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CUSTOMER STORY

UK-based Pytch Launches The Virtual Venue with Analog Way Ascender 48 Driving Massive LED Videowall Backdrop

Bristol, England-based Pytch (formerly known as SXS Events) has launched The Virtual Venue to serve clients' communications needs as the industry moves from staging live events to live streaming during the coronavirus pandemic and into the future. In the powerfully-equipped Virtual Venue Analog Way's Ascender 48 multi-output seamless switcher and videowall processor drives content on a massive 3.9mm LED videowall backdrop.

Pytch is well known for staging large-scale brand events, including launches and sales conferences for fortune 500 companies. It transformed one of its warehouses into The Virtual Venue, a combination of a top-tier event space and a TV studio. In its first month it produced live streams for a planetarium show, feature films, corporate training sessions and music performances.

Pytch Founder and Managing Director Johnny Palmer, says The Virtual Venue offers clients “total flexibility” and “resources that allow for maximum creative output.” The space is equipped with a huge LED videowall backdrop that “pushes toward 4K,” tungsten TV and moving light rigs, audio with Dante routing, and a large vision mix camera rig.

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“Rather than treat the LED videowall display as a video screen we see it as a giant digital canvas that we can throw anything on,” says Palmer. “The Ascender 48 takes all the inputs from the media server, playback machines, PowerPoint and Zoom machines and spits them out with chromakeys, PIPs, overlays, and stretched and amorphic elements. Our ATEM switchers are used for camera mixing and outputs on the live screen while the Ascender handles the backdrop screen.”

He explains that The Virtual Venue also uses the Ascender as a matrix to feed confidence monitors and green room monitors. “The Ascender is the hub of absolutely everything,” says Palmer.

The Ascender has “been fantastic” at performing both of those roles, he notes. “There’s no need to scratch our heads trying to figure out how to route things. We acquired the Ascender because of our relationship to Analog Way where we have direct access to their engineers. If we can’t speak directly to the people who make the gear, we don’t buy it,” Palmer says.

“The Ascender gives us the flexibility we need to deliver on a high level, to handle very demanding projects with a short lead time and a huge number of last-minute changes.”

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Using the Ascender to help build out The Virtual Venue has enabled Pytch’s staff to come off pandemic furlough and back to work, Palmer points out. “We will survive this.”

Palmer believes virtual events are here to stay even in a post-coronavirus world. “Traditionally, for live events you’re either there or you’re not. They narrow the audience and exclude those who are not physically able or can’t afford to attend. Live streamed virtual events, on the other hand, offer bigger audiences, more access, more entry points and a lower cost of production.

“Analog Way will be critical to those events,” he declares. “We need equipment that will allow us to deliver really rich experiences that excite and engage the audience. Analog Way will help us deliver top-tier, TV-level productions.”

[Discover The Virtual Venue](#)

About Analog Way

Analog Way is a world-leading designer and manufacturer of innovative equipment dedicated to the professional audiovisual industry. The company’s portfolio includes a wide range of award-winning multi-screen presentation systems, media servers, event controllers and multi-format converters, designed to deliver uncompromising video presentation experiences to high-end staging and premium system integration. For 30 years, Analog Way has provided advanced processing technologies, which accommodate a large range of applications, from massive video wall installations to large corporate events worldwide.

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