



For Europe's Pro AV integrators in a Networked World

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## Cisco Builds an Empire of Collaboration

We tend in AV to be the least unified but most collaborative piece of the Unified Communications jungle where Big Vendors hunt for Big Business.

We tend to just put our head down and play our small role when asked. But we can't afford to do that anymore. We need to leverage our ability to collaborate digital AV media to pick up a bigger piece of the jungle real estate. To do that, we first have to listen to Cisco: collaboration is the next phase of the internet. Cisco is already building an empire in this jungle, an empire the size of the Belgian Congo in a jungle the size of Africa. Cisco figures that the VoIP part of the jungle is a \$1 billion opportunity, telephony a \$12 billion opportunity and unified communications a \$27 billion opportunity. But collaboration adds up to a \$34 billion opportunity.

Cisco's collaboration portfolio aims to leverage its network architecture to integrate collaboration experiences, from text messaging to Cisco TelePresence sessions. Cisco Systems' newest collaboration portfolio includes a new version of Cisco Unified Communications System, as well as new TelePresence and WebEx features.

Cisco Unified Communications System Release 7.0 offers organizations more ways to collaborate. The new Cisco TelePresence Expert on Demand enables end-users to connect with subject matter experts via video at the touch of a button.

Cisco also announces a new cloud-based application platform for collaborative business mashups. Cisco WebEx Connect offers standard applications like enterprise instant messaging, team spaces, document management, calendars and discussions. It also includes e-mail and calendaring features gained from the acquisition of PostPath. The applications can be combined with 3rd party applications that are built using open APIs. WebEx Connect is available now as a desktop and Web-based client, with mobile client support rolling out in early 2009.

Cisco argues (quite rightly) that collaboration represents a huge opportunity for vendors and channel partners. We would agree but want to add AV integrators need to consider how to add collaborative IT services around their AV and teleconferencing technology. In a world where IT is "blind," the video-eyed man should be King.

Go [Collaborate with Cisco](#)



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## PROJECTA

[Click above for more information](#)

## Projection & Screens

### 3M MPro110 Micro Professional Projector



A lightweight and ultra mobile MPro110 from 3M is easily connected to a laptop PC for screen projection. Photos, video clips, presentations and other visual media can be projected from 5" up to 50" diagonal—a new way to share content on the spot.

The size of a smartphone, MPro110 weighs 152 grams and measures 115(L ) x 50(W) x 22(H) mm. Operation is silent and its rechargeable battery gives up to 60 minutes running time. Using LCOS technology MPro110 has an aspect ratio of 4:3 and a native resolution of 640 x 480 VGA.

Go [3M's Micro Professional Projector](#)



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### Displays & Mounts

#### Philip's Glass-Free 56" 3D HDTV

Of course, it was in Hollywood that Philips introduces its 56" prototype HDTV panels for displaying 3D images via 3840 x 2160 resolution and proprietary technology.

This Quad Full Autostereoscopic 3D HDTVs runs on high-speed data delivery and brings 4X the pixels of current maximum HDTV resolution to achieve glasses-free 3D.

The added pixels allows Philips' to trick the human brain, sending multiple images to each eye at slightly different angles for the 3D effect. Its technology allows it to achieve a 160-degree viewing angle along with a high image contrast ratio.

Philips already has commercialized a simpler 3D display technology, with its 22" WOWvx display meant for commercial applications. Any consumer or business launch of Philips' 3D HDTV is likely to include this technology, which can convert HD content into 3D programming.



Go [Philips 3D](#)

#### Vogel's Professional: Short Throw Projector Mounts



Short-throw projectors (STPs) grow in popularity as they squeeze into offices and rooms that once-upon-a-time couldn't fit a projector.

Mounting specialists Vogel's Professional now offers mounts exactly for those STPs. One universal model (PPA 40) offers a solution for all while a second model (PPW 406) is dedicated to the Sanyo PLC XL50.

Features include flexible adjustment in all directions, adjustment fine-tuning, and stylish design.

Vogel's Professional will send RAVE EUROPE readers a brochure

if you reply at [RAVE@Vogels.com](mailto:RAVE@Vogels.com)

Or take a look first. Go [Vogel's Short Throw](#)

Go [Sanyo Version](#)

## Where Are Flat Panel Prices Going? Down.

The world's biggest flat panel display maker, Samsung, has reduced production of its flat screens and may cut investment in the business next year.

Samsung's 5% cut in production since August, adds the Big Guy to a list including LG Display and other Taiwanese companies that have already reduced output. Analysts think AU Optronics and Chi Mei could report some losses in Q4 as an industry downturn could continue throughout the first half of next year.

Although major display makers have reduced production to ease oversupply, panel prices continue to fall as the global economic slowdown hits demand for consumer electronics. LG Display said its average sales price in Q3 fell about 22% from Q2 prices.

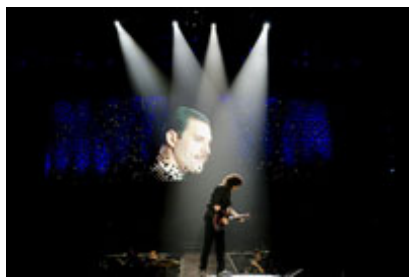
Citigroup predicts a supply glut will force the five major LCD makers to reduce capital spending by 24% next year.

Go [Samsung Cuts LCD Production](#)

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## Rental & Staging

### Barco Brings Freddie Mercury Back to Life...



If that were only true...but it's next best thing. Barco's OLite 612 LED display supports Queen + Paul Rodgers on their 2008 European tour. The tour began in Ukraine and has 2500 OLite 612 LED modules to create a backdrop screen on stage that does bring Freddie's image back for the audience.

This year Queen teamed up singer/songwriter Paul Rodgers to release their first new studio album since the loss of Freddie Mercury. A 4-month tour, takes them across 14 different European countries.

Design company Stufish created the stage set for the tour. The giant backdrop screen, the key visual element to the show, measures 17m wide and 5m high and holds the 2500 OLite 612 LED modules.

The screen frame (custom made by Brilliant Stages with integration by Barco's Innovation Designs) houses a creative mix of high and low res and combines elements of both video and traditional lighting into one screen. In the centre, Barco's OLite modules form a high res elliptical screen to deliver the main show video. Fanning out from the circle's edge, the OLite modules are placed apart in a "checkerboard" effect for the visual elements of the show. A number of PAR 64 lighting fixtures are built-in among the OLite modules on each side for a special mix of video and lighting effects. Thanks to clever cabling, the massive screen also splits into different sections during the show.

Barco's OLite 612 is a multifunctional indoor/outdoor SMD LED display. With a 12mm pixel pitch, 6,000NIT light output and 15 bit processing, the OLite 612 delivers high quality images even in daylight. One OLite 612 can be split into 48 modules enabling creative display designs of any shape or form. The use of SMD technology enables wide viewing angles and superb uniformity at very short viewing distances and thanks to its outdoor IP65 rating the OLite panels can be used in all weather conditions.

Go [Barco's OLite 612](#)

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## Digital Signage

### Poor Man's Digital Signage

Is it my imagination? No, it can't be, because I took photos...

Everywhere you go these days small companies have subverted digital photo frames to create digital signage.

Modest airport hotels, small city conference centers, small corporate reception...you can spot the digital photo frame--without Mom's pictures but with customer messaging, advertising, and communication.



The business makes up the message and the image on its computer and insert the memory card into the photo frame that plays it automatically. "The airport bus leaves every hour..." "The Lecture on Robespierre is in Room 4 at 13:00.." "Don't forget to leave us your visitor's badge..."

Clever people, those small businesses.

Worldwide shipments of digital frames grew from 2.8 million units in 2006, with an average selling price of \$168 to 42.3 million units by 2011. Shipment growth will be driven by added features, larger frame sizes, and lower prices.

The 5" to 6.9" frame category made up the bulk of the market in 2006, but 7" -8.9" dominated 2007. Digital frame prices will be a major purchase influencer as overall worldwide prices decline an average of 16.5% from 2006 to 2011.

On one hand, maybe we should be depressed that without integrators, these Small Medium Enterprises have created their own digital signage systems. Or, on the other hand, we should be thankful to their commitment to the concept and demonstrate what the real stuff can do for their business.

Watch [The Evolution of Digital Photo Frames](#)

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## Conferencing

### Cisco & Tata Go MainStream, 100 Locations



Cisco Systems will partner with Tata Communications of India to install Cisco's TelePresence at hotels and other locations (including a suite at Cisco in Silicon Valley) where they will be open to the public via on-line reservation.

Tata will open public TelePresence suites in 100 locations by the end of next year. The move follows Hewlett-Packard's partnership with Marriott to make Halo available to the public at some Marriotts.

Cisco and Tata already have conference rooms in 9 locations (Santa Clara, Boston, London, Bangalore, New Delhi and other Indian cities) where rental fees are \$299 to \$899 an hour (depends on room size).

Cisco has installed about 1000 conferencing suites for corporate clients (from \$34,000 to \$349,000 each). Renting out suites to the public will let future customers get familiar with the technology and may eventually create the universal usage the industry has long sought.

Go [TelePresence, Anywhere, Any Time](#)

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## Installer & Distributor News

### ETC: Doing the "Fireworks Prom"



Large format projection specialists E/T/C London supplied seven 6kW PIGI projectors with double rotating scrollers to produce a spectacular 120 metre wide backdrop on The Old College building at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, for "Music On Fire" 2008.

The PIGI scrollers contained 19 metres of film and produced over 100 looks on the building. The projectors were positioned 46 metres from the building, covered by Steeldeck hides, with special weatherproof covers.

It is the third time that E/T/C London has been involved in the biannual 3-day mixed-media extravaganza and "Firework Prom" which attracted audiences of up to 10,000 per night. This 2 hour performance featured music from different military orchestras and bands, plus special guests and eye-catching

pyrotechnics.

The biggest challenge in projection was the live music each night, (no guiding soundtrack, just a script with cues).

The OnlyCue control system was programmed and operated by Andy Murrell, who worked alongside E/T/C. They pre-programmed some of the projection show beforehand at E/T/C London, saving a night of programming on-site.

Go [E/T/C](#)

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## Agora Takes Biggest DiGiCo SD7 Delivery

Italian rental company, Agorà recently took delivery of no less than four DiGiCo SD7 digital mixing consoles, the biggest single delivery to date.

Agorà's high profile client list (the majority of the country's top tours) means that its inventory of consoles (six D5s, and a D1) needed to be augmented. After these SD7s, the company from central Italy expects to purchase another two in 2009.

The four SD7s were set up in one room and the assembled engineers very quickly got to grips with them with only a minimal amount of instruction, followed by a Q&A session.

Product support is high on DiGiCo's list of priorities, so DiGiCo's MD, James Gordon, visited Agorà's premises to head up a training programme.

"Agorà has a long association with DiGiCo," says Stefano Cantadori, president of Audio Link. "It was one of the first companies to invest in the D5 and has an impressive stock of both digital and analogue desks. Agorà already had the edge in the Italian market and the purchase of the SD7s has reinforced that."



Go [DiGiCO and Agorà](#)

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## Residential Systems & Digital Home

### The Crestron iServer

Crestron says its new iServer is "the first permanent iPod based home audio solution, bridging the gap between expensive dedicated audio servers and basic docking."



Users can now access iTunes from the home computer, download new songs, and immediately enjoy their music in every room in the house.

Once connected to a users' home computer network, the Crestron iServer automatically synchronises with iTunes Library whenever new content is added or new playlists are created.

The Crestron iServer plays all the content stored on a user's iPod, including music, audio books and videos. Much more than a basic docking solution, the Crestron iServer is a dedicated audio server that is always available for whole house entertainment. The low-profile solution can either rest on a shelf or mount in a rack.

The device uses any iPod, once installed through the front panel slot, as its hard drive. Connecting the iServer to the home network will provide direct communication with the home computer.

Go [iServer](#)

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## Feature

### What Keeps Us Up at Night?

### Rising Costs Got You Down?

by **Chuck Wilson, NSCA Executive Director**

[Editor's Note: It took a global financial crisis to force fuel prices to drop. This article was written only



*weeks earlier but we include it because it highlights the thought process that underlines business decisions. Expect fuel prices to drop and use this advice to think about the twin demons spawned by the bank crisis: inflation and recession.]*

Who knew when you bid that project two years ago that petrol would be where they are today? Now you're stuck with the project and looking to find a little margin elsewhere. It's happened with fuel, copper, and labor. If fuel wasn't going up, it would be something else. Here's something to think about when facing rising costs:



Contractors get hit on two fronts – petrol for vehicles and energy costs for their buildings. Neither are easy to pass onto the customer. Both can take a big bite out of profits.

NSCA is committed to helping our members save money and solve problems. The following tips and techniques can help you preserve and grow your commercial electronic systems business during the lean times ahead.

Since we cannot control rising prices, there are really only three basic counter approaches to consider. We owners can:

1. Raise prices across the board
2. Add surcharges and fees
3. Sit tight and eat the increasing costs

First, if you decide to raise prices across the board, you can implement this strategy at the project level or apply it to hourly rates. This option is easy if your customers accept it.

NSCA is always trying to help our members save money and be more profitable. We have found that in many cases that the way you can save money is to be smarter about how and when you order.

Regular customers are the bread and butter of successful businesses. Yet as a systems contractor, it's important to realize that the cost of doing business never goes down. If your clients understand this, then they'll logically understand the forces at hand and be sympathetic. By the way, most of your customers and probably your competitors are doing the same. Even if you don't own a fleet of trucks, somewhere along the line your business relies on a supplier who does, and these higher prices are passed right on down. All too often the small business owner is the last one in this pecking order before the prices reach end-users.

I've heard a twist on this tactic is to raise prices only for new clients, or for those who don't do much business with the company. This way rates remain the same for long-term, loyal clients that have a track record of maintaining good, working relationships.

A second option is to implement surcharges and fees. Begin by explaining the increasing price of fuel and its impact on your business. Whether it's by the kilometer or as a flat rate, there are a number of ways to calculate fuel surcharges added to invoices. First, consider that the businesses most dependent upon fuel have the easiest time making higher prices palatable to clients. That's because those same clients can more easily perceive the need for higher prices.

Now let's examine the last strategy of sitting tight and eating the extra costs. Are there really any advantages to this approach? Advantage may not exactly be the right word to choose in this instance, but there are times when raising prices as a small business owner just doesn't make sense, even in the current economic situation. If, for example, gas prices are killing you as they go higher, it's still tough to justify raising your prices if all your clients are getting killed by the same costs.

It's also worth remembering that companies that do raise their prices -- either via increased rates or surcharges -- generally see a drop of revenue to some degree. There may be times when that strategy is not advisable, despite the projected offset of higher rates.

While no business owner wants profits to decline, small business owners, in particular, have more reasons to avoid rate increases. Because they are closer to their clients, see them often and work with them regularly, they can tell if their customers aren't doing well, and it's tough to ask them for more.

As fuel prices increase, smaller profit margins mean fewer raises, slower growth and expansion plans that get put on hold. There will be light at the end of the tunnel, even though rising energy and fuel costs are pushing some companies right to the edge.

Perhaps using a combination of all three of these strategies is another remedy. In the end, you must make the best decisions for your particular business. You know your clients, you know your bottom line issues, and you know what works and what doesn't. Strategic planning and forecasting will enable you to succeed in the present and for many years to come.

NSCA is a not-for-profit association representing the commercial electronic systems industry. NSCA helps members solve problems, save time, and make money through our focus on education, membership, and advocacy.

Go [NSCA](#)



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

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: [rAVEurope@gmail.com](mailto:rAVEurope@gmail.com)

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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](http://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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