

newsbites

USA Former Rock-it-Cargo president and COO Doug Masterson has joined Shockwave Cargo as managing partner, in a bid to strengthen the company's strategic alliances within the global logistics community. Masterson has a range of business interests including being production director for the 2007 show Jack FM, featuring ZZ Top, The Pretenders and The Stray Cats.

UK Professional audio brands Midas and Klark Teknik have been sold by Bosch Communications Systems to The Music Group, parent company of the global audio manufacturer Behringer. The sale follows Bosch's decision that the brands were no longer part of its core activity. MD John Oakley will continue to head up the operation, while existing distribution arrangements remain unchanged.

Red Sea safety challenge for TAO

EGYPT The organisers of Beyoncé's 10,000-capacity show at Egypt's Red Sea resort Port Ghalib called in UK-based event specialist TAO to ensure production safety, as many of the local contractors were involved in such a large production for the first time.

Organised by resort owner the Kharafi Group and producer Ahmed Beltagy, the show was working to an initial production brief supplied by Jack Morton Entertainment (JME), which was not contracted to be involved in the build.

So, to ensure safe practice throughout, Creative Entertainment Group's CEO Peter

Brightman, who secured Beyoncé for Beltagy, asked TAO's Andy Cotton to verify safety procedures.

"We arrived 21 days before the show and started to make the arena and production suitable for a world class concert," says Cotton. JME, who had not been involved with the initial build, also sent its own team.

"As I understand it, Jack Morton heard nothing further from the organisers before the start of the build and it's a testament to their professionalism that they sent their own people," explains Cotton.

TAO first worked on the safety of the stage, which was newly-purchased by Egyptian production company Golden Show from the manufacturer Eurotruss.

The structure required



a 7.5 ton touring video wall to be flown from its rear arch and Cotton worked with a number of colleagues including Henk Tiekstra, Eurotruss's structural director, to provide a solution which satisfied Beyoncé's team.

Cotton also helped make safe a 2,500-capacity VIP seating grandstand, erected in the initial build which, he says, "Looked like it would collapse in a bad wind."

The TAO team, which included Darren Wring and Nick Evans, also solved a number of other site design and structural safety issues and trained the Egyptian front-of-stage security team, who had never worked in that position before.



Andy Cotton (left) during the build