

PHARMA ROCK

Riverview Systems Group's Evan Williams And Franco Berardi On Staging For Zimmer Biomet's AAOS 2016 Annual Meeting Booth

/// BY MARIAN SANDBERG



The 19,000sq-ft., two-floor exhibit booth featured its own conference rooms and demonstration labs.

Last month, Riverview Systems Group and Zimmer Biomet marked their 18th collaboration when they partnered to provide extensive production design services in support of its exhibit presence at the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons 2016 Annual Meeting (AAOS) in Orlando, FL.

However, calling what Riverview produced merely an “exhibit presence” is a bit of an understatement. In reality, the 19,000sq-ft., two-floor exhibit booth (complete with conference rooms and demonstration labs), with a 48'x16', six-section automated LED wall that moved together and broke apart, depending on specific content, as well as an

immense lighting rig, was more akin to something you might see at an arena-sized concert tour.

As Riverview Systems Group CEO Evan Williams notes, “The technology advances and automated elements we incorporated into our approach for the Zimmer Biomet booth this year is more typical of a state-of-the-art arena-like rock show than what is normally seen on a trade show floor. This is a multifaceted custom booth environment that allows for a seamless and cohesive presentation of brand messages throughout.”

We spoke with Williams and Franco Berardi, Riverview’s director of Design Services, to take a deeper dive into this massive project and the challenges it presented.

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the bundled care experts.



LIVE DESIGN: *Eighteen years is a long time to work with a client. Talk about your collaborative relationship with Zimmer Biomet and how you keep it fresh creatively year after year.*

EVAN WILLIAMS: I think, in a nutshell, that it is simply our passion for the new and interesting. This exhibit has been enormous for 18 years, and Riverview and the technology available have evolved a lot over that time. It's not really about thinking outside the box, but rather making the box *really big*.

FRANCO BERARDI: Designing not only what's cool, but making it purposeful, is the edge we have on others. Our internal ecosystem is set up to support our vision and carry it through to completion, whether it's a simple show or a complex one like Zimmer Biomet. For me, the thrill of working on this type of creative assignment keeps me excited year after year.



Riverview Systems Group created a multifaceted custom booth environment for Zimmer Biomet.

LD: *What were some of the creative and technical challenges you faced this time around?*

FB: Rigging is always the principal technical challenge. Given the design, we needed to hang anywhere from 40 to 50 tons of equipment and scenic elements above the booth space. Because of this, every design is built from the rigging down. All hanging elements of the booth, including lighting, audio, video, and exhibit pieces are taken into account as we build the system. That gives us the control to balance out every aspect visually and experience all elements that make it work as a unified design.

EW: We actually begin work on the next year's exhibit almost immediately after the current show is over. Due to the enormity of the project, design and budgeting for the next year needs to begin early so we can figure out how to out-do the previous year's impact. We then discuss the needs and targets with our clients to determine how to best approach a given campaign, support new initiatives, etc. Once that's evolved, we begin to work with the content, exhibit, and marketing partners to develop what we end up with.



More akin to a state-of-the-art arena-like rock show, the booth also featured an immense lighting rig.

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LD: *In the past, you likened the Zimmer Biomet booth to creating a theme park. Is that still an apt analogy?*

EW: Yes, it is. Although, it might be more accurate to compare this to recent concert tours from the likes of Bon Jovi or U2. The overall system, including truss and hoists, weighed over 46 tons this year. We provided all of that, as well as all of the lighting, audio/video equipment, and all of the technical support for the AV related needs, and we managed the delivery of the content to the LED walls and displays throughout the exhibit. This year, we added a six-section automated LED wall that moves together and breaks apart depending on content-driven segments. The overall size of the wall was 48' wide by 16' tall.

FB: I also call it "Planet Zimmer," given the sheer size and scope of it. This year really embodied that feeling not only in size, but the design itself, which was very solar system-like. Large, sweeping headers throughout the space created a central core of activity, and this area was led by the automated video system delivering the content about Zimmer Biomet products. A two-story structure with conference rooms and a media loft space to hold impromptu meetings with clients, this booth was really a planet of its own.

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EVAN WILLIAMS

LD: Speaking more broadly, how has the company, and more generally the industry, changed over the years?

FB: In the past, companies looked for great technicians that could use the equipment in a way that amplified their own skill set, but Riverview today takes a more thoughtful approach, building theatrical storylines into our design and using the technology to further the concept. Today, technology is plentiful, but creating designs and executing them flawlessly are what is most important to clients.

EW: You hear it all the time: Content is king. No surprise there, but more often this year than ever before, content is driving production design, rather than the other way around. Clients demand wide aspect ratios and display technologies to fit with their content desires and formats, and we, as solutions providers, have to muster the design acumen and technologies to make it happen. The LED automation on the Zimmer Biomet project exemplifies this trend.

BILOGICS