Shure Axient Digital at Eurovision Song Contest 2023



Picture: Anthony Devlin/Getty Images

Eurovision, one of the largest and most complex entertainment events in the world, demands reliable and flawless audio for attendees in person and viewers at home. Hosting on behalf of Ukraine, the United Kingdom welcomed a global viewing audience of more than 161 million into the Liverpool Arena to hear performances from the top 26 countries during the grand finale, aired live on May 13. Shure Axient® Digital Wireless System was selected to provide a phenomenal experience for artists and viewers alike.

Britannia Row provided audio equipment for the 67th edition of Eurovision Song Contest. Tom Brown, Project Manager at Britannia Row, together with his team and Robert Edwards, Head of Sound at ESC 2023, specified an extensive system of Shure Axient Digital, PSM 1000 in-ear monitoring, AD600 Axient Digital Spectrum Manager, ShowLink, Wireless Workbench Software, and Wavetool Software to provide the robust and solid solution required.

Tom Brown commented: “We needed a reliable system that we could be confident in pushing to its limits, and the Shure systems provided a comprehensive set of tools and products to manage this effectively. The reliability and known robustness of the PSM 1000 in-ear monitors, huge tuning range of the Axient Digital Wireless System, frequency diversity, and invaluable support of ShowLink were imperative.”

Phoca PDF

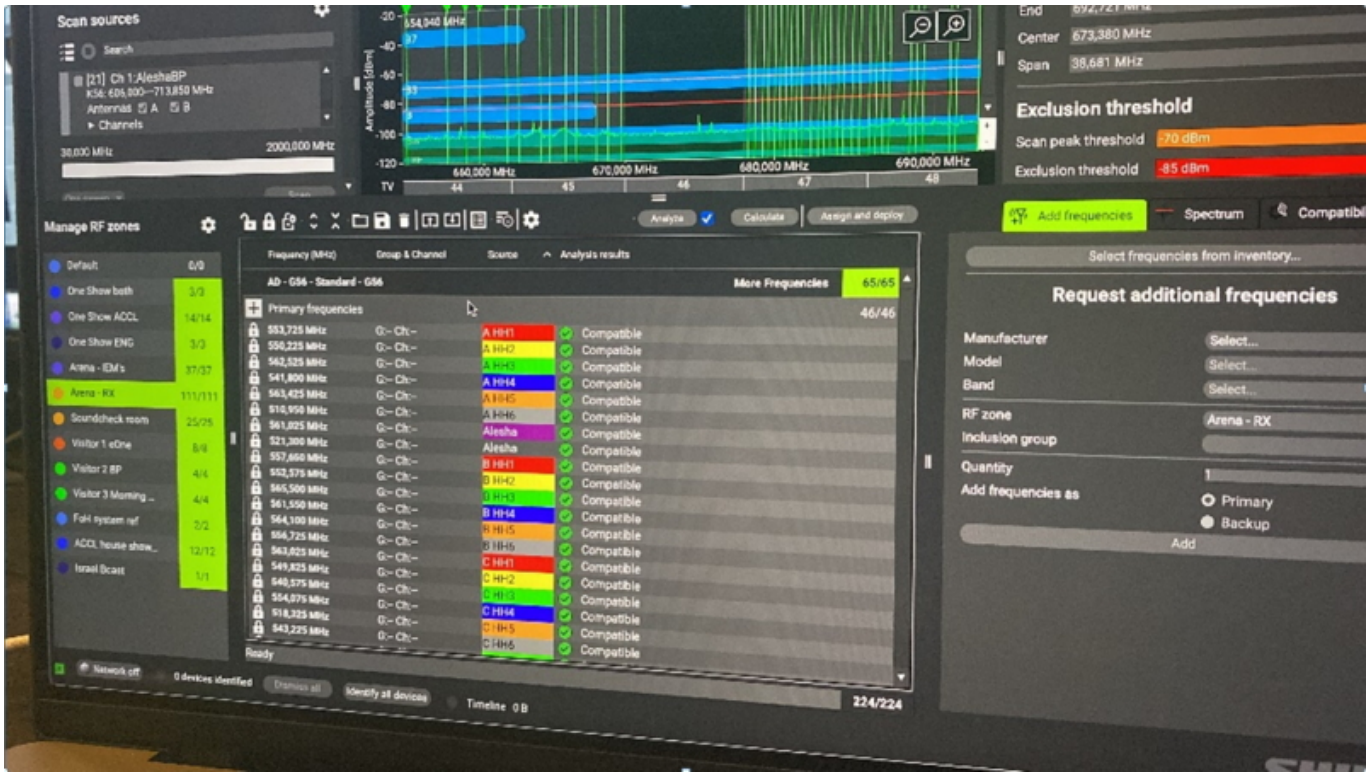
Robert Edwards, Head of Sound of Eurovision Song Contest 2023 added: “In collaboration with our technical partners at Brit Row, the Shure Axient Digital system of microphones was at the very heart of the audio production plan, and the enormous system performed flawlessly during the entire production period of five weeks. It has been described as the most technically proficient and best-sounding Eurovision ever. It’s always a challenge keeping the 37 delegations happy from a sound point of view, but I think in Liverpool, we managed it!”

Given the limited amount of available RF spectrum and high quantity of wireless channels required to deliver an exceptional and unique Eurovision, the event necessitated a solution that could manage one of Europe’s most challenging audio environments. Thanks to the solid performance of Shure Axient Digital, the technical team easily overcame the complexity to ensure a seamless celebration of another exciting Eurovision edition.

Josh Lloyd, Head of Engineering at Britannia Row, explained: “Axient Digital helped with managing spectrum, allowing us to squeeze a lot of channels into reduced spectrum. We had 10 or 12 ShowLink access points across the arena, and it meant we could have control over the handhelds used by all artists in all spaces.”

As part of the equipment, Shure Wireless Workbench (WWB) software was used for monitoring the signal of all radio mics and in-ears, forming one Shure ecosystem. Josh Lloyd continued: “We pushed Wireless Workbench to its limits, using all the tools available in the software to help artists feel fully comfortable on stage. The AD600 Digital Spectrum Manager was also very useful - the monitor antenna receiver and 6 inputs meant we could monitor antennas on and off stage. This unique tool made our workflow much quicker and efficient.”

Phoca PDF



The technical team used Wavetool – a professional audio and RF monitoring and listening software for audio engineers – to integrate the Shure kit while monitoring dropouts and pops/crackles to ensure that artists could feel comfortable before going on stage. Due to the sheer scale of the show and high number of RF channels, there was a wide and experienced crew just looking after RF. This team relied on Shure's exceptional audio equipment. At such a large event, the ability to quickly respond to any scenario is imperative. Only a solid audio solution and software could ensure such a flawless performance.

The Shure team was onsite supporting and providing expertise from previous Eurovision celebrations. Josh Lloyd commented: "Having Aart Heus from the Shure team was incredibly useful for optimising RF performances. It is a luxury to have a manufacturer you can rely on. Both Tuomo Tolonen, who was involved in the planification, and Aart Heus' knowledge, attention, and help were invaluable. When pushing product limits, they were able to go and check with R&D directly. It was remarkable to have that level of dialogue with a manufacturer."

Andrew Lillywhite, part of the Britannia Row team and responsible for RF at Eurovision added: "I really can't imagine what it would have been like doing this show without the functionality that Showlink and Wireless Workbench together with Axient Digital provide. With the benefit of Showlink and the remote control and monitoring it provides alongside a host of other features that I am already taking for granted it does make life a lot easier for a show of this size and scale."

Stuart Moots, Director of Pro Audio at Shure UK, concluded: "The entire team at Shure are proud and extremely honoured that Britannia Row chose to use Axient

Phoca PDF

Digital and PSM 1000 for Eurovision. It speaks volumes that both systems performed flawlessly at the event, especially given the sizable channel count and wireless that were in use.

To see Wireless Workbench being used to its full potential alongside Wavetool, which was taking care of monitoring, was one of the most comprehensive deployments of wireless we've seen in Europe."

Eurovision Song Contest 2023 was an exceptional event and a night to remember. Only with the highest Shure quality and reliability can teams, artists, and audiences enjoy to the fullest.

www.shure.com

Phoca PDF