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2026
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Barcelona
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2026
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THE NZICC CELEBRATES
OPENING

Regulars

ANDY STEWART: THE
PRODUCTIVITY PARADOX
BRIAN COLEMAN - WHEN
OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS
JOHN O'BRIEN ON
STAGECRAFT, THE
ARTFORM



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THE STAGING ISSUE

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2026 STAGING AND EVENT TRENDS YOU NEED TO KNOW
THE P.A. PEOPLE DELIVER AT WAAPA
STEP UP YOUR STAGE WITH DESIGN QUINTESSENCE

GTX Melbourne 2026


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HARRY THE HIRER PRODUCTIONS MAKES

LARGE ROBE iFORTE INVESTMENT

Leading rental company Harry the hirer Productions (HtH) has invested in 80 Robe iFORTES, which have been added to its extensive lighting rental stock.

These fixtures will be used mainly for the company's touring and event-based work and will travel between HtH's three large branches in Melbourne, Sydney, and Brisbane. The fixtures were delivered via Robe ANZ, part of distributor LSC Control Systems, which is the new distribution setup for Robe in the ANZ area, headed by Darren McLanders.

Harry the hirer Productions' General Manager Simon Finlayson explained that, as a business, they like to trailblaze trends but were also acutely aware of mature products in demand, particularly in the US, so they were keen to get a fixture that was being regularly specified on international riders, and therefore able to help generate its own demand. They were also searching generally for a long throw profile fixture.

After considering all the options, iFORTE was identified as the best current option for brightness and longevity, confirmed Simon, adding that their calculations are based on at least three years of constant work to get the full ROI, going up to a lifespan of ideally six years for full value.

They knew from previous Robe purchases that the kit is built to last. Versatility of a fixture is also considered when calculating ROI, which was another plus point for the iFORTE, as the fixture is equally applicable to both event and touring sectors.

Much of Harry the hirer Productions' work involves supplying the international artists on the Australasian leg of their tour and they also service numerous large and high-profile business and major events.

"We put time and money into the research of our investments, and also consult our international connections, so we know what is happening in

the US, the UK and Europe, which is where a lot of the touring specs tend to start. This is another good indicator of what we should be purchasing," stated Simon.

Eddie Welsh, General Manager of the New South Wales branch, adds that the iFORTE's IP65 rating was important, given that a substantial amount of their concert and major event work is outdoors. He notes that not having to pressurise the unit is another big bonus, helping to reduce maintenance time and increasing the pace of the turnarounds, which they like to be fast-and-furious as well as thorough.

"The lumens-per-kilo ratio is another consideration," stated Eddie, with roof weight loading often restricted in venues. Eddie thinks that the crisp iFORTE output over the long zoom ranges was impressive and great for both their rock 'n' roll and event/corporate work.

Harry the hirer Productions' iFORTES have been out constantly since they were delivered by Robe ANZ, which is of course the ideal scenario.

50 iFORTES were recently used by lighting designer Ziggy Ziegler of ZZ Creative Australia on a project for a major Australian bank at the ICC Sydney, as part of a lighting rig comprising 250 static and moving LED lights, primarily rigged on overhead trusses.

The event combined an environmental technology expo with plenary sessions, breakout rooms and product demonstrations, played out in a contemporary theatrical setting. From the bushland of Australia and naturalistic feel of the plenary to the waterfall-inspired breakout room with transparent, mesh walls allowing guests to see into the room when it was in session, it was an event that combined theatrical display with technology-driven lighting and lots of internally lit free-standing walls and set pieces, for which the iFORTES were the main workhorses.

"It was simple to assign multiple tasks to the iFORTES," explained Ziggy. Some were utilised for

a specifically focused front light stage wash using the inbuilt shutter system with soft focus ability, and these same units double purposed as chair and fireside chat specials and speech spots, being repositioned and refocused throughout the day.

"The brightness was amazing – we mostly ran them at around 60 per cent – and they worked well juxtaposed against the projection surfaces in the room," he added.

A large group of iFORTES were used to create effects, gobo washes, set lighting and shutter specials with light colour tints to suit each stand in the expo. One fixture was bright and flexible enough to create a wide zoned, focused gobo floor wash, and also tight focus onto signage, which made patching, system design and maintenance simple and straightforward.

Another group of the iFORTES were used as effects lights in the waterfall-themed breakout room, creating curiosity and magic in the space, together with low fog and water sound effects. The waterfall was created with projection, and Ziggy reports that the iFORTE colour temperature adjustment enabled accurate and even colour correction to match the waterfall.

This was Ziggy's first time using iFORTES: "I was delighted with the results, very much enjoyed using them and look forward to the next time."

Simon and Eddie both feel that Robe is a solid brand that they can trust.

They appreciate the fact that the company is co-owned and headed up by Josef Valchar, who is an engineer and himself right at the heart of the product design.

"You can see that these lighting products are designed by a lighting engineer who is passionate about his products, who understands the fundamentals of lighting and who is tuned in to what lighting designers and rental companies want," he concluded.

IS SERIES: PERFORMANCE INSTALLATION, TOURING SYSTEM INSPIRED.



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NEXO announces new distribution partners in Australia

Part of the Yamaha group of companies, French pro sound innovators NEXO have announced new arrangements for the distribution of their products in Australia.

Effective April 1 2026, distribution will be shared by three existing NEXO dealers in the country, each with extensive experience in supplying and supporting NEXO customers working in a range of applications, and now each with direct, distributor-level access to sales and technical support from NEXO's French-based HQ.

“Alongside growing NEXO’s presence in Australia, our absolute priority is to continue the high levels of support that NEXO users there already enjoy, which is why we’re partnering with companies that have a proven track record of supplying NEXO systems with excellent reputations for technical service,” comments NEXO Asia Sales Manager Joe White.

The three new NEXO distribution partners in Australia are Factory Sound with locations in Melbourne and Sydney, Gold Coast-based Captivate AV, and the LSV Group, headquartered in Melbourne.

Commenting on the new partnership, Factory Sound General Manager Artie Jones says; “We purchased our first PS8/10/15 systems for the Factory Sound store in 2004. Over the following 20-plus years, we have watched NEXO grow in Australia, being adopted by many production companies, integrators, and owner-operators.

“Factory Sound is very proud to be able to continue the good work started in Australia by Group Technologies, and we look forward to continuing to supply and support the many existing and new potential NEXO customers in Australia in the future.”

For Captivate AV, Managing Director Chris Lang comments; “For the past 10 years, we have used NEXO products exclusively for our high-end audio solutions in both fixed installations and in our rental inventory. NEXO’s extensive range and modularity between series has enabled us to deploy countless creative solutions, exceeding expectations in every scope and scale. Now moving into a new phase of distributorship, we

are excited to share our breadth of experience and passion for the NEXO brand with existing dealers and new prospective dealers, integrators and rental houses around Queensland and beyond.”

At the LSV Group, Brands Manager Andrew Stanley says; “NEXO’s reputation for precision engineering and worldclass professional audio fits naturally with our group’s longstanding commitment to the Australian market, with NEXO forming a core part of our audio strategy across touring, live events and installed sound for many years. LSV Group is proud to be appointed as an Australian distribution partner for NEXO and looks forward to working in close collaboration with NEXO HQ and alongside our friends and colleagues at Factory Sound and Captivate AV, to further strengthen NEXO’s long term presence and customer support across Australia.”

The new NEXO distribution partners in Australia can be contacted via their respective websites:

factorysound.com
captivateav.com.au
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ENTECH features new immersive Audio and Vision Demo Experiences at ALL 2026 events

ENTECH has announced yet another first with the launch of new immersive Audio and Vision Demo Experiences at its roadshow events for AV and entertainment technology professionals that visit every major population centre in Australia and New Zealand, kicking off in May this year.

ENTECH CEO Kate McKenzie explained, “Following feedback from exhibitors and visitors, we have upgraded all of our 2026 venues to deliver fully enclosed, controlled environments where it matters most. This means natural or ambient light will be maximised for demonstration potential and critically will help focus on our new, dedicated and immersive Audio and Vision Demo Experience areas.”

The 2026 ENTECH program places a strong focus on venues that support high-impact audio and vision demonstrations allowing technology to be experienced exactly as it was designed.

McKenzie added, “These venue improvements underpin the introduction of our new, dedicated and immersive Audio and Vision Demo Zones which run throughout the day at every ENTECH event in Australia and New Zealand. These dedicated zones enable ENTECH 2026 to move away from the old side-by-side comparisons in favour of structured, exhibitor-led demonstrations giving attendees the very best possible experiences.”

Within the new Audio and Vision Demo Zones each participating brand is allocated a scheduled, standalone demo slot, promoted to the public ahead of the show, ensuring ultra-focused engagement with interested audiences.

Live sound technology continues to evolve rapidly and the new Audio Demo Zones reflect that pace of change. Exhibitors

will have dedicated live audio time to demonstrate system performance, design philosophy and key features.

Sensible Sound Pressure Level (SPL) limits will be in place to ensure impactful demonstrations while maintaining a comfortable environment across the wider tradeshow floor.

The dedicated Vision Demo Zones will encompass the latest LED video walls, display screens and lighting technologies. These zones are specifically designed to showcase brightness, colour accuracy, contrast, resolution, motion and creative effects in optimal conditions.

Kate McKenzie concluded, “With all 2026 venues now fully enclosed and light-controlled, exhibitors can demonstrate visual performance without interference from daylight, whether presenting large-format LED walls, display technologies, or integrated lighting elements. Vision exhibitors will present in the same structured, non-competitive format as audio, with timetabled demo slots and a presentation and support area on stage alongside their equipment.”

The upgraded venues and new immersive Audio and Vision Demo Zones represent a significant evolution of the ENTECH Roadshow and tradeshow experience delivering clearer, fairer and more immersive demonstrations for exhibitors and a richer, more informative event for visitors and attendees.

The ENTECH Roadshows are the only mobile trade shows for AV and entertainment technology professionals. They will visit Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth in May 2026, Auckland and Wellington in July 2026 and Christchurch in August 2026.

ENTECH Roadshow is space limited and for information on any remaining opportunities go to: www.entech-roadshow.com



Blackmagicdesign

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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!

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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.

**ATEM Mini
Extreme ISO G2**
\$3,109



Learn more at www.blackmagicdesign.com/au



PRISM SOUND

Prism Sound appoints Amber Technology as distribution partner for Australia and New Zealand

Prism Sound is pleased to announce the appointment of Amber Technology Pty Ltd as its official distribution partner for Australia and New Zealand. This appointment reflects Prism Sound's continued commitment to working with partners who understand the importance of accuracy, reliability, and long-term product support. Amber Technology's experienced team brings extensive expertise in broadcast and major infrastructure projects, alongside excellent access to professional audio markets across studios, education, and post-production. Its recent increased focus and investment in professional audio aligns well with Prism Sound's values and ambitions in the region.

Mark Evans, International Sales Director, Prism Sound, said, "We're thrilled to be working with Amber Technology, a highly respected company with an outstanding reputation across the professional audio, broadcast, infrastructure, and education markets. Its depth of expertise, nationwide coverage, and strong technical culture makes it an excellent partner for Prism Sound as we continue to support and grow our presence across Australia and New Zealand."

Amber Technology's established presence in broadcast and large-format system design makes it a particularly strong partner for Prism Sound's flagship DREAM ADA-128, where absolute transparency, scalability, and dependable long-term performance are essential. At the same time, its growing engagement with the professional audio community presents an exciting opportunity to further expand awareness and adoption of Prism Sound converters across a broad range of applications.

Peter Amos, Managing Director at Amber Technology said, "We are proud to partner with Prism Sound, a brand that is globally respected for its uncompromising approach to accuracy, reliability, and long-term performance. Our team brings deep experience in broadcast and major infrastructure projects, and we see a strong alignment between Prism Sound's values and our continued investment in professional audio. From large-scale deployments to expanding engagement across studios, education, and post-production, this partnership represents an exciting opportunity to deliver world-class conversion solutions to the Australian market."

Amber Technology will represent the full Prism Sound product range and will provide local sales, technical support, and customer service across Australia and New Zealand. Customers in the region can expect knowledgeable consultation, strong after-sales support, and closer access to Prism Sound's products and expertise.

DPA Microphones, Wisycom and Austrian Audio, join the Audiotonix mix

Audiotonix has announced its agreement to acquire three pioneering microphone and wireless audio companies to complement its current roster of global technology brands: DPA Microphones, Wisycom, and Austrian Audio. The acquisition is now being filed for regulatory approval.

With more than six decades of world-class Danish microphone design experience, DPA Microphones creates mics with exceptional sound, consistency and durability for a range of professional markets including live sound, theatre, film, and installation.

As a global leader in designing and manufacturing advanced wireless audio solutions, Italian company Wisycom provides industry-leading solutions to demanding customers' RF challenges across broadcast, live events, corporate and location sound, among other applications.

Vienna-based Austrian Audio delivers reliable and innovative microphones, headphones and audio tools while maintaining a strong connection to the brand's acoustical heritage.

All three brands now join the growing Audiotonix brand portfolio of leading audio technology and solutions companies that includes Allen & Heath, Calrec, DiGiCo, DiGiGrid, Fourier Audio, Group One Limited, Harrison, JH Audio, KLANG:technologies, Slate Digital, Solid State Logic, sonible, and Sound Devices.

"With the development work we have been investing in with Sound Devices, it makes technological sense to add Wisycom to the

team. The next logical step is to move closer to the performer with microphones, and DPA as a premium brand is the ultimate choice. Austrian Audio, with their decades of microphone and headset design experience, have immense potential and will help complement our existing and future portfolio. We always aim to work with brands that add value for our customers, and the future potential of this trio as part of Audiotonix is not hard to imagine," states James Gordon, CEO of Audiotonix.

Kalle Hvidt Nielsen, CEO at DPA Microphones, comments, "DPA Microphones, Wisycom, and Austrian Audio are premium brands known for their strong and visionary product offering, used by many high-end customers who are familiar with all the Audiotonix brands. We share many location sound professionals with Sound Devices who rely on best-in-class audio quality and top-notch reliability and so by joining Audiotonix, DPA Microphones, Wisycom, and Austrian Audio get the opportunity to offer more premium solutions to discerning, quality focused customers." Kalle concludes, "The synergy across the brands enhances the group's capacity to deliver substantial advantages to all professional customers who demand the best. I look forward to more collaboration and moving the state-of-the-art forward in new verticals."



WISYCOM



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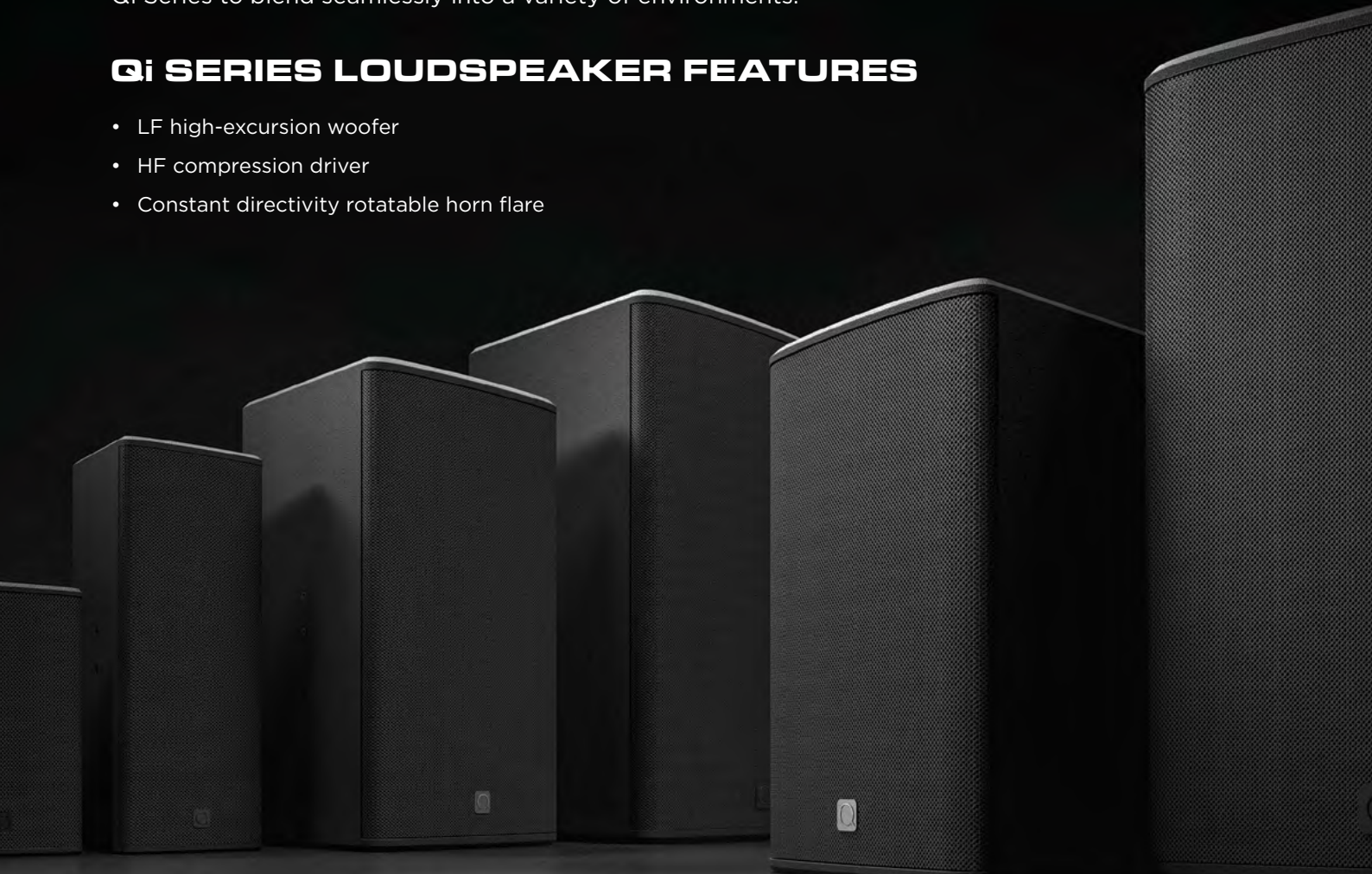


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AVOLITES CELEBRATES 50 YEARS!

Avolites, the British lighting and media control pioneer, has marked its landmark 50th anniversary with the launch of an exclusive Golden Console Competition and the release of the Avo50 Ambassador programme.

To celebrate five decades of empowering creativity that has helped style the look and feel of live entertainment lighting and visuals worldwide, Avolites kicks off a series of initiatives that will run throughout the year, including the opportunity to win a one-of-a-kind 24-carat gold plated Avolites console.

Founded in 1976, Avolites was built on a simple but powerful idea: that creative people deserve tools that are fast, flexible, and built for the realities of live performance.

Today, Avolites is among the most trusted names in professional lighting and media control, and its products are used in all performance scenarios, from the most intimate and innovative experimental theatre productions to the world's biggest tours, festivals, and broadcast events.

At every stage of its journey, Avolites has focused on one thing: serving the people behind the control desk...

This commitment to lighting and visual designers, programmers, and operators who turn technology into moments and experiences that move audiences, has driven decades of invention. From groundbreaking control workflows to the



integration of lighting and video, Avolites helps creatives tell richer and more ambitious visual stories.

“50 years is an extraordinary milestone, and what truly matters is the community behind it,” stated Avolites CEO Nikki Scott.

“Avolites exists because of the designers, programmers, technicians, and partners who have trusted us with their creativity for half a century. This anniversary is a celebration of them: of their talent, passion, visions, imagination, and all the incredible shows they bring to life every day.”

A year of celebration begins

The 50th anniversary has launched with a series of global initiatives designed to celebrate both Avolites' past and its future.

At ISE in Barcelona, Avolites unveiled the Golden Console Competition, a high-profile campaign created to energise and connect the global Avolites community throughout the year.

Alongside this, Avolites is introducing its Avo50 Ambassadors: fifty influential designers,

programmers, and operators who will be revealed over the next 10 months. Their stories, experiences, and achievements will be shared through interviews, video content, and social media, putting the spotlight on the people who are truly defining the Avolites brand.

These initiatives will be joined by a wide range of anniversary activity, including a time capsule project, archive features, and special content reflecting the people, products, and moments that have shaped Avolites over five decades.

Built on people, driven by innovation

So much has changed in the industry over 50 years, but as Avolites looks ahead to its next chapter, the mission remains clear: to collaborate with creative professionals and provide them with the tools they need to push boundaries, tell stories, and create memorable experiences.

“This anniversary isn't about looking back with nostalgia,” added Nikki, “It's about recognising what we've built together and using that momentum to shape the future. We're incredibly proud of where Avolites has come from and even more excited about the years ahead.”

ETC Welcomes Pharos to the Family and Expands Warranty Coverage



ETC has announced the acquisition of longtime collaborator, Pharos Architectural Controls (Pharos). Pharos is a UK-based developer and manufacturer of dynamic lighting control systems used in architectural, themed entertainment, and large-scale visual installations. This investment builds on more than two decades of partnership between ETC and Pharos whose 21-year history of innovation, reliability, and customer-first service has played a central role in the evolution of ETC's architectural product line.

As the designer and manufacturer behind ETC's Mosaic product family, Pharos has long shared ETC's culture of agile development, exceptional support, and dedication to product excellence. ETC's CEO Dick Titus said; “We look forward to growing our long-standing partnership with Pharos. Their in-house development

team continues to push the boundaries of dynamic lighting control, and their work will further strengthen ETC's offerings in the global architectural lighting market.”

Pharos' extensive market presence and robust sales network across EMEA and APAC positions ETC for enhanced growth worldwide. The highly respected Pharos brand gives ETC a powerful complementary platform to accelerate growth and broaden market reach.

Pharos will continue to operate as a stand-alone company. All existing sales and service relationships with Pharos will continue as normal and they will maintain their strong supply and licensing partnerships. Simon Hicks, Pharos CEO, said, “This is an exciting new chapter for Pharos and a fantastic opportunity for the team and our

product. ETC provides a long-term home for the company, ensuring continuity of service for our customers, and we can now tap into a wealth of resources to help us accelerate our ambitious product development roadmap.”

ETC Announces Expanded 5-Year Warranty

As of January 1, 2026, the vast majority of the ETC portfolio is covered by a minimum 5-year warranty. This includes but is not limited to the following product families: Eos, Hog, fos/4, Desire, Irideon, Source Four, Mosaic, ColorSource V, ArcSystem, Echo, Echoflex, Sensor, F-Drive, Foundation, Prodigy, Response, Mosaic, Paradigm, and ColorSource.

Automated lights will now receive an additional year of coverage, increasing from two to three years, with a 5-year warranty on the LED array.

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NEXSTAGE CELEBRATES



NORWOOD FOOD & WINE FESTIVAL - PHOTO CREDIT DAVID SOLM

A DECADE

10 years ago, motivated by the availability of local industry stalwart Jimmy Hewton-Lamph, a group of events and production professionals decided to embark on building a staging and rigging business in Adelaide with a large focus on safety, compliance and high-quality standards. The gap in the market they identified proved to be fruitful indeed, and the company grew exponentially. After the trials of the COVID years, they thrived again, and now Nexstage are celebrating a decade in business, looking back on their achievements while keeping a keen eye on growth and expansion.

Nexstage's General Manager Michael Scheid was at the helm of the company for the first four years and returned to the job in 2024. I sat down with him to discuss the creation and ethos of Nexstage, and where they're heading in the next 10 years.

"We started Nexstage partly because Adelaide production company Novatech had been looking for a staging provider they could rely on," relates Michael. "They just wanted everything to be in place; sturdy safe, engineered, ready to go, and presentable. When we formed Nexstage, it was Jimmy with the same directors as Novatech, and the same overall direction, but run as separate companies."

With Michael in place as General Manager, the first job was to get the business running. "We had a book of work that Jimmy Hewton-Lamph, had brought with him," continues Michael. "We then grew from there, from our first season. We started in November 2016 and by the end of the next summer, we had doubled in size, and then we doubled again. The first few years were a wild ride!"

Nexstage's wild ride extended way beyond SA, with shows in Perth, Darwin, Sydney, and Melbourne,

as well as in Adelaide, all within 12 months. "Overseeing that kind of growth while making sure our systems, safety, and engineering developed and held together was quite the task," admits Michael. "When a business grows that quickly, it's a challenge to keep everything on track. We put an emphasis on how we conduct ourselves and how we deal with our clients, and to maintain that culture, everybody needs to be on the same page. When we ballooned out to 80 staff over summer, systems to induct people quickly and safely had to be in place, to ensure that we kept delivering consistent results; consistency is the big win."

After the years of pandemic restrictions receded and business slowly returned to normal, Nexstage's relationships with their clients solidified, and took on a deeper form. "We're regarded as a trusted partner now, rather than just a staging provider," explains Michael. "We're often brought in on the ground floor of client projects to help with design. Our skills are leaned upon when people are designing venues; we've recently been involved with an arts installation, consulting with them on their roof structure. We're also a trusted partner at Adelaide Oval. We've had a lot of comments to the effect that customers can always



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PRISMSOUND CONVERSION

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TONES & I - PHOTO CREDIT DAVID SOLM

rely on us, we're always here, we always deliver, and we've never let anybody down."

Continuing to grow means continuing to expand inventory, and one of the latest purchases is a 10 metre by six metre mobile trailer stage, joining two eight metre by six metre trailer stages already in stock.

"We invested in our first trailer stage for the Santos Tour Down Under, and that's been in use for podium finishes at the race for the last six years," confirms Michael. "For all of our trailer stages, we have multiple capabilities in terms of branding and signage to make them look completely different for every event. In their basic form, they're an hour set up with two staff, which is a far cry from four staff in a truck with scaff and decks. They really hit the mark with small to mid-sized community level events. The new 10 by six stage is being deployed on gigs up to 8,000 pax at a much cheaper price point than traditional staging."

"The general challenge in the staging space is making an affordable product that's got impact," continues Michael. "Cost effectiveness is the key, because everybody's getting crunched. To get events actually making a buck at the end of the day, they need to be able to push costs down. We've got products that meet those demands. We can also upscale them with scaff towers either side, signage, wings, and rear change-over; they're really versatile."

While the trailers find opportunity with sharp budgets, Nexstage are also working the premium end of the market. "We've got some huge sporting activations that we're doing with LIV Golf," says Michael. "We've incorporated a new engineered system of glass balustrading for premium VIP viewing platforms. We do a lot of premium cladding and custom works, making turnkey solutions for our clients. We produce renders so clients can see what the end product will look like.



PHOTO CREDIT DAVID SOLM



LIV GOLF 2025 - PHOTO CREDIT DAVID SOLM



PHOTO CREDIT DAVID SOLM



FIFA FESTIVAL - PHOTO CREDIT DAVID SOLM



GLUTTONY - PHOTO CREDIT DAVID SOLM



PHOTO CREDIT DAVID SOLM

We have our own in-house drafters and engineers that help put it all together."

Taking stock of where they've been while considering where they're going, Michael is sanguine; "We've gone through massive growth, we've gone through rebirth after COVID, and we've re-engineered how we go about our delivery," muses Michael. "We're now a company that can deliver two decks for a corporate gig, right up to staging a major music festival, and service everywhere in between.

Now growing well beyond being an 'Adelaide' staging company, Nexstage are often called upon by their clients to assist in other parts of the country; "We're fortunate to have a large presence in the local market, everybody knows us, and we're well trusted," Michael divulges. "We're not embarking on an interstate expansion campaign as we're happy with the focus and growth locally. However, due to our unique service offerings, high quality products, safety, compliance and customer service, there are some clients that do take us interstate for unique projects. We see ourselves as a complementary offering to those in our industry and are proud to stand alongside them in continuing to innovate for clients who are looking for fully engineered, safe and creative staging solutions."



LANEWAY FESTIVAL 2023 - PHOTO CREDIT MACLAY-HERIOT

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ALPHA THETA RMX-IGNITE EFFECTOR

RMX-IGNITE is the new generation effector from Alpha Theta. It combines dynamic sound-shaping control with advanced effects, such as a 3-band FX section equipped with 2 types of effects: Lever FX, and Isolate FX. The sampler section comes preloaded with 20 royalty free samples from Loopcloud and has 4 sample trigger pads with white LEDs. In Overdub mode, users can record and loop samples in 1-bar phrases, layering multiple sounds to build dynamic progressions within a track. Samples triggered with the pads can be rolled in 10 rhythmic patterns. The sampler section also features 6 dedicated effects (Echo, Space, Filter, Pitch, Decay, Swing), controllable with a single knob. PRO DJ LINK is supported for precise beatmatching. The RMX-IGNITE supports digital send/return connections with the DJM-A9 and DJM-V10 mixers by connecting a USB cable to the MULTI I/O terminal on a compatible mixer.

Australia: Jands jands.com.au 02 9582 0909

CROWN COMTECH D SERIES AMPLIFIERS

Crown ComTech D Series Amplifiers come with Dante inputs and outputs, built-in DSP, power sharing, Lo-Z/Hi-Z switching, and a web configuration interface. All models support 125W per channel with power sharing of up to 250W in the 2-channel model, 500W in the 4-channel model, and 500W x 2 in the 8-channel mode. They are all 1RU for installation and racking. CTD-2125 is the two-channel, ½ rack width unit. CTD-4125 is also ½ rack width but four-channel. CTD-8125 uses full rack width for its eight channels.

Australia: MadisonAV madisonav.com.au 1800 436 378
New Zealand: JPRO jpro.co.nz 09 275 8710



NEW GEAR

ELATION MAGMA PRIME TOUR FAZER

Engineered for professional touring, live productions, and permanent installations, the Magma Prime Tour uses a water-based fazer system to produce a high volume of continuous, ultra-fine haze. The 1350W heater reaches full operational readiness in 20 seconds and outputs 20,000 cubic feet per minute (CFM) of dry haze. A 5.6 litre fluid reservoir is consumed at a rate of approximately 10ml per minute. Magma Prime has DMX-Activated Sleep Mode, allowing users to reduce power consumption when the fazer is not in use, and without unplugging the unit. A variety of remote-control options include Aria X2 Wireless DMX Module.

Australia: ULA Group ulagroup.com 1300 852 476
New Zealand: ULA Group ulagroup.com 09 218 6532



QSYS INTEGRATION WITH SERVICENOW

QSC's integration with ServiceNow and its AI Platform is designed to help customers streamline AV and IT workflows. The collaboration automates the flow of AV system data into ServiceNow, supporting applications such as IT Service Management (ITSM) and IT Asset Management (ITAM). This bridge assists automatically generated support tickets from AV system events, AV inventory updates within ServiceNow, reduced training requirements for IT support teams, and improved operational efficiency and responsiveness.

Australia: Technical Audio Group
tag.com.au 02 9009 4322
New Zealand: NSL Group Ltd
nsl.co.nz 09 913 6212



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NEW GEAR



RF VENUE 4 ZONE-NETWORK

4 ZONE-Network adds network control for remote monitoring and configuration of wireless audio. It is a distributed antenna system combiner for wireless mics. It achieves that by combining four diversity antenna pairs into one A and B output, using a web interface for status checks, zone control, and configuration. 4 ZONE-Network aims to improve coverage by eliminating dropouts or dead spots as presenters move between zones. It allows monitoring and adjustment of antenna systems in physically separate areas. The 4ZONE-NET-DARC Antenna Bundle Includes (1) 4ZONE-NETWORK and (4) D-ARC antennas.

Australia: Jands
Jands.com.au 02 9582 0909
New Zealand: JPRO
jpro.co.nz 09 275 8710

JBL INTELLIVOX COLUMNS

Intellivox Column speakers are designed for sound reinforcement and public address in large or reverberant spaces. They use multiple high-quality drivers with advanced DSP and integrated multi-channel amplifiers to enable precise digital beam shaping. Intellivox supports Dante and analog audio inputs alongside IP control connectivity. Built-in redundancy and status monitoring aid with robust installations. Eight different configurations are available over three categories. DS series cover basic PA and speech reproduction. DSX series uses extended frequency ranges (130Hz - 18kHz). HP-DS series are IP rated for outdoors and use larger drivers for higher SPL levels.

Australia: MadisonAV
madisonav.com.au 1800 00 77 80
New Zealand: JPRO
jpro.co.nz 09 275 8710

MA LIGHTING GRANDMA3 ONPC DMX-KEY

The grandMA3 onPC DMX-key from MA Lighting turns your PC into a lighting console. It offers 4,096 parameters via USB-C connection to grandMA3 onPC software. The DMX-key can simply be connected to a PC that has the free grandMA3 onPC software installed and it is ready for use. It is targeted at small venues and installation designers. A trimmed down version is also available - grandMA3 onPC DMX-key starter offers 1,024 parameters via two DMX outputs, for entry level MA programmers.

Australia: Show Technology
showtech.com.au 02 9748 1122
New Zealand: Show Technology
showtech.com.au 09 869 3293





HIGH END SYSTEMS LONESTAR PRIME FRAMING FIXTURE

High End Systems Lonestar Prime is a framing fixture with IP54 rating. It is 20 percent brighter than the original Lonestar with improved colour rendering. A new CTO flag also gives users a wider range of bright white points. Nine rotating and 10 fixed gobos can be combined with continuously rotating animation and dual prisms. Lonestar Prime also features framing shutters and dual frosts that function without optical adjustment or conflict. There is an optional RigPOV camera accessory, to stream live video right from the fixture. It also supports manual followspot operation.

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The New Zealand International Convention Centre

NZICC OPENING CEREMONY

is officially open!

The New Zealand International Convention Centre (NZICC) has officially opened, marking a significant achievement for Auckland and New Zealand's business events, culture, and tourism landscape.

At first light on 11 February 2026, SkyCity held its ceremonial opening of the NZICC, led by Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei, who bestowed a formal acknowledgement of the deep connection between people and place. Starting with an official ribbon cutting, led by Prime Minister Christopher Luxon, formally opening New Zealand's largest convention centre.

Prime Minister Christopher Luxon said: "The opening of the NZICC is a proud moment for Auckland and for New Zealand. It's a significant investment in our economy, creating jobs, attracting international visitors, and supporting growth across tourism, hospitality, and local businesses. Just as importantly, it's a place built for people. It is where ideas are shared, relationships are formed, and communities connect. NZICC strengthens New Zealand's ability to compete globally while delivering benefits that will be felt by Aucklanders and New Zealanders for generations to come."

The following evening, 12 February 2026, the NZICC welcomed its first guests for a celebration event attended by 700 leaders, dignitaries, and partners. This event marked NZICC's first major activation and showcased the scale and atmosphere of the new venue through light, art, and performance.

'Helios', a six-metre sun sculpture by British artist Luke Jerram presented at an approximate scale of 1:230 million, illuminated Arika Hall. It was

showcased alongside Iwi Rau (Many Leaves, One Canopy) a stained-glass installation by artist Sara Hughes inspired by Tāne Mahuta and the forests of Aotearoa. Te Paepae Theatre hosted its first performances with an array of entertainment including kapa haka group Te Whare Karioi, the Auckland Youth Choir and a surprise performance by none other than Six60.

Jason Walbridge, CEO of SkyCity, said: "Seeing the NZICC open its doors and welcome its first guests was a defining moment for Auckland and New Zealand. The NZICC is more than a venue, it is a catalyst for growth. Every event will generate activity that reaches far beyond its walls, supporting local businesses, strengthening regional economies, and creating lasting value for New Zealand."

Renè de Monchy, CEO of Tourism New Zealand, added; "The NZICC plays an important role in positioning New Zealand as a world-class conference and exhibition destination. It gives us the capability to welcome the world in a whole new way and plays an important role in accelerating international visitor arrivals for the Auckland region, and beyond. The NZICC is predicted to attract 33,000 international visitors annually, and those visitors are crucial for sharing knowledge, building global connections, supporting businesses and driving vibrancy and growth."



PRUE DALY



KINGI MAKOARE

Designed by Warren and Mahoney, Moller Architects, and Woods Bagot, the \$750 million, purpose-built centre has been designed with accessibility, flexibility, and inclusivity. With 33 meeting spaces, a 2,850-seat theatre, and the capacity to host more than 4,000 delegates, NZICC is equipped to deliver everything from international summits and trade exhibitions to concerts and cultural events.

John Coop, Managing Director at Warren and Mahoney added: “The building’s design is the product of collaboration and ambition from fellow architects, specifiers, builders, engineers, and artists – at a scale never before seen in Tāmaki Makaurau. We’re proud to have led the design of a project that demonstrates the power of social infrastructure to transform cities, and create meaningful experiences for those within them.”

The NZICC is expected to generate more than \$90 million in new economic activity each year, reinforcing Auckland’s position as a premier global events destination.

Prue Daly, General Manager of NZICC, concluded: “Opening the NZICC is a moment for Auckland and New Zealand to come together. It represents years of collaboration, creativity, and careful planning from everyone involved. I want to acknowledge and sincerely thank our incredible NZICC team and partners whose passion, resilience and commitment have brought this vision to life. We’re proud to welcome the world through these doors and look forward to the incredible events and experiences ahead.”



JASON WALBRIDGE, MARAMA ROYAL, CHRISTOPHER LUXON AND WAYNE BROWN



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THE NZICC

Opening Celebration

It was more than we had expected, as 700 invited guests walked into the exhibition hall void on February 12, framed in controlled gloom. At the far end of the vast new space sat a huge stage-effect sphere art installation, glowing like a sunrise, called Helios. In the calibrated, atmospheric half-dark there was a bar and a thrumming, excited crowd gathered for the very, very belated opening of what New Zealand really needs: a big-city convention centre.

It took an impossibly long time to build. In October 2019, the construction site caught fire. That, along with the pandemic, put the brakes on.

But now, here was an opening extravaganza worthy of a mighty little nation of five million. The building rises in the heart of Auckland — not the political capital, but the commercial powerhouse — adjacent to SkyCity Casino, with the new Horizon Hotel next door and other worthy stays within spitting distance.

Finally, NZ comes of (events) age, judging by the calibre of the ceremony. From the tradeshow floor and its sun, we ascend to Level 5 and enter the plenary theatre foyer. Expansive, with views across the better angles of the self-styled capital of the South Pacific. Soft planting. Calm textures. Modern aesthetic 101.

We are ushered into the plenary theatre, a convertible, multipurpose concert hall-slash-ballroom. It seats 2,852 and can be divided into two spaces.

From the entry, a laser cuts across a diagonal drape wall, signalling dawn. We spread across the flat floor and then, suddenly, a stage appears, with a Māori cultural group from Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei, the iwi, or tribe of Auckland CBD, delivering what a unified culture does best: a national greeting. In New Zealand, major moments increasingly begin this way, not as tokenism. It is simply their lived, shared reality in a country with dual language and an integrated indigenous population.



HELIOS



JASON WALBRIDGE, SKYCITY CEO



MINISTER LOUISE UPSTON



GUESTS KINGI MAKOARE (LEFT), AUCKLAND MAYOR WAYNE BROWN (CENTRE)

Opening speeches take place on an island stage, then throw, as a surprise, to the Auckland Youth Choir positioned in the upper reaches of the retracted seating system. The venue can operate, as it does tonight, flat floor or fully raked with retractable seating. Moving lights pan dramatically and precisely to the choir. Unexpected. Stunning.

They sing two numbers in Māori. Towards the end, a reveal opens at the opposite end of the venue, another moment of theatre, with the band Six60 joining the choir. A to-and-fro of voices and melody. The crowd is stunned. The sound is immaculate; kudos to in-house provider NW Group, which has six technicians assigned to the new venue.

Kate and I were deeply impressed and look forward to bringing ENTECH NZ to this stunning venue in July.



STATIONS METITA



NZICC GENERAL MANAGER PRUE DALY (CENTRE)



FOOD STATION



SIX60 WITH KAPA HAKA GROUP TE WHARE KARIOI

THE PRODUCTIVITY



ХОДАЯА

The struggle with productivity is not a personal failing but a reflection of the complex environment in which modern audio professionals operate. In a world where our tools of trade try to convince us that music-making is an assembly line, it's high time we cut ourselves some slack and reconnected with why we make music in the first place. We make music, not toasters.

From outside, music production has never looked easier. A laptop, a modest interface, a handful of plug-ins and some decent headphones can now (apparently) replicate most of the capabilities of studios that once required entire buildings and vast budgets to operate. In theory, this should mean we're currently residing in a golden age of productivity. Our tools are powerful, cheaper than ever, and endlessly flexible, and entire records can now be made without ever setting foot in a traditional recording space...

And yet, many creative professionals feel less productive than ever. Projects stall. Mixes remain unfinished. Hard drives fill with half-completed ideas and umpteen reiterations of a song structure. Despite an abundance of technology designed to streamline the production process, a persistent sense of creative gridlock has become common amongst professionals and enthusiasts alike. This contradiction isn't caused by laziness or lack of ability... it's more complicated than that. More often, it arises from a combination of psychological pressure, technological overload, economic reality, and the deeply personal nature of making music.

The Paralysis Of Possibility

One of the most significant challenges facing modern audio professionals today is the sheer number of options available. Earlier generations worked within firm constraints: limited tracks, finite studio time, expensive tape, and commonly no recall. Decisions were often made quickly and committed to permanently. Mistakes became part of the record. Limitations shaped creativity and encouraged forward motion.

Today, those boundaries have largely disappeared. Digital recording environments allow for unlimited tracks, infinite undos, and constant revision. Every sound can be replaced, every performance corrected, every mix endlessly refined. While this flexibility is technically liberating, it can also be psychologically paralyzing. When there's always another option, it becomes difficult to decide when something is finished. Songs linger in a state of perpetual revision, caught between what they are and what they might still become. But when no external forces exist to push songs over the line into the limelight, a song can curdle like a carton of milk.

Cognitive Overload

Audio production is a discipline built on thousands of small decisions. Engineers and producers constantly evaluate tone, timing, dynamics, balance, arrangement, and emotional impact. Each choice may seem minor in isolation, but collectively they demand significant mental energy.

Over long sessions, this continuous decision-making leads to cognitive fatigue. As mental resources deplete, confidence in those decisions also declines. What once felt obvious begins to feel uncertain. A vocal that sounded perfect an hour ago now feels questionable. A mix that seemed balanced suddenly appears flawed. The result is often a loop of second-guessing and revision that slows productivity and erodes satisfaction.

Unlike many technical fields, there are rarely definitive answers in music production. Most decisions are subjective and context-dependent. This ambiguity amplifies fatigue, as creators cannot rely on clear right-or-wrong outcomes. Instead, they must trust their judgement repeatedly, even as their mental clarity diminishes.

Modern musicians, producers and engineers also swim in a constant stream of information. Tutorials, plug-in reviews, production breakdowns, and social media content are available at all times in most modern studios, and while these resources can be educational and inspiring at times, they also fragment attention and create subtle pressure to keep learning rather than doing something with your precious time!

And as we all know, it's easy to spend hours watching demonstrations of new techniques or trawling the internet for free plugins that promise to solve our production problems, rather than closing up the shutters and getting something done. These activities feel productive because they're 'related' to music-making, yet they often replace the more difficult task of actually finishing projects!

Perfection Or Procrastination?

Another byproduct of our current approach to creativity, which stifles productivity as often as it supports it, is perfectionism; a pursuit that's deeply embedded in our audio culture. Engineers are trained to listen critically and correct flaws. Producers are expected to deliver professional, competitive results. Musicians often feel that each release represents their identity and reputation.

While high standards can drive excellence, perfectionism frequently becomes a barrier to completion. When the internal benchmark for quality becomes unrealistically high, no work ever feels ready. Every mix reveals new imperfections; every performance could be improved. The pursuit of flawlessness delays our upcoming releases and transforms our creative process into an endless refinement exercise. And yet ironically, most listeners outside our audio community wouldn't be able to discern one mix from another. So the question then becomes: who are these mixes really trying to impress? Not the wider public, clearly... they couldn't care less.

Economic Pressures and Fragmented Time

For many audio professionals, productivity is also closely tied to financial survival. Freelance engineers, session musicians, and independent producers often juggle multiple roles: recording, mixing, teaching, performing, maintaining equipment, managing clients, and handling administrative tasks. This fragmentation of time makes sustained creative focus difficult.

Creative work thrives on immersion and continuity, and constantly switching between tasks disrupts that flow. An engineer may spend the morning responding to emails, the afternoon troubleshooting technical issues, and the evening attempting to mix. By the time a window of uninterrupted creative space opens up, the mental energy is already depleted.

Financial pressure can also discourage experimentation, and in some cases stop the creative process dead in its tracks. When income depends on client satisfaction, risk-taking may feel unsafe. If you're producing your own work at home, popping out to the studio for the day might seem like an indulgence – particularly to your immediate family – if you're also struggling to pay the power bill. Nothing kills the creative process faster than a sense that what you're trying to achieve is a waste of precious time, or a distraction from your ability to earn a wage elsewhere.

Hopefully your music is not seen as a 'waste of time' by those around you. If it is, that is an exceedingly difficult pill to swallow – strychnine for your motivation, basically. If you're in that situation, reassessing how your creative workflow functions alongside your day-to-day commitments is something you need to address separately first.

The Isolation Booth

Advances in technology this century have made it possible to produce entire records alone that are indistinguishable from others costing more than the average house. While this independence is empowering, it can also be isolating. Without collaborators, deadlines, or external feedback, momentum can fade. There is no session start time, no studio clock, no collective energy pushing the work forward.

Isolation removes the gentle pressure that often drives completion. In collaborative environments, decisions must be made to keep the session moving. Alone, it is easy to postpone those decisions indefinitely. Collaboration also provides perspective. Another set of ears can resolve uncertainty quickly. Without that feedback loop, creators may spend hours debating choices that could be settled in minutes through conversation.

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Many audio professionals also operate in a state of chronic overwork. Long hours, irregular schedules, and the pressure to remain constantly available can lead to burnout. Unlike physical fatigue, creative burnout often manifests as apathy, procrastination, or loss of enthusiasm.

When passion becomes obligation, productivity declines. Tasks that once felt exciting begin to feel burdensome, at which point the studio becomes associated with stress rather than exploration. In this state, working harder rarely helps. What is needed instead is rest, renewal, and reconnection with the original joy of making music.

A fundamental challenge in creative professions is that productivity does not follow a predictable pattern. Some days yield remarkable progress with little effort. Others produce nothing despite intense focus. This variability can be frustrating in a culture that values consistent output and measurable results. Recognising this inconsistency not as failure, but rather an inevitable part of the creative process to be embraced, not shunned, is crucial to sustaining a career in the arts, whether it be in music or some other form of expression.

Finding The Motivation

Motivation is the quiet engine behind every meaningful piece of music ever made. Long before the first microphone is placed, the first lyric written, or the first track recorded, there exists a simple but powerful question: why am I doing this? For musicians, producers, and audio engineers, returning to that question can be confronting. If it's a difficult question to answer, it may be that you've lost contact with the reasons that got you hooked on this caper in the first place.

When productivity declines, the instinct is often to search for better tools, better systems, or stricter discipline. Yet many creative blocks are not technical problems but motivational ones. Reconnecting with the original reasons for making music can restore a sense of direction and energy.

Revisiting your internal compass can be clarifying. If, for example, your core motivation was once pure expression, then reminding yourself that not every project needs to be perfect is a good start. If it was collaboration, then perhaps it's time to acknowledge that isolation is now your main

obstacle. If it was curiosity, then routines may be stifling your ability to experiment.

Redefining Productivity

Perhaps the most useful step forward for modern audio creatives is to reconsider what productivity actually means. In creative work, productivity is not measured solely by quantity. It is measured by completion, growth, sustainability, and ultimately, happiness.

Productivity may look like everything from finishing a song 'imperfectly' to setting boundaries around endless revisions. It may involve taking breaks without guilt or allowing time for experimentation without immediate results. It may mean collaborating more, sharing unfinished ideas, or accepting that some projects will remain experiments rather than releases.

In a culture obsessed with optimisation and output, these approaches can feel counterintuitive. Yet they align more closely with the realities of creative practice. Music-making is not an assembly line. It is a process shaped by emotion, curiosity, and human connection.

When musicians, producers, and engineers allow themselves to work in ways that honour those realities, productivity becomes less about relentless output and more about meaningful completion. The pressure to constantly produce gives way to a steadier, more sustainable rhythm.

And from that place, the path forward often becomes clearer – not through forcing more output, but through reconnecting with the simple, enduring reason of why we began making music at all.

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



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ELATION

GTX 2026

GROUP TECHNOLOGIES AND L-ACOUSTICS UNVEIL SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE'S **FIRST** L-ISA AUDITORIUM



THE L-ISA AUDITORIUM

Group Technologies' in-house GTX trade event is always an excellent opportunity to network, catch up with developments in tech, and chat to the many international visitors representing their brands. Back after a year's hiatus, there were even more reasons to get to GT HQ on 25 February, including the big debut of L-Acoustics with the distributor.

The French PA manufacturer is known globally for the slick presentation of its products, with their demos and presentations harmonised and tightly on message. Part of this strategy includes a network of dedicated spaces for people to experience and work with their L-ISA spatialisation and acoustic enhancement system, dubbed L-ISA Auditorium. They're found across the world, and now for the first time, in Australia.

Group Technologies transformed an existing demonstration space at their Melbourne home over the course of four months, starting work almost immediately after taking on the distributorship. The result, with the opening celebrated at GTX, is a world-class facility that is perfect to evangelise the technology to all parts of the industry, including venue operators, artists, and producers, as well as technicians.

I came along to a scheduled L-ISA demo at GTX having been warned to get there 15 minutes early, as they were all packed to capacity. Lucky I did, because with five minutes before showtime, they were having to turn people away and tell them to come to the next one. While I have experienced L-ISA many times before, I haven't heard it in such a beautifully acoustically treated room.

The demo started by going pitch black and playing a live recording of the LA Philharmonic performing a Harry Potter overture, spatialised with L-ISA Hyperreal, their frontal localisation system. It was like being in front of a live orchestra. Other highlights included a soundscape that L-Acoustics' Daniel Lee put together on his laptop using headphones on the plane ride over from Singapore, using binaural mixing software L-ISA Studio. The finale was a live recording of British singer-songwriter Raye performing at London's Albert Hall with a full orchestra, which was mixed on L-ISA Hyperreal, showcasing just how big GT's L-ISA Auditorium can go.

Perhaps the most subtle yet powerful moment of the presentation came near the end, when the L-Acoustics staff explained that the acoustic enhancement system Ambiance had been active during their presentations, with microphones in the ceiling picking up their voices and L-ISA adjusting the volume and reverberation. They then turned it off, the room went completely dead, and they kept speaking. What had been a

pleasant natural volume of speech dropped to an unworkable level. To make the point, they turned it on and off a couple of times, and increased the size of the room. People actually gasped, because your brain really struggles when what you are hearing and what you are seeing don't agree with each other.

After that thoroughly enjoyable 30-minute experience, I sat down with five of the six L-Acoustics staff present at GTX to talk about the L-ISA Auditorium, and the global strategy to expand L-ISA's use in both venues and live production.

"We have two L-ISA Processor IIs in this room," explains Damien Juhasz, Consultant Liaison, APAC. "One for the object-based processing of frontal localisation system Hyperreal and object-oriented surround mixing system Immersive, and one to run Ambiance, our acoustic enhancement system; it's two different firmware versions."

All of the loudspeakers in the Auditorium are from L-Acoustics' point source X Series. "We've got seven X8is across the front, and seven X8is as lateral surrounds both side and rear," continues Damien. "Then there are 10 S6i overheads, plus four Syva Subs. We're driving this all off two 16-channel LA7.16i amplified controllers, with signal on an AVB backbone. That's 2RU powering the whole room; it's very cost effective."

"The design process of this L-ISA Auditorium was a collaborative approach between L-Acoustics and GT," says Chris D'bais, Regional Sales Manager. "We went back and forth with different room designs, but ultimately chose this to make it consistent with the L-ISA Auditoriums that we're deploying globally. The great thing with GT was they were open to anything that we wanted to achieve. Then they took our design and all our documentation, and then they built this. They pulled all the cable in, built the room, and put everything together."

The opening of the Auditorium comes at a time when L-ISA use in Australia is expanding dramatically. Two existing L-ISA installations at St Michael's Grammar School in Melbourne and Sydney Coliseum have just been joined by a whopping four at Perth's new Edith Cowan University (ECU) city campus, home of the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts.

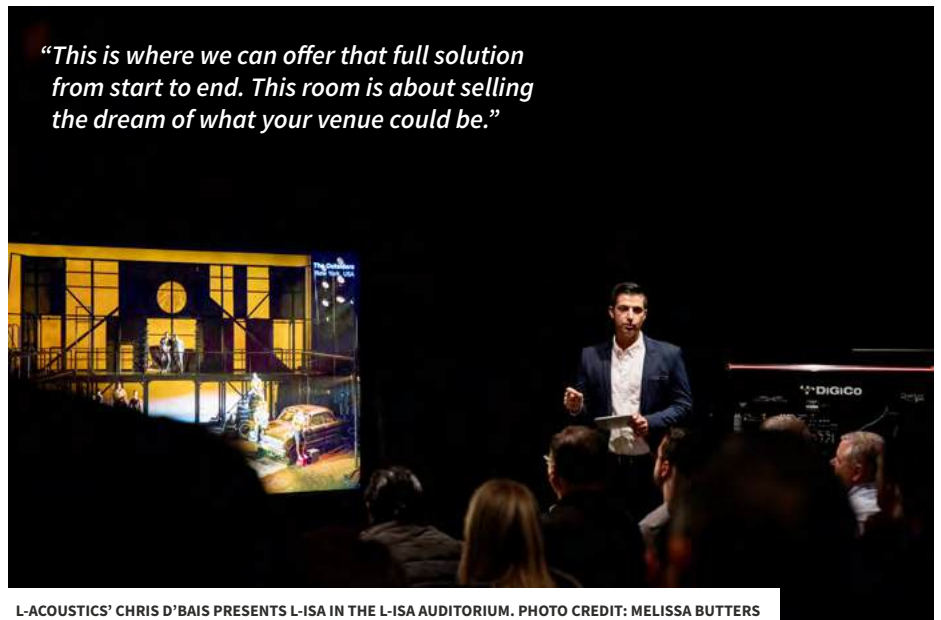
"There's eight venues at ECU with L-Acoustics PAs, and four of them are L-ISA, including a spatial audio studio," continues Chris. "L-Acoustics wants to partner with educators long-term, so we can see their students go into the field after their studies already knowing L-ISA technology. One of the things that was really important for us, particularly with this room and ECU, was making sure that people have a space to create. We've identified that front of house engineers and creatives need space to have a console and program their show before they go into a venue. Now artists and engineers can use the L-ISA Studio binaural software on their DAWs in their own space, then move into this room. It's a really good workflow to enable people to get into L-ISA for their shows."

The democratisation of access to L-ISA via the free L-ISA Studio software is definitely helping with adoption. "ECU are really excited about L-ISA Studio," says Perth's own Roy Cressey, Regional Application Engineer. "They've got a large volume of students that can be at home working on L-ISA Studio on headphones, getting a substantial amount of their programming done. They can then take their designs into the theatres, where time's more limited and needs to be booked into advance. That's a really big value add for ECU's scheduling."

Daniel Lee, L-ISA Applications Engineer based in Singapore, helped calibrate the Auditorium and customise demo content for the facility. Having worked across APAC, he's seen first-hand how L-ISA is taking off overseas; "Some of the more notable L-ISA applications in APAC are big installations, like a recently completed 5,000 seat house of worship in Singapore with our new L2 line array," he relates. "There are a number of bigger L-ISA venues across China as well. What really excites me is how L-ISA is being used to enhance the live music experience, even outdoors. There's a lot of understanding in the market now that L-ISA



THE L-ACOUSTICS TEAM AT GTX 2026
(L-R) ROY CRESSEY, DANIEL LEE, CHRIS D'BAIS, DAMIEN JUHASZ, DAVID COOPER, AND SEBASTIAN HAMMOND



L-ACOUSTICS' CHRIS D'BAIS PRESENTS L-ISA IN THE L-ISA AUDITORIUM. PHOTO CREDIT: MELISSA BUTTERS



L-ACOUSTICS' DANIEL LEE PRESENTS L-ISA IN THE L-ISA AUDITORIUM. PHOTO CREDIT: MELISSA BUTTERS

enhances the listening experience. It's now about trying to work out the workflow; how do we get from pre-production to the stage? L-ISA Studio is the first point of entry for artists and musicians, then we can move on to rehearsal spaces, and then finally to the live venues."

"We've seen a lot of interest in post-production studios and record labels who are recording artists in Dolby Atmos for Apple Music," adds Chris D'baïs. "Audiences are listening to it, and then they're going to concerts that are in stereo, which is often just dual mono. They're identifying a disconnect, but they don't know why. The record labels are approaching us asking how they can take something from studio into the live world, and we're focusing on how to bridge that gap."

"I think that the big uptake in live shows using L-ISA, particularly in China, has been a direct result of the availability of L-ISA Auditoriums and studios," observes Damien Juhász. "It's very hard to convince stakeholders in the live production game to make the leap into immersive without them having the experience of hearing it first. If you can bring an artist, promoter, and engineer into an L-ISA space like this one at GT, let them bring their own tracks and show them how easy it is to use, that's what

convincing the decision makers to get it over the line and take it out on the road."

"We're really excited about the journey ahead with Group Technologies," declares Sebastian Hammond, Director of Application for APAC. "They've been in the business a long time, and it's clear that they have a vision as to how they represent their products. The facility that they've got here is just unbelievable; it's beautiful, and we couldn't ask for a better space. We can talk all we want about the technology, but getting an audience in front of the system is the most influential thing we can do."

"Material costs on projects in Australia are going up," concludes Chris D'baïs. "People still want a multi-purpose venue, but often can't afford it. Now they're looking for alternatives, particularly with L-ISA and Ambiance, so they can present everything from spoken word all the way up to opera. This is where we can offer that full solution from start to end. This room is about selling the dream of what your venue could be."

Following on from my conversation with L-Acoustics, I chatted to Anthony Touma, General Manager of Group Technologies, about their experience of onboarding with L-Acoustics and the process of the building the Auditorium.

"This is where we can offer that full solution from start to end. This room is about selling the dream of what your venue could be."

"The concept of the Auditorium was completely in line with how we present to the market, and how we deliver our brands to customers," says Anthony. "We had the space to set up a dedicated room, and the technical expertise to build it in-house. It was a natural progression for us, and we built a very sophisticated room together inside of four months. I am so proud of the team's accomplishment on that front, and it's exciting for us to share such innovative technology with our industry."

While only officially opening at GTX, there was already a buzz in the air around the facility. "We have theatrical sound designers, engineering consultants, content creators, progressive producers, and production customers expressing interest in coming in and working in the L-ISA Auditorium," divulges Anthony. "They're trying to understand how they can place immersive systems in front of their customers and how it's relevant in their markets."

While Ambiance and Immersive are more likely to be used in fixed installations, the Hyperreal frontal system is gaining traction in live production. "There's a lot of live L-ISA Hyperreal frontal productions in the works, because it is becoming more and more common overseas," explains Anthony. "L-Acoustics are the most developed in that space, having the wider image and sweet-spot across the listening plane, creating a better experience for live concerts. Hyperreal is also gaining a lot of traction in the worship market, particularly with large format L-ISA installations around the world."

"L-Acoustics' technical knowledge and support is second to none," concludes Anthony. "All of their staff are so passionate, experienced, and responsive. Working with them doesn't feel like we're just ticking boxes and meeting standards, it feels like we are working together to get the best possible outcome. Going forward, L-Acoustics and GT are going to be working very, very closely; more closely than most manufacturers work with distributors. We want to be a genuine extension of the manufacturer. We have never been a box-moving distributor. We're focused on providing best in class solutions and backing them up with comprehensive support. GT has always prided itself on developing longstanding partnerships and we're looking forward to representing L-Acoustics in a totally new way throughout ANZ."

GTX 2026



RCF AND TT AUDIO DEMO IN THE LIVE SPACE. PHOTO CREDIT: MELISSA BUTTERS

Group Technologies' GTX event featured 20 visiting product experts from their brands, travelling from as far afield as the UK and Europe. Often the founders of the companies or creators of the products themselves, getting access to these experts is worth its weight in gold. The nature of the event means that everyone who attends has an opportunity to talk one-on-one in a relaxed environment, quite different to the experience you have at a giant show like ISE. In no particular order, here's a run-down of what was new at GTX, and what I learned from speaking to the people behind the products.



DIGICO QUANTUM112

DIGICO, FOURIER AUDIO, AND KLANG

Stationed at a commanding DiGiCo Quantum 852 sitting next to a petite Quantum112, DiGiCo's Ian Staddon and Dave Bigg were also representing KLANG immersive monitoring, and working together with neighbouring Fourier Audio's Elliot Sinclair.

The big yet small deal was the new Quantum112 flyweight mixer, which clocks in at the magic 23kg checked baggage limit when housed in a custom Pelican case, bringing DiGiCo power to flying rigs.

"The Quantum112 was launched to distributors last November," explains Ian Staddon. "On the launch date, we had a live band playing, with Jerry Harvey of Jerry Harvey IEMs (now available through Group Technologies) the FoH mixer for the band. He flew in on a helicopter with the 112 in a Pelican case, walked in, and set up. We had more than a dozen 112s at the launch event, and Group Technologies walked away with one of them. We have started shipping in limited volumes, we're back-ordered, and we can't make them fast enough. Because it's a full-blown Quantum mixer in a small box, it does everything that the Quantum852 does, but with fewer channels. The engine and processing are pretty much exactly the same, which means the test time at the factory is more or less the same a Quantum338."



FOURIER AUDIO'S ELLIOT SINCLAIR WITH TRANSFORM.ENGINE AND THE NEW TRANSFORM.GO

Ian also teased new Quantum software due to be released by the end of March, with new features including tight integration with Sound Devices wireless mics and support for Fourier Audio's new Hyperport connection to its transform.engine and new transform.go VST effects engines.

Fourier Audio's Elliot Sinclair explains; "Hyperport brings the round-trip signal latency from the console, through the engine, and back to the console, down from three milliseconds via standard Dante to 1.2 milliseconds. This opens up the market for monitor engineers. The really cool part is that existing Dante hardware will support Hyperport. We'll switch the card to a different firmware, so it's a free upgrade all round. Hyperport clocks automatically, and patches one-to-one; it's literally plug and play with two cables, one being a redundant connection. It removes the headache of dealing with Dante Controller and needing to understand networks."

"A lot of people are using Fourier Audio's transform.engine at Front of House," outlines Dave Bigg. "But with the latency within standard Dante, it makes it tricky working with monitors. In monitor world, latency is everything. We work on a budget of about five milliseconds; it's two milliseconds for a radio transmitter and two for the console, and that only leaves one millisecond. We need to do everything we can to squeeze that down to make transform.engine and transform.go useful for monitor engineers. With Hyperport, we'll now be able to easily utilise Fourier at both ends."

With Fourier Audio's 64 channel transform.engine enthusiastically adopted by sound engineers around the world, Fourier have just introduced the transform.go for smaller shows. "The transform.go is 16 channels instead of 64, with two DSP cores instead of six," states Elliot Sinclair. "In terms of feature set, it's exactly the same."

Just released at NAMM, KLANG's new single mix immersive monitoring devices integrate natively with DiGiCo surfaces. "KLANG:1 and KLANG:1pro are designed to give you a single mix of KLANG immersive monitoring in any environment," continues Dave Bigg. "The feedback we got from some KLANG users was that the artists they were working with loved using it, but on small fly shows where they couldn't take any gear, they weren't getting the monitoring they had gotten used to. The idea is you can throw them in your backpack and take your immersive mix anywhere you're traveling. You can cascade them as well, so you could create multiple mixes on the KLANG app. KLANG:1 is MADI in and out, and KLANG:1pro has two MADI in and one out, plus Dante, so it connects to just about any device."



KLANG:1 AND 1PRO

FOCAL

Group Technologies have refreshed and updated their Studio space, adding Dolby Atmos capability with Focal monitoring. I heard an electronic work played back through the system, and the quality was breathtaking. Focal's own Vincent Moreuille talked me through what GT had done in the room.

"This is 7.1.4 system built to Dolby's Atmos standard," says Vincent, "It showcases the Focal Shape series, which is our premium near-field monitoring range, and is coupled with two Sub One subwoofers. They have a very slim profile and are very shallow, so you can put them under a desk and still have space for your feet!"

With Apple Music championing Dolby Atmos, and companies like Netflix making it standard, Vincent is convinced it's here to stay. "I think Atmos is not just 'yet another format'. It is a new creative tool for artists, producers, and mixers. If you use it as a tool to express yourself in the creation of a work, you can get results that are really stunning. Also, while Focal are renowned in the stereo world, with Atmos, we are now present from the genesis of the content, all the way to your lounge room; we just released an all-in-one immersive speaker called Mu-So Hekla that features the Dolby decoding algorithm as well as our own, which is called Focal Sphere."

FOCAL'S VINCENT MOREUILLE



RME'S MAX HOLTSMANN WITH THE HDSPe AOX-M



RME

GTX 2026 marked the first time German audio interface manufacturer RME had exhibited, with GT acquiring distribution back in April 2025. RME's Max Holtmann showed us the new HDSPe AoX-M, a 512 channel PCI Express Card with Milan and optional MADI.

"The two network ports can be extended with two MADI ports," says Max. "You can have a total of 256 MADI channels in addition to the 256 channels via the network ports. Via the ports, it can handle 512 channels of Dante or Milan. In AVB configuration it can accommodate larger stream sizes of 32 channels per stream."

FOCAL DOLBY ATMOS STUDIO





DAN CARTMAN NST AUDIO

NST AUDIO

It's always lovely to catch up with NST Audio's founder and chief engineer Dan Cartman, and he showed me their new DM88 System Processor.

"The DM88 is our new matrix processor for live sound and installation," Dan explains. "It's intended to go between a mixing desk and an amplifier rack. It's a desk switcher, it's a signal router, it's a house EQ, it's a format converter; it's a total toolbox for a FoH system engineer."

The DM88 comes standard with eight analog ins and outs, eight AES/EBU ins and outs, and 16 Dante inputs and outputs. "You can route inputs and outputs however you want," continues Dan. "You can use processing, or you can not use processing. It's a semi open architecture format; if you want to use it as say, a four in, eight out loudspeaker processor, you can do that. Or if you just need to get two AES channels onto the Dante network, you can just plug those in and use it as format converter, configured using the same D-Net software that we use with our other products. There's a ton of new features that we've added, including grouping and linking channels, and multiple device grouping. You can have a whole system group where you can delay, gain, and EQ the entire system via a single object, rather than individual channels. You can also layer different subgroups, so you can have a subwoofer group, a delay group, and so on. It makes administrating a large system much more efficient."



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MARTIN SEIDL (CEO OF AUSTRIAN AUDIO) WITH THE OC-B6, GRILLE OFF



AUSTRIAN AUDIO

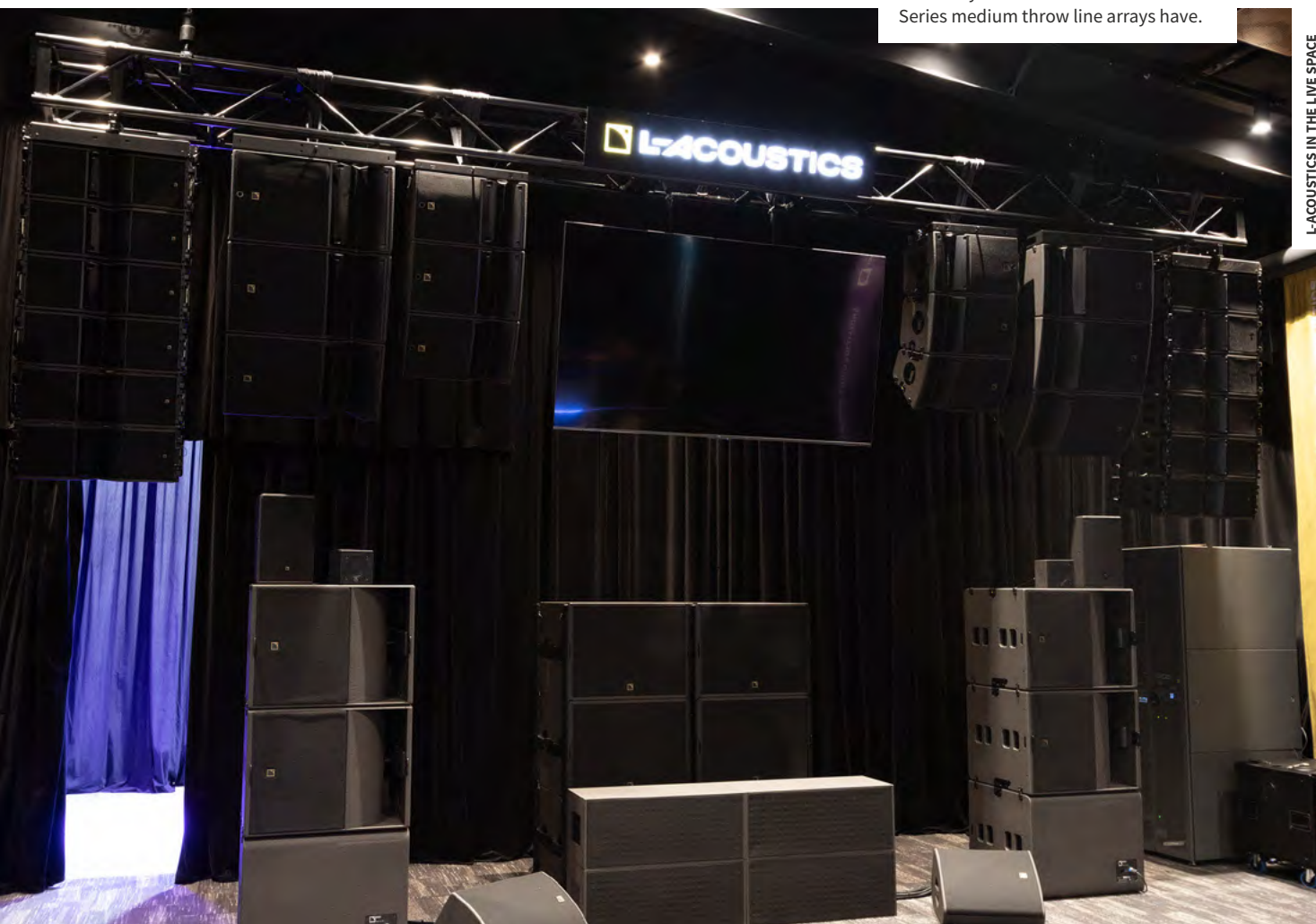
Austrian Audio sent no less their CEO himself, Martin Seidl, to GTX, carrying his very own OC-B6 kick drum mic.

“This is absolutely brand new, and I’m really proud to say it’s the first kick drum mic that has a capsule designed especially for the kick,” says Martin. “It’s a large diaphragm condenser, so it’s a full one-inch condenser capsule. We have made the capsule capable of coping with SPL in excess of 170dB. I have just announced the challenge – ‘bring me the drummer who plays a kick drum that loud’. The mic’s sound character is designed to be the same as a normal condenser. In a drum mix, for example, if you just turn up the overheads and kick drum, you very often have a sound mismatch. The OC-B6 is not EQ-shaped like a traditional kick drum mic in any way. It is a very flat frequency response. You can use it in any position; it works brilliantly in front of the bass drum, at the port, or in the drum.”

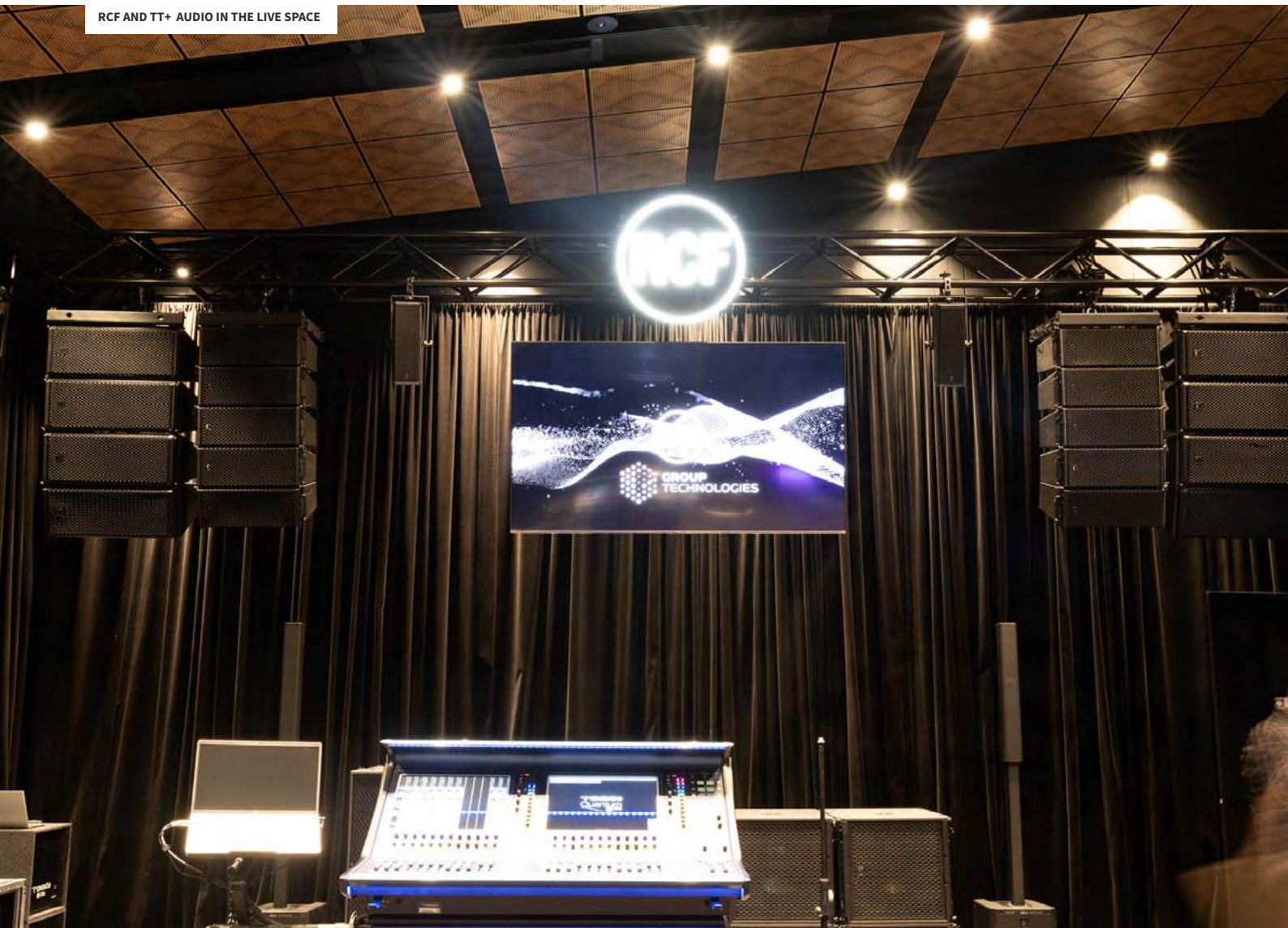
L-ACOUSTICS

In addition to the L-ISA Auditorium, L-Acoustics PAs are now hanging in Group Technologies excellent Live Space, a huge room in which you can listen to just about any loudspeaker in their portfolio.

I caught the demo, which really showed off just how much punch their extremely flexible and affordable A Series medium throw line arrays have.



L-ACOUSTICS IN THE LIVE SPACE



RCF'S ALBERTO RUOZZI

RCF AND TT+ AUDIO

At the opposite end of the Live Space, RCF and its flagship brand TT+ Audio demoed the new RCF EVOX J three-way column arrays speakers and TT+ Audio GTX line arrays.

EVOX J comes in three models, the largest being the EVOX J11, with one 1.75" Neo compression driver, 12.3" full-range Neo transducers, and a 12" RCF subwoofer. While light, portable and brilliantly easy to set-up, both the smaller EVOX J9 and the J11 absolutely filled the Live Space with punchy sound, and would both be at home handling live band gigs up to 500 pax.

I talked to RCF's Executive Sales Director Alberto Ruozzi about the distinction drawn between the RCF brand and TT+ Audio. "RCF is RCF," explains Alberto. "We created a division within RCF which we branded as TT+ Audio. What does TT+ Audio mean for us? It is where we give our best with absolutely no compromises. With RCF, we pursue excellence in performance while balancing attention to price and value. TT+ Audio is more like our Formula One team, representing the best possible product we can manufacture."

We heard two TT+ Audio line arrays, GTX10 and the brand new GTX7c. "The GTX10 is a conventional dual 10" two-way system," continues Alberto. "The GTX7c is a cardioid compact line array with dual 7"s in the front, a compression driver, and two 5"s in the back for the cardioid cancellation. The uniqueness of this system is that our system is active; we have a separate channel for the front and back. Because of this, we have better control of the cancellation at the rear, and can vary the setup; conventional cardioid cancellation, or hypercardioid, or another setting for ground stacking."

Both systems absolutely shone, and as is becoming more and more common with cardioid line arrays, going behind the speakers to hear what wasn't coming out of the back was just as important as hearing what was coming out of the front!

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NAMM 2026

NAMM Marks 125 Years

The NAMM Show ran January 22 to 24 at the Anaheim Convention Centre in Los Angeles, marking 125 years since the formation of the eponymous North American Music Merchant's association. What started in 1901 as a group of piano dealers who wanted to unite music merchants has today become a global convention featuring education sessions, keynote speakers, live music on multiple stages, and the biggest draw of them all, musical products bursting through the seams. There's also a fair amount of music tech, including PA.

RCF's JAMM NIGHT once again stood out as one of the week's most anticipated and attended live music events, filling the Anaheim Convention Center Arena with over 5,000 attendees on Friday, January 23, with an unforgettable evening of performance, community and tribute. Produced in support of the David Z Foundation, the event united world-class musicians for a high-energy yet deeply reflective celebration of music's enduring legacy.

Hosted once again by Paulie Z, the evening featured standout performances from an all-star lineup spanning rock, metal, pop and beyond. Highlights included appearances by Nuno Bettencourt, Corey Glover, Billy Sheehan, Tiffany, Alex Skolnick, Joel Hoekstra, Doug Aldrich, Chris Jericho, Doug Pinnick, Alissa White-Gluz, Rob Affuso, Kat Dyson, Marco Mendoza, Phil X, Donnie Vie, Randy Jackson, Stephen Perkins, Joe Travers, David Cowan, Tony Macalpine, Corey Feldman and Marco Minnemann, among many others, creating a rare, one-night convergence of elite musicianship and collaborative spirit.

This year's JAMM NIGHT was built around a unifying theme honouring pivotal musical milestones of 2025, with especially moving tributes dedicated to rock icon Ozzy Osbourne and a powerful KISS tribute honouring the late Ace Frehley. Dedicated performances of Ozzy Osbourne classics like Black Sabbath's 'The Wizard', 'War Pigs' and 'Symptom of the Universe',

along with 'Close My Eyes Forever' (Lita Ford & Ozzy Osbourne) and a medley of his solo hits paid tribute to the late vocalist; while seminal KISS material including 'Detroit Rock City', 'Parasite/Shock Me' and 'Shout It Out Loud' celebrated Frehley's immeasurable influence as a founding member of KISS and one of rock's most distinctive and influential guitarists. These tributes drew a strong emotional response from the audience and reinforced the evening's focus on legacy, influence and remembrance.

Sonically anchoring the event was RCF's flagship TT+ AUDIO GTX system, which delivered the power, clarity and consistency required for a production of this scale. The system deployment included GTX 12 line arrays (12 per side), GTS 29 subwoofers and supplemental GTX 10s, ensuring immersive, even coverage throughout the arena for the duration of the five-hour performance.

Beyond the Ozzy Osbourne and Ace Frehley tributes, the evening also recognized Rock & Roll Hall of Fame artists and celebrated landmark album anniversaries, including multiple 50-year milestones for records originally released in 1975. Together, these elements shaped a thoughtfully curated program that honoured music's past and underscored its ongoing cultural impact across generations. Other songs performed included 'Burn' (Deep Purple), 'It's A Long Way To The Top' (AC/DC), 'Bad Company' (Bad Company) and more. JAMM NIGHT featured a finale with everyone

joining on stage to perform 'With A Little Help From My Friends' (modelled after Joe Cocker's famous Beatles cover), with Paulie Z, Nuno Bettencourt, Jeff Scott Soto and Corey Feldman sharing the lead vocals.

Several artists offered comments on the evening's event: Jane's Addiction/Porno for Pyros drummer Stephen Perkins stated, "Paulie's mission was accomplished. We raised awareness and money for a great cause, and the ingredients to do that were 40+ thoughtful musicians that got on stage and brought to life the great rock songs we all grew up on!"

Whitesnake/Night Ranger guitarist Joel Hoekstra echoed Perkins thoughts: "I had a great time at JAMM NIGHT, spending time with so many talented musicians and friends! As someone who was friends with and toured with Dave Z, it's awesome to watch JAMM NIGHT growing into one of the main events of the NAMM show!"

Guitarist Kat Dyson, who has performed with Prince, Cyndi Lauper and Sheila E, summed up the evening by saying, "Nights like this show us that music and the power of love will always unite us."

"JAMM NIGHT reflects the heart of what RCF believes in: bringing artists together through exceptional sound while honouring the legacy that shapes our industry," said Tarik Solangi, Vice President of RCF USA. "Presenting the TT+ AUDIO GTX system in a night centred on tribute and

reflection was incredibly meaningful, but what matters most is our continued support of the David Z Foundation and its work to inspire and empower the next generation of musicians.”

“I’m incredibly grateful that RCF believed in this concept and trusted me to bring it to life,” stated Paulie Z. “Producing a show at this level takes real commitment and a willingness to take creative risks, and RCF’s continued support means everything. What makes it even more meaningful is two things: first, that I truly believe in the RCF product. As a singer, vocal clarity, especially in the

critical high-mid range, is everything. With RCF, the midrange is so clean that when the audience hears the vocal the way it’s meant to be heard, that changes everything. And second, that Tarik’s ongoing support of the David Z Foundation is deeply personal – he knew and loved my brother – and that connection makes RCF’s involvement especially meaningful. The fact that RCF not only understands the mission but actively allows the Foundation to be woven into these shows speaks volumes about their commitment to honouring David’s legacy and supporting the artists and community behind it. It’s about giving back,

creating opportunity and celebrating music not as a paycheck, but as a passion.”

Nuno Bettencourt summed up the evening: “A special night, a special community, and a special cause!”

Open exclusively to NAMM badge holders, RCF’s JAMM NIGHT once again affirmed its reputation as a defining live experience of the NAMM Show, blending technical excellence, charitable purpose, and a deep respect for the artists and legacies that continue to shape modern music.



NAMM 2026

Product Roundup



ADAMSON

Adamson introduced two new MILAN-ready networking audio products: MS8.2 Network Switch and USB Milan Bridge. Designed to simplify connectivity of audio networking while maintaining uncompromising performance, these new additions expand Adamson’s ecosystem with flexible, reliable tools tailored for live sound and installed applications. The MS8.2 Milan AVB ready network switch delivers a streamlined, deployment-friendly solution, compatible with all Milan equipment. Optimised for stage monitors, small arrays, and distributed systems, the MS8.2 supports streaming of up to 48 networked loudspeakers while offering robust, road-ready connectivity options. Completing the addition of new Milan focused products is the compact yet powerful USB Milan Bridge, an all-in-one solution that provides direct Milan network connectivity for macOS and Windows 11. Designed for stability and performance, it delivers ultra-low latency with high-resolution audio, ideal for engineers requiring seamless integration between computers and Milan networks.

AUSTRIAN AUDIO

Austrian Audio proudly introduced their first large-diaphragm condenser bass drum microphone. Austrian Audio has achieved what was long considered impossible, integrating a large-diaphragm capsule into a remarkably compact, stage-ready design capable of handling extremely high SPL while delivering the pure, unprocessed sound of the instrument and the new CKR6-B capsule. The OC-B6 is engineered to capture the pure sound of a bass drum, empowering the sound engineer or musician to shape and sculpt the sound to their needs and vision. Thanks to its precision and neutrality, users can shape the final result through drum choice, microphone placement inside or outside the drum, and any desired signal processing. Its exceptionally stable and clean performance, regardless of placement, opens the door to new sonic possibilities for bass drums. The OC-B6 can handle virtually unlimited maximum SPL; performance unmatched by any other condenser microphone on the market. The “B” version of the CKR6 capsule doubles the distance between diaphragm and electrode and features a lower-tuned resonance frequency. The result is enormous headroom and a subtly refined frequency response.



Product Roundup

AUDIX

AUDIX announced the launch of Novacore, a professional digital wireless platform. Making its debut at the 2026 NAMM Show, Novacore comprises 16 distinct products including the NCR1, NCR2, and NCR4 single and multi-channel receivers, NCHH handheld and NCBP bodypack transmitters, specialized NCEC and NCTH vocal capsules, the Novacore Frequency Coordinator, and a comprehensive set of accessories. Novacore has been designed to be the digital wireless answer for AUDIX customers across live sound, worship, legislative, and educational applications who demand uncompromising sound matched with mission critical wireless performance. Novacore brings the unique AUDIX sound into the digital domain using high-quality 24-bit analog-to-digital conversion. The system offers superior clarity with a wide frequency response (20Hz to 20kHz) and ultra-low latency of under 3ms. To meet modern security expectations for secure speech and performance, Novacore features AES-256 digital transmission encryption aligned with industry standards. The heart of the ecosystem is a family of Digital UHF receivers available in single (NCR1), dual (NCR2), and quad-channel (NCR4) configurations. These receivers feature a wideband front end with a 48MHz tuning range, providing the spectrum agility required to survive crowded RF environments. For modern networked installations, the dual and quad-channel models are Dante-enabled, allowing wireless channels to be routed directly onto existing AoIP infrastructures.



KLANG

KLANG:technologies announced the global launch of its new KLANG:1 and KLANG:1pro, which pack professional immersive in-ear monitor mixing into a new ultra-compact format at unprecedented price points. Truly pocket-sized, these are the smallest KLANG processors ever created, providing a single immersive mix from 64 input channels and serving as the pro audio and music industry's most affordable entry points into immersive monitoring. Measuring only 30 x 108 x 123mm and weighing a mere 350 grams, the new KLANG devices offer plug-and-play operation for comprehensive control and monitoring via phone, tablet, or PC, as well as native worksurface integration with DiGiCo Quantum and SD-Range consoles. Featuring the same lightning-fast 0.25ms latency and powered by the same cutting-edge FPGA family as the company's flagship KLANG:konductor, KLANG:1 and KLANG:1pro are powered and configured via USB-C connections, with no additional power supply needed. The two models are nearly identical, with one distinction: KLANG:1 features dual MADI I/O, while KLANG:1pro adds a second MADI input to enable full 64-channel MADI I/O at 96kHz, plus redundant 64x64 Dante with single-channel routing, making it the most affordable Dante and MADI converter in its class.



AUDIX

AUDIX also announced the introduction of its new Wireless MicroBoom (MBW) condenser microphone line. A forerunner of AUDIX's new digital wireless ecosystem while building upon the success of the company's popular MicroBoom range, this new range provides a transformative approach to stage and choir miking, by combining plug-and-play simplicity, seamless stage transitions, and complete freedom of movement in a sleek, wireless format, with superior performance which is indistinguishable from wired versions. The new MBW line has been designed to be a performance enabler for a wide range of applications including choirs, houses of worship, vocal ensembles, theatre and stage productions, orchestras, acoustic groups, location recording, presentations, broadcast, sports, and live events.



Product Roundup

SHURE

Shure's new SLX-D+ wireless microphone system is the next evolution in its renowned wireless portfolio. Building on SLX-D's proven success, SLX-D+ delivers a powerful combination of advanced features and ease-of-use, now accessible to audio professionals and experienced volunteers in live performance, houses of worship, education, content creation, electronic newsgathering (ENG), broadcast, and video industries. SLX-D+ features wide tuning across all components up to 138MHz, enabling seamless countrywide deployment and minimising inventory complexity. Systems can operate across multiple frequency bands, reducing the need to own several product variants. The new ShowLink Ease technology, inspired by ShowLink on Shure's premier Axient Digital wireless system, provides real-time, two-way communication between receiver and transmitter. Once synced, the transmitter remains paired to the receiver every time it is powered on. This allows for automated radio frequency (RF) set up, and remote parameter adjustments, eliminating the need for physical proximity and streamlining live management from performance to performance. Should interference occur, the SLX-D+ system can automatically scan for a new, clean frequency and deploy it to both the receiver and transmitter without requiring user interaction, ensuring enhanced operation and continuous connectivity. Joining the SLX-D+ on debut was the new KSM condenser microphone line, including the KSM32C, KSM40C, and KSM44MP. Shure KSM microphones have delivered exceptional audio quality for decades. With the launch of new models, the KSM line once again sets the benchmark for professional recording by providing premium, true-to-life audio capture and ultra-low self-noise, all within a sleek, modern design. The KSM32C is a large diaphragm condenser microphone that delivers a smooth, balanced response and exceptional low-frequency performance. This microphone is ideal for vocals, instruments, drum overheads, and ensemble work, and is available in a stage and studio bundle. The KSM40C is a versatile, large diaphragm condenser microphone that delivers natural, detailed audio with enhanced proximity effect and natural high-frequency boost. An ideal microphone for capturing rich nuances in vocals and instruments, including upright bass, guitar amps and kick drum. The KSM44MP offers unparalleled versatility in a sleek, dual-diaphragm design that maximises sensitivity and stabilises pattern consistency, improving off-axis control at low frequencies. A multi-pattern microphone with natural clarity and smooth, airy detail, this mic is ideal for vocals, pianos, stereo techniques, distant miking, and ensembles.

FOURIER AUDIO

Fourier Audio announced the worldwide launch of its compact transform.go plugin server designed to run VST3 plugins in a live environment. The new transform.go packs 16 channels of I/O into a remarkably trim, light, and tour-grade design that conveniently fits into a backpack or carry-on Peli case, perfect for use on flypack shows and mid-sized productions, whilst featuring the same best-in-class features as the company's larger transform.engine, including full access to the transform.suite bundle. When compared to transform.engine, with its smaller chassis, lower cost, and reduced I/O count, Fourier Audio's transform.go will appeal to touring companies and engineers working on fly tours who need a compact, lightweight product to accommodate logistical constraints. The new product also affords a very compelling entry point into live plugin hosting for a much larger market segment of live engineers, music venues, theatres, performing arts centers, houses of worship, rental houses, event production providers, and other mid-range users that don't require the full capacity of the original transform.engine's 64 channels. Fourier Audio also announced HYPERPORT, a new low-latency, point-to-point audio protocol designed for seamless integration between its transform.engine or transform.go and DiGiCo's Quantum and SD-Range consoles. With the launch of HYPERPORT, Fourier Audio addresses one of the most critical challenges in live sound - latency. Built from the ground up for professional touring, theatre, and broadcast environments, HYPERPORT delivers ultra-fast, reliable audio transfer, giving engineers the speed, precision, and confidence they need in high-pressure performance situations. When connecting transform hardware as an insert on a DiGiCo console, HYPERPORT achieves an astonishing 1.2ms roundtrip latency, a reduction of more than half when compared to Dante (~3ms). The new protocol's impressive real-world performance enables Fourier Audio's live plugin hosts to now be used for even the most latency-sensitive applications, including monitor mixing.



Product Roundup

RCF

RCF introduced the GTX 7C compact cardioid line array, the latest addition to its flagship TT+ AUDIO GTX series. Designed for high-performance sound reinforcement in demanding environments, the GTX 7C offers powerful output, digitally controlled directivity, and outstanding rear wave rejection in a compact form factor. The system delivers a maximum SPL of 140dB using a 120° x 10° linear resistive waveguide for consistent, wide-angle coverage. It features two 7" front-firing and two 5.5" rear-firing neodymium woofers, along with a 3" titanium dome compression driver. Powered by RCF's XPS 16K amplifier, the GTX 7C enables independent control of front and rear transducers, achieving an average rear attenuation of 22dB up to 600Hz. A phase-optimised 900Hz crossover and advanced FIRPHASE and Bass Motion Control (BMC) DSP ensure linear phase response and minimised off-axis distortion for maximum clarity. Housed in a durable polyurea-coated PU enclosure with IP54-rated speakON connectors, the GTX 7C is available in black or white finishes to suit any installation.

RCF also introduced the GTX 10P two-way line array module, another new part of the TT+ AUDIO GTX family, designed for medium to large-scale touring and installation environments where controlled coverage, power and deployment efficiency are critical. Building on the proven engineering of the GTX platform, the GTX 10P offers optimized directivity, extended long-throw performance and the clarity demanded by today's most challenging sound reinforcement applications – indoors and outdoors. At the heart of the GTX 10P is a pair of 10-inch HyperVented woofers featuring 3-inch inside-outside voice coils and high-flux neodymium magnets. This low-distortion motor structure provides impactful, articulate low-frequency performance with impressive headroom and dynamic range. High frequencies are handled by 4-inch titanium-dome compression drivers coupled to the TRW-4PATH waveguide, ensuring precise 70° x 15° coverage and phase-coherent integration with the low-frequency section

Rounding out the bottom end were two new subwoofers: SUB 15-AS and SUB 18-AS. The SUB 15-AS is a compact, high-power 15-inch active subwoofer capable of delivering up to 133dB SPL. It is the ideal low-frequency complement for 8-, 10- and 12-inch loudspeakers, making it perfectly suited for portable PA systems, DJs, live bands and installed sound applications where power and portability are critical. The SUB 18-AS steps up with an 18-inch transducer and maximum output of 135dB SPL, offering deeper low-frequency extension and increased impact. Designed to pair seamlessly with 10-, 12- and 15-inch loudspeakers, the SUB 18-AS is ideal for venues and productions requiring greater low-end authority without sacrificing mobility.



VIOLET AUDIO

Australia's own Violet Audio launched the dMix 128, a next-generation, ultra-low-latency networked

digital mixing system engineered for the most demanding live sound, broadcast, installation, and immersive audio applications. Developed by an international engineering team across Singapore, Australia, and Brazil, dMix 128 represents a clean-sheet approach to modern digital mixing. Built around a powerful FPGA-centric architecture, the system delivers 128 channels at up to 96kHz, sub-millisecond system latency, exceptional sonic transparency, and the reliability required for mission-critical environments. At its core, dMix 128 is natively optimised for IP-based audio workflows. The platform supports AES67 as standard, with a roadmap for ST 2110-30 compatibility, enabling seamless integration into broadcast and large-scale networked systems. Connectivity is highly flexible, with MADI I/O onboard, three onboard Ethernet ports, and support for Dante via an optional expansion card, alongside provision for future protocols as they emerge. This modular approach allows system designers to tailor dMix 128 precisely to current and future infrastructure requirements. dMix 128 is controlled entirely via a browser-based user interface, eliminating the need for proprietary software and enabling fast, intuitive operation from computers, tablets, and dedicated control surfaces. The system is equally suited to FOH, monitor mixing, broadcast trucks, and fixed installations, offering flexible routing, deep DSP resources, and workflows that scale effortlessly from compact rigs to complex, multi-engineer productions. Each dMix 128 unit provides 32 high-performance analog inputs and 24 analog outputs, with support for a wide range of remote I/O and stagebox solutions. Designed by engineers with decades of real-world touring and systems experience, every aspect, from clocking and power architecture to redundancy strategies, reflects Violet Audio's uncompromising focus on long-term reliability and audio integrity. For recording and hybrid workflows, low-latency 64x64 channel computer drivers enable seamless DAW connectivity and native plugin integration, making dMix 128 equally powerful in live-to-studio, broadcast, and virtual soundcheck environments.



SSL

Solid State Logic's ORACLE Future Analogue console was recognised with a TEC Award for Outstanding Technical Achievement in the Large Format Console category on its release at NAMM. The TEC Awards are widely regarded as the highest honour dedicated to the pro audio and sound recording industry, recognising outstanding performance by the individuals, companies and technical innovations behind the sound of recordings, live performances, films, television, video games and multimedia. ORACLE is a fully analogue in-line mixing console offering large-format features in a compact, AWS-size footprint, with instant, effortless, and complete recall of all processing, routing, gain, and pan settings thanks to the company's innovative new ActiveAnalogue technology. With the ability to instantly switch between mixing or tracking set-ups, users can change a session's workflow in less time than it takes for an artist to switch tracks. The console is capable of producing a range of sonic signatures, from the beautifully precise sounds of SuperAnalogue audio to a palette of driven tones, and everything in between. From an SSL legacy perspective, ORACLE embodies the DNA of the classic E, G, and J/K consoles, while taking SSL's sonic signature into the future.

AT NO STAGE

STOP BULLYING  HARASSMENT

AT NO STAGE
STOP BULLYING  HARASSMENT

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or the stage it plays out on...
At NO Stage will bullying and harassment
be tolerated in the live music industry!

 **CrewCare**[®]
For ALL Live Music Crew

AND THE WINNER IS...

ROBE'S EXCALIBUR - PHOTO CREDIT MARKO POLASEK

With ProLight+Sound now officially over for Frankfurt, it appears the winners are ISE and Barcelona. The 2026 iteration of ISE that ran 3 to 6 February cemented the show as home of lighting, audio and live production, with Robe bringing their 'Excalibur - The Lights of the Round Table' live show, complete with acrobat and robot.

ISE 2026 broke all of its own records, with 92,170 visitors, 1,751 exhibitors (including 323 making their debut at the event) and all eight halls of the Fira de Barcelona Gran Via filled, making the show's footprint a staggering 101,000 square metres.

ISE is one of three major show that run at the Fira that have hit the capacity of the venue. The new two-storey Hall Zero was originally set to open late in 2026, but has been delayed until 2028, meaning any new exhibitors may have to wait to get into the show.

With ISE dwarfing other major international AV and production tech events such as the USA's InfoComm, it is now clear that it is the global industry's annual gathering place.

Aussie Winners!

Australian distributor Audio Logistics had a cracking show, being named Distributor of the Year – APAC by Void Acoustics as part of the brand's annual global partner awards programme.

The award recognises outstanding distribution performance, market development and brand growth across the Asia-Pacific region. Over the past year, Audio Logistics has expanded Void's regional presence through focused channel development, technical support and high-impact project delivery across hospitality and entertainment sectors.

"Being recognised by Void is a testament to the strength of our partnership and the dedication of our team and dealer network," said Adam Dullens, Managing Director at Audio Logistics "We're proud

to represent a brand known worldwide for design-led, high-performance audio."

After Adam collected his award, he then went on to announce a new brand partnership, live from the show; SOWA, which is a Danish company redefining professional audio through wireless simplicity and Scandinavian design.

SOWA creates precision-engineered loudspeaker solutions designed for professional events, corporate spaces, and live productions. Built with high-quality components, sustainably sourced materials, and award-winning industrial design, SOWA systems are built for flexibility, modularity, and durability, designed to deliver professional sound that is effortless to set up, uncompromising in performance, and responsible by design.

"We're thrilled to bring SOWA to the Australian market," said Adam. "Their combination of design, performance, and reliability aligns perfectly with our company philosophy. We're excited to introduce them to the local market"

SOWA CTO, Andreas Ranch, added: "Audio Logistics shares our commitment to quality and service. This partnership allows us to deliver our products to the Australian market with confidence and reliability."

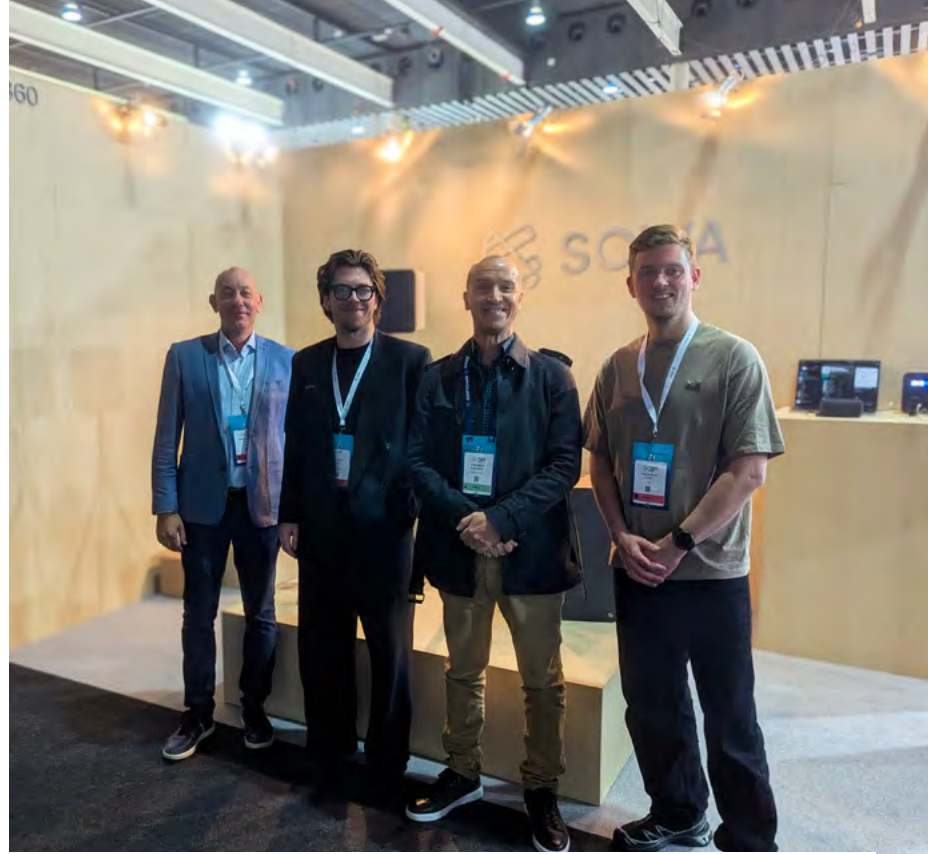
Meanwhile, after their first full year of trading with the brand, Melbourne's own NAS was awarded AtlasIED's APAC Distributor of the year for 2025. "We are thrilled to accept this recognition and extend our gratitude to the team at AtlasIED," said Brad Kivela, Business and Products Manager at NAS. "I'd also like to thank everyone at NAS, and of course, our customers!"



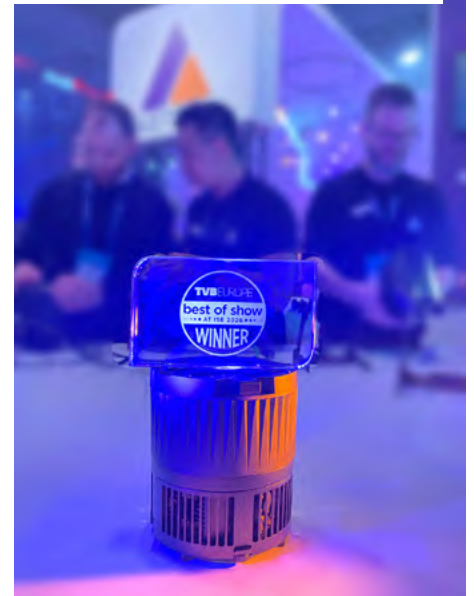
AUDIO LOGISTICS' VOID AWARD

"Being recognised by Void is a testament to the strength of our partnership and the dedication of our team and dealer network. We're proud to represent a brand known worldwide for design-led, high-performance audio."

- Adam Dullens
Managing Director at Audio Logistics



L-R HENRIK CHRISTENSEN (SOWA), JESPER OLÉHN (SOWA), ADAM DULLENS (AUDIO LOGISTICS), ANDREAS RANCH (SOWA)



Media Award Winners

While CX does not indulge in the practice of handing out awards at trade shows, many of our international peers do. There's a bewildering range of 'ISE Best in Show' awards handed out, often by multiple publications that have the same ownership. In no particular order, here's a rundown of who took home some tasteful Perspex trophies to sit in their foyers:

The HARMAN group took three awards, all handed out by Future Publishing-owned mastheads. These included an AV Technology award for the JBL Professional SRX900 Series powered line array, a Sound & Video Contractor award for the refreshed JBL Professional Control 400 Series and a Mix award for the new AKG C Series condenser mics.

Top New Technology (TNT) Awards, presented by several publications at ISE that are all ultimately owned by Emerald X, went to the Renkus-Heinz ICLX-48S subwoofer, Netgear's network management solutions and M4350 series switch, and WyreStorm's CAM-0402-NDI-BRG compact 4K multi-camera video bridge.

WolfVision's new Cynap Pure wireless presentation and collaboration system was named a 'Best of Show' winner by Future Publishing's AV Technology Magazine, marking the debut for the first model in their next-generation Cynap systems.

Sonance was recognised with four product awards, all handed out by various brands under the Future Publishing banner, including their newly unveiled VX Ultra Thin-Line speaker, the wedge-shaped (naturally) Wedge X Series loudspeakers, the updated PowerPipe X Series subwoofers, and the Professional High Output Series installation loudspeakers.

EAW's NT206L compact active line array loudspeakers won multiple awards at ISE, including Best in Show from Future Publishing brands Installation and Sound & Video Contractor. Also in the EAW trophy cabinet, the Commercial Integrator (owned by Emerald X) Top New Technology Awards for best line array speaker.

Astera's new QuikBeam luminaire, launched at the show, took home the ISE Best of Show Award from TVBEurope, yet another Future Publishing brand.

And now, on with the all the new product announcements from the show...



L-R NAS'S JAMES PIPER, SHANE BAILEY AND BRAD KIVELA WITH SAM DENNISON FROM ATLASIED



WOLFVISION WITH AMBER TECHNOLOGY



THE SONANCE TEAM WITH AMBER TECHNOLOGY



Listen Technologies and Ampetronic

Listen Technologies and Ampetronic are expanding the Auri system with new products that will ship in 2026.

The LA-470 Auri Ear Phone/Neck Loop Lanyard is designed specifically for the Auri assistive listening system and provides an optimised listening experience for end users with telecoil- (t-coil) equipped hearing aids or cochlear implants. The neck loop connects to the Auri Receiver and transmits the broadcast audio directly to listeners' telecoil devices. Users can seamlessly switch between telecoil mode and earphone mode based on their accessory choice.

The Auri Transmitter TX2N (also available with Dante, TX2N-D) is the central component of the Auri system. It is a sleek, low-profile unit resembling a Wi-Fi access point that includes a mounting bracket for easy installation on walls or ceilings. The transmitter is available in white and, for the first time, also in black. The new dark transmitter case provides venues with another colour option to complement or match their space. It is ideal for theatres and performing arts centres, hospitality settings, museum exhibits, and any environment where the colour would blend into the surroundings for a seamless look.

The new Auri docking case provides a simple storage solution for Auri Receivers. Venues can easily store, charge, and carry up to 16 receivers in the case. The sleek, sturdy case features a hard foam insert with individual openings for system components. It also has durable locking latches and includes a shoulder strap for easy transport.

In environments featuring hearing loops, the new Ampetronic LR 3200 HL Hearing Loop Receiver gives users clearer, more consistent loop audio, no matter how they hold the receiver. The LR-3200-HL features dual telecoils, smart bandwidth, hum filtering, and full iDSP compatibility.

AtlasIED

AtlasIED introduced the Atlas+Fyne FC-D (Ceiling) and FS-D (Surface) Dante-enabled PoE++ loudspeakers, which combine the efficiency of PoE++ power delivery with IsoFlare point-source transducer technology for high-output performance.

Unlike traditional PoE loudspeakers that sacrifice headroom and dynamic range, these models utilize PoE++ to unlock their full potential using a single network cable, delivering premium audio without compromise. The IsoFlare driver ensures phase-coherent summation across the passband, with integrated waveguide geometry for constant directivity and improved time-domain accuracy, resulting in precise coverage and lobe-free dispersion essential for high-end applications.

AtlasIED also launched the DMA digital mixer-amp and the LMA mono amplifier, designed for smaller venues like cafes and shops looking to enhance their background music or live music offerings. The DMA is available in 100W, 200W, and 400W models, and features onboard DSP and app-based control via the DMA Control app for mobile devices, allowing users to easily adjust speaker tuning and system performance. It includes front-panel controls and compatibility with optional wall-plate accessories. The LMA amplifier series matches the DMA's power ratings and offers a straightforward, DSP-free amplification solution. It can function independently as a single-zone amplifier or be linked with the DMA for a two-channel system, providing an innovative and flexible audio solution for small commercial environments.





ASTERA

Usable in any lighting scenario, Astera's QuikBeam is in a class of its own; a super bright, rapidly deployable, fresnel lensed fixture with 13-60 degree zoom, complete with swappable batteries, practical plug-and-play functionality, and all the performance, perfect colour mixing, quality and high CRI / TLCI of Astera's outstanding Titan LED Engine.

The swappable battery system saves wait time for fixtures to charge. Batteries can simply be replaced on site if needed, when a unit returns from rental or a demo. Spare batteries can be kept on charge and swapped in and out on-the-fly, ensuring the fixtures are constantly ready for immediate use.

PoE (Power over Ethernet) connectivity over EtherCON enables streamlined installations with combined power and data over a single cable, running up to 100 metres, perfect for remote prepping and sACN or ArtNet control for shows and events.

AYRTON

Ayrton surprised the industry with the premiere of Rawbeam 350, its brand-new laser-sourced ultra-compact fixture that emulates a discharge-style beam, yet with all the efficiency and power of a laser source. A compact, flat-beam fixture with the same footprint and dimensions as Stradale, Rawbeam 350 delivers a remarkable output of 1,200,000 lux at 10m. It also features a 160mm front lens, and a proprietary 13-lens optical system offering a 35x zoom ratio with a working range from 1.2° to 42°.

The new Nando 1202 Wash has a minimalist design philosophy and is purpose-built for hybrid use, indoors or out. Nando 1202 is equipped with 28 high-performance 42W RGB-L LEDs delivering a luminous flux of 25,000lm, and additive colour mixing that produces beautifully blended pastels and saturated colours with flawless consistency, and a CRI exceeding 86. It shifts effortlessly from Beam to Wash, boasting a 15:1 zoom ratio and an exceptionally wide operating range, from a tight 3.5° beam to a generous 53° spread.

Part of the Dot Neo family, MagicBlade Neo is an entirely new concept, an organic and innovative luminaire designed to create infinitely reconfigurable curtains of multiform light. Built on the foundation of the all-new MagicDot Neo, it features five independently moving heads, spaced just 3mm apart, with continuous pan and tilt rotation.

Equipped with five individual 120W RGB-L multi-chip LED sources, each paired with a high-efficiency 100mm optic, every beam seamlessly transitions from Beam to Wash, offering a 10:1 zoom ratio and an extensive range from 3° to 30°. Each lens of the MagicBlade Neo features a high-definition LiquidEffect on its periphery, allowing the creation of intricate graphic effects.

Ayrton continues to shape the story of laser-sourced fixtures with the advent of Naja, a

weatherproof, ultra-powerful fixture that embraces excess in a remarkably compact frame. Naja boasts breathtaking brightness and astonishing precision, featuring a 35x zoom ratio (0.6° - 21°) with flawless uniformity, an outsized 200mm lens and a staggering 1,840,000 lux at 10m.

Its technical arsenal is equally impressive: a high-speed CMY colour mixing system using rotating discs ensures perfect colour rendering, and a dual-wheel configuration carries 2 metal gobos, fixed and rotating, offering unparalleled sculpting of light. These gobos can be combined with two layers of three rotating prism effects, unlocking a world of image-multiplying, show-stopping visual possibilities. IP65 rated and with continuous pan and tilt, Naja weighs just 31.5kg and takes the same form factor as Rivale.



BROMPTON TECHNOLOGY

Brompton Technology showcased the new SQ200, the world's most powerful 8K LED processor, demonstrating its capability to receive 4x4K video over ST2110 over 100G Ethernet, with dual inputs enabling it to support ST2022-7 network redundancy.

Brompton also welcomed Fabulux LED as the first Silver Partner in its Panel Manufacturer Partner programme. Brompton is introducing the Silver Partner tier to its Panel Manufacturer Partner programme, alongside the existing Diamond and Gold Partner levels. While Brompton works with a huge range of LED panel manufacturers, the Partner Programme recognises the particularly strong relationships the company has developed with panel manufacturers including ROE Visual (Diamond Partner), Absen, AOTO and INFILED (Gold Partners).



ELATION

The SÖL I Strobe expands the SÖL family with a focused tool for high-intensity strobe moments that register instantly with the audience, even in visually dense environments. Built on the same modular, IP-rated platform as the SÖL Blinder Series, it combines fast strobe response, multi-zone control, and seamless SÖL system integration to give designers precise control over impact moments, indoors or outdoors.

The SÖL I ACL is a purpose-built narrow-beam fixture designed to deliver clean, consistent beam looks with confidence in any environment. With ultra-bright beam performance, silent convection cooling, and an IP-rated modular design, it empowers designers to create high-impact visuals without worrying about weather, noise, or reliability.

Fuze Profile+ is a high-output LED framing profile that delivers dynamic colour quality, precision effects, and versatile performance across professional production environments. It brings together powerful RGBMA colour with a full framing and effects system in a streamlined design, consolidating multiple fixture roles into a single solution.

Elation's SIX+ PANEL delivers unmatched colour in a powerful, adaptable wash panel for touring, broadcast, and outdoor productions. By combining high-output RGBLA+UV colour, IP65 protection, and optional battery-powered operation, it delivers exceptional performance anywhere designers work.

BROMPTON PARTNER PROGRAMME



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FOHNN



Fohhn presented a major expansion of its Dante Power over Ethernet (PoE) loudspeaker platform. The new portfolio includes PoE, PoE+ and PoE++ loudspeaker systems – including ceiling, pendant, full-range speakers and a subwoofer – designed for fast installation, simplified system design and seamless integration into IT-based AV infrastructures.

Building on its pioneering Dante PoE concept, Fohhn expands the platform with new PoE-capable loudspeakers for an even wider range of applications. Power, audio, control and monitoring are transmitted via a single network cable, significantly reducing installation effort while enabling scalable and flexible sound reinforcement systems.

The expanded range includes PoE, PoE+ and PoE++ variants, covering applications from compact commercial spaces to more demanding installation scenarios.

Follow-Me

Follow-Me announced Follow-Me DELTA, the latest generation of its manual performer tracking system. Built on the trusted foundation of Follow-Me 3D, DELTA has been enhanced with improved architecture in both hardware and software.

Follow-Me DELTA represents a comprehensive response to user feedback and evolving industry needs, as productions have grown significantly in creative design, scale and complexity in recent years.

The system introduces features that encourage creative collaboration between lighting, audio and video, support setup efficiency, and deliver operational focus and precision across all production scales.

At the core of the Follow-Me DELTA system is a redesigned licensed rack server featuring enhanced processing power and multiple etherCON ports, enabling separate network streams for video and control data. The system now ships with a 4K camera set, delivering low-latency video directly over the network and providing operators with significantly sharper, more detailed views of performers.





Naostage debuted YouTrack, a manual tracking system offering the best price-to-performance ratio on the market and unlimited scalability; the brand new Kore S server; and a preview of Multiview technology, which extends tracking capabilities and opens up new opportunities in the broadcast, VR/XR, architectural and sports segments.

Designed for both fixed-installation and staging projects, YouTrack is an accessible system designed to benefit all types of productions, from small venues to large festivals. The system is made up of Kam, an HDR RGB Full HD spectral camera, and Nuk, a pre-configured compact computer that transmits data in real time to Naostage's Kratos tracking software. IP67-certified and featuring PoE technology, Kam can be connected to 10 Nuk stations to create and manage multiple tracking positions.

YouTrack enables one or more lighting operators to manually follow a target (for example, an artist, performer or audience member) using a 3D mouse, using all Kratos features which were, until now, only available using Naostage's K SYSTEM.



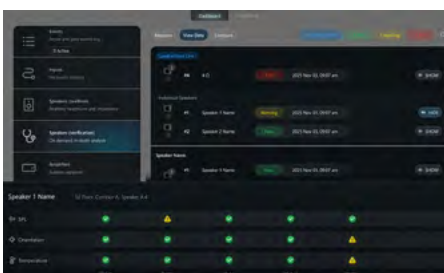
OBSIDIAN CONTROL SYSTEMS



The ONYX NX3 lighting console is designed around how programmers actually work, with intuitive control, refined ergonomics, and show-ready performance coming together in a compact platform that supports faster workflows, comfortable long-session programming, and dependable operation as productions grow in scale and complexity.

Obsidian's NETRON FS16 network switch brings clarity to complex lighting networks with dedicated fiber-optic connectivity for dependable, predictable performance. Designed for live productions, it avoids the complexity of traditional IT switches while delivering fast, stable control across long shows, tours, and installations.

POWERSOFT



Powersoft unveiled AnyMATE and its first implementation, SpeakerMATE, marking a significant step towards smarter, more connected installed audio systems. The new technologies are designed to add identification, monitoring and data exchange capabilities directly to passive loudspeakers, without the need for additional network cabling or external power.

AnyMATE is a communication technology based on a proprietary protocol and a patent-pending physical-layer implementation. Rather than relying on Ethernet or wireless connections, AnyMATE exchanges data directly via an amplifier's output channels. This makes it possible to identify and monitor downstream devices without deploying a separate control network, aligning closely with the realities of installed audio environments that often feature long cable runs, Hi-Z architectures and legacy infrastructure.

SpeakerMATE represents the first practical application of the AnyMATE platform. The compact hardware module establishes communication between amplifiers and passive loudspeakers and can be deployed either as an external add-on near the speaker or integrated directly by loudspeaker manufacturers. For retrofit applications, SpeakerMATE connects in parallel with the speaker line via quick-splice connectors and requires no dedicated power supply, simplifying installation and minimising downtime.

Once installed, SpeakerMATE devices are automatically discovered and configured

through Powersoft's Armonia+ software. Additional data can be written to the device in advance, including speaker brand and model information, enabling the system to suggest appropriate presets and helping to reduce configuration errors during commissioning.

Beyond identification, SpeakerMATE incorporates a temperature sensor, accelerometer and microphone, with the option to interface with an external sensor via a GPI port. These features enable new levels of monitoring and diagnostics for passive loudspeakers, including temperature and tilt measurement, on-demand sound pressure level testing, and access to detailed metadata such as installation notes, serial numbers and lifecycle history.

When integrated with cloud-based services such as MyPowersoft, accessed via MyUniverso, SpeakerMATE allows system status and anomalies to be monitored remotely. This capability supports faster fault-finding, preventative maintenance and reduced site visits, particularly valuable for large, distributed systems such as shopping centres, airports, stadiums, cinemas and theme parks.

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:



ROBE



Robe launched its much-anticipated landmark new GigaPointe, a versatile and truly multi-functional IP65-rated moving light that has been skilfully engineered to offer optimal performance combined with extraordinary output, plus dynamic high-contrast effects, and swift, pinpoint movement, ready to transform any space into a spectacular environment.

Powered by Robe's advanced LSW-3 engine and white 350W phosphor laser source, the GigaPointe produces an ultimate contrast beam with outstanding projection qualities, and striking visual impact. The 150mm front lens is highly attractive in itself, and precision optics create beautiful flat-field beams, dynamic shapes, and stunning effects.

GigaPointe offers 1.8°-21° beam and 3°-42° spot modes that automatically adjust based on the selected effects. Beam reducers and 1° and 5° frosts provide yet more versatility and options, from tightly focused aerial beams to softer, subtler washes.

GigaPointe has a CMY colour mixing system and a 13-colour dichroic wheel as well as the DataSwatch virtual library with 66 pre-programmed colours, including essential whites, deep saturates, and refined pastels.

Robe's new T10 PC and T10 Fresnel luminaires were also launched at ISE. These have a compact design that is ideal for smaller theatres, studios and spaces while retaining all the features and benefits of Robe's larger T11 PC/Fresnel, including a smooth, softer beam, offering great performance and value.

The outstanding colour finesse of the T-Series is maintained using the MSL (Multi-Spectral Light) additive colour mixing concept combined with innovative Robe TE technology (TRANSFERABLE ENGINE), while the MSL-TE 200W LED engine produces over 10,500lm plus all the advantages of cost saving, exchange or replacement.

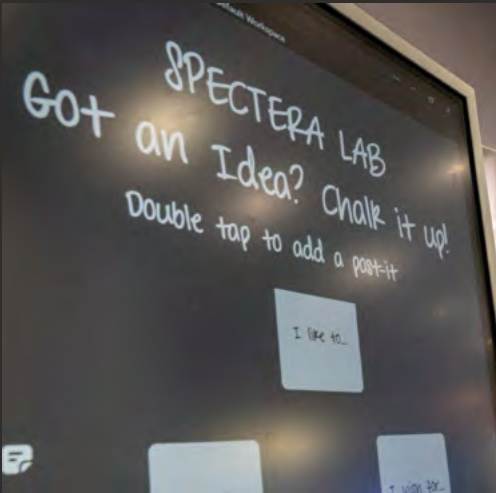
The T-Series LED technology provides identical colour characteristics, responses, and control across all its luminaires, giving absolute colour consistency across a Robe installation.

There is a virtually controlled CCT range of 2700K to 8000K (extended range 1800K-10000K), a set of calibrated whites, as well as authentic-looking tungsten emulation for ultra-precision control.





While Sennheiser's Spectera bidirectional wideband wireless ecosystem continues to transform productions around the globe, ISE 2026 marked the preorder start for the upcoming Spectera SKM handheld transmitter (both the UHF and 1.4GHz version) as well as for the Command adapter, which equips the handheld with a programmable Command function. Both items are scheduled to launch in September. Another highlight is the Spectera API (Application Programming Interface). Coming in Q2, it enables advanced customisation and control across multi-vendor workflows.



The handheld with Sennheiser standard capsule interface for Sennheiser and Neumann microphone heads features a sleek, aluminium-anodised body with OLED display. The bidirectional data stream enabled by Sennheiser's WMAS implementation gives the operator full remote control of mic parameters such as low-cut or gain.

The Command adapter allows users to change the audio routing at the push of a button, for example for convenient communication between the talent and the technical crew. Whether programmed for toggling, muting, or push-to-talk, the Command functionality makes communication control easy and immediate.

With regular hardware, software and functionality updates, Spectera is being continuously expanded, and the Spectera Lab (www.sennheiser.com/spectera-lab) is the place to go to receive the latest outlook on what is coming next for Spectera, and to join the co-creation of the ecosystem via the Idea Space and a Discord channel. At ISE itself, visitors had the opportunity to directly leave their ideas for Spectera on a big touchscreen.

SENNHEISER



SHURE

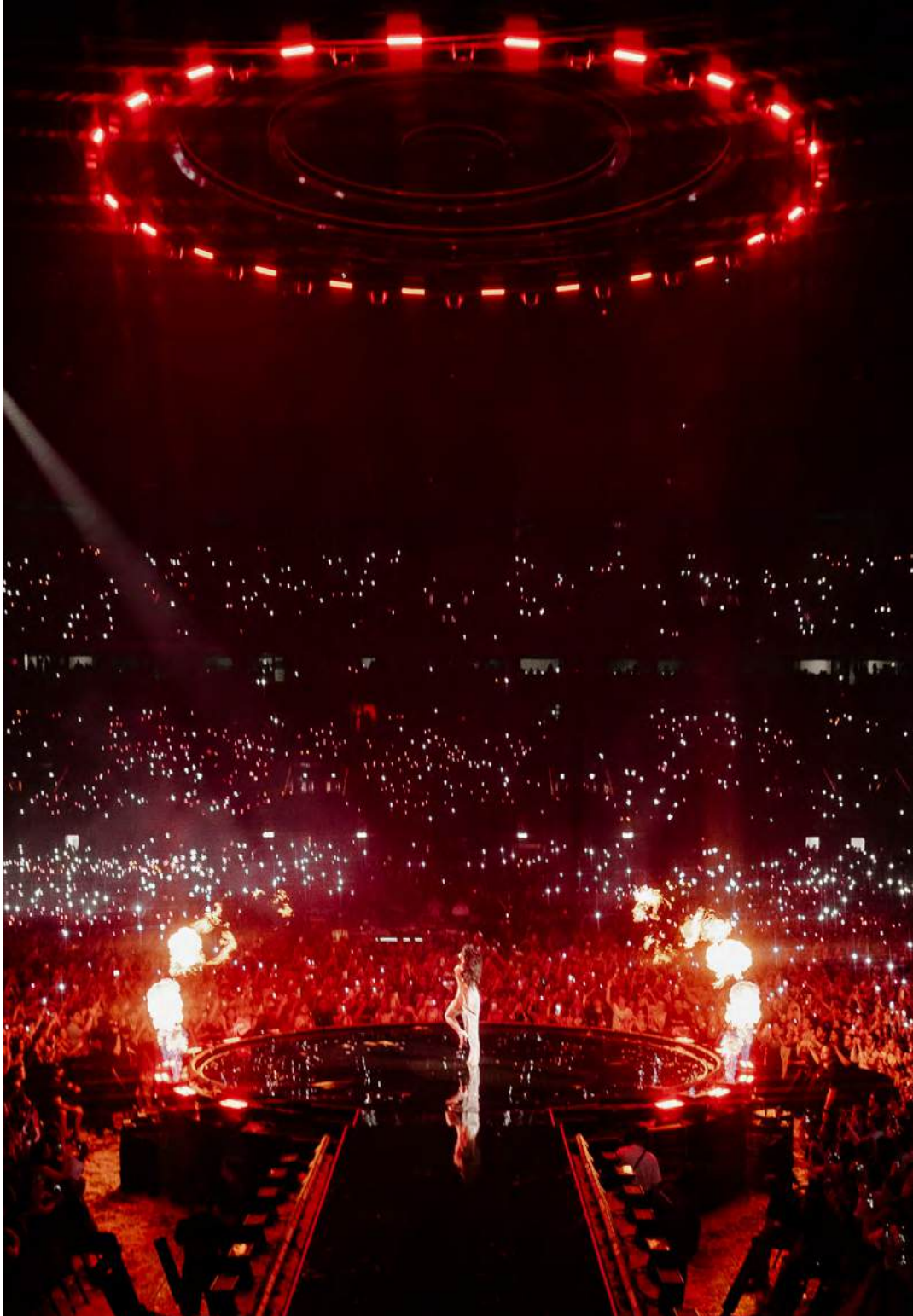
Shure announced the latest addition to its video conferencing portfolio, the IntelliMix Bar Pro, a powerful all-in-one video bar that sets a new standard for scalable, secure, enterprise-ready systems. Engineered to solve IT's everyday challenges in meeting spaces, the IntelliMix Bar Pro delivers exceptional audio and video coverage from a single device, making it ideal for medium to large meeting spaces.

The IntelliMix Bar Pro's innovative, patent-pending camera placement and AI-framing technology enables precise capture of non-verbal cues, creating more engaging and productive meetings for all participants.

As part of the portfolio, Shure also introduced the new Microflex Advance MXA320 Table Array Microphone, designed to be ideal for IT and AV professionals seeking an easy to deploy, low-profile and scalable table solution. Packed with technological innovation, this next evolution of Shure's table array microphone platform offers a reliable networked audio device with minimal out-of-the-box setup for all types of conferencing spaces.



MSA SUPPLIES RADICAL AUTOMATION FOR DUA LIPA TOUR



Denmark-based Motor Stage Automation (MSA) supplied a complete automation system – comprising Moveket VMK-S 500 vari-speed hoists, Moveket V-Motion 40 E-drives, a specially modified Alfasystem M-1020L stage lift and Moveket control – to facilitate several scenic, creative and technical solutions for Dua Lipa’s European ‘Radical Optimism’ tour.

Moving objects included two spectacular eight and five metre diameter ‘astrolabe’ LED rings, six lighting pods, a ‘puck’ on which the artist flew above the stage – while the two astrolabes created kaleidoscope effects above – and the upstage lift, which was utilised extensively for stage access throughout Dua Lipa’s acclaimed and highly visual live performance.

The production design was a collaboration between tour and creative director, Pete Abbott, and show designer Matt Pitman, who also created the lighting scheme. Sam Jackson was head of automation and Ross Maynard was the production manager, co-ordinating all technical departments.

Sam and Ross made the decision to get MSA on board to help provide a tour-ready solution for this elaborate and highly effective staging, and together with MSA’s project manager, Jimmy Johnson, designed a tourable automation system that they could take on the road.

This met all the required EU safety regulations and was fine-tuned to be as practical and portable as possible to assist quick and efficient get-ins and outs.



The astrolabes were custom-made circular set pieces with integrated LED product that flew in and out and pitch and turned seamlessly and elegantly around each other.

Together with the chasing LED pixels, this created a truly three-dimensional visual effect that appeared to be floating in space, as Dua Lipa initially performed below on the B stage at the end of a 40ft thrust emanating from the main stage, and then flew up on the puck to be in the centre of the two circling and rolling astrolabes.

These major WOW moments of the show drama happened during two songs, 'Love Again' and 'Anything for Love' after which the artist was lowered to the floor and the puck flew back out to the roof.

The astrolabes were each rigged on four Moveket VMK-S 500 variable speed hoists and the puck on three.

Two motors each were allocated to the six lighting pods – positioned downstage left and right – loaded with eight moving lights, eight strobes and one laser on each – giving a total of 23 active hoists over the full performance area.

The pod motors were synced to run at the same time and speed, with all operated by George Davies located at FOH using a Moveket Expert-T III console and the Moveket KES operating system.

PosiStageNet (PSN) positional data was sent from the Expert III to the SFX department's grandMA3 control console, and for safety, SFX sets limits at their end, instructing the laser cues not to run unless the pod is stopped in certain pre-defined positions – calculated with some necessary tolerance. If the position did not stop between these parameters, the ES was automatically activated and the lasers did not switch on.

A major challenge for the automation department, explained Sam, was in integrating all the different elements – lighting, video, lasers – located all around the arena, merging the system and running everything back to FOH and George’s operating position next to lighting director Aaron Veness, with tidy and expedient cable management.

The stage lift was positioned upstage centre, and was designed, built and commissioned by MSA based on an Alfasystem stage lift that was modified to meet the specific requirements of this show.

The lifting mechanism was a SERAPID motor-driven chain lift rather than hydraulic. It all ran off a 32A power supply and was compliant with the EN 17206 “machinery for stages” EU standard.

The lift was controlled via a Moveket Basic controller, which was separate from the rest of the moving elements and moved 2.5 metres up and down. The desk allowed different level user access to be set up for get-in and show run, so the set carpenters running it during the show could only execute cues programmed by the automation team. They simply had to push the

joystick up or down, and the lift moved to the precise correct positions.

“It’s very robust”, commented Sam, “it just worked solidly gig-to-gig.”

For the get-ins and outs, the automation was split, with the B Stage going in and being rigged first, followed by the stage overheads and then the overheads further down the room.

The MSA system was designed and thought-through specifically to make this a smooth and swift process, with power supplies and other essential components packaged in racks and dollies so they could be rolled quickly into place.

It was also modular, with no components more than 1.5 metres high, so they fit underneath an aeroplane and were ready for palletisation/air freighting as the tour continued.

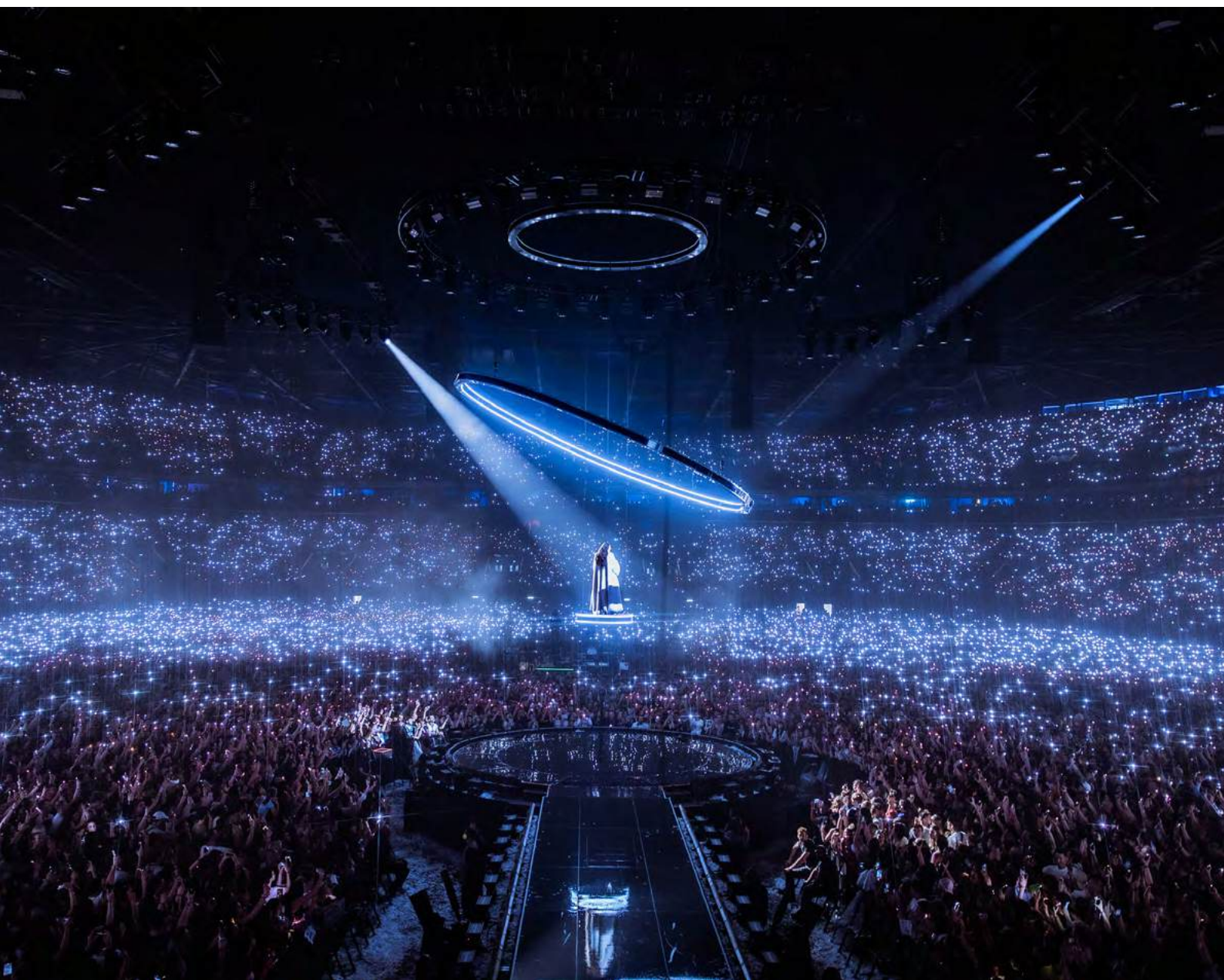
“It was a very collaborative effort between all the technical disciplines,” stated Sam, “with great teamwork involved in co-ordinating lighting, effects and video and automation working so closely.”

In addition to Sam and George, the automation team comprised technicians Alex Hughes and Joseph Rapson.

This tour was also Sam’s first time working with MSA: “I’d heard about them for some time, and their reputation was constantly growing, so we were keen to get them involved with this production, and the service exceeded that of any other automation supplier I’ve previously worked with!”

Jimmy Johnson added, “It was brilliant to be able to supply such a good range of essentially off-the-shelf products with practical solutions to meet the required functional safety for the production team’s design.

“Everyone was a joy to work with. The key to the smooth running of this tour was the communication between Dua Lipa’s production team in their design process and MSA’s ability to offer practical integration solutions for efficient and safe touring.”



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2026 STAGING AND EVENT TRENDS YOU NEED TO KNOW

FROM HERITAGE BUILDS TO TOURING FESTIVALS, HERE'S WHAT'S SHAPING THE YEAR AHEAD.

A new year brings a new wave of expectations across Australia's event landscape. In 2026, organisers are demanding staging that is more creative, more compliant, more adaptable, and more visually expressive than ever before.

From heritage-listed venues to multi-day festivals and national touring events, staging is no longer just a functional requirement, it's a defining part of the event experience.

Here are the key staging trends shaping 2026, illustrated through real Megadeck projects already leading the way.

CUSTOM SHAPES AND SCULPTURAL BUILDS BECOME SIGNATURE FEATURES

The era of square, predictable platforms is fading.

Event designers are increasingly embracing architectural staging, curved, rounded and sculptural builds that enhance the venue and help shape atmosphere from the ground up.

*Example: Sydney Opera House
– Joan Sutherland Theatre*

When the Opera House required a heritage-approved curved step within one of Australia's most iconic performance spaces, Megadeck engineered a solution that blended seamlessly into the architecture.

Individually bonded timber strips were shaped, planed and finished by hand, matching the theatre's exact curvature down to the millimetre.

The result demonstrates how precision-crafted, custom staging is becoming the benchmark for premium venues and cultural spaces.

ACCESSIBILITY IS NOW DESIGNED IN FROM DAY ONE

Accessibility has shifted from a compliance requirement to a core design consideration. In 2026, ramps, viewing platforms and safe performer access are being incorporated at concept stage, ensuring inclusivity for artists, audiences and crew alike.

*Example: Be Bold Festival
– Creative Brimbank and Brimbank City Council*

Megadeck delivered fully accessible staging across multiple performance areas, including ramps, compliant handrails and clear access pathways. The result was a community-focused event where accessibility was seamlessly integrated into the overall design; functional, safe and visually considered.

AUSTRALIAN-MADE ENGINEERING BECOMES THE DEFAULT

With offshore staging copies circulating online, some even using stolen imagery, organisers are

prioritising proven, Australian-made systems that meet national safety standards and local conditions.

Example: Australian Surfing Open

Megadeck staging was constructed directly on shifting beach sand, maintaining stability, weather resistance and structural integrity in a demanding coastal environment. It's a clear demonstration of why Australian engineering matters: tougher materials, safer construction and performance tested in real-world conditions.

PURPOSE-BUILT WATER STAGES FOR UNIQUE EVENT EXPERIENCES

In 2026, memorable events aren't just about bold visuals, they're about executing complex builds safely and precisely in challenging environments. Water-based staging is becoming an increasingly popular way to create standout moments, but it demands expert engineering and rigorous safety planning.

*Example: Custom Pool Stage
– Sporting Club of Sydney*

A 6m x 6m purpose-built stage constructed inside a swimming pool, positioned above the waterline for

a members' Christmas celebration. Engineered for load, stability and safety, the build required specialist planning and the use of commercial divers during installation to meet strict health and safety standards. A clear example of how complex environments demand professional, Australian-engineered staging solutions.

TOURING-READY BUILDS DRIVE MULTI-CITY PROGRAMS

As festivals and major productions expand in scale and complexity, organisers need staging systems that deliver consistency, efficiency and reliability across demanding schedules.

Example: Good Things Festival – National Touring Build

For Good Things Festival, Megadeck delivered modular DJ decks and performance platforms designed to support rapid changeovers and consistent layouts throughout the event. The staging was engineered to perform reliably across consecutive days, support high production loads and fast artist transitions, and maintain a consistent experience despite tight timelines.

Touring-ready and repeatable staging like this is now essential for festivals and large-scale events where reliability matters as much as creativity.

RAPID CHANGEOVERS ARE NON-NEGOTIABLE

With increasingly tight schedules and packed line-ups, staging must allow for quick, safe transitions between acts.

Example: Electric Gardens

Megadeck designed modular instrument risers that enabled DJs and live performers to transition with minimal downtime. These fast-changeover systems kept the program running smoothly across a tightly scheduled event.

STAGING MUST LOOK PERFECT ON CAMERA

With premieres, launches and live events increasingly designed for digital reach, staging must translate flawlessly on camera, not just in the room.

Example: Netflix Wednesday Premiere – Cockatoo Island

For Netflix's Sydney premiere of Wednesday, Megadeck delivered a dramatic, atmospheric staging build in one of the city's most visually distinctive locations. The platform was designed to complement lighting, branding and set design, hold clean lines and strong geometry on camera, and perform under close scrutiny from photography and video crews.

Camera-first staging is now a key driver of design decisions, particularly for high-profile media and entertainment events where visuals live on long after the night ends.

Final Word

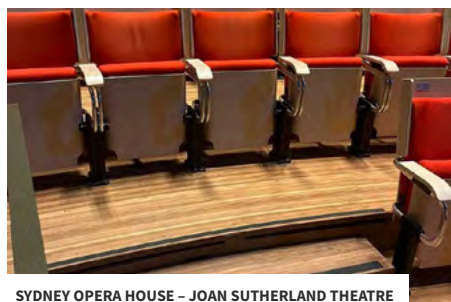
2026 is shaping up to be the year of smarter, safer and more creative staging.

Whether it's a major festival, corporate launch, heritage venue upgrade or national touring program, Megadeck is ready to support the next era of event innovation with Australian-made, modular staging systems built to perform.

Contact Megadeck on 1300 016 528 or email info@megadeckstaging.com



CUSTOM POOL STAGE – SPORTING CLUB OF SYDNEY



SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE – JOAN SUTHERLAND THEATRE



AUSTRALIAN SURFING OPEN - SAM JONES PHOTOGRAPHY



ELECTRIC GARDENS



NETFLIX WEDNESDAY PREMIERE

INTEGRATED STAGE ENGINEERING SYSTEMS



ENHANCE PERFORMANCE CAPABILITY AT WAAPA

Over the past 18 months The P.A. People was asked to deliver a comprehensive package of stage machinery, rigging and curtain track systems across multiple venues at the new Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA), part of Edith Cowan University.

The project is unique in that it covered the fit out of five venues within a new inner-city campus - the Playhouse Theatre, Recital Hall, Flex Theatre, Playhouse Rehearsal Studio and Dance Theatre, with each space requiring systems aligned to its performance and teaching functions. Most equipment was designed and manufactured by The P.A. People, allowing solutions to be customised to each venue while maintaining consistency in operation and safety. The result is a cohesive technical ecosystem designed to support professional-level production while enabling flexibility for training emerging performers and technicians.

Playhouse Theatre

The Playhouse Theatre represents the most technically complex space within the project, incorporating counterweight flying, motorised rigging, an orchestra pit lift and flexible staging infrastructure.

Counterweight System

A 41-line TheatreQuip counterweight fly system provides primary stage flying capability, with front-loading cradles located prompt side and dual rope brake arrangements at stage and mid-gallery levels. Ladder truss battens support lighting and scenery loads, while purpose-built weight storage systems optimise backstage workflow.

Complementing the manual system are six motorised flying lines, including two over-stage pan bars and four forestage bars, powered by six TheatreQuip K600/12 Motorised Pile Hoists, two installed within the fly tower grid and four in the forestage grid. The motorised system provides a low dead of approximately 1100mm above stage

level and travel heights up to 16m, enabling efficient lighting focus and scenic movement.

Control integration was a significant element of the project. A unified control architecture manages both the motorised flying system and the orchestra pit lift via touchscreen pendant interfaces, distributed emergency stop stations and dedicated hoist control cabinets.

Orchestra Pit Lift with Integrated Seating

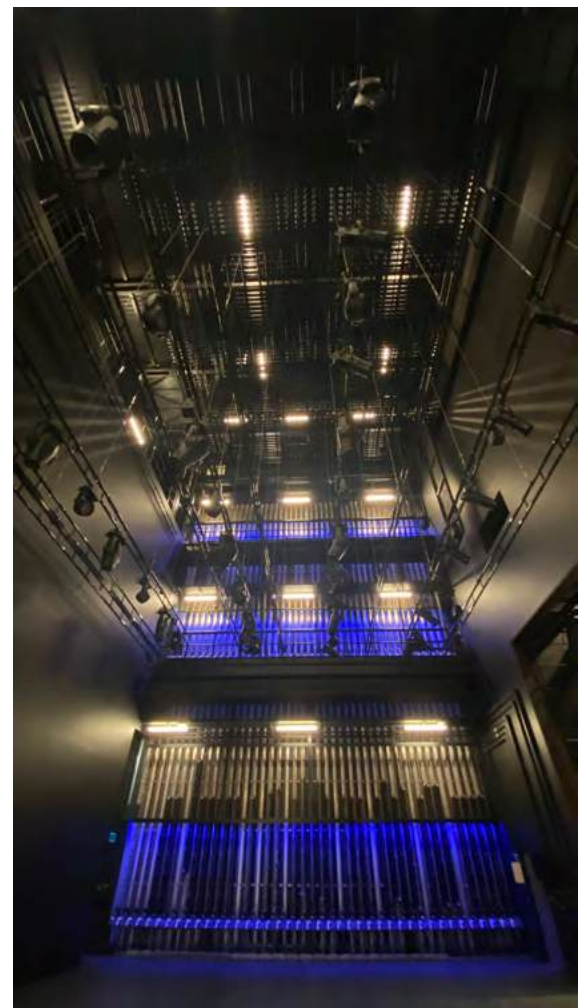
A standout feature of the Playhouse Theatre is the orchestra pit lift, utilising Serapid LinkLift technology to deliver multiple preset configurations including basement, orchestra, seating wagon, auditorium and stage levels.

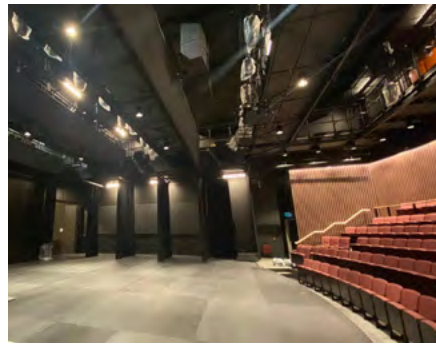
The lift incorporates a seating wagon storage system beneath the stalls, allowing rapid conversion between performance modes. Temporary guide tracks assist alignment during wagon deployment, while integrated safety systems, including safe edges, door sensors and platform hatch monitoring, ensure compliant operation. Folding fascia panels provide visual masking when the lift is positioned below stage level.

Additional Stage Flexibility

Further enhancing production capability, the theatre includes:

- Travelling beam systems for temporary rigging points
- Rigid teaser and tormentor masking panels for proscenium adjustment
- A demountable stage infill system covering approximately 8m x 4m for adaptable staging layouts





Together, these systems significantly expand the creative possibilities available to production teams and students.

Recital Hall

The Recital Hall features nine motorised TheatreQuip PRO BAR lighting bars distributed along the venue length, each rated to 500kg WLL with integrated segregation for power and data services.

Nine TheatreQuip TQP-K600/12 motorised pile hoists are located in a dedicated winch room, reducing acoustic impact within the performance space. Energy chain cable management systems route power, DMX and AV connectivity, interfacing with the building's technical infrastructure through ceiling patching systems.

Preset control positions allow repeatable lighting configurations for both teaching and performance use.

Flex Theatre

The Flex Theatre incorporates a TheatreQuip TensionGrid tensile wire rope access system at gallery level, providing safe technician access to overhead equipment via the 'virtual floor' without the need for elevated work platforms.

Importantly, the grid functions as an access platform rather than a load-bearing surface, with rigging loads supported by an extensive travelling beam network above.

Twenty movable beams with 600kg WLL, combined with cleat rails and multiple curtain track configurations, create a highly adaptable performance environment suited to experimental staging formats typical of contemporary theatre training.

Playhouse Rehearsal Studio and Dance Theatre

The Playhouse Rehearsal Studio features two large truss grids supported by fourteen Moveket D8+ 500Kg chain hoists with integrated load monitoring. Each grid can support distributed loads up to 3,500kg, enabling rehearsal environments that closely replicate mainstage production conditions.

Motor-up rigging orientation improves cable management and removes hoist body weight from load calculations, while four rack-mounted controllers and two plug-in locations allow the hand controller to operate from both floor and gallery levels.

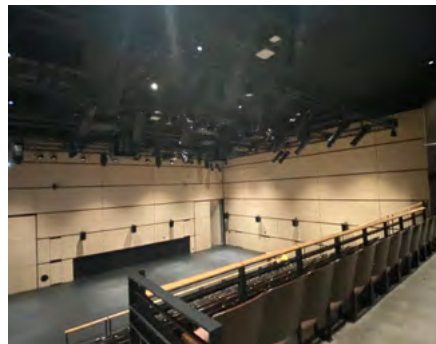
The Dance Theatre includes 16 travelling beams rated to 600kg WLL, cleat rails and flexible mounting infrastructure including strut-based rigging rails. These systems provide adaptable suspension points for lighting, scenic elements and performance equipment.

There was also a full set of drapes to dress the space, including legs, tabs, cyc and scrim, giving opportunity to transform into a small performance space.

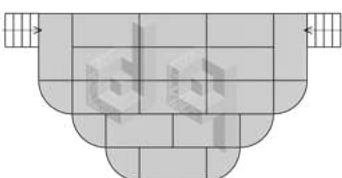
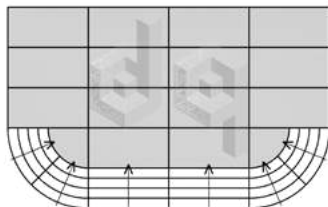
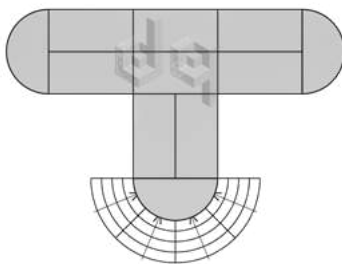
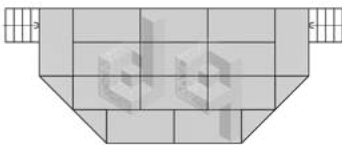
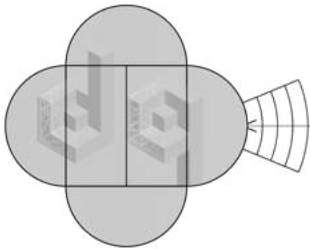
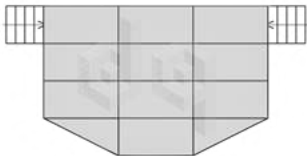
Project Outcome

The installation delivers professional-grade stage engineering systems across WAAPA's new teaching and performance venues, providing flexibility for a wide range of productions while supporting technical training on industry-standard equipment.

The P.A. People was appointed by Multiplex through a competitive tender process, with selection based on capability, experience and the ability to provide customised solutions across multiple venues.



STEP UP YOUR STAGE



Don't settle for a dull, rectangular stage - get creative with your stage design and offer your client a different look

Design Quintessence stages are more than platforms, they're tools to bring your vision to life. DQ's Performer Stage and GT Stage decks come in a range of shapes and sizes, enabling configurations that go beyond standard rectangles. Triangles, squares, curves, full and half circles, hexagons, diamonds, and rectangles with chamfered or curved ends give you the flexibility to design stages that are unique, dynamic, and memorable.

With all their standard stage components, you can create layouts that stand out and enhance your client's experience, from multi-level platforms to visually engaging, performance-ready setups.

Here are six examples of stage configurations using our standard components, showing the possibilities for creativity and impact.

What's new?

Modular Stairs

DQ's new modular stairs take stage access to the next level. Spanning the full width of the stage for continuous integration, they feature under-step mounting points for LED strips and include panels to create opaque black-out or backlit acrylic risers, making the stairs an integral part of the stage design.

Modular Wheelchair Access Ramp

Accessibility is essential. The Modular Wheelchair Access Ramp is regulation-compliant, modular, and portable, adapting to landing heights from 300mm to 900mm for stages, buildings, and elevated areas.

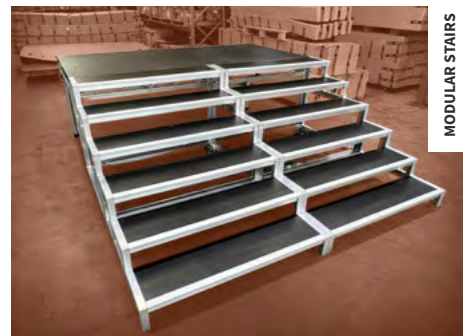
Built with durable staging platforms, the ramp features a 1:14 incline for safe, inclusive access. Its modular design allows left-turn, right-turn, and wraparound configurations, including mid-height landing platforms, while remaining fully compatible with standard stage decks.

Key features include:

- Spacious ramp: 1000mm wide with 1:14 gradient
- Expanded landings: 1800mm-wide for comfortable wheelchair manoeuvring

- Continuous handrails: 50mm curved handrails extending 300mm at start and exit, with 270° post clearance
- Tactile indicators: TGSI hand and floor markers at ramp start and end
- Kick panel: Positioned outside to maintain a 1m clear passage
- Modular heights: 900mm, 750mm, and 450mm, configurable for left or right setups
- Complete kit: Reconfigurable for multiple layouts and events

The Performer Stage, GT Stage, new modular stairs, and Global Truss Modular Access Ramp together provide flexible, safe, and visually impactful solutions, allowing every stage to be creative, accessible, and unforgettable for performers and audiences alike.



MODULAR STAIRS



MODULAR WHEELCHAIR ACCESS RAMP



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THE VENUE THAT CHANGED SYDNEY



In 1969, Sydney's rock-and-roll scene was loud, lawless and running seven nights a week. Clubs like Chequers, the Chevron Hotel and Whisky Au Go Go were packed with American GIs on short 'Rest and Recreation' (R&R) breaks from Vietnam, men spending hard and fast, flipping the coin on a possibly short future life. They poured their pay into booze, birds, and drugs before being shipped back to the war.

The club scene was blokes in tight trousers, Cuban heels and paisley shirts, and girls in minis, eyeliner thick enough to be armour. Go-go dancers did their thing in cages. US Military Police patrolled the streets outside, collecting any colleague unlucky enough to be "bounced", which quite literally involved huge thug-like bouncers cannoning the perp into the gutter, where two MPs would bodily lift him and throw him into a US divvy van.

Television told a different story. Shows like *Bandstand* portrayed a controlled, respectable industry: male performers with short hair, clean-shaven, in suits or neat jackets; women with bouffant or beehive hair, coordinated dresses and immaculate makeup. Everything looked smiling, polite and non-threatening, with no visible

rebellion. Songs were tightly arranged, usually under three minutes, with no extended solos and no grit. It was essentially 1950s television values stretched into the late '60s.

What makes this especially interesting in 1969 is the disconnect. The same musicians who smiled for daytime TV were tearing clubs apart at night with loud blues-rock and proto-hard rock. Billy Thorpe is the classic example: he went from straight pop to raging guitar hero. But for that shift to happen, the scene itself had to change.

Enter Geoff Cantor, today an international film, video and event producer based in Queensland. In 1959 he left the rarefied air of Wesley College in Melbourne, went skiing with Olympic aspirations, then lived in Scandinavia for four years and the

USA for two. In California he became involved with the San Francisco music scene, working as a roadie at the Avalon Ballroom, hauling guitar amps and PA speakers onto the stage. There he learned stage production, psychedelic lighting, sound setup and event management. He returned to Australia in 1968.

Geoff produced several shows in Sydney at Paddington Town Hall but ran into a basic problem: janitors wanted bands out by 11.30pm. Bands hated playing covers, and halls were suffocatingly rule-bound. Typical of the era, many hall attendants were war retirees and often former officers. They loathed these young bands. The mood was right for something new.

Borrowing five grand from his surgeon father, Geoff opened The Arts Factory at 158 Goulburn Street. It was an empty factory with a dividing wall down the middle. The Federal Police were just around the corner.

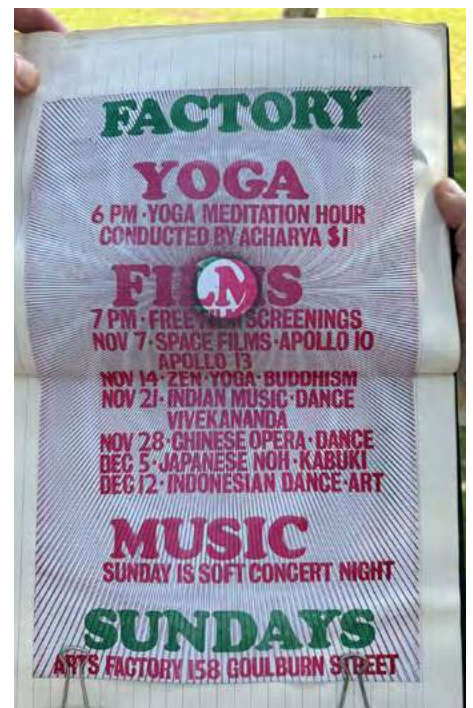
Michael Batchelor helped hose the place out, clean it up and set it running, stage with a 360-degree screen on one side, flea market on the other. A young Peter Noble (later of Bluesfest) had a stall selling juice, alongside candles and other hippie paraphernalia. Parachutes hung from the ceiling, with old rugs and cushions scattered across the floor.

Police interest was constant. Large crowds of long-hairs always attracted attention, but everyone knew who the interlopers were. "They had shiny shoes under their flares," Geoff chortled.

The programming was eclectic: poetry on Tuesdays, auditions on Wednesdays, shows Thursday through Sunday. Rising bands made their name there; Tully, Nutwood Rug, the La De Da's from New Zealand, Chain, Taman Shud. Doug Parkinson converted his career from pop to rock. A 15-year-old girl from Dover Heights was invited onstage to sing for the first time with a jazz-fusion band called Sun. Her name was Renée Geyer. Barry Leef and Bakery ripped the roof off on their first foray from Perth; Leef later joined Frank Zappa's band.

It was a time of cultural upheaval. Australia dragged behind the free-love, hippie revolution that began in San Francisco and climaxed with Woodstock in upstate New York. Indian swami influences rose, the Hare Krishna movement blossomed, orange robes and drums on the street everywhere, and The Pill transformed society. Meanwhile, 19-year-olds were balloted into conscription; two numbers were drawn each month, and if your birthday came up, off you went to Puckapunyal or Kapooka for army training. Then into the jungles of Vietnam on a Qantas 707. They WERE only 19.

A mass protest movement against conscription emerged, known as the Moratorium, running parallel to venues like the Arts Factory. It drew on the same energy; distrust of authority and a rejection of inherited values. Musicians, artists and audiences moved fluidly between clubs, communes and protest marches.



Conscientious objection to conscription frequently led to imprisonment in Australia, and hippies were at the forefront of both protest and broader anti-establishment resistance. Society was changing under black-and-white television and heavy censorship, in a culture still uneasy with dissent and quick to punish those who stepped outside the line.

At The Arts Factory, a psychedelic 'liquid' light show was pioneered by Michael Batchelor. On a scaffold platform, Batchelor and several hippies, usually in a chemically altered state, operated overhead projectors using paired Pyrex dishes filled with water- and oil-based dyes. Moving the dishes produced swirling colour patterns, ideally in time with the music.

Each operator controlled a section of screen, some overlapping. Over the top of this, mad genius Eddie Van Der Madden projected "de machines": a slide projector with its heat filter removed to melt slides; polarising plastic sheets rotating against static images; old turntables spinning prisms to throw fractured beams through spotlights.

All this visual chaos happened around the room while the band played under a single static spotlight. Lighting bands wasn't yet a thing. A few years later Sherbet, Skyhooks and Hush would pioneer touring lighting rigs.

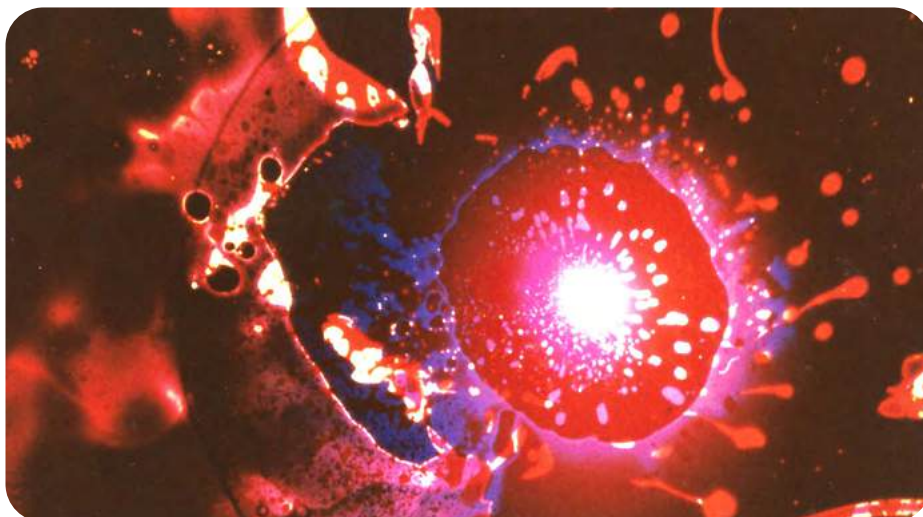
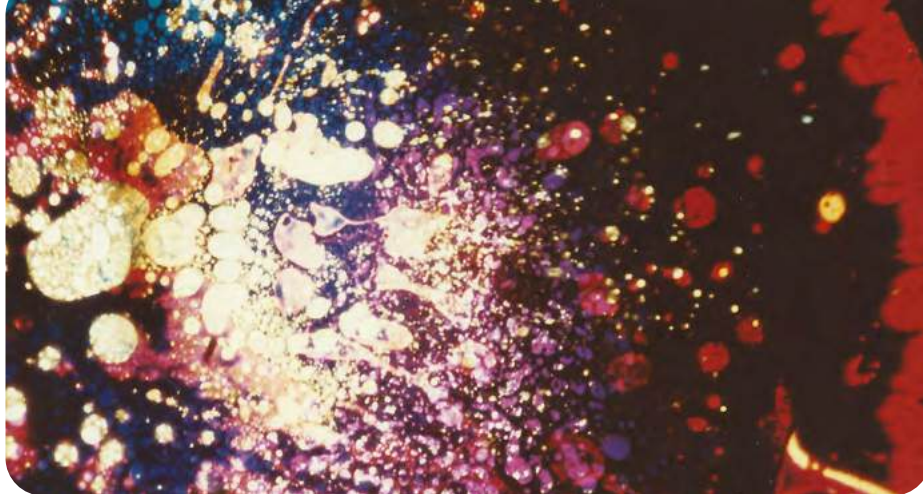
There was no house PA. Bands arrived in Kombis, Transits or Commers with their backline and a column PA; four 12-inch speakers, a single four- or six-channel head, rudimentary rotary controls and a built-in 150-watt valve or transistor amp. The La De Da's arrived one night straight from a double; sweaty roadie Michael Chugg lugged their gear inside. Company Caine had radio hits; their roadie was better dressed than anyone else. Roger Davies, who would go on to manage Joe Cocker, Sade, Cher, Tina Turner and Pink, was already around.

Towards the end of The Factory's life, modern Jands PA systems occasionally appeared, horn-loaded speakers, separate mixers and amplifiers, a glimpse of what was coming.

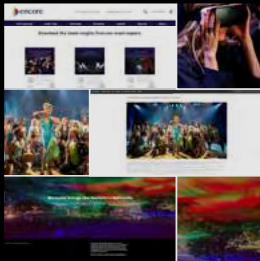
Geoff was exhausted by November 1971 and departed overseas for a short break, as he put it, after six years of sex, drugs and rock and roll. By then the scene had changed: bikers were turning up, sharpies and skinheads were around, violence was escalating. Someone took a gunshot at the front of the building. Johnny Allen stepped in to run the venue for a few months, a bouncer was skimming money, the energy ebbed away, and The Factory shut its doors.

"The dream is that every man is your brother, that the forces underlying the universe are basically good. Whether the dream is reality, or reality is a dream, is for us to live out," Johnny wrote in his farewell note.

Johnny went on to create the Aquarius Festival at Nimbin, and the counterculture that had burned hot and fast in the city dissolved into something looser and harder to hold. The Factory was gone, but the idea behind it, that music, freedom and community might briefly align, didn't disappear. For some it became memory, for others myth. Either way, the dream had run its course, leaving behind stories, scars, and the sense that, for a moment, however chaotic, something real had happened.



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ASTERA QUIKPUNCH



The Astera QuikPunch is an IP65 rated, single source 5" LED Fresnel, but delivers much, much more.

For those familiar, it is a bigger, more powerful version of the Astera QuikSpot. I do wonder if we will see yet a bigger version in the future, similar in size to the AX10.

If you were looking at this light as a tech or a gaffer wanting a quick, easy, convenient and high-end static LED solution, QuikPunch ticks just about all the boxes.

Construction

As it's IP65 rated it does have a bit of weight to it at 6.5kg. Dimensions are 236mm x 196mm x 296mm. The QuikPunch is a reasonably compact fixture. It is very easy for one person to carry and set up, and can be run off battery or mains power.

They have their own case, called the Astera PrepBox. The PrepBox and Charging Plate ties in and allows you to store, charge and prep (program, set addresses and parameters) all in one place. A lot of thought has been put into how these lights are stored and transported too.

It takes five and a half hours to do a full charge, which is pretty reasonable. You could almost charge them for the day and run them at night. You get four and a half hours run time on maximum output. Output can be adjusted depending on how long you would like it to run for. Maximum run time is at about 20 hours.



QUIKTURN OFF

QUIKTURN ON



PREPBOX

We can create amber by mixing red and green, so why have amber LEDs in additive colour mixing?

We use amber in additive LED colour mixing to create a warm white. Mixing amber and blue in varying proportions gives a cleaner range of colour temperatures when compared to getting amber from two sources (mixing red and green).



Optics, Colour and Brightness

The Astera QuikPunch is a single source LED, exactly what you want. It is RGBMA (Red, Green, Blue, Mint, Amber) additive colour mixing, just like the rest of the Astera range. It has a CRI of greater than 96 and produces 8000 lux at three metres.

The light draws 75W of power, with a maximum power draw of 100W. The output it gives is the equivalent of a 650W tungsten fixture. The efficiency is impressive, which is a bit easier to forget when you are running lights on batteries. The output won't blow you away, but if you were to run them off mains power, you would get 24 to a circuit.

The QuikPunch is bright - at its widest its 60° beam angle makes it an excellent wash light to evenly lit large surfaces like a stage or large set piece. Going down to its narrowest at 13 degrees it can give a good spot. (Typical par zoom range is from about 17°-50°. Typical Fresnel zoom range is about 15°-65°). To add to this, it also features an 8-way barn door that you can use to shape the light.

It can also work as an old school 650W Fresnel spotlight when the EdgeSoftener filter is added. It may not sound like much, but having a light that can behave like a traditional Fresnel with the convenience that the QuikSpot brings really opens up a world of options.

If you are looking at this light as a lighting designer or a technical director who is after high quality, uniform lighting, QuikPunch ticks all the boxes.

Applications and Features

When reviewing any Astera fixture, you have to talk about it as part of the Astera ecosystem. The ecosystem does give you a lot of support and certainty. The ecosystem features accessories, an app, and the same light engine across the range.

Considerable time has been spent developing convenient mounting and stand systems for the QuikPunch. A few highlights include a removeable yoke, folding feet, a kickstand, a TrackPin and a TrackSpigot. These are all very much aimed at the TV, film and corporate markets but would be handy for all applications.

THE SPECS

Astera QuikPunch

LED engine: Titan LED Engine

Colours: RGB Mint Amber

CRI (Ra)/ LCI 3200-6500K
(OutputGain disabled): ≥96

Beam angle: 13°-60°

Field angle: 20°-75°

Strobe: 0-25Hz

Weight: 6.567kg

Dimensions: (L x W x D)
237.5mm x 188mm x 309mm

One of my favourite features is, the TiltMeter. It's an option in the onboard display menus that shows the tilt angle of the fixture as you are hanging it or placing it on the floor.

Control and Programming

The Astera QuikPunch includes LumenRadio's wireless DMX and RDM, making for easy integration with consoles and other control surfaces. The DMX patch is simple to configure, assign profiles, starting addresses and fixture numbers when using the PrepBox or the AsteraApp.

Part of the Astera ecosystem is the AsteraApp, which gives you full control over the QuikPunch fixtures as well as any other Astera fixtures you are running. You can set the lights up and monitor them using the app. You can also control them using the Astera White or FX Remote. The QuikPunch also has an onboard menu.

QuikPunch is wireless for both power and data, but can be wired if need be with 5-pin XLR in and out. 'If you can run copper, run copper' has long been the mantra when dealing with wireless technology, but those who have used the Astera wireless set up will attest to its reliability. The wireless capabilities are not just an add-on, but a core component when developing these fixtures.

Few companies have invested so much and promoted their lights as battery powered and wireless as Astera have. They do a fantastic job with both, but I would be curious to know what percentage of Astera users run them wirelessly or on mains power and trusty 5-pin DMX.

Verdict

You could say QuikPunch is borderline over engineered for many of your more simple applications but if you are after the best of the best, don't go past this. It's not only a solid investment, but also a fixture every event, film, or broadcast crew will want on set.

Part of me thinks that Astera should be making moving lights; they would sell like hotcakes. Another part of me says they have nailed their niche. The QuikPunch only furthers Astera's reputation as producing some of the best quality static LED fixtures on the market.

Product Info:

astera-led.com/products/quikpunch

Distributor Australia and New Zealand:
www.ulagroup.com



STAGECRAFT

Ugg and Dugg swept a patch in the dirt. Ugg transcribed an arc in the ground with a sharp stick. On one side, an audience; on the other, a performance space. Dugg stood tall and made the first moves of re-enacting today's hunt. They had spears for props, feathers and leaves for costumes and a hide on a stick for the quarry.

Viewers were transfixed as Ugg, Dugg, and assistant Zog used that space to convey not just the mechanical motions of that day's adventure, but the waiting, the tension, the careful pacing and placement of each step, culminating in the almighty rush of the final chase. A performance highlighting success for the hunters and awe from the gallery.

These cave-dwelling proto-humans had built a stage from scratch, using what they could, to define that area and using craft to add to the drama of their story.

Back to the future

Millenia later, a dishevelled black clad roadie, eyes crusty from lack of sleep, guts gurgling from rubbish road food and cheap coffee, pulls the truck into the venue lot. The rest of the crew start rolling up, looking no more salubrious but ready for action anyway.

Cracking the doors to the club, they wander into the gloom and quickly size up the space. Where

is the main stage area, and will the act fit? If so, is the stage robust enough? No on either count - then dig the risers from the truck and start cobbling together a space to play for the day. Gaffa tape, tek screws and even 6" nails are your friends here. Pallets, roadcases, random crap from the venue junk heap - if they fit and will be strong enough, they are all valid additions to the construction of a sturdy performance platform.

Around this, each tech/dept looks at where they can hang/stack the PA; whether it's worth a full lightshow today or a stripped-down version to deal with lack of height or floor space? Power - how much and where? Monitor land VS stage techs - who gets L or R? FoH - where is safe, with good sound and sight lines?

Good venues have all this sorted in advance, leaving crew to easily and efficiently go through their normal setup routines. That's when they have the time and energy to execute the full breadth of their stagecraft expertise.

THE ARTFORM





What is stagecraft?

Many people see stagecraft as an umbrella term for the technical aspects of producing an entertainment event. Scenery, wardrobe, props and makeup predate lighting, sound and video by eras, but all are regularly defined as part of stagecraft. As such, these are rightly considered trades or crafts.

I see it as much more than just a collection of technical disciplines. To me, true stagecraft is an artform. Like all arts, basic technique and procedure need practice before competency. It then takes much longer to achieve mastery, but when this prowess shines it is a joy to watch.

I had the great pleasure of touring Australia with Peter Gabriel in 1994, and he spent hours every day refining all sorts of aspects of the show. One day, a tweak to a musical arrangement; the next day moving a floor light by inches at a time until it was 'just so'. A perfectionist, for sure, but it showed in the slickness of the final product. Even 10 months into a tour, he was still polishing the gem on a daily basis.

Elevated stagecraft is found in attention to detail, in taking great pride in what you do, and care with all your actions as you practice your craft. If you make everything you do about enhancing the show, you become an integral part of it.

Knowing your craft intimately, you can anticipate many problems before they arise. Some you can't, but stagecraft mastery will help you to make quick decisions and solve issues efficiently when they do occur. Ideally, doing so in a way that the audience is either none the wiser, or thinks it's a part of the act.

Check the fine print

After testing all lines, cleaning up the cables doesn't take long and can save you crucial seconds when something goes wrong during showtime. Taking a few moments to tram-track all exposed lines, coil excess cable neatly, cover and tape trip hazards makes your work look professional. It also saves valuable seconds during an emergency troubleshoot.

Another critical factor is knowing what goes where. You will know this because you did label EVERYTHING way before showtime. Right? Any time saved up front by not doing this, now gets multiplied and amplified just when stress levels are at their peak.

Stagecraft means:

Audio has to sound good, lights and video need to look good, and instruments need to be in tune, but it is the physical set that audiences first experience. The room and stage environment establish the vibe as soon as doors are thrown open. It doesn't take much to pull riser dressings sharp and tight or throw a drape over some visual eyesore. Those little 1%-ers all add up.

Apart from basic aesthetics, the main reason to hide or obfuscate the mechanics behind a show is to maintain an illusion for the audience. Not every show has elaborate kabuki drops or grand reveals but there is art in hiding special effects until they are needed. Disguising distracting mechanics also keeps audience focus on the act, not the strings being pulled behind it.

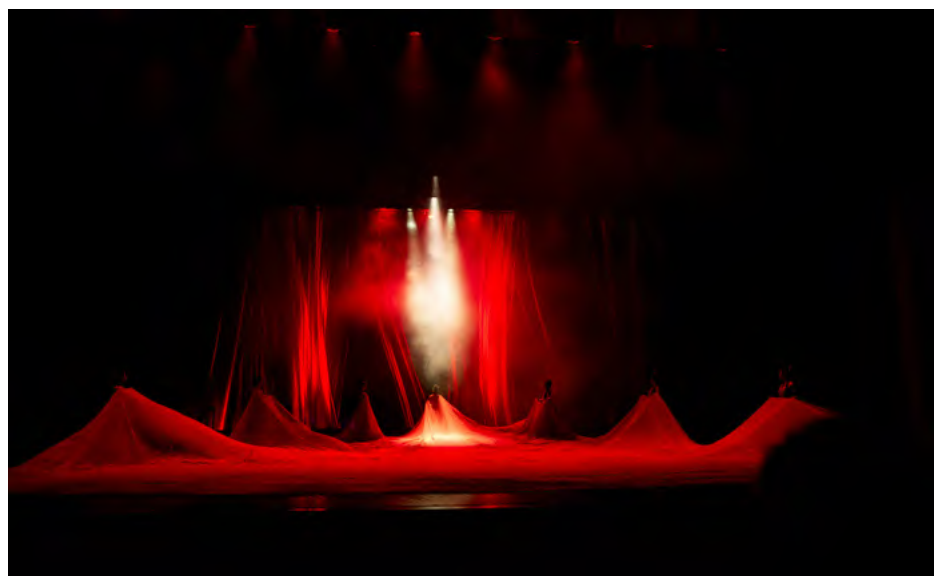
Performers get the sneak peek behind the curtain before the punters, but it is their domain after all. Good tech crew understand this and make every effort to know exactly how their artists like their performance space laid out. The top tier crew go one further, endlessly finding ways to improve on this.

An authentic sign of stagecraft success is having the artist wander in at soundcheck and go "Wow, that looks really sharp. I can feel a good night coming on." This one happened to me at the Ettamogah Pub (also '90s). I can't remember how I ended up there, or whose production employed me to run the lights and set the stage, but I vividly remember those words from Matt Moffit (solo or Matt Finish - I remember not) when he walked into the room.

After the show, he sought me out to again complement my level of proficiency. Something along the lines of: "Your control of stagecraft is sublime. Thank you for taking the care to do things so well." Coming from someone who also showed obvious care in honing his craft, this was high praise indeed.

Matt passed suddenly in 2003. We only did the one gig together and it was a mutual joy. I don't know what he would have thought of the prehistoric analogies above, but I'm sure he would have appreciated their dedication to stagecraft.

The size of the stage is unimportant compared to the attitude of an artist truly in control of their craft.





WHEN OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

SNIPPETS FROM THE ARCHIVES OF A BYGONE ERA

When I left school on my final day, there was no departing ceremony and no well wishes or handshakes from the teachers. The school hadn't bothered organising a school formal, nor did they keep student records or organise reunions. When the final bell rang, I just walked out and never returned. Without a serious career in mind, I joined the NSW Government Railways as a junior clerk, and after those mind-numbing 18 months, I wandered through a succession of meaningless jobs for the next 10 years, waiting for opportunity to knock.

Passing the Intermediate Certificate in 1964 allowed me to leave the drudgery of school life at age 15. It was the era of Professor Harry Messel, who was the visionary architect of the famous blue science book introduced in the same year. The 'Messel Blue Book' contained 879 pages of integrated physics, chemistry, biology, and geology, and it included a graphic image of a dissected rat, for which it is notoriously remembered. However, it was Chapter 14, Magnetism and Electricity, that piqued my interest, and despite my dogged resistance to most things academic, this intrigue would eventually lure me into a lifelong career in audio, broadcast, and music technology.

I remember our science teacher being as nonplussed about the contents of the Blue Book as the students were. He would tentatively turn the pages as if dreading what intricacies he would unfold next, taking us into the worlds of carbon chemistry, plant biology, and other complexities. It would be mid-year before he got to the chapter on magnetism and electricity, where a diagram of an electric bell circuit was displayed. This was

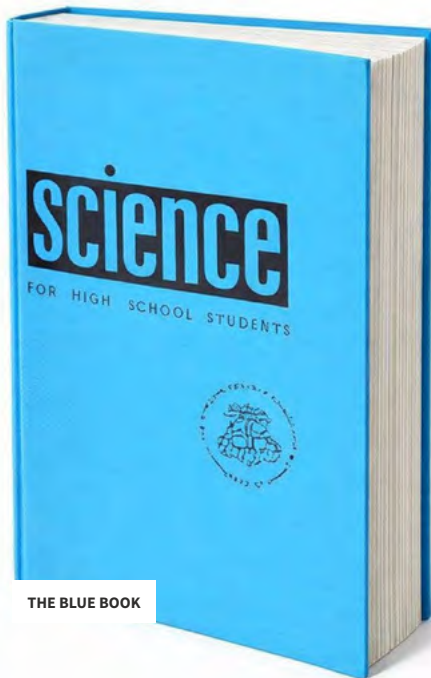
a project that I was obsessed with, and I could hardly wait for the teacher to assign the task of building it to the class. However, when he finally got to that magical page, he just flicked over it and said something like, "Well, we won't be bothering with any of that." I was devastated! At the time, I didn't realise that the electrical signal that activated the bell operated on the same principle as the analogue audio that would eventually define my career.

I'd left my last band, a pub rock band, in 1981, and I was amassing PA equipment to start a hire business. In the years since, it seems that every member of that band has formed a different view as to why I quit, and I'm also a bit mystified. Two of the band members were licensed electricians; they even named the band Main Earth. I always thought that my role as the lead singer was more of an act than a musical expression, and I felt that the well was running dry. I'd also become interested in the technical side of sound reinforcement, but alas, that job was firmly in the hands of my two electrician band mates. There were never any disputes about this, but I was

becoming obsessive about putting together my own PA system, and to deviate from the lowly paid gigs that resulted from seven years of playing in bands, this was going to be my venture into a full-time profession, and I made a vow never to stray too far from the industry.

Over the next 10 years, the PA hire venture shape-shifted from sound engineering into sound and lighting installation, entertainment and venue management, band management, one-man-band performances, karaoke hire and hosting, and eventually the graveyard of a large contingent of music industry personnel, sales. I won't dwell on my lifelong disdain for the mundane life of a sales representative; perhaps watch *Seize the Day* starring Robin Williams, or Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*.

Looking back, whether these ventures were planned or opportunistic depends on how one answers the proverbial knock at the door when opportunity knocks. I never had the slightest inkling to play guitar; it came about as an essential need after my songwriting partner departed



THE BLUE BOOK

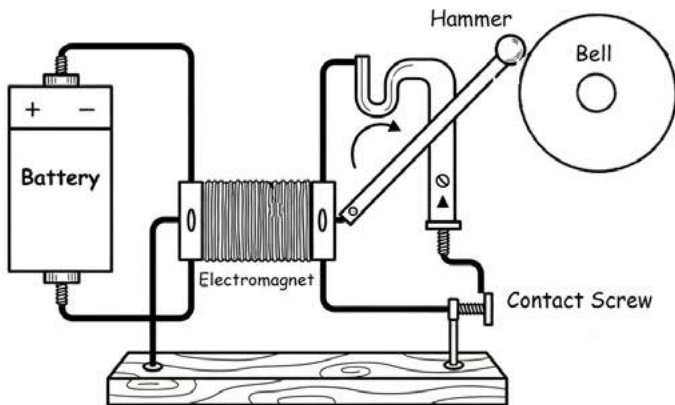
interstate for an employment opportunity. This created the need for me to learn guitar, which eventually led me into music performance and then the PA hire business, where I eventually ended up doing sound for the Chet Reynolds Band. Chet had been a regular performer on The Mike Walsh Show, The Midday Show with Ray Martin, and The Don Lane Show. After Chet became ill and the group disbanded, I decided to investigate employment opportunities in the fledgling rock 'n' roll business in the Philippines.

One morning, while nursing a hangover and sipping coffee in a Manila bar, I was invited by the owner to sit in at a card game. One of the players was planning to feature rock 'n' roll bands in a new nightclub venture, and he happened to ask me what I did for a living. When I told him I was in sound and lighting, his face lit up. It seemed that opportunity had finally knocked at my door, and I spent the next four years in the Philippines in sound and lighting and entertainment management.

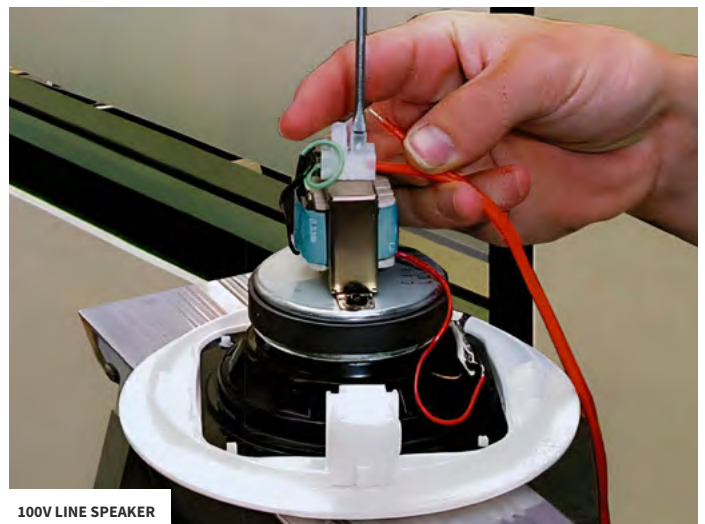
Back in Australia in the late 1980s, it was desperation that led me into sales. During my

second sales position interview, the CEO of Audio Telex handed me their catalogue, which was bristling with Symetrix audio processors. Audio Telex had just acquired the Symetrix distributorship, and I was asked if I had any grasp of their audio processing equipment, which consisted of high-performance outboard equipment, including voice processors with quality preamps and EQ, compressor limiters, and SPL computers. I arrogantly blurted out that I not only understood the equipment but that I could set it up and operate it.

Audio Telex was primarily the distributor of 100V line systems, often referred to as high impedance, and they were now additionally entering the world of low impedance systems as used in the music industry. Scanning the catalogue, I noticed images of transformers attached to several of the speakers, and having zero knowledge of 100V line systems, I was very close to asking why transformers were attached to the speakers. Fortunately, a little voice in my head said, "Shut up, you've got the job; don't put your big foot in your mouth."



ELECTRIC BELL CIRCUIT



100V LINE SPEAKER

Are you concerned about your mate's mental health?

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

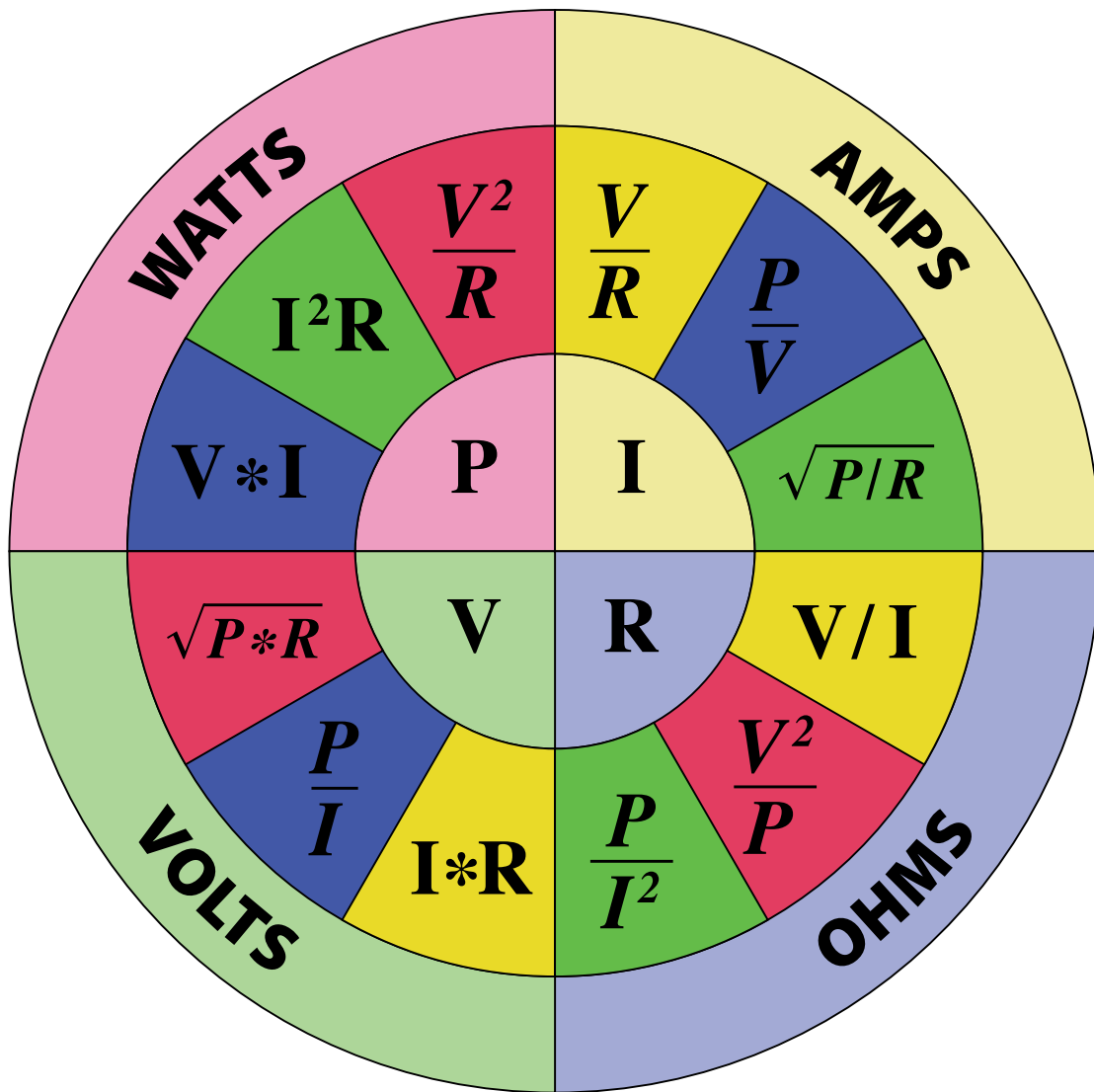
Support those around you and register for free mental health training



www.entertainmentassist.org.au

Supporting the mental health of Australian entertainment industry workers

¹Passion, Pride, Pitfalls Dec 2014



OHM'S LAW PIE CHART INCLUDING JOULE'S LAW

Since I was now the pseudo low-impedance techno-head of the sales staff, I thought I'd better figure out how the 100V line high-impedance world worked; however, the technology sounded a lot like Ohm's Law, which I had a basic knowledge of. The problem was that Ohm's Law basically dealt with voltage (V), current (I), and resistance (R). I couldn't find anything under power (P), which was the output wattage of the amplifier. I did learn that if you exceeded the wattage of the power amplifier by incorrectly tapping the speaker's transformers, you could blow up the whole shooting match, which was often the case with inexperienced installers that I had to deal with.

Thankfully, a Manchester brewer, James Joule, had discovered in 1840 that the heat produced by an electric current was proportional to the square of the current multiplied by the resistance. Not bad for a beer brewer. But the complexity of that jargon, which kept most of the sales staff away from the technical aspects, gave me the opportunity to explore and understand the simplicity of Ohm's Law and retain my position as a pseudo techno-head for over five years.

I often wondered how three guys, who worked in different areas of physics and who never worked together, became factored into Ohm's Law. James Watt worked on steam engines and

horsepower, Georg Ohm worked on voltage, current, and resistance, and James Joule worked on the relationship between heat, electricity, and mechanical work. However, it was Joule's Law that consummated the ménage à trois, which is now represented on the Ohm's Law pie chart.

The traditional 'over the hill' age in Australia used to be 40 years of age, and getting a 'boob cake' presented to me at my 40th birthday party signified a kind of last hurrah for my chances to again find romance. This milestone also rendered me virtually unemployable and stuck in sales, where I persevered, as my prime motivation was that I was saving and planning to build my dream house in Port Stephens, NSW. Fortunately, the digital age of computers, audiovisual, and video conferencing was evolving at an exponential speed, and no opportunity had ever knocked louder at my door. So, I was able to transition into audiovisual and audiovisual management, where I spent the next six years.

When the house in Port Stephens was built to 'lock-up' stage in 2002, it provided an almost perfect sea change. But while Newcastle was the nearest metropolitan hub, its urban core was navigating a post-industrial lull at the time. With the CBD essentially dormant, my prospects of landing a corporate audiovisual role were about as

likely as a slow sheep in a shearing shed escaping the clippers.

I've made many jokes in the past as to how in 2003 I became the editor of Broadcast Engineering News, including that I was looking under the Js for janitor, and a journalist position caught my eye. The truth is that it was a tongue-in-cheek application, where I subsequently had to bluff my way through the first two interviews before I was finally asked to submit evidence of my writing ability. I submitted a comedy screenplay, and the newly appointed publisher, who didn't have a broadcast background, liked it, and he hired me. Opportunity sometimes knocks in strange ways.

I often reflect on the flak I took from all quarters for not having a regular job in those interim years. I was even admonished by a mate's father who'd spent his entire life as a postal worker sorting mail. My first fiancée once referred to my obsession with learning guitar and wanting to join a band as 'childish'. "My brother wanted to be a train driver," she once scoffed. And she would often remind me that opportunity would never knock at my door. My retort, which virtually ended the relationship, was, "Did you know that my electric guitar cost more than your engagement ring?" Try that one, guys, and see how well it goes down.



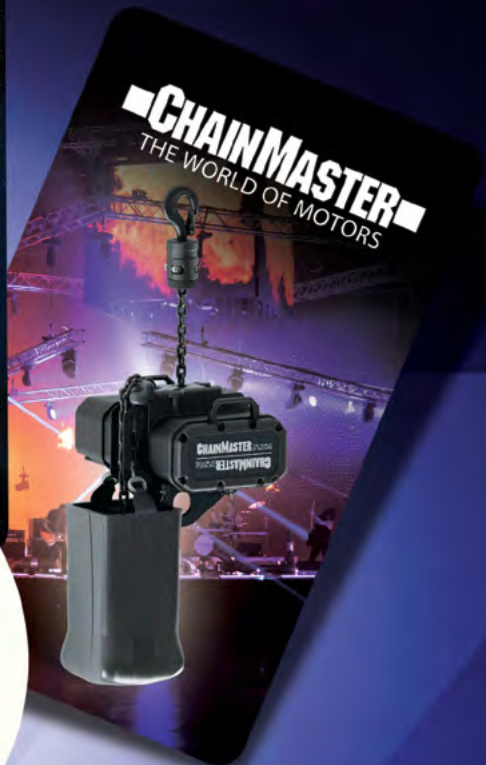
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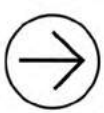
For more information or to become a member, please contact at julie@aceta.org.au

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