

Pro Sound News

Europe

The business of professional audio

EXCLUSIVE

Sound Technology and Harman: details revealed

No job losses says Sound Tech MD despite move from Potters Bar to Letchworth

Speculation remains rife in the audio industry following Sound Technology's takeover of Harman Pro UK, which caught both pundits and industry denizens off-guard when it was revealed on 22nd May. Speaking exclusively to *Pro Sound News Europe*, Sound Technology managing director Dave Marshall and marketing director, Ian Cullen have revealed the backdrop to the deal, which has seen the distributor fundamentally shifting from its roots in MI.

"I think the pro-audio sector is stronger at the moment, than MI," says Marshall. "MI in the UK is particularly troubled by the Sound Control/Turnkey situation, but although that was the big one, there have also been about half a dozen smaller dealers who have disappeared in the past few weeks. One of the main factors behind this was to make sure that we're in strong markets but not be reliant on any one of them."

Marshall and Cullen have both stressed that there are no planned redundancies as a result of



Sound Technology's Dave Marshall (l) and Ian Cullen

the takeover, with the managing director explaining that "the hope and the intention from our point of view is that there won't be any losses. Max Lindsay-Johnson will be the director responsible

for sales of all the Harman product into all channels, except MI, so he will be responsible for touring, install, engineering sound and broadcast pro. We hope that we will be able to welcome everybody from Potters Bar."

Yet however positive the strategy, industry talk has turned to how Sound Technology will be able to cope with the detail of such a massive acquisition, particularly the difficulty of merging two facilities that are 20 miles apart. Marshall is confident that he can confound the critics.

"We will be moving everyone here to Letchworth and we already have the capacity to house them here," he declares. "In terms of space for the staff it's fine, though stock will be an issue. However, they use third-party warehousing and fulfilment, so we will be looking at doing something along those lines in the future as well, though that has still to be determined."

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The Human League opened the Sheffield Academy

UNITED KINGDOM

Academy Music Group expands into digital

With one new Northern venue already open and another on the way in Birmingham, Academy Music Group is set to expand in 2008, while continuing the shift to digital consoles in its latest 2,350-capacity venture.

Three Soundcraft Vi6 desks have been purchased for the newly launched Carling Academy Sheffield, with AMG group operations manager

US/EUROPE

Technomad goes Dutch

New European distribution centre will cut costs and delivery times

Joanne Ruddock

Technomad Associates, a manufacturer of weatherproof loudspeakers and Turnkey PA systems, has announced it will begin stocking equipment in the Netherlands for distribution throughout Europe and nearby regions. The initiative will cut delivery times to Technomad customers and minimise shipping costs for European distribution. The company will continue to manufacture its products at its US factory in South Deerfield, Massachusetts.

Rodger von Kries, vice president of Technomad, said: "We felt that there was an opportunity to expand our European business by reducing the transport costs faced by our EU import customers through bulk container shipments. The strong euro makes this a particularly appealing time to try to grow EU sales."

At present, however, there are no plans to open an office in Europe.

Technomad invented the first reliable full-range weatherproof loudspeaker and now offers eight models ranging in power from the 60W Vernal 15 to the 800W Chicago 15/12 subwoofer. In 2000, Technomad introduced its range of complete Turnkey PA Systems that have turned previously complex integration jobs into simple, one-line orders.

Technomad IP56-rated weatherproof loudspeakers are installed around the world in cruise ships, theme parks, sports stadiums, outdoor entertainment venues, and within other harsh environment fixed and mobile applications, both indoors and outdoors. Most Technomad loudspeakers are available as part of the Turnkey PA Systems range and feature a six-channel audio mixer, two-channel power amplifier, speaker cables, speaker mounting brackets, a dynamic microphone with cable, and a GRU rack enclosure. Technomad Turnkey PA Systems are especially popular in outdoor sports venues where the systems can be easily assembled for quick and secure installations.

"Technomad's always been a best-in-class solution for weatherproof applications, and we've always had steady sales to the EU. But we realised that this lack of

a true supply channel was causing our products to be much more expensive than lesser-quality 'weather-resistant' products in the EU, and thereby forcing European contractors to make compromises based on price," said von Kries.

He added that the distribution plan will make it easier for European contractors and dealers to provide Technomad solutions to their customers. The company is now hoping to expand its network of European distributors and is looking for partners for the upcoming Infocomm Show to be held in Las Vegas in June. Interested companies can find more details and apply on Technomad's website.

The new strategy is also expected to improve customer service for international customers as shipping times will be reduced to one day for many locations, installers' timelines can be shortened, and



Technomad's Noho weatherproof loudspeaker

the cost of shipping small quantities of product direct can be eliminated.

"We're just sorry it took us so long to do this!" concluded von Kries. 🍌

www.technomad.com