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AUSTRALIA

20 Years of City to Surf! The P.A. People deliver quality audio systems



The Sun-Herald City2Surf presented by Westpac is not just Sydney's favourite sporting event, it is the world's largest run, with 85,000 registered participants. It has become one of Australia's most iconic sporting events and dates back to 1971 with Sydneysiders joined by participants from all over the world, elite athletes rubbing shoulders with locals to run, walk or watch the 14km race from Hyde Park in Sydney's CBD to the finish at spectacular Bondi Beach.

Over the years the scale of the event has increased significantly and the 2013 edition came with an amazing feat of logistics managed with the utmost precision by the Fairfax Media Events team.

The Event Communications team from the P.A People have proudly been involved with the event for over 20 years and provided the start and finish line audio systems for the 2013 race.

"It's an honour to be involved year after year with such an amazing event", said Matt Kirby, Manager, Event Communications. "The technical and logistical challenges combined with the unpredictable weather conditions provide us with our own sense of achievement, not dissimilar to those that have run the race!"

The installation started for the P.A People at the control position on the corner of William and Park St in the city. "With a desire to generate a more festival-like atmosphere for

this year's event, the client really stepped up the level of production from prior years and our control area and signal distribution reflected that change" said Matt. "We worked closely alongside BMA Event Group who had been contracted separately to provide video content that was fed to a number of LED screens spread throughout the start line area including Macquarie St. This involved plenty of interaction between the various start zones with two way crosses and various sponsor activations all requiring audio to be distributed to the entire crowd. We ran a significant amount of cable for this event including a 1000m tactical fibre-optic run between control and Macquarie St!!"

The real fun began at midnight. With an operation of military precision, two teams ran concurrently throughout the start line area to begin the process of mounting and cabling a distributed system of over 60 speakers along the lengths of Park St, College St and Macquarie St to provide full and even coverage across the whole start line area. "The design of the system served two purposes" said Scott Davidson, Senior System Engineer and Project Manager for the installation. "It needed to be able to clearly provide all the runners with audible safety announcements and race information and also needed to contribute to the entertainment value of the event by providing full range sound.

The P.A. People trialled a new generation of column speaker for this year's event – the

JBL CBT70J. Combined with a P.A. People designed and manufactured line transformer and custom street pole mounting brackets the compact two-way line array column speakers performed flawlessly and invisibly as a 100V line system in this application.

Whilst the start line team continued working through the night, a separate team was deployed to setup the finish line component. "We setup a number of horn systems throughout the whole Bondi Beach precinct that playback pre-recorded messages to ensure that the crowd movement is managed effectively for the event" commented Dave Wright, Project Manager for the finish line installation. "We also provided one of our Clearcom Helixnet systems integrated with our Motorola two way radios to allow communication between the director, talent and roving camera operators from BMA" said Dave.

Back at the start line, the pace was frantic as early runners began to gather at the various starting positions. "It's very difficult to describe the period of time between midnight and 3pm," said Matt. "It's a real blur. Before you know it, the last speakers are being hung, the national anthem gets sung, the race starts and as the last runners cross the start line, the bump out has already begun following the runners down the street alongside the city's street sweepers, fencing contractors and clean-up crews. The whole thing is complete and back in the truck by 2pm!! No one would ever know that the event took place, it was so fast."

www.papeople.com.au

IN A HURRY?

- Main PA: 60 x JBL CBT70J speakers
- Communications: 1 x Clearcom Helixnet systems integrated with Motorola two way radios

