

Long-term Funktion

Six years after *Worship AVL Asia's* sister title, *Pro Audio Asia*, visited Seoul's 10-storey Oryun Community Church, how much has changed? **Barney Jameson** reports

SIX YEARS AGO – LONG before the creation of *Worship AVL Asia* – a trip to South Korea brought this magazine's sister title, *Pro Audio Asia*, through the doors of Seoul's towering Oryun Community Church. The reason for the visit was the unusual use of a Funktion One sound reinforcement system at front of house – the kind of loudspeaker rig more usually employed at major rock concerts or in high-end nightclubs, but here serving to deliver the best possible performance for worship bands and spoken-word services.

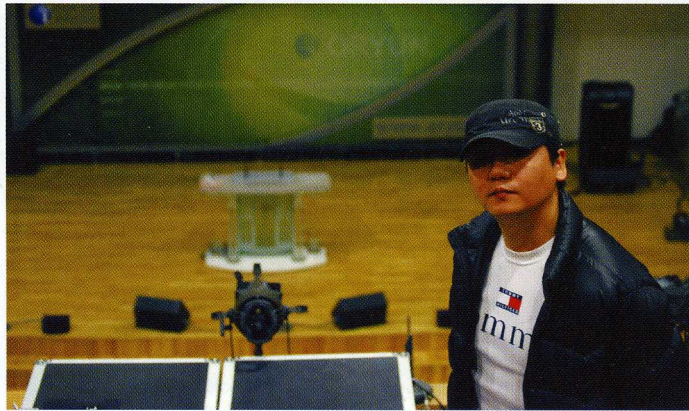
The result was certainly impressive, but then so is Oryun Church itself. Its main sanctuary occupies four entire floors of a 10-storey tower based in the city's Olympic Square district, while its congregation is 10,000-strong. Broadcasts of its services are relayed over four cable television channels as well on the internet, while its message is simultaneously translated into four languages beyond the native Korean: English, Japanese, Chinese and Russian. Even in Seoul, where the streets are thick with believers and the churches are many, Oryun is a remarkable place.



The front of house position

But it is still a church, and the same budget limitations apply within its walls as elsewhere. South Korea's worshippers are nothing if not generous, but when a system as powerful as that which sits in Oryun's main sanctuary is chosen, its worth is judged not only by its initial success but the longevity it offers.

All of which is why, six years after that initial visit, *Worship AVL Asia* has returned to Oryun Vision Centre – the name given to the tower – in the company of regional Funktion One and DiGiCo distributor Soundus, the same company that delivered the



Oryun Church audio engineer Sanghum Kim



The DiGiCo D1 at FOH

audio installation into the tower to begin with.

Not that it's likely to remain just a tower for very much longer. Within the marble and glass foyer area of the Vision Centre is a coffee shop used by worshippers and their non-believing neighbours alike, an enormous staircase overlooked by a smiling image of Oryun's pastor with his family, and a display requesting donations to support the church's future. An expansive new wing will be attached to the current building, offering education to the local community alongside the already existing library, sports and gymnasium facilities and more. With such a substantial development to pay for, it's no wonder that Oryun needs its installed audio technology to function as if it was installed yesterday.

Indeed, the only change within the cavernous main Sanctuary that is immediately obvious upon entering is the addition of a DiGiCo D1 digital console at the front of house position, located at the fore of the balcony overlooking the huge stage.

Previously a DiGiCo D5 was used here, though the purchase of the D1 was already planned. It has become the heart of the Sanctuary's



E 15 amplifiers in use

system, offering invaluable snapshot automation to the two full-time sound engineers employed by the church. With five services every Sunday, each of which offers different styles of music, the desk is a critical tool for more than just mixing. Engineer Sanghum Kim is quick to point out that he thinks of the console 'not as a technical device but as a musical instrument' in its own right.

If the DiGiCo desk is the instrument upon which Mr Kim plays, then hung proudly at either side of the stage are the loudspeakers through which his work is heard – the Funktion One

system, still untouched after six years.

Comprising 12 Resolution 5 enclosures flown six-per-side plus three per-side clusters of Resolution 4D for down-fill, the front of house system is further bolstered by six wide-dispersion F55 compact speakers providing front-fill. Elsewhere, 10 F88 direct-radiating speakers are installed as under-balcony fills. Low end is delivered by six F218 subwoofers, concealed behind panels to integrate them into the overall décor. A small army of amplifiers is used to power the system, including seven E15 amps, five E25s and three E45s for the F218 subs. Only for the onstage monitoring is the F1 paradigm broken, with 12 TTM129 wedges and four 14-inch TTM149 boxes from JBL providing foldback.

Loudspeaker management is handled by a combination of two Dolby Lake Contour processors and a BSS Soundweb system comprising four 9088ii units. 'The main speakers are managed by the Dolby Lake system while the delay speakers and monitors are managed by Soundweb,' explains Mr Kim.

When the system was installed it was not Mr Kim who selected Funktion One and prepared the design but the church's original chief audio operator, Duckjae Shin. Mr Kim took his place at the DiGiCo console a little more than three years ago, quickly familiarising himself not only with the installed system but also the room in which he mixes. It is, he reports, not without its challenges.

'The room acoustics are fairly good



The impressive stage

but there is one difficulty in that it's very wide,' he explains. 'That width makes it difficult to create a stereo mix. I also have to take into account the use of the front fills, which makes it a little bit complicated. But the Funktion One speakers are great and they react well with the room.'

Additionally, the first floor of the sanctuary, most of which is under-balcony, can present bass resonance issues, but Mr Kim quickly points out that the large congregation enjoyed by Oryun is itself a natural solution to the problem. 'When services start many people crowd in here and lots of them are on the first floor,' he reasons. 'The sound becomes absorbed, balancing out the difference.' Ultimately he concludes that the Sanctuary is 'a nice space', a sentiment with which members of the Soundus team readily agree. 'They considered the acoustic properties of this room carefully,' explains technical support advisor Chan-woo Kang. 'There are many churches in Seoul that don't care about acoustics as this church does.'

Also integrated into the system are 12 channels of AKG wireless, one channel of Sennheiser wireless, and effects outboard including a TC Electronic M2000, a Lexicon PCM81 and a Yamaha SPX990.

While the main Sanctuary is by far the largest and arguably most striking area within Oryun Vision Centre, it may not be the most well known. Nor is it the only room in the tower with a Funktion One system. Situated below it is another hall, described by Mr Kang from Soundus as a famous venue in Seoul for weddings. The



The view from one Funktion One hang to another

space is considerably less arena-like than its bigger sibling upstairs, but it is nonetheless equipped with a reinforcement rig comprising four Resolution 2 cabinets configured two-per-side. Augmenting them are six JBL Control 29AV mid-sized loudspeakers used for delays, while onstage sound is courtesy

of 10 Dynacord AM12 wedges. A combination of Crown MA 2402 and 3600 amplifiers power the system, while an analogue Soundcraft MH3 is at front of house.

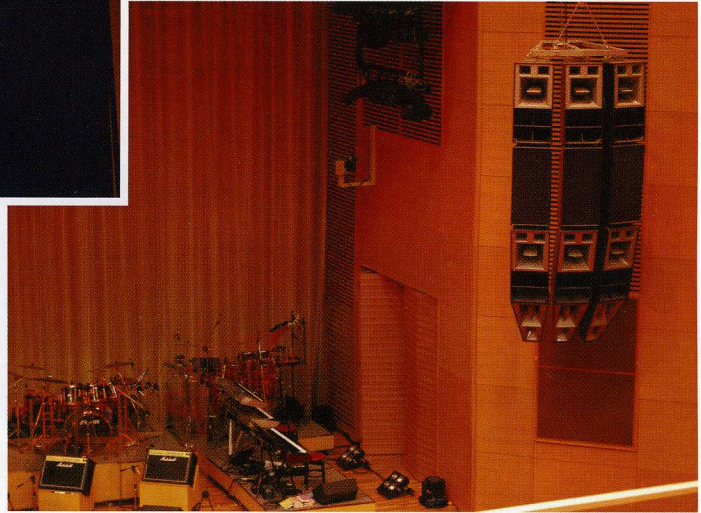
If the above sounds like an odd collection of brands working together, it's simply an example of how Oryun Church, like any other, must operate within the confines of its budget until more funds become available. Until such time as a more focused design can

be installed, the wedding hall will continue as it is. And so will the Sanctuary – its audio system is likely to add many more years of service to its existing six. When the system is turned on for *Worship AVL Asia* to hear, it's easy to understand why. Six years ago the concept of installing a Funktion One rig into a church seemed unusual. Now it just seems prudent.

www.digico.biz

www.funktion-one.com

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A loudspeaker hang overlooks the waiting equipment of the worship band