

VOICE COIL

THE PERIODICAL FOR THE LOUDSPEAKER INDUSTRY

Spotlight

Loudspeaker Sourcing Show 2017

By Rob Baum (Pacific Audio Consulting)

The third annual Loudspeaker Sourcing Show (www.loudspeakersourcingshow.com) was once again held in Guangzhou, China, which is about an hour by ferry from Hong Kong. The show was hosted by Philip Richardson (see **Photo 1**), owner of Trueanalog Strictly OEM (www.trueanalog.com), and his wife Mandy Tseng (see **Photo 2**) of ZengBen (www.zengben.com).



Photo 1: Co-host Philip Richardson of TrueAnalog Strictly OEM



Photo 2: Co-Host Mandy Tseng of ZengBen

The couple created the Loudspeaker Sourcing Show to connect qualified and vetted loudspeaker component, driver, and system manufacturers directly with loudspeaker engineers, purchasing heads, and brands. This is a focused engineering/purchasing event where the attendees meet directly with manufacturers for details and costing at the show.

How It Began

Richardson's company, which he opened in 2009 on the ZengBen campus, is a Tier 1 manufacturer of finished speaker systems for many of the world's top brands—exclusively OEM high-quality drivers and speaker systems (passive or powered). ZengBen Industrial is a first-tier manufacturer of T-yokes, top plates, and U-yokes for many of the world's top loudspeaker driver name brands. ZengBen is the largest supplier of steel to the speaker industry.

Over the years, Richardson found that one of the biggest challenges for brands looking for manufacturing or development partners is actually identifying qualified suppliers. If there is any doubt, walk the huge HK Electronics Faire and attempt to sort through many suppliers in any product category from kitchen appliances to A/V products (e.g., there were more than 100 headphone suppliers at the last show, most of them not very good).



Photo 3: The Loudspeaker Sourcing Show brings together suppliers who build quality components for speaker drivers and turnkey speaker systems.



Photo 4: Here attendees have a chance to meet directly with representatives from Dr. Kurt Mueller.

While conducting production tasks, Richardson conceived of the idea for a sourcing show that caters to the loudspeaker industry. He said he has “spent years searching, cultivating, and investing in different cabinet suppliers, aluminum frame suppliers, crossover guys.” And when he had a project requiring a plate amplifier from an amplifier factory that does not make or source completed systems, Richardson decided it was senseless to create his own competition. So he thought it would be great to have a show just for loudspeaker companies to source components and products necessary to complete a system. He asked around to see if a show like that existed and the answer was the same: no.” So he created the Loudspeaker Sourcing Show.

The Loudspeaker Sourcing Show Three Years Later

Three years later, in 2017, show attendance has continued to grow. The exhibitors provide OEM/ODM services in the manufacturing of loudspeakers and



Photo 5: Rob Gault of Eminence presented one of several industry-related lectures.

related products and components (see **Photo 3**). The Loudspeaker Sourcing Show is open to all markets that deal with loudspeakers—including consumer, high-end two-channel, home theater, audiophile, contractor A/V, mobile, musical instrument and professional. At the 2017 Loudspeaker Sourcing Show, there were three AMT manufacturers, as well as Eminence (www.eminence.com) and Dr. Kurt Mueller (see **Photo 4**, www.kurtmueller.com). This year there were five cone and dome suppliers, three voice coil suppliers, and three cabinet suppliers. NTi Audio (www.nti-audio.com) and KLIPPEL (www.klippel.de) had booths, as did three magnet companies and three frame suppliers.

For 2017, the Loudspeaker Sourcing Show was strategically timed to take place in October, between two major shows. It occurred after the October Hong Kong Electronics Faire (<http://m.hktdc.com/fair/hkelectronicfairae-en/HKTDC-Hong-Kong-Electronics-Fair-Autumn-Edition.html>) at the HK Convention and Exhibition Centre, Wan Chai, Hong Kong Island, and before the October Global Sources Mobile Electronic Show (<http://www.globalsources.com>), at the HK Asia World Expo, on Lantau Island. The Global Sources shows are the easiest to attend in Hong Kong—just get off the plane and stay at the Regal Airport Hotel.

For those thinking of attending next year’s Loudspeaker Sourcing Show, you can take a high-speed ferry from Kowloon, Hong Kong to a ferry port that is about a five-minute walk from the Nansha Grand Hotel. The border crossing into China is at the ferry terminal. The Loudspeaker Sourcing Show is the probably the easiest trade event to attend inside China.

The Loudspeaker Sourcing Show is specifically designed for the loudspeaker industry, bringing



Photo 6: Attendees can meet one-on-one with suppliers.



Photo 7: Small booths hold down exhibitor expenses and complexity, forcing them to focus on what is most important to potential customers, in this case voice coils.

together suppliers who are good at building components for speaker drivers and turnkey speaker systems. Attendees represent brands that buy from these suppliers or are looking for loudspeaker component suppliers or turnkey system suppliers. There are no video or lighting suppliers—the focus is on loudspeaker-related components, drivers, systems, and related parts.

In 2017, the event also featured a series of industry-related lectures (see **Photo 5**). On the show floor, there were more than 40 table-top-sized booths, allowing for immediate access to exhibitors' staff without walking around huge booths and halls (see **Photo 6**). Small booths hold down exhibitor expenses and complexity, forcing them to focus on what is most important to potential customers (see **Photo 7**).

All booths have the same compact dimensions and fit into one large ballroom in a single hotel. The show can be walked in a day but many people prefer to spend two days due to the quality and variety of suppliers. Exhibitors were also able to use their hotel suites for live demos.



Photo 8: Rob Baum represented the Audio Engineering Society at the 2017 Loudspeaker Sourcing Show.

Exhibiting factories came from Germany, Switzerland, the US, Taiwan, and China as well as from other Asian countries, and they were selling everything from transducers to die casting, powder coating, tooling, CNC machining, plating, voice coils, cones, speaker baskets, spiders/dampers, chassis parts, cabinets, and cabinet shops, whole systems, packaging, and logistics (shipping).

There were more than 400 attendees from 10 countries. In 2017, the Audio Engineering Society (AES) also had a booth at the show (see **Photo 8**, www.AES.org), which attracted attention from the attendees who were members, or interested in becoming members, of AES sections in China. The free raffle for nice prizes (e.g., an Omni-Mic) was generously sponsored by Parts Express, Skull Candy, Smith Optics, and more.

Planning Ahead for 2018

The 2018 Loudspeaker Sourcing Show will be held in October in the Nansha Grand Hotel, Nansha, China. Make your reservations early, and remember to get a Chinese visa for your passport. Ten-year visas are now available. Visit www.loudspeakersourcingshow.com for more information. **VC**



Part of the Loudspeaker Industry?

Designed to help you locate the resources that are essential to loudspeaker manufacturing operations, the *Loudspeaker Industry Sourcebook* keeps you informed and connected with the companies making it happen.

Don't miss out! Sign up for your FREE listing!

www.loudspeakerindustrysourcebook.com