



For Europe's Pro AV integrators in a Networked World

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Feature

InfoComm 2008: Top 6 New Technologies

by Gary Kayye, CTS

There were a lot of new products and technologies at InfoComm 2008 that are worthy of a mention and we'll cover them all in our comprehensive InfoComm coverage this month and next.



To that end, I want to start by covering **my Top 6 New Technologies at InfoComm 2008** (these are in no specific order -- all six deserve equal billing):

4LCD: Sanyo demonstrated 4LCD technology. Aimed at those DLP-lovers who prefer the colorimetry of DLP to LCD, 4LCD from Sanyo was a hit when we polled DLP fans. Although traditional LCD colorists didn't prefer it to 3LCD, those in the DLP camp did (even one DLP-staffer asked me if I had a chance to see it).

Itty-bitty Projectors: The best was at the DLP booth where Optoma demonstrated a DLP-based projector using LED lamps and it's the size of an iPhone!

Mercury-Based projection: It's not totally new, but it's prime time now! The best of the best was Christie's new 10K 3-chip, DLP-based projector.

HD Conferencing: HD conferencing amazing! I had a chance to finally use Polycom's HDX-4000 and it was flawless performance at quality that's exactly where everyone who's ever dreamed about doing a VTC call wants.

3D Imaging: There was a lot of 3D on the show floor with Philips, Sony, Panasonic and NEC but the best of the best was what we saw from Da-Lite. They were showing a new 3D Virtual Black rear-screen technology that was stunning. 3D is a new market opportunity that every high-end Pro AV integrator needs to take a close look at for 2008-2009.

Remote Management: Companies like AMX, Crestron and Extron have had network-based remote management software for their own gear for years. But, at InfoComm 2008, Extron took their GlobalViewer to the next level by not only introducing an Enterprise version, but they also added the capability of controlling AMX and Crestron systems, too!

--by Gary Kayye, CTS

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PROJECTA

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Industry News

Whitlock & Impact Create Global Alliance

The Whitlock Group, a \$150 million force in the U.S. market, and \$100 million European group Impact announce an alliance they hope will create one of the industry's first and only global alliances for the AV install market. They even named it -- the Global Presence Alliance -- but this alliance will first focus on the U.S. and Europe (the companies plan to take this alliance past even those borders.)



Global Presence Alliance will provide a sole-source solutions approach, a consistent, consolidated service operation, better pricing due to efficiency, etc. etc. The companies say this alliance is a formalization of an existing working relationship between the two.

Established in 1974, Impact Marcom in UK is the amalgamation of two of the UKs most well established Audiovisual and Videoconferencing re-sellers and system integrators, Impact Europe and Marcom Systems. Impact Europe

With 14 offices across UK and Scandinavia, Impact is especially strong in the Defence, Criminal Justice, Higher Education, Energy and Enterprise market segments. Impact delivers AV design and integration, managed services and turnkey solutions for clients such as UK Ministry of Defence, Shell, Aker, Merrill Lynch, Deutsche Bank, Microsoft, Ericsson, Swedish Courts and the Met Police.

Fredd Causevic, CEO of Impact, points out the videoconference market, in particular, makes this good timing since that market is experiencing a 25% growth. So it makes sense for an alliance that can install cohesive systems worldwide.

Go [Global Presence Alliance](#)

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InfoComm Sees Record Numbers, Again

Anyone who attended InfoComm this year can vouch for the fact that it was the biggest show of our industry, ever. InfoComm released number the last day of the show -- 34,600 attendees and 988 exhibitors (versus previous high of 855 exhibitors last year).



Registrations for InfoComm Academy educational courses totaled 8606 for 2008. The Institute of Professional Development (IPD) attracted 587 registrants, up from 531 in 2007, a more than 10% increase.

Super Tuesday, a full-day of advanced instruction for AV pros, attracted 817 registrants in 2008, a 12% increase from 2007.

Among the most attended courses were the classes focusing on Green AV, Technology Trends and Project Management. Other popular classes include Syn-Aud-Con's Sound Reinforcement for Designers and the Imaging Science Foundation certification class. Classes offered jointly by InfoComm Academy and NSCA University drew 564 students.

Other highlights of InfoComm 08 include the welcoming of InfoComm International's 5000th member, a preview of the 2008 InfoComm International Asia Pacific AV Market Definition and Strategy Study, and the debut of the association's social networking program.

Go [InfoComm 2008 Results](#)

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ISE Road Show 2008 Dates Set

This year's 3rd edition of Integrated Systems Road Shows in Europe will visit the emerging markets of Greece, Bulgaria and Romania

Mike Blackman, MD, Integrated Systems Events, says the Roadshow has established a unique position in the industry calendar. "Since its inception in 2006, our Roadshow has visited seven European cities and attracted more than 1000 industry professionals from some of the continent's most dynamic markets."

As in previous years, each stop on the tour will feature a combination of manufacturer training and a hotel ballroom tradeshow, with additional education provided by ISE's two supporting trade associations, CEDIA and InfoComm International. All three shows will offer free admission to qualifying participants, and sponsorship opportunities will be strictly limited.

"By restricting the Roadshow to a maximum of 25 exhibitors, we ensure the event maintains its unique character," Blackman continues. "Attendees can fit both education and technology discussion into a single day, while exhibitors get quality time to spend time with new prospects. And, for the first time this year, all our destinations are within the European Union, which will ease customs and transportation for our sponsors."

As well as EU membership, all three of this year's Roadshow countries offer enormous growth opportunities in both commercial and residential systems integration. Between them, Greece, Bulgaria, and Romania have a population of over 40 million people and a combined GDP of more than \$650 billion per year, with growth averaging 5% annually.

Go [Roadshow](#)

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Displays & Mounts

Sharp's TL Series -- Best LCDs Ever?

Sharp's new TL LCD monitors, debuted at InfoComm, are no doubt considered some of the best on the market but, RAVE USA goes even further to say that without any hesitation, the best LCDs they've ever seen!



This is a line of 1920 x 1080, two-megapixel HD monitors that includes 52- and 46-inch models with 2000:1 and 1500:1 contrast ratio, respectively. Target markets include teleconferencing, CAD/simulation, digital signage, corporate, educational, training, hospitality, sports arenas, entertainment and house-of-worship.

The TL series features a new thin, lightweight cabinet design for easy installation as well as RJ-45 LAN control. It is also designed with fanless cooling.

BUT, Sharp TL Series still needs small sizes...Sharp, build a 37" version! Come on...

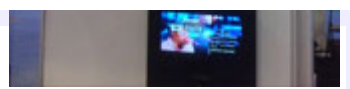
Go [Sharp TL Series](#)

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Pantel Shows Outdoor LCD HDTVs

Pantel has a huge variety of outdoor LCD TVs, from a small 20" all the way up to a huge 65" model. The middle sizes are 32", 42" and 52", too. At InfoComm, they had the wettest demo – as water was poured right over them!





The company says they offer double the brightness of most indoor TVs, and these are all specified at 1080 resolution.

One notable feature is the wireless transmitter that comes standard with all these models. The wireless package lets you broadcast both audio and video wirelessly up to 150 feet to the TV.

Testing, says the company, proves these operate in weather conditions ranging from -40F up to 140F. These are also made with anti-reflective glass.

Go [Pantel](#)

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Panasonic 103" Plasma at InfoComm

Although not brand new (it launched in February), Panasonic brought its impressive 103-inch plasma display to InfoComm and we took notice! This is a full 1080p resolution display and Panasonic says it ships with a 100,000-hour service life and backed by a 3-year warranty.

(By the way, in speaking with the Panasonic rep there at the booth, he wouldn't go on record, but he bragged that Panasonic would be the world's ONLY plasma manufacturer by the end of 2009.)



Called the 10 Series TH-103PF10UK, new features include configurability for video walls, new video processing technology, enhanced wireless capabilities, plug-in card functionality and dual HDMI.

For commercial video wall environments, the TH-103PF10UK provides native support for up to a 5 x 5 display configuration, the largest of any plasma display in the industry. Also, the new Portrait Zoom feature helps display of a single horizontal image across three vertically-mounted 103-inch plasmas for an impactful display 93 square-feet. The 103-inch plasma ships standard with two plug-in boards: a Dual 1080p HDMI Board (model TY-FB10HMD) and a Component Video Board (model TY-42TM6A). It also comes with a built-in PC Input (15pinHD), Audio Input (for PC), and Serial Control (RS-232C) Input.

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Control & Integrator Solutions

Extron Premieres 1500' Twisted Pair Receivers

Among the 100+ products Extron introduced at InfoComm was the MTP 1500RL Series of extended distance twisted pair receivers.



Available in four models, the new extended distance receivers work with MTP Series transmitters to send high resolution

video along with RS-232 or audio signals 1500 feet (457.2 meters) or more over a single CAT 5-type cable.

The extended distance receivers are compatible with resolutions up to 1600x1200 UXGA, and feature separate continuously variable level and peaking adjustments that precisely optimize image quality for various cable lengths. The receivers are housed in low profile, rack-mountable metal enclosures that can be discreetly mounted in racks or behind wall-mounted displays.

The long-distance receivers are designed for anywhere a high-res video signal needs to be sent a long distance, such as large buildings, airports, campuses, etc.

Go [Extron Long-Distance Receivers](#)

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Look, Ma, No Windows!

Crestron's new touch panels are now available with or without Windows.



One of Crestron's new touch panels is the TPS-6X, a tidy six-inch touch panel in a tabletop form. While docked, the TPS-6X is a wired Cresnet or Ethernet connected panel with full-motion video display. When you lift the panel off the dock, the panel automatically switches to a wireless RF device. TPS-6X features long-range, high-speed two-way RF communication up to 200 feet and 1-way IR.

Crestron says the TPS-6X is engineered to deliver the functionality previously found in nine separate touch panels! It is a wireless, tiltcase and permanent panel. As a wired touchpanel, the TPS-6X communicates over Cresnet or Ethernet. As a wireless touchpanel, it communicates via RF and IR. The TPS-6X is shipped with both a pre-engraved backlit button bezel and a blank bezel, in a luxurious black glossy finish.

Sitting on the docking station, the high-speed Ethernet connection enables full motion video display in a scalable or full-size window. Programs can be uploaded to the panel remotely while charging on the dock.

The TPS-6X simultaneously remains connected to the RF radio while operating as a wired panel, so when the panel is removed from the dock, it instantly switches over to wireless mode. The TPS-6X operates within IEEE 802.15.4 so it does not experience any of the challenges of WiFi.

Go [Crestron TPS-6X](#)

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Projection & Screens

Christie's New M Series 3-Chip DLP Projectors

Christie has a new series of 3-chip DLP projectors, the M Series, built on a dual-lamp and consisting of six new models. They were shown for the first time at InfoComm.



The projectors range from 5000 to 9500 ANSI lumens and come in two resolutions: SX+ (1400 x 1050) and HD (1920 x 1080). Also of note is they weigh just 55 pounds (25 kg), pretty light for this much power.

This Series also provides an expanded suite of lenses that includes two new options -- a short zoom (1.25-1.6:1 SX+ / 1.16-1.49:1 HD) and a long zoom (7.5-11.2:1 SX+ / 6.9-10.4:1 HD). These lenses all incorporate true Intelligent Lens System (ILS) capabilities, which Christie says automatically recognizes and calibrates a lens when it is installed. There is an encoder-based system that ensures repeatable recall of all lens offset, zoom and focus positions.

The M Series includes the Christie DS+6K-M at 5000 ANSI lumens; the Christie HD6K-M at 5100 ANSI; the Christie DS+10K-M at 9300 ANSI; the Christie HD10K-M at 9500 ANSI; and two Christie Roadster models with stacking and rigging.

Go [M Series](#)

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Hitachi Short-Lens Projector at InfoComm

While it's not a new projector, the new short-lens CP-A100/ED-A100/ED-A110 from Hitachi was new to InfoComm and it was pretty cool, with a great aesthetic form factor and the ability to project a 60-inch image from about 16 inches away. Once a market completely dominated for years by NEC, Hitachi has the best short throw follow-up to NEC's line we've seen so far.



This is specified at 2500 lumens, 400:1 contrast ratio, XGA resolution and it is networkable. It uses LCD technology.

Go [360-degree View](#)

To read more, go [Hitachi Short-Throw](#)

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Optoma Shows Handheld Pico Projector

Optoma chose InfoComm to launch its new Pico Handheld Projector. This DLP projector uses LED technology, as you might have guessed as its low power light system is the best for super-small projection devices like this, and it's small enough to fit in your palm (seriously, it's exactly the size of an Apple iPhone).



Optoma expects this to be used mostly by ultra-mobile users who want to project from mobile devices such as iPods or for people who just need to make presentations to small groups from "portable media players" rather than laptops, PDAs, smart phones and digital cameras. They aren't really releasing any specs as yet, but they do hint that the image it projects is 100 times the size of the source device. We found a DLP insider that told us that the real resolution they were showing at InfoComm was about 320 x 240 (half that of VGA). The company has plans to ship only to Europe and Asia in late 2008 with a worldwide launch planned for 2009.

And, yes, it is battery operated (expected to be 1-2 hours of battery life at launch), but the key here is size. Image quality? Well, for half that of VGA, for playing movies or short presentations, it's got potential.

Go [Optoma Pico Handheld Projector](#)

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Epson Demos 3LCD WXGA Projector at InfoComm

Epson's PowerLite Pro G5200WNL Projector is one of those presentation projectors that looks like it was designed with a wish list -- widescreen 16:10 aspect ratio, 4200 lumens, WXGA resolution and networkability, and a price tag of around \$3,400.



Lens not included

Lens not included

This is a 3LCD design specified at 800:1 contrast ratio with horizontal and vertical lens shift, instant off and on and 30 degree tilt. It also has closed captioning, an increasingly popular trend and a good trend, too!

This was the best small/install projector we saw at the show. We were thoroughly impressed by this projector. It's not the level of a Christie or DPI for staging or big installs, but it squarely hits 70% of the install market.

Go [Epson's PowerLite Pro](#)

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Casio Super Slim Pro-Series Projectors

Casio, which always brings some cool super slim projectors to InfoComm, did so again with four new Super Slim projectors. These are DLP models.



Casio says the XJ-SC210 and XJ-SC215 are designed for color accuracy and are specified at 2500 lumens. These two models provide 10 percent expansion of the chromaticity region.

The XJ-S57 and XJ-S52, on the other hand, deliver more brightness, specified at 3000 ANSI lumens.

Some models include a 2X power zoom lens, a RS-232 port and a USB port for PC-free presenting.

You can't tell from the picture, but these are seriously small, weighing under 4 pounds and measuring 11 x 8 x 1.5ish.

Go [Casio Super Slim Projectors](#)

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Conferencing

Hands-On with Polycom

rAve USA got a chance to try out the Polycom HDX 4000 Series using Ultimate HD for desktop conferencing before InfoComm and we were thoroughly impressed.



Not only does the HD look great, but in SD it looks better than any other 4 CIF product we've ever seen. Although made for HD, the HDX series looks awesome at 384 (and, of course at 512 too) and FINALLY fixes the years and years and years of image quality and connectivity issues that have plagued 384 and 512 users who've had it with VTC technology. Buy it for HD, but use it in SD too!

The HDX 4000 comes with a 20.1-inch HD screen, speakers, 1280 x 720 resolution, Siren22 Stereo Surround Audio and it is VoIP or analog speakerphone capable.

Go [Polycom HDX 4000](#)

Digital Signage

Arrive's Ultra HD Digital Signage Appliance

Arrive Corp. introduces at InfoComm the Arrive.MediaPoint Digital Signage Appliance" the company says it delivers 1080p real time dynamic digital signage and interactive information management using a unique application that Arrive is developing.

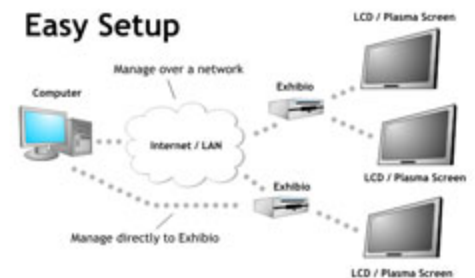


The new appliance uses touch and software tools to simplify large-scale signage systems. It is an integrated (hardware and software) appliance rather than a PC-based software system. All that it requires, says the company, is a connection to power and TCP/IP to give instant Ultra High Definition playback of media files. The network feed is provided from a FTP based server which is not proprietary and can be managed from anywhere in the world.

Go [Arrive Corp](#)

Digital Signage Setup in 5 Minutes?

Exhibio claims you can set up their digital signage system in only 5 minutes.



It does look easy to use -- with what appears to be an intuitive graphic user interface on Exhibio Manager software for inserting your text, audio, images, movies, and even RSS feeds. You can set it up with or without a network or internet connection.

What is a bit different here is that unlike most digital signage systems, this is all contained in one "black" box. There is no separate server; no separate player. The company also says there are no monthly subscriptions or "per seat" licensing fees. As digital signage is one of the fastest growing segments of ProAV, we made it a point to seek out small digital signage players that we think you need to know about! And, this is one of them.

Go [5-Minute Signage Solution](#)

AMX Digital Signage with InfoComm Demo

If you saw the AMX booth at InfoComm, you saw one of their new digital signage systems, made up of dozens of flat panels side by side and wrapping the top of part of their booth with images. The company is also making use of the recently-acquired signage company, Inspired Signage. This new Inspired Signage digital signage product family is, according to AMX, a line of pre-packaged solutions designed to bypass custom development.



The first product introduced in the Inspired-2-Go line is specifically tailored to the education market. Solutions for other

vertical markets will be available in the future.

AMX says Inspired-2-Go Education provides pre-packaged layouts containing graphics and animations specifically designed for the K-12 and higher education markets.

The layouts also let administrators customize and change the design and content distributed to their displays whenever they want, and with very little training. They can create announcements, event calendars, menus and video clips to news headlines and local weather.

The system includes the Inspired Player (IS-Player-200), and the Inspired Composer with Inspired-2-Go Layouts. This is expected to ship in 90 days.

Go [AMX Digital Signage](#)

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Residential Systems & Digital Home

MIT's Power Bar Cuts Noise

In a world premiere at CEDIA in London last week, MIT International Sales Manager Steve Holt demo'd the Z Powerbar. It uses (patented) parallel noise filtration circuits, removing AC line noise you can hear through every speaker, and noise you can see on a high definition display.



By controlling line noise, customers can enjoy "blacker" blacks, better saturation of color, and the ability to see details in the shadows.

Go [Steve's Power Bar Demo \(video\)](#)

Go [MIT Power Bar info](#)

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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

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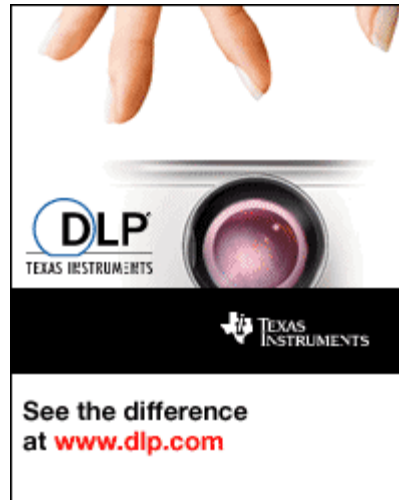
A little about Gary Kayye, CTS, Chief Visionary, Kayye Consulting, Inc, and founder of rAve Publications:

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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