

Case Study:

Cerwin-Vega! P-Series is Powered and Punched into the Market

Overview

A leader in the design, manufacture and distribution of loudspeakers for the home and professional audio markets, Cerwin-Vega! (CV) is wholly-owned by Gibson Brands, Inc., the recently established corporate name for the legendary guitar company. Dedicated to the pursuit of dynamic, accurate sound reproduction since 1954, CV products are distributed throughout the world via a network of distributors and dealers in more than 75 countries.

In late 2012, Cerwin-Vega! launched the P-Series Professional PA System, targeted to the live performance and installation markets. P-Series was the first official product introduction by any of Gibson's new pro audio brands (CV, KRK Systems and Stanton DJ) since the sale from the Stanton Group to Gibson in late 2011. As such, CV and Gibson were under intense pressure for the new product line to succeed.



Objective

As CV's longtime PR agency, D. Pagan Communications (DPC) was tasked with leading the international product launch. While Cerwin-Vega!'s product portfolio already included live sound products, the company had for a long while focused its attention on its home theater offerings, thus DPC faced the challenge of re-establishing the company within the live sound and installation markets, while differentiating the P-Series from existing CV lines within this same space. To accomplish this, DPC executed a comprehensive global public relations campaign focused on pre-launch parties for press and potential customers in New York and Los Angeles, product announcements, feature stories, reviews in target market publications and a year-long promotion at domestic and international trade shows.

Execution

Together with the CV/Gibson marketing teams, DPC kicked off the company's P-Series PR campaign with bi-coastal launch parties at the Gibson showroom in New York (the former Hit Factory Studios) and at the Gibson LA showroom in California. For these events, high-profile artists such as DJ Premier, The Dirty Pearls, DJ Serafin and Echosmith performed using the P-Series PA system for a variety of customers

and dealers, such as Guitar Center and Musician's Friend. From rock to hip-hop and nearly every genre in between, the variety of music styles that these performers represented, gave guests a chance to experience the full-scope of the P-Series' abilities.

In order to gain the maximum amount of coverage within CV's target markets, DPC invited industry, consumer and local media to attend. Prior to and during the parties, journalists were offered the opportunity to speak directly with the artists and company representatives about the gear. Between the two events, DPC and CV hosted a total of 30 members of the press from outlets such as *CE Pro*, *The Deli*, *DJ Times*, *Lighting & Sound America*, *Pro Sound News*, *Pro Audio Asia*, *SonicScoop*, *Sound & Communications* and *XXL*. An additional 15 editors who were unable to attend the events, including those from *AOL Music*, *Church Production*, *The DJ List*, *DJ Worx* and *MIX*, requested information and images from DPC for upcoming issues.

For each event, DPC provided social media support, as members of the team tweeted live and posted photos and videos of the artists and guests, which helped generate real-time buzz. Post-party recaps were also issued, including professional photos and videos, to ensure that any media who were not able to attend had a glimpse of what unfolded.

Immediately following the launch events, DPC aggressively publicized the P-Series through one-on-one press appointments at domestic and international trade shows including the 2013 NAMM Show and Musikmesse/Prolight + Sound 2013. In total, DPC arranged 35 press meetings with CV representatives, during which the P-Series was the primary topic of discussion. At NAMM, CV also hosted live performances on the Gibson stage, which was equipped with P-Series gear. Outlets such as *Disc Jockey News* and *NAMM TV* captured video of the P-Series in action, while *AxVault* conducted an interview with Echosmith that included a video of the band's performance and a testimonial on the quality of sound the P-Series delivered.

To keep up the momentum ignited by the launch parties and tradeshow activity, DPC led aggressive outreach for product reviews, coordinating all ends of the review process, from pitches and follow ups to shipping and returns. As a result, several positive reviews appeared in magazines and online outlets such as *CrossFader*, *Digital DJ Tips*, *DJ Booth*, *Electronic Musician*, *Live Sound*, *Mobile Beat*, *MONDO*, *Music Connection* and *Sound on Sound*.

Since its launch, the P-Series has gained traction throughout the world as it continues to grow its customer base. DPC wrapped up the campaign with press announcements focused on user testimonials. The first of these included Cake Shop Music Venue in New York, and AMPLYFi Music and Fonogenics Studio in California. As the gear is sold through major retailers, such as Amazon and Best Buy, additional customers are coming to fruition and DPC continues to support the P-Series through testimonials and additional PR tactics.

Results

Through DPC's aggressive efforts, the P-Series PA System has quickly become known throughout the world as an alternative solution to its competitors' offerings. Thanks to DPC and CV's launch strategy, P-Series was covered in 54 percent of Cerwin-Vega!'s top-tier domestic and international publications and websites. In addition, the P-Series received 15 reviews and was featured in five different product spotlight videos.

