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Colossal Trade Up with Robe

Colossal Rental in Budapest, Hungary is one of several production companies in Hungary that has invested in Robe.

The company was founded in 1994 and from 2003 it was owned by Adam Nagy, András Lerner and Csaba Csanádi. It's now run by directors Adam and András, while Csaba takes care of sister company AVL Trade, founded in 2016 to focus on the sales side of the business, which also includes being a distributor – for Robe and other leading brands.

In the slightly unconventional world of entertainment technology, Hungary is one of those markets where sales and distribution can flourish alongside a rental operation under the same roof.

Colossal has over 400 Robe's fixtures in its rental stock today, and started down this road in 2003, shortly after Robe itself was launched as an independent brand. They became a distributor in 2005. On the audio side, Adamson is their main brand for large shows and events, and with this and Robe, the focus is on premium quality equipment.

Colossal now has 40 employees and is run from an old chocolate factory near the river in the south of Buda. Many other rental companies are located in this area, which has become an enclave for entertainment technology, and this includes FOR Event, one of AVL Trade's biggest clients and also an enthusiastic Robe user.

Sales wise, AVL Trade has clocked up some success in theatres, especially with the DL7S Profiles and Spiiders, but rental and staging is currently the most proactive area for Robe, and installations have also picked up in the last two years, which have been exceptionally busy.

"The Robe product range is good, so we can offer a solid solution for most lighting scenarios" says Csaba, adding that the Spider has been their number one most successful Robe product in the last 12 months, selling to all sectors, together with the original Pointe, the new MegaPointe and the BMFL range.

Hungary is popular for movie and television location shooting – due to its abundance of eye-catching and beautiful scenery, buildings, general architecture and historic cities – as it is a cost-effective option. Moving lights are frequently used for these, and there's three major film studios in Budapest.

PDF Productions is a major TV and film lighting rental house which started buying Robe in the last year, including MegaPointes, BMFL Blades and RoboSpot systems, and they service most of the large and high-profile TV productions in the country.

BMFL Blades are also starting to appear more regularly on studio riders, and once a trend like this takes off, more will follow, explains Csaba. This is a movement noticeable in franchised shows, many of which will come to Hungary.

Being six hours away by road from the Robe factory in Valašské Meziříčí has also been a great help to AVL Trade's Robe business as it enables them to easily take customers there and show them around.

Colossal's current stock of 400 Robes is roughly divided 50/50 between moving lights and static fixtures like the ParFect 100, CitySkapes, the LEDForce series, etc., and they also have 32 x Robe ColorStrobes which were purchased for the Sziget Festival in 2016.

"We supply a massive amount of festivals with Robe kit during the summer" comments Andras, which in 2018 included the Volt Festival, Balaton Sound - one of the largest EDM events in Europe - and B My Lake. Valley of Arts is another uniquely Hungarian event taking place over 10 days with around 20 stages in and around the charming and rustic villages of the Lake Balaton Uplands.

Lots of AVL Trade's clients will also be servicing stages on these festivals, so in addition to the Colossal Rental direct business, there's healthy cross-rental activity taking place.

Corporate event work is Colossal's second biggest market.

"Quality and reliability have been the major factors for Robe's success" says Andras, "also from a rental company perspective, the units are easy to service and maintain, which is essential".

Adam adds that the "the brightness and extra-functionality of Robe, plus the light weight especially of the most recent fixtures, have all helped the success. Weight might not be such a major issue on large events, but on small ones - which make up vast numbers - and in the more interesting and site-specific venues... it can be THE defining factor.

"People are always pleased to see Robe on a stage or a festival rider - LD's, programmers, operators, etc... it's never questioned now as the brand has become to be widely respected and accepted" elucidated Adam, observing that several artist LDs who once regularly specified other brands have now switched to Robe.

Colossal Rental services around 60 events per month of different types, sizes and budgets, and supplies the full production package - lighting, sound, video, staging and rigging. The company works nationwide around Hungary and in some neighbouring countries like Germany.

They know from the various other brands that they have onboard that the service from Robe is "outstanding" and Adam concludes: "I can honestly say that Robe is among the world leading entertainment technology brands right now and its latest products are absolutely premium".

