



AND THE WINNER IS...

THE AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND INTEGRATION INDUSTRY HAS SPOKEN AND THE WINNERS HAVE BEEN ANNOUNCED. SEAN CARROLL TAKES A LOOK AT THIS YEAR'S RESULTS.

Deck the halls with immersive audio and hang the security camera on the video doorbell for it truly is the time to be jolly. The 2023 Most Popular Awards have been announced and it's like Christmas time for integrators.

Over 500 AV professionals from across the industry have cast their vote in over 50 categories. The results show some interesting movement in the past 12 months for who integrators prefer and some consistent results.

For some, it's a chance to defend a dynastic winning streak, for others, it's a

chance to break into a side of the industry it has been working on for some time and for the new categories introduced this year, it's an opportunity to make a mark.

The major industry awards saw Amber Technology take home a lot of the gold medals, but Westan disrupted a winning streak in the New Zealand distributor market, taking the top prize for the first time in a long time.

In this year's awards, we thought we'd change it up and include visual snapshots of the past five years (ten years for major awards). The idea behind this is to

give integrators a tangible look into the popularity of companies across time.

And with every Most Popular Awards, *Connected* magazine crowned another Most Influential Person. This year, Paul Skelton took the top spot for his work with CEDIA.

A profile piece on Paul can be found in the awards spread as we talk through his journey into the AV industry and accomplishments since joining CEDIA.

Congratulations to all the winners and continued success to all winners and nominees in the future. ▶

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MOST INFLUENTIAL PERSON INDUSTRY AWARDS



Paul Skelton has been part of the integration industry since 2006 but has been kicking goals as the CEDIA regional development consultant, Australia and New Zealand, since 2020.

While it took a while for the travel component to really kick off (thanks COVID-19), Paul is seemingly always on the road, getting out in front of integrators, cablers, electricians and more. He's doing what he can to tell people about standards, certification and showcasing everything CEDIA can offer.

When speaking with Paul for the profile piece in this edition, he said that he's more than happy to put his face out there to start some tough conversations that can move the industry forward.

Paul has had success sinking his teeth into the education side of the AV industry. It's obvious that there are little-to-no formal education pathways into the industry, but Paul is doing his best to remedy that issue. Box Hill Institute has, at the time of print, 12 students going through a Cabling & Infrastructure Technician (CIT) pathway for the very first time.

Paul is also making use of the CEDIA NextGen: Smart Home Career Toolkit, a range of resources that helps CEDIA and integrators get out in front of school students to let them know about the AV industry and any potential opportunities.

RESIDENTIAL DISTRIBUTORS INDUSTRY AWARDS



Amber Technology has made it five in a row in the Residential Distributor category for the 2023 Most Popular Awards. After a slight dip in 2018, it's looking like the company won't cede its victory any time soon.

Hot on Amber Technology's heels is Snap One who moved up from ninth to second in this year's voting. This time last year, Snap One had just over eight percent of the popular vote. This year, that figure has jumped up to nearly 23% and above Radio Parts, another company who left up a few spots.

TRENDS

- Advance Audio
- Altronics
- Amber Technology
- Audio Active
- Avation
- Canohm
- Connected Media
- Convoy International
- Hills
- Ivory Egg
- Midwich
- NAS Australia
- Qualifi
- Radio Parts
- Sennheiser
- Snap One
- Sound United
- Synergy Custom
- Techstyle
- Wavetrain
- Westan

MOST POPULAR MANUFACTURER INDUSTRY AWARDS



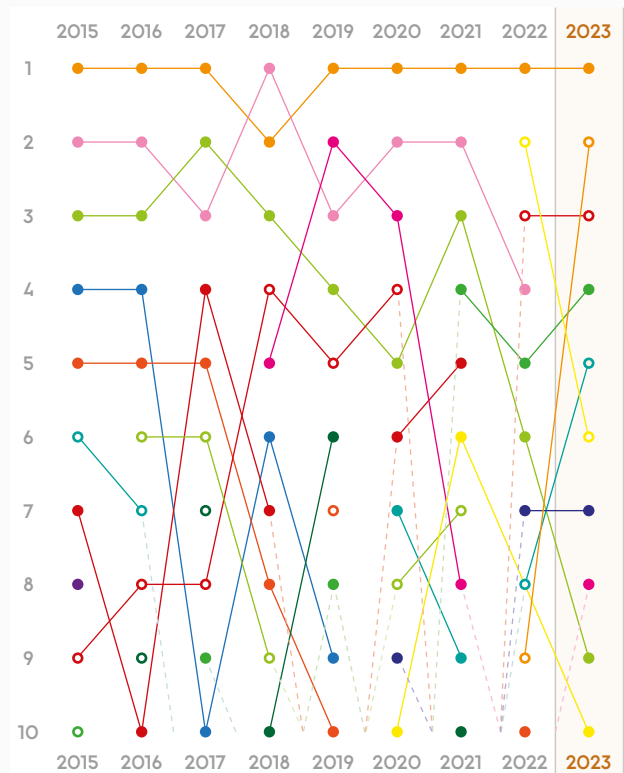
Interrupting a streak of three in a row by Ness Corporation, Snap One has swooped in to win the Most Popular Manufacturer Award in the 2023 Most Popular Awards.

Snap One has seen strong growth over the past few years, servicing the residential industry as well as recently touching on the commercial side. For integrators, Snap One is the go-to destination for all smart home solutions.

In this past year alone, the company has debuted a range of new solutions at various trade shows.

Additionally, Snap One entered into an Australian distribution agreement with Ness. Underpinned by the industry-leading OvrC remote monitoring and management platform, the Snap One product offering includes Araknis Networking, Wattbox IP power, Episode multi-room amplification and Core series in-ceiling speakers, ClareVision (NDAA Certified) Surveillance, Strong racks and mounts, Wirepath speaker and data cable and Binary HDMI and Media over IP (MoIP).

Following the agreement, Snap One vice president and general manager, Asia Pacific, Adam Merlino said: "Greater product choice and accessibility is a win for everyone, and we're excited to offer local integrators new tools from networking gear to power monitoring systems to high-end speakers."



COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTORS INDUSTRY AWARDS

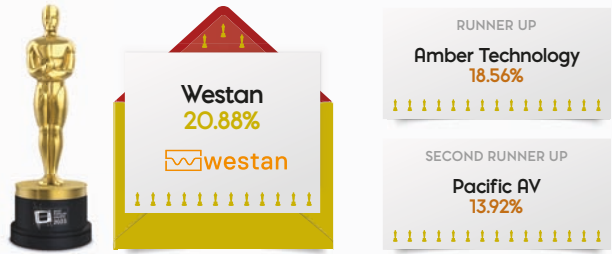


Amber Technology continues a stellar run in this year's Most Popular Awards, nabbing the Commercial Distributor award as well.

Radio Parts continued a solid showing, moving into the second spot after not placing in the top ten last year. The company's 21.59% of the popular vote was enough to see it ahead of mainstays like Westan and AV Distributors.

Westan was this year's biggest mover, going from 8.73% of the vote in 2022 to nearly 16% this year.

NZ DISTRIBUTORS INDUSTRY AWARDS



The one distribution award that Amber Technology didn't win was taken by Westan, a company that didn't make the top ten in the 2022 Most Popular Awards.

Amber Technology falls to second and Pacific AV takes a huge stride up to second with nearly double of its popular vote from last year's awards.

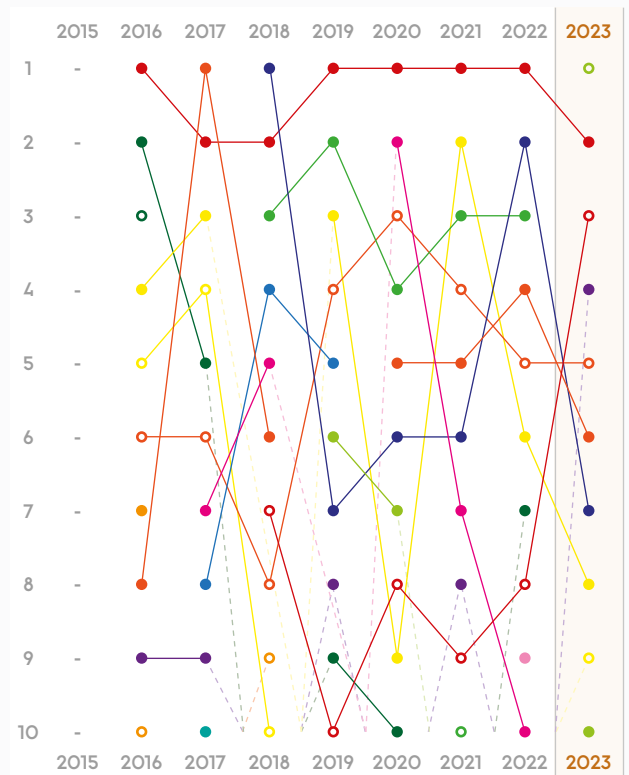
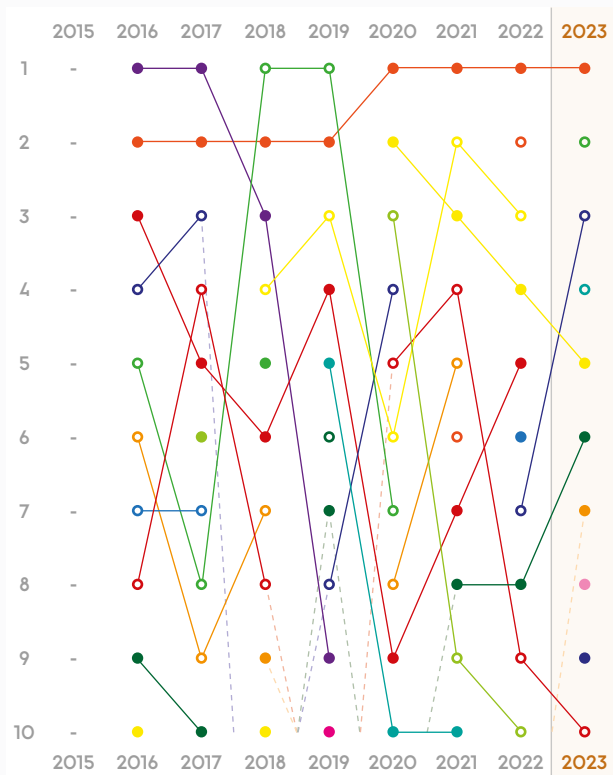
Ivory Egg took a hit in this year's awards after taking second place in last year's votes. The company fell to seventh in the popular vote this year.

TRENDS

- Altronics
- Ingram Micro
- Amber Technology
- Ivory Egg
- Audio Brands
- Jands
- AV Distributors
- Madison AV
- Avation
- Midwich
- Bose Professional
- National Audio Systems
- Canohm
- Ness
- Connected Media
- Radio Parts
- Corsair
- Sennheiser
- Dicker Data
- Snap One
- Hills
- Wavetrain
- Westan

TRENDS

- Amber Technology
- Mayo Group
- AV Supply Group
- Midwich
- AVA Pacific
- NFS
- Avation
- Pacific AV
- AVD
- Sound Group Holdings
- Connected Media
- Synnex
- Digital World
- TechStyle
- Emersive Technologies
- Westan
- Hills
- Ivory Egg
- Wildash
- Wired



PAUL SKELTON: AT THE SMART HOME COALFACE

AFTER YEARS OF COVERING THE INDUSTRY AS A JOURNALIST, PAUL SKELTON HAS TAKEN WHAT HE LEARNED TO HIS ROLE WITH CEDIA AND IS KICKING GOALS FOR INTEGRATORS IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND.

CEDIA is always reaching out to various people in the integration industry. Here on Australian soil, regional development consultant, ANZ, Paul Skelton is always sending ahead story ideas, press releases or sometimes just calling for a chat.

When speaking to Paul, he's usually in a random town across the country at the coalface, getting out in front of integrators and cabling, answering questions and explaining how CEDIA can help.

Even when he's on the road, I'll often get a reply and Paul says he'll solve the issue, answer my questions or lend a hand when he's back at his hotel room.

It's this hard work and dedication that has helped CEDIA become a much more active organisation in Australia since he arrived. After starting the role in 2020, CEDIA has made inroads into a formal education pathway to the integration industry, branched out more into the professional design market and held a number of events across the country.

"I think I'd be lying if I didn't say that CEDIA needed to change for it to grow and evolve but I think it's true that we have been a lot more active in the past few years," he explains.

He says that there have been a few changes within CEDIA itself that have led to this. A change at the executive level with chief executive Daryl Friedman taking over in late 2021 was crucial, as were new members joining the leadership team.

"Their experience coming on board has really been reflected in what we do, and it has allowed me to do a lot more as well. So, suddenly, conversations that I've had

years ago, they're all starting to pay attention and give us some leeway in Australia and New Zealand," Paul says.

A lot of the conversations Paul mentions started before his time with CEDIA, when he was the editor of this very magazine, *Connected*. Getting his start as a graduate writer for Connection Magazines (now Lanella Media) in 2006, Paul jumped into the AV industry like many others.

In his time with the company, Paul would go on to become the group editor, looking after *Connected* magazine as well as the *Electrical Connection* and *Cabling Connection* trade publications.

He also helped create the Most Influential Person Award, something he describes (tongue-in-cheek) as his "full-circle moment". Paul adds that when *Connected* was coming up with the name of the award, he said realistically he'd win the award every year without fail but unfortunately, award rules stipulate that you can't give it to yourself.

Earlier editions of the award had a caricature of his face on it, he says it brings him great comfort to know that

some in the industry have a trophy in their homes with his face on it, just staring at them every day.

Paul's time as a journalist for the AV industry helped him form connections while learning what he could about all aspects of the industry, setting him up perfectly for his current role: "Moving on to my current role with CEDIA made a lot of sense to me. I could take what I had learned in the industry and then try and apply that to building it some more."



Paul Skelton has been with CEDIA since 2020 and has been a part of the AV industry since 2006.

Creating formal pathways into the AV industry was a major issue when Paul entered, back in 2006. The fact that it's still a talking point means something must be done and it was one of Paul's main focuses when he arrived at CEDIA.

"There's a long way to go and the vocational education system in Australia is a mess. But what I can say that I've done so far is we now have 12 students going through Box Hill Institute doing our Cabling & Infrastructure Technician (CIT) pathway and we're trying to get in the door with a lot of other TAFEs and RTOs," he explains.

The availability of the CEDIA CIT pathway to Box Hill Institute's students will equip them with essential skills related to cabling, infrastructure and the installation of smart home systems.

Outside of that partnership, Paul says he's constantly talking to other TAFEs and national RTOs that work in the



telecommunications pathway to keep pushing things forward. He says there are still hurdles there but it's significant that moves are being made to get a steady stream of new workers in the industry.

Paul has also been working with the CEDIA NextGen: Smart Home Career Toolkit program that's mostly targeted toward school students. NextGen is a collection of free resources that are designed to complement CEDIA's existing workforce development programs and help to build awareness of industry employment opportunities and recruit new hires.

It gives integrators all the necessary resources to go to schools and start speaking to kids (also known as potential future employees) and tell them about what the AV industry is.

"I can't go to every school in Australia, and it has been great to work with those in the industry to make as much noise as possible, getting people to pay attention," Paul says.

One hurdle that Paul says the industry has to jump is to first get the integrator recognised as a legitimate job. He says that during the COVID-19 lockdowns in Victoria, integrators were allowed to go out and complete networking jobs because they were considered an "essential" service but at the same time, the government didn't recognise the job of an integrator.

It's hard to get work done when you're essential but invisible.

"Most recently, I have put a request through the ANZ Standard Classification

of Occupations, which is run by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and StatsNZ, to have the role of technology integrator officially recognised," Paul says.

"This will allow us to officially set an expectation of what an integrator is, what skills they should have, pathways to the industry and so on."

An outcome from this submission is not expected until December 2024.

At the time of speaking, Paul was preparing for the CEDIA Tech Summit in mid-October 2023 that's being hosted at Sea World on the Gold Coast. Between our chat and then, Paul was still on the road, speaking face-to-face with those in the industry.

"I've been trying to get out to regional and remote areas as much as possible, into the places where we don't really have a huge presence and get our name out there," he says.

"A lot of electricians and cabling are coming through and I spend a lot of time talking about certification and education and making sure they know who CEDIA is and how we can help. We want to get in first and help support them through any teething issues there may be."

He says that a lot of the people who come to the regional CEDIA events have had limited experience with the smart home industry but it's different from place to place. Sometimes Paul will arrive and find out that there are people working as full-blown integrators already and it's just about validating skillsets.

"In some places, I'll get an absolute grilling about the association and

certification. I'm finding that there's as much hesitance and doubt on the side of the electricians about integrators as there is integrators about electricians," he says.

"It's harking back a long time to this 'us and them' mentality, which is crap, and we need to get over it as an industry if we actually expect to get anywhere."

Paul says that another side of the integration industry that he's very focused on is the disability sector. He believes that this is one way that integrators can move from a luxury item to a necessity, where the industry can change lives and give people the independence to live in their own homes.

"We've been petitioning the NDIA and the SDA, and then we went to Bill Shorten's office to try and raise awareness to the fact that the current design standard that they have is inadequate and inappropriate," he says.

It's obvious why *Connected* magazine's Most Influential Person for 2023 won the award. Paul has spread his wings far and wide since joining CEDIA and his constant legwork to get in front of the right people only helps the industry move forward.

Whether he's at the coalface or speaking to integrators, educators, cabling, designers and more, it's fair to say that Paul's influence across the industry is large. But let's not let that compliment get to his head; during our chat for this article, I introduced Paul as *Connected* magazine's Most Influential Person for 2023 and he immediately asked why we had to qualify that the award for only "this year"? ■

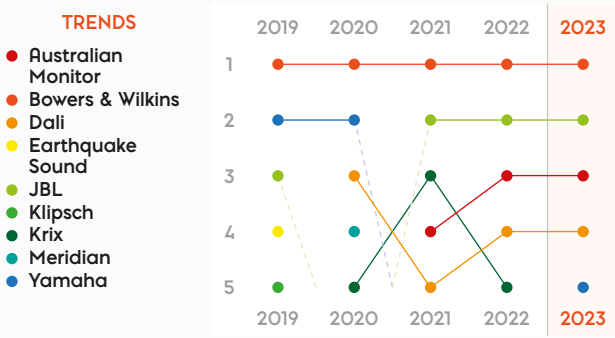
MOST INFLUENTIAL PERSON
HONOUR BOARD

2016	DAVID MOSELY	WAVETRAN
2017	DAMIAN CAVANAGH	ELECTRONIC LIVING
2018	ALAN CHOW	CHOWMAIN SOFTWARE
2019	DAVID MEYER	CEDIA
2020	BRUCE COX & STEPHAN GOODHUE	LIQUID AUTOMATION
2021	ADAM MERLINO	SNAP ONE
2022	TONI MCALLISTER	WOMEN IN AV
2023	PAUL SKELTON	CEDIA

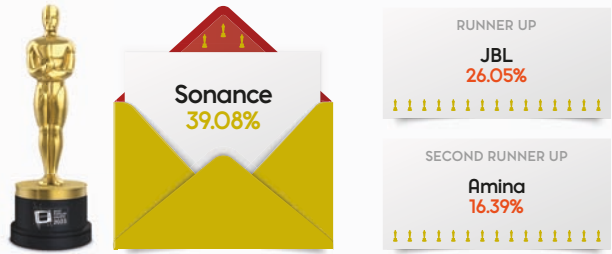
FREESTANDING LOUDSPEAKERS AUDIO



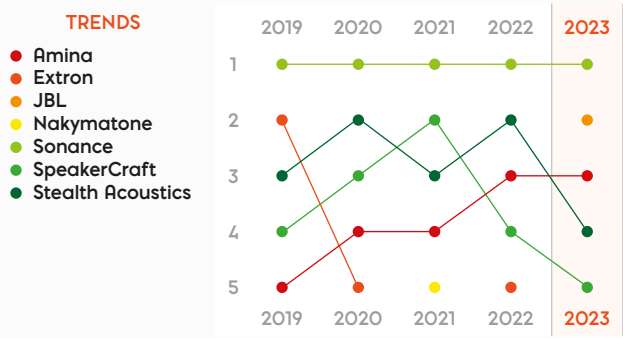
Bowers & Wilkins has made it seven in a row this year, beating out JBL who came within half a percentage of breaking the streak last year. The winners continue to dominate this category with its range of award-winning loudspeakers designed to fit in any room. Yamaha returned to the top five for the first time since 2020 and Australian Monitor maintained its third place finish it grabbed in 2022.



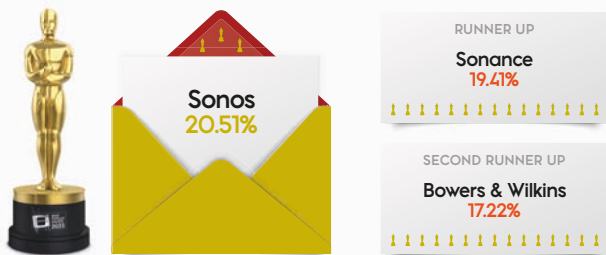
INVISIBLE LOUDSPEAKER AUDIO



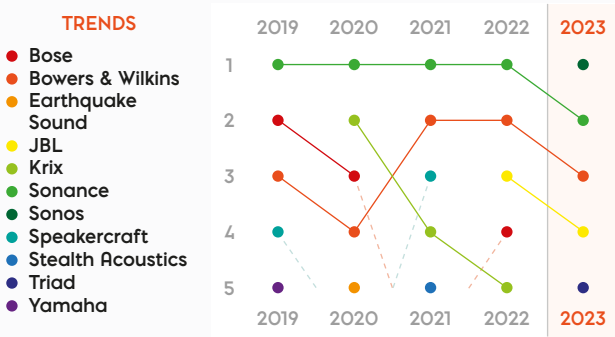
Polling a whopping 39.08% of the popular vote, Sonance has run away with the Invisible Loudspeaker category for the 11th straight year. JBL entered the podium positions for the first time in this five-year snapshot and Amina's slow-but-steady ascension has seen it finish third for the second year running. Sonance looks card to catch with such a large amount of the total votes.



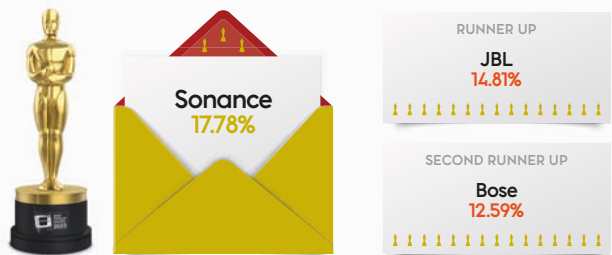
ARCHITECTURAL LOUDSPEAKER (RESIDENTIAL) AUDIO



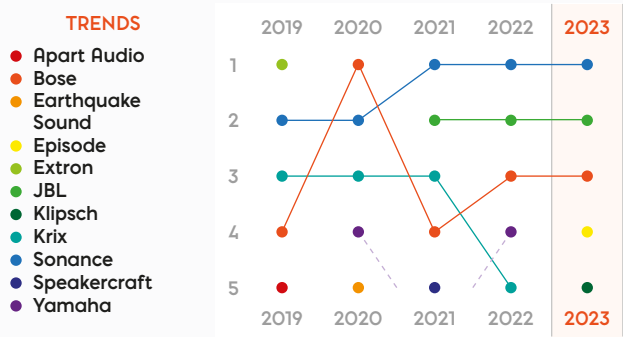
The first major upset of the 2023 Connected Most Popular Awards comes in the Architectural Loudspeaker (Residential) category as Sonance cedes its top spot to the newcomer, Sonos. After winning 11 straight awards for this category, the audio giant loses by just over one percentage point in a category that should be a fun one to watch in future editions.



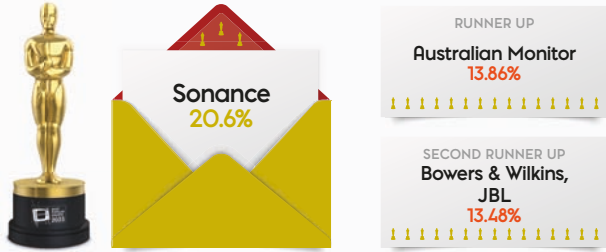
ARCHITECTURAL LOUDSPEAKER (COMMERCIAL) AUDIO



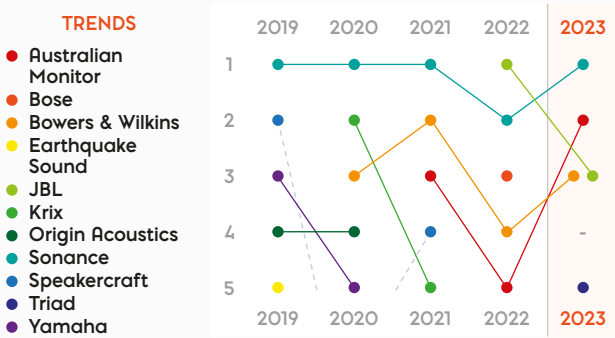
Sonance are taking home another award but unlike previous awards, they don't have a huge streak behind them (or are they just getting one started?). Bose came third but with the recent news about the Bose Professional branch breaking off from the parent company, we might see a shake-up in future award seasons. And welcome to Episode, polling for the first time in this five-year snapshot.



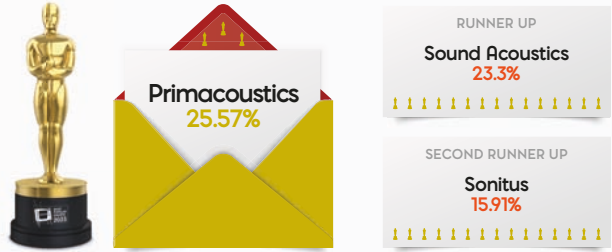
OUTDOOR LOUDSPEAKER AUDIO



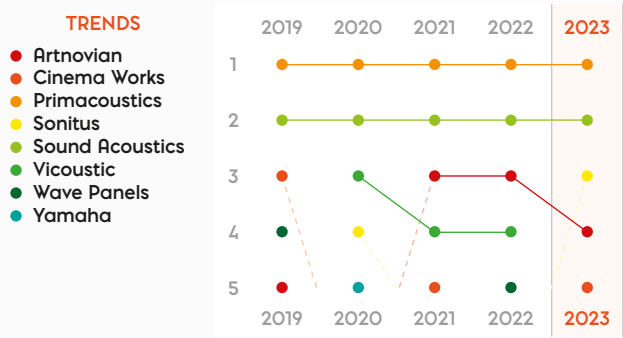
Last year's shocking come-from-nowhere win by JBL in the Outdoor Loudspeaker category has been tempered by a solid year by Sonance who comfortably pulled ahead into first place. This year, JBL and Bowers & Wilkins are sharing third place as Australian Monitor ever-so-slightly pulled ahead for a second-place finish.



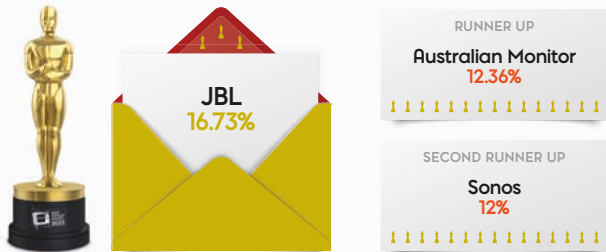
ACOUSTIC TREATMENT AUDIO



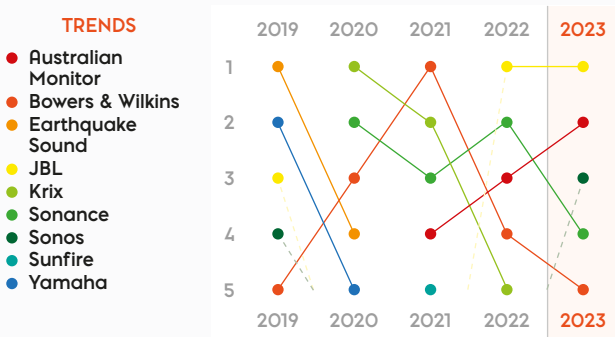
You can almost set your watch to the Acoustic Treatment category in the Most Popular Awards. For the past five years, Primacoustics and Sound Acoustics have steadily held the one and two positions respectively. After some years away from the awards race, Sonitus polled third in this year's awards.



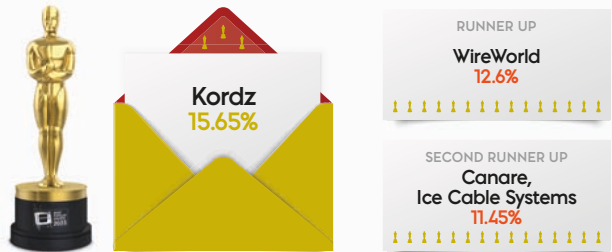
SUBWOOFERS AUDIO



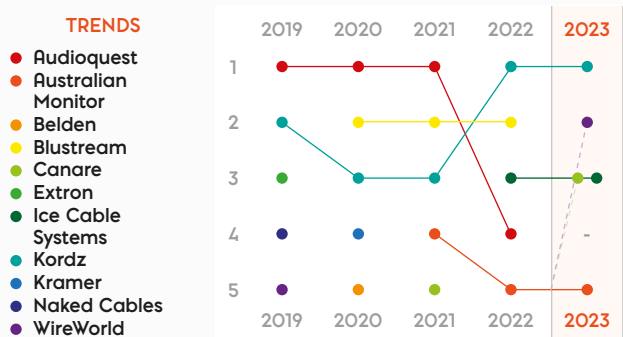
If the award before this was the most consistent award in the Most Popular Awards, the Subwoofer category is the complete opposite with brands jumping all over the place. The category is filled with familiar faces and this year's winner is JBL who snuck ahead of Australian Monitor and Sonos, winning a second straight.



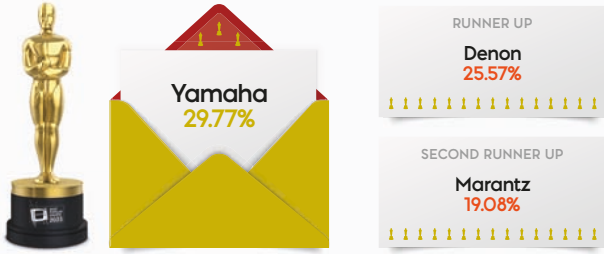
SPEAKER CABLING/INTERCONNECT AUDIO



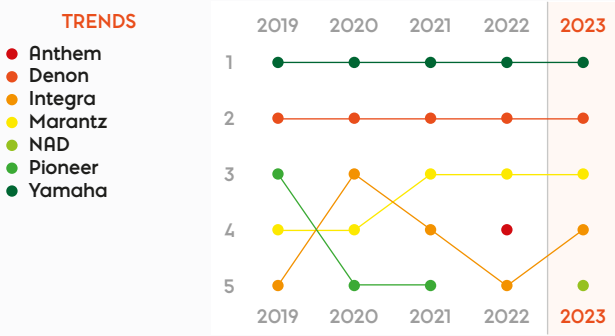
Kordz take the headlines with its second win in the Speaker Cabling/Interconnect category, separating itself from the crowded list of entrants. An intriguing storyline here is Audioquest's fall from the rankings. Last year, the company fell to fourth after winning the previous five Most Popular Awards in this category and this year, they failed to crack the top five.



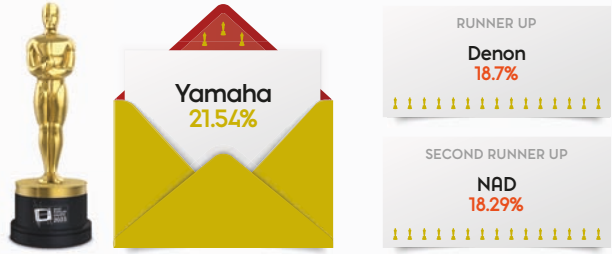
AV RECEIVER AUDIO



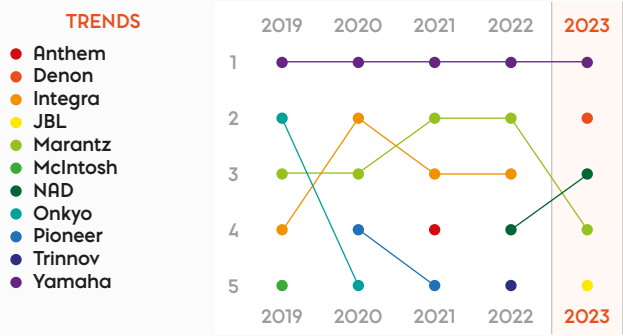
Business as usual in the AV Receiver category this year with Yamaha winning, chalking up its eighth win in a row. Despite some tough competition in the category, Yamaha only dropped one percentage point on its 2022 Most Popular Awards polling. For the first time in our five-year snapshot, NAD enters the race, hoping to make some noise in the future.



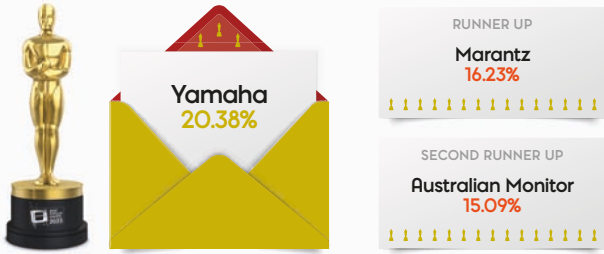
PREAMPLIFIER AUDIO



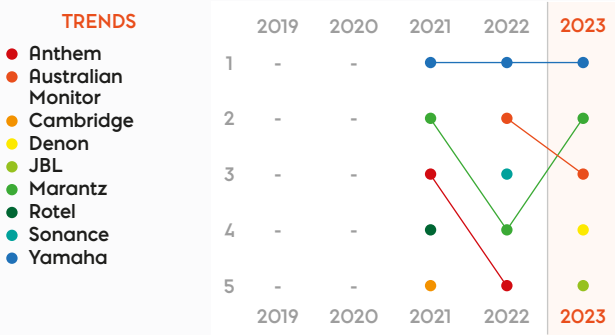
Yamaha has made it six-in-a-row with a victory here, polling 21.54% of the popular vote. This year's voting saw a huge leap from Denon who jump into second place, slightly nudging out NAD who climbed from fourth to third. JBL also enter this category for the first time in our snapshot.



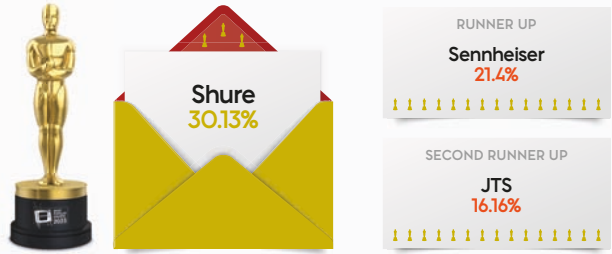
POWER AMPLIFIER AUDIO



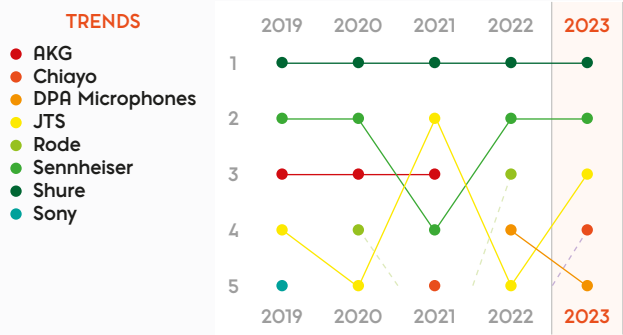
One of the younger categories in the Most Popular Awards, Yamaha has won every year that it has existed, and nothing has changed here. Marantz leapt back up to second place after a year in fourth position and Australian Monitor was a close third place. Denon and JBL entered the polling slots in this category for the first time.



MICROPHONES AUDIO



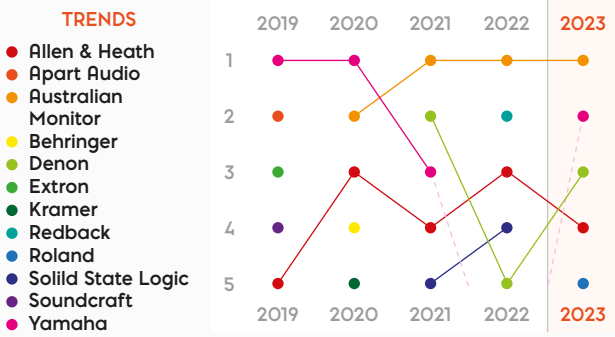
With over 30% of the vote for the second year in a row, Shure is solidifying its spot atop the Microphone category. Down the order, there's quite a lot of movement as Sennheiser holds on to the second place slot and JTS jumps up to third. Chiayo has come back into the top five after some time away, landing in the fourth place slot.



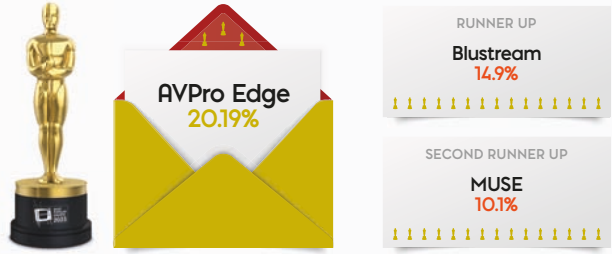
MIXER AUDIO



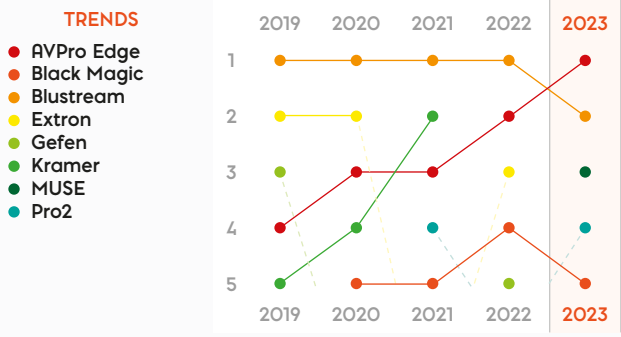
One of the more crowded categories in the Most Popular Awards, the Mixer category was won by Australian Monitor for the third straight year. Former mainstay, Yamaha, has returned to a podium finish (second) since falling out of the top five last year. Denon leaps up to third place as Allen & Heath continue to the rollercoaster polling journey, dropping down to fourth.



AUDIO EMBEDDER AUDIO



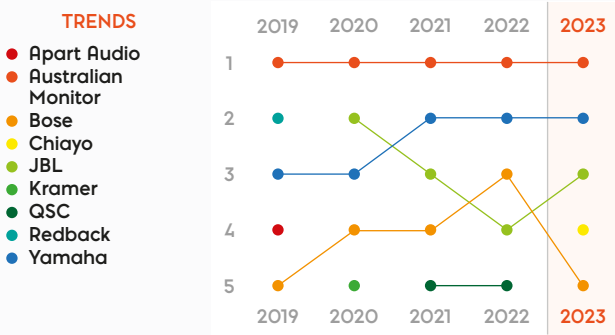
A shockwave rippled through the Connected magazine offices when these results came in. Not only were Blustream winners of four in a row, but last year, the company polled 38.8% of the popular vote. This year, it's a different story as AVPro Edge takes the crown, a fitting win to its steady rise in the category in the past five years. MUSE takes third place in its first-ever polled finish for the category.



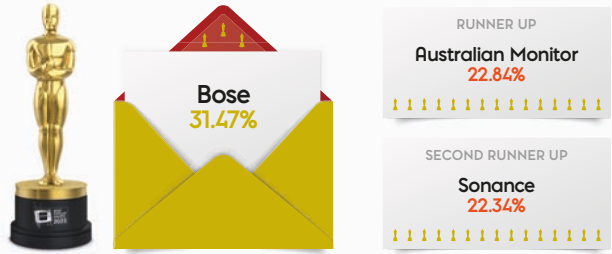
PA SYSTEM AUDIO



Australian Monitor continues to dominate in the PA System category and this year, it even extended its popular vote, rising from 26.24% in 2022 to 30.22% this year. Yamaha stayed relatively similar to last year and held on to the second place while JBL crept back up to third place. Chiayo entered the competition for the first time and finished with an impressive fourth place.



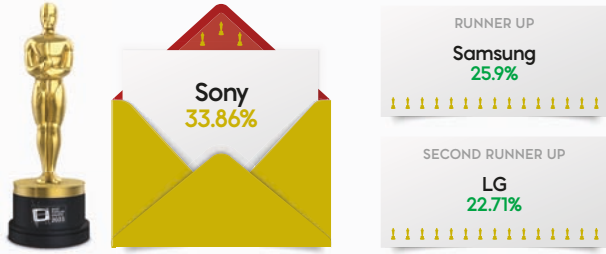
DSP AUDIO



In a new category for the Most Popular Awards, Bose won the Digital Signal Processing (DSP) category with just over 31% of the vote while Australian Monitor and Sonance were extremely close for the second and third place.

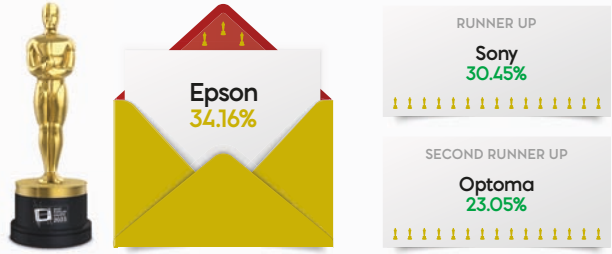


FLAT PANEL DISPLAYS VIDEO

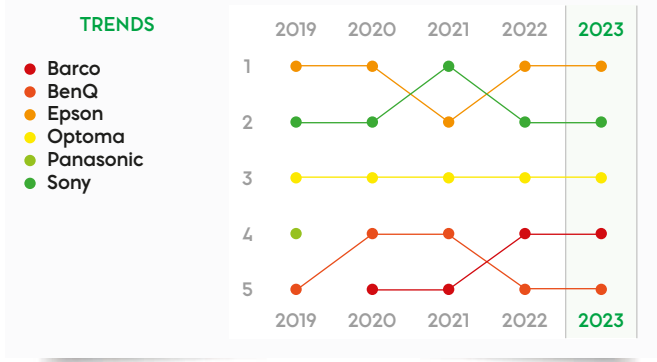
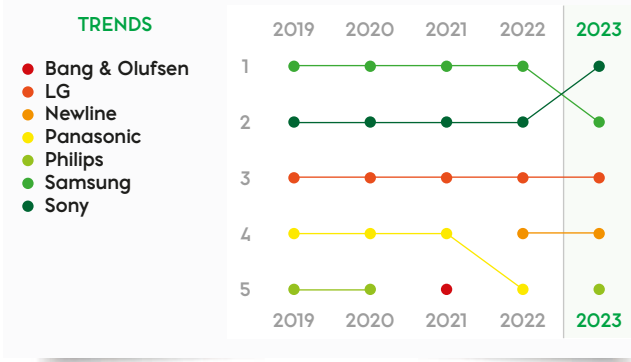


Two of the biggest names battled it out atop the Flat Panel Displays category this year with Sony stealing first place off Samsung for the first time in 11 years. Interestingly, the two companies share a lot of similarities with technology-sharing agreements between the two for various supplies. LG maintained the third spot while Bang & Olufsen and Panasonic fail to make the top five.

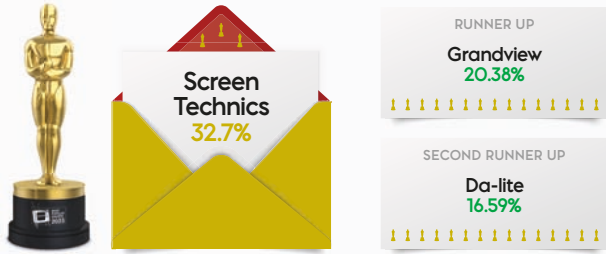
HOME THEATRE PROJECTOR VIDEO



The heart of any home theatre setup, the Home Theatre Projector Category is always a must-see in Connected's Most Popular Awards. Epson retained the first spot for a second year in a row while Sony had to settle for second place again. The top five was a copy of the previous years' and Epson's popular vote rose from 29.27% in 2022 to a staggering 34.16% this year.

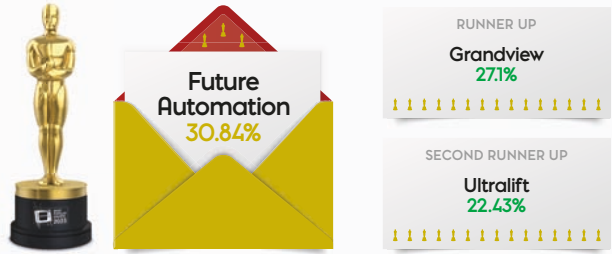


PROJECTION SCREEN VIDEO

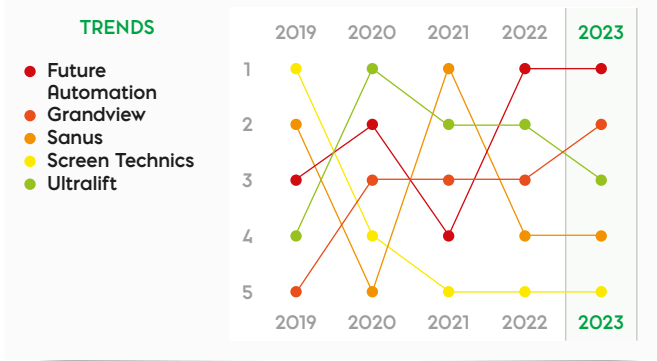
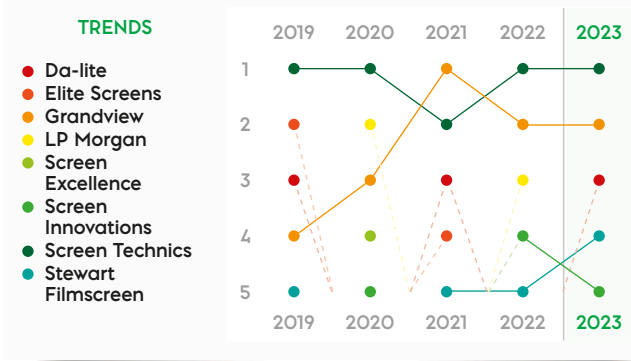


The Projection Screen category has been relatively stable at the top with the same top two (Screen Technics and Grandview) from last year remaining. Underneath them, it's hard to tell as Da-lite enters the top three after polling sixth in 2022 while Stewart Filmscreen and Screen Innovations round out the top five.

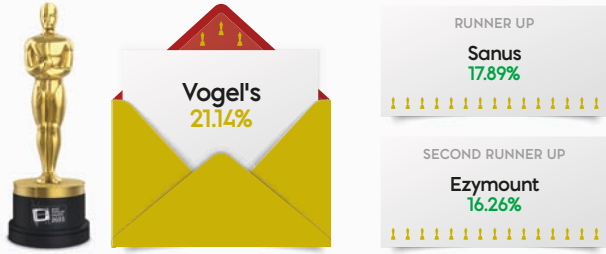
MOTORISED LIFTER VIDEO



Maybe Future Automation was using its two-time award-winning motorised lifter to lift it to the top of the Motorised Lifter category, but what it's doing works, grabbing just over 30% of the vote. It grew on the 26.15% it received last year. Former high finishers, Sanus and Screen Technics fell to the fourth and fifth spots respectively in this year's awards race.

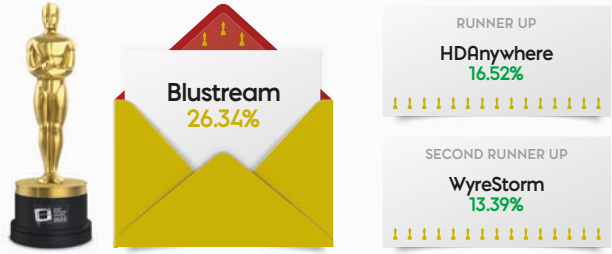


TV MOUNT VIDEO

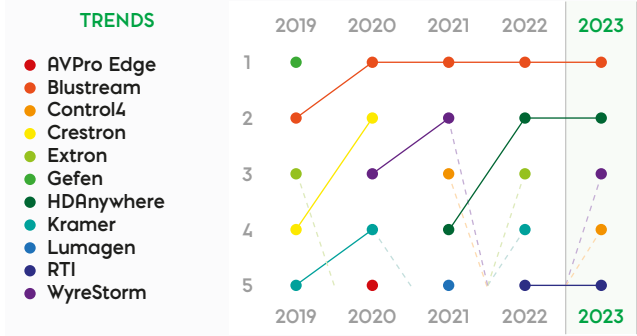
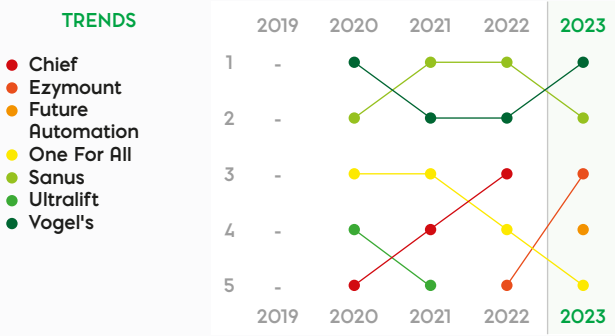


If this was an F1 race, Canohm would be walking away with 40 points in the podium finishes alone with its Vogel's and Ezymount solutions coming first and third. Sandwiched between them (and probably in the DRS range) is Sanus who held the top spot in this category for the past two years. Future Automation (grabbing 12 points in the F1) joined the category this year, coming fourth.

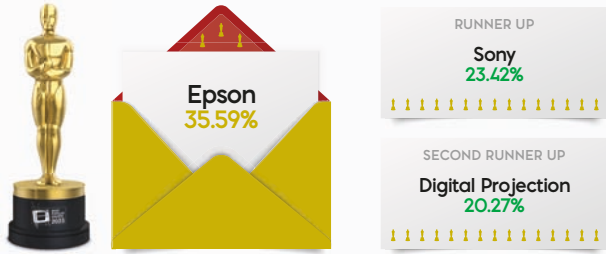
VIDEO PROCESSOR VIDEO



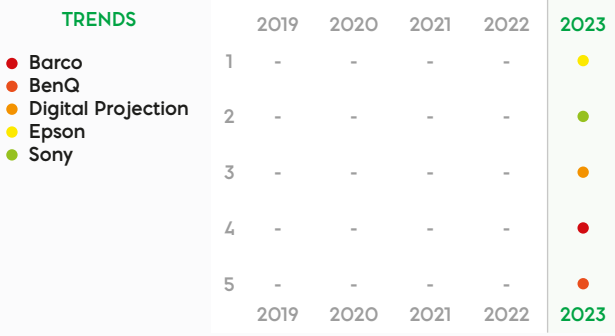
This is quickly becoming Blustream's award to lose as the company celebrates its fourth-straight win since coming second to Gefen in 2019. HDAnywhere continues a strong showing of second after leaping into the top three last year. WyreStorm are back in the snapshot after a year off in 2022.



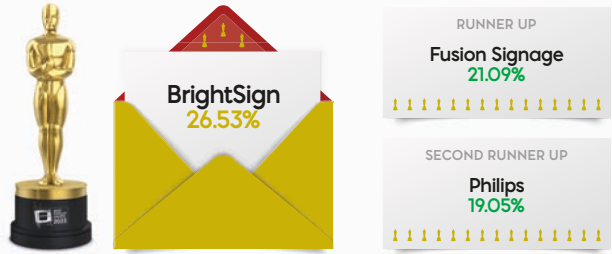
COMMERCIAL PROJECTOR VIDEO



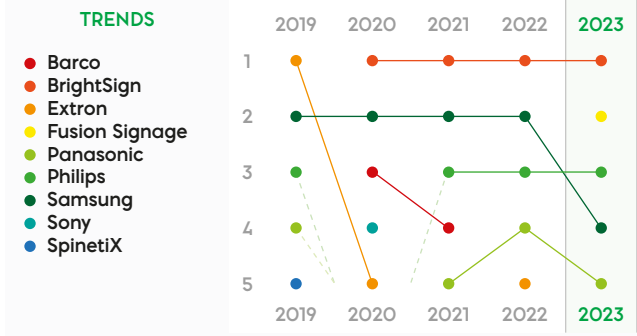
Another new category that has been introduced this year, the Commercial Projector category looks like it'll be a hotly contested one for years to come. In the debut poll, Epson stole over a third of the popular vote while Sony and Digital Projection did extremely well in their own rights. Barco and BenQ round out the top five but this race will be an interesting one for years to come.



DIGITAL SIGNAGE CMS VIDEO



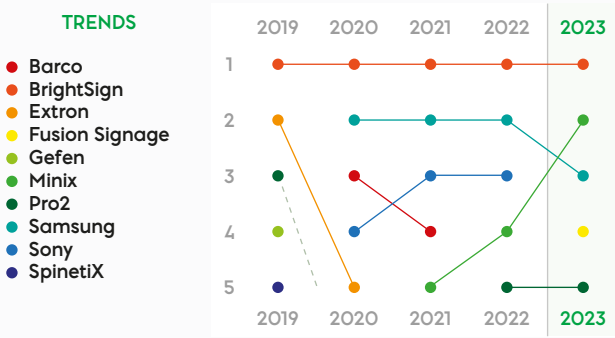
A familiar face sits atop the leaderboard in BrightSign but a huge 39.19% popular vote in 2022 fell to 26.5% this year. Fusion Signage starts its Most Popular Awards journey off in second place while Philips maintains a consistent third place. Samsung dropped several places after polling 26.35% of the popular vote in the 2022 Most Popular Awards.



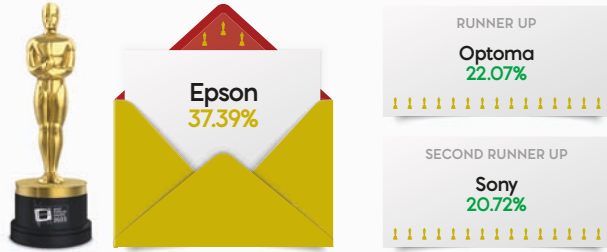
DIGITAL SIGNAGE PLAYER VIDEO



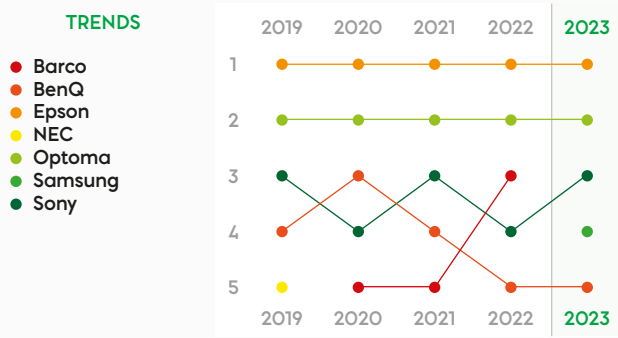
BrightSign makes it seven years in a row at the top of the Digital Signage Player category but like the category before this one, it saw its percentage of votes fall, this time, down from around 30%. Minix leapt up to second place, Samsung fell to third and Fusion Signage continues a debut Most Popular Awards section with a fourth-placed finish while Pro2 rounded out the top five.



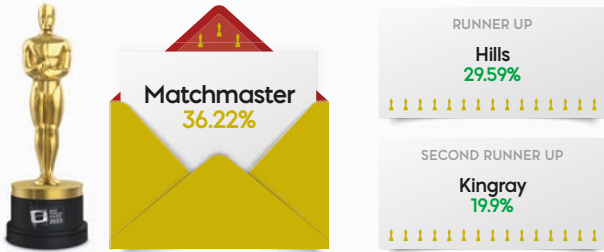
SHORT THROW PROJECTOR VIDEO



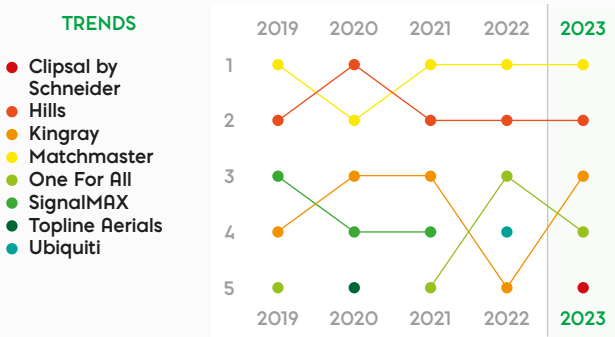
There seems to be no catching Epson in this category as it's over 15% of the popular vote ahead of the perpetual second-place finisher, Optoma. Sony continues its on again, off again pattern in this category, jumping up to third place from fourth as Samsung falls for the first time in this snapshot. Barco fails to make a top five position in this year's awards.



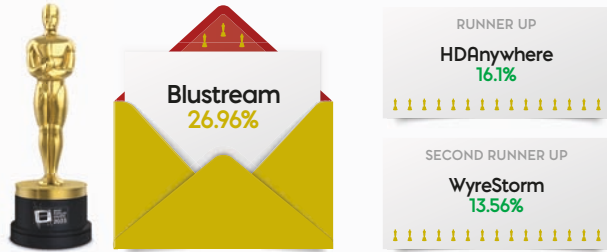
ANTENNA VIDEO



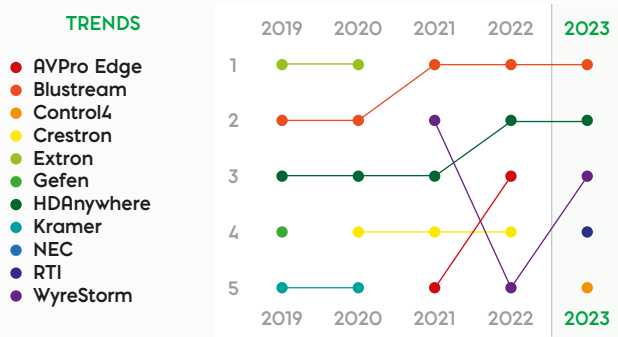
A very top-heavy battle, the leaders in the Antenna category keep their leads and build heavily on their 2022 numbers. Matchmaster grows from 24.23% last year to a whopping 36.22% this year while Hills rises from 19.07% to 29.59 (a number that would've won in previous years). Connected welcomes Clipsal by Schneider Electric in this year's awards as it rounds out the top five for the first time.



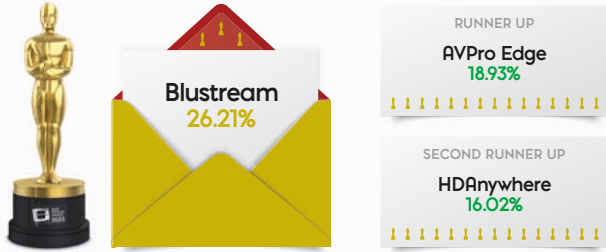
4K VIDEO EXTENDER VIDEO



Blustream and HDAnywhere keep the one and two positions locked down for another year while the rest of the market battle it out for the lower spots. In this year's Most Popular Awards, two new names in RTI and Control4 make the top five as integrators start to spread the love around when it comes to 4K video extenders.



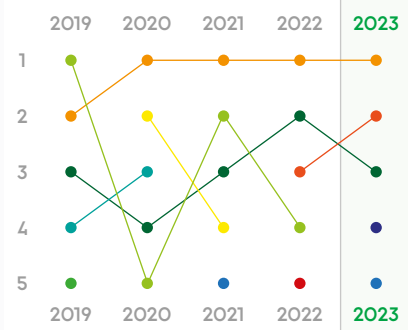
VIDEO SCALER VIDEO



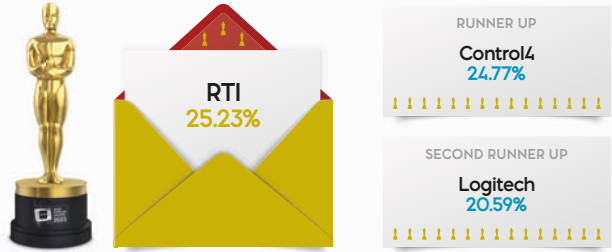
Similar to the 4K Video Extender category, Blustream and HDAnywhere typically poll very highly but this year sees AVPro Edge jump up a spot, grabbing nearly five percentage points on the popular vote. WyreStorm gets a top-five finish for the first time in a five-year snapshot while Pro2 rejoins the top spots, finishing fifth.

TRENDS

- AV Gear
- AVPro Edge
- Blustream
- Crestron
- Extron
- Gefen
- HDAnywhere
- Kramer
- Pro2
- WyreStorm



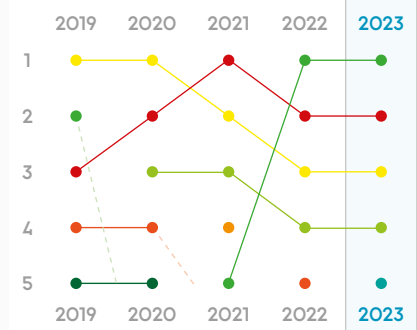
UNIVERSAL REMOTE CONTROL CONTROL



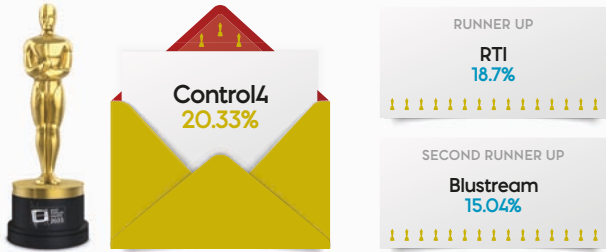
RTI has taken home the Universal Remote Control category for the second year in a row after narrowly edging out Control4 by less than a percentage point. As the main hub of any smart home or AV installation, this category is one of the more hotly contested ones and it'll be interesting to see what happens next year with Control4 nipping at the heels of the Amber Technology-distributed solution.

TRENDS

- Control4
- Crestron
- Elan
- Logitech
- One For All
- RTI
- Savant
- Tyba



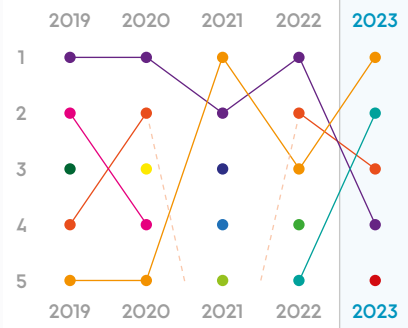
MULTI-ROOM AV DISTRIBUTION CONTROL



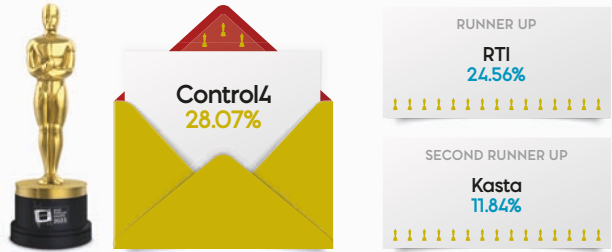
There has been a lot of movement in this category and after ceding the top spot last year, Control4 is back atop the list for 2023. Sonos, who enjoyed a win in 2022, 2020 and 2019 have fallen to the fourth spot as RTI jumps into the podium positions. Australian Monitor bursts onto this category with its first top-five finish in the entire five-year snapshot.

TRENDS

- Australian Monitor
- Blustream
- Control4
- Crestron
- Elan
- HDAnywhere
- Heos
- RTI
- Savant
- Sonance
- Sonos
- Yamaha



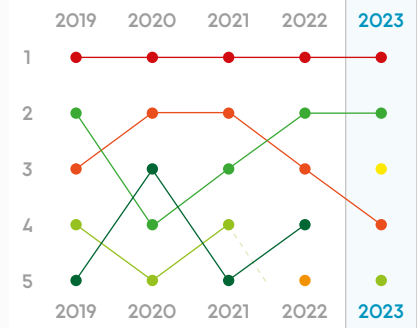
WHOLE-HOUSE CONTROL SYSTEM CONTROL



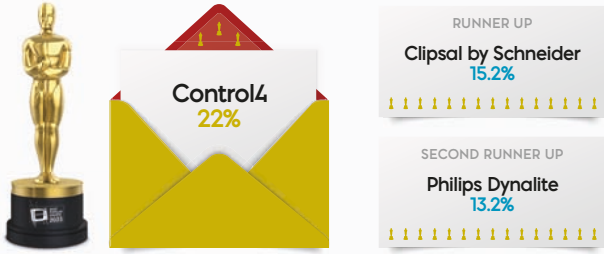
Control4 is really doing well in the control solutions for the 2023 Most Popular Awards, sealing an eighth win in a row for the Whole-house Control System category. RTI continues an impressive year by locking down the second spot and Kasta has entered this market for the first time, starting off with a third-place finish. Meanwhile, Crestron continues to drop in popularity for the third straight year.

TRENDS

- Control4
- Crestron
- Elan
- Kasta
- Kramer
- RTI
- Savant

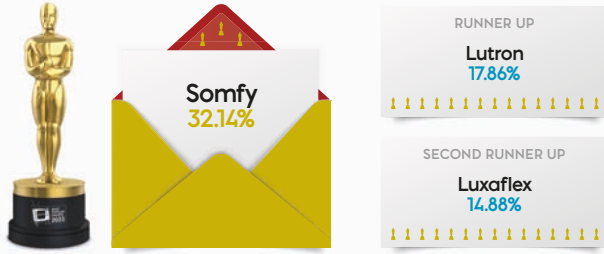


LIGHTING CONTROL SYSTEM CONTROL

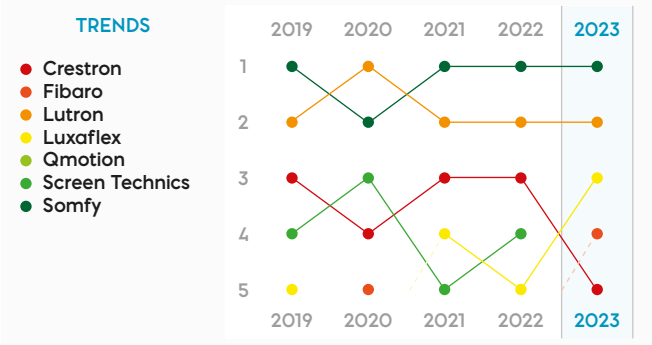
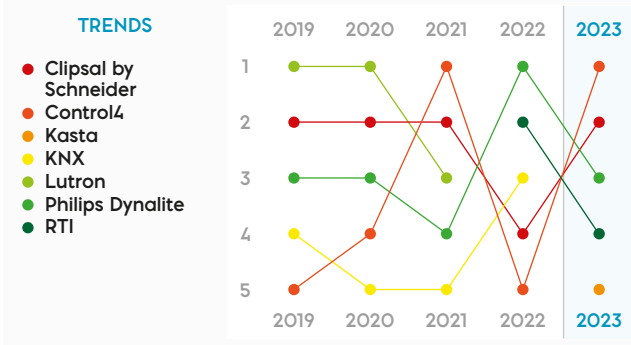


What a roller coaster ride for Control4 in this category, going from fourth to first to fifth to first this year. But it's not just Control4 running all over the shop, this interesting category has Philips Dynalite falling from first to third while Clipsal by Schneider Electric regains the second place after a year down the order. Interestingly, KNX failed to place this year after a consistent showing.

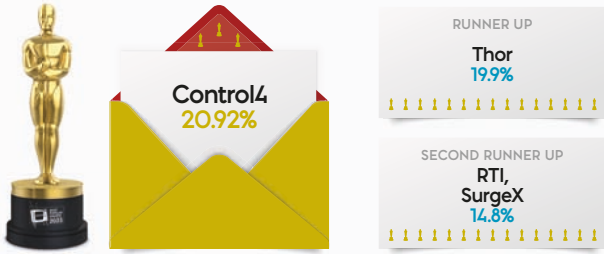
MOTORISED BLINDS CONTROL



Somfy makes it three in a row after beating Lutron again. A commanding 32.14% is enough to win this year's award but it's a drop on the company's 35.5% it received last year while Lutron dropped around four percentage points. Crestron was flirting with the third position for a few years but fell to fifth in this year's awards.

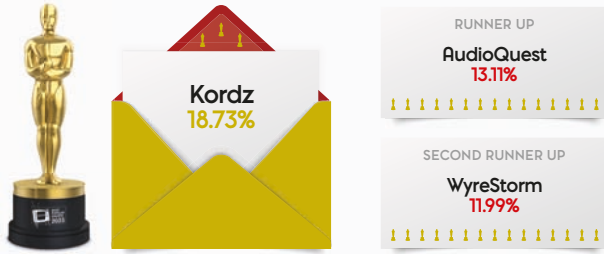


ENERGY MONITORING CONTROL

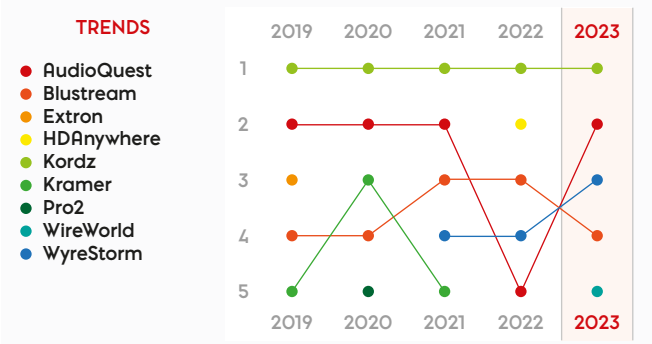
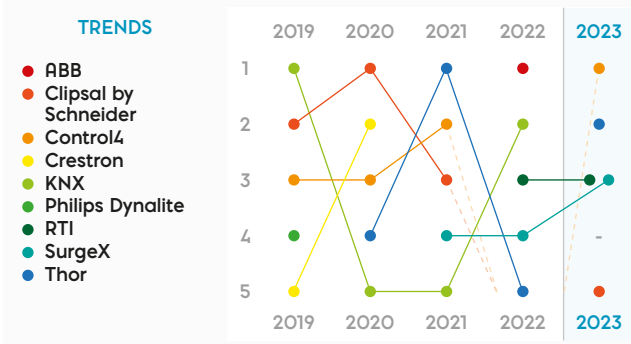


"From the top rope!" Control4 has jumped from sixth in 2022 to a first-place finish in the 2023 Most Popular Awards and last year's winner, ABB, failed to finish in the top five. In fact, last year's second-place finisher, KNX, also failed to hit the top five in 2023 as new entrants in Thor and Clipsal by Schneider Electric round out the top five.

HDMI CABLING INFRASTRUCTURE



The veins of every AV installation, HDMI Cabling is a big category for integrators and Kordz continues to win the award, which has since we started hosting these awards. This year, AudioQuest jumps into second place and WyreStorm rounds out the podium finishes. WireWorld is a new entrant in this category and finishes fifth.



MATRIX SWITCHER INFRASTRUCTURE

Extron
23.11%

RUNNER UP
Blustream
17.23%

SECOND RUNNER UP
Control4
15.55%

Extron has won the Matrix Switcher category for the second year in a row while Blustream keeps a podium place and Control4 continues a consistent rise in this category, jumping to third. Last year, HDAnywhere increased its vote share by ten percentage points but finds itself in fifth place this year, dropping down to its lowest mark in the past five years.

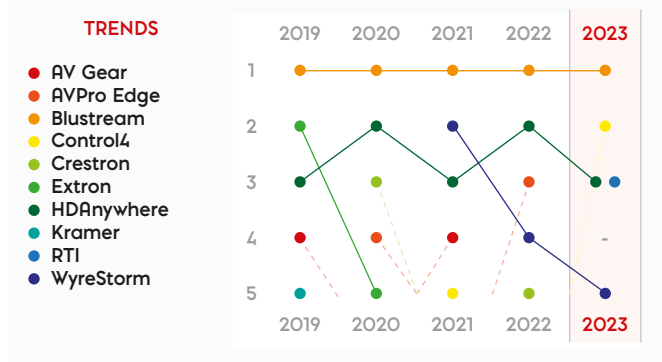
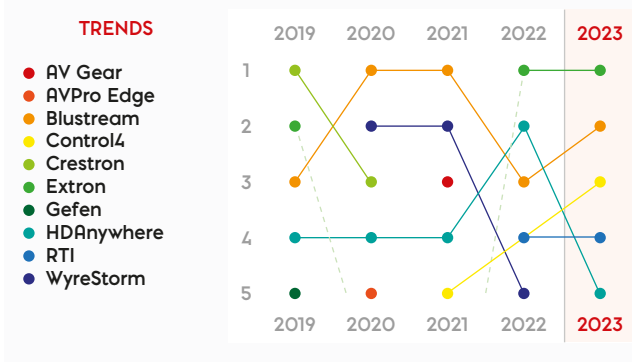
HDBASET EXTENDER KIT INFRASTRUCTURE

Blustream
29.63%

RUNNER UP
Control4
15.23%

SECOND RUNNER UP
HDAnywhere, RTI
14.4%

HDBaseT Extender Kits have been dominated by Blustream in the history of the Most Popular Awards, receiving its eighth-straight win. With a vote share of nearly 30%, Blustream even grew on the tally from 2022. After failing to make a top five spot last year, Control4 finds itself in the top spots with a silver medal while HDAnywhere and RTI share honours of third place.



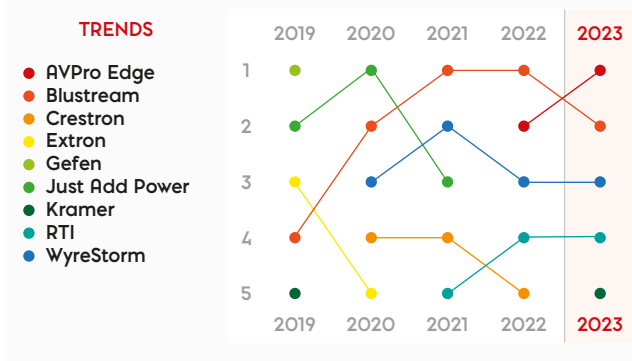
AV-OVER-IP INFRASTRUCTURE

AVPro Edge
29.28%

RUNNER UP
Blustream
14.86%

SECOND RUNNER UP
WyreStorm
14.41%

A battle at the top of the AV-over-IP category swings in favour of AVPro Edge as it pretty much swaps votes with Blustream. In 2022, Blustream won with just over 27% of the votes while AVPro Edge came in second with 17%. The rest of the board was mostly chalk from the previous year except for Kramer, finishing fifth for the first time since 2019.



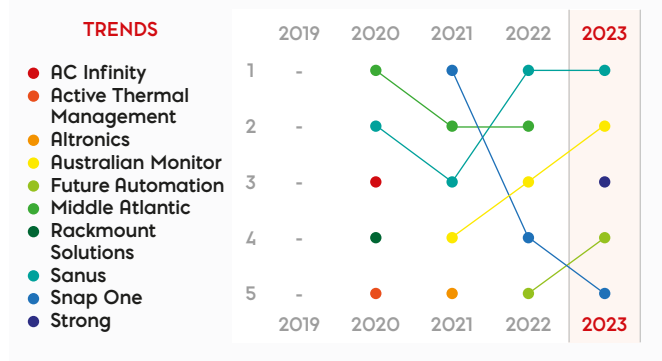
RACKS/CABINETS INFRASTRUCTURE

Sanus
19.44%

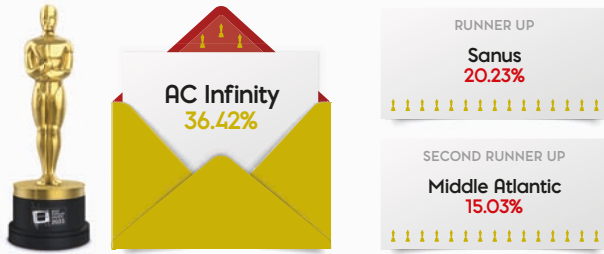
RUNNER UP
Australian Monitor
18.98%

SECOND RUNNER UP
Strong
18.06%

The Racks/Cabinets category has some of the most entrants in it for any category and Sanus has separated itself for the second year in a row by the slimmest of margins. Australian Monitor continues a consistent rise to second place but with less than a percentage point between first and second, next year's award race will be hotly contested again.

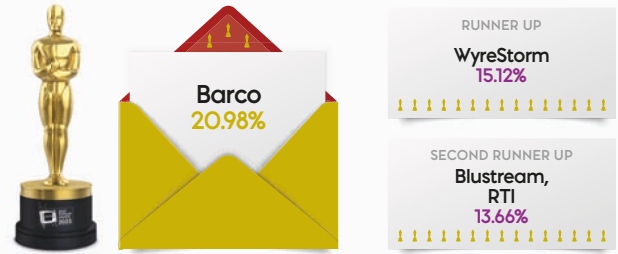


RACK COOLING SYSTEM INFRASTRUCTURE



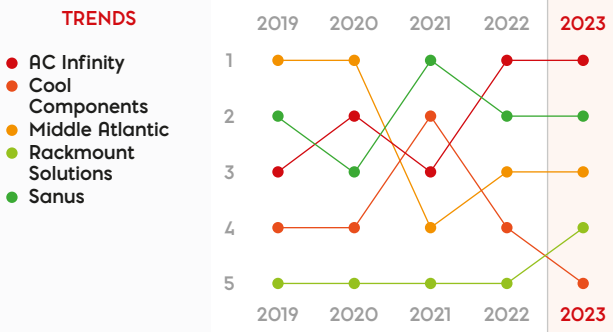
The Rack Cooling System category has been dominated by AC Infinity for the second year running, polling a whopping 36.43% of the popular vote while the remaining four companies stay nearly identical with the 2022 standings. Rackmount Solutions jumps up to fourth place while Cool Components falls to fifth.

PRESENTATION/COLLABORATION TOOL COMMUNICATIONS

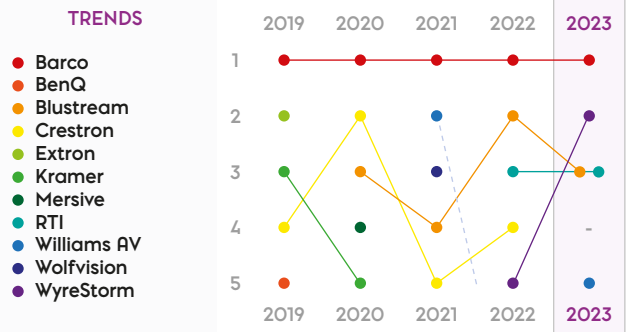


The Presentation/Collaboration Tool category is another must-watch every awards run and Barco has, once again, pulled away to win. In the 2022 awards, Barco took first place while growing its total vote by nearly ten percentage points. This year, it increased slightly and holds onto the lead. WyreStorm saw its percentage of votes increase as well as it moved from fifth place to second place.

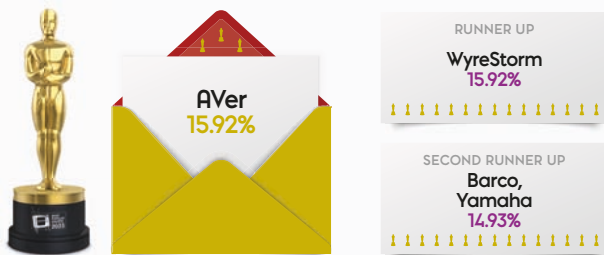
TRENDS



TRENDS

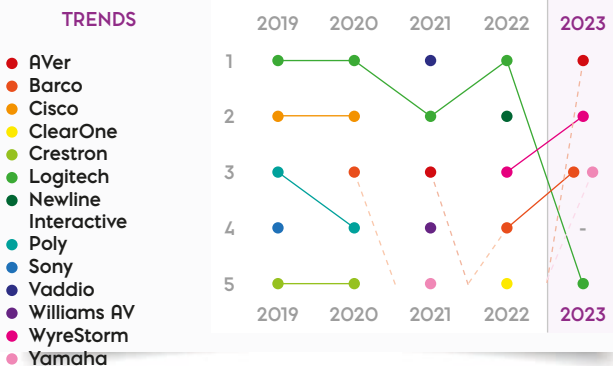


VIDEO CONFERENCING EQUIPMENT COMMUNICATIONS

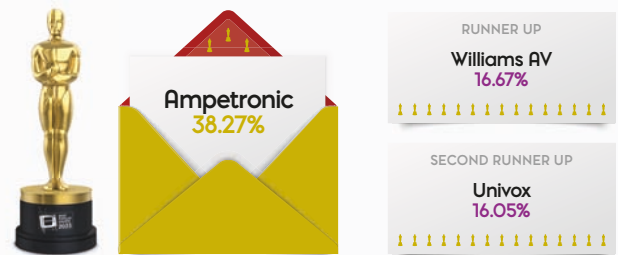


This category is moving more than a day-five pitch at the Adelaide Oval. You can skip the key test by Tubby Taylor and just bowl the balls because who knows what's going to happen. Last year's winner, Logitech, fell from first to fifth while AVer came from outside the boundaries to steal the top spot in this year's voting. WyreStorm showed consistent growth and hit the second overall spot.

TRENDS

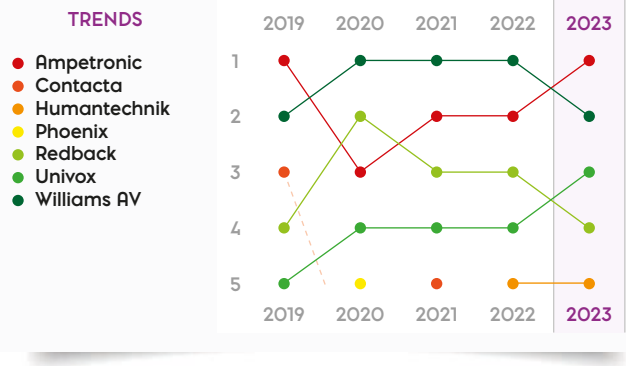


HEARING LOOP COMMUNICATIONS



One of the biggest moves in this year's awards, the 2022 winner, Williams AV previously received 46% of the vote and had first place but this year's winner, Ampetronic swapped places and stormed into first place with a huge 38% of the total vote. Univox saw steady growth in popularity as it moved into the podium slots.

TRENDS



INTERACTIVE DISPLAYS COMMUNICATIONS

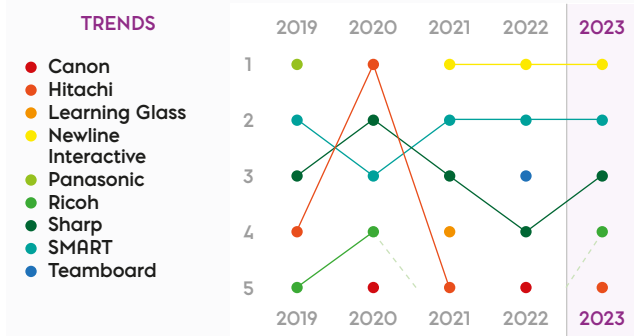
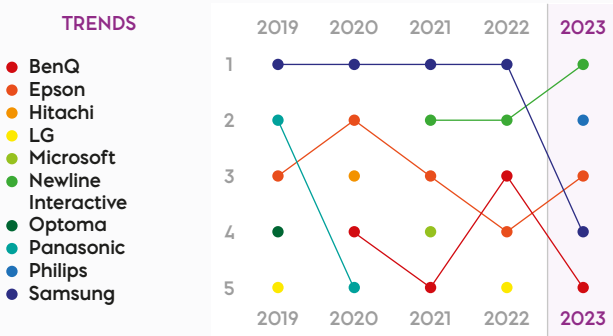


Newline Interactive saw modest growth on its 2022 popular vote but the sharp decline by Samsung in the Interactive Displays category steals the headlines this year. Samsung took 21.69% of the popular vote last year and fell to fourth place this year. A debutant in this category, Philips is starting at the second place for this category.

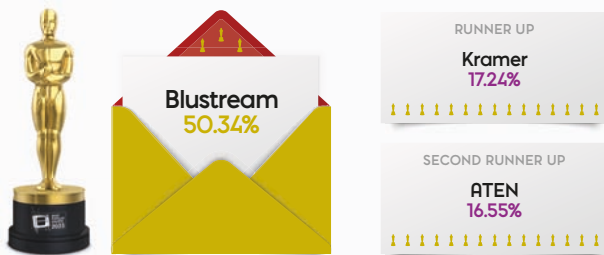
ELECTRONIC WHITEBOARDS COMMUNICATIONS



Much of the same at the top of the table, Newline Interactive and Smart held steady atop the category of electronic whiteboards while Ricoh and Hitachi crept into the final two spots. Sharp rose to the third position and would be hoping to regain some momentum it had at the start of the pandemic when it was securely in the top three.



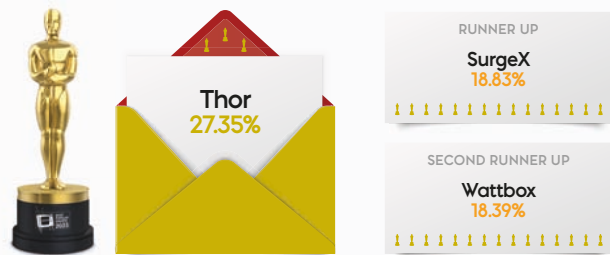
KVM COMMUNICATIONS



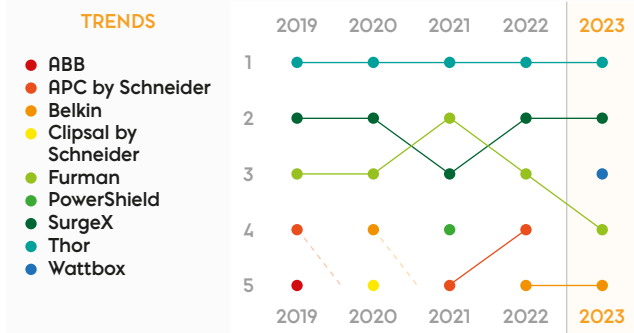
Another new category for the Most Popular Awards in 2023 is the KVM category and Blustream has the highest popular vote that we've seen in any category so far. Securing over half of all entrants, Blustream might have found a home atop this category for years to come. We'll see if ATEN, Dynalink, Kramer and Matrox can make some noise in future surveys.



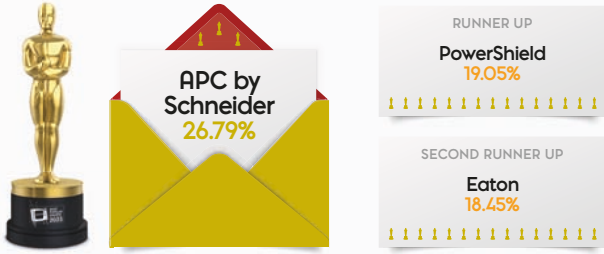
SURGE PROTECTION ELECTRICAL



This is one of those categories that will be of keen interest to all integrators and manufacturers. Thor has secured the top spot for a mighty 12 wins in a row now and it holds nearly ten percentage points above the second place SurgeX. Wattbox entered the awards with a third-place finish and Furman continues to dip, falling out of the podium spots for the first time in our snapshot.

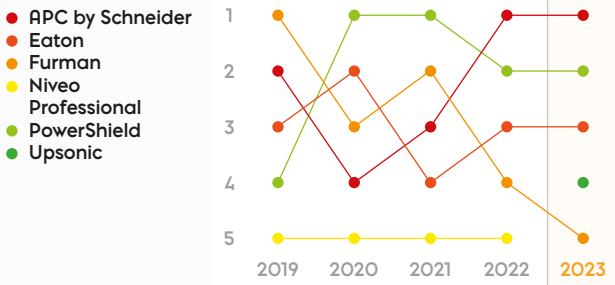


UPS ELECTRICAL

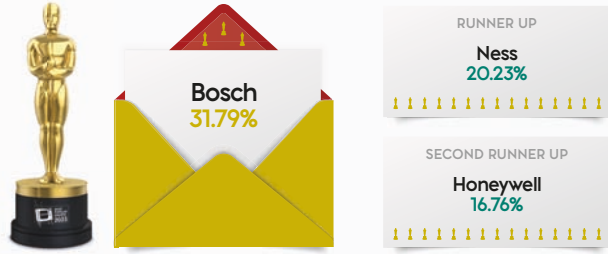


Another electrical category saw much of the same with APC by Schneider notching a brace with just under 27% of the popular vote. PowerShield and Eaton held the second and third places for a second year in a row while Furman, like in other categories, continued a sharp decline in the popular vote.

TRENDS

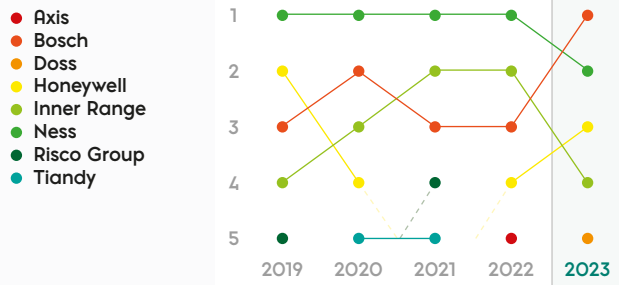


INTEGRATED SECURITY SYSTEM SECURITY

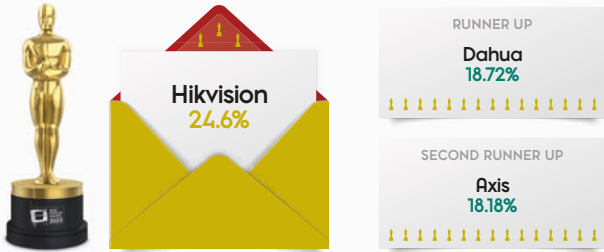


Ness won last year but saw its popular vote dip to 33.16% and 2023 wasn't any kinder as it fell by around 13 percentage points and Bosch scooped up a lot of those votes to steal the gold medal. Inner Range had an impressive rise in this five-year snapshot, but it couldn't sustain the positive momentum and fell to the fourth spot.

TRENDS

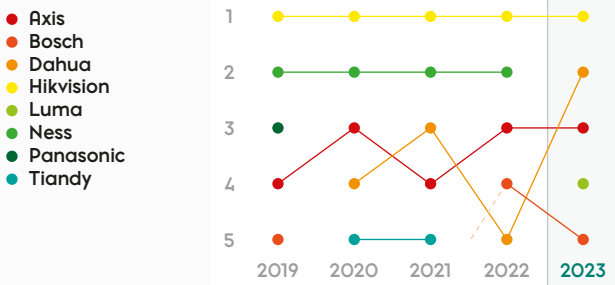


IP SECURITY CAMERA SECURITY

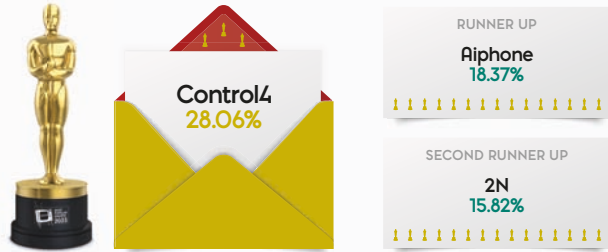


Hikvision will receive the gold medal for coming in first again, but it wasn't as comfortably as last year's 44.83% of the vote it enjoyed. The biggest riser in this category was Dahua who went from fifth last year with 8.87% of the vote to second this year with 18.72% of the vote. Ness fell completely off the board after sitting pretty at number two for the previous four years.

TRENDS

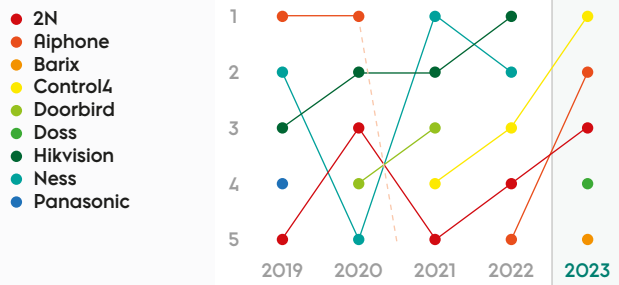


INTERCOM SECURITY



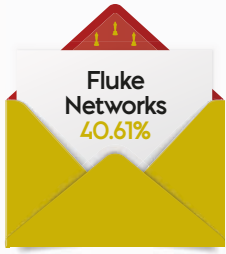
The Intercom category in the Most Popular Awards has been all about the risers in the past couple of years with multi-year improvements from Control4, Aiphone and 2N all securing the top three spots. Previous winners, Hikvision and Ness are nowhere to be seen in this year's top five for the first time in the entire snapshot.

TRENDS



TOOLS

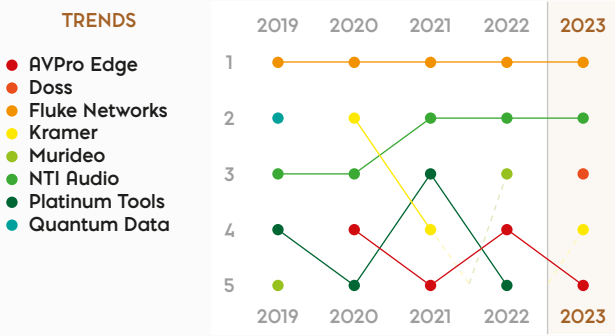
TEST AND MEASUREMENT TOOLS



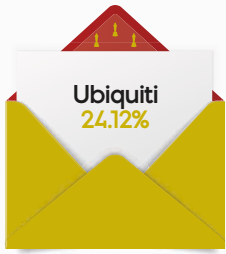
RUNNER UP
NTI Audio
 20.81%

SECOND RUNNER UP
Doss
 13.71%

Test and measure tools are the best friend of every integrator and the most popular of those tools is, once again, Fluke Networks. NTI Audio has held on to the second spot for three years in a row now and newcomer, Doss, launches itself into third place in its first top-five finish in the whole snapshot. After a year away, Kramer returned to the fourth spot in this year's awards.



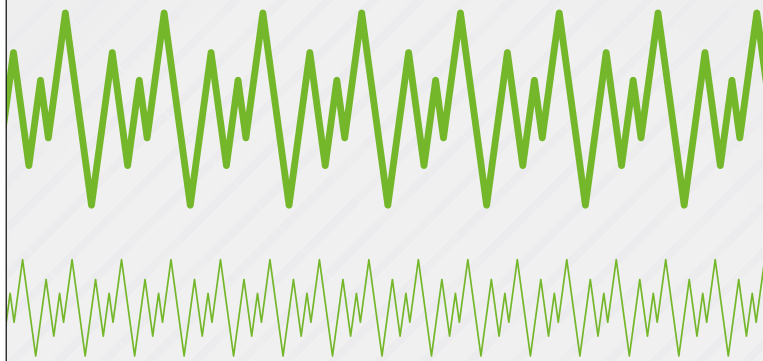
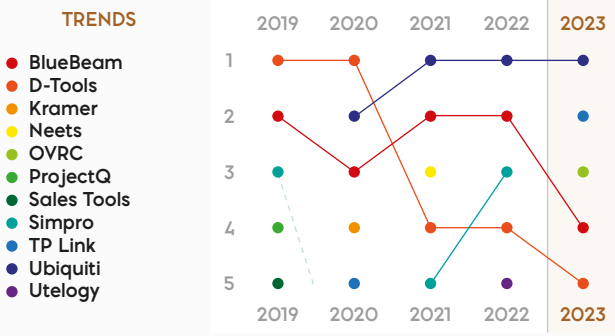
SOFTWARE TOOLS



RUNNER UP
TP Link
 23.53%

SECOND RUNNER UP
OVRC
 19.41%

Ubiquiti make it a hat trick as they hit the top spot for the third year running, followed (very) closely by TP Link and then OVRC. BlueBeam fall out of the top three for the first time since 2020 and former mainstay in this category, D-Tools, hangs on to a snapshot finish with fifth but the trajectory doesn't look great.



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