

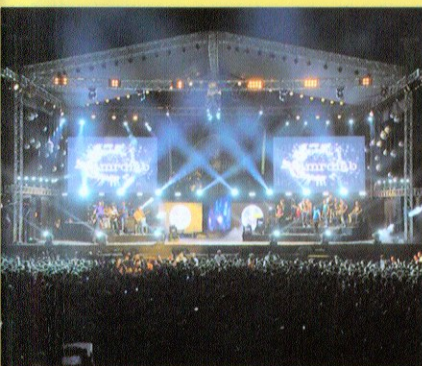
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INSTALLATION • A/V • LIVE SOUND • BROADCAST • POSTPRODUCTION • RECORDING

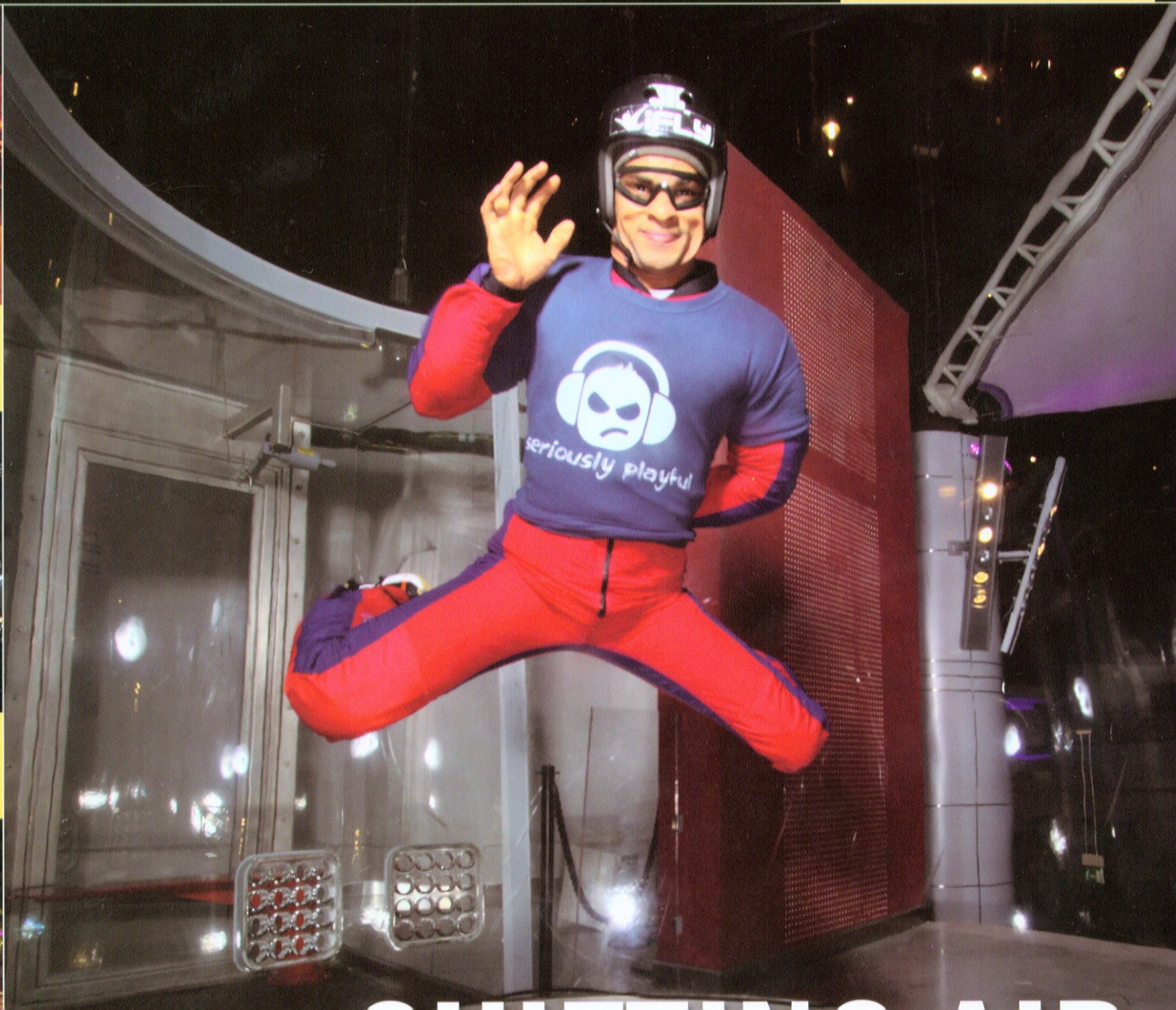
September–October 2010



CELEBRATING CULTURE
QATAR'S CULTURAL VILLAGE



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AMR DIAB LIVE IN EGYPT



full experience in the UAE. iFly fans suck air down into the wind tunnels where it is squeezed and accelerated to speeds of around 200km/h – fast enough to lift the human body high into the wind tunnel. With the help of the highly-experienced instructors, anyone can get that free-fall sky diving experience without the need to jump out of a perfectly good aeroplane!

With two wind tunnels rising up either side of

from Sony Professional Dubai, iFly it has been used to truly bring the site to life. With its central location, the Ziris Canvas video wall provides the platform to play out full-HD content as well as ultra-HD content.

'I believe this is the world's largest ultra-HD LCD-based video wall,' says Magesh Srinivasan, regional sales and marketing manager for Sony Professional Solutions MEA. The

video wall is made up of 25 units of 47 inch full-HD



The 25-screen ultra-HD LCD-based video wall

Taking flight at iFly Dubai

five rows and five columns to form a lattice design. The audio side of the installation is handled by a number of Tannoy V12HP full-range loudspeakers and accompanying VS 18DR subwoofers for additional low-end reinforcement, all driven by a rack of three power amplifiers. While the components are all standard box products, it is with the design where the overall bespoke solution is created.

The design of the video wall was done in collaboration with the client's architect responsible for the iFly project. There was a total space of around 15m across to fit the two wind tunnels and the video wall – with a great deal of attention paid to ensuring the wall was in proportion to the tunnels. 'It was a good example of client-side design talent combined with professional solutions expertise from Sony,' says Mr Srinivasan.



The audio side of the installation is handled by Tannoy V12HP loudspeakers and VS 18DR subwoofers

communications objectives that it needs to achieve using Ziris Canvas technology. 'Once we understand that, we use Ziris Screen Cutter software to create video wall layout designs, publish a *.xml file for

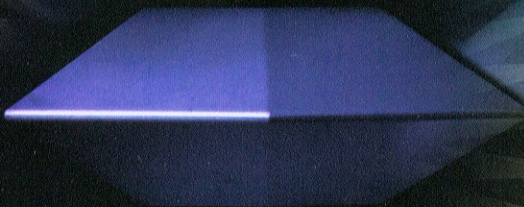
(behind the flying area) and is connected over LAN to 25 units of professional Playstation3 consoles. 'There are 25 PS3s installed on racks and loaded with Ziris Canvas View software on a Bluray disc,' says Mr Srinivasan.

The PS3 may not be many people's first thought when it comes to selecting a high-end media player, but Mr Srinivasan explains it is much more than a consumer gaming device. 'These are not the consumer PS3s, these are Sony Professional modified PS3s. The consoles are powered by the Cell processor and it's the cheapest and most efficient full-HD and ultra-HD player in the world,' he claims. 'The system utilises the hardware and processing power of the PS3 to play back video at ultra-HD if required.'

Mr Srinivasan believes the processor at the heart of the PS3 is the key to why it is being used as a play out device. 'It's a cross-functional application. Even though the PS3 was not designed for play out on a video wall project,

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Sony Professional Solutions Europe developed Ziris Canvas successfully and it is installed in many video walls around the world.'

The decision to specify Tannoy loudspeakers for this installation was an obvious choice for Mr Srinivasan. 'Tannoy's V-Series has a proven pedigree over many A/V installations both in terms of performance and reliability and afford us real peace of mind,' he says. 'The local support in the region is also a vital factor, especially with the recent opening of a dedicated Middle East office virtually on our doorstep.'

With the mall open between 14 and 16 hours per day, the Sony video wall at iFly needed to be able to cope with being in constant use for long periods of time. 'This is a professional system, so they are designed to work 24x7, and this is one of the key differences between retail digital signage and a professional B2B video wall application. The Sony Professional LCDs we've used are designed to play 24x7 both in landscape and portrait mode, and have a life span of at least three years.'

The installation itself moved at a rapid pace. The installation at site lasted just 13 days, however these were long 14-hour days for the team to get the system installed and

working. 'We were part of the work in progress during construction, we had to get it up and running alongside the construction, so it was tough,' he says. 'However, compared to the many months it takes to build a mall, 13 days working 14 hours a day is a small ask.'

It was a two-phase installation following the initial work taking place in the UK. 'We built the whole thing up in the factory where the stand was designed and manufactured, got everything running and approved by the client before we shipped it from the UK to the site,' explains Mr Srinivasan. 'In phase one of site-installation we put up only the aluminium structure as the



PS3s are used as the playback device



The equipment rack

framework. Then when construction was completed, we came back to install the LCDs, PS3s and computers along with the wiring and then testing the video wall.' The team were working towards a fixed deadline of the opening of iFly at Playnation, and Mr Srinivasan was extremely satisfied to have the full system in and tested to meet this deadline.

Doing the initial setup off-site is a standard procedure for Sony. 'When you build a system you always do a pre-shipment test, just to make sure the system is fully working before we ship it out. We also get a certification from the client's inspector to say they have seen it and believe it is fit for purpose. Only

then will we ship it out – you don't want to have any surprises when you get the equipment on site.'

Mr Srinivasan describes the workflow for the system as quite simple. The PS3s are used as the play out devices with one used for each screen – which means a total of 25. The PS3 is used for both the video and audio outputs so are connected to the Tannoy Audio System. The Tannoy speakers also have their own proprietary audio tracks which are played out via Sony DVD players.

Sony needed to overcome many challenges on this project. 'We had to make sure the load capacity of the floor could cope with the weight of the equipment and that the

INSTALLATION

design was in-sync with the interior of iFly Dubai. We had to make sure that the structure was robust, but at the same time sleek and not too bulky. That was what we were trying to achieve with the stand design,' says Mr Srinivasan. 'The video wall itself had to be unique, so we went for a weave pattern. This brings out the flexibility of the Sony solution with Ziris Canvas and opens up a platform for the content designers at iFly to experiment with.'

The initial use of the wall saw iFly playing out 16:9 HD Handycam video of people skydiving in the facility, but further visuals have been prepared. 'From the Sony side, we are preparing a three minute show reel which tells the complete story of iFly Dubai and the video wall itself.'

Mr Srinivasan is very happy with how the project came together and believes it will be a very good reference site for Sony, and understandably so. The Project at iFly has shown that an A/V system doesn't need to be on a grand scale to make a big impact. It needs to be fit for purpose and help the customer achieve its goals – something Sony has certainly achieved with this project.

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As the music industry evolves and looks for new revenue streams from live performance the demands placed upon touring production companies to deliver reliable high track count