

Sennheiser at the 2014 ECHO Awards: glamour gala with record viewing figures

Berlin, 7 May 2014 – On 27 March, the 23rd ECHO Awards Ceremony was held in Berlin. Presented by the Deutsche Phono-Akademie (German Association of Recording Companies), they are considered to be one of the most important music awards in the world and honour the most successful national and



international stars from the past year. German broadcaster ARD broadcast the awards ceremony live from the Messe Berlin exhibition centre during its prime time slot. Artists including Kylie Minogue and Shakira and host Helene Fischer used microphones from the

Sennheiser product portfolio throughout the evening. Both wireless and wired solutions from the audio specialist ensured excellent sound quality for the audience in the exhibition hall, and for more than four million TV viewers.

For her performance, Kylie Minogue used a Sennheiser SKM 5200 handheld transmitter, while Shakira's management had requested two SKM 5200s with Neumann KK 105 capsules. Wired Sennheiser microphones were used both by artists – such as the five e 935s used by Peter Maffay and his band – but also on the host's podium, where two ME 36s on goosenecks ensured that speech was heard with perfect clarity.

Presenter and singer Helene Fischer used various customised SKM 2000 handheld transmitters, a model with platinum finish as well as a white and a black model decorated with SWAROVSKI ELEMENTS. German rappers "Die Fantastischen Vier" also used 2000 Series handheld transmitters with special MD 9235 capsules as they attempted to set a new musical record – 25 of their most famous songs performed in just 250 seconds.



The number of wireless channels was particularly impressive: a total of around 200 frequencies were in use for the awards. Performing artists were asked not to bring their own wireless equipment with them so as not to further complicate the already complex frequency situation.



The frequency bands of the Sennheiser equipment were divided into two segments, which were each assigned to an ASA 3000 antenna splitter. This meant that only two pairs of antennas (AD 3700s) had to be mounted in the stage area. Another antenna (A 1031) was operated at the monitoring position backstage in order to supply the technicians working there with the signals.

The wireless monitoring at the ECHO Awards was carried out entirely using products



from the 2000 Series. The SR 2050 IEM transmitters and EK 2000 IEM belt packs transmitted at A band frequencies (516 to 558 MHz) and within the duplex gap (823 – 832 MHz). The monitor transmitters were connected to circularly polarised A 5000-CP helical antennas via AC 3200 active antenna

combiners.

Frequency management

In keeping with tradition, wireless specialist Svenja Dunkel again looked after the frequency coordination at the ECHO Awards. The interference-prone LTE frequencies were completely ruled out of consideration for the set-up. However, ample use was made of the LTE duplex gap (823 to 832 MHz), and above 863 MHz, the production also used two frequencies in the ISM band for the interpreting. "Anyone still using frequencies in the LTE range for audio transmission today in Berlin is putting their hearing at risk," commented Svenja Dunkel. In her work, the wireless expert used a brand-new beta version of the Sennheiser Wireless Systems Manager software, which provided an excellent overview of the ECHO Awards' wireless set-up.

Her many years of experience serve Svenja Dunkel well during the awards as, in spite of intensive preparations, various last-minute changes are always required: artists



sometimes decide rather 'spontaneously' how many wireless channels they require, and the technical riders provided in advance are not always up-to-date or may relate to festival performances. "Actually, it is only during the rehearsals that it becomes clear exactly what is required for the individual acts," Svenja Dunkel pointed out. She therefore has an appropriately large pool of equipment, the components of which can, for

example, also be used to mike any backing vocalists who arrive unexpectedly. As the colour of the microphone is also important, various types of finish are also included within the pool.

The German music scene was represented at ECHO 2014 by Tim Bendzko, Marteria, Peter Maffay, Jan Delay and Elaiza, participants in the 2014 Eurovision Song Contest. Shakira, Kylie Minogue, pop sensation Birdy and James Blunt provided some international flair. This diverse group of performers all shared one thing – excellent sound, both in the venue and on television screens. Pierre Morant, Head of Global Relations at Sennheiser, commented, "The ECHO Awards are definitely one of the highlights in the music industry's events calendar, and we are delighted that we were able to provide our expertise."

Photo captions:

Helene Fischer.jpg: Helene Fischer (centre) opened the 2014 ECHO awards ceremony (photo credit: BVMI/Monique Wüstenhagen)

Mics.jpg: Helene Fischer's customised Sennheiser SKM 2000 handheld transmitters

Peter Maffay.jpg: Five wired Sennheiser e 935s were used by Peter Maffay's band in addition to the wireless channels (photo credit: BVMI/Monique Wüstenhagen)

Beltpacks.jpg: The 2000 Series was used for wireless monitoring – pictured here are the EK 2000 IEM beltpacks

Svenja Dunkel + Tom Haubrich.jpg: Two sound pros: Svenja Dunkel and Tom Haubrich

The Sennheiser Group, with its headquarters in Wedemark near Hanover, Germany, is one of the world's leading manufacturers of microphones, headphones and wireless transmission systems. In 2012 the family company, which was founded in 1945, achieved a turnover of around 584 million euros. Sennheiser employs more than 2,300 people worldwide, and has manufacturing plants in Germany, Ireland and the USA. The company is represented worldwide by subsidiaries in France, Great Britain, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Liechtenstein, Germany, Denmark (Nordic), Russia, Hong Kong, India, Singapore, Japan, China, Australia and New Zealand, Canada, Mexico and the USA, as well as by long-term trading partners in many other countries. Also part of the Sennheiser Group are Georg Neumann GmbH, Berlin (studio microphones and monitor loudspeakers), and the joint venture Sennheiser Communications A/S (headsets for PCs, offices and call centres).

You can find all the latest information on Sennheiser by visiting our website at www.sennheiser.com.

Sennheiser electronic GmbH & Co. KG
Press & PR, Professional Systems
Stephanie Schmidt
Am Labor 1 • 30900 Wedemark • Germany
Tel. +49 (5130) 600 - 275
stephanie.schmidt@sennheiser.com

Sennheiser electronic GmbH & Co. KG
Pierre Morant
Head of Global Relations
Tel. + 33 (0) 966 43 89 87
pierre.morant@sennheiser.com