



RELIABLE COMMS FOR MELBOURNE'S WHITE NIGHT



Customer

Optical Audio Productions Pty Ltd

Industry

Event Management

Need

- A communications system for all stakeholders, including emergency services

Benefits

- A reliable communications system
- Capacity to integrate with customer's own specialised technology
- User-friendly handsets

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Jason Read, technical director, Optical Audio Productions Pty Ltd

For three years Optical Audio Productions Pty Ltd (OAP) has provided a “theatrical communications system” for White Night Melbourne: an all-night cultural event with visual art, illuminations, music, food, theatre, sport, fashion, film, design and performances. Held in the heart of Melbourne, activities take place in city streets, parklands, laneways, public spaces and cultural institutions.

A theatrical communications system means reliable communications between event coordinators, emergency services and other stakeholders, and can include elements such as coordination with music and lighting.

In preparation for the event, OAP supplied their design to Motorola Solutions Rentals, which provided the infrastructure and handsets. OAP then integrated Motorola equipment into their Clear-Com digital matrix system to create a backbone communications system.

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Keeping the emergency operations centre informed

OAP manages the emergency operations centre which houses all emergency services and other stakeholders, such as public transport and security representatives. All activities are coordinated via several Clear-Com digital matrix communication system consoles, which interoperate with the MOTOTRBO handsets, keeping everyone informed and in constant contact.

In preparation for the events, a MOTOTRBO Capacity Plus system was installed within Eureka Tower, providing access to 22 channels. Approximately 250 MOTOTRBO DP4801 handsets and 22 DM3601 mobiles were deployed to staff on the ground, such as emergency services, security staff and others, ensuring that everyone involved used the same system.

One of the technologies added to the MOTOTRBO system was OAP's “show call” feature – a semi-duplex channel. This enabled all users to hear simultaneously when this channel is used.

“It's a great way to utilise the system. Even if one person speaks during the show call, everyone can hear both sides of the conversation. It doesn't cut out either voice,” explains Read.

With a large percentage of White Night Melbourne employees made up of seasonal workers, a core reason for deploying these particular handsets was that they are easy to operate, as there was minimal time to train users.

The system comes into its own

The system really proved its worth in the first year of White Night Melbourne. Organisers expected several hundred thousand visitors to the new event, however, more than 550,000 people arrived. With such large numbers of people moving around the city, the demand placed on the communications system was high. Fortunately, as OAP had based the network design in a much larger event – New Year's Eve in the Melbourne CBD – the infrastructure had adequate capacity and could handle the extra demand.

