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GENTEC THANKS KEY IMAGING RETAILERS WITH LUXURY CRUISE



In celebration of 20 years in business, Gentec took key digital imaging retailers from across Canada on a seven-day luxury cruise through the Mediterranean. "It's really a thank you," says Joel Seigel, President & CEO, "to those dealers who have helped us reach [this] milestone." Photo by Paul Clairmont

In late May, a group of key digital imaging retailers enjoyed a seven-day luxury cruise through the Mediterranean, compliments of Gentec International in celebration of marking the Markham, ON-based distributor's 20 years in business.

"We have dealers in the same city that have never spoken to one another," Joel Seigel, President & CEO, told *Marketnews*. "There are lines of communication that have been opened with such a trip and it was terrific to see dealers interacting with one another."

Gentec guests represented dealers from all across Canada, from big names like Henry's, Vistek, Lozeau, and McBain Camera, to smaller dealers in the Maritimes and Newfoundland. The requirement for inclusion was meeting a certain level of support for Gentec's imaging line of products, which include well-known brands like Sigma, Roots, Optex, and SanDisk, between September 2009 and January 2010. This might mean carrying a certain mix of products, or meeting specific sales targets. "Even if the dealer was small," explains Seigel, "if they offered a certain

level of support, we wanted them to be there."

As a result, and to Gentec's delight, the grouping was the largest yet, numbering 57 versus 33 for the last incentive gathering. In addition to dealers and their significant others, the cruise was hosted by Seigel and his wife, Margaret Adat, Executive Vice President & C.F.O. and her husband, Brad Lloyd, Senior Vice President of Sales & Marketing and his wife, and several other senior management staff at Gentec.

The cruise, held by six star cruise line Crystal Cruises, started off at the port of Athens, Greece, and traveled through Santorini, Greece, Bodrum, Turkey, Corfu, Greece, Dubrovnik, Croatia, and Venice, Italy. It kicked off on a high note at a winery in Santorino where the group had lunch outdoors and enjoyed a live band, and even some traditional Greek dancing. "This really set the tone for the entire trip," Seigel enthuses.

Dubrovnik, he adds, was the biggest surprise of the trip. "We all know about spots like Venice and Greece," he explains, "but Dubrovnik was a pleasant

surprise, with its beautiful setting and history. We didn't expect it. But," he allows, "every city had a unique quality."

The cruise was chosen specifically to appeal to imaging dealers. "When you think of this group," Seigel notes, "they're photographers. So we went to sites that are fantastic for taking photos. Each city has its own charm."

Guests were able to print their day's best shooting through a number of Sony SnapLabs that were set up on the ship. A set of his & her watches was awarded to Downtown Camera's Harry Mac and his wife for their prize-winning shot that best represented the location in which it was snapped. Ironically, Mac's photo was of the group strutting their stuff with the Greek dancers during the aforementioned winery lunch.

The trip wrapped up on a rooftop restaurant overlooking Venice in the famous Danieli hotel.

Gentec hopes to plan another such trip for its imaging dealers; possibly in five years' time. And, adds Seigel, with Gentec ramping up its presence on the consumer electronics side, Gentec may look at a similar event to bring those partners together as well.

More so than the great destinations, scrumptious food, and luxury accommodation, Seigel says this trip was predominantly about camaraderie, and helping to build relationships. "It's not just about where we went," he says, "but for dealers to interact and to have fun. It's really a thank you," he adds, "to those dealers who have helped us to reach the milestone of 20 years in business."

PANASONIC'S 3D LINE HITS SELECT CANADIAN DEALERS NATIONWIDE



Panasonic Canada's quartet of 3D plasma HDTVs comprising its VIERA VT25 Series, and the companion 3D Blu-ray player, were made available through "select dealers nationwide last month, with a large-scale roll out to follow shortly after." That also includes the firm's 3D eyewear, of course.

The combined Panasonic 3D TV/Blu-ray player purchases will be bundled with *Coraline* and *Ice Age 3: Dawn of the Dinosaurs*, "two never-before released 3D Blu-ray discs offered exclusively to Panasonic customers...while supplies last."

To cope with the demands of 3D reproduction, Panasonic has developed faster screen phosphors, high-speed 3D drive technology, and 600Hz sub-field drive for its new plasma panels. The faster response time necessary for 3D results in a more stable, sharper 2D image, especially with sports and action scenes. Panasonic 3D panels are rated at 100,000 hours; are lead and mercury free, and Energy Star 4.0 compliant.

In addition to 3D technologies, all four VIERA VT models offer Panasonic's VIERA CAST Internet programming

package delivering access to information and communication services such as Bloomberg News, Google's YouTube, Picasa, and new this year, Skype video calling (see related announcement.) The TVs also offer VIERA Image Viewer for viewing of digital photos and videos on an SD card; and VIERA's Concierge help line, priority service, and optional extended warranty.

The BDT350 Blu-ray player (\$599) is compatible with a wide variety of 7.1 audio formats and up converts all standard video formats to 1080p. It also offers dual HDMI outputs, VIERA CAST and Wi-Fi.

Panasonic has announced equal or lower pricing for the VIERA VT25 Plasma 3D HDTV Series compared to last year's 2D models as follows (all prices MSRP): \$2,999 for the 50" TC-P50VT25; \$3,499 for the 54" TC-P54VT25; \$3,999 for the 58" TC-P58VT25; and \$4,999 for the 65" TC-P65VT25.

Each comes with one pair of Panasonic 3D Active Shutter Lens Eyewear (TY-EW3D10U), with additional pairs costing \$149.95.



Attendees to Gentec's incentive trip for digital imaging retailers enjoyed some traditional Greek dancing at a winery in Santorino, Greece, the first stop on a Mediterranean cruise. Harry Mac from Downtown Camera won a set of his and hers watches for snapping this compelling shot.

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