

Success Story

 Allied Telesis™

# IT in Extreme Conditions: EventNet Provides High-Quality Networks for Touring Concerts and Events

Allied Telesis helps EventNet Systems take superior networks on the road

the **solution** : the **network**



# High tech events

## EventNet Systems

Well-planned logistics are essential to the success of a good concert tour. Sound gear, stage equipment, instruments, wardrobe, and lighting need to turn up in place, on time, every time. The staff has to be ready for rehearsals and the main show. At the end of the night, everything needs to be packed down quickly, loaded into trucks and sent on its way to the next venue. Accuracy, precision, and timing are crucial.

In 2005, recognizing the new challenges facing the entertainment industry, Michael Devitt, Director of IT services company, Devtech Technologies, set up a sister company specializing in event technology support. Known as EventNet Systems Pty Ltd, it has become one of Australia's leading IT infrastructure suppliers for concert tours and corporate events.

EventNet Systems has become a cornerstone of concert tour logistics, with the Company providing IP networking and IT services to some of the biggest summer music festivals in Australia.

Tailored network services, including high quality Internet access, have become a "must have" at every venue, stadium, or farm. Before a touring band arrives, the network is set up, tested and made operational. In the past, only band management carried laptops; today all members of the tour are likely to travel with a smartphone and a laptop or tablet. Touring groups rely on the Internet to check upcoming venue or production details, confirm accommodation and travel arrangements, and check ticket sales. Applications such as Skype are used to keep in touch with family and friends during long months on the road. In the last few years, the number of devices expected to connect to a venue network has grown by 75%, and bandwidth demands keep on growing.

Depending on the nature and location of the festival or event, the EventNet Systems network may be required to support ADSL, Closed Circuit Television (CCTV), Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) scanning for the gates, live broadcast links, or EFTPOS (electronic funds transfer at point of sale) applications, in addition to providing Internet connectivity to touring groups' devices.



# Business opportunity

EventNet Systems can arrive at a park, field, or stadium and roll out a mission-critical class IP network within hours.

In recent years, Devitt's team has provided the network and IT services for entertainers such as Robbie Williams, U2, The Police, Elton John, and Taylor Swift just to name a few. His office is filled with backstage passes that some fans would give an arm and a leg for.

EventNet Systems has managed events as diverse as the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), the Perth Royal Show, the Red Bull Air Race, Ironman, and many others. Devitt has more than 20 years of experience in the entertainment industry, with expertise in lighting, sound and stage management.

At a recent AC/DC concert, EventNet Systems created a network that connected more than 300 devices, which downloaded 120 Gigabytes of data in a single day, over ADSL.

"We achieved 100% uptime, and the set up didn't involve the venue's IT infrastructure," Devitt smiled.

"If you look at Southbound, a two-day music festival and one of our biggest events in regards to infrastructure requirements, we literally build a small suburb's copper network. We bring in city services to a farm in the middle of a southwest town and provide an A-class DSL service. Connected to this are the offices with phones, printers, etc. Among other things, the same network supports CCTV, EFTPOS and radio broadcast services for a localized radio station."

Michael Devitt

Director of IT, Devtech Technologies



# Tough equipment

“Typically, at every show we use an Allied Telesis AT-9924T Gigabit Ethernet Layer 3 switch at the core, which is responsible for managing the network. This is our most critical piece of infrastructure because if we lose it, we lose the network and our credibility. We do have backup procedures, but we’ve never had to implement them—not that we have shot one, but they are almost bullet proof. We have about eight of these switches on the road or in the warehouse at any one time.”

Michael Devitt

Director of IT, Devtech Technologies

To ensure that Eventnet Systems is ready for any occasion, the Company maintains an inventory of network equipment, valued in excess of \$150,000. It is predominately Allied Telesis equipment—including all routers, Layer 3 switches, and media converters.

EventNet Systems also owns more than a dozen 8600 Series Fast Ethernet Layer 3 switches, which are used to provide PoE power to VoIP phones and devices such as high definition IP cameras. There is a collection of 708 PoE unmanaged switches, and more than 30 AT-AR440 ADSL routers that provide Internet connectivity load balancing over multiple services. Allied Telesis iMAP™ (integrated Multiservice Access Platform) products: iMAP 7101, 7101 and 9100 feature more than 20 SFP fiber modules with matching media converters.

One of Devitt’s favourite products is the Allied Telesis AT-MC605 media converter, which transforms existing analog phone-grade wiring into IP-ready cabling. “We keep about eight pairs of these in stock and use them in last-mile scenarios. They are used where we need very high bandwidth over standard copper wire and can provide 80MB bandwidth in both directions. Not many people are aware of them, but the speed you get out of these devices is fantastic. Australian National Broadband Network, beware! They are one of the most golden products on the market for networking,” he explains. “You can pop a set in your carry-on baggage and feel safe that no matter how bad the copper network is, there is a good chance you can run HD video over a single copper pair.”





# Superior service

Set up time for a network varies according to venue requirements. Some shows will need to be up and running in less than eight hours, while others may be given up to a week. Deployment is divided into two stages: during the initial set up, the infrastructure is rolled out, connections are tested and the network goes online. Next, the devices are added—it could be cameras, EFTPOS, or an office with a printer, VoIP phones and PCs.

Within hours of the show ending, the network is pulled out, packed into road cases, and pushed onto trucks, ready to be sent to the next location. If distances between venues are too great, there may be two complete separate network systems on the road, leapfrogging each other from venue to venue.

Right from the start, EventNet Systems standardized on Allied Telesis products wherever possible. Devitt says he shopped around a number of networking vendors but found many were prohibitively expensive—or too scared to take on the challenge. “We were impressed with the service that Allied Telesis offered and, because of the quality of their equipment and support, it became a given that we would exclusively run with their products in the long term.”

Devitt believes his faith has been well placed. “The Allied Telesis gear never misses a beat. We’ve never had major problems with any of their products, and even the original equipment we purchased is still working on the road. The moment we have even an inkling of a problem, we can contact Allied Telesis and they give us 100% support.” He cites the example of a recent Melbourne concert where an Allied Telesis support staff team member arrived within 15 minutes of his call. “It was one of their top guys, too.”

Despite the stress of constant travel and working in time-critical environments, Devitt obviously thrives on his work. He understands technology and enjoys seeing a project come to life. He also revels in the entertainment industry. “It has its highly stressful moments, but it’s very addictive. I’ve been able to meet some really great artists—some have even signed our networking equipment. Anyone you know have a router signed by Coldplay? Once the industry gets into your blood, you won’t leave it,” he concludes.

“It’s IT in the extreme. We push the living daylights out of our networking equipment. Whenever it is taken on the road, it gets full of dust and dirt. We know we push the equipment beyond anything it was designed to do and we do this in critical environments. It can be heart breaking to see one of the road cases full of equipment fall off the back of a truck; you almost cry when you see the hole in the case. I can’t explain the relief you feel, when you plug it in and it still works. You’ve got to love Allied Telesis equipment! You almost want to hug it.”

Michael Devitt

Director of IT, Devtech Technologies

## About Allied Telesis, Inc.

Founded in Japan in 1987 and with offices worldwide, Allied Telesis is a leading provider of networking infrastructure and flexible, interoperable network solutions.

The company provides reliable video, voice and data network solutions to clients in multiple markets including government, healthcare, defense, education, retail, hospitality and network service providers.

Allied Telesis is committed to innovating the way in which services and applications are delivered and managed, resulting in increased value and lower operating costs.

Visit us online at [alliedtelesis.com](http://alliedtelesis.com)



the solution : the network

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