Martin Audio 22live partnership


Picture: James Cumpsty

Martin Audio announces its partnership with the recently-formed 22live described as ‘the UK’s next generation pro-audio service provider’. In so doing it reunites the company with Hire Director, Paul Timmins - part of a hugely experienced team that also includes MD Spencer Beard and Commercial Director, Alex Penn. They are joined by Technical Director, Simon Gladstone, Operations Director, Stefan Phillips and Finance Director, Ian Bidmead.

Driven by Timmins, who has enjoyed a long relationship with Martin Audio, the company has confirmed a large investment in Martin Audio’s advanced control and array technology. This enabled them to make an immediate impact in 2022, supporting the Sigur Rós global tour with the manufacturer’s Wavefront Precision system and TORUS scaled for arenas, and the Australian Pink Floyd Show UK, with Wavefront Precision and TORUS scaled for theatres up to small arenas. Both bands have enjoyed a long relationship with Paul Timmins, which looks set to continue under the new production company.

One of the first key considerations when 22live set out its stall early last year was which loudspeaker company to forge a relationship with. Setting out the reasons for backing Martin Audio as their front-line brand, Timmins was aware that a long

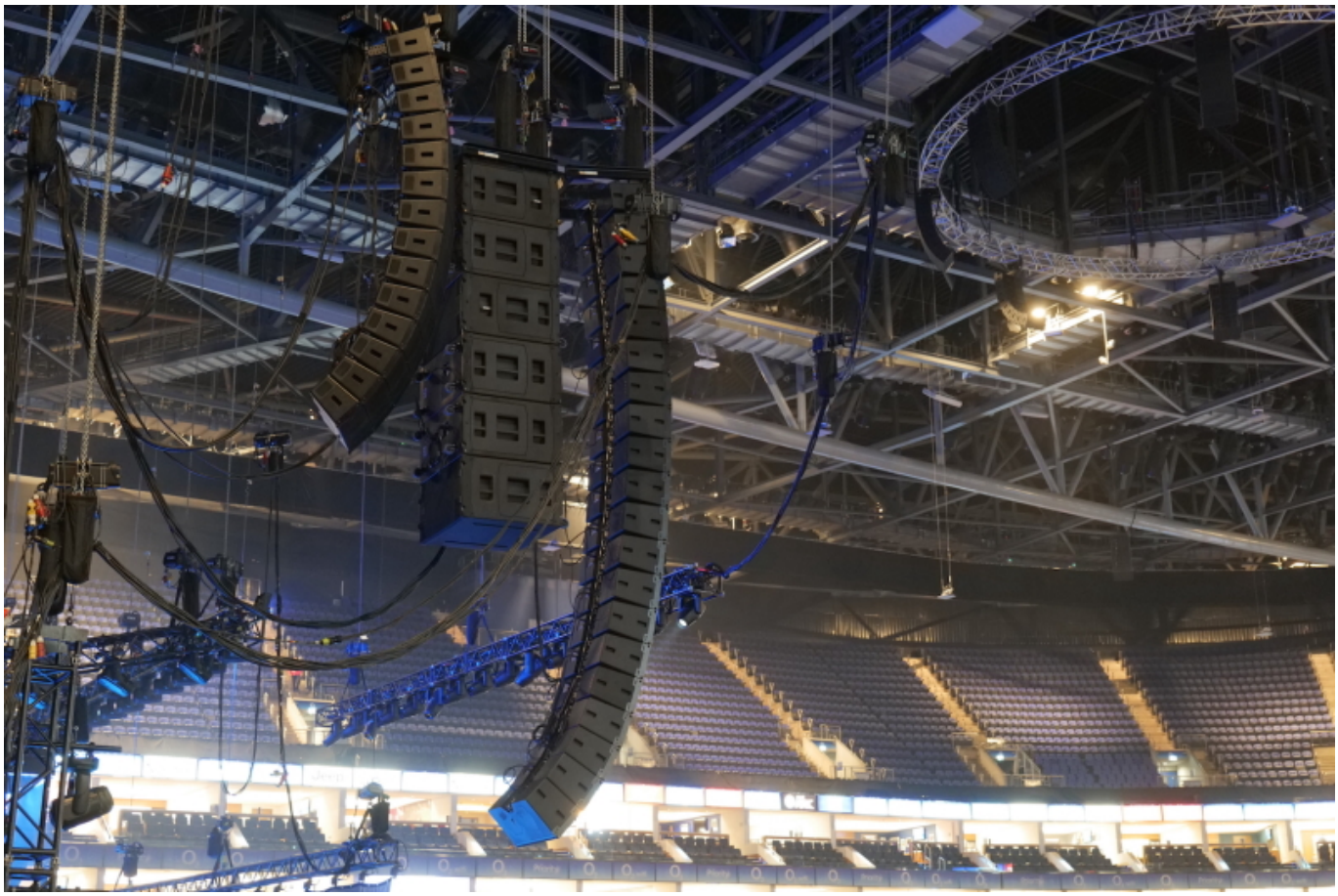
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historic relationship with a brand is not necessarily justification for future investment. “There is always a lot at stake when it comes to selecting a partner brand,” he says. “For us, we needed to get our hands on a product that gave us more of a USP, and was supplied by a manufacturer that complemented our own ethos. This was the key to a successful launch.”

In Martin Audio’s favour was the strength of the brand generally within the world of live sound reinforcement, and specifically its perception as a rock n roll provider - aligned with the fact that it was a UK manufacturer. At the corporate end, Dom Harter, as managing director, had provided confidence, while 22live could also see that parent company, Focusrite plc, was reinforcing the brand’s potential by supporting its ambitions in R&D and investment. Paul Timmins comments, “As we were considering a substantial investment in the brand it was important to hear Dom‘s longer-term vision for the company, and how that could positively impact on our needs and expectations.”

This commitment to live was further reinforced when Focusrite plc acquired Linea Research in March 2022 - a further investment that underpinned 22live’s decision. “We saw bringing the amplifier manufacturer in-house as really providing Martin Audio with the tools it needed to become more successful.” Having decided on the brand, the next decision was on which of their front line systems to invest in. The answer was all of them - and they opted for WPL, WPC, WPS, WPM and TORUS, supported by SXCF118 and SXHF218 subwoofers, all powered via the Martin Audio iK42 amplified controller, and utilising Dante throughout.

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Wavefront Precision is a relatively recent addition to the Martin Audio product portfolio, acknowledges Paul Timmins. WPM (2 x 6.5”) and WPC (2 x 10”) were both unveiled as the first products in the series back in 2017, with WPL (2 x 12”) and slightly later the WPS (2 x 8”) joining and completing the current line-up in 2019. Shortly after the 2019 release the industry was hit by the pandemic, and so it is only now that these products are really having an opportunity to get out there, with 2022 being the first year that WPL was deployed as the main system on Martin Audio’s flagship showcase, the Pyramid stage at Glastonbury Festival.

But for all his confidence in Wavefront Precision’s USP’s he still had to sell it to the rest of the team. And so he arranged a demo at Martin Audio HQ in High Wycombe, where everyone gave a resounding thumbs-up … to the system output, rigging and physical characteristics. Simon Gladstone commended the control software while Stefan Phillips could see the investment in such new tech would guarantee a long life cycle and would grow alongside the company.

Gladstone also promotes the company’s reason for backing the TORUS constant curvature array. “TORUS has been an excellent product for 22live already, and it produces a great result with minimal effort. It sounds great out of the box and the dynamic horn flare makes it very flexible and intuitive. My first experience of TORUS was utilising a pair of T1230 as a main FOH box, paired with the SXCF118 sub, whilst teching a small Sam Ryder show - and I was very impressed.

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“It’s a great versatile box, working well standalone, and also when supporting larger systems as fills etc. It’s a real workhorse and a staple for rental companies small and large, as well as ticking boxes for venues and touring acts alike. If you’re considering a move towards Martin Audio, this is a great place to start.” Finally, 22live were excited by the potential of working with the expanding Martin Audio network of front-line rental partners through a burgeoning summer of outdoor events. “The more we got into the opportunity that Wavefront Precision presented, the keener we were to get onboard,” Paul Timmins summarises. “It felt like a small risk to take backing something new, but it was a considered risk, with plenty of opportunity to go with it.”

22live will also now act in 2023 as a dealer for Martin Audio, representing the company as a boutique supplier, focused on supplying Wavefront Precision and TORUS products predominantly to the touring market.

www.martin-audio.com
www.22live.co

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