

# Building Audio Excellence: Sonotone's Four-Decade Journey in India's Pro-Audio Market



At the helm of Sonotone Audio Systems, Karan Nagpal Director talks strategy, growth, and next-gen audio

*For decades, Sonotone Audio has been a cornerstone of India's pro-audio industry, blending global partnerships with local expertise. Known for its partner-first approach, robust after-sales support, and market responsiveness, Sonotone delivers solutions that meet the diverse needs of rental, retail, and installed AV segments. At PALM Expo 2025, the company showcased high-SPL drivers and Dante-enabled systems, reaffirming its commitment to acquiring innovative technologies. In this interview, **Karan Nagpal**, Director at Sonotone, shares insights on strategies, partnerships, and the evolving audio landscape in India.*

## 1. Sonotone has been in the audio industry for decades. What strategies have helped Sonotone maintain its leadership in a competitive market?

Sonotone's longevity rests on three consistent strategies: (1) partner-first product curation — we bring global, proven technologies to Indian customers rather than pushing untested novelties; (2) after-sales & local engineering support — fast service, spare parts availability, and application support build trust with rental houses and integrators; and (3) market responsiveness — we continuously monitor pro-audio trends in all three sectors, Retail, Rental and Installed AV and adapt our portfolio and inventory mix quickly. Together these create repeat business, strong trade relationships, and a reputation for dependable delivery.

## 2. Sonotone has maintained long-standing partnerships with global brands like Mackie and P Audio. How have these associations shaped your product portfolio and contributed to Sonotone's position in the professional audio industry? What do these brands represent for Sonotone in terms of technology, market positioning, and brand identity?

Long-term partnerships let Sonotone offer a coherent portfolio that covers consoles, monitors, loudspeakers and system components across price/performance.

- **Mackie** brings accessible, battle-tested consoles and monitoring solutions — ideal for touring, houses of worship and mid-market installs. For Sonotone it represents reliable mixing platforms and entry-to-pro workflows.
- **P.Audio** provides high-performance components as well as transducers. For Sonotone these brands anchor our presence in large events and festival supply.

Together these associations supply complementary tech (mixing + monitoring + large-format loudspeakers), strengthen our market positioning across rental and installation segments, and reinforce our brand identity as a one-stop supplier of professional, production-grade solutions.

## 3. How do you decide which international partnerships to pursue? How do you curate your brand portfolio to meet India's evolving pro-audio demands?

We evaluate partners on four criteria: product performance & reliability, serviceability and spare-parts availability, price-to-value fit for Indian customers, and roadmap alignment (innovating in networked audio, DSP, rigging safety, etc.). Portfolio curation is demand-led: we balance rental-grade inventory (durable, high-SPL systems), installed solutions (fixed-install loudspeakers, conferencing systems) and workflow tools (consoles, Dante/AVB networking). We also pilot new brands selectively with key rental partners and integrators before committing to large stock purchases.

## 4. How do relatively newer inclusions like UNiKA and Marani to your brand portfolio, complement your existing lineup?

Newer brands are chosen to fill technical or market gaps. **UNiKA's** Dante-centric designs and modular line arrays add modern networked flexibility and compact touring options that complement blue-chip large-format systems. **Marani** strengthens our mid-to-high-end offerings where we need tighter price/performance or regional manufacturing synergies. In short, these additions broaden choice: they let rental houses and integrators pick the right tool for a job—whether it's lightweight touring, installed AV, or Dante-networked systems—without compromising Sonotone's overall reliability promise.

**5. How do you see the Indian pro-audio market evolving compared to global trends? And what one technology will most define India's rental market by 2035?**

India is following global trends—greater adoption of networked audio, immersive audio formats, and compact, high-output systems—while also showing distinct local dynamics: rapid growth in mid-sized live events and experiential activations, and heavy demand for reliable rental gear that can withstand rough logistics and climate stresses.

**6. At PALM Expo 2025, Sonotone showcased P.Audio's large-format drivers. Are high-SPL systems becoming standard for rentals?**

High-SPL systems are increasingly common for medium-to-large festival and stadium work, but "standard" depends on the rental segment. For big outdoor events and large touring packages, yes—high-SPL, power-dense systems are essential. For corporate, houses of worship, and many smaller venues, demand is moving toward compact, highly efficient line arrays that balance SPL with intelligibility and transport efficiency.

**7. Sonotone also introduced UNiKA's Dante-based NBB series in India. How fast is networked audio adoption growing, and which segments lead this trend?**

Networked audio adoption in India is accelerating—adoption curves are steepest in corporate AV (boardrooms, auditoriums), higher-education campuses, and modern houses of worship that prioritise scalability and remote management. The market is also adopting Dante and AoIP for signal distribution, monitor mixes, and FOH-backline integration because it simplifies multitrack workflows and reduces bulky analog snake runs.

**8. Where do you see AVB-ready systems gaining traction first, stadiums, festivals, or corporate installs?**

AVB's deterministic timing and managed-network advantages make it attractive for corporate installs and large fixed systems (stadiums, arenas) where

long-term reliability, QoS and vendor-managed infrastructure are priorities. Festivals and touring rigs typically adopt Dante today due to its ecosystem and ease-of-use, but AVB will gain ground in stadiums and permanent installs where network-managed audio and strict timing control deliver clear benefits.

**9. India's Pro AV and audio market is projected to hit USD 17.3B by 2031. Which segment - live entertainment, corporate, or education, - do you think will grow fastest, and how are you aligning your brands / inventory?**

We expect corporate & institutional installs to show the fastest proportional growth as organisations invest in hybrid-work AV, auditoriums, and campus-wide AV infrastructure. Live entertainment will continue growing strongly in absolute terms, driven by festivals and experiential events. To align, Sonotone is: (a) increasing inventory of Dante/AVB-ready installed speakers and DSP-enabled consoles for corporate/education projects, (b) maintaining and expanding rental-grade, high-SPL stock for live entertainment and festivals, and (c) strengthening service and training programs so integrators can deploy networked systems confidently.

**10. Finally, what has been your biggest challenge in leading Sonotone Audio Systems, and how did you overcome it?**

The biggest challenge has been balancing inventory readiness with capital efficiency—keeping enough high-demand stock and spares while avoiding overcommitment to products that may be overtaken by new tech. We addressed this by diversifying supplier relationships, building stronger forecasting with key partners, investing in modular systems that serve multiple market segments, and improving reverse-logistics for faster turnaround of repaired units. Equally important was investing in local technical training so our customers could maximize uptime—service reliability has been the key differentiator.

**SNL PRO CREATES...** (Continued from page 38)

**Trussing Infrastructure**

The structural backbone of the show was also provided by SNL Pro's comprehensive trussing solution, engineered to support the complex rigging requirements of this massive two-night spectacle. The trussing infrastructure required meticulous planning over an 11-day period from October 10th to 21st, with the actual deployment spanned the show dates from October 18th to 19th.



**Beyond audio excellence, the production featured an extensive special effects package that elevated the sensory experience, dramatic vertical flames and 32 RECOjet CO<sub>2</sub> bursts amplified the energy**

SNL Pro deployed an extensive inventory of premium trussing components to create the robust framework necessary for the production's ambitious design. The primary structure utilised 40 units of 3-meter silver truss sections (510 x 610mm) complemented by 20 units of 1-meter sections, all secured with 300 spigots, 600 bullets, and 600 R-pins for maximum structural integrity. Additional support came from 90 units of 3-meter black truss (400mm), 48 units of 2-meter sections, and 16 specialised 6-way junction pieces, creating a versatile framework capable of accommodating the production's complex rigging requirements.

The lifting and rigging system incorporated 75 Chain Master 1000kg motors with 24-meter capacity, supported by comprehensive power distribution through custom SNL motor controllers and extensive cabling infrastructure. Safety remained paramount throughout the installation, with German-standard safety harnesses, mountaineering ropes, and color-coded rigging hardware ensuring secure operations. The deployment of 110 soft slings, 50 round sling belts, and various shackles provided the flexibility needed to accommodate the intricate audio, lighting, and effects rigging that defined this landmark production.

This landmark production demonstrates the Indian live entertainment industry's capacity to deliver world-class technical solutions for major international artists. The successful integration of complex audio system design with spectacular visual effects and premium trussing infrastructure, all while maintaining the highest safety standards, sets a new benchmark for large-scale concert production in the region.

The Travis Scott Delhi concert represent more than just successful shows—it showcases the technical expertise and production capabilities that position India as a premier destination for major international touring acts. SNL Pro's flawless execution of this complex production demonstrates that top-notch Indian rental companies can deliver world-class standards that rival any international market, establishing the foundation for India's emergence as a key player in the global live entertainment circuit.