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**2002 VIDEO GRAND PRIX
BALLOT INSIDE
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NASHVILLE KNOWLEDGEFEST

A LOOK AT SOME OF THE EVENTS & HOT TOPICS AT MERA'S MOST RECENT 12V RETAILER/INSTALLER CONFAB BY MICAH SHEVELOFF

The Mobile Electronics Retailers Association Knowledgefest event, held Feb. 9-12 in Nashville, had a record turnout of approximately 800 attendees. There were many seminars and classroom events for sales, management and installation staff, as the 12-volt com-

munity has embraced the CEDIA-like educational format. There was also an area set aside for vendor booths, where retailers and their vendor partners could exchange meaningful dialogue.

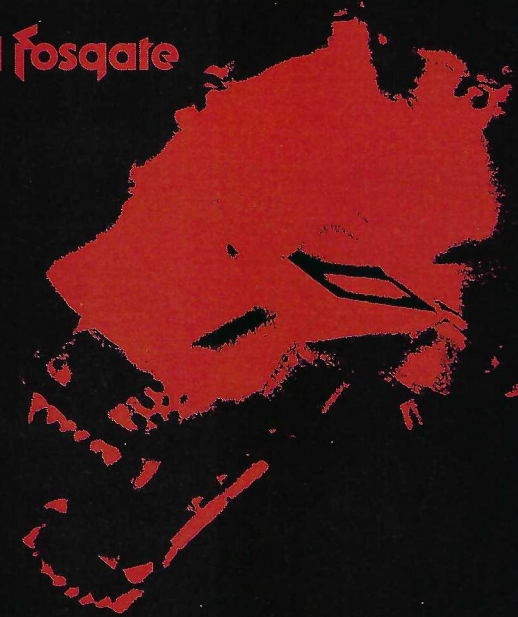
Jeff Hoover, president of Audio Advisors, West Palm Beach, FL and current CEDIA president,

gave the keynote address on the opening morning to a packed hall, telling of his personal trials and tribulations starting out as a 12-volt retailer. Hoover also illustrated the importance of having a detailed business plan, and told of the valuable guidance he received along his path to success.

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42-VOLT A TOPIC

There was also a discussion panel whose focus was tomorrow's technologies, including representatives from Ford Motor Co., iBiquity Digital Radio, Soundgate, and CEA. Topics covered were the upcoming introduction of a 42-volt automotive electrical platform, an explanation of non-subscription-based digital radio technology, the complexities of aftermarket-to-OEM interface, and automotive data bus systems. Alpine's Steve Witt moderated the session.

TECH CLASSES

The installers were treated to technical classes taught by such industry notables as the Steve Brown/Chris Yato team from Alpine, Robert Garza, Gary Biggs, and the Bill Hamze/Hector Yanez team from JL Audio. Attendees to these forums were exposed to the latest fabrication techniques, how to work with Plexiglas, and the vast capabilities of the router. Additionally, Kicker sponsored an instructional session covering antennas and installation for satellite radio technology. Eddy Kay offered two lectures, covering such sales topics as customer care and overcoming sales objections. Installer certification, aftermarket performance parts and reaching the youth market were

some of the other seminars MERA had planned as part of the Knowledgefest program. The final day featured a session by author and speaker Terry Lonier on how to create an action plan, with a focus on how attendees should apply lessons learned at the MERA event once they have returned to the routine of operating their businesses.

SUPPLIERS ON TAP

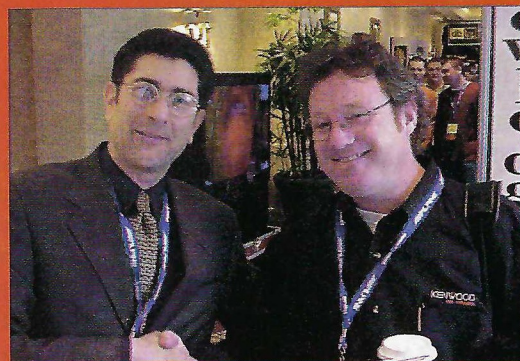
Many manufacturers were in attendance, showing their support for the MERA event; they included Kenwood, Clarion, Alpine, Kicker, Memphis, AAMP of America, Red Mountain Audio and Rockford Fosgate, just to name a few. Kenwood parked its classic Cadillac out in front of the hotel, and stationed a massive display of current products in the hotel lobby. Michael Hurley, Kenwood's eastern regional sales manager for car audio, commented: "I thought the MERA

event was outstanding. The content was timely and exciting, and the dealers that did not attend really missed something. With the rapid changes happening in our industry, this event was a critical link to staying informed about emerging technologies." Andy Oxenhorn, president of JL Audio added, "There was a terrific exchange of ideas at Knowledgefest, and the attendance was excellent. JL Audio was very pleased to have been a part of the event. Any retailer that did not attend certainly missed out."

With the turnout this year being about double that of last year's Knowledgefest, MERA says it expects to carry the positive momentum forward into the creation of next year's event. Current unconfirmed plans are to repeat the success and hold the 2003 Knowledgefest in Nashville as well.



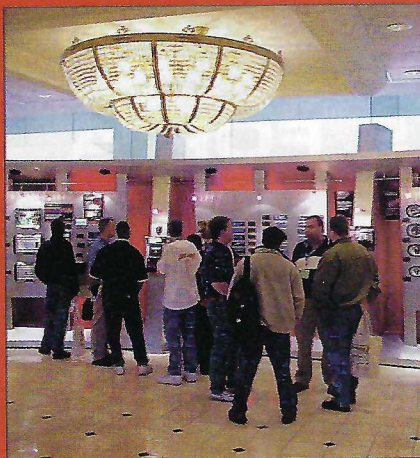
THIS KNOWLEDGEFEST DREW ABOUT 800 ATTENDEES — A RECORD TURNOUT



SEMINAR SPEAKER EDDY KAY (L.) WITH KENWOOD'S MICHAEL HURLEY



ALPINE ON-STAFF INSTALLER STEVE BROWN CONDUCTS A TRAINING SEMINAR



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