



For Europe's Pro AV integrators in a Networked World

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Sinus Awards at Prolight + Sound 2008

For the 5th year running, the Sinus – Systems Integration Award – will be presented for innovative and exemplary projects in the field of media technology and systems integration. In 2008, the Sinus Award goes to three projects with two winners in the 'Business' category and one in 'Venue'. The presentation ceremony will take place in Galleria 1 at 18.30 hrs on the first day of the fair, Wednesday, 12 March.



The first project to be awarded in the Business category is **the showroom of the DHL Innovation Centre**. A Sinus goes to the participants in the planning and realisation of this project – Hajo Gawins of Triad Berlin Projektgesellschaft GmbH, Franziskus Scharpff of Ground Zero-Systemintegration and DHL Project Manager, Ms. Gülderen Tuna. Judges cited the lighting concept that employs light as a design feature and a means of visitor guidance. The showroom is fitted with RFID so visitors can see for themselves how this new technology will influence the parcels delivery in the future.

The second project in the Business category is **the Cologne-outlet of the Globetrotter outdoor chain**. A Sinus goes to Thomas Aicheler and Stefan Pagenkemper of DEKOM Kommunikations- und Mediensysteme. Prof. Holger Moths receives a Sinus for his contribution to the architectural planning of the conversion of the 'Olivandenhof' building, in which the outlet is located. As representatives of Globetrotter, Thomas Lipke, Klaus Weichbrodt, Meike Lorentzen and Anja Vogel were singled out for a Sinus. In reviewing this shop concept, the jury was particularly impressed by the purposeful use of media technology that not only makes shopping a pleasurable experience but is also used in connection with sales advice.

The Sinus in the Venue category goes to John Lay Electronics AG for the media equipment supplied for the **Stade de Suisse**. Following the demolition of the venerable old football stadium and the construction of a multi-functional arena, Fritz Müller and his team not only installed a broad spectrum of equipment to cater for the various requirements – e.g., an in-house television system and the planning of a POI/POS communication system for the entire stadium, which includes a shopping centre, not to mention multi-media systems in the restaurants, boxes, VIP zones and conference rooms – but also prepared a professional operating concept.

For more info, go to [SINUS AWARDS](#)

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Who (of us) Will Be at CeBIT?

There's a lot of talk about convergence and you're starting to see IT companies in ISE. But you still not seeing too many of us at IT events, trying to endear ourselves to IT managers. Here's where to find a quick list of companies exhibiting to IT buyers at CeBIT in Hannover, Germany (the world's largest IT event!).



J&T Junemann at CeBIT

ShowWay 2008, Report from Italy

By *Cristiano Cameroni*

Bright, warm sunshine marked the opening of ShowWay 2008, the Italian trade show for entertainment industry professionals in Bergamo, northern Italy, with its very first edition. The show is a joint production of Italian trade association APIAS and PROMOBERG and is entirely devoted to professionals from Italy and from abroad.



The international flavour of ShowWay 2008 is clear as we walk the fairground and look at the stands. Here we can see more than 160 exhibitors, 96 of them coming from outside Italy with products and solutions range from lightning systems to projection devices, from huge audio installations to large displays...

In most cases at the center of the booth sits an international vendor, with Italian distributors being only one part of this highly-international, well-branded exposition. Many exhibitors, including major Italian press analysts, said they were happy with the number and quality of visitors. That sounds like music for the organizers, who are fighting against former market leader SIB INTERNATIONAL, now backed by a different trade association,

ShowWay 2008 is a good start. For a show that hopes to reflect the pro entertainment industry, their formula must be rebuilt from the bottom up if the organizers want to benefit from the growing market of commercial installations and system integration.

For more info, go to our **[Video Report on ShowWay](#)**



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Displays & Mounts

Sony and Sharp Join in LCD Production

Sony will take a one-third stake of Sharp's \$3.5 billion LCD panel plant (world's largest, set to open March 2010.) Sony and Sharp are the world's 2nd- and 3rd-largest LCD TV makers behind Samsung.

Sharp's new factory will use 10th-gen glass substrates to yield more panels than earlier-generations, smaller glass substrates and improved production efficiency. The joint venture will have a production capacity of 72,000 units per month.

Global LCD TV sales should more than double to 155 million units by 2012, according to the JEITA. Sony aims to sell 10 million units of its Bravia LCD TVs in the current business year to March 31 and runs another LCD joint venture, S-LCD, with Samsung.

Sony needed an extra source of large panels and wants to diversify panel sources. Sony is likely to continue the partnership with Samsung as well.

Sharp will be able to reduce its share of the huge capital outlays and recoup its investments early, so limiting associated risks. Toshiba and Pioneer already buy LCD panels from Sharp, while Panasonic will spend \$2.8 billion to build its own LCD plant.



For more info, go to [Sharp and Sony Together in LCD](#)

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Pioneer Will Stop Making 42" Plasma

Pioneer Corp will stop making 42-inch PDP and instead buy panels in that size (and smaller) from Panasonic or Hitachi to turn around its loss-making flat TV business, says Asahi newspaper in Japan.



Pioneer will end output as early as March 2009 to focus on making 50 inches or larger at other plants.

Pioneer wants to sell 480,000 plasma TVs this year, ending March 31 (less than one-tenth of Panasonic's 5 million units).

For more info, go to [Pioneer Outsources 42" Plasma](#)

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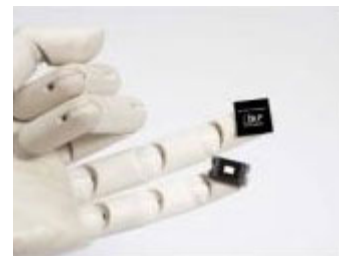
An advertisement with a green background. At the top, it says 'The Formula for Business Success'. Below this, two men are shown from the chest up, holding white signs. The man on the left holds a sign that says 'Credit' in red, and the man on the right holds a sign that says 'Finance' in red. A white plus sign is positioned between the two signs. At the bottom of the advertisement, it says 'Visit Us Now' in yellow text with a yellow arrow pointing to the right.

[Click above for more information](#)

Projection & Screens

Pico Projectors, Grande Opportunities

Sony Ericsson files a patent on their concept that would automatically adjust the projected pico image using analysis from the camera in the handset. TI promotes the Pico projector concept at Mobile World Congress, the Olympics for mobile phones.



TI is working Foxconn, Sypro and Young Optics to supply LED modules and the projector to handset makers and as add-on modules for phones in early 2009.

Sales of pico projectors may reach 30m units by 2012, according to a report by Insight Media.

For more info, [Peek at Pico Report](#)

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Control & Integrator Solutions

Crestron CEN-RGBHV Wideband Matrix Switcher

Crestron CEN-RGBHV line of wideband matrix switchers for demanding presentation environments (boardrooms, training centres and live staging events) give integrators a solution for flexible routing of high-res video and audio signals.



A CEN-RGBHV switcher can be installed easily in a Crestron control environment. The switcher can be quickly configured with all necessary control functionality via SIMPL or SystemBuilder, eliminating the need for additional programming or deciphering cryptic protocol. Integration with any 2-Series Control System also provides the gateway to Crestron's RoomView Asset Management Software and e-Control2 XPanel Solutions for remote monitoring and control.

Says Robin Van Meeuwen, MD Crestron UK. "With CEN-RGBHV switchers, dealers can quickly integrate a video network that accommodates HD content and provides highly accurate high-resolution signal routing. They can also add control functionality to expand any project and enhance their added value."

CEN-RGBHV switchers provide video-follow-sync switching to ensure transition when selecting between non-synchronous sources. CEN-RGBHV switchers feature low crosstalk and 450MHz video bandwidth as well as video sync detection on each input so that horizontal and vertical values can be viewed on the front panel display, control system touchpanel, or RoomView.

"For commercial dealers working in high security environments, CEN-RGBHV switchers feature extremely low crosstalk specification" adds Van Meeuwen.

Available in 8x4, 8x8, 12x4, 12x8 and 16x16 models, CEN-RGBHV switchers are fully operable out-of-the-box for use as standalone units.

For more info, go to [CEN-RGBHV](#)

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Pro Audio

Audica Pro Launches MICROplus 4-Ch. Power Amp

Audica Professional will launch in Frankfurt a new MICROplus 4-channel power amplifier, an ultra-compact unit to partner their MICROzone pre/amp/controller.



Explains Audica Professional Sales Director, Derek West, "When we first launched MICROseries we really didn't appreciate the size of some installations it would be chosen for, based on audio quality and design, and our only limitation has been amplifier power..."

"...Used singly or in multiples, MICROplus resolves this cost effectively and provides a system capable of handling almost any size of applicable installation. With a MICROzone and a MICROplus in our optional 2U rack panel we have pre-amp, controller and a serious and flexible 370W (2 x 25W plus 4 x 80W) amplifier package, with the ability to constantly expand the system by up to 8 x 80W for each additional 2U of rack space."

West continues, "We chose a straight gain design for the MICROplus as we already pre-amp and EQ functions handled by the MICROzone for complete Audica sound systems, but this also gives the advantage that MICROplus can be used for any audio system that needs a high quality, ultra-compact 4-channel power amplifier".

Features include 4-channel limiting and protection and individual channel bar indicators showing output level, clip and fault. The unit has rear-mount level control, phono in/out and screw terminal loudspeaker outputs for each channel.

For more info, go [MICROplus 4-ch. Power amp](#)

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Community Celebrates 40th

Community Professional Loudspeakers will celebrate its 40th Anniversary at ProLight +Sound in Frankfurt. Founded by Bruce Howze in 1968, Community has grown as a manufacturer of sound reinforcement products, especially their weather-resistant designs (i.e., R-Series and WET Series II lines).



The all-weather R-Series and WET Series II will be on show at Frankfurt, alongside Community's CLOUD ceiling and I/O compact indoor/outdoor loudspeakers, the VERIS range of installation loudspeakers and the new i2W8. Also on show will be the SONUS range, designed for the working musician.



An addition to the iBOX Series, the Community i2W8 is a 2-way loudspeaker system designed for use in distributed systems (low ceiling venues as well as for monitoring and down, side and under-balcony fill-in theatre and live music clubs) with 6-sides, low profile enclosure and ultra-wide coverage pattern.

For more info, go to [Community i2W8](#)

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Residential Systems & Digital Home

BMB to Brings Colourful CINCO to Frankfurt

BMB Electronics will exhibit at Pro Light & Sound in Frankfurt with a special show focus on several new products.

The one that caught our eye is Luxom, European developer of home automation systems. BMB will feature be their new CINCO product, a multi-function wall switch to control lighting, audio, heating and more.

CINCO (comes in many different colours) can be programmed and easily remembered and changed by the user (for example, colour-matching to the home's interior). CINCO can be combined with other CINCO products, motion detectors, lux meters and other devices.



New MPEG Audio Codec by Fraunhofer IIS

Based on the MPEG-4 SLS standard, Fraunhofer will show at CeBIT their HD-AAC codec for future-proof, lossless compression of 24-bit quality music content.

Audio-CDs store uncompressed music in 16-bit, 44.1 kHz quality, while most music is now produced in the improved 24 bit, 96 kHz format. HD-AAC is making this new standard efficiently available to consumers, electronic music distribution and the consumer electronics industry.

"Consumers will be able to buy content in online music stores that sounds better than CDs, and preserve their existing CD collection for the future by encoding it in HD-AAC", says Harald Popp, head of the Multimedia Realtime Systems department at Fraunhofer IIS. "For casual listening, HD-AAC files conveniently play on existing AAC devices."

Due to its AAC-LC core layer, an HD-AAC file can be directly played on existing music players and millions of mobile phones. For decoding of the fully lossless signal, upcoming devices will be equipped with an HD-AAC decoder. In the connected home, songs stored on media servers in the HD-AAC format can be streamed to multiple devices at varying bitrates. This maximizes the sound quality under difficult network conditions by matching the bitrate to the available bandwidth.

As the inventor of MP3 and co-inventor of MPEG-4 AAC audio coding standard, Fraunhofer IIS has gained worldwide audio recognition.

For more info, go [HD-AAC](#)

Feature

What Keeps Us Up at Night

A Laborious Issue

Paying for your labor means you must also properly charge for it
By Chuck Wilson, Executive Director, NSCA

Systems contractors, like everyone else, must pay competitive wages. Not only is good help hard to find – and, consequently, keep – but companies that provide and are known for quality projects must also value those who perform the work, and that means paying fair, competitive wages.



Chuck Wilson

In a time when the price of practically everything seems to be on the rise, how can systems contractors afford to employ top-notch professionals? To turn reasonable profits, these expenses must be reflected in labor rates charged to customers. Many systems contractors are hesitant to pass on these fees to their customers. Brad Nelson, president of Systems Solutions Northwest in Kennewick, Washington, says it is a gray area for companies. In some states, licensure is mandatory, providing a solid argument for charging increased fees. Electricians, for example, are paid well because they are licensed, must follow codes, and cannot deliver work until they provide their license credentials. In states where low-voltage licensure is obligatory, passing on increased labor rates to the client is, perhaps, an easier exercise.

However, the situation becomes murky when a region does not require licensure. In these cases, systems contractors must base their fees solely on their expertise. This knowledge, however, is extremely valuable and its value will only grow as systems contractors are tasked with integrating increasingly complex projects.

An increase in labor rates, according to Nelson, is not an uncommon phenomenon in other construction trades and systems

contractors should look to these industries as examples. Low voltage contractors possess a significant level of expertise; knowledge that the average electrician does not have. Systems contractors are more than just important partners in the construction industry. Some sub-contract to electricians, while in other cases, they are sub-contractors to electricians, depending on the state requirements. In either case, systems contractors should demand the same level of respect given to other specialists.

Additionally, systems contractors should realize that clients aren't always averse to increased labor fees. Clients must deal with inflated prices in their own organizations; the rising cost of doing business is a bitter pill that everyone must swallow. Companies that wish to remain in business must recoup increased expenses related to staffing, insurance, benefits and taxes, maintaining fleets of vehicles, and sending technicians to job sites. An annual increase of three to five percent for labor rates may not be welcome news for your clients, but reasonable customers will admit that it's fair.

Labor burden is another important consideration. No employee can work 40 billable hours per week; paperwork, meetings and other duties not directly related to working on site are necessary to the execution of a project. These activities must be considered when developing labor fees. Otherwise, companies run the risk of short-changing themselves. There are a number of resources designed to assist systems contractors in establishing appropriate labor rates. NSCA's Advanced Project Management seminar, for example, details acceptable fees based on a technician's qualifications and salary. The course also examines elements such as vehicle expenses, insurance costs and benefits.

Announcing labor rate increases may not be the easiest task for systems contractors, but presenting the value added is becoming less daunting. One solution is to offer an EST Apprenticeship program. Depending on the prevailing wage in the area and whether apprenticeship is approved in your region, apprenticeships may reduce your costs.

Over the last decade, the industry has matured and is now viewed as a distinct trade. Systems contractors are now involved in construction projects earlier in the planning phases, rather than as a last-minute afterthought. Nelson said that 10 years ago systems contractors were often viewed as the musicians who couldn't make it in a band, opting to install audio systems, and maybe some video, instead. Today, he says, the reputation for being the 'shingle hangers' among the other trades has dissipated.

As the industry has evolved, so too has the systems contractor's image as a legitimate professional. Systems contractors must recognize that charging fair and reasonable labor rates is a necessary part of operating a profitable venture.

For more info, go to [EST Apprenticeship](#)

[Listen to Chuck Wilson at ISE](#)

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

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A little about Gary Kayye, CTS, Chief Visionary, Kayye Consulting, Inc, and founder of rAve Publications:

Gary Kayye, CTS is chief visionary at Kayye Consulting, a Chapel Hill, NC, USA-based firm specializing in marketing consulting and training development services to the ProAV and HomeAV markets. Recognized as InfoComm's Educator of the Year in 2004 and NSCA's Instructor of the Year in 2007. Gary is a columnist with Sound & Communications Magazine and founder of rAve Publications, publisher of the premier HomeAV industry's eNewsletter (rAve HomeAV Edition – published in conjunction with CEDIA), rAve ProAV Edition, rAve Rental [and Staging] and the newly launched Reviews By rAve. Prior to forming Kayye Consulting, he spent 11 years at Extron and AMX as VP of Sales and Marketing and has

previously served on the InfoComm Board of Governors, as the chairman of the Projection Shoot-Out and chairman of the AV industry's Professional Education and Training Committee.

Gary is currently serving on NSCA's Industry Advisory Board (IAB). In addition, he donates four weeks of his time a year as an active educational leader in the ProAV and HomeAV markets through free seminars and workshops at shows like NSCA, InfoComm, CES and CEDIA. He is a lively and fun speaker and every time he speaks, he mixes a visionary look into the future with a keen eye on how to get there. His clients have included Sony, InFocus, Crestron, Hewlett Packard, Steelcase, NEC, Da-Lite, Epson, Clarity, Apple, Scientific Atlanta, Cisco, JBL, Crown and Harman.

Finally, Gary's passion is a non-profit he co-founded called the Swim for Smiles Foundation (www.swimforsmiles.org). Swim for Smiles raises money for the North Carolina Children's Hospital through fun, active athletic events involving kids and swimming.

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