



For Europe's Pro AV integrators in a Networked World

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Save money with filter-free DLP Projectors.



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Feature

My Top Six New Companies to Watch

by Gary Kayye

As I said in my last column, InfoComm 2008 was, by far, the best AV show EVER! I was simply blown away with everything as I walked the floor over those three days



Note to the InfoComm Show Management: Please consider making it a 4-day show. I know many manufacturers will not like this, but ultimately they would appreciate it as 3 days are simply not enough to cover the show floor. If you survey attendees, a great number of them would agree: we need one more day!

And, by the way, there were over 34,600 people walking the aisles of the show over the three days -- besting the old record for attendance by almost 10%.

That said, one thing that was noticeably different and impressive was the number of NEW exhibitors at InfoComm 2008. Check this out, overall InfoComm had 988 exhibitors in this year's show in Vegas in June, but of that 988 (a 15% increase over last year), 231 were NEW exhibitors -- nearly 25%!

That's amazing -- especially in a time where every piece of information you could ever seem to want is available via the Internet and, more impressive is the fact that this is a very mature show (almost 50 years old) that's continuing to grow -- clearly at a staggering rate.

So, having seen most if not all of the 231 new exhibitor's booths and their new products, I thought I would tell you who are the Top 6 newcomers to the AV market that YOU should watch carefully (and consider becoming dealers for).



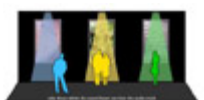
AGN PRO: This is NOT a new company, but it is NEW to InfoComm. They make the simplest out-of-the-box digital signage network players I have ever seen. Great design and with resolutions (for network-based content) from regular old video all the way up to 1080p.

Go **AGN PRO**



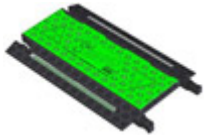
BROADSIGN: Now that you know the manufacturer of the best new digital signage player I saw (see AGN Pro above), you will also need to check out BroadSign as they make the digital signage cloud -- the NETWORK that drives all this content to the displays via the Internet.

Go **SaaS for Digital Signage**



HOLOSONICS: This is a cool company with a cool product. It's a product they call Audio Spotlight and it was invented in the MIT Media Lab. Basically it's speakers that direct sound just like a spotlight beams light directly at the listener. It's way better than those stupid sound domes that never work right and much less expensive.

Go **Audio Spotlight**



FIREFLY: A small company out of California called Firefly (a name that I am sure is shared with thousands of other companies) introduced an LED-lit cable cover for rental and staging application where you have to cover cables with something so people don't trip over it. It's VERY cool. EVERY rental and staging company NEEDS this! Tell them to check it out.

Go **Firefly the Video**



MIPRO: MIPRO Electronics is a new manufacturer to the US -- based out of Taiwan -- and they have some very powerful and simple wireless microphone solutions. I was impressed with the simplicity of operation but the prices stunned me.

Go **Digital Wireless Mic System**



STREAM1080: This is a totally new company that builds a portable high-definition mobile video encoder. So, what this means is that you can carry around an HD video camera and simultaneously (wirelessly) transmit/stream that video via the Internet wherever you want -- live.

Go **HD Mobile Video Encoder**

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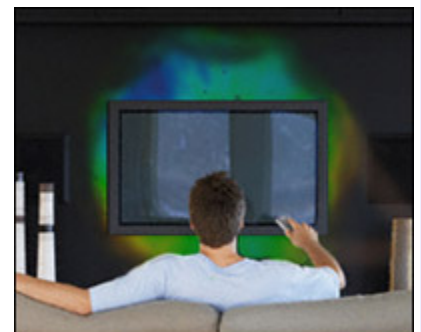
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Industry News

Giving Gas: A New "FLAT-ulence"

A professor from University of California says flat screens contain a "missing greenhouse gas" that is 17000x worse for global warming than the more famous CO2 emissions.



The industry began to use nitrogen trifluoride (NF3) in the manufacture of flat-screens in the late 1990s as a safer alternative to PFC gases (known contributors to global warming.) They believed NF3 was less likely to escape into the atmosphere (but they were aware NF3 could cause much more environmental damage if accidentally released).

Now scientists think more of the gas may be released during use than assumed. "We don't know if 1% or 20% is getting out, but once you let the genie out of the bottle you can't get it back in," says Professor Michael J. Prather, co-author of a study of the gas.

When released, NF3 (not even covered by the Kyoto Protocol) survives in our atmosphere for 500 years, trapping heat and raising global temperatures.

USA, Japan and Korea last year stepped up production of NF3: by 2010, world production will be 8000 tons a year (equal to 130 million metric tons of CO2).

University of California hopes to find a way to measure how much of the gas is already trapped in the Earth's atmosphere.

Go [NF3 Research](#)

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Control & Integrator Solutions

AMX Adds RFID into Resource Management Suite 3.2

AMX announced at InfoComm that the new version of its Resource Management Suite, RMS 3.2, includes the RFID technology for asset management and monitoring, tracking fixed and mobile assets and also scheduling meeting or classrooms. The new features include location-based asset tracking using their Anterus RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) solution, additional report options, a more powerful search engine and greater scalability.



In addition to managing and monitoring A/V equipment, users can now track fixed and mobile assets. With RMS 3.2, any asset - such as tables/chairs, flip charts, podiums/lecturns and mobile A/V carts - can now be registered for inventory management. The physical locations of items can even be monitored in real time using AMX Anterus Asset Tags, which incorporate the RFID. Not only can lost items be found, but instant alerts can be sent when items are moved outside the RFID coverage area.

With RMS 3.2, a specific function can now be automatically performed as a result of a pre-defined event. For example, the system can be configured to turn on a fan based on the temperature threshold of an equipment rack.

The new reports in v 3.2 include Device Activity, Room Activity, Device Location, Device Battery Level, Device Inventory, Control System Inventory and System Users. The new software version also lets users perform searches by any key word, such as device type, name, tag ID or room.

Go [RMS 3.2](#)

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Kramer Announces Cobra Twisted Pair Products

Kramer Electronics announces the Cobra line of ultra long distance twisted pair products. Designed for systems integration and public display/signage markets, the Cobra line provides previously unattainable solutions for long-distance resolution and control. The line includes four transmitters, four receivers, two matrix switchers and one distribution amplifier.



Kramer says the Cobra family of products offers 1920 x 1200 resolution at 1300 feet. The products also feature bi-directional RS-232 for two-way communication and control.

The Cobra receivers feature Kramer's Tru-Sync processing, which allows the receiver to sample the sync at the source and recreate it at the destination.

Go [Twisted Pair Compatibility Engine](#)

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Displays & Mounts

Sony: Two New High-Res Displays at InfoComm

Sony introduced two new high-res LCD displays at InfoComm. The new models are the 42" FWD-S42H1 and 47" FWD-S47H1 and they are specifically designed with high brightness and high res for a range of commercial installation applications, including digital signage.



Each model has full 1920 x 1080 resolution and, for digital signage, the displays are specially designed to accommodate Sony's HD player, model VSP-NS7, with screw holes, so users can easily mount the player to the rear of the display. The displays can also be used with a table-top stand, and additional screw holes on top allow Sony IPELA cameras to attach for videoconferencing.

These have a higher brightness than previous versions, with a "brightness boost" setting for even brighter images. Three types of screen savers are available: standby, which is activated while the backlight is off; all-white and sweep.

Users can control and manage the displays remotely from a central location, with firmware upgrades available over a local area network. A "power on delay" function shifts the power-on timing of multiple displays to avoid system power down.

Also nice is that the displays automatically detect use in landscape or portrait mode, and illuminate a logo in the appropriate orientation. They also have Invisible speakers, rear control buttons and a slim bezel design.

Go [Sony High-Res LCD Displays](#)

TOP ↑

Projection & Screens

Christie Single-Chips, High Brightness in Bright Rooms

Along with the new 3-chip DLPs we previously covered, Christie also announced new single-chip DLP projectors at InfoComm.



The new projectors, additions to the DS+ Series, are designed specifically for presenting in high-ambient light environments. You get 6 motorized lens options with throw ratios from 0.8:1 through 7:1.

The DS+655 is specified at 6500 ANSI lumens, SXGA+ resolution and 7500:1 contrast ratio. It uses 10-bit image processing, BrilliantColor from TI and DNX.

The other single-chip is the DS+405, which is a special, built-to-order projector for applications requiring fully saturated colors.

Go [Christie Single-Chips](#)

[TOP +](#)

Mitsubishi Brings Wireless Projector to InfoComm

Mitsubishi showed a new wireless projector, the XD530U, at InfoComm. This is specified at XGA resolution with 3000 lumens. The XD530U is a DLP model using BrilliantColor from TI.



The wireless functionality can be used by downloading installation software from Mitsubishi's website and the company says it is set up in four easy steps.

This model also has color wall support so that users can select surface colors, including beige, blue, green, pink, blackboard or the new whiteboard setting that helps eliminate hotspots. It supports DVI, has separate audio inputs for computer and video, dual computer inputs, RS-232, and monitor loop through.

Go [Mitsubishi Wireless](#)

[TOP +](#)

Your Choice of 4:3 or 16:10, InFocus Projectors

InFocus made several product introductions at InfoComm, including the IN1100 series, a mobile projector designed for travel. This is a small DLP weighing just 2.75 pounds and specified up to 2200 lumens. It comes equipped with DisplayLink for connecting to the laptop via a standard mini-USB cable.



This projector is available in both XGA and WXGA resolutions -- a very nice option.

Go [IN1100 Series](#)

Another debut from InFocus is the IN3100. Designed for meeting rooms, this uses a new LiteTouch keypad that is visible only when it's needed. This replaces standard button controls with a backlit touch-sensitive keypad. This is specified from 3000-3500 lumens, 2000:1 contrast and, again, your choice of XGA or WXGA resolution.

Go [IN3100](#)

InFocus also introduced an installation projector. The IN5100 is specified up to 5000 lumens with WXGA resolution. It has HDMI 1.3 and BNC inputs along with RS-232.

Go [IN5100](#)

[TOP +](#)

Digital Signage

82" Indoor/Outdoor Display at InfoComm

Finnish company Symbicon showed its indoor/outdoor signage solution. This was a very nice display -- thinner than most outdoor encasements, and designed with an attractive aluminum enclosure. They will have three sizes -- 46, 57 and a huge 82 inches.





These have a filter-less cooling design, and no refills (such as liquids) are required. They also incorporate vibration dampers. They can be used in portrait or landscape, and they can be mounted on the wall or ceiling or can be flag mounted.

For more information, go to <http://www.iconone.fi/index.php?id=1>

Go **Symbicon 82**

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Visix Intros Its First Signage Media Appliance

Visix ships its first fully-embedded digital signage media appliance. The company says it accommodates a variety of still, video and audio formats, including video overlay from external sources. The appliance can also support external database sources delivered in RSS and XML formats.



The media appliance is positioned as an entry-level digital signage endpoint device, with features that most Visix users would need.

Content for the appliance is managed through Visix's AxisTV digital signage software application, using its Professional and Enterprise server platforms. The appliance can be configured to support N-tier scalability built into the Enterprise server application, and can be integrated with new or existing channel players supported by AxisTV.

Go **Visix**

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Conferencing

Polycom Expands Telepresence Offerings

Polycom gave live demos of 1080p Telepresence at InfoComm, and announced the company's plans to extend its Telepresence portfolio to support 1080p resolution. Polycom also demonstrated the Polycom TPX 306M, with content on the table.



The Polycom TPX series is designed to make people feel like they are sitting across the table from coworkers, partners and customers who are actually in other locations. The same-room experience is made possible through high definition video displayed in lifelike proportions and high definition directional audio that even allows participants to hear where remote participants are located within the room when they speak. The solution also offers high definition content-sharing.

The new TPX 306M product is quite cool -- the content on the table is a three-screen solution for up to six people on camera in each location. It features personal, pop-up content displays embedded within the table. The Polycom TPX 204M is a new two-screen solution for up to four people, the TPX 102M is a single-screen solution for up to two people.

VoiceLift Microphone for Classroom Sound Field Voice Amplification

Extron Electronics introduces the VoiceLift Microphone, an infrared wireless microphone system that the company says integrates seamlessly into new or existing Extron PoleVault installations, as well as complete VoiceLift solutions.



The VoiceLift Microphone creates a sort of sound field that allows a teacher or other presenter's voice to be heard throughout the room. The VoiceLift series of products includes a wireless pendant microphone and a ceiling or wall mounted receiver, as well as an optional second microphone and dual mic charging station. The pendant microphone is lightweight, so it can be worn around the neck or clipped onto clothing. The pendant microphone has volume and power/mute. An auxiliary input is also included for use with an MP3 player or other audio source, and there is an auxiliary microphone input for use with an optional boom or lapel mic.

Because it uses infrared, the signals don't pass through walls and aren't subject to interference from other wireless technologies. Up to two microphones can be supported per room.

Each microphone is powered by an included rechargeable 2500 mAH NiMH AA battery for more than 8 hours usage time. The desktop charging station charges two microphones and protects them when not in use. Or, a standard AA Alkaline battery can be used instead.

When this is officially announced, you will be able to find more details at [VoiceLift Microphone](#)

Audio

SmelloVision Comes to ProAV

SoundTube and ScentAir demonstrated a new product at InfoComm that actually emits aromas. It is a combination product that provides scent, audio and light encased in SoundTube's FP dual parabolic focus point speaker. It uses ScentAir's custom engineered scent delivery system to deliver audio and scent into a very small, targeted area.



ScentAir says they partner with the world's best fragrance houses to provide over 1000 scents in its scent library, making it easy to fit a business' target. FP Series Focus Point Speakers are designed for contained music and messaging. This specially packaged speaker also has a light installed to help draw attention to the display.

The companies say this combination will help any type of business deliver the right message, scent or audio, to the right place at the right time to create a precise customer experience.

Go [SoundTube FP Series](#)

Go [Scent and Audio Combination](#)

Rich Media & Content Distribution

Keyword Search for MediaPOINTE Server

Advanced Media Design gave rAVE USA a sneak peak at its upcoming search functionality last year and now, the company is delivering it. MediaPOINTE Ensemble is



a server that stores and streams video files over the network, but it also allows an organization to consolidate disparate multimedia assets into a single content management portal. Users can do a keyword search and find any file over the LAN, WAN or Intranet, regardless of where it is stored.



The company is describing this as the YouTube for your enterprise.

Also, get this: the content search function allows users to find specific video topics on the Ensemble server and stream them to their computers, OR to their iPods, too.

Go [Keyword Search](#)

[TOP +](#)

Planar Brings Solutions for Control Rooms, Video Walls

Planar announced at InfoComm the Indisys Director, billed as complete end-to-end management of video and data acquisition, distribution and display for control rooms and video walls.



Indisys Director gives control over key data such as event triggers, drag and drop sources, presets, and live source and video wall thumbnails. Additionally, Indisys Director communicates with the Indisys in-cube processor in order to manage and control the video wall itself. The operator can power cubes on and off, launch Set it and Forget it (SiFi) Auto Color Balance on the video wall, and report and respond to conditions such as system temperature and lamp life.

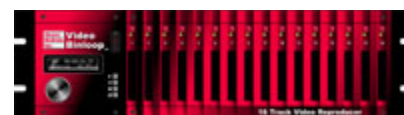
It has Web-enabled monitoring, and offers full API for end-user customization and integration.

Go [Indisys Director](#)

[TOP +](#)

Video Binloop Now Shipping

Alcorn McBride now ships its Video Binloop, specifically designed for environments where a large number of repeating video feeds are required but rack space is limited. The Video Binloop provides up to 16 tracks of high bitrate MPEG-2 video in a 3 RU enclosure. Video clips, encoded at up to 15 Mbps, are stored digitally so there are no moving parts to wear out. It features composite, component and optional SDI (SMPTE 259M) video outputs.



The product locks to NTSC or PAL video sync, and reads or generates linear timecode at many different SMPTE and EBU rates. It can be controlled using contact closures, RS-232, MIDI or Ethernet. Reproducer cards or entire Binloops can be grouped to respond to the same command, allowing a single event to control hundreds of tracks.

And each video track can be multiplexed with stereo or Dolby AC3 audio.

Go [Video Binloop](#)

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Residential Systems & Digital Home

Kaleidescape: Ordinary DVDs Can Rival Blu-ray

Kaleidescape brought their new 1080p Player and 1080p Mini Player to CEDIA in London. Save your DVD collection because Kaleidescape says it can produce "stunning video quality" from ordinary DVDs, rivaling Blu-ray HD.





The 1080p Movie Player, says the company, upscales ordinary DVD content to high definition video, matching the resolution of today's display devices without the added cost and complexity of an external scaler.

"These new Players have achieved our goal of producing beautiful high definition video from the DVDs that we've all been collecting for years," says Michael Malcolm, Kaleidescape founder. "The new 1080p Players leverage Kaleidescape's extensive Movie Guide database to make the viewing experience even more entertaining. Our patent-pending video bookmarking changes the way rental movies are enjoyed – no more annoying trailers, advertisements and DVD menus. And the compact 1080p Mini Player saves valuable space so customers can enjoy their movies and music in more locations throughout the home."

The 1080p Player is designed as a 1U rack mount device, and includes a DVD/CD-ROM drive for import and direct playback of DVDs and CDs. The 1080p Mini Player offers the video and audio performance of the 1080p Player, in a smaller package with a lower price. It is ideal for inconspicuous installation in viewing rooms where owners desire that A/V equipment be hidden.

Go **Kaleidescape**

Watch **1080p Player at CEDIA**

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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.

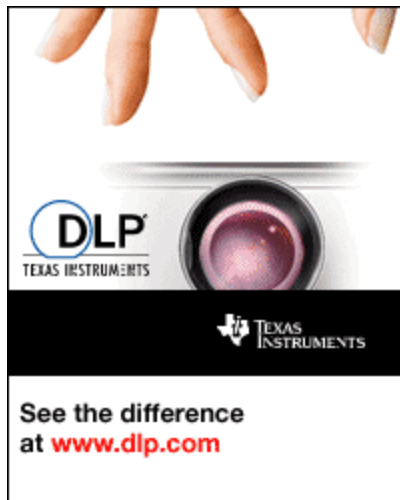
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A little about Gary Kaye, CTS, Chief Visionary, Kaye Consulting, Inc, and founder of rAve Publications:

Gary Kaye, CTS is chief visionary at Kaye 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 Kaye 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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