CETNAJ 40th ANNIVERSARY

THE CLIENT
Cetnaj Lighting~Electrical~Data is a leading Australian electrical wholesaler supplying the needs of contractors, licensed electricians and builders. Cetnaj has morphed into a multi-million dollar powerhouse from its humble beginnings in country New South Wales. Fast-forward four decades, the brand has emerged as one of the most trusted wholesalers and retailers in the industry with over 40 stores servicing the east coast of Australia. Founders Martyn and Roslyn Richardson and John and Catherine Connors engaged the event management services of Blue Shadow Group to commemorate its 40th anniversary with a gala event spectacular.

With over 1,200 staff, suppliers and customers attendance, the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre (GCCEC) was tasked with assisting Blue Shadow Group in delivering an overall successful event that included catering expertise and audio visual design and technical production services. Blue Shadow Group orchestrated the evening’s itinerary which included official proceedings, out-of-the-box entertainment including abseiling bushrangers, and a star-studded line-up of Australian music royalty.

THE VENUE
The regions premier conferencing facility, the GCCEC was able to supply the client superior facilities, flexible space and world-class equipment and technology. The team had to ensure the audio system deployed to cover 2,182 square metres of arena space and suitability for high profile entertainment was imperative.

Big-name production brands such as the Centre’s DiGiCo digital console’s, GrandMA lighting control, the world’s brightest intelligent light fixture a Robe BMFL, Barco E2 screen presentation system, and numerous Christie digital projectors contributed to the GCCEC’s seamless production that was met with awe by the client.

GCCEC’s ability to provide a dynamic space flexible enough to suspend multiple screens from the roof of the arena was vital in delivering the overall ambiance of the event. With all angles of the room in use, operators were tasked with bringing to life an Australian theme complete with seamless transition in imagery. An immersive visual experience was created by using standard projection screens, blended projection and LED screen panels. The additional depth of the Centre’s 14 metre-high arena ceiling height enabled the expanse of the outback to be captured by six large format screens totalling 660m2 of screen area and projected over 38 million pixels - all in high definition. Two 27 metre-wide by 5.5 metre-high screens on both sides of the room were projection blended perfectly with an additional 16 metre-wide screen and four 9 metre-wide by 5 metre-high screens.

THE EVENT
The multi-million dollar Australian wholesaler spared no expense to mark the milestone with a six-hour black tie gala spectacular for more than 1,200 staff, suppliers and customers. Organiser Blue Shadow Group, remained tight-lipped about the slew of Australian legendary pop and rock names and well-known television personalities prior to the event, with the top secret line-up remaining undisclosed to all guests and even some Cetnaj founders.

The night featured an Australian rock music trivia competition with popular television hosts Julia Zemiro and Brian Nankervis emceeing proceedings and live performances by rockers Frankie J Holden and Wilbur Wilde, songstress Wendy Matthews and Paulini as well as Joe Camilleri, Richard Clapton and Ross Wilson.

CASE STUDY
www.gccec.com.au
A visual focal point for the room included an LED screen wall consisting of seven columns measuring 8 metres-high by 1.5 metre-wide, positioned one metre apart, and suspended behind the main stage. Three broadcast cameras also conveyed live performances on the screen ensuring there wasn’t a bad seat in the house.

With a personalised approach to theming and event styling, all vision content was managed and synchronised using Watchout Media Playback and the Barco E2 Presentation System to ensure all transitions and effects were seamless. On stage video content was also cleverly relayed to intelligent lighting fitted in the arena roof using pixel mapping technology to create a holistic room lighting effect whereby the colours of lights were matched to the images on screen.

With such great numbers in attendance, the client sought the destination and venue based on reputation, wanting to encompass everything the Gold Coast stands for – a place where business, lifestyle and beauty all intertwine. The accessibility and location proved paramount for the 1,200 attendees and of significant economic benefit to nearby business that included close to 3,000 room nights booked at hotels and apartments situated within walking distance to the GCCEC.

LOGISTICS AND CHALLENGES

GCCEC’s technical team worked over a three day timeframe dedicated to setting up the event inclusive of rigging and testing and calibrating equipment to ensure high quality production output throughout.

In the lead up to the event, our in-house AV team designed a customised audio system utilising simulation tool software to ensure uniform coverage and tone. The system was flexible enough to deliver “rock concert” audio energy whilst also clear and crisp announcements during formal proceedings and award presentations. With seven main acts on stage, five dedicated audio technicians worked to ensure quick and seamless turnover of the entertainment requirements without compromising audience experience. Stage changes appeared invisible to those in attendance using theatre style production techniques.

To ensure immediate response times and minimise the volume of radio traffic throughout the event, a decision was made to separate technician communication channels dedicated to vision and lighting respectively, to ensure any errors would be marginalised. With a personalised approach to theming and event styling, in-house production helped reduce costs for the client, while the in-house capabilities also proved beneficial in allowing the team to coordinate bump-in around the building’s event schedule.

A plethora of equipment and cabling had to be tastefully hidden to keep the room neat and focus away from the AV equipment itself. As such the event design included rigging as much of the equipment as possible. Over 17 tonnes of rigging and AV equipment was suspended from the arena roof above the audience, including provisions for four performance artists to rappel from the roof and onto the show floor.

Providing further testament to the venue’s commitment to quality service, extensive safety measures were overseen by GCCEC’s Safety Manager in consultation with the clients request for performers to abseil down from the roof cavity, as part of the theatrics of the evening. Special rigging points had to be installed for the flying bushrangers with the team had to ensure the descent was perfectly timed and safe.

Such was the extent of production that GCCEC successfully partnered with technical suppliers including Pixel Line, Dreamweaver Productions and Entertainment Lighting and Sound for additional technical elements including projection surfaces and screens.

HIGHLIGHTS AND SPECIAL TOUCHES

The GCCEC team pride themselves on going above and beyond to ensure the event setups were seamless. Considerable preliminary planning provided the client with optimal audio and lighting coverage, with minimal visible cabling. The event was one of the largest gala dinners produced in the arena with creative use of solution based production and staging needs delivered.

Food and beverage is always a memorable experience for guests so when the client requested that the Centre’s award-winning culinary geniuses create a dessert that would take Cetnaj founders by surprise, Executive Chef Garry Kindred and Sous Chef Adam Hall were all too happy to oblige. The duo created a rocky road slab of epic proportions measuring 2.8 metres-long by 1 metre-wide and 70 kilograms of delicious ingredients including 5 kilograms of cherries and nuts and 10 kilograms of marshmallows. Delivered in person, GCCEC’s chefs wheeled out the sweet surprise to the delight of all in the room.

The attention to detail and integration between all parties showcased the audio visual expertise and award-winning capabilities of the Centre in providing Cetnaj with a spectacular event that lived up the expectations of the founders promising an evening “for the history books”.

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