

Event Industry of the Year Award

Sponsor: Accio Marquee & Event Company
Winner: Andy Cotton (TAO Productions)



TAO Productions has become increasingly successful. Here Andy Cotton looks back at his busy diary for last year

January & February

The year started quietly with preparing paperwork, lecturing for the Cabinet Office's Safety at Festivals and Massed Gatherings and doing last year's accounts.

March

A drive up to Heathrow; unfortunately not for a plane destined for sunny climes but instead for a hotel for a Deloitte Conference. TAO supplied Production Management, Set, Staging and AV. TAO's Andy Cotton also had a trip into San Remo, Italy to production manage and help long-term friend former Kajagoogoo frontman Limahl with a major television performance for Rai Uno.

April

The year continued into April with launches for Fiat around the country in London, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester and Glasgow with TAO providing safety & licencing management. This month also saw the working relationship with Major Tom Sound continue when Chris Marsh asked TAO Group to undertake tour health & safety and crew welfare for the Michael Ball UK tour 2007.

May

May saw TAO spread their wings with the event management and H&S for the Mayoral Parade for Oxford's Millennium through Oxford city centre, culminating in a professional road race started by the legendary Sir Roger Bannister and featuring TAO Traffic on dynamic road closures and traffic management to safeguard pedestrian and vehicle interaction. TAO's Andy Cotton was fortunate not to have to jog along in the road race as Jon Perry & Ben Price covered that, whilst Andy and Graham Jones looked after the set up for a 5000 capacity concert which featured the world premiere of John Madden's Circus Songs performed by a 300 strong choir

and a 200 piece orchestra.

Following the success of TAO's work on the Michael Ball tour, Chris Marsh employed TAO to look after tour health & safety and crew welfare for the Diana Ross 'I Love You' European tour which included shows in the UK, Ireland, France, Holland & Belgium.

June

June started with an email that just said "Help" referring to the International Indian Film Awards (Bollywood Awards) where TAO was pulled in 10 days prior to the event to cover public protection, H&S and Safety Advisory Group liaison for 8 sites, over 6 cities for the IIFA Awards week 2007. It also included the production management for Shilpa

"The Alan Ball Memorial Cup saw the TAO team manage 22,000 fans, over 100 celebrities and footballers, featuring a diverse range of players from Frank Bruno to Grahame Le Saux, Danny Dyer to Joe Pasquale and John Barnes to Sir Geoff Hurst."

Shetty's Birthday party held in the Victoria Quarter in Leeds where TAO's Andy Cotton rugby tackled a gate crasher moving faster than he has in the last 30 years; Andy was thankful for working with a great team at TAO as they managed to pick up the floundering whale from the pavements of Leeds.

July

July saw the start of TAO's summer season with production management contracts for concerts at Tonbridge Castle, Belton House, Duxford and Weston Park.

On one of the wettest weekends of the year, TAO Group was spread across the country with a three day show in the Duke of Bedford's backyard -





Woburn Abbey, featuring Van Morrison, Marti Pellow, Hayley Westenra, Curtis Stigers and Ronnie Scott's Jazz Band, and three major televised football matches for Sky TV at the partially built Milton Keynes Stadium.

The Alan Ball Memorial Cup saw the TAO team manage 22,000 fans, over 100 celebrities and footballers, featuring a diverse range of players from Frank Bruno to Graham Le Saux, Danny Dyer to Joe Pasquale and John Barnes to Sir Geoff Hurst.

TAO Misc's Jon Perry was also safety manager for The Children's Food Festival which incorporated over 300 stalls and 20,000 visitors over the weekend. He then went on to safety and traffic manage Escot Sounds with artists like The Feeling and The Australian Pink Floyd.

August

The summer continued through August with production management roles at Calke Abbey, Castle Howard and a spectacular audio-visual performance by composer George Fenton of The BBC's Blue Planet at the exclusive venue of Tonbridge School.

TAO Miscellaneous and TAO Fire joined forces to undertake the traffic, safety and fire safety management of The Beautiful Days Festival at Escot

Park in Devon. The three day 15,000 capacity festival featured an eclectic set of bands, an extremely wet car park and major over night camping.

September

The summer series of concerts climaxed in September with Rock The House featuring an amazing performance by the reformed Iggy Pop & The Stooges at Harewood House, Leeds. A day that featured some of the best new bands in Britain culminated in a 300-400 person stage invasion during the Iggy Pop set which went off without injury to anyone. TAO Miscellaneous was again busy with traffic management planning duties for the Waveform Festival at Powderham Castle near Exeter.

October

October saw the TAO team have a short break, although Andy Cotton & Ben Price had meetings in New York with Sharon Kim Dion regarding the 2008 Seattle Festival and in Nova Scotia regarding concerts for 2008.

November

TAO's Jon Perry was again called in to provide traffic management planning for the Newham Fireworks Festival which drew close to 40,000 spectators.



Following the success of TAO's work on the Michael Ball tour, Chris Marsh employed TAO to look after tour health & safety and crew welfare for the Diana Ross 'I Love You' European tour which included shows in the UK, Ireland, France, Holland & Belgium.

December

With Christmas approaching TAO again got busy with H&S advice for the iTouch Christmas Party and The O2/Facebook Party at Keele University.

The month also saw TAO revisit the part finished MK Stadium to undertake production and event work in the attached MK Arena for a series of Christmas events.

These events saw TAO not only put in lights, sound, staging and power but floors, fire alarms, safety lighting and heating. The before and after was quite amazing, even to the team that built it. From building site to an event space fit for the clients that attended which included McClaren F1, Mercedes Benz and Coutts & Co