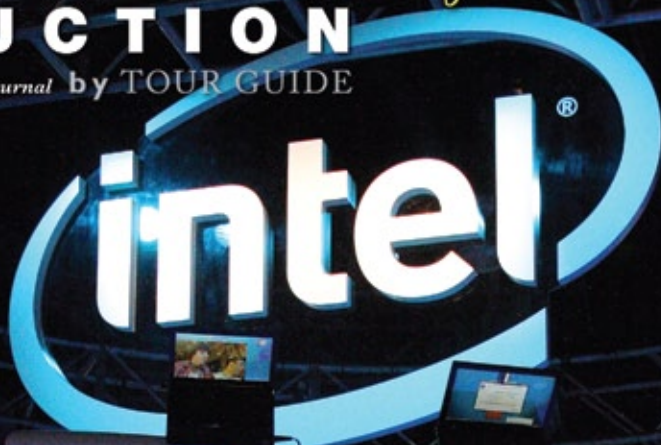


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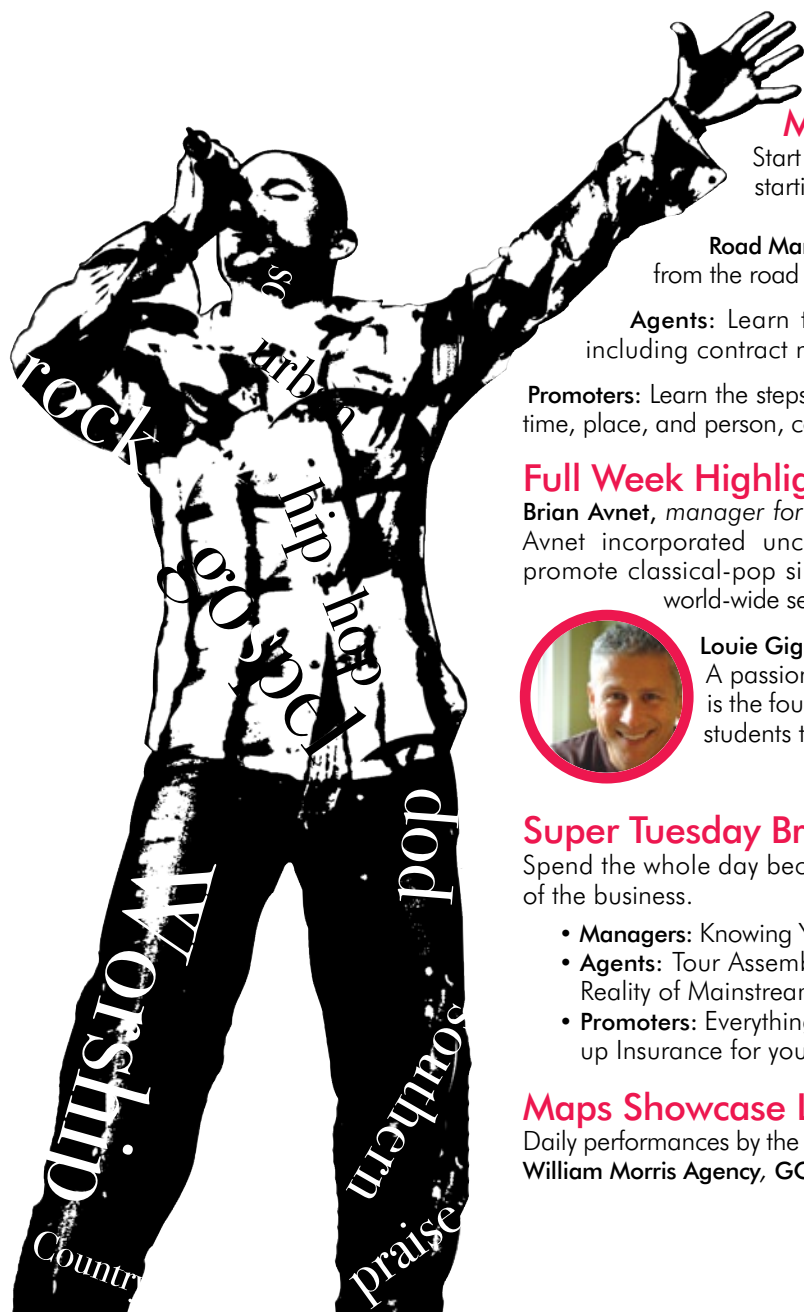
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Dear Readers,

As you can see from our feature on the Consumer Electronics Show, we are still expanding our coverage to include special events and corporate productions. I would remind our readers that this is not a retreat from our coverage of concert touring, but rather a broadening of our coverage of mobile production to include all live events that are produced by professional companies and personnel. CES, as you will read, is a "doozie." Clearly, this show is one of the biggest and most complex presentations each year. Last year, we covered the Detroit Auto Show, and this event is clearly in that league.

In addition to the problems the end of winter delivered to those on the road, the price of fuel added financial worry to the mix. With oil over \$100 a barrel, profit margins are getting tight for everyone. Because of that, we will also be moving to curb some of our added expenses by initiating a shipping and handling fee for the monthly magazine as well as our annual directories. After nearly ten years, we have finally reached the point where we must ask our readers to help offset the ever increasing cost of postage, printing and operations. Don't worry, we will not be asking a lot, just enough to keep things rolling for all of us.

Also, we would like to say Bon Voyage to our Brother, Michael Waddell, who has been a part of this family for over ten years. Michael has been itching to take to the road for a long time, and our loss will be the industry's gain. Those of you who know us already know how very much he has meant to our organization, the industry and to me, personally. Michael is one of the most honest and hard-working men I have ever had the pleasure to know. The Irish prayer goes out to you Michael and may that wind always be at your back.

Larry Smith

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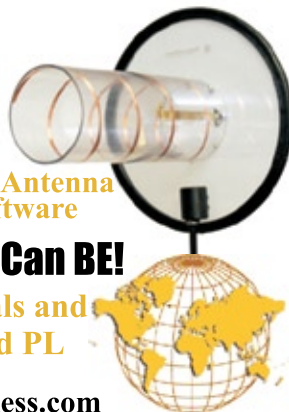


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ROBE

BOB DYLAN TOURS North America With Soundcraft Vi6™

With die-hard Dylan fans celebrating his current late-career renaissance, the folk legend's onward-rolling Never Ending Tour continues to delight concertgoers both familiar with and new to the artist's decades-spanning work. For the tour's most recent North American leg, which featured solo performances from the inimitable Elvis Costello as the opening act, FOH Engineer Pablo Wheeler requested a Soundcraft Vi6™ digital live sound console. Escondido, California-based Sound Image, which has been supplying PA systems for Dylan's tours for the past seven years now, was happy to oblige.



"I had used the Vi6 digital mixer last August during tour dates in New Zealand," recalls Wheeler, who has been handling FOH for Dylan for more than a decade. "So, when the time came for the North American dates, the Vi6 was my first choice. Since Sound Image had a Vi6 in its inventory, the rest fell into place. The Vi6 is ergonomically very simple to use, thanks to the Vistonics II™ interface, which is one of the major selling points for the console.

"But really, it's about the sound! I like the way the Vi6 sounds. The dynamics sections, in particular, are very nice – the Soundcraft-designed console seems to have inherited a lot from its Studer ancestry. Also, the built-in Lexicon effects are quite useful," continues Wheeler. Outstanding sound quality is assured through a combination of Soundcraft ultra-low noise analog mic pre-amp designs linked to an advanced 40-bit DSP engine developed by Studer.

"I was working with 40+ input channels from Dylan's five-piece band," the FOH engineer describes. "I kept all of the major sources on the Vi6's top layer, with the second layer used for echo returns and the like. I could also remap important channels to the center of the console, much like an analog board. The Vi6 is the only digital console I



photo: Soundcraft Vi6™

have come across that incorporates a very analog-like layout."

The seasoned FOH engineer lists three primary reasons for liking the Vi6 digital live console. "First," Wheeler

offers, "the desk sounds crisp and clear, particularly on drums. Second, the Vi6 offers great ergonomics and is very easy to use. And third, the EQ and dynamics section – particularly the de-esser and noise gates on each channel, is very useful."

The Vi6 control surface connects to the I/O rack and processing engine via a single fiber-optical connection. "Pablo and the sound crew preferred optical connectors over conventional CAT5 cables," recalls John Leary, the Sound Image system technician who managed the console during the North American leg of the Never Ending Tour. "The Opticore snake is more reliable and streamlines systems hookups." Leary handled pre-flight checks for the tour and was on the road with the system during USA and Canada dates. "The Vi6 worked out very well," the engineer recalls. "We put it on the truck and it went out on the tour for the first dates in Florida. The rest is history." ☺

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New system facilitates full integration with mc² third generation consoles



For additional info. & updates
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Lawo, recognized globally as a leading manufacturer of digital audio networking and console systems for production, post production, broadcast, and related applications, is pleased to announce that the company's new plug-in integration, using the Lawo Plug-in Server, is now available. Designed as a dedicated environment for VST-type audio processing plug-ins, the server facilitates seamless integration with the company's mc² series third generation consoles while providing greater flexibility in the use and routing of processed signals—all while freeing the host recording platform from the system overhead typically associated with numerous plug-in processors.

The Windows OS-based plug-in server accepts all VST-type audio processing plug-ins without any modification whatsoever. Installation appears as though the plug-in is being installed to a standard audio workstation environment. Subsequently, the plug-in server is integrated with the Lawo HD Core processor, with control of the system originating at the console. Once an audio plug-in is installed on the plug-in server, the mc² control system identifies it as a "known plug-in". Applying a plug-in is as easy as assigning it to an effects slot. Additionally, audio tielines are handled automatically and appear in the system's routing representation. All plug-in parameters are available directly from within the console.

Among the system's features is the ability to use a single audio plug-in for multiple functions, each with its own parameter settings, FX slot, and independent signal routing settings. The only limitations lie within the capabilities of the plug-in itself. All 64 bi-directional audio tielines are fully automated and administered dynamically by the Lawo Plug-in Host.

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With Lawo's plug-in integration, all plug-in parameters are accessible directly from within the mc² series console, with all visual feedback occurring on the console's large, illuminated central display. This arrangement enables the mixing engineer to remain focused on the mixing environment. The mc² mixing console knows all of the plug-in's various parameters and all parameters are stored for later recall along with all other mix data for any given project. This includes the plug-in's FX slot assignment.

The benefits of the Lawo plug-in integration are substantial. In addition to complete integration with Lawo's mc² series third generation consoles, including snapshot storage and recall, installation of a plug-in follows the identical procedure as if it were being installed to a DAW. Compatible with multiple hardware platforms, the Lawo Plug-in Server supports any well designed plug-in and has been tested and found to be fully operational with plug-ins from leading developers such as Sonnox (Oxford), Waves, Universal Audio and TC Electronic.

Herbert Lemcke, President of Lawo North America, commented on the company's new Plug-in Server, "Lawo's new plug-in integration represents a dramatic step forward in the use of audio processing plug-ins. Installation is no different than if the plug-in was being installed to a DAW, yet the benefits are significant. The system provides operators of Lawo's third generation mc² consoles complete integration into the mixing environment, with all parameters available directly from the console—enabling an engineer to remain focused on the task of mixing. Not only are all plug-in FX parameters stored and able to be recalled along with all other aspects of a mix, the system facilitates use in live settings such as televised events with greater ease and minimal latency issues. I'm confident users of our mixing consoles will find much to like with our new plug-in integration."

Lawo's new Plug-in Server is now available for use with the Lawo mc²66 (V1.10.1.0) and the mc²90 (V1.2.1.0) production consoles. Those parties interested in additional information or acquiring the system should contact Lawo North America's technical support services at (888) 810-4468. Users outside North America should contact their local Lawo representative. ☺

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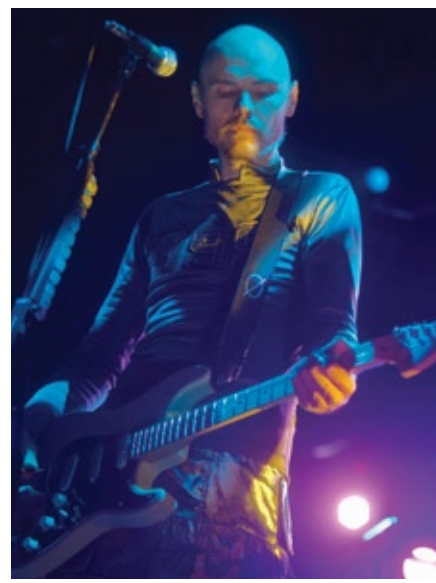
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THE SMASHING PUMPKINS

The Lights Are the Star of the Show



A tour born in the USA, started in Europe, and traveling for 11 months in America, the Pacific, Central America and ending in Costa Rico, with a minimum of 6 different lighting designs all based around a central theme of triangles. No one has had more fun on this tour than Designer Greg Shipley.

Currently the Smashing Pumpkins are on their third European run of this tour. The act decided to take some of the lighting equipment from Bandit America which was seamlessly incorporated with Bandit UK's power distribution and motor systems. Thus allowing the current system to meet codes throughout Europe.

"Apart from making the logistics flow, it was a great opportunity to show how inter-continental co-operation offers the client ultimate continuity" says Bandit UK's Lester Cobrin, adding "It's been a great pleasure for us here in the UK to work with Chris Gratton (production manager) and his team."

The Pumpkins LD Greg Shipley has been working with the band since June 2007, during which time the lighting design has undergone several metamorphoses. Each leg of the tour has presented itself with different

challenges. The designs have ranged from new LED technology to traditional rock-and-roll lighting.

After some initial input from (lead singer) Billy Corgan, Shipley has been free to create new and interesting designs for each leg of the band's tour. After designing several plots, Shipley and Production Manager Chris Gratton evaluated each creation for touring reality. "It has been a great pleasure to work with Chris Gratton. He is one of the great touring Production Managers on the road today." explained Shipley. Along with Gratton, Shipley would present each design to the band for final approval.

For the current European leg, Shipley created a more traditional rock design utilizing 13 individually hung 15 ft sections of truss - each suspended on 2 motors - which make up 6 triangles, arching over the stage.

The band thrives on having an intimate, very personal look on stage. The lighting is designed for a low intimate look consisting of an upstage trim of a mere 12 foot arching to a downstage trim of just 20 feet. With no followspots and a plethora of back and side lighting, there are many dramatic moments. With no production video on this leg, lighting has the pleasure of being the star of the show.

The fixtures used on this tour are a combination of Coemar, Martin, and Vari*Lites. In the moving light category, there are 24 Vari*Lite VL3000 Spots, 30 Martin 2000 Washes, Shipley states, "I love these two products for their brightness and durability." Adding to the base moving package is the excitement of: 10 Coemar I Wash LEDs that create a layer of lighting just above the band's head, 37 Coemar Parlite LEDs used not only as truss toners for creating varieties of colour and flash, but also as up lighting of the artists. All complemented by 36 Martin Atomic Strobe 3000s with scrollers.

Shipley is a big fan of LED sources, and loves their speed and intensity. The power-saving properties are also

very important as many acts wish to set an example of energy conservation to their fans. Other permutations of the rig featured more LED fixtures and been video driven, but with this section of the tour, the main look is essentially back to a rock 'n' roll traditional style – metal and movement.

The console of choice for this tour is the Compulite Vector Red, one active and one slaved spare. Shipley has been using the Compulite Vectors for over three years. "The desk is absolutely amazing. I have the ability to compress or expand my shows at will. With the great support one can get from Compulite, the sky is the limit for this console." states Shipley. The consoles are running via Ethernet. With Artnet running thru 2 D-Link boxes and a Compulite E-Port, the desks are in sync and either is able to instantaneously control the show.

Shipley, a working LD, is joined on the tour by crew chief Shawn Lear and tech's Jackson Beck and Sam Morgan, who he says are "Just fantastic – I really can't praise them enough – this is a great team effort!" He also comments that working with Bandit UK has also been an "...excellent experience. Everything was meticulously prepped on both sides of the Atlantic, and the process of fitting the gear from the UK and US together went seamlessly from the first European show." Many thanks to Chris Gratton for his support guidance and expertise. ☺

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REBA & KELLY CLARKSON

2 Worlds 2 Voices – One Serious Production

by CHRIS COGSWELL

In January and February of 2008, the unlikely duo of country music icon Reba (no last name necessary) McEntire and American Idol pop star Kelly Clarkson, set out on their 2 Worlds, 2 Voices Tour. Check out this billing.... “1 Stage, 2 Bands, 1 Night, 2 Superstars.” Keep in mind, this was NOT Kelly opening for Reba or visa versa. Both artists and bands played the hits together the entire show.

This meant mixing from the FOH, two separate bands, together with at least 13 different musicians, all playing on stage together at the same time for the entire show. And let it be known that this was a rock show, and not some watered down country/pop endeavor with canned music. These ladies can SING! FOH guru, Ricky Moeller made it all sound like the rock show that it clearly was.

“Reba’s shows always rock. Her fan base can attest to that!” enthused Moeller, with Reba since 1984. MPM asked Moeller about the difficulties inherent in mixing essentially two separate bands, 13 pieces versus a standard four or five piece. “Imaging and separation can be problems, but at least it’s not a symphony orchestra!” laughs Moeller. “We use Clair Bros. Audio/Showco I-3, I-4, P-2 and S-4’s [speakers] with the new Bowtie Subs for speaker enclosures on the monitors.” Obviously Moeller’s decisions were spot on, as the show sounded absolutely phenomenal. The separation was stunning, and the bottom end could be felt, well... in your bottom end.

Lighting Director Gayle Hase, also a Reba veteran of 30 plus years, shined some light on the look, gear, and design, aspects of the show. With 150 moving pieces on this tour, Hase is quick to praise the Maxxyz lighting console. “For the last four or five years I have used the Maxxyz for my console. I don’t want to sound like a Martin commercial, but the desk is

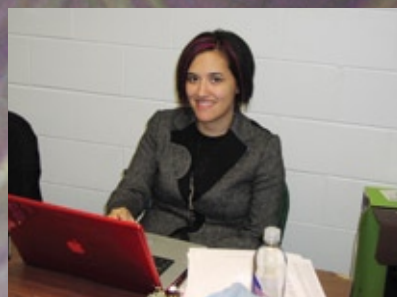
truly awesome. The ability to write complex timings far surpasses other gear I have used in the past. It drives more DMX channels (read universe) than the last rig I used and that’s a plus.”

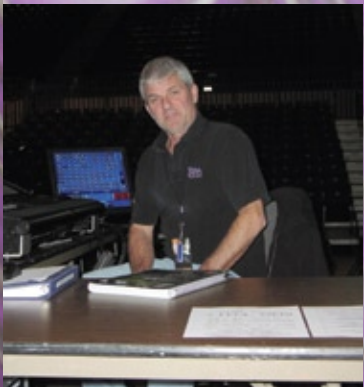
Not to beat a dead horse, but Hase also had kudos for the support staff at Martin. “When the console was first introduced, we would run into issues with programming. Simply a phone call or email to Denmark, and we were downloading a fix within minutes,” explains Hase.

Reba’s husband, Narvel Blackstock, produces the entire show. Making the crews’ tasks much more efficient, Blackstock is aware of everything that is going on, production wise, at all times. “Narvel is very much involved in all aspects of the show,” explains Hase. “He knows what the carpenters are doing, what’s going on in video world, what I am supposed to be doing lighting-wise... and hell, he even spends showtime at FOH every night! I can’t speak highly enough of his talent and vision. I am as proud with this run as anything I have ever done with Reba.”

The video is also worth mentioning, as the lighting and video were totally separate. The stairs on set had Mipix installed and were driven by a Hippotizer, that the Maxxyz console recognizes as another lighting instrument. Material presented on the 21’ x 24’ LED screen was controlled from backstage with four cameras at the FOH position, and had a beautiful look that accompanied the show without taking away from the artists themselves.

Special thanks to Gayle Hase, Brian Leedham, and Lighting Crew Chief John Nichols along with the guys at Premier Global for their insight and access. Well done all around. ☺





opposite page: Tricia Farrow - Kelly Clarkson's Production Asst., Local Riggers (l tor): "Indian" Joe Giddens, George Johnson, Henry Hayes, Josh Carrier; Mark Sizmore - Reba's Production Asst., Carolyn Snell - Reba's Tour Manager, to her right Carolyn Tim Krieg - Kelly's Tour Mgr. & Accountant, Chris Crawford - Local Promoter w/ AEG Live

Gayle Hase - Reba's Lighting Designer, Brian Leedham - Tour Production Coordinator, John Nichols - Premier Global Lighting Crew Chief, Ricky Moeller - Reba FOH Engineer

**REBA &
KELLY CLARKSON**

Reba Band

Reba McEntire - Vocals
Doug Sisemore -
Band Leader/Keys/Vocals
Bruce Bouton - Steel Guitar
Richard "Spady" Brannan - Bass
Tommy Harden - Drums
Catherine Marx - Piano
Jim Kimball - Guitar/Harmonica/
Mandolin/BGVs
Jeff King - Guitar
Carmella Ramsey - Saxophone/
Fiddle/Mandolin/BGVs

Kelly Clarkson Band

Kelly Clarkson - Vocals
Jason Halbert -
Musical Director & Keys
Cory Churko - guitar & Violin
Aben Eubanks - Guitar
Chris Deaner - Drums
Einar Pedersen - Bass

Reba Crew

Carolyn Snell - Tour Manager
Brian Leedham -
Tour Production Coordinator
Tom Nisun - Stage Mgr
Mark Sizemore - Prod. Asst.
Gayle Hase - Lighting Director
Ricky Moeller -
FOH audio engineer
Robert Kosloskie -
Monitor Engineer
Mark Fleming - Head Carpenter
Matt Jumper - Rigger
Carpenters - Doug Brown,
Bobby Wilcox, Cutis Vannoy
Keith Daniels -
Drum Tech / Carpenter
Terry Fox - Keyboards / Carpenter
Guitars Techs -
Billy Gosser, Jim Whitfield
Brett Freedman - Hair & Makeup
Terry Gordon - Wardrobe
Bill Hastings - Merch
Bus Drivers - Mike Holder, Eric
Smith, Ben Mainers,
Neil Derington

Kelly Crew

Tim Krieg -
Tour Mgr & Tour Accountant
Tricia Farrow - Prod. Asst.
Brian Butner - Venue Security
Kevin Elson - FOH Engineer
Chris Dye - Head Backline Tech
Backline Techs - Jim Fredley,
Bryan Jones
John Williamson - Rigger
Ashley Donovan -
Hair, Makeup & Wardrobe
Rich Koffer - Merch
Peggy Speir - KC Chef
Bus Drivers - Tommy Debernardo,
Charlie Quick

Reba & Kelly Tour Staff

Scott Frey -
Showco Systems Enginner
Showco Techs - Chris Nichols,
Shawn Bivens
John Nichols - Premier Global
Lighting Crew Chief
Premier Global Lighting Techs -
Nick Shields, Mark Liatos, Ricky
Krohne, Ryan Thresher
William Paris -
I-MAG Video Director
Randy Ice -
I-MAG Video Engineer/camera
Jason Baker -
I-MAG Video Engineer/LED Wall
I-MAG Video Camera Operator -
Art Fry, Mike Buswell
AEG Reps - Chris Crawford,
Trev Wooten
Truck Drivers - Steve Rowland,
Tim "TC" Turner, Jeff "Speedway"
Weimer, Teresa "T" Quinones,
Danny "Joe" Kile, Gordon "Wagon
Master" Sercombe

Tour Related Offices

Reba

Travel Agent - Travel for the Stars
Tour Management - Carolyn Snell
Wireless - Systems Wireless
Ear Monitors - Future Sonics
Coaches - Diamond Coaches
Merchandise -
Richards & Southern


Kelly

Travel Agent - Preferred Travel
Tour Management - Tim Krieg
Coaches - Celebrity Coaches
Freight Company - Rock It Cargo
Merchandise - Bravado
International Group

Tour Production Management -

Brian Leedham
Promoter - AEG Live
Lighting - Premier Global
Productions
Trucking - StageCall
Transportation
Audio - Clair Bros. Audio/Showco
Rigging Company - Branam
Rigging (Nashville)
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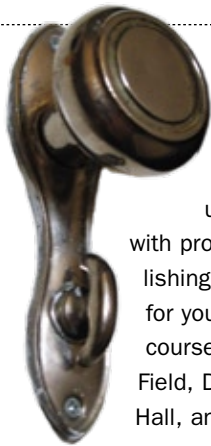
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Hotel San Carlos

by JESSI WALLACE

Antique Surroundings Meet Modern Ethic



The historic Hotel San Carlos in Phoenix, AZ provides something special for those looking for a non-traditional hotel stay during their travels. Although it seems easier to choose a well-known hotel chain while planning tours, sometimes a little history and unfamiliarity can make life on the road much more interesting, as long as the hotel is equipped with properly trained staff. The Hotel San Carlos has been hosting entertainers of all sorts since establishing in 1928. With 80 years experience serving our industry, there is no doubt this hotel is ready for you, whether it means rolling in at 3 a.m. and having rooms ready, or figuring out (in advance, of course) where the buses are going to park. It is conveniently located near U.S. Airways Arena, Chase Field, Dodge Theatre, Orpheum Theatre, Herberger Centre for the Performing Arts, Phoenix Symphony Hall, and Veteran's Memorial Coliseum.

When stepping into the lobby of Hotel San Carlos, guests feel as though they have traveled back into the Golden Twenties. Every room's ambiance is more of a guest room at a family member's house instead of the traditional hotel room. Antique end tables and a dressing table accompany each room along with the old-time high-top beds. While the hotel has centralized AC and heat, each room's temperature can be adjusted using the ceiling fan over the bed. Guests



can't help but feel as if at Grandma's house when staying at the hotel. Some may wonder what in the hotel is original and what has been added to make it feel older. Georgene Coffman, Director of Sales and Marketing, told *Mobile Production Monthly*, "The exterior of the hotel bears the same Italianate detailing that adorned it at its grand opening in 1928. Much of the interior detail work, including cornices and moldings is also original, as are the steam radiators that provide every room with its calm, even heating in winter

weather. Though no longer functional, we have preserved the third water tap in most guest bathrooms, which originally provided continuous chilled drinking water to our guests."

Although Hotel San Carlos is an older hotel, it provides modern necessities for our day in age. Wireless internet access is free in every room. There are large TVs and several HBO channels available. Multiple surge protectors are already in tact, saving guests the hassle of looking for additional electrical outlets that are unoccupied. When asked

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- ◆ Centrally located. Within walking distance of all of the downtown Phoenix sporting & entertainment venues including, but not limited to U.S. Airways Area, Chase Field, Dodge Theatre, Orpheum Theatre, Herberger Center for the Performing Arts, Phoenix Symphony Hall, Veteran's Memorial Coliseum and local downtown venues.
- ◆ In addition to our onsite Copper Door Restaurant and bar, there are limitless dining opportunities in our neighborhood.
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Hotel San Carlos

about the renovations taking place in the hotel, Coffman said, “By the time anyone gets to be 80 years old, renovation is more or less continuous.” The hotel will be undergoing many necessary renovations and advancements over the next several years, but comfort will not be sacrificed in the meantime.

Many tour managers wonder about the room service options in the hotels they’re booking. Rolling in at three in the morning with a bus full of hungry band members can become an uncomfortable experience for not only those on the tour, but the hotel staff as well. At Hotel San Carlos, as long as advance notice is made, anything is possible. The kitchen will provide meals at three in the morning if needed. This available service shows that Hotel San Carlos really understands the entertainment business and is willing to be flexible in order to keep guests comfortable and happy.

At the end of the interview, *MPM* asked why a tour manager should choose Hotel San Carlos instead of another hotel in Phoenix. Coffman explained: “The Hotel San Carlos is a charming and unique spot from which to stage a visit to the greater Phoenix area, and Downtown Phoenix in particular. It is Downtown Phoenix’s ONLY historic boutique hotel, and is within easy walking distance of major sports, theater and convention complexes. The freeway hub serving the rest of the valley is only blocks away. If charm and proximity aren’t enough, we have over 1,000 sqft of storage space and the ability (depending on occu-



pancy and prior commitments) to customize the act’s visit by dedicating entire floors and public spaces if desired. At only 121 guest rooms, a Lollapalooza-type tour could conceivably book virtually the ENTIRE hotel.” 🌀

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iaam 16th Annual Performing Arts Managers Conference

by JESSI WALLACE

Nearly 250 performing arts facility managers and vendors from all over North America gathered together February 16-19 in Phoenix, AZ for the 16th Annual International Association of Assembly Managers (IAAM) Performing Arts Managers Conference (PAMC). The host hotel and primary location for events was the Wyndham Phoenix. Other local hosts included The Orpheum Theatre, The Tempe Center for the Arts, Mesa Arts Center, and Herberger Theater Center. Title sponsors were Irwin Seating Company and Wenger Corporation.

Day one took place at the historical Orpheum Theatre, where facility managers attended sessions concerning venue security and how to handle the media. In the first session, attendees learned the different security practices between Europe and the United States. They also discussed the probability of terrorist attacks in a performing arts facility versus a much larger government facility, and if metal detectors and wand searches are appropriate in an arts building. In the second session, a panel composed of local media and legal professionals gave advice on how facilities can properly manage interviews and avoid having their quotes taken out of context. At the end of the day, everyone gathered at The Tempe Centre for the Arts for a charming welcome reception sponsored co-sponsored by Ducharme Seating, Architekton, Barton Myers Associates, and Theatre Projects Consultants.

For additional info. & updates
visit: iaam.org

The rest of the conference took place at the Wyndham Phoenix and offered several educational panel sessions and group discussions. At the end of day two,

the Mesa Arts Center extended its hospitality to the conference for an evening reception co-sponsored by AudienceView Ticketing, BOORA Architects,



and American Seating Company. The final hospitality reception at the end of day three was at the Herberger Theater Center, co-sponsored by Event Software, Pfocus, and TICKETSage. The conference ended on day four with final opportunities for open discussions, and formal tours of The Orpheum, Phoenix Symphony Hall, and Herberger Theater Center. All four days of the conference were successful in providing new and regular attendees with information to help better manage performing arts facilities in North America.

With performing arts facilities abundant, Phoenix, AZ was a perfect location for this year's PAMC. Next year, all will gather February 7-10 in Atlanta, GA. ☺

pictured on opposite page (l to r): Performing Arts managers gathered for a town hall meeting. Mark Mettes - Herberger Theatre Center. Rodney Smith - University of Denver. Corrin Shepard - Tampa Bay PAC. *(at table, l to r)* Mark Loigman - Hult Center, Jannah Loigman - spouse, Margarette Lake Gusman Center, Tim Coleman - Artifax, Peter Shaughnessy - Artifax. Town Hall Session. Inside the beautiful Orpheum Theatre. Gourmet meat assortment served at the opening night reception.



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Consumer Electronics Show

The Largest Trade Show in the World?

by MICHAEL A BECK
photos by Michael A Beck

It has been said that the CES (Consumer Electronics Show) held every year in Las Vegas is the largest trade show in the world. It is not all together clear exactly how such a statement is quantified. However, once you see CES you have little problem with the claim whether it can be officially proven or not. After all, electronics is the world's largest trade.

The show takes up every available inch of the Las Vegas Convention Center as well as several major hotels around the city. It also spreads into the parking lot of the convention center. That's the good news. There are some drawbacks though. For example, the show is so densely crammed into the convention center that one gets the feeling of claustrophobia almost immediately upon walking into any one of the exhibit halls.

There was a very common sense among both exhibitors and attendees that it's just too much being crammed into the show. This seems to be backed at least in small part by the fact that a number of companies such as Apple have chosen to show individually at other times during the year.

On the other hand, one attendee explained that given the fact that this show is for people in the retail and wholesale end of the industry, they generally know what they are coming to look for and at. That can tend to neutralize the somewhat crowded feel of the show.

As we did at the Detroit Auto show last year, we went to CES to have a look at the production and design of some of the booths at the show. It must be said that calling these "presentation booths" is a lot like calling an airline hanger a garage.

That being said, there are a couple of things that can be noted about this show in general. The lighting used in the designs was achieved by the usual suspects regarding gear, Vari*Lite, Martin, ETC, MA Lighting, High End Systems, etc. The visual aspect that was missing was the LED video technology that seems to be ubiquitous today. That is not to say that there was no LED technology, but there was a surprisingly small amount of it.



Microsoft

The first one we saw was the Microsoft booth. The design of this booth was done by Chris Collins of New York-based Yeager Designs. In past years it had a dramatic look employing deep saturated colors.

This year's look was much more understated and corporate looking. It was remarkably clean and elegant, a long rectangle. Several columns that presented the Microsoft logo created the front edge of the booth. They were lit in gentle, almost pastel colors and created an unmistakable front end to the booth. Inside the booth everything was well lit. This was clearly about the product, the companies with which Microsoft is in partnership, and the people who were there to see it all.

The one area that was darker than the rest of the booth was the theatre where demonstrations were conducted. The demo presentation was created with a high def projector that hit a screen with incredible clarity just above the stage where the presenter worked.

There was another area of the booth that was occupied by several kiosks and these were lit a touch brighter than the walk area around them, but the walk area was lit well enough so that the business could be transacted without having people to squint at one another.



The one thing that was missing was anything above people's heads. Apart from the screen at the demo theatre and the marquis columns, there was nothing that would draw the attention of the attendees into the air and away from the displays. This booth was clearly not designed to put on a show but to do business. The proof that the design worked is seen in the fact that the place was always packed.

Intel

Across the aisle from Microsoft was Intel. In stark contrast to Microsoft, Intel was presented with the use of the deep saturated colors and bold set pieces and demos that were not evident at Microsoft. The area was centered around a display showing various aspects of what the company does.

The biggest difference from this booth and most others was the interactivity. The whole idea of Intel was speed and versatility of its processors. At first blush, one would like to have seen a little more light in this booth. However, the fact is that the focus of the presentations in this booth was on the video screens whereupon the action was taking place. For the most part, it had the look of a high tech gaming arcade.

In this case, the low light of the area worked to the advantage of the presentation. In addition, while the booth did have scenic elements in the air above the booth, they weren't in areas where the focus needed to be on the product. It was clearly there to attract people into the presentation.



Canon

Canon on the other hand was a clear example of "designer ADD." This booth was a visual disaster. It did indeed succeed in sending out a siren's call to come and see what's going on. However, once there, the question immediately came to mind, "what's going on here?" There were banner displays reaching up into what looked like hundreds of feet of truss drenched in red toners. On the face of it, the drama

factor was through the roof. Red, red and more red. It brought to mind a cross between Dante's Inferno and Twin Peaks. The problem was that it made the product displays seem to fade into obscurity.

We were unable to meet the designer or even find out who the designer was. However, the question would have been, "What was the reasoning behind this?"

Hewlett Packard

Hewlett Packard was pushing the whole creativity angle that we've all been seeing in its ad campaigns. Here was another example of creative elegance at its

finest. It put the attendees in their own homes and kept them there. One walked in relative darkness from one presentation to the next. However, once there, the display was well lit as was the immediate area around the display giving the attendees adequate ambiance to conduct business.

While we were not able to catch the name of the designer, we did hear that the same person who did the less elegant and far more astonishing design for the Intel booth did this design. This showed that rather than having a style that leans toward one type of look or another, the designer of this display has a style that leans toward the needs of the client. Nice work!

Eton

The Eton booth was much smaller than the looks that were put up by the companies that have been mentioned in this story so far. However, it was dazzling in its simplicity and effectiveness. The centerpiece of the booth was a glowing acrylic bar upon which the products of Eton's primary brand (of the three brands it represents) was presented. Because it was in the center of the space, it had no back line and attendees were then able to move around the bar and access the demos much more easily.

Every surface in the booth was white. It also had a very low-slung artistic ceiling. This served a number of purposes. Designer Jesse Kearney explained, "Because radio (which is the main product that the company sells) is such a dynamic medium, we wanted to have a booth that worked a dynamic sculpture."

The sculpture idea was clear as all of the walls and ceiling were constructed in artistic shapes, which Kearney referred to as "origami shapes." Because the ceiling was hung so low, it never detracted from what was going on in the color. The lighting in the room was white as was the carpeting. This allowed the lighting to bounce back and forth between the floor and ceiling, which, in turn, allowed the client to get more bang for the lighting buck.

The white surfaces served other purposes as well. There was the fact that the only colors in the booth were the products themselves, meaning that no matter how bright the booth area was, the brightly colored products would always pop.

Next was the consideration that since the light was bouncing off every surface of the booth as well as emanating from within the display counters, there were no shadows on the faces of anyone in the booth. This made it much more pleasant to have conversation with anyone there.

There was also the issue of projection. There were no restrictions limiting where Kearney could put his projections. However, this did pose the only problem with the booth. The projectors that came into the show were excessively weak. In addition, while





Kearney did have a reason for why it happened, budget was not among his comments on the matter and therefore, there had to be a problem with either design or advance.

Oh well, no one walks on water.

Sony

Two booths were on the lips of many of the attendees. The first of them was Sony. We apologize for the poor photographic imagery of this booth. However, we have no problem pointing the finger of blame at Sony itself. There was just no way to get one or even ten photos that could accurately show the grandeur of this presentation.

Because of the high emphasis this company puts on multimedia, that was the thrust of what was going on here. The general area of the booth was fairly dark in order to let the visual imagery do its job. However, like HP and Intel, there was ample lighting around the individual presentations to allow business to be conducted. Where this was different from everything else was the fact that from any vantage point one could only see a very small part of the show. However, there were enough hints and hook to entice the attendees to go deeper into the experience.

There was also a theatre that was housed in a round enclosure. The doors on the back of the theatre slid open at “doors” (as it were) in order to allow the audience into the room. The concert was shot using Sony video gear and broadcast to video displays around the booth including a large tower that fronted a main entrance.

The tower had a small meeting area in its base. The mid section was ringed with plasma screens and the top had one of the few LED displays in the trade show. The lighting of the booth served the purposes of theatrical drama and utility as well as anything seen in the show.

Dolby

The other booth that was the buzz of the floor was Dolby. However, the chatter was not about the booth itself. It was about the main entrance to the booth. The attraction was a huge Transformer - you know, like the toy.

It was truly impressive. The problem was that the booth beyond the big robot was so dark and uninviting that there was no real reason to go beyond the big toy. And that is exactly what was happening. People were lining up to have their picture taken with the thing after which they would be on their way...away from Dolby.

We would be remiss if this story came to a close without mentioning the smaller displays. It's got to be tough coming into this place to try to sell your cell phone face plates, chargers and “Wonder Lariats” in your little booth that is more like a booth and less like

the airline hanger that was mentioned at the top of this piece.

These companies and the people who man their booths have the undying respect of *Mobile Production Monthly*. They come into this place and stand their ground in the shadows of Sony, Microsoft, Samsung and all of the rest of the titanic giants of the electronic age, and they do it like David in a world full of Goliath's. They come in without the benefit of huge production budgets and major designers and all of the other tools that the big kids have at their disposal.

MY VU

One such company had an amazingly creative approach to this situation. The company is MY VU. It makes headset video displays that are worn like eyeglasses. The booth was at the top of an escalator feeding into a hallway that linked two exhibition halls.

MY VU representatives came in well in advance and cut a great deal with CES. Marketing Director Rebecca MacQuarrie explained, “We were very creative in our negotiations. We are not a selling booth here. We are an information center for CES.”

Indeed, the MY VU was teamed up with three other organizations to make information available to the public concerning convention events. The trade off is that MY VU gets to show its wares without talking price.

The plan worked. The place was packed ten deep from open to close every day of the show.

Jesse Kearney had a very interesting notion on the purpose of designing a booth for a trade show. “Exhibition design is the third dimension of branding.” He went on to explain, “It is the opportunity that we have to put the product in the publics’ hands and the brand in their heads in a way that cannot be done in a store or in an ad.”

That insight is probably why he is so good at his job.

We would have loved to look at more. But then we would have had to write about more and there aren't enough pages in this journal to talk about even one percent of what was there. You have to see this thing to believe it. In the winter of 1944 General George Patton disengaged from an ongoing battle and marched 250,000 people and over 130,000 vehicles 100 miles through the bitter cold to re-engage the Germans in the last big battle of the war. One has to imagine “Old Blood and Guts” here to see the logistical prowess put forth by CEA in order to pull this show off. He would have been well impressed. ☺



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Yeager Design

Still Fun After All These Years

by MIKE WHARTON

The Consumer Electronics Show held its annual January unveiling in Las Vegas. Amidst the clamor of 2700 companies spread out over one million square feet in the Convention Center serenely sat the Microsoft Booth, bathed in white and subtly colored. Designed by Chris Collins with Fabian Yeager of Yeager Design, LLC, its concept has evolved much like their relationship has developed over the years. In addition, possibly one of the key factors in this successful relationship is as Yeager states, "We're still having fun."

After graduating from San Francisco State with a Liberal Arts Degree specializing in Theatrical Lighting Design in 1989, Collins moved to Los Angeles and began working with Entertainment Lighting Services. Yeager, an '84 graduate of New York University with a MA in Theatre, was freelancing at the time when their paths crossed on the various industrial and party projects for which ELS is noted.

As with most of us in this business, Collins' path to a career in lighting design wasn't exactly a straight shot. "I guess I'm an oddball in that respect. I was actually an actor when I went to college." His uncle was a lifetime SAG career actor and Collins took note. "I swore to myself when I went to college I was not going to get a degree in acting because I couldn't make a living at it." Collins visited his high school during his first year in college and helped with the lighting (load) out on a show. A career was born. "I was much more adept at lighting and enjoyed it a lot more than working onstage, Says Collins."

Yeager had formed Yeager Design in 1988 and around 1994 was approached by Collins about a job. "It's one of those things," Yeager recalled. "One thing led to the next and as I was doing bigger projects I needed to bring on an assistant and Chris fell right in line at the perfect time, as did another guy,

Mark Andrew who does a lot of the architectural work with us. The projects continued to grow and over time as the clients came to know Chris and Mark, they became the lead designers and brought their assistants on board. It was never necessarily a master plan that we are going to have a lighting design firm or not. It's just sort of where the business has taken us."

As things developed, one plan did start to emerge. It had to do with the size of the company. Again Yeager explained, "We have stayed relatively small compared to some of our other colleagues, and taking that route has been somewhat on purpose. It's always been a very personal relationship we have with our clients and the tighter you can keep that relationship the better. For instance, when Chris started working with me, I think there was four or five years of continuous work on Microsoft projects, so the producer inside of those projects really got a total working relationship with Chris. When we sent him out on his first number of shows, there was no problem - the ball was never dropped. They didn't feel like they were getting an associate designer or less of a product. It was something we work very hard to maintain."

The team's first big Microsoft project was Windows '98. This was followed with several more large shows. At this same time, Microsoft internally created an Events Group to develop a team of vendors to handle these shows. Yeager Design became one of those vendors. Yeager is quick to point out Microsoft's philosophy of incorporating a team effort for project development involving the designers, production people, carpenters and electricians. The Microsoft exhibit booth if one of those projects.

With Microsoft being such a well-branded image, there's a look of consistency somewhat expected from both client and people who visit the booth. Collins explained his approach and the challenges

to achieving what he envisioned. "For that particular booth - it has always been very architectural. We wanted to create sort of a warm space that stands out and is different from the very theatrical and loud approach to many of the booths at CES that are trying to grab your attention. They (Microsoft) were going after the smart home market and the design developed out of that."

Collins added, "The biggest challenge for both Fabian and myself when it comes to this type of booth is wanting to light something very big when it is Microsoft's tendency to pull it into a very simple clean almost architectural realm. We design it to be able to pull it back and let the booth speak for itself; light the pieces and parts but not make it such a conglomeration of things that are constantly changing."

Here is a company that wants to illustrate a clean image of what it is presenting to support its graphics - simple colors and a lot of white. So how does a lighting designer do this? In Collins words, "backing off the flash and trash, keeping it simple, elegant and letting it stand on its own. That's daunting for a lighting designer coming in to light a big white space when they're not going to let you throw color on it. Luckily, we were able to paint a little bit of color here and there which actually ends up standing out against all that white."

Collins created 'that little bit of color' with 82 color blocks for the Theatre Banners, 96 Color Blasts for the 6 tower tops, and 20 Mac 2K Performances for the Theatre and wall effects.

Collins emphasized, "We had a lot of dimensional lighting up there too which creates its challenges as well on a project of this scope. We've got to get up there and focus everything, but we're beholden to the booth being built, the graphics getting in place and staying in place so that we can actually make a decent pass at getting things focused. But this year we were actually ahead of schedule."

One of the givens installing trade show booths is the product and graphics always seem to arrive at the last possible moment and more often than not tend to be in flux. Designers rarely get a chance to interface with the folks in charge of these

departments or have any input until they get on site.

"That gets back to the whole partnership thing we were talking about earlier," says Collins. "Microsoft is very good at organizing its vendors. This particular team Microsoft created has been working together for the last three years on this booth. We've learned to give and take to accomplish what needs to be done to get our job done."

ME Jennifer Chesney oversaw the installation on all the effects fixtures and 440 conventional fixtures powered by ETC Sensor racks containing 240 2.4 dimmer modules. Programmer Jon Smith drove the show on a Grand Ma with SMPTE interface to audio and video.

Yeager is quick to add, "That's the other part, we can't do what we do without the support from our guys, the ME's and programmers who are working for us. I can sit here in the office and draw all I want but it's not going to happen on site without that team of people behind you. We have three vendors we rely on pretty much exclusively... and they are terrific shops! Because of their history with us we know that if we have an issue, though it seldom happens, we can make a phone call at any time and they will support us. But I do get a lot of grief these days, as does Chris, because we're not in the truck any more.

Along with having fun for close to 20 years, Yeager Design has had many successes in other areas of our industry... theatre, awards programs, corporate theatre, architectural and themed attractions. Yeager Design has achieved this through its personal integrity, close personal relations with its clients, the mutual respect shared with its crews, vendors, colleagues and.... keeping the bean counters happy.

"Every dollar is accounted for," says Yeager. "We're not going to throw as much truss as we can in the ceiling, load it to its weight limit and hope to figure out what to do with it when we get on site."

"Yeah, we're always limited to a budget, and we have to hit that budget line quickly, so we have a pretty good idea what it's going to take to light the show properly," Collins adds.

continued on p. 43

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Wrangling the World's Largest TRADE SHOW

Planning, Partnering and Proximity

by BILL ABNER

It is no mere accident or stroke of luck that the International CES, the world's largest consumer technology trade show, is a perennial success. The

annual tradeshow, host to more than 2700 exhibitors this year, continues to grow. The phrase "trade show" hardly seems adequate to describe this four-day mega event. Encompassing the entire Las Vegas Convention Center, The Sands Expo and Convention Center/Venetian, as well as parts of the Las Vegas Hilton, the "trade-only" show continues to hold the title of "the largest trade exposition in the world." It takes a combination of precise planning, extensive partnering with vendors and exhibitors, proximity, and not a small amount of temerity, to deliver the world-class event.

The planning process begins with a review of potential annual dates as far in advance as possible. It is then that event coordinators and producers take an initial look at the availability of all the exhibition facilities and venues that are directly involved with

the event. At the same time, they begin conferring with the many ancillary industries and entities necessary to support the citywide exposition.

Karen Chupka, Senior Vice President of Events and Conferences for Consumer Electronics Association explains, "We currently have contracts for the next several years in Las Vegas, and we also have subsequent dates calendared through



2023. The city needs to know that we're coming; the hotels need to know so they can pre-plan room blocks to ensure they have accommodations for the attendees."

The Consumer Electronics Association, or CEA, is made up of over two thousand member companies whose central mission is to grow the consumer technology industry. Chupka has been a part of that mission for 19 years in various roles, beginning as a registration coordinator. Chupka says, "It's easy for me to put myself into the shoes of the exhibitors and understand what they hope to accomplish at the show, because I had the luxury of starting in that environment."

But no single person, or entity, could produce an event of this magnitude alone. The success of CES can in part be attributed to the strategic partner relationships forged between the Association and its exhibitor organizations. The exhibitor/partner gets the benefit of pairing with the CES for promotion and marketing, and CES benefits by sharing logistics and other services with the partners, as well as gaining guaranteed show attendees comprised of the partner's constituency. "We work with a variety of different companies in a multitude of ways, depending upon what that group's needs are," says Chupka.

Proximity and opportunity are very much a part of the equation for the exposition's success. When the time came for the expo to expand, the options were centered on other Las Vegas properties that would be big enough to house the expansion. Mandalay Bay, whose golden glass windows on Las Vegas Boulevard are also home to a convention and event center, was one choice. However, Mandalay had



Karen Chupka,
Sr. V.P. of Events
and Confer-
ences for CEA

a conflicting event already booked for the corresponding dates. The Sands, with its location virtually across the street from the Las Vegas Convention Center, was the ideal alternative.

“We wanted to try to keep people as consolidated as possible,” Ms. Chupka continues. “Naturally, as we were looking to make some moves with other categories, it just made sense that we grow that into the Venetian part of the Sands.” Additional events and exhibitions were then strategically placed in those venues to give them identity, and to draw attendees to them. To further facilitate the flow between venues, shuttle buses are provided to run between the sites, as well as around the City. So many vehicles are required in fact, that Chupka brings in buses from neighboring California to handle the load during the four day show.

While the history of this giant consumer electronics showcase rewinds back prior to the debut of the VCR, the future remains clearly in focus. The concept that the show may be getting too large is now a consideration, but Chupka together with her staff and partners, stand ready for the challenge. As for managing the number of attendees, Chupka says, “We are really trying to validate people who register for the show. We want to know who is registering, and if they represent legitimate companies. If we determine that they are not legitimate, we will deny them a registration badge.” Growth and management of the number of exhibitors is also a concern. “We do need to manage the exhibitors based on the real estate that we have. When that time comes,” says Chupka, “we have to decide if we want to go into another facility, or if we want to stay where we’re at. Luckily, we have never had to push that.” ☺



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UVLD LIGHTS UP MOSCONE For Altered Imageland Forest Laboratories

UVLD provided lighting design for pharmaceutical company Forest Laboratories when it unveiled a next-generation beta blocker at the Moscone Convention Center in San Francisco.

The event reunited UVLD lighting designer Greg Cohen with longtime client Altered Image, which produced the high-profile, four-day event attended by Forests national sales staff with entertainment headlined by John Mayer and the innovative dance troupe Pilobolus. Actor Avery Brooks hosted the event. UVLD supported the corporate aspects of the gathering as well as the dynamic performances of Pilobolus, which appeared interstitially, and Mayer who closed the event. The entire production was supervised by Gregory Hermanson of ShowTx.

Forest was launching Bystolic, a next-generation beta blocker that solves the problems of traditional beta blockers. "With the meetings theme 'Beyond the Ordinary', we wanted to devise a show that would make people think differently, says Frank Ward, owner of Altered Image and the shows executive producer.

"Once that was established, we began to work with Pilobolus, which is known for always thinking outside the box," Ward continues. "They made a big splash last year with their roll-ins for the Academy Awards. We were interested in their shadow performances, but they've done most of those sketches in black and white. We wanted something against a colored backdrop. Pilobolus was intrigued by our plan



and by working in an HD environment while performing in conjunction with animations we were creating. The dancers were really jazzed about it."

Ward knew that Greg Cohen was familiar with Pilobolus because of his theater background. "We've worked with UVLD on a number of large projects, and they always do a phenomenal job of making things come to life," Ward says.

Altered Image partnered with the

dance troupe and scenic designer Patrick Fahey of 8 Hands High to craft a unique set, which suited the auditoriums odd shape. "Using two outboard HD screens which flanked a larger HD widescreen at center, we wrapped the whole screen set to bring the audience of 3,000 people into the presentation," Ward explains. "That gave Greg a tremendous canvas to work with while still focusing attention on Pilobolus. I knew Greg would come back with something great without having to give him too much direction." "It was great to have this unique opportunity," notes Cohen. "Working with the team at Altered Image is always a treat, but brining Pilobolus to the table gave us the chance to do something different. A dance company of that relevance is a variety on the corporate stage, and it was great to be able to both concentrate on





mimicking their traditional lighting while treating the larger scenic canvas.”

Pilobolus formed the name of the new drug and interacted with graphics and text like “share” and “attention.” They appeared as black silhouettes against a sunset orange screen. Colored, stylized arrows flanking the center screen changed colors.

The PRG-supplied package featured 200 lights, 100 of which were movers. “It was a fairly large package,” adds Cohen, “but Altered Image never shies away from technology. They give us great direction initially and then the freedom to run with our ideas. It’s a great collaborative environment, and I think it brings out the best in us all.”

UVLD’s Cameron Yeary created the lighting for John Mayers performance on the events closing night. “It was an acoustic night, and we wanted it to feel intimate,” says Ward. “We created a really cool backdrop with HD I-MAG, graphics and images. Cameron really shines with this kind of thing. We know we can let him run with it. And he did an awesome job of making a noisy, 3,000-person room feel intimate. Even John Mayer, who often plays that room, was impressed!”

“Once again we were delighted to team with Altered Image,” says Cohen. “One of the things that makes it such a pleasure to work with them is that they are a family-owned business so there is a really close-knit feel to these shows that we love being a part of. Everyone trusts each other, and that allows us to do exciting things in their shows.”

ShowTx, lead by principal Gregory Hermanson, served as overall production managers for the event. LMG provided both the video and audio for the show. The set was designed by Patrick Fahey of 8 Hands High. On the UVLD team, Mark Nead served as production electrician, assisted by Paul Cottrell. ☺

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X-FACTOR FOR XL VIDEO UK

X-Factor Live 2008 Tour

XL Video UK is again supplying video production and crew for the X-Factor Live 2008 tour, an all-action performance featuring a strong line up of the 10 finalists from the 2007 BBC TV series.



The tour includes Dan Omerod as the live video director, Tim Byrne as the show director, and the set has been designed by Iain Whitehouse from Production North. Production management is handled by Sarah Hollis. The tour is being project managed for XL by Jo Beirne and Phil Mercer, and is one of a number of shows they are working on this spring for Leeds-based Production North in conjunction with Blink TV.

Phil Mercer adds, "As screen supplier for the recent ITV series it's been a good challenge for XL to adapt the system for touring whilst still maintaining the overall scale, variety and quality of the original TV studio based design."

Similar to the TV show, X-Factor Live is fast-paced and involves lots of cues and quick cutting. The stage features three upstage screens constructed from Barco I-Lite 10 LED panels - the side ones are 8 tiles wide by 6 high, and the centre is 12 wide by 10 high. The central screen also splits in the middle and tracks to create an opening for stage entrances.

Above the front truss is a border style banner made from Barco MiTriX. It is 50 tiles wide by 6 high, and used as a ticker-tape style effect with scrolling text to introduce each act at the start of their set.

There are two further offstage 16 x 12 ft side screens which are fed by Barco R12 projectors.



'Virtual' presenter Dermot O'Leary introduces each of the acts, appearing as a video clip across all 5 screens.

For additional info.
visit: xlvideo.tv

Ormerod has 3 of XL's Sony D50 cameras at his disposal, two on track & dolly in the pit and the third at FOH with a 70 mm long throw lens, and he mixes using a GV Kayak mixer/switcher.



The VT play ins are stored on Doremi hard drives. Each band has a demo clip and beauty shots which play during their set, and XL is also supplying a Catalyst digital media server which generates ambient effects, scrolling text, graphics and the X-Factor logo, and is controlled by lighting director Tellson James via his WholeHog II console.

The playback content was supplied by two companies. The Farm produced special edits of the TV footage, links and VT intros, and Helena Spencer from

The Field produced footage for the banner screen and graphics for the main screens.

The I-MAG mix is sent primarily to the centre and the

two outer side screens, leaving the offstage side screens to be fed by the Catalist content.

Ormerod worked closely with show producer Tim Byrne at the start of the tour to shape the show stylistically, taking many successful elements of the previous year and combining them with new looks and techniques to keep it fresh.

A major aesthetic challenge is to maintain the hectic pace on screen for 2 hours with an interval in-between the show's two halves, and also to give each artist their own individual look and video structure.

Joining Ormerod on the XL crew are engineer Jeroen "Myway" Marain, Oli Derynck (LED tech), Al Wright (LED Camera operator) and Ed Moore (Crew Chief & projection/camera operator). Gareth Morgan from Over The Top Rigging is looking after the tracking system for the centre screen.

Other suppliers involved include Wigwam (audio), Pyrojunks (pyro), Stardes (trucking), Trathens (buses) and Home Cooking (catering). ☺



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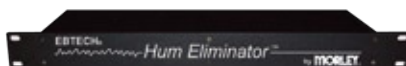
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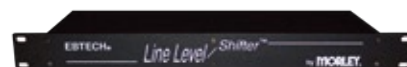
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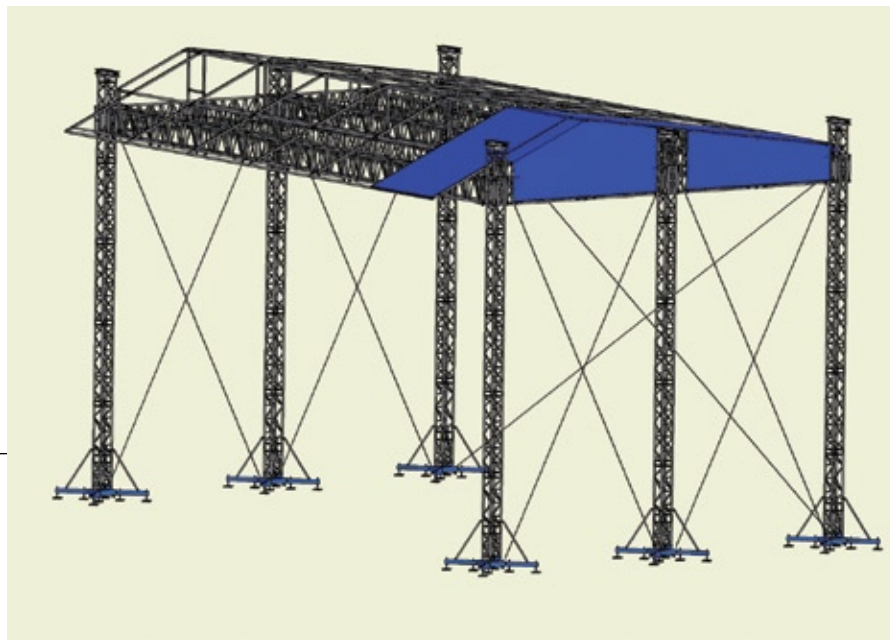
Czech Republic-based trussing manufacturer Milos launches its new MR5 Roof.

This is Milos largest roof system to date and builds on their very successful MR3 Roofs. It utilises Milos' M950 QuickTruss in combination with six of their MT3 towers, and is perfect for large indoor and outdoor events needing a serious amount of space, headroom and weight-loading.

The MR5's maximum dimensions are 27.8 metres wide by 17.8 metres deep, which offers 13.5 metres of headroom – enough to accommodate a wide range of large lighting and sound rigs and video systems. The maximum loading on this version of the MR5 is 15 tonnes.

The MR5 has been designed with the practicalities of quick rigging and de-rigging in mind.

Milos' M950 trussing is the largest system in the current trussing range and is designed to make long spans and for flying heavy loads. It utilises 60 x 5 mm main tubes with 32 x 3mm bracing spars, and is available in Quatro and compact folding versions as well as a variety of standard lengths between 1 and 3 metres. Milos' 'QuickTruss' technology has been developed to expel the myth that 'big is slow' and M950 is fit-



ted together quickly, simply and safely using conical connectors and tapered pins with strong R-Clips.

The only tool needed to assemble the system is a mallet – no spanners, screws or bolts, which massively speeds up the process. Using the M950 Folding Truss to create part of frame also saves storage space.

The MT3 Tower is also designed for large events and applications requiring maximum loading capacities and free-span characteristics. It uses columns made from M520 trussing which can be built up to 15 metres high. A specially reinforced sleeve block and dou-

ble roll header section is used in combination with the M950 trussing to build the MR5 Roof system.

It can be ballasted by water tanks, anchors and ropes, concrete blocks etc (as specified and sourced by client.)

The MR5 is supplied with roof canopy, a full set of safety wires and Milos' 'helper' tool for the towers. Side skins or nets are optional.

Milos is holding a hands-on MR5 workshop at the end of March for clients and other interested parties. ☺

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Throughout that development process there is constant communication with the scenic and creative designers. Visuals are emailed back and forth, and meetings are arranged to see how light will affect different materials those departments are bringing to the project.

Yeager reflected, "It's been a lot of fun working with the video elements, the LED curtains and walls. I like the LED scrim. It becomes a bit more ethereal and there is less of a chance production is going to take it over and turn it into a power point service."

Every LD has that "ahha!" moment when what he or she has visualized, put to paper, proposed to the client and mustered past the budget occurs. "You know, no matter how many times I've done this," laughs Collins, "I still sort of get those nerves just before I get a guy up in the lift and we focus the first lamp, look at it and realize what I did draw actually does work. It's not until about half way through that first day that I step back and say 'OK, this is gonna work.'"

There are two constants in this business that successful designers bear in mind when returning to these events; there are no small shows and you are only as good as your last show.

"It does boil down to that," says Yeager. "You can do five years of really spectacular work and have nothing but good comments from clients, and it just takes one bad experience to sour that for a fair amount of time. We honestly work very hard not to have that sour experience. And it's still fun to come to work. We have a good time doing our job."

Collins ends, "And what I've found too, in this business, is in every aspect of this business, the electricians, scenic designers, the set carp, it's a relatively niche little business we're in. I have to say, if nothing else, it's got to be one of the most interesting groups of people I know. That's what keeps me coming to work every day. The different people I work with. It's a great little family on the road. It's the Robbie Greenberg's."



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