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## Backstreet's Back with Portal Design

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In order to make the most of an impossible schedule, LD John LaBriola turned to Dallas-based [Portal Design Services](#) for help with the Backstreet Boys summer tour of Asia.

Ahead of their new album, the Backstreet Boys were planning a short tour of China and Japan. The band would play a night in Beijing and one in Shanghai, before moving on to five sold-out nights at the Yoyogi Gym in Tokyo, Japan. Yet LaBriola and lighting director Jason Deboer had no production rehearsals for the large-scale arena and stadium-sized shows. A portable WYSIWYG visualization system from Portal Design Services proved to be the solution to the problem.

### The Entertainment Technology Show



Portal shipped the self-contained system directly to LaBriola's house so that he could program the show in his home office. "I was able to complete the vast majority of the cueing at home," says LaBriola. "The pre-programming was all about information management. We could swap fixtures around in the WYSIWYG drawing easily and we could also do the same in the grandMA console we were using for control. It was difficult to get confirmation about exactly what equipment would be waiting for us in China. Being able to swap fixture types and expand or contract the major design elements while preserving the programming meant that the grandMA was the only console for the job."

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With only a week to go before the tour left for China, LaBriola flew to Los Angeles with Portal's portable WYSIWYG system to meet with production and the band to go over the show's structure. LaBriola showed members of the production team renderings produced in Portal Design Services render farm by Jordan Ray illustrating what the show would look like. The time in Los Angeles also gave LaBriola the chance to teach DeBoer the show, before Deboer left for China with the tour, using Portal's WYSIWYG system.


Despite the total reliance on 'virtual lighting design,' the shows went off without a hitch. "This really shows what is possible with visualization software," comments LaBriola. "It has become such a cliché to say 'this show would not have happened without it,' but these shows really wouldn't have."



A rendering of the Backstreet Boys Asia tour design by Portal Design Services, and the finished live project, below.





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