration tool, RoomHub. It's got AI-driven deployment on board, making installation and integration faster and easier than ever. RoomHub instantly maps your network, discovering ceiling microphones, PTZ cameras, amplifiers and peripherals. Link devices to rooms with a single click. Then AI AutoDeploy takes over, listening, measuring room acoustics, and tuning your system automatically with AI-driven EQ.

Audio Brands Australia have recently become home to the brand - contact them for more info!



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**Jim Seretis**  
Business Development  
Xilica



## Yealink's AI-powered workplace

Yealink, a global leader in Unified Communications and Collaboration, demonstrated its "Innovate Workspaces with AI" next-generation intelligent solutions at Booth E29, showcasing how AI technology is transforming professional collaboration. Axel Chen, Country Manager for Australia at Yealink talks us through their ecosystem.

**Axel Chen**  
Country Manager, Australia  
Yealink



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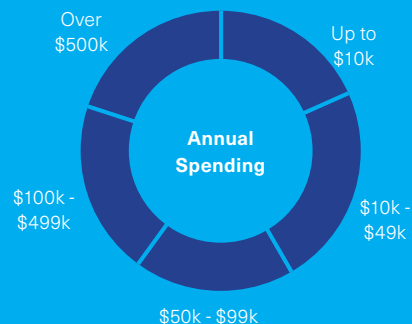
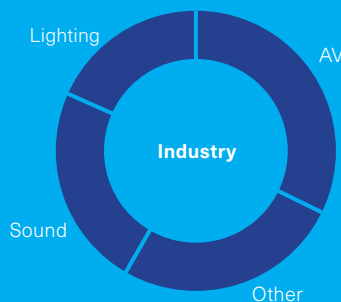
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King Gizzard &amp; the Lizard Wizard live at NYC's Forest Hills Stadium

## DiGiCo's Quantum 326 Shape-Shifts on the Road with **King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard**

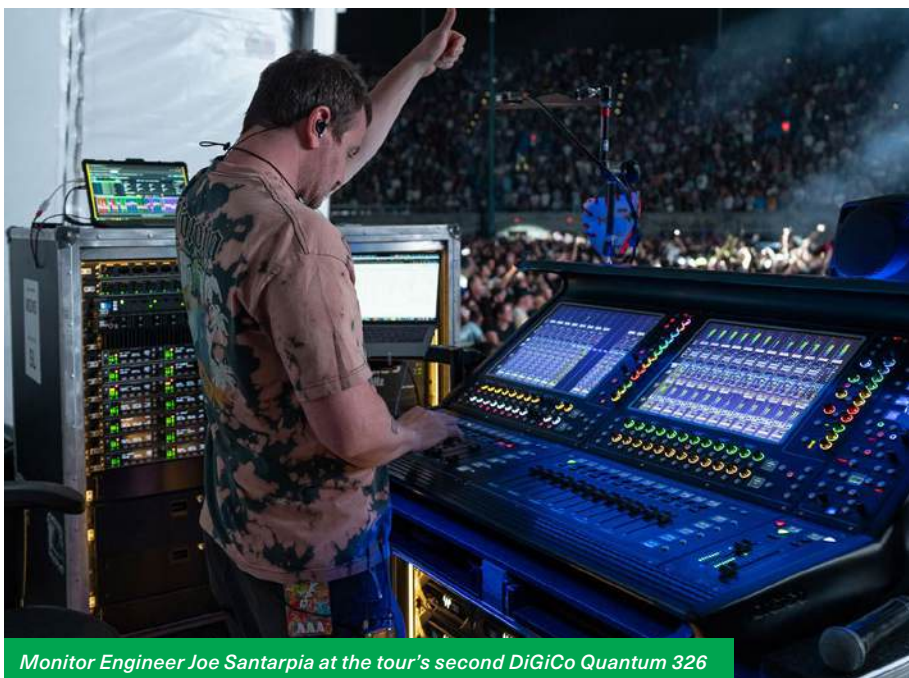
Six-piece multi-genre Australian band King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard recently brought their energetic stage show to the United States in their summer's Phantom Island tour, which featured collaborations with local orchestras on eight nights of the 12-date run. For the first time, the band's FoH engineer Sam Joseph and monitor engineer Joe Santarpia, both longtime DiGiCo console users, were behind new small-footprint Quantum 326 desks, a change that delivered several significant benefits.

The reduced footprint of the two Quantum 326, which were supplied by Nashville-based Worley Sound, offered critical space savings at the FOH and monitor positions. That is ideal for a band still playing the occasional smaller venue, not to mention the truck pack, Joseph reports. "Often, our production trucks are packed high and to the door!" With the smaller form factor, he says, "You can tip the console with two people. Plus, the layout is great, and the number of layers and macros make it all super accessible."

King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard are amazingly prolific; Phantom Island is their 27th album release since 2010, with projects running the gamut from psychedelic and prog rock to metal and even folk. "Gizz are a very musically diverse band, and they like their live show to be dynamic and unexpected, so Joe and I must be super flexible and prepared for anything," says Joseph. He has been with the band since 2016 and additionally works with "Gizz-related" bands like Babe Rainbow, The Murlocs, the Allah-Las, and, most recently, GUM/Ambrose Kenny-Smith.

To be ready for anything, he says, "We are working off a 'master' input list this year that includes inputs for a standard 'rock' show, a 'rave' show, the recent 'orchestra' shows, and even some 'acoustic' shows. We have access to all these inputs at any time on every show file, so we are ready no matter what they throw at us."

For the Phantom Island tour, the Quantum 326 consoles were paired with two DiGiCo SD-Racks and an Orange Box on an Optocore loop transporting about 100 inputs, with Santarpia controlling the head amp gain. "Additionally, we were sending and receiving quite a few channels between FOH and monitors," says Santarpia, who has been with Gizz for 10 years in various roles, also touring with Mac Demarco, Band of Horses, The Decemberists, Dom Dolla and Kurt Vile. "The loop makes it all seamless and easy without the extra analog hardware and without having to jump through hoops to split the MADI." The Orange Box converts, and clocks, MADI inputs from an Ableton rig to HMA fiber for the band's 'rave' sets.



Monitor Engineer Joe Santarpia at the tour's second DiGiCo Quantum 326

*"Worley Sound's packages are works of art," Santarpia adds. "Everything is super clean and laid out in really smart ways, so getting up and running is as fast as it can be. Their attention to detail for our individual needs puts them many steps above the larger rental houses. Truly an engineer's dream!"*

"I've loved the upgrade to Quantum consoles and have been able to move a lot of my outboard processing onto the desk," Joseph reveals. "Gizz love saturation – they want it on everything – and I have found the Mustard Tubes a game-changer. It can go from super subtle to absolutely blown out, and each setting has a nice, unique sound. Since it's onboard, it's easy to build this into macros or snapshots to dial in and recall for different songs."

The Quantum platform allowed Joseph to assign DiGiCo's Mustard Source Expander (MSE) to every vocal channel. "Or anything else, really," he chuckles. "It lowered stage bleed noticeably and was super useful on the recent orchestra run where it was important to get rid of as much bleed as possible. I've also enjoyed the different Mustard Compressor options, hearing how they all react differently and finding the right tool for each job."

"I'm using Mustard extensively, mostly the MSE," Santarpia also reports. "I love that there's a sidechain option for the detector. The Naga 6 (six-band dynamic EQ module) is cool. I love assigning faders to the parameters, especially threshold. That's great for DJ sets where I'm hyper-focused on a stereo channel and ride those thresholds on the faders."

He continues, "The Nodal Processing is quite useful for monitors as I have band members with some wildly different preferences on tones. I've got tons of snapshots automating multiple moves for specific moments throughout each set. Since every set is different, I'm programming and reprogramming these daily with ease." Overall, he adds, "There's a clarity and roundness to the Quantum desks that makes everything come together quickly and beautifully."

At FOH, Joseph says, "I don't use many snapshots as the band change setlists and songs on a whim every night. But I rely heavily on macros and have a bunch of them set up for different vibes. Having 40 macros available now on the Q326 is awesome; I used to run out quickly, but not anymore. And the colour-coding and labelling options are great."

Santarpia uses Virtual Soundcheck regularly and generates a 64-track recording of every show via an MGB interface into the QRec app.

"I have a macro that toggles the 'Listen to Copied Audio' on/off and can switch between VS and analog inputs quickly," he says. Those multitrack recordings are used if the band wants to mix and release a live version of a song or album, which they frequently do."

Joseph adds, "I make a 32-track post-fader/post-processing stem mix at FoH that the band often releases publicly a couple of days after a show. The onboard UB-MADI interface is great for my stem mix recording. The sound quality is great and it's nice running the desk at 96k and being able to record at 48k," a space-saver since the band's set can run as long as three hours.

The band decided to begin recording to multitrack early in Joseph's tenure, he says, a decision that led them to purchase an SD11 console with UB-MADI and a D-Rack that together served as the main FOH console until 2022. "It sounded great, and we could check it onto a flight. Since then, I have been a 100 percent DiGiCo convert. I think my current show file is a descendant of that first SD11 file." The SD11 now resides in the band's Melbourne studio where it is used as a rehearsal and recording console.

*Joseph concludes, "I like DiGiCo consoles because they sound familiar to me; each iteration sounds better than the last but still has a recognisable sonic quality. There is a warmth to the tonality I like that lends itself to my mixing style and the band's music. Same with the layout – familiar but improved. It's not like learning a whole new desk each upgrade, it's just a better version of what you were already comfortable on."*



FOH Engineer Sam Joseph at Worley Sound's DiGiCo Quantum 326 desk

# Chameleon Crew Win **High Praise** for Keith Urban Tour

Keith Urban has been roaring across the country with his lauded HIGH AND ALIVE WORLD TOUR, described by Rolling Stone magazine as “one of the very few gotta-see-’em-live-to-get-it greats who can hold an arena in the palm of his hand.”

The flawless performance is matched by an equally flawless lighting design by Rob Sinclair (Kylie, Post Malone, My Chemical Romance), with lighting director Benjamin Silverstein on tour. Ben has worked with a variety of acts throughout his career, including The War on Drugs, and MGMT.

“Keith loves big, chunky looks, and when speaking with Rob, I think part of the intention was to recreate an old-school Par can rig but with modern gear,” explained Ben. “Rob has knocked it out of the park because it really feels like the pods are banks of Par cans.”

The aforementioned pods have become a significant topic of discussion among aficionados of concert lighting design. The four air pods are packed with Martin MAC Aura PXLs, with 24 units in each of the four pods. Additionally, the four side pods each hold 12 MAC Aura XBs.

They are complemented by video pods, which are often used as a lighting source. Ben controls these through the console into disguise D3, essentially treating the pods as a bunch of RGB fixtures.

The video pods move positions throughout the show via Kinesys, sometimes blending into the hardware and sometimes drawing attention to the talent.

“There’s a lot of really cool stuff with video and lighting morphing into one,” remarked Ben. “In some songs, when we’re controlling the video through the lighting console, we add effects or filters or masks over it from the D3. You wouldn’t always realise it was just like a lighting thing.”

The use of pods can often fill the stage with lighting effects, making the lighting the primary element of the stage set. The pods can channel energy to a specific area with

great efficiency. The stage can be made to appear one size and then appear much larger with different positions and various pod automation looks.

“The MAC PXLs have been an excellent fixture to use,” said Ben. “They’re just so punchy. We use Elation Fuzes in the US, but with the MAC Aura PXL, they really cut through in a different and very satisfying way. We run lots of Phasers (effects) through them, although not a lot of movement effects, but a lot of colour sweeps and hits and stuff like that. Modern-day Par can stuff!”

Ben says the MAC Aura XBs in the side pods are great, providing a range of Phasers like dimmer, colour, and punch.

Upstage on the floor is a row of 18 Ayrton Dominos to provide backwash, punch and fill in the space in a great way.

A total of 31 Elation Proteus Maximus units are in the rig: on the front truss, the upstage truss for back lighting, and on the floor on either side of the stage for side lighting. Ben says he doesn't use them above 20-30% throughout the show because they're so bright. He adds that they are great; however, the backline guys don't love it!

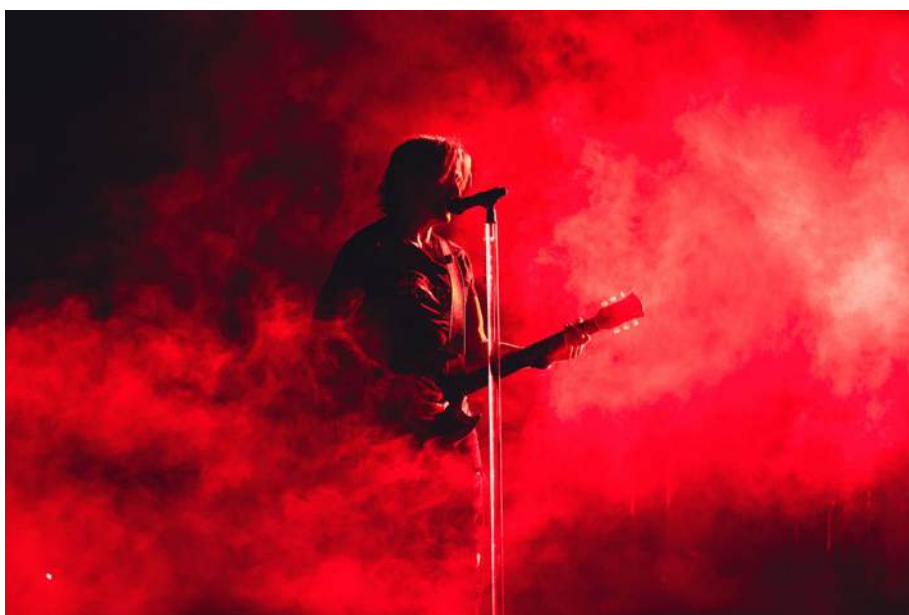
All of the thirteen Proteus Maximus on the front truss were used as followspots. In the US, these were coupled with a Follow-Me tracking system, but in Australia, a RoboSpot follow spot system is used.

"One of the coolest things that Chameleon did was successfully make a RoboSpot system work like a Follow-Me system, which is the first time I've ever experienced RoboSpots being able to do that," commented Ben. "Chameleon said there was an update relatively recently where you can use the PSN data, and I believe PSN from the RoboSpot station is output into the MA3 console, where they do the calibration, and then we have markers set. Now I can assign any light on our front truss to different markers, just like in Follow-Me."

"It made coming from the States to here seamless, and there was no programming challenge. Chameleon solved it, and it's a huge benefit."

ACME PIXEL LINEs are located along the main riser step, adding an effective icon eye candy detail. A total of 35 Chauvet Color STRIKE Ms provide great hits and a lot of sparkly stuff.

"They provide a lot of great strobe hits, big wash looks, and you can get a lot of really great punchy stuff through them or just set a really nice, soupy wash upstage, and it just fills the space in a great way," explained Ben.





Eight Robert Juliat Dalis 862S are situated on the floor of the small thrust areas off the front of the stage. Six Claypaky Sharpy were in the rig; two on either side of the stage floor and two at FoH to make the mirrorball super effective.

Ben ran the show on an MA Lighting grandMA3 full-size console running in Mode 3. He adds that Joe Watrach programmed on this tour and did an absolutely amazing job.

"The Australian tour has been incredible," commented Ben. "Maybe because Keith is from here, there is a certain element of different excitement, and you feel that energy. We started with a few days of production rehearsals in Newcastle, followed by our first show there, and the Chameleon crew has been absolutely incredible. They went above and beyond, making my life easy. Everybody on this tour has been great, with an amazing crew in every department. Shout out to the team at Big Picture as well. They were all phenomenal. We're feeling it everywhere, just how lucky we are right now."

"You know it's been nice here because we've been doing pre-rig load-in days and then show days, and a lot of times we're doing two or three nights in one place, whereas in the States we've been doing three nights in a row in different cities, and that gets hard at times."

"The Chameleon crew are so good, and they're just top-notch, with an incredible work ethic and positive attitude."

#### **Chameleon Crew:**

Levi Boes - Crew Chief  
 Danyon McCue - Kinesys  
 Michael Simpson  
 Nick Newman  
 Cooper Corcoran  
 Matt Davies  
 Shonnie Skehan  
 Hunter Philip  
 Graham Walker - Account Manager



# Learning to Fly with Newline Interactive

The Redcliffe Aero Club, an hour's drive north of Brisbane, is a site that has been tied to Australian aviation since the late 1960s, with its airfield officially designated in 1972. These days, it's a busy hub for pilot training, offering full time diploma courses and CASA flight training. There's also scenic and charter flights on offer, along with social 'flyaways' that members organise to attend events in distant locales.

Aviation is a necessarily conservative environment, with only the most tried and trusted methods employed, including in training. Until recently, the pilot training classrooms at Redcliffe were still using a combination of projectors and whiteboards as their main classroom teaching technology.

"In aviation, everyone loves using projector and whiteboards," explains Redcliffe's RTO (Registered Training Organisation) Coordinator Bernadette Killick. "Last year, my boss wanted to buy more projectors, and I said 'I've think I've got a better solution!'"

Bernadette's better solution was discovered through nearby audio-visual integrator MacroSphere, based in Clontarf. Bernadette had encountered LED interactive screens and knew they could offer massive benefits to the Club. "I contacted MacroSphere, and they put forward three options. We chose the Newline Interactive Q Series, and installed two of them."

The Q Series are 4KUHD LED screens running an Android 11 operating system. They have 20 points of active touch control through infra-red detection, USB-C connectivity with 65W of power, built-in speakers, included collaboration tools, and an app store with more than 100 tools available.

Since their installation, Redcliffe Aero Club have been using the screens for their flight training, workshops, and committee meetings. They have come into their own particularly when used in training pilots on EFBs; Electronic Flight Bags.

"EFBs are the electronic versions of the big folder of printed documents pilots used to take on each flight," explains Bernadette. "It's all now on iPads; all of your charts and documentation. EFBs are a closed ecosystem that only runs on iPads. Connecting those to



the screens and showing students what an EFB can really do, and being able to annotate it and draw over it has been a great benefit. Beforehand, connecting iPads to projectors was difficult and the result didn't look good. We needed something high resolution. The screens are very energy efficient, and we have proven that we can do so much more with them compared to a whiteboard."

The smaller of Redcliffe's two Newline Interactive screens is a TT-Q65 65 inch model installed in their Briefing Room. "Our flight instructors are able to display presentations, play videos, and connect their iPads," continues Bernadette. "Our second screen is in what we call 'The VET (Vocational Education and Training) Shed', which is a demountable classroom. That screen is the larger TT-7521Q 75 inch model, and we use it for larger briefings, bigger classes, and busy meetings. It handles presentations, screen sharing from iPads and laptops; a bit of everything."

Outside of pilot training, the Newline Interactive screens are used for a variety of internal communications. "Our CEO says that the board meetings are enjoying the new technology, and being able to interact with the material while they do their presentation has been amazing," relates Bernadette. "Now they're able to integrate their presentations, charts, and other documents. When it comes to our staff meetings, having the ability to replicate a screen on a large display, being able to draw over it, and direct people through the material has been a great improvement."

Redcliffe Aero Club's investment in Newline Interactive technology has been backed up by excellent service and support from their supplier, MacroSphere. "MacroSphere's service has been amazing," confirms Bernadette. "Jodene McKenzie is MacroSphere's Newline guru, and she has provided both in-depth and 'quick start' type training for us. She's been amazing; even her short and quick demonstrations immediately



EFB on Newline Q Series



Bernadette Killick

teach you about the screen's capabilities. There's always more we can learn, and support is just a phone call away."

With solid support and supply from both MacroSphere and distributor Amber Technology, Bernadette is sure that Redcliffe Aero Club will continue to expand with Newline Interactive. "We most definitely will be looking at buying some more Newline Interactive screens in the future," she concludes.

[redcliffeaeroclub.com.au](http://redcliffeaeroclub.com.au)  
[newline-interactive.com](http://newline-interactive.com)  
[www.macroSphere.com.au](http://www.macroSphere.com.au)  
[www.ambertech.com.au](http://www.ambertech.com.au)

# Awards, wages and wormholes



## HOW A.I. TRIED TO FRY MY PAYROLL

I bought Sydney PA Hire in July, and it came fully loaded - equipment, booking system, huge customer base - and two lovely casuals. I set up payroll on my Xero accounting package and jacked up the hourly rate for the operators. That's what you do when you buy a happy business: put the prices up. Both ways; some of the rental rates were a bit slim.

As a legitimate and compliant business, I bought Worker's Compensation Insurance too, and made sure my new Public Liability insurer knew that I do some small stage hire along with pipe and drape. They pointed out any contractors need to have their own Public Liability insurance, so that limits the people I can sub in. I rely on payroll - regular casuals paid by the hour.

My casual factory rate is \$45 an hour, and production (anything outside the factory) is \$50. That compares to the Live Performance Award with a Level 5 casual theatre technician working non-touring must be paid a minimum of \$36.25/hr.

The award lays out those levels with skillsets, and I regard my operators as somewhere between Level 4 and 5. Specifically, it works thus:

Level 4. Skilled technician/operator

- Can independently operate standard audio, lighting, or staging systems for productions
- Understands patching, rigging basics, cabling, etc
- May supervise Level 1-3 staff during calls

Level 5. Highly skilled technician

- Operates and maintains complex production systems (large-format consoles, automated lighting, integrated AV systems)
- May be a department head (lighting operator in charge, sound operator in charge)
- Provides guidance and training to junior crew

When I worked for a major venue in 2023 as a sound operator mixing monitors for professional shows, I was Level 7 and paid a glorious \$42.00/hr! No-one is here for the money.

At Sydney PA Hire, we specialise in small. Schools, corporate, community, and sporting events are our thing, awards nights with bands less so. But we did one recently, and my operator cranked some hours. Starting 10.00 am at the warehouse, he worked until 1.00 pm, then took a break until 3.00 pm and worked through until 1.00 am. I checked ChatGPT to see what the Award said, and calculated the pay this way:

First 10 hours normal rate, next two at time and a half, then double time. But when it got to midnight, the A.I. said the rate - it was now Saturday morning - was 1.5 and the multiple was again x2. My operator was perfectly happy with the day and the pay! But something didn't make sense.

I went where you go to for advice: Live Performance Australia. Live Performance Australia (LPA) is the peak body for Australia's live performance industry. They are a registered employer organisation under the Fair Work (Registered Organisation) Act 2009, which allows them to negotiate industrial agreements on behalf of Members.

Note that word: 'Members'. Many production suppliers and most venues are members - don't call LPA unless you ARE a member. I strongly recommend joining if you have any kind of payroll!

"I don't know why anyone would use ChatGPT to interpret an Award or any other legislative instrument", said Shay Minster, Director, Workplace Relations.

"In this case the Award is not cited properly by ChatGPT. A quick fact check by looking at the actual Live Performance Award 2020 would reveal that the clause to which you refer is 63.7: Special overtime and penalty provision for all crewing services employees."

"(It says) 'For all work between 11.00 pm and 6.00 am, a crewing services employee will receive a 52.5% loading payment instead of overtime and penalty provisions for all purposes of the award'. Also, many awards do not stack loading." - a claim my A.I. research had made.

"In general, double penalties are not paid".

For my operator, the effect of this meant they were on double time until 11 pm, and then flipped back to time and a half between 11.00 pm and 1.00 am! I'd already overcalculated the pay, so they were \$75 overpaid. Which brings on the next conundrum.

Underpaying award wages could get you into serious penalty pain, including jail for WAGE THEFT! Currently the major supermarkets are facing big fines presumably due to small errors that multiplied across massive workforces. If I'd underpaid my operator I'd fix it next pay cycle. But now I have OVERPAID them, and it was my fault. So I'll eat that! But, imagine you go a year or two of possibly minor pay scale error, those numbers and the ramifications do stack up.

Paying over award gives an employer a buffer against small errors, and also means crew will actually want to work for you. I don't know ANYONE prepared to do a Level 5 shift at \$36.25 casual - and if they are, they have one eye on the job listings to get out of there.

The current Live Performance Award 2020 (21 July 2025 version) is here: <https://awards.fairwork.gov.au/MA000081.html>

Note there is also a Pay Calculator that is very handy: <https://calculate.fairwork.gov.au/>

# Sometimes it all gets too much...



The *Support Act Wellbeing Helpline* is a free, confidential counselling service that is available to anyone working in Australian music who needs to talk to someone about any aspect of their wellbeing.



THE SUPPORT ACT WELLBEING HELPLINE IS MADE POSSIBLE WITH THE SUPPORT OF:



# ACME MANA PROFILE



# and MANA HYBRID

The MANA PROFILE and MANA HYBRID are both IP66 rated, 600W moving head LED fixtures. The 600W moving head profile market has a lot of options for the prospective buyer, and I was surprised by how many choices there are in this range.

ACME has a strong presence in the touring market, here and overseas. Over the years, ACME has gained a reputation for listening to their customers and really taking on the feedback they receive; their recent range of fixtures really demonstrates this. Both the ACME MANA PROFILE and the MANA HYBRID have a lot to offer.

## Construction

MANA is a family of lights, so they are constructed similarly. The only difference is that the PROFILE is 2kg heavier than the HYBRID. Width is 380mm, depth 284mm, and height is 658mm, with weights of 32.5kg (PROFILE) and 30.5kg (HYBRID).

Both are IP66 rated, a massive tick in my book. IP rated moving head fixtures are now becoming the norm, and I think that is a great thing.

They are both solid, chunky looking lights. They are workhorse fixtures, not an eye candy or effects lights - function over fashion all the way.

While there is a MANA PROFILE and a MANA HYBRID, there is not yet a MANA WASH, at least not at the time of writing. It would be

good if they did have an accompanying wash light. Typically, when people are specifying lights for a show or purchase, they are looking for the Wash and the Profile to be able to work together and complement each other.

## Optics, Colour, and Brightness

Both use a 600W LED engine with a native 7,000K source that uses subtractive linear colour mixing (CMY). The PROFILE outputs 26,000 lumens, whereas the HYBRID does 21,000 lumens. The lumen difference seems large on paper but in person it is much more subtle.

Both the ACME MANA PROFILE and the ACME MANA HYBRID feature linear CTO colour correction, which ranges from 2,700K all the way to its native 7,000K. They have a single colour wheel which has six colours as well as a linear CRI filter. Both feature a 170mm frontal lens.

The MANA HYBRID has a very impressive zoom range of 2° all the way out to 45°. The 2° beam is almost laser-like. The MANA PROFILE features a zoom range of 3.5°-45°. The 45° gives a good wide wash, maintaining a lot of its brightness and producing a nice, flat field.

## Applications and Features

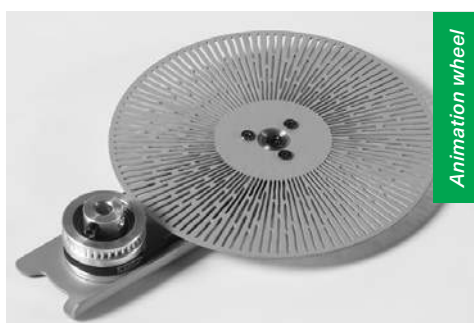
The main difference worth noting is that the MANA PROFILE features a framing system, whereas the MANA HYBRID does not. The MANA HYBRID instead features a larger zoom range and a larger range of gobos.

The shutter blades for the framing system of the MANA PROFILE features four blades, each with separate movement and full blackout from a single blade. As far as I'm concerned, full blackout from a single shutter and a 4-plane system is a must in a shutter kit.

The MANA HYBRID contains one static gobo wheel with 13 gobos, plus open as well as a rotating gobo wheel with eight gobos, plus open.

The MANA PROFILE has one static gobo wheel with nine gobos, plus open, and one rotating gobo wheel with eight gobos, plus open.

Both fixtures have steady, smooth dimming with four user-selectable dimming curves. Dimming curves are very relevant in the modern LED era. Different dimming curves can be quite noticeable in modern LED lights



## The Specs

### MANA HYBRID

Light source: 600W LED engine  
 Total lumen output: 21,000 lumens  
 Colour temperature output: 7,000K  
 Zoom range: 2°-45°  
 Standard mode: Ra>70  
 HCRI mode: Ra≥90  
 Diameter of frontal lens: 170mm  
 Linear CMY colour mixing  
 Linear CTO colour correction: 2,700K-7,000K

1 Colour wheel: 6 colours + CRI, plus open  
 1 Static gobo wheel: 13 gobos, plus open  
 1 Rotating gobo wheel: 8 gobos, plus open  
 Animation wheel, prism, frost filter

### MANA PROFILE

Light source: 600W LED engine  
 Total lumen output: 26,000 lumens  
 Colour temperature output: 7,000K  
 Beam angle: 3.5°-45°  
 Standard mode: Ra>70  
 HCRI mode: Ra≥90  
 Diameter of frontal lens: 170mm  
 Pan movement: 540°  
 Tilt movement: 260°  
 Linear CMY colour mixing  
 Linear CTO colour correction: 2,700K-7,000K

1 Colour wheel: 6 colours + CRI, plus open  
 1 Static gobo wheel: 9 gobos, plus open  
 1 Rotating gobo wheel: 8 gobos, plus open  
 Animation wheel, prism, frost filter  
 Framing system: 4 blades, each with separate movement and full blackout

if you know what you are looking for. Naturally, LED does not dim the same as other more traditional light sources.

The motorised linear iris is really smooth and indexes well. All parameters are 16-bit making things much smoother, feeling much more precise and giving the operator more control. 16-bit parameters are the benchmark for high-end moving head profiles and we are seeing more lights offer this instead of 8-bit parameters. Will we soon start seeing fixtures with 24-bit or even 32-bit parameters?

### Control and Programming

Both lights consume 910W of power. If ample

power is at a premium in the venue you are in, this might be worth noting.

The four compatible control protocols for the MANA range include DMX512, RDM, Art-Net and sACN, the protocols you would expect from a high-end fixture. The MANA HYBRID can be run in either 24 or 30 channel mode. The PROFILE can be run on 22 channels, two different versions consisting of 31 channels, as well as 40 channel mode. It can be controlled via 5-pin waterproof XLR or an RJ45 connector.

The pan range of movement is 540° and the tilt range of movement is 260°. A moving head profile does not need to have infinite pan and tilt.

### Verdict

These are both solid workhorse fixtures, and are fantastic lights. A reliable moving head profile forms part of the backbone of any modern lighting rig.

Overly simplified, the difference between the two is really whether or not you need the shutter kit.

If you are in the market for a 600W moving head LED profile, take a look at the MANA range by ACME.

Product Info: [en.acmelighting.com](http://en.acmelighting.com)  
 Distributor Australia and New Zealand: [www.ulagroup.com](http://www.ulagroup.com)



# SHOWPRO EC7 WASH

**The ShowPro EC7 is a small to medium size LED moving head wash light with a big emphasis on brightness and optical quality. It has been built for the budget conscious buyer who is chasing value for money. The new EC7 has twice the output of its predecessor, all while maintaining the same power draw.**

I was pleasantly surprised at how good this light is. What we have is a compact, lightweight fixture that outperforms expectations; it's an overachiever! If you are after a small, bright, moving head wash light and you don't need advanced features like backlights and pixel control, you should be looking at this.

### Construction

The EC7 sneaks in just under 10kg (9.7kg). It is a compact fixture with dimensions of 323mm (H) x 207mm (L) x 381mm (W).

The EC7 is a comfortable one person lift with a single clamp. The light can be hung at any orientation or popped on the floor. Personally, I am a fan of the more squared-off design. The 'boxy' look just seems to work for it. It doesn't feel too chunky or clunky when you see it in person.

It is an IP20 rated fixture. I think that with a fixture whose main selling point is its brightness, there would definitely have been benefit in making it IP65 rated. Then again, I know there's a big manufacturing cost

difference between an IP20 and an IP65 rated fixture. Making it IP65 likely would have pushed it over the 10kg mark. I do feel like ShowPro made a conscious effort to keep this light under 10kg. That said, the light is robust enough to be part of a production companies inventory.

Looking at two fixtures pound for pound in light output only, the EC7 stacks up really well with the Martin MAC Aura XIP, one of, if not the leader in the small to medium wash light category. Of course, this is in isolation and does not factor in all the other features of the light or the fact that the XIP is IP54 rated.

### Optics, Colour and Brightness

The main selling point for the ShowPro EC7 has to be its relative brightness and the high quality of the light source. If you want output and optical quality in line with the top end of the small to medium wash light market and you don't have the budget, this should be near, if not at the top of your list. The trade-off is the feature set and the overall level of refinement.

The fixture uses additive colour mixing with seven 50W RGBWW LEDs (WW is warm white). It has variable colour temperature control ranging from 2,800K all the way up to 10,000K.

It draws 400W of power, meaning you could comfortably fit five on a 10a circuit. Six would get you to 2400W, which puts you right on the edge, which is not recommended. It seems kind of thirsty for a smaller wash light, but when you consider that it gives you nearly 8,000 lumens, it's quite a reasonable power figure.

### Applications and Features

It has a very large zoom range going as small as 3.5° all the way out to 51°. It can pan 540° and has a tilt range of 247°. Both are very respectable numbers. Infinite pan and tilt would not have added much usability to the fixture, but still would have been cool.

It would suit a small to medium size venue and similar size shows. It is brighter than it looks. They work best overhead washing a stage or set pieces.

With a CRI of higher than 93 it would suit TV and film applications. It is a quiet light which will help it on set. It's not the fastest light I've ever seen, but it could work in a nightclub simply due to how bright it is. It would work well in a theatre, indoor concert, or a corporate show.

It does not have all the bells and whistles, but if it has the features you need, you will be impressed.

### Control and Programming

You can get individual control of each of the seven LEDs if you wanted to use it like that for effects, however, it works best as a wash light.

It is compatible with a number of different protocols such as DMX512, RDM, sACN, Art-Net, Bluetooth, APP and NFC. It can be controlled via 3 pin or 5 pin XLR in/out as well as Art-Net in/out

It has five DMX modes available including 16ch, 31ch, 34ch, 40ch, and 62 channels.

It is easy enough to control and program.

It has an onboard menu which is easy to navigate and allows for manual control; simple but effective.

### Verdict

The mid-level moving light manufacturers are producing some exceptional lighting fixtures at the moment. You would be wise to look around and see what is on offer. Pound for pound, The EC7 by ShowPro is brighter than the top end of the market. With a CRI of more than 93, it offers a high-quality light source. You get about 80% of the light for about 50% of the price. Value for money is exceptional with the ShowPro EC7.

For those who are hung up on brand name lighting fixtures, give this one a shot. It might just be enough to change your mind.

#### Product Info:

[www.showtech.com.au/product/ec7-wash/](http://www.showtech.com.au/product/ec7-wash/)  
Distributor Australia and New Zealand:  
[www.showtech.com.au](http://www.showtech.com.au)



### The Specs

Light source: 7 x 50W RGBWW LED

Output: up to 7,700lm

CRI>93

Colour temperature: 2,800K - 10,000K

Zoom range: 3.5° - 51°

Pan 540°, tilt 247°

Colour system: RGBWW

Strobe: 1-30Hz



# Incorporate or in corporate?



**Groups of animals go by some funny names. A scurry of squirrels, battery of barracudas, or gaggle of geese all sound silly but a collective of humans is often a corporation.**

Corporations are entities unto themselves, but they do require people to run them. From janitor to CEO, all roles require some degree of human input. That's you and me, sentient meat sacks trying to make sense of the world around us while feeding the beast that feeds us.

Corporate life demands many compromises. Not the least being: turning up in a semi useful state at the office 09:00 every morning, repressing personal opinions that don't align with HR policy, ignoring all your socio-psycho-neuro-quirks to conform to a company line even when it doesn't sit well with you personally or professionally, and the

knowledge that you are only a number on a balance sheet as far as upper management are concerned. They are all "maaaate" until it's expedient to drop you like a used burger wrapper.

There are upsides. Regular and consistent pay that you can budget on, paid holidays, sick leave, superannuation, paid training and an easy answer to the inevitable "So, what do you do?" question at social events. Plus, you might get some real burgers at the annual pissup that is the office breakup. Don't forget that if you get drunk enough to make an idiot of yourself, it will be the sustenance you need to get to the dole shop.

### You are what you wear

It's the uniform bit that gets me most. What's with this performative BS of being trustworthy only if you wear a suit and/or tie? These are often the worst crooks, stealing from you as they look you in the eye. Without a moral qualm amongst them.

I know it's a societal convention, but I stand with Zelensky on this fashion choice. A well-fitting T is far more attractive, authoritative and just plain cooler than a crinkly polyester suit straight off the rack.

Every idealist has their line in the sand. Mine is the insistence on the bag of fruit and neck noose.

Standard Western business attire can be avoided if you do your corporate life in the creative fields. I've known enough architects in skivvies or bow ties to justify the legion of memes long in circulation. Y'artz peeps prefer colourful scarves or asymmetric hair and we all know that tech crew are rarely seen out of show blacks. Business owners wear what they feel like when they make enough money.

I tried and failed as an entrepreneur. While being your own boss means you can set your own rules like which clothes you do or don't don, budgets and accounting did my head in.

## When ya gotta, ya gotta

My overarching life goal of building a house in the country dictated a compromise at some point. Not being born sucking on a silver spoon, and living hand to mouth while I partied hard, didn't leave much of a nest egg beyond breakfast googs. The seed capital that funded my business experiment took ten years to get together and only ten months to lose the lot.

So I had to get serious for a few more years. Being on a wage meant I could budget and save properly. Tech skills from rock touring made the transition into theatre (with the long predictable runs) and then corporate theatre technically easy. The hardest part was in the mind.

Ultimately, sucking it up and suiting up paid for my house in the country, from where I am now working while lying on the couch and listening to the ravens squawking outside. In dirty, torn tracksuit pants no less.

Does this mean I won the Game of Life? Hardly. But I get to play it mostly on my own terms and that is the biggest success.

As a young idealist leftie humanist socialist (as I was pigeonholed at 18), corporate world always seemed soul-less, capricious and devoid of any morality. But I wanted some of its output to further my input, as we all do. I hadn't bargained on meeting some excellent people along the way, all trying to get their slice of the pie too, but I despaired of falling into a socially acceptable but personally unfulfilling career path and waking up in 40 years wondering why I had wasted my life.

The evolving plan was to engage the system only as much as it advantaged me and no more. Get in, get what I want, and get out. Actual success ratio of about 50% has been acceptable for such a scatter gunned approach but the losses were also wins when considered as essential parts of the learning curve. And many long-term friends came from business interactions.

## From little things, big things grow

The irony is that, in year 12, I campaigned to keep uniforms for senior years at our secondary school. The reasoning went that we would all be equal. The fear was that I would be singled out as povvo because I was stuck with home mended hand me downs while all the cool kids had the latest expensive fashion.

The ultimate irony is that I now wear such items as badges of honour. My dearest disagrees with some of the sartorial choices, but such is the joy of relationships that are deeper and longer lasting than the next

shareholder AGM. Besides, as a gardener, she is now more of a work grot than me! Above all, we both very much enjoy working on our own terms.

The corporations have not fully won yet. Being less of a robot in your own approach to the world helps with that end. Wear a sarong, board shorts or plus fours if it makes you happy. Nude up if the rules allow. Find a gig that lets you do that. At the very least, put on a colourful top or funky loud shoes and do your bit to undermine the brologarchy that is choking our collective existence.



# Are you concerned about your mate's mental health?

**FACT: Most Australian tech crew and roadies have attempted or considered suicide<sup>1</sup>!**

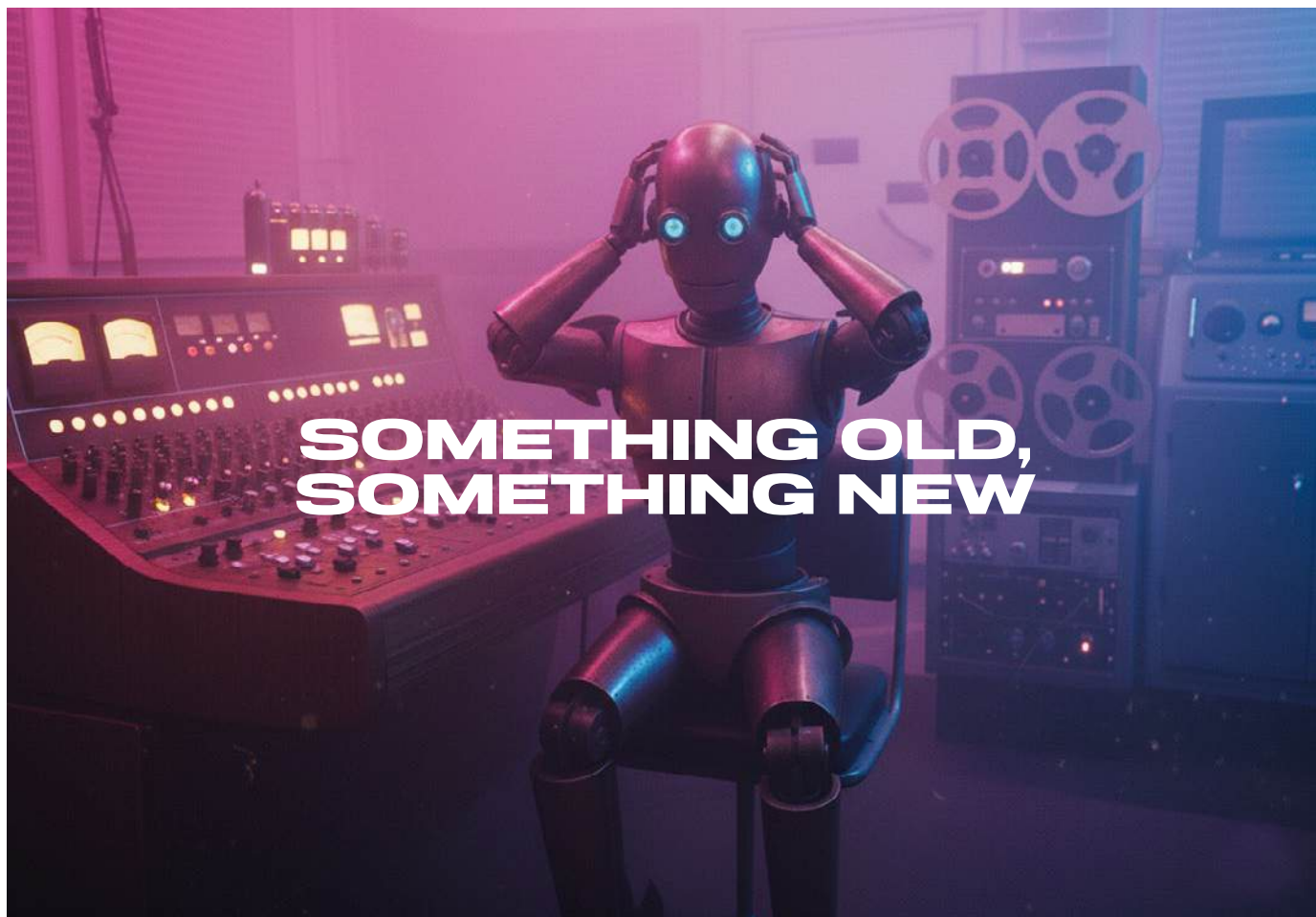
**Support those around you and register for free mental health training**



[www.entertainmentassist.org.au](http://www.entertainmentassist.org.au)

Supporting the mental health of Australian entertainment industry workers

<sup>1</sup>Passion, Pride, Pitfalls Dec 2014



## SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW

### Snippets from the archives of a bygone era

**In a world fixated on the digital and AI evolutions, other significant changes that have impacted our live music and recording industries have been relegated to footnotes in history. And in the midst of exponential technical changes, there is still a devout group of players clinging to traditional live and recording techniques, while there are also aspects of our industry that haven't really changed all that much.**

So, did it make sense to mothball my 90s PA system in the garage all those years ago in the hope that my son would someday use it in live music performances? Well, after a 17-year waiting period, Russell gave his first performance in August of this year at a school event in a trendy Newcastle City nightclub. I particularly noticed that in this changing world, the PA wasn't all that different from my 90s system gathering dust in the garage: speakers on stands, wired and wireless microphones, an analogue mixer, graphics and reverb effects, etcetera. While some performers clipped their smart phones onto a microphone stand, I didn't see how this enhanced the various performances or was all that revolutionary compared to a sheet of paper gaffa-taped to the microphone stand or taped to the stage floor. Yes, the LED lights, which have become ubiquitous in less than two decades, added a cool touch, and I would rather be crutching sheep than regressing to the power draw and heat problems associated with tungsten lighting. Thus, I have owned my LED studio lighting for many years now.

People new to the industry might feel that LEDs have been around for eons, but in a 2011 interview with Diesel (Mark Lizotte), he told me how he was trying to come to terms with LEDs. "I'm trying to get used to LEDs. I'm not sure where I am with them emotionally. I'm not sure if I love them yet. I'm like, 'Ok, this is the way it's going,' and I do love the fact that they're so much lighter. I can really appreciate that the crew loves them because there's no changing of bulbs. The components last a hundred years or something (laughs). But they're more expensive, and it's a different kind of light. I've noticed, looking down at my fretboard, it throws these weird little shadows. I've had to say a few times, 'Just be careful where these lights are focused.'"

People new to the industry might also not be aware that the introduction of poker machines in hotels in the 90s had a far more devastating effect on the pub rock industry than any technical innovation. Profit margins from pokies were so high that venues that were once entertainment hubs became stylised casinos virtually overnight when governments

changed the rules and allowed the flood of slot machines into the pubs. Previously, most bands in the 70s and 80s could pick up the phone, ring around the pubs and eventually get a gig. But after that window of opportunity was closed with the onset of the gambling bug, the only major viable venues were clubs, and you had little chance of working in a licensed club if you didn't have an agent. This was an era when a lot of musicians moved into home studio productions, a lot of which have now morphed into podcasts and online video productions.

A bit of research and sneak trip over to Julius Grafton's recently purchased Sydney PA Hire website confirmed my suspicions that things hadn't changed all that much in the hire department either: a digital mixer here and there, some Bluetooth, some LED lighting, but nothing that would confuse a Baby Boomer that had just emerged from a time warp. Interestingly, a recent press release from ENTECH, Julius' former exhibition enterprise, stated that half of all attendees were, "now identifying video as a core technology of interest." Undeniably, this



Russell's Live Performance 2025

swing has been ushered in by the evolution of the internet, where video hosting sites like YouTube and TikTok have made marketing and communications an even playing field and a favourite of consumers.

One of the major changes in sound reinforcement came in the late 80s when the industry was moving away from horn-loaded speaker enclosures like JBL 4560s and W-bins, to composite PA systems like the Meyer Sound system that Ian Richardson introduced to Australia in the early 80s. More modular 'point source' systems started to appear on the scene, like the EAW KF850s introduced by Norwest; these were the predecessors of the line arrays of the 90s and onwards. These new systems saw the ultimate demise of the huge speaker stacks employed by major touring acts. Not everyone could afford to buy or even hire composite PA systems, and a lot of pub

rock bands clung to the large conventional enclosures, which were no longer needed after the pokies decimated the pub rock scene.

In 1983 I was contracted to outfit an American nightclub just off the U.S. Air Force base in the Philippines. Along with the 4560s, which they already had in the country, I decided to introduce the double W-bins. I found the plans in a Balmain library, and the librarian allowed me to make a Xerox copy for 5 cents. The local Filipino JBL dealer, Lin Gomez, built the W-bins for me, and I installed them in my first nightclub engagement. However, Lin told me that JBL was no longer specifying W-bins for their speakers; instead, the recommended cabinets for their subs were 4520 J-bins and also 455OA bins, not folded horn W-bins. I later worked in a nightclub where Lin Gomez had installed 4520 J-bins, and after hearing the front-loaded bass push and sub-bass pumping out of the J

curve, I was no longer enamoured with W-bins. Paradoxically, because our nightclub was so successful, Lin Gomez was inundated with orders to manufacture the inferior W-bins, and I was eventually approached by one of his competitors, who offered me a huge sum of money for the plans, which had cost me 5 cents at the Balmain library. It was an offer I couldn't refuse. When I returned to Australia in 1986, I had a pair of J-bins manufactured for a club I was working for, and they sounded great, but large enclosures were already on the wane.

While the Beatles are credited with creating the foremost musical change in modern history, I never considered that they changed the very fabric of popular music. Moreover, they shook up an industry that had been churning out manufactured music by stylised acts that used professional songwriters and backing musicians, something akin to what has happened to the current wave of mass-produced music tailored to a marketable structure. The Beatles gave budding musicians a more humanised, grass-roots prototype of the makeup of a band.

Both Norman Smith, the Beatles' first sound engineer, and Glynn Johns, the Beatles' recording engineer on the Get Back/Let It Be recordings, laboured to change stringent studio techniques to produce live-sounding recordings. Norman Smith dared to move the acoustic panels (gobos) that divided the instruments and vocalists so he could emulate the sound of a live band. He dared to place microphones in positions that were frowned upon by studio executives. The Beatles' producer George Martin also broke from tradition when he made all the Beatles the focal point, instead of an individual singer backed by the other musicians in the band. Despite Glynn Johns' persistence at producing live-sounding studio recordings, his mixes were all rejected by the Beatles. Johns recently strongly criticised modern recording techniques, and he sent shockwaves through the recording industry when he made

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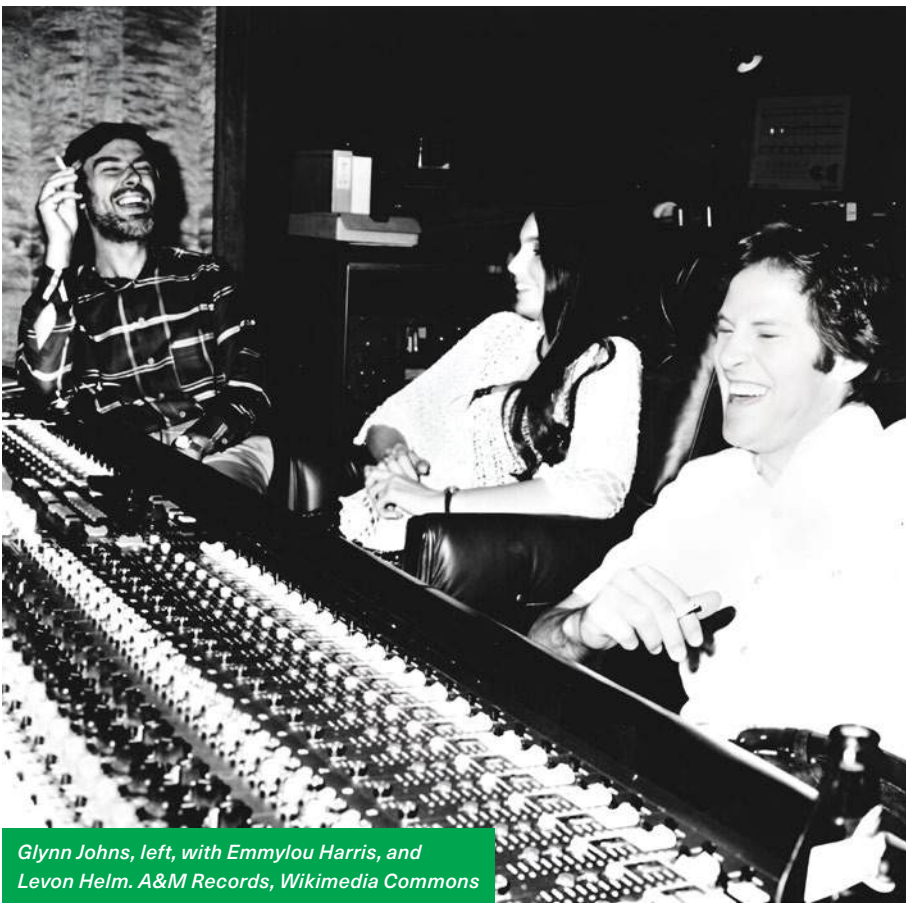
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Glynn Johns, left, with Emmylou Harris, and Levon Helm. A&M Records, Wikimedia Commons

derogatory comments about SSL mixing consoles, such as those installed at Abbey Road Studios. "I think they're diabolical. I hate the sound of them; they're overly complicated, unnecessarily so," he said.

I hadn't seen the Let It Be film since I sat in an Auckland picture theatre in 1970, but Peter Jackson's 2021 Get Back release illustrated that some things hadn't really changed all that much. The bane of my life has long been themed 60s and 70s parties where people dress like freaks, thinking that's the way we all dressed back then. The Get Back footage showed that you could walk down the street today with the same hairstyle and the same attire that the Beatles wore in the doco, and you wouldn't get a second glance. You will also see the same instruments, like Fender amps, Ludwig drums, and Fender and Rickenbacker guitars, used today in recording studios. The control room with its outdated mixing console and tape machines is a bit of a giveaway in the Get Back flick, but Glynn Johns, who has mixed sound and produced groups including the Rolling Stones and Led Zeppelin, maintains that he still uses the same dinosaur mixing consoles and edits analogue recordings on quarter-inch tape at 15 IPS.

Over the years I have embraced some technological changes and rejected others, but have I embraced the digital and AI evolution? Well, I do all my recording on a multichannel DAW via my Yamaha AG06 mixer, which is a little gem. It's not purely an analogue mixer; it's a hybrid digital/analogue mixer with high-quality preamps and a USB audio interface. I use a digital NLE (non linear editor) for my videos, and I have a Veo 3 subscription to generate AI video clips to give some of my old songs a new lease of life.

One of the main reasons I transitioned from PA hire to installation and entertainment management in the mid-80s was to avoid the heavy lugging (and, of course, the unruly drunken punters). It makes sense to have powered composite speaker enclosures rather than lugging heavy amp racks and monstrous bins up several flights of stairs in venues that don't have elevators. But apart from that, if I get the chance to mix my son's future band in a live venue, I'll most certainly go with my existing analogue mixer and other equipment that hasn't changed all that much in the past 30 years.

But would it make sense to regress to inferior antiquated equipment? I'd rather be a goat herder in Siberia than go back to tape for recording, and how far back would I go to embrace an antiquated analogue mixing console? The answer is, not too far because there have been major improvements in microphone pre-amplifiers and EQ. We all loved Jands equipment in the 70s and 80s, and the company has transitioned into a distributor of high-end audio, video, and lighting technologies. But that doesn't mean I'm out scouting for another of my once-owned 1978 Jands 12-channel JM5 mixing consoles.



Jands JM5 mixing console



My mothballed PA system

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