



Funking it up

Taipei's nightlife is hotting up with the installation of Funktion One systems into some of the capital's leading clubs. **Caroline Moss** listens up



Funktion One Resolution 3 enclosures serve inside Hive



Jonathan Liao from Audio 6 in Halo

AUDIO 6 WAS STARTED IN LATE 2010 BY JONATHAN

Liao and his partners, Brian Tsai and Yang-Yu Ping. The main purpose of this venture: to bring the Funktion One brand to the Taiwanese market. And Mr Liao, who has a BMus in music technology from New York University and an MSc in sound and vibration from Southampton University in the UK, is certainly fulfilling that remit.

While studying and working in the USA and UK before returning to his native Taipei, Mr Liao had heard Funktion One systems at Cielo in New York and at dance music events in London, and knew he wanted to work with the company one day. He and his partners paid a visit to Funktion One's UK headquarters in the summer of 2010 and the resulting partnership was born.

Among some of Audio 6's most recent Funktion One installations are three nightclubs in Taipei's ATT4Fun shopping mall, in the cosmopolitan Xinyi district of the city. Spark (known as Elektro from January 2015) is owned by local DJ Junior Lin and was installed with Taiwan's first EVO dance stack system consisting of two stacks of two Resolution 3SH EVO mid-high sections alongside a pair of F215 mkII double 15-inch woofers and two F221 Bass double 21-inch enclosures.

Now, two more Funktion One-equipped clubs have joined Elektro on the seventh and eighth floors of the ATT4Fun mall. These identically-sized units previously formed the upper and lower areas of live performance space Showbox, which had decided to downsize. On the eighth floor, Halo pulls in the after-work crowd looking for somewhere to lounge with a drink before the music picks up the pace and the pool table is removed. On the floor below, Hive is pulling in a younger crowd.

Like Elektro, Halo is also one of Junior Lin's club ventures; the DJ has 15 years' experience in running venues. 'Junior is very into audio, and we worked closely with him, both here and in Elektro, to get exactly the kind of sound he was looking for,' says Mr Liao. This has been achieved in the 500-capacity Halo by a relatively simple

system of two Funktion One Resolution 3 all in one three-way enclosures and four F121 bass units powered by a Full Fat Audio FFA-6004 and two FFA-10000 amps, with processing carried out by two XTA DP448s. The system concentrates its energy onto the small dance floor, while five Reyn Yang M-650 mk II 15 inch concentric speakers acting as sidefills provide coverage to the seating areas around the club's periphery, and are amplified by a Reyn Yang QX4. DJ equipment includes two Pioneer CDJ-2000 Nexus CD players and a DJM-900 Nexus mixer.

'This club has a small dance area, and is really more of a lounge,' explains Mr Liao. 'A lot of glass and mirrors have been used in the club's décor, but this wasn't really an issue, because of the way we've focused on the dance floor, while the Reyn Yang speakers direct the sound out to the side. It was an uncomplicated system to set up; there was just tweaking to pull the high frequencies back, as the speakers are up against the dance floor.'

Halo opens every evening to catch the office crowd, putting on a special midweek night on Wednesdays as well as regular Friday and Saturday events. DJ Junior can often be found behind the decks, along with a selection of mostly local DJs.

The club also boasts a roof terrace offering stunning views. Although music has to be kept to a low level outside, Audio 6's rental division sometimes provides extra Funktion One systems for special events. As is common practice in Taiwan's developing pro audio industry, Audio 6 also has a PA rental division. The inventory of Funktion One and Full Fat products is split between warehouses in Taipei in the north, and Kaoshiung, Taiwan's second-largest city at the southern end of the island. The hire division caters for DJ events, university parties, live music festivals, shopping mall and corporate events, fashion shows, press conferences and election rallies. Stock currently consists of 12 Funktion One Resolution 4s, eight F221 and six F121 bass units, six Resolutions 2s and smaller range systems including



Audio 6's Jonathan Liao and Hive technician Jack Shih



The rack inside Halo

F1201s, F88s, F101s and MB212.

Occupying the floor below Halo is Hive, with entry to the club via a private service elevator decked out with red velvet curtains, moving lights and Meyer Sound speakers. From here, clubbers are disgorged into a compact, well-designed space that can accommodate around 600 and which hosts a roster of local DJs and the occasional international act six nights a week. Modular furniture shaped like cells of a honeycomb, and similarly-shaped LED panels, reinforce the hive theme.

As Hive was originally conceived as a cabaret venue, Mr Liao designed a distributed system comprising 10 Resolution 2s with two F221 bass units in metal cabinets either side of the DJ booth, and four BR118 bass

enclosures towards the rear of the club. At front of house is a Midas Venice mixer, and DJ equipment includes two Pioneer CDJ-2000s, Nexus CD players and a DJM-900 Nexus mixer.

Mr Liao carried out his design after being presented with a specification by the club's technician, Jack Shih, a man who knew what he wanted. For Mr Shih, there was no other consideration when it came to equipping Hive with a PA system. 'I'm a sound engineer and I've been a big fan of Funktion One for around 12 years now; I've been following the company's progress online and I recommended it to my boss,' says Mr Shih. 'It's a great sounding system and very easy to work with.'

Supply and installation were handled by Audio 6. 'Once we received the technical spec from Jack, we talked it over with the people at Funktion One to come up with the best products and system design for the space,' says Mr Liao. 'However, we were contracted quite late in the day, and most of the club had already been fitted out, so we were pretty limited as to where we could hang the speakers. It was a challenge to find places to put the flying gear, but we've achieved a good, even sound coverage in here.'

The subwoofers are carefully concealed in metal cabinets on

either side of the DJ booth. 'This wasn't ideal in the beginning, as the whole shell was rattling around, with the F221s and BR118s creating so much energy,' says Mr Liao. 'With Jack's help, we devised a way of adding some cement mixture to the interior of the metal cabinet to make it firm and minimise the vibration of the casing.'

quite a challenge for one company to function as a hire company, an installer and a distributor, but these guys have taken all of the positives on board and are flourishing.'

Adds Mr Liao, 'It's been a fun four years since our inception, and we are proud to have accomplished what we have. However, the Funktion One technology really



Inside the Halo club

Audio 6's sterling efforts in Taiwan haven't gone unnoticed by Funktion One. 'Audio 6 has developed into a very good distributor for us; their enthusiasm and understanding of the market, matched with their technical expertise and ambition, really impressed me on a recent visit I made to their two locations,' says Bill Woods, Funktion One's director of business development. 'It can be

deserves to be out there more. Our motto from the beginning was always about bringing the best sound possible to the masses so we're pushing the brand as much as we can, both on the sales and the hire fronts. Hopefully, we can continue to do so for many more years to come.'

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