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Research Highlights Value of In-Person Events in AV Industry

With a degree of optimism, ISE, AVIXA and CEDIA look forward to the return of industry events next year, as market research finds that AV professionals are eager to attend face-to-face events in 2021.

MUNICH, 22 DECEMBER 2020: During October, Integrated Systems Europe commissioned research, targeting AV professionals to evaluate visitor appetites for conferences and events following COVID-19. The research, completed before news of a COVID-19 vaccine, was carried out by Fusion-Insight to gauge interest in face-to-face, digital and hybrid event formats. The results show that 98% of the audience missed attending in-person AV industry events.

ISE was forced to postpone its Barcelona debut in February 2021 due to the global pandemic. In the absence of in-person events, there has been a sharp rise in digital events to fulfil education, networking, and profiling agendas. Indeed, ISE launched its own series of digital events called RISE Spotlight, which has been welcomed by the industry. Virtual events are useful for lead generation, deepening customer relationships and building brand profile but live experiences such as touching, seeing and hearing AV products, are yet to be replicated.

ISE wanted to explore the general feeling towards face-to-face events in 2021. The research consisted of a web-based survey sent to ISE’s database and a collection of in-depth interviews with ISE exhibitors. Over 7001 people from 96 countries2 responded to the survey with 95% having attended ISE before (60% in February 2020).

Key Findings
The research and the results overwhelmingly endorse a return to in-person as soon as it is safe and practical to do so. Findings show that 98% of the research audience missed attending events, with 42% of these missing meeting and networking with people the most, 32% missing the live experience of products, and 21% missing the direct exchange with suppliers and customers.

1 711 completed responses analysed and used within the research by Fusion Insight and Strategy
2 71% of respondents were based in Europe, 13% North America, 8% Asia, 5% Middle-East, 1% Central and South America, 1% Australia and New Zealand, 1% Africa
Almost 70% of the audience is ready to attend in-person trade shows and 57% would be ready to visit international ones. Given that this research was conducted before news of a vaccine, it shows a desire to get back out to physical events again.

Mike Blackman, Managing Director of Integrated Systems Events explains: “We felt it very important to listen to our industry in shaping our offering for 2021 and so we commissioned independent market research specialists to conduct this intelligence project for us. The results clearly demonstrate that, for an industry at the cutting edge of immersive technologies, there is no substitute to the touch-see-hear experiences that are at the heart of the AV industry and shows such as ISE. We are working very hard towards the goal of ISE2021 in Barcelona in June next year and it is reassuring to confirm that strong demand is there too.”

“The annual calendar of trade shows provides a rhythm and cadence to our ever-changing and advancing industry,” said David Labuskes, CTS, CAE, RCDD, CEO of AVIXA. “As individuals move in and out of roles within the industry, these shows have always provided a touchpoint that allows us to reconnect with the people we do business with. I am certain that all of our past and future attendees are anxious to meet again in person soon, and the research reinforces that emotion. The incalculable value of ISE to the exhibitors as a platform for engagement and thought leadership and to the attendees as a community from which to learn and grow compels us to do everything in our power to ensure that there will be a safe return of ISE in 2021 and an exciting debut in Barcelona.”

Giles Sutton, Co-CEO of CEDIA adds: “In our industry, the experience is everything. Home technology products need to be touched, seen and heard if integrators are to recommend and specify them on projects for their customers. More than that, our industry is a community that benefits from meeting, talking and build relationships with others as well as the opportunity to learn from experts at in-person training. These are all massively important factors for professional integrators who want to grow their knowledge and continue to do good business. That’s why we support the safe return of the ISE event in June 2021.”

As well as the independent market research study, ISE also spoke to key exhibitors who also confirmed their desire to return to in-person activities:

Peter Pauwels, Vice President Sales EMEA, Barco NV said: “Together with you, the AV partner community, we make the choice to look forward, not backwards. The new normal will be hybrid, but for real connection we need to meet in person and ISE Barcelona is a great place to meet up.”

Michelle Downey, Harman Marketing Director, EMEA comments: “2020 has been an uncertain year for our industry and we look forward to returning to some kind of normality for 2021. We are excited to attend ISE and have the opportunity to meet our customers face-to-face again.”

Eva Claudi of Lang-Iberia comments: “Our industry is one of the largest economic sectors. In addition to commercial events, events in the business environment are essential for the success of the economy. Only in an emotional, experience-oriented environment we can succeed in developing and fostering customer relationships through face-to-face communication. Positive emotional experiences, through the use of AV technology, promote socio-cultural development and also the connection of people of different cultures and
countries. The language of emotion is international. For this experience there is no digital alternative with a similar effect.

Of course, health and safety come first, but an event like ISE is highly professionally organised and well planned, which means that risks can be avoided and protective arrangements can be implemented with the highest precision. We are looking forward to ISE 2021 in Barcelona and we are 100% committed.”

Integrated Systems Europe (ISE) 2021 will take place at the Fira de Barcelona, Gran Vía, on 1-4 June 2021.

For more information please visit: www.iseurope.org and www.thenextweb.com.

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Click here to download high resolution images from ISE 2020 and the ISE logo.
Click here to download high resolution images of the Fira de Barcelona.

About Integrated Systems Events:
Integrated Systems Events organises, manages and develops leading business-to-business events for the professional audiovisual, electronic systems integration and IT industries. Integrated Systems Events is a joint venture of the AVIXA and CEDIA trade associations. Its flagship event, Integrated Systems Europe, is the best-attended AV trade show anywhere in the world. After many successful years in Amsterdam, ISE is moving to the more spacious Fira de Barcelona in June 2021. Integrated Systems Events produces conferences that take place at Integrated Systems Europe and elsewhere, bringing together thought leaders and experts from around the world. These events include the Smart Building Conference, the Digital Signage Summit conference series (produced in association with invidis consulting), Integrated Systems Russia (produced in association with MidExpo), XR Summit (covering virtual, augmented and mixed reality), Digital Cinema Summit (in association with Digital Cinema Report), Hospitality Tech Summit (in association with HTNG) and the Control Rooms Summit (in association with ICCRA). Visit www.isevents.org.

About AVIXA™:
AVIXA is the Audiovisual and Integrated Experience Association, producer of InfoComm trade shows around the world, co-owner of Integrated Systems Europe, and the international trade association representing the audiovisual industry. Established in 1939, AVIXA has more than 11,400 enterprise and individual members, including manufacturers, systems integrators, dealers and distributors, consultants, programmers, live events companies, technology managers, content producers, and multimedia professionals from more than 80 countries. AVIXA members create integrated AV experiences that deliver outcomes for end users. AVIXA is a hub for professional collaboration, information, and
community, and is the leading resource for AV standards, certification, training, market intelligence, and thought leadership. Visit avixa.org

About CEDIA®:
CEDIA is the global trade association and central touch point for companies that design, manufacture, and integrate technology for the home. With a keen focus on education, workforce development, and industry standards, CEDIA continues to build on its more than 30-year legacy as the industry leader in delivering the resources that set members on a pathway to prosperity. CEDIA delivers market intelligence through proprietary research, fosters community within the channel, and cultivates awareness with industry partners, consumers, and connected stakeholders. CEDIA co-owns Integrated Systems Europe, the world’s largest AV and systems integration exhibition, and founded CEDIA Expo, the world’s largest annual residential technology show. Over 3,900 global CEDIA member companies deliver technology solutions that allow families to experience the best moments in life from the comfort of their own home – Life Lived Best at Home. To learn more about CEDIA, visit www.cedia.net.