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JBL VERTEC® Line Arrays Define International Standards At Miss Universe 2008 Pageant in Vietnam

Bi-coastal team of audio specialists with gear from Firehouse Productions and ATK/Audiotek enable live audio support for global broadcast.

NORTHRIDGE, California – The global adoption of JBL VERTEC® line arrays continues to grow with an international flavor as demonstrated by the specification and use of a full-scale VERTEC system for the 57th Miss Universe 2008 pageant. The event took place at the Crown Convention Centre, located at the scenic Diamond Bay Resort on the coast near Nha Trang City, Vietnam. Dayana Mendoza, Miss Venezuela, was crowned Miss Universe 2008 from a field of 80 hopeful contestants. The pageant was broadcast live by NBC in English and Telemundo in Spanish to more than one billion viewers in over 180 nations.

An all-star audio crew from the USA, including A-1 (lead engineer) New York-based Tom Holmes, Los Angeles-based digital console specialist Andrew “Fletch” Fletcher and Firehouse Productions’ system engineer Mark Dittmar, spearheaded the sound system setup, optimization and operation. Staged in a 7,500-seat performance space, the audio system needed to provide precision coverage with sufficient power to be heard throughout the venue, with adequate clarity to meet live broadcast standards. To achieve these goals, the professional audio team turned to VERTEC for the system’s loudspeaker components.

New-York based Firehouse Productions performed system integration functions and pre-event testing before shipping the entire JBL VERTEC system, the first to arrive in Vietnam, to its new owner in that country. “We have all worked extensively with VERTEC line arrays in the past and have found them to be very easy to set up, extremely reliable, and most importantly, they sound great,” said Mark Dittmar, Vice President, Firehouse Productions. “Given the technical requirements for the Miss Universe event, the VERTEC system was a natural fit.”



The live sound system at the 57th Miss Universe pageant featured VERTEC line arrays.

Additional technical audio support equipment for the production was supplied by ATK/Audiotek of Valencia, CA. “Broadcast events that include live entertainment and music program content have highly specialized requirements,” explained ATK/Audiotek’s technical operations manager Brett Valasek. “When international productions take place in regions like southeast Asia, the sponsors and producers look to the various technical specialists to work out a logistical plan that may include sourcing some local equipment while transporting other items. ATK/Audiotek outfitted the team with some specialty items not readily available in the region.”

For Miss Universe 2008, the sound reinforcement system included a main PA setup of two line arrays, each containing 12 JBL VERTEC VT4889-1 full-size line array elements per side, and a center cluster of six VT4887A compact line array elements. These were



enhanced by four JBL SRX728S 2x18" subwoofers per side. The system also featured four VT4887A compact line array elements for front fill. Additionally, the backstage paging system included six JBL EON15 G2 portable loudspeakers. Crown I-Tech 6000 and 4000 amplifiers in custom Firehouse-fabricated electronics racks powered the system, while a dbx DriveRack 4800 loudspeaker management system handled system EQ and signal distribution. All amplification and signal processing functions were remotely controlled and monitored using the Harman HiQnet™ System Architect™ configuration and control software.

"The specification and use of VERTEC for the 57th Miss Universe 2008 pageant, one of the most widely-viewed broadcast events of the year, is quite an honor," said David Scheirman, Vice President of Tour Sound, JBL Professional. "This event also underscores the increasingly-sophisticated level of audio system technology that is becoming available in emerging-market regions. This allows event planners and show producers with high global standards to have their needs met even in the most far-flung, exotic locations."

Firehouse Productions can be reached at <http://www.firehouseproductions.com/>

ATK/Audiotek can be reached at <http://www.atkcorp.com/>

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