

# INSIDE CI

**After returning from the CEDIA Home Technology Event DAVE SLATER is feeling positive about the whole thing but whether that has more to do with free burgers and beer than the show itself is yet to be seen...**



**Well here we are, well into the summer months, the sky is blue, it is almost 30 degrees in Central London and travelling on the Tube is becoming totally unbearable.**

As I write this I am at the renamed *CEDIA Home Technology Event*, but this time I am on the other side of the fence helping out Redline and Signature on their stands.

With the recession taking its toll over the last couple of years, manufacturers and distributors have been making cuts in their advertising and PR budgets and looking at only doing the shows which count. *ISE* has been a great draw as the show has been growing constantly for the last five years and the amount of business carried out during one week of the show is overwhelming. On the Monday before the show, which has evolved since last year, everybody was beaver away with sweat dripping from their foreheads due to it being the hottest day of the year.

Every stand was making an effort but it was AWE who had the biggest and it reminded me of most stands at *ISE* and even *CEDIA US*, with its fine array of plasma and LED screens - the new ultra slim LED from Samsung was on display (we have used these out on site and they are utterly fantastic). In the Panasonic room visitors were treated to a showing of *Avatar* in 3D on the largest plasma TV in the world and to make things comfortable there was a row of Signature seats which allowed you to marvel and relax at the same time.

Redline were showing the DD-18 subwoofer- the type of subwoofer that can shake the whole infrastructure of your cinema room. Another new product on show was their new range of mirror TVs called Séura. Now mirror screens are not new but these ones have a slightly different concept- you buy your up to date favourite screen then strap it to the back of the mirror and with over 160 different screen frames to choose from, this is pure custom install at its finest.

## Foxing clever

With me having my different hat on for this show I didn't have as much time as usual to soak up all the new products out there, but there was some nice kit on show. Evolution had their server hooked up to a JVC projector and it



Artison speakers were just one of the draws at the Redline stand



The Velodyne Subwoofer blew visitors away at the CEDIA event

looked great, DF Solutions had their latest offering on the AWE stand featuring a nice clean interface with the Bluray 3D disks looking good.

At DSE we install a lot of Sonos so I had to make a beeline to their stand and I was very impressed. They rolled out a new black and gold corporate feel on the stand and with the launch of two new radio streaming stations, AUPEO and Stitcher, the latter sounding very interesting to me as it streams your favourite podcasts. I will be straight onto my computer when I get back to the office and downloading my free trial.

All in all it was a great show, the networking was excellent, everybody of importance being under the same roof helps when you run a business like me. People buy from people; it does not matter if you have the best product in the world, if you don't have a good sales force, a good level of stock and a good technical support, you've got no chance. Networking is so important in this game as CI is never going to be a massive market.

I loved the old days of driving down to Brighton and having a pint on the beach before hitting the CEDIA show on the following morning. CEDIA have introduced some of the good old fashioned buzz back to the show, the CEDIA networking night was very good at The Fox opposite the ExCel - simple food and free beer with a lot of business cards changing hands and a couple of slurred sentences securing deal, though whether anybody will have remembered the deal the next morning is another story!

## French not so fancy

Back at DSE HQ the France contract is in full swing... or is it? We shipped the guys off on their long road trip from Gateshead to the South of France after we had checked four times that the site was ready for us. After two days of travelling they had no fingernails left after biting them down, hoping that the van would not be hijacked with £90,000 worth of digital kit rammed in the back of it. On arrival at the location, the two main technicians reported back that project resembled a full-blown building site with no windows in the cinema room and no front door!

Surely the site Project Manager would have made an educated guess that it was not ready for us. We were not the only ones disappointed as the kitchen team were also from England and, by the looks on their faces, were in the same boat. This all started a domino effect; flights to cancel for programmers, hotels for the second week to cancel and a return journey to organise, thank God I had built non-refundable expenses into the price, though I'm not sure the client is happy as it has cost her an extra £4500 for us to drive kit to France only to bring it all back to London.

Anyway the guys came back with a little bit of a sun tan so not everything was bad about their trip, I can think of worse places to have a delay on, and now with it being the summer months all work stops, as there is a ban on making noise until September. Who said CI was easy?

**Dave Slater is MD of DSE Group, incorporating DSE DIGITAL.**

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

**+44 (0)1914 914 141 dave@dsegroup.co.uk www.dsegroup.co.uk**