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July 2008 — For Immediate Release

## **RICCIONE'S PALAZZO A TRIUMPH FOR SOUNDWEB™ AND ALTER ECHO**

*Riccione, Italy ...* Situated on Italy's Adriatic coast, Riccione has been traditionally known as a tourist resort and haven for nightclubs rather than as a hub for conventions and cultural events. However, the 'Green Pearl of the Adriatic', as it is known, has just opened an architecturally-breathtaking, €32-€33 million congress centre comprising 116,000m<sup>3</sup> of glass and steel construction.

Built on the site of a former cinema, the aim of the Pala Riccione (or the Palazzo dei Congressi di Riccione to give it its full name) is to become one of the major conference venues in Italy and Europe — thanks to a progressive audio visual infrastructure, masterminded by Rimini-based installation company Alter Echo, which chose a BSS Audio Soundweb London solution.

The Pala Riccione extends over a number of floors and includes six digital cinemas (on Level 2), and a number of reconfigurable conference rooms on Levels 3 and 4, providing an overall capacity of 2,500 people.

The largest of these is the Concordia Room (the 'Great Hall'), a multi-function 1,800 sq metre space which can operate as a 1,400-seat (theatre style) auditorium, or be split into four other scenarios with the aid of wall dividers for mixed concept exhibitions and catering.

Upstairs, smaller rooms — named the Polissena (seating 680), Ginevra, Violante and Costanza (each seating 100) can likewise be reconfigured and combined into larger facilities.

Venture further up to the roof terrace, and the 'Riccione City Eye' offers catering and conference opportunities, with breathtaking rooftop views over the coast.

Working closely with architects and acousticians Studio Anselmi, Gandolfi, Passarelli, in conjunction with Poltrona Frau, which supplied all the furnishing, Alter Echo specified an all Harman Pro sound solution.

Poltrona Frau has delivered a world's first by installing 1,400 'motorised' armchairs with a special mechanical design by Generale Impiante; this allows all seating to 'disappear' beneath the floor — changing the venue into an empty 1,800 sq metre space in less than five minutes.

Alter Echo matched this impressive feat with the data network.

Having worked previously for the Commune of Riccione (and been recommended by Studio Pasarelli) they tendered successfully for the multimedia contract and immediately set about designing a CobraNet™ infrastructure.



Alter Echo's Atos Dellapasqua and his project team were supported by Harman Pro's Italian distributor, Audio Equipment with the advantage that the distributor's local sales rep Fabio Deambrogio, also works at the venue.

Soundweb London programming support was provided by Audio Equipment's Moreno Zampieri. With HiQnet™ software set up on their laptop it will be possible for Alter Echo to run system health checks (with fault reporting) from their offices in Rimini.

The central rack is located in the technical room above the Concordia and feeds six local racks. "The system is based on CobraNet and analogue feeds and is fully redundant," says Atos. "There are primary and secondary systems so if we have a problem with CobraNet we can switch to analogue instantaneously."

The network is all under BSS Audio Soundweb London control. The matrix comprises five BLU-80 (four 12 in/4 out analogue, one 8 in/8 out analogue), and three BLU-16 (12 in/4 out analogue). There are further BLU-80 devices receiving the signals in the local racks and seven BLU-10 programmable wall controllers for local source select and volume control, distributed around the venue.

Alter Echo has used HP ProCurve 2510-24 switches to manage the networks by running gigabit fibre between the rack locations, with an extension for 1GHz transfer rate.

The main room PA comprises a JBL VRX 932LA system, four enclosures per side in L/R hangs, along with a VRX 928LA ceiling monitor. The system is equalised and delayed in Soundweb (the delay is applied when Concordia A is open to its full extent). These are supported by three JBL AM4212/95 90° x 50° with rotatable horn — which activates when Concordia A & B operate independently. The system is powered by Crown CTs 3000, 2000 and 600 amplifiers, fitted with PIP USP3 CobraNet cards.

Alter Echo has also provided a Soundcraft GB4 analogue mixer, integrated within the Soundweb environment, with separate mic and amp distribution.

Elsewhere in the complex, sound is reinforced through JBL Control 26C 70V line speakers.

Set up in 1973 by Arnaldo Ciavatta and Flavio Migani, Alter Echo's confidence in specifying the Harman Pro equipment is based on its experience in its primary role — as a rental company (running JBL VRX and Soundcraft MH4 consoles).

Summing up, Atos says, "We are very happy with the sound quality we have achieved. We received a highly favourable reaction on checking the system for the first show. In fact we didn't need to introduce any EQ — it was very linear and the sound engineer was delighted with the sound."

Meanwhile, the Adriatic is certainly developing an appetite for major building work — the Commune of Rimini, situated a few kilometres north of Riccione, is shortly to follow the example by building and even larger convention centre.

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***Pics attached***