



Volume 3, Issue 27 - 18th July 2007

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Gary Kaye's Annual "Best of InfoComm" Awards

Best New Product

For InfoComm 2007: Extron's AVTrac - a floor-mount raceway system that allows for power, analog and digital video, audio, RGB, and control signals to be routed on the floor. Ingenious!



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Best New Killer App

AMX's Anterus RFID system for tracking the whereabouts of devices and triggering automated series of actions (like control systems do). Finally, a whole new set of products you can take back to existing customers and sell to new ones.



TOP ↑

Most Creative Product

LongPen. I assure you that most, if not all of you, will never have an application to use or specify LongPen, but it was cool. It's a signature system where someone can sign documents in real-time over a videoconference. They demonstrated the system by having authors of books sign the books via videoconference.



TOP ↑

Best New Screen Technology

It's a tie! Da-Lite's Polacoat Wide-Angle Optical Coatings (up to 72-degree viewing angles) and Da-Lite's new 16:10 projection screens.

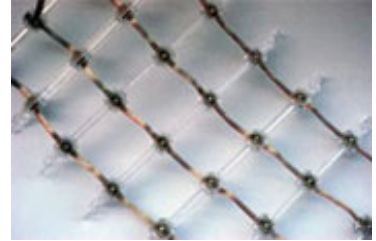


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Best Potential New Technology

A little known company called Element Labs showed a flexible LED video screen system called Helix. Helix can actually

bend, wrap, drape and fold. It was amazing to see. It's brand new technology and will no doubt be a winner in 2008.



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PROJECTA

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Best New Video Product

Analog Way's new AXION controller for live, large venue staging events.



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Best New Projection Display

Christie Digital's LX650. It just looked perfect! It's a 6500 ANSI lumen, 3-chip DLP, XGA resolution projector.



[TOP ↑](#)

Best New Flat-Panel Display

It's a tie! NEC's LCD 4620, 46" chevron-shaped pixel design that had an amazing contrast ratio. I am not sure they specified exactly what it was, but it was clearly higher than anything else in its category. And, Sharp's new LC-42BT10U is an LCD-TV in the Aquos line of Sharp products that, although it's a 1080p HDTV, it's specifically aimed at the ProAV market where a lot of applications exist for an HDTV that's a bit more ruggedized than the ones you get at HomeAV stores.



AQUOS

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Best Rear Projection Display

Planar's RP System - an SXGA resolution rear screen projection wall system designed for Command and Control system applications. Simply put, it looked stunning!



Best New LED Display

Barco's amazing NX-4 system. It uses 4mm indoor LEDs and has, BY FAR, the blackest black I have ever seen on ANY LED display!



... FOR LCD, PLASMA AND PROJECTORS



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Best New Audio Product

Extron's new System Integrator series of in-wall an in-ceiling speakers.



Best New Microphone

Shure's KSM9



Best New DVI Product

It's a tie! RGB Spectrum's 8 x 8 DVI Matrix Switcher and Crestron's new DVPHD-PRO.



Best New HDMI Product

Extron's new HDMI Wall-plate, the HDMI 201 A D.





TOP +

Best New Conferencing System Product

Polycom's SoundStructure - it's an HD audio system (22KHz) that truly sounds like you're all in the same room when you're talking on it - you can't even tell you in an audio-conference.



TOP +

Best New ProAV Networking Product

AMX's Inspired Signage system which allows you schedule, deliver and manage content via the network to digital signage displays. AMX getting into digital signage validates that market in a way like no other manufacturer has before. I am sure all the flat-panel display manufacturers are happy as this system will draw enough attention to drive digital signage solutions. I guarantee you that we'll see Crestron move in this market by the end of this year. They know they need to be there.



TOP +

Best Company to Watch in 2007

Arrive Corporation has created a content, control and room management system that works with AMX, Crestron, Extron and IP-enabled rooms (facility or company wide). It's sort of like Crestron's RoomView for every system. Selling software in the AV market has proven tough over the years, but Arrive's technology is powerful enough that they may well do it! This is THE new company to watch in Pro AV for 2007-2008.



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Europe's Largest Trade-Only Projector Lamp Distributor

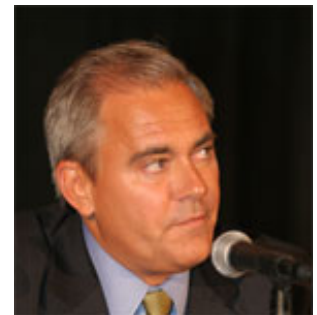
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Best Question at the Show

It's a tie! An I.T. guy from AOL asked Rick Snyder of Tandberg when all the videoconferencing companies were going to standardize. Another guy from Lehman Brothers added: "Sure, you're all standardized. It's just different standards." Still another I.T. guy asked the Manufacturers Forum "More of us are coming. What are you going to do with us?"



TOP +

Best Answer at the Show

(in response to the I.T. guy above) George Feldstein at the Manufacturers Forum: "I would prefer that AV dealers become IT dealers rather than the other way around."





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Best Booth

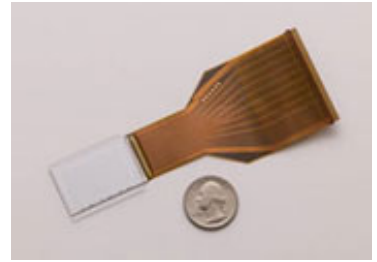
At Crestron's Humongous Stand it was easy to find what you were looking for and eye-catching. All the credit apparently goes to Rosanne Lang.



TOP ↑

Best In-Booth Presentation

JVC's 4K projector presentation where they actually fed it with a native 4K studio camera.



TOP ↑

Worst Display of Product on the Show Floor

Sony. Yes, this will shock people but it was virtually impossible to figure out how to get in to their booth. Once you were in there, no one seemed to know anything about the new products. When I asked someone with a Sony badge on about where I could see their 4K projector, he didn't even know they had one.



Proof: Sony DOES have a 4K Projector

TOP ↑

Best Small Booth

Kramer's Booth looked incredible for its size.



TOP ↑

Best Presenter

Andrew Edwards (Extron) and George Feldstein (Crestron) at the Manufacturer's Forum. They were entertaining, honest and clever.



George Feldstein
President
Crestron Electronics, Inc.



Andrew Edwards
President and CEO
Extron Electronics

TOP ↑

Most Ubiquitous Message

It's a tie! DLP BrilliantColor (shown in six booths and on 14 products, not counting TI's own exhibits.) And Going "Green." Almost every manufacturer has a new environmental protection program.



TOP ↑

Best Booth Giveaways

Spinitar's Who Wants to be an AV Millionaire. They gave away a flat-screen every day!



[TOP ↑](#)

Worst Booth Giveaways

Candy and I took way too much!



[TOP ↑](#)

Best Breakfast

Starbuck's, of course, at the Anaheim Hilton (despite the line to get drinks).



[TOP ↑](#)

Best Lunch

I never ate lunch!

[TOP ↑](#)

Best Dinner

Morton's Steakhouse in the parking lot of the Anaheim Hilton.



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Show Report

I.T. or Die Says InfoComm's Manufacturers Forum

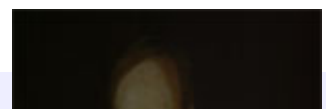
By Denise Harrison

Editor-in-Chief of rAVe America

By the time the InfoComm Manufacturers Forum began, the auditorium seats were filled and the walls were lined with a standing room only crowd. The panel was seated, including Gerry Remers, president and COO, **Christie**, George Feldstein, president of **Crestron**, Andrew Edwards, president and CEO of **Extron**, Michael MacDonald, executive vice president, **Harman Pro Group**, and Rick Snyder, president of Americas, **Tandberg**. rAVe's own **Gary Kayye** moderated.



At times, watching the panel was like being a fly on the wall during a poker game among long-time friendly rivals. Other times, it was like a master class in succeeding in the AV



business. Everyone attending would agree that Kayye's candor, sometimes snarky, and always authoritative contributions made for one of the most lively, fast moving one-and-a-half-hour events of the week.



Kayye asked the panel to comment on general trends the executives are seeing lately. For Christie, Remers said the company is seeing green. In fact, many companies at InfoComm this year talked about green initiatives, and Christie has been one of the leaders in this area, with its Environment Program designed to reduce waste and consumption. Christie has experienced excellent growth in recent years and is re-investing some of those profits into helping the environment.

Crestron, too has grown. "Since I was eight years old, I've been making things in my basement," said Feldstein. "The basement got bigger, to about 100,000 square feet now."

Growth has also been huge, just huge, for Tandberg. "We've seen 30% growth in the last quarter," said Snyder. "Customers are more interested in videoconferencing, and especially, telepresence."

MacDonald's answer was indicative of the theme that took up much of the rest of the panel discussion. "An increase in scope of solutions means dealers need more knowledge about first class audio solutions," he said. "We're seeing more complex system integration."

When Kayye asked the panel what concerns them, most everyone on the panel said they also see the more challenging integration as mentioned by MacDonald. And those challenges mean integrators are going to have to step up to meet them.

Feldstein said the industry itself is a concern. "In many large companies these days, what needs to be AV is turned over to I.T. Only through growth of our industry will we all have jobs."

Edwards agreed. "The focus used to be on product. But now, the trend is toward increased demand for infrastructure." In fact, Edwards feels so strongly about this that he said: "We have a weakness in the AV industry on the I.T. side. Unless it's addressed, it will be a big issue over the next five years."



Few companies know about this need for networking expertise better than Tandberg and Christie. Snyder says Tandberg is now benefiting from the technology advances -- advances such as improved networks that better allow for standard and high definition in videoconferencing. "The technology is easier to use," he said. You don't need three AV techs in the back of the room to run it anymore."

Networking is also key to many of Christie's AV solutions. "It's important to us as well," said Remers. "We have more than 100,000 devices networked for cinema. It's difficult for dealers to find AV-I.T. experts so if you can't find them, you have to hire and train them."

Feldstein added that "being a manufacturer is easy compared to being a dealer, he said. And by the way, employee morale should be someone's priority."



The panel then fielded audience questions. As if to sum up the event, one of the last of those stood bravely in front of the hundreds and declared himself an I.T. dealer.

"I'm an I.T. dealer here at the show," he said. "More and more of us will be coming to this show. What are you going to do about us?"

Industry Feature

Kramer to Hold First East European Forum

The first East European Kramer Forum on audio/video solutions will take place in Opatia, Croatia from July 29th until August 2nd. It's an interesting effort in a region bursting with AV growth, so **rAve EUROPE** questions Ilya Davidovich, head of the Russian/CIS representative office of Kramer, about what's behind this forum.



rAve: Ilya, in your opinion, why is it necessary to hold such a forum?

I.D.: Modern life is quite interesting: the scientific & technical revolution, the topic of numerous discussions between scientists and engineers, is not over yet. It continues but we don't notice its rapid development since we are living "inside the process." Recently a mobile telephone was rather expensive and even an exotic form of entertainment. And now every student owns a cell phone, the cellular radio network has become an indispensable part of our life and no one seems surprised. And recently three leaders in Russian cellular networks have taken licenses to bring the 3G cellular standard which will open even more new opportunities for all users.

The same situation is true for our audio/video industry. Not long ago the average Russian citizen thought about home theatres, video processors and common DVD players in the same light as particle accelerators and nuclear reactors. Yet nowadays the Russian market for high-quality (and, to be honest, rather expensive) domestic electronics develops rapidly.

For many years Kramer has accumulated experience from working with companies-- both installers and users of our equipment. Now we are ready to draw some conclusions and share these experiences.

rAve: And what are these conclusions?

I.D. : The first conclusion is that industry information is still rather fragmented, incomplete and uncoordinated. Installers and end users are not really familiar with the available technology and the potential of this equipment. While manufacturers, from their side, still need more detailed information about market demands to take into account during the renewal of the equipment models.

The second conclusion is that markets of separate CIS states and East European Countries develop at different rates due to a complexity of reasons. The exchange of actual information may help to solve this problem, so we have decided to bring together the installers and other experts from CIS and East European states. It should be noted such events were organized only on regional level before. We will see what happens.

rAve: Are you anxious about the event?

I.D.: Organization of such a large-scale event for the first time always means a certain risk, so we are a little bit nervous even though we are confident that we have done our utmost to make all necessary preparations.

In a home-like atmosphere we will discuss the trends in audio/video technologies and the market developments for corporate, educational, Digital Signage, domestic entertainment, and the many other applications of our equipment in general.

The trends in the AV market, the difficulties that installers face while solving the engineering problems...these are very important issues for this forum.

We would like to create a dialogue by asking the representatives of the installers in attendance to share the problems they face and raise possible solutions.

rAve: Please tell us about the Premium "Best Installation Kramer Awards."

I.D. Within the frameworks of our forum we have announced a contest of installations for participants. A special board of judges will evaluate the nominated works by a number of criteria, such as social importance, application of innovative technologies, functional completeness and the reasonable minimalism of the technical solution, possibility of the solution application as the base for a typical project, original schematic solutions, installation difficulties and their solutions, size of the installed equipment and the installation compliance with ergonomic and technical aesthetics and other criteria.

The winners will be awarded prizes.

rAve: What are the terms of the contest participation?

I.D. : The organization committee of our forum accepts contest applications till June 30, 2007. Russian-speaking companies should submit documents in Russian; others can submit in English. All applications should be sent to the

organization committee by e-mail (awards@avclub.ru) and copies of necessary documents should be faxed to +7 495 7800302. A member of the organization committee in charge controls the accuracy and completeness of the filed documents and confirms the application acceptance.

rAVe: Why will the forum be held in Opatia?

I.D. : I think one should always mix strenuous work with some rest, and Opatia is the most popular resort of northern Adriatic and one of the best in Europe. The location is rather comfortable: Opatia is 44 km away from Rijeka airport, 85 km away from Pula and 200 km away from Zagreb.

Kings and other famous people (Wilhelm II, Gustav Mahler, Isadora Duncan, Anton Chekhov and others) have vacationed here. There are plenty of cozy restaurants situated on the seaside. There are of course the beaches, tennis courts and swimming pools. All conference halls and hotel rooms are air-conditioned. I have no doubt that our work at the Forum will be done in a very pleasant and comfortable environment.

rAVe: Thanks for the interview. Good luck with the Forum.

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Do you have a special topic you would like to address industry-wide? We're open for **Guest Editorial** comments on the industry from Europe... Sorry, no commercials...this is just for industry issues. Contact: rAveEurope@gmail.com



Well, that's it for this edition of rAve Europe! Thank you for spending time with us as we follow the industry happenings.

A little about Gary Kayye, CTS, founder of Kayye Consulting: Gary Kayye, an audiovisual veteran and columnist, began the widely-read KNews, a premier industry newsletter, in the late 1990s, and created the model for and was co-founder of AV Avenue - which later became InfoComm IQ. Kayye Consulting is a company that is committed to furthering the interests and success of dealers, manufacturers, and other companies within the professional audiovisual industry. Gary Kayye's rAve was first launched in America in February 2003.

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