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INFOCOMM14 NEW PRODUCT WRAP UP CONCLUSION: MORE THAN 60 AUDIO INTRODUCTIONS

Themed attractions offer crossover opportunities.

BY JUDITH RUBIN

Two Las Vegas-based integrators apply what they've learned serving the nightclub and casino postponed transition from film to digital, with one of them introducing near-8K resolution for AV, virtualization and integration for multiple markets, including theme parks that have been

NTA (NATIONAL TECHNOLOGY ASSOCIATES) ROLLS IN

Bob Schiffman founded National Technology Associates, Inc. (NTA, www.ntalex.com), in Las Vegas in late 2012 and the AV integration, design and engineering company sprang right into two high-profile Caesars Entertainment projects on the Strip: the High Roller observation wheel (at 550 feet, the world's tallest) and The LINQ, a walkable retail, dining and entertainment district bookended by the High Roller to the east and Las Vegas Boulevard at Caesars Palace to the west.

For the High Roller and LINQ projects, NTA was contracted to Caesars Entertainment, Bombard Electric and Leitner Poma. NTA's Senior Project Manager was Nevin Edwards, and Kevin Ruud provided design, engineering and programming for the systems. The scope of work was to provide audio, video and security surveillance cameras in the High Roller's 28 cabins, the show control for the AV feed to the cabins, AV throughout the wheel building (including preshow, staging and queuing areas), the outdoor AV throughout the LINQ and the AV in all remodeled areas of the newly branded LINQ hotel.

The contracts had originally been held by Kelley Technologies, which had ceased operations after

SMART MONKEYS AND THE SMART AIRPORT TERMINAL

Since opening in Sept 2013 within LAX, the new Tom Bradley International Terminal (TBIT) has received multiple industry awards and is in line for several more. It pulls together a vast array of high-resolution displays and content streams (seven media features, with about 9600 square feet of combined active display area) via an integrated environmental media system (IEMS) to process and deliver information and generate non-aeronautical revenues for the facility while providing a state-of-the-art passenger experience.

The groundbreaking, intelligent control system was designed by Smart Monkeys, Inc. (www.smart-monkeys.com), using its ISAAC (Integrated Scheduler and Automated Controller) platform to build an enterprise solution based on Medialon Manager. It uses a "virtualization cluster" of enterprise servers and a storage area network (SAN). Within that cluster, a network of virtual PCs lives on enterprise-grade Dell servers, programmed and interacting as they would in other PC-based systems but without the shortfalls of actual PCs. GrassValley K2 servers run alongside the ISAAC control cluster to play back pre-produced content.

DIRECTIONS

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Caesars Entertainment's new LINQ retail/entertainment district includes the world's tallest observation wheel, the High Roller.
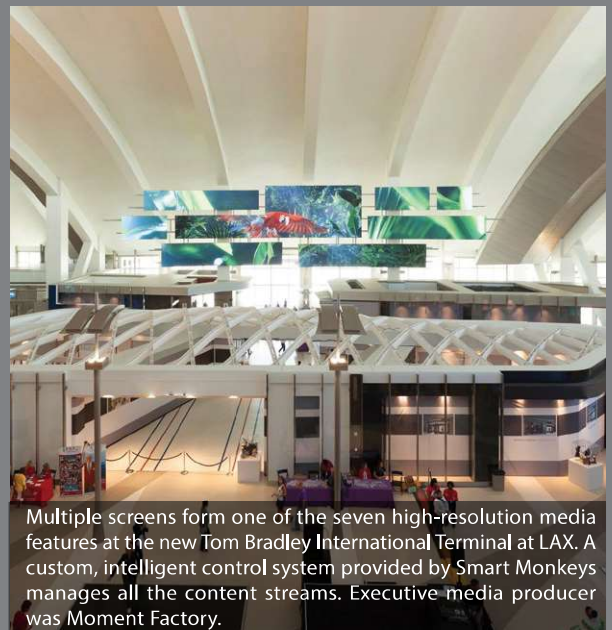
Denise Truscello

Multiple screens form one of the seven high-resolution media features at the new Tom Bradley International Terminal at LAX. A custom, intelligent control system provided by Smart Monkeys manages all the content streams. Executive media producer was Moment Factory.

Moment Factory

EVANS & SUTHERLAND: HEADING TOWARD 8K RESOLUTION FOR DOMES

Adoption of 4K resolution is now sweeping multiple display sectors. Meanwhile, a specialized niche—the digital dome—is already headed to 8K.

There are two primary markets for dome theater systems: planetariums, and giant screen cinemas in museums and science centers. Planetariums began converting at an impressive rate in the late 1990s, either discarding or augmenting their opto-mechanical "starball" projectors with multi-projector, digital video systems ("fulldome").

But it has taken longer to develop systems with sufficient resolution, color saturation and brightness to rival the quality of 1570 film on a giant IMAX film dome. "When it comes down to the finest cinematic platform, you want as many pixels as you can afford, in the tightest concentration you can have," said Michael Daut, Director of Show Production at Evans & Sutherland (E&S, www.es.com), a leading provider of fulldome systems. Daut sits on the Board of IMERSA (www.imersa.org), an organization that works to spread awareness of the potential of fulldome, and is a

The Dome at the Science Museum of Virginia features "8K."

NTA (NATIONAL TECHNOLOGY ASSOCIATES) ROLLS IN

some 30 years in business serving hotels, casinos and convention centers. Schiffman, who had been VP with Kelley for 20 of those years, retained most of the Kelley team. He then set out to recapture the business, with gratifying results. "We were successful in the first 90 days in securing 100% of the contracts previously sold under Kelley," he told *Sound & Communications.*

The future looks promising for NTA, which now has 18 full-time people and a pool of consultants. Schiffman and business partner H Waldman are looking forward to continued growth. He alluded to possible future big wheel projects (the High Roller was their first) and of a venture into lighting control systems, with Crestron. "We are always looking for new business. The company is progressing and we're excited because things are picking up here in Las Vegas and throughout the country."

Current NTA projects include a series of analog-to-digital, hi-def video upgrades for Red Rock Resort and other Station Casinos facilities, a new Downtown Las Vegas Event Center, and providing the distributed AV systems to the new SLS Resort & Casino set to open in September.

SMART MONKEYS AND THE SMART AIRPORT TERMINAL

The client was Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA). In addition to Smart Monkeys (system designer and technical consultant), the project team included MRA International (project director, www.mrainternational.com), Sardi Design (design director/creative producer, www.sardidesign.com), Fentress Architects (www.fentressarchitects.com), Moment Factory (executive content producer, www.momentfactory.com), Digital Kitchen (content producer, thisisdk.com), Electrosonic (systems engineering and integration, www.electrosonic.com) and Daktronics (display technology, www.daktronics.com).

The TBIT has much in common with a visitor attraction or theme park in the scope and quality of media-based experiences, in that it accommodates high throughput and has to run reliably all day, every day, year round. Smart Monkey's Stephan Villet wants to see this overarching approach to control more widely adopted in the theme park sector, which has been slow to embrace it, but could reap the benefits of centralization that have long been available to other industries. "We love show control so much, we work hard to get on very big projects to show the potential and capability of show control," said Villet.

Show control has been a niche specialty for the themed entertainment sector, which stays competitive by creating unique, one-off projects that interface gear in customized