



Beyond the box

Provocateur Dubai has grabbed headlines as the world's first Evolution 6 installation, but there is more to the club than just the new cabinets. **James Ling** reports

IN THE MARCH-APRIL EDITION OF

Pro Audio Middle East, we led the magazine with news that Provocateur at the Four Seasons resort in Dubai had become the world's first permanent install for Funktion One's new Evolution 6 cabinets, prior to their official launch in Frankfurt. While this was the most attention-grabbing feature of the project, there was a lot more to it than the brand new speakers.

Approaching the club, customers are first greeted by a large LED wall leading you through the double doors into the lobby and then the venue itself. While the mismatched, quirky décor initially catches the eye it is hard to ignore the scarlet speakers hanging menacingly in each corner. And that is exactly the point. Provocateur is not looking to hide its sound system, it wants to celebrate it.

'Sound was the number one priority above the décor,' says Andy Williams, general manager at Em-Tec, Funktion One's distributor in the region and the company responsible for the installation. 'That's the other way around in most venues, sofas are more important, but not here. The whole venue is designed around the sound. That was really nice for us.'

With sound being the critical component from the installation stage, the venue's owners quickly



Sound was the first priority for the venue

engaged Em-Tec to provide the club with something unique. 'The client has used Funktion One in several projects. He has started working really closely with us and this is the sixth venue where he has used them,' says Mr Williams. 'We knew the Evolution 6 was coming out and the client had asked for something new and special. It was the right speaker for the right job, we wouldn't put the wrong speaker in.'

While the speaker may have been the correct one for the venue, there was one significant hurdle that Em-Tec needed to overcome. At this point Evolution 6 hadn't even been officially announced, let alone put into production. Undeterred, the distributor approached the



F1201 cabinets provide fill at the venue



Dubai's Provocateur has the first four Evolution 6 speakers

manufacturer to see what would be possible.

'We asked if we could get some for a certain date and Funktion One did everything they could to deliver,' recalls Em-Tec CEO, Alex Bracken. 'They worked hard to meet the date we needed the speakers by and put everything else on the backburner to do it. Two weeks before the speakers came, Funktion One was still woodworking bits together. It was finished, the testing was done and then it was put in a box and shipped out here while the paint was practically still wet.'

It is this kind of service that Em-Tec has come to value from Funktion One. 'We have a great relationship with the guys there and really respect what they do,' says the CEO. 'They are always very accommodating and help us to deliver on our promises.'

With the full complement of speakers supplied, Em-Tec was able to get on with the actual installation process. 'It was quick and easy to install,' notes Mr Bracken. 'When you have a space which is almost a square like that, it makes things a lot easier.'

The four Evo 6 cabinets have been installed in each corner with an F1201 speaker hung behind each of the main cabinets to provide fill by the bar and behind the DJ booth. Of course, one of the critical elements of any club install is the low frequency reproduction and Provocateur doesn't disappoint here either. 'There are two F121s installed into the DJ booth with a further two BR121s hidden in the venue,' says Mr Williams. 'You get the power from



A pair of F121 subs have been installed in the DJ booth

the F long throw punching in your chest and then more of a warmer surround from the bass reflex.'

The only discreet portion of the sound system is the rack, tucked away in a cupboard in the venue's lobby. Power for the system is from the manufacturer's E15, E25, F60Q and E100Q amplifiers with control from an XO4 processor.

With such a simple system design, understandably the rest of the



Processing and amplification

install was relatively straightforward. 'Running four main speakers in stereo, two at either end also meant the cabling was easy,' notes Mr Williams. 'They're held with tension springs and there's rubber under the bass to cut down on some of the vibrations. They're above a five-star restaurant and the sound-proofing seems to have worked pretty well, they haven't had any complaints.'

As this was the first time the new loudspeakers had been used it would be easy to assume there would have been some challenges with the installation or tuning process. However, Mr Williams insists this was not the case. 'I did notice it took a while to run the speaker in and there was a bit more tweaking to get everything right. But from out of the box, you could just tell it was going to sound awesome. Obviously you have to tweak it slightly for the venue, but it was a pretty painless install,' he reflects.

While it's always nice to be the first installation of any new system, the most important thing is how the venue sounds. It is here where Em-Tec believes the new Evo 6 cabinets

have come to the fore. 'It's quite a radical new design, the way that the 15 is very low-profile,' says Mr Williams. 'It's an amazing sounding speaker. To get that level of sound from that sized box is phenomenal and there's no loss in the clarity. The way that the axe head has been designed, it really does punch that sound out.'

'It's really loud, but enjoyable,' adds Mr Bracken. 'You can feel it. It's a



The shape of the club made the system design simple

big powerful system for the box. It's a proper Funktion One speaker,' he smiles. 'It's a real evolution, they've taken it to the next level. It's a smaller box, but more powerful which is what club owners want.'

The end result is something that the Em-Tec team is clearly proud of. 'It's not a huge venue, the capacity is around 500,' says Mr Bracken. 'You look around and you've got four speakers, four bass bins and then the F1201s as fills, so the level in there from that little equipment is phenomenal.'

'It was a good but simple job and they're the best ones,' adds Mr Williams. 'The client wanted a big sound in the venue, and that is exactly what we have given him.' Pro Audio Middle East can certainly testify to this. And judging by the smiles on other people's faces we are certainly not alone.

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