

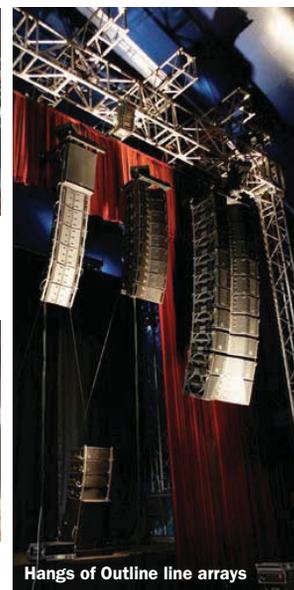
During the demonstrations



The Cadac equipped front of house area



Italian wine Outline style



Hangs of Outline line arrays

# The Italian job

Outline and Cadac recently joined forces, inviting distributors and end-users to a special event in Brescia, Italy. **Tim Goodyer** reports

## MARKING 40 YEARS IN BUSINESS

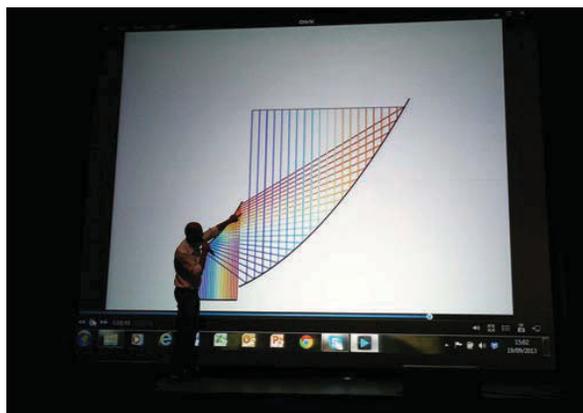
but looking forward more than back, Outline recently invited a select number of distributors and end-users to its home in Italy. Intriguingly, the invitation came not only from Outline, but was co-signed by Cadac – having a similarly long history and also newly focused on the future.

As principal hosts, Outline co-founder Giorgio Biffi and sales director Chris Hinds spoke freely about the company's heritage, products, plans and frustrations. Similarly, the powerful pairing of Richard Ferriday and James Godbehear had plenty to say about Cadac's own achievements.

The kit was rigged, the audience arrived from across Europe, Scandinavia, the Middle East and Asia, and the gloves were off.

The location was the Pala Banco di Brescia, close to Outline's HQ and an ideal venue for Outline to rig its GTO C-12, Mantas and Mini-Compass line array systems, and for Cadac to set up its CDC Eight digital console to emulate concert conditions. In addition, there was abundant space for a further (and larger) CDC Eight, along with several CDC Four and Live 1 consoles for demonstration and discussion in an adjacent room – with a live multi-track recording for hands-on mixing on a CDC Four.

The event represented a logical move from one held earlier, and running a 'rolling' programme over four days allowed guests to step in and out at their convenience without missing any of the demos or sessions.



Demonstrating waveguides

'We took on The Audio Specialists as distributor for Benelux and, by way of introduction, Axel [Nagtegaal, owner] wanted to arrange a demonstration day,' Chris Hinds explains. 'Axel had just opened an office in Germany and we thought about opening it up to include France and the UK to introduce the products there. I realised that we shared distribution with Cadac in those territories as well, and we obviously needed a console so I got in touch with Ben [Millson, international sales manager] at Cadac. He was looking to do something similar.'

'I said we had a blueprint so join us in Brescia – the costs will be shared. We're very lucky, we're based in Italy and it's a nice draw – the food, the people and the wine, sprinkled with a few sound systems seems to lure people down.'

'Our brands address similar

market sectors,' offers Cadac brand development manager, Richard Ferriday. 'Neither of us can claim to be market leaders, but we both make very good products and we are both looking to increase our presence in the market. Those parallels have pulled us together.'

'There are also parallels between Outline and Cadac as brands, in that Outline has a lot of history behind it but there are people who consider it to be a new player. Similarly, Cadac has been around a very long time but some people have been unaware of it – or have not believed it was a brand that they might be interested in. Part of the aim of this event is to change that perception.'

'Our perception was that people knew the Outline brand – because it's 40 years old – but not the product,' Mr Hinds agrees.

Both sides reported the

collaboration to be valuable: 'Obviously, Outline wants everybody to pay attention to its speakers and we want everybody to look at our consoles, but there hasn't been any friction,' Mr Ferriday says.

'It seems to have flowed very nicely,' confirms Mr Hinds. 'People gravitate to the company that they have come to see, and the other company gains exposure to those customers. It's been pretty seamless.'

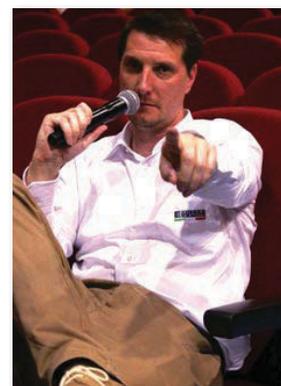
So why organise a dedicated event rather than exhibit at a trade show? 'A trade show has a different focus – it's a shop window,' explains Cadac brand marketing manager, James Godbehear. 'But when you turn up and plonk a load of gear on a stand, you might not get the response you want.'

'It's another tool; it's not a trade show,' says Mr Ferriday. 'We don't have the opportunity to reach hundreds of people or people we don't know, but the guys here are here to look at consoles and listen to speaker systems. The fact that Outline or Cadac has invited them means that they are serious, professional people. They are decision makers; they are opinion changers. This is just the kind of focused event that will enable us to get people talking about our products.'

'This industry has grown up; PA companies are now businesses,' Mr Hinds observes. 'The manufacturers have to grow up too. I think that dedicated events are the way forward. Local trade shows are the responsibility of the distributor, but we will keep doing the major

international trade shows like Frankfurt – and we want to do more of these.'

'There are people here who have come to look at Outline products and will see stuff they didn't expect to see,' says Mr Ferriday. 'We've already had a number of people tell us that they didn't realise some of the things our products will do or that the company does. That's what trade shows are good at, so there is still that element.'



Outline's Chris Hinds makes a point

'I could see us doing further events like this in other parts of the world,' he adds. 'I could also see us doing this in conjunction with other manufacturers, if we can find people to work with as well as we're able to work with Outline.'

[www.outlinearray.com](http://www.outlinearray.com)  
[www.cadac-sound.com](http://www.cadac-sound.com)