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For Europe's Pro AV integrators in a Networked World

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## Industry News

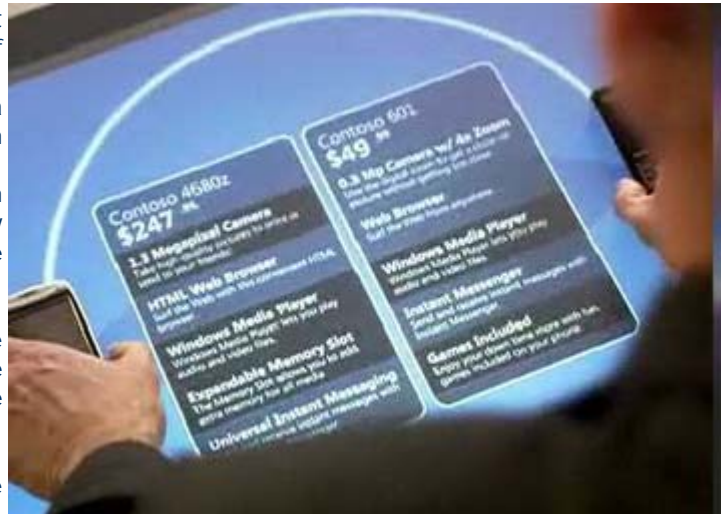
### Microsoft Surface Launches in 12 EMEA Markets

Microsoft Corp. announces expanded commercial availability of Microsoft Surface to 12 select markets in EMEA (Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Qatar, Spain, Sweden, UAE and UK.)

Microsoft Surface is a surface computing platform that responds to natural hand gestures and to the placement of real-world objects on the display. With a large, 360-degree, horizontal user interface, Microsoft Surface creates a tabletop computing platform where multiple users can collaboratively and simultaneously interact with information, content and physical objects. Microsoft sells Surface as an enabler that lets companies attract and convert new customers as well as cross-sell products and services, drive customer loyalty, and achieve operating efficiencies.

As content and applications provide the real context of the Microsoft Surface experience, developers are critical. The Microsoft Surface partner program has expanded to include more than 120 partners from 11 countries

One example: Telefónica I+D is working on the development of Microsoft Surface applications for the retail, banking, digital signage, leisure and entertainment sectors. The Telefónica flagship store in Madrid, Spain, features a Microsoft Surface app that lets customers have a personalized shopping experience (lets buyers shop by accessing info about multiple mobile devices by placing them on the display.)



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## Projection & Screens

### Sanyo Shows Totally New HD Projector

The PDG-DHT100L is Sanyo's answer to a high-end DLP-based bright HD projector. At 6500 specified ANSI lumens and a 1920 x 1080 native resolution, this projector is aimed at the large meeting room market (i.e., auditoriums, churches etc).

This projector is likely to be mounted, so one nice feature (that all high-end projector manufacturers are moving towards) is an active maintenance filter that cleans itself.

The PDG-DHT100L is Ethernet-ready, is available with interchangeable lenses and ships immediately.



Go [Sanyo PDG-DHT100L](#)

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## Acer Shows Mini Projector at CeBIT



Acer's K10 projector is 13 x 12 cm mini projector with a brightness of 100 ANSI lumens for projecting images with a diagonal of up to 152 cm (so for smaller rooms such as a manager's office.)

The Acer K10 projector, with its LED technology, is a real green IT product. The LEDs have an effective life of up to 20,000 hours. Furthermore, projectors with LED technology require up to 30% less energy than devices with conventional lamps because they generate less heat. The reduced need for cooling also enables a reduction in the overall

size of the device.

For environmentally conscious users there is another reason to be pleased: the production of LEDs requires no harmful substances, such as mercury or halides, in contrast to the production process for conventional lamps.

Go [Acer K10](#)

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## First Pico Projector with Onboard Memory

Forget about its light weight (6 oz.) and 640-by-480-pixel resolution...the real news is that P1 offers one GB of memory, a microSD slot and an onboard media player. This means the P1 can decode most media formats and play them straight from the projector.

Additional features include a built-in speaker, 1,000-to-1 contrast ratio and a 3.5-millimeter headphone jack. The battery lasts 45 to 60 minutes, depending on use.

You can also buy a \$15 AAXA P1 iPod A/V cable so you can adapt audio and video files to an Apple iPhone, iPod and iTouch.



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## New MediaLink® Controllers for MK Junction Boxes

- Mounts in a single or double MK junction box
- Elegant brushed aluminum and white faceplate options to match any décor



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## Control & Integrator Solutions

### New Crestron Marine Division Sails Forth

Crestron International names Dallas Tacon (pictured here) to head up a new Marine Division to increase sales to vessels of all types and sizes.

Dallas says: "Crestron is successful in the AV industry as their products are simple and intuitive to operate, this is something which is especially important in the marine environment where yachts are often chartered to for short periods and the time to learn the system isn't available. My focus will be to look at ways to improve all aspects of our service to the end user, and help to really add value to each installation."



With more than 14 years crewing in the yachting sector, Dallas has spent his life sailing and can be found in his spare time competitively racing Maxi class yachts around Europe. He also has worked on a vessel where a Crestron system was installed, giving valuable experience in understanding projects from the customers perspective.

Go [Crestron Marine](#)

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## Smart-e Celebrates 10 years

UK-based Smart-e Limited, known for its purple coloured equipment, is celebrating 10 years trading. The company has, since 1999, designed and manufactured AV equipment for a wide range of industries and uses across the globe.

Co-founder Jon Lane, says "We started the business because we saw a gap in the market for using CAT 5\* structured cabling for transmitting AV signals. We spent several years extolling the virtues of CAT 5\* cabling for AV use, however it was only in 2005 that people began to understand its versatility. Now CAT 5\* has become the cabling of choice, with many new-builds being pre-wired with structured cabling."

One of several new products being launched during 2009, the company's 10 year anniversary, is smartmix, a matrix that mixes analogue and digital signals in one unit.

Go [Smart-e](#)



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## Extron Europe Names New Director of Product Marketing



Extron Electronics promotes Wilfred de Nijs to Director of Product Marketing, EMEA. In this new position, de Nijs will oversee the product marketing and training teams at Extron Europe in the Netherlands office.

Wilfred de Nijs (photo left) joined Extron as a Manager of Product Marketing a year ago, bringing with him seven years of experience in the AV industry. In his previous role as a Product Marketing Manager, de Nijs was responsible for planning and implementing marketing plans for new and existing Extron products.

Go [Extron's Director of Product Marketing, EMEA](#)

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## Displays & Mounts

### Dubai Mall Shops at Barco

Barco is now the main LED supplier for The Dubai Mall. Located at the foot of the Burj Dubai, it is one of the largest malls in the world and the region's premier lifestyle and entertainment destination.

The Dubai Mall, officially opened in Q4 2008, offers visitors more than 1200 retailers, a world-class aquarium, exclusive access to the world's tallest tower, an indoor Olympic-size ice rink and much more.

For this Dubai-size project, Barco provided a total of 300 square meters of LED, divided over various applications. Barco also arranged all technology for the Mall control room.

The adventure starts upon arriving at The Dubai Mall. Visitors are immediately greeted by the seven digital banners along the Grand Drive each composed of 7.4 square meter of OLite 612.

Inside, the skating rink is an attraction on its own. The indoor Olympic-sized Ice Rink features a giant ILite 12 LED display totaling 190 square meters. It projects the latest news and information, as well as advertisements from the Mall, with the capability of projecting live feeds showcasing the shark feeds in the Dubai Aquarium.

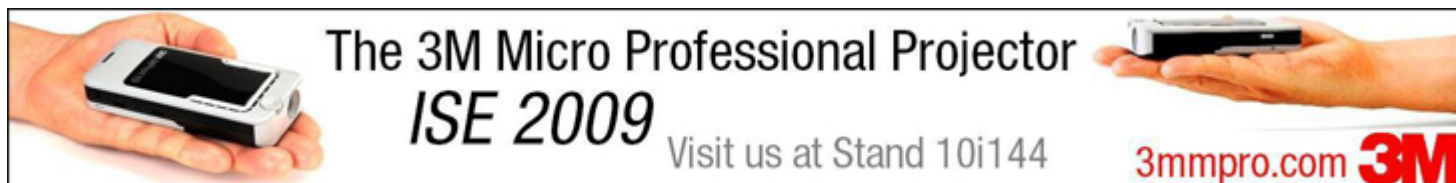
The Fashion Catwalk is the setting for the most prestigious and creative LED construction. A total of five separate rings, embracing a central structure, move independently of each other to form eye-catching configurations. The rings each have a diameter of 7.5 meter and are fully covered with Barco's OLite 510 LED tiles. In addition, eight separate curved



columns, each containing two square meters of Barco's ILite 6XP LED tiles, enhance the focus and entertainment value of the area.

Go [Barco Goes to Mall](#)

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## Distributor and Installer News

### Barco Names RGB Communications for UK and Ireland

Barco appoints RGB Communications Ltd. as the official UK and Ireland distributor for its projection and image processing solutions for rental and fixed install.

The distribution agreement is intended to offer more rental and fixed install companies, active in the audiovisual market, access to Barco's leading product lines. In addition RGB Communications will offer dedicated pre-and post sales support.

Caroline Britt, Managing Director of RGB Communications comments, "This new partnership represents a very exciting opportunity for us and our customers. By adding Barco's projection and image processing products, we are now able to offer the rental and high specification fixed installation markets a truly comprehensive range of projection & image processing solutions."

Simon Turtle, Barco's Sales Director UK says "this agreement will make our products and solutions more accessible to partners throughout the UK & Ireland, increasing Barco's presence both in the rental and fixed install markets. We are very pleased to be partnering with such an accomplished distributor as RGB Communications and we are confident this will be beneficial to our customers and Barco."

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## Digital Signage

### My Digital Signage Expo Review

By Gary Kayye, CTS

Walking the floor of the 2009 Digital Signage Expo (DSE) in Las Vegas was exciting. The fastest growing emerging segment of the AV market has definitely started to mature a bit and is still growing exponentially -- even in a down economy. Kudos to the show organizers, and also actually the venue -- and that's saying a lot because I HATE Vegas.

However, as you know, I am a straight shooter and a "tell it like it is" sort of person, so I'm going to be quite open and honest here about some major problems I see in the near-term future of the DS market.

**1. The software market for DS is too fragmented and the biggies are bullies.** Walking the show floor, I was amazed how many software content companies there were -- I stopped counting at 60. And the sad thing is, a lot of

them are really good companies with a really good offering. Just about every company started with, "We're not trying to be everything to everyone like Ronin or Scala - we have a great, unique product, that fills the holes for the small- and medium-sized companies." Is that really a good marketing pitch? I think not. Interestingly enough, the best (and probably simplest) pitch I got was from a company that, ironically, wasn't even on the show floor -- Westinghouse. They had a suite in the Hilton. They are hawkling an all-in-one beginner and intermediate solution where they will package the displays with a very simple software package. It's not a perfect package -- just the best pitch I heard, by far. The DS market cannot, at this point, service 60+ companies out there -- so I suspect you will see both collateral damage from the economy and consolidation take out 50% of these by the DSE Vegas show next year. But, that ultimately helps the consumer -- and many of these companies, if by working together, they can produce some great products. But, what struck me the most is how arrogant some of the Scala and Ronin folks were. Thank goodness I have a personal relationship with Jeff Porter of Scala or I would have thought that the company was like Microsoft of the 1990s. Note to the account reps and sales reps of both of those companies: you do not work for Microsoft. You do not have a 90+% market share. Be kind and not condescending when you show people your offerings. You may be the market leaders now, but if you present to each and every customer like you did in your booth tours, you will be relegated to a 10 x 20 at the back of the hall in 2010 as you will have shrunk to a tiny, handful-of-people company.

**2. The Europeans are way ahead of the Americans.** The integration of and the maturity of the European companies at DSE was way ahead of the average American company. Not many emerging markets can make that claim. We certainly knew the mobile (or what we call cell) phone market was and is -- but not a lot else. Personally, I think a lot of it is due to the chasm between AV integrators and IT integrators. In speaking with the Europeans that were there at the show, they have a more sophisticated relationship with the AV companies than the US-based DS market seems to have. Since the beginning, they (the Europeans -- specifically the retail DS market) have been partnering with AV companies to help with the integration of these sophisticated networks. In most cases, the sale was handled direct with the retail store chain, but all along, the software producer or hardware company making the sale had the AV company on the side coaching and pricing the details of the install. I think we can learn a lot from that.

**3. Very little personalized DS integration:** With the exception of two companies, nanonation (USA) and Capital Networks (Canada), there was little or no true integration with personal information displays (i.e., cell phones, game consoles, iPods, etc.). Are we all to believe the future of the DS market is giant displays hanging in the window of every storefront? I know we don't believe that. Instead, pushing personalized digital signage content to someone is the future -- we all can agree on that -- and, believe it or not, we can do that now with the sophistication of the networks (both cell and WiFi) we have out there now. Ultimately, there will be displays on shopping carts pushing specials to us as we browse the aisles, there will displays on restaurant menus that allow us to see what we're ordering and we'll soon see more iPhone-like products that truly connect you to the Web and allow for special offers to be pushed to us as we walk the mall. In the meantime, one of these best out there now leveraging the cell phone (Bluetooth) network is a tiny company called iSign ([www.isignmedia.com](http://www.isignmedia.com)) - offering SMS solutions to push messages via IM or text messages to any Bluetooth-enabled phone that steps within 90-feet of the sender (a retail store, a bar, etc).

**4. Too much content is relying on the PC -- and a Windows PC no less:** The reliability issues with Microsoft Windows are infamous. So, why are so many of the content storage and players Windows-based? Sure, they all say their own proprietary software ensures that their own box is immune to the Windows diseases (i.e., the blue screen of death, viruses, freeze-ups, etc.), but wouldn't you expect to say that if you worked for a company that only sold Windows-based players? I was and continue to be thoroughly impressed with those companies out there that are looking past Microsoft for other solutions. I was invited to three private suites at DSE where I saw two Apple solutions (using the iPhone and the AppleTV) and one proprietary solution. We will see solutions coming in late 2009 that pull us away from Microsoft and on to more reliable platforms.

**5. Finally, the fragmentation.** Any emerging market is fragmented. Studies show that well less than 2 percent of all retail locations in the US and less than 4 percent worldwide use any sort of digital signage for way-finding, advertising or marketing. For universities, the numbers are even lower. Go corporate and we dip into the 1 percent range. This market is an early adopter market on its way to an early majority buyer. We will see exponential growth (even in a down economy) in 2010 and even more in 2011. But, consolidation needs to occur in the DS market. A fall out of the part-timers and the companies who don't specialize in this market will occur over the next 18 months. Who is left will be the market leaders -- and it may not be the market leaders of today. Just because you have the front and center booth at DSE 2009 doesn't mean you will in 2011. In fact, I think it's likely to change. I see a new set of leaders emerging and minor players becoming major. It was an eye-opening experience to see some of the guys in the smallest of booths have a better vision for the market than those that lined the entrance. So, I am awarding those I saw that had creative vision and products I see that should be given attention by the AV integrators heading into or already supporting the DS market.

So, next week I'll present to you, the **2009 Digital Signage CHAMPS** -- awarded for their creativity, likely staying power, and commitment to support the AV channel, in addition to their current channels of distribution and their understanding for the vision of the future of the DS market: personalized messaging - not mass marketing.

Go **Digital Signage EMEA**

## Reach for the Sceye



The digital document camera SCEYE is for the average scanner users who scan 5 to 500 documents a day. With a TWAIN port, it's an all-purpose digital document camera with a sleek modern design.

It features one-click operation and auto-archive. Sceye's even able to scan pages tacked together or files right out of their folders.

Go [Sceye](#)

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## Conferencing and Classrooms

### Fraunhofer Engine Improves Teleconferencing

The Fraunhofer Audio Communication Engine is designed to offer significant improvements to the overall sound quality of teleconferencing or VoIP applications when compared to existing systems.

The defining component of the Fraunhofer Audio Communication Engine is the MPEG audio codec "Enhanced Low Delay AAC", which guarantees hi-fi sound quality at low data rates and low coding delays. An echo control eliminates acoustical echo commonly generated in hands-free communication, while an intelligent analysis and playback of the sound-field over several loudspeakers ensures that it is always possible to identify the position of each participant in the virtual room - even if several people are talking at the same time. Error concealment and conversion to the network transmission capacity guarantee fluent conversations without interruption, including over low-bandwidth connections.

At CeBIT 2009, Fraunhofer IIS demonstrated the Fraunhofer Audio Communication Engine via a temporary telepresence installation. This will take the form of two separate but connected living rooms, and will illustrate the ease with which friends and family can take part in games and conversation - no matter how far apart they may be.

The telepresence configuration to be shown at CeBIT is part of the EU project "Together Anywhere, Together Anytime" (TA2), which explores the ways in which technology can support group-to-group communication.

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## Residential Systems and Digital Home

### faceVSION showcases HD (720p) Video Communications



faceVSION Technology Limited (FVT) announces the availability of 720p/HD video chat services using any netbooks or notebooks on standard home broadband network. The company can also showcase its FVfone™ solution, the first ever full function DECT phone system that allows users to enjoy HD video chat and multimedia experiences over big TV screens.

Offering any netbook/notebook users or even those without PC experience to enjoy true 720p/HD video chat experience under standard broadband network is a must to bring HD video chat to the masses. By inserting FVexpress, the mini-PCI express card offered by FVT, into any netbook or notebook, and/or getting an innovative FVfone™ from faceVSION and its channel partners, any consumers and SMEs' can now do true HD chat without any hassles.

FVexpress™ card and FVfone™ are engineered with state-of-the-art technology at consumer price. By employing standard encoding, decoding and transcoding algorithms optimizing for image quality for participants to ensure the best possible experience with lowest bandwidth requirements, together with the superior quality HD video coupled with built-in noise cancellation and error concealment support included inside FVexpress and FVfone, these cutting edge solutions are designed for use with a variety of webcams and applications including browser-based talk client and FVT's QuLives manager.

The launch in Cebit marks faceVvision's first step in empowering mass market users with true HD communication experiences - from looking real to feeling real, from exclusive (to corporate users) to affordable, and from location-bound to pervasive VC experience.

The FVexpress card and FVfone will ship in Q2 2009.

Go **FVexpress card and FVfone**

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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.

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](mailto:rAveEurope@gmail.com)

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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](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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