Martin Audio WPC for ‘Tunes in the Dunes’ Festival



Tunes in the Dunes is the apt name given to an annual three-day festival on Perranporth Beach in Cornwall. The festival has been running on the golden sands for 11 years, having sprung up from the live music events at the beachside Watering Hole - which is actually the UK’s only bar on a beach. Based nearby in Plymouth, Martin Audio partner Nub Sound this year provided the technical infrastructure, deploying their Wavefront Precision Compact (WPC), eight elements a side, which ensured headliners McFly (Friday), Craig David (Saturday) and Ocean Colour Scene (Sunday) could be heard to the max by crowds assembling on the beach as their music drifted out towards the Atlantic Ocean.

On duty was Nub Sound Director of Operations and sound engineer Josh Small. He explained that in addition to the eight WPC per side, a cardioid sub array of eight SXH218 in a castellated format, ensured rear rejection and stage spillage. Three WPS enclosures provided nearfill coverage, with the main hangs driven in 2-box resolution from Martin Audio iKON multi-channel process-control amplifiers, and the front fills individually amplified.

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Small explained the challenges. “We were in a very long arena, not particularly wide and needing to get consistent audience coverage from in front of the pit to right out to 55-60 metres behind the FOH position. That’s something we can achieve really well with the Wavefront series.” He also spoke of the environmental requirements, which his sound team were able to meet thanks to the close control offered by Martin Audio’s proprietary DISPLAY software. “We were aware that we were in in a really residential area. Although Perranporth is only a small town, there are a number of high-quality hotels and residences on the cliff-top which we were pointing towards, and our neighbours naturally have concerns about being disturbed by events happening on this site. “Therefore, we have to be really considerate about our offsite noise and we have to be really thoughtful about how we are going to impact the local populous.” His solution was to use the strict Hard Avoid setting in DISPLAY at the back of the arena …”really pushing the priority in the optimisations to get as much offsite noise control as possible,” he said. “We specifically aimed the PA acoustically to avoid sending anything offsite.”

Finally, Josh Small also spoke of the logistics of getting the tech down to the beach from the cliff top. “It was a case of getting everything to the nearest hard standing car park, forking it off a lorry onto tractor trailers, bringing it to stage and then forking it off again.” In this instance the tractor trailers took on more the role of dune buggies, while the event itself gave a whole new meaning to building sand castellations.

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