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## **XTA MAKES SOUND SENSE IN MATTERS OF LIFE AND DEATH**

Watching the six members of Iron Maiden on stage, it's hard to believe that all are swiftly approaching their 50th birthdays (except one, who's already passed the landmark). But appearances bely the facts as one of the world's most successful heavy metal bands continues to record and perform with the vigour of men half their age.

Late 2006 has seen Maiden promoting their latest album *A Matter Of Life And Death*, culminating in a sold out arena tour of Europe and the UK.

Alternating between galloping bombast and subtle acoustic sections, heads-down metal and quiet reflective pieces - all with Bruce Dickinson's infamous 'air raid siren' vocals over the top - accurately reinforcing the band's live sound is a major challenge for any system. But with XTA on board, the band's passionate fans can fully enjoy the diverse range of Maiden's sonic spectrum.

Supplied by ML Executives, the band is touring with an EAW KF760/761 line array, featuring six XTA DP226s, four GQ600 dual 30 band graphic EQs and AudioCore control software.

The PA comprises main left/right arrays with further arrays flown outside each of the main hangs to ensure adequately wide sound coverage. These are complemented by SB1000 subs, KF300 infills and Turbosound TMS-3 ground rows.

FoH engineer Doug Hall has been working with Iron Maiden since the early 1980s. "There are few venues we haven't played multiple times, so the rooms are all pretty predictable in that respect," he says. "We've got one GQ600 on the main drops, another on the hard left/right drops and a third on the TMS-3s, just for tweaks and fine tuning."

The fourth GQ600 is running as twin mono units. "One channel is on Bruce's lead vocals, just to get the gain really up there," Doug continues. "The other is on the KF300s, which we're just running vocals through. But I only ever have to make a couple of tweaks. Mike Hackman voices the rig with AudioCore, he's the line array wizard!"

"One XTA DP226 covers each of the four main PA hangs," adds system tech Hackman. "We're running low mid/high on the KF760s and mid/high on the KF761s, with separate EQ on the front end. We've got the same low band running through all the boxes, which means that on the second input channel we can EQ the 760s and 761s individually.

"Doug runs the subs on a mono aux, so that's run through another DP226, together with the KF300s," Mike continues. "While the last is on the TMS-3s, which are only pushing the sound back 30 feet or so, just to catch the front rows."

Everything is controlled via a wireless PC and AudioCore and Mike is happy to admit his enthusiasm for XTA products, the combination of great sound and ease of use meaning that the EQ and time alignment of the system is both fast and intuitive.

"The combination of the EAW line array, the Lab Gruppen amps, the DP226s and AudioCore works really nicely," he says. "AudioCore is the best software to work with and the 226s are very easy to use, either from the front panel or with the software. If you want to just turn a pot, you can.

"The functions in AudioCore are superb," he continues. "When I'm setting the system up it's really easy to just concentrate on one part of the rig and then copy everything over to the rest of it. That gives me a really good starting point for the rig as a whole. It's great, I love the XTAs. They're easy to work with and they sound really transparent."

"Anything you plug into the DP226s is going to sound better," adds Doug Hall. "And the GQ600s work really well, the high frequency trim is a really nice feature. They work just perfectly."

