

IBC 2013

Did the International Broadcasting Convention remain its dependable self when it returned to Amsterdam's RAI in September?



FEW MAJOR TRADE EXHIBITIONS

are as consistent as IBC. Year after year all facets of the broadcasting industry descend upon Amsterdam's RAI – and Amsterdam itself after dark. On the opening morning the video halls open to scrums of visitors eager to get their hands on the latest technology. Meanwhile, over in hall 8, the audio boys give it a couple of hours before straightening their ties,

well aware that it will take at least that long for attendees to tear their eyes away from the big screens.

Over the days that follow, footfall sometimes fluctuates a little, but only a little. As a rule the aisles remain busy, business is done and the conversations are worthwhile. It's the kind of show nobody wants to miss.

Perhaps the only things that do change are the weather (the

occasional blaze of late summer sunshine makes for a nice welcome, whereas this year's rain and wind were a little less enjoyable) and of course the technology trends, which are after all the point.

Every IBC has its theme – more often settled on the show floor rather than in the white papers of the conference. Tellingly, Hall 8 tends to set its own tone. Last year, for example, audio exhibitors were abuzz with debate over Ravenna and Dante, while the year before the conversation was focused on loudness. But if you had asked anyone elsewhere in the RAI what the theme of either show was then they would have immediately pinpointed 3D. This year at least that changed. In the world of home entertainment, 3D has revealed itself to be less popular than smellovision, with even the BBC turning its back on the format. Not to be discouraged, the video contingent instead decided that 2013 would mark the coming of the next, next big thing: 4K.

In the audio aisles, 4K meant little – the average homeowner might opt for a better TV in the near future, but it's going to be a while before

they buy a 22.2 surround sound set-up to match. So what was the big topic of conversation among the audio companies in 2013? For the first time in a long time there wasn't one. Talk of loudness was hushed in comparison to previous years, and while Ravenna flags continued to fly, there seemed to be less of them than 12 months ago.

Digigram APAC sales manager Nancy Diaz Curiel, adding that she had met more representatives from Asia than she had expected, particularly Korea, Vietnam and India. But, she said, 'I think the show is too long – five days is a little unnecessary.'

Marcus Brooke of **Sonifex** agreed. On a busy stand the UK-based manufacturer presented a number of new launches including two modules for the CM-TB8 talkback control unit – the CM-TB8T, which adds two telephone hybrids, and the CM-TBG, a dual GSM telephone expansion card. In addition, two portable, battery-powered belt-packs drew attention in the shape of the CM-BH4W four-wire headphone amp and the CM-BHA headphone amplifier with limiter and loudspeaker. The popular Redbox range also expanded

with the RB-AES4B3 AESID3 splitter with BNC connectors, the RB-SD1IP silence detection unit with Ethernet and a USB port, and the RB-VHDA2x4 video distribution amplifier.

'We've had a good response with lots of people through – we've seen all of our distributors so all of the main customers have been here,' Mr Brooke commented, speaking on the afternoon of day three, when numbers slacked a little as the sun made an appearance outside. 'Monday was good for us last year so hopefully the same thing will happen this year. But they need to get rid of Tuesday as it's a waste of time. We don't need a five day show.'



Marcus Brooke of Sonifex shows off the new CM-BH4W and CM-BHA belt-packs