

ESPARTACO

# SAEZ

A name like Espartaco - Spanish for Spartacus - is not an easy one to forget. There is certainly only one in the industry that I know of. Named after the Roman gladiator, Espartaco Saez, Global Sales & Commercial Director at Acustica Beyma, was born and bred in his native Spain, but since early adulthood has enjoyed travelling the world, to both explore new cultures and earn a living. Rachael Rogerson-Thorley chatted to the Spaniard to learn more about the gladiator's namesake.





*"I was 24-years-old and I hadn't worked a single day in my life, without living on my family's money. I was on a comfortable and secure life path, but I needed to prove to myself that I could make it on my own."*

Maybe there is something I'm missing, but Valencia, Spain seems to be a hub of activity for our industry. Companies from the worlds of audio, lighting and trussing industry all call Valencia home, and it's not difficult to see why. A port city on the south-east coast of Spain, famous for its art culture, architecture, food and Les Falles - a local festival held every year in March. But why have a collection of audiovisual companies gathered there? And how does a man originating from the city end up in an industry that is thriving in the region, despite being born in Madrid and studying law?

Espartaco Saez, Global Sales & Commercial Director at Acustica Beyma was born into a Valencian family, however, his parents moved to Madrid in the '70s for his father's work, so both Espartaco and his younger brother were born in the Spanish capital. The family put down roots there, staying for almost 20 years. "I remember those times as happy ones, plenty of sports, bicycles and many friends," said Espartaco.

"During my last year in Madrid, my parents sent me to the south of England to study English. I think that experience was important because I suddenly realised that the world was much bigger than I thought, and that feeling awoke huge curiosity in

me. I wanted to know and discover more." After returning from England, and once Espartaco turned 17, the Saez's returned to their hometown, where Espartaco has now set down his own roots with his wife and their 10-year-old son.

Espartaco recalled: "By the time I returned to Valencia, I had become quite interested in literature, history and politics. I remember my father telling me, 'if you are thinking about studying literature remember that lawyers master language like no others, and it will give you a wide view - and the tools - to understand the world. After finishing school you can do whatever you like.' I took my father's advice, I entered into the School of Law at the University of Valencia."

Alongside law, Espartaco studied creative writing and the history of cinema, he also fondly remembered meeting some incredible people, who he still considers his friends today. The travel continued throughout his studies, too, however, once he received his degree in law and the BAR approval to work as a lawyer, he started to help his father at his law office - the family business.

"But something felt uneasy," Espartaco continued. "I was 24-years-old and I hadn't worked a single day in my life, without living on my family's money. I was



on a comfortable and secure life path, but I needed to prove to myself that I could make it on my own.”

With that attitude, he decided to leave everything behind in Valencia and travel for a while, ‘listening to the rebel inside him’, as he put it. “If you want to write as Jack London - the American novelist, journalist, and social activist - you have to live like Jack London, that’s what I thought. So, I moved to London with a few books, some music and very little money.” His journey took him primarily to the UK, spending time in London, as well as Edinburgh and he stayed there for almost two years. “I had many weird and wonderful jobs

during that time, gained priceless experience, things that you simply don’t learn at university. I would strongly recommend any young person to go and get lost in the world for a while. It is very interesting to see different ways of thinking and different perspectives on understanding life.” Upon returning to Spain, and after much soul searching, Espartaco had come to the decision that he wanted travel to be part of his career, giving him the opportunity to meet new people and see new places. He took the decision to go back to school and study international trade, business and commerce.

Just after the turn of the millennium, he

was offered his first job on his new career path. Avance Tecnico del Sonido / Signat Electronics was a Spanish distributor for European and American car audio and Hi-Fi brands. This was the first contact Espartaco had with the audio industry and he hasn’t looked back since. “At first, I was in charge of being the international face of the company, looking after more than 15 brands that we were importing into Spain. I handled all the procurement and negotiations and in a second stage - after I was promoted - I was also supervising our commercial structures and helping with the general management of the company. I spent several years there and learned a 🍷

• Above top  
Espartaco with  
Jorge Serrano,  
R&D Director.

• Above below  
Espartaco with  
Jorge Dosda,  
Director of  
Operations.



• Above Espartaco and the team at the NAMM Show 2019 celebrating the company's 50th anniversary.

lot, some knowledge that I still make use of today.”

It was 2005 when Espartaco joined Beyma, and due to his experience, he was hired as Commercial Director in the car audio division. Although, after just three short years, that division was closed down, as the company as a whole wanted to put all its efforts into professional audio.

Subsequently, he was made Commercial Director of the company - the position he still holds to the present day.

“The first two important tasks in that role were to redefine the sales structures in the USA and China. It was a real challenge and a tough job to achieve, but after we spent some time on it, focussed on the task in hand, we fully succeeded in this mission.

“From the technical point of view, Jorge

Serrano was appointed as R&D Director around that time. That was a key decision since Jorge and his great team have put in a lot of time, effort and work in order to keep Beyma at the forefront of the professional audio industry. They led this area of development, always listened and communicated with the rest of departments in the company to ensure the best results.”

The different departments at Beyma are actually very well represented. Despite it being a family owned business - set up by the Masip family back in 1969 - it is structured by a board of directors made up of a member of staff from each key department - so the management tier as a whole is both independent and professional.

“As a member of the board myself, I have responsibilities in the overall functioning of the Beyma brand, including marketing

activities and international sales operations. Fortunately, I am surrounded by a lot of talented people in different areas. It is good to work with intelligent people who have diverse skills. If I give them the room to display their abilities and express opinions, even if they are sometimes different to mine, the whole project benefits,” added Espartaco.

In addition, Beyma also operates on an ‘open door’ policy. He expanded: “For instance, the president and the managing director’s offices are always open for anyone who wants to speak to them. So Beyma, compared to some other companies, has a strong transparency culture.” From an outwardly perspective, Beyma is valued by its customers for the product it can offer. “We are in direct contact with our customers, and give each one a personal



• Above  
Espartaco  
with owner  
Jose Masip.

service, which denotes flexibility. That is a reflection of what is going on inside the company, too... our culture. Our words are backed by our actions, so we show a high level of integrity and coherence, which translates into a lot of long-term customers for Beyma.”

Being a designer and manufacturer of transducers isn't the easiest of gigs, as its product is only one element of a large product - the loudspeaker - and it is the latter, which receives the majority of the praise and recognition. In some cases, it is widely known which transducers are inside a brand of loudspeaker cabinets, on other occasions it is top secret. Beyma is well known in the worlds of OEM and ODM, and not only produces drivers for a number of high-end brands, but is also capable of adapting designs to suit specific projects. Today, the company is proud to have a collection of patents under its belt including Helicex Technology and Malt-Cross Technology, and it has a presence across five continents around the world.

Some big achievements for a company that is just 50-years-old.

Obviously, it goes without saying that even if it isn't widely known where all the Beyma products end up, the team is in the know. So, Espartaco is well equipped to outline the company's main markets as fixed installations and live sound. “Installed sound will continue to grow as there is a general trend to enrich the customer experience in many different environments, and sound is a key part of that. Live music will carry on increasing because the music industry depends more on live events than it did 20 years ago. We are also serving the cinema market, as well as super Hi-Fi, where we have several products doing a great job.” Reminiscing over how the company has developed over the years, Espartaco said: “We have made a great effort to automate the production processes. These improvements were started by our own initiative, in order to increase the consistency of the products, the productive capacity and improve processes. At the same time, the

market has been increasing its demands in terms of quality, technological innovation and price competitiveness. So, both forces - internal decisions and market demands - are fed back to each other in a process that never ends.”

A standout product in the Beyma range, according to Espartaco, is the 18LEX because it is an excellently constructed product, with an extraordinarily low weight and features that make it one of the best in the world in its category. The company also implemented a striking marketing campaign around this product launch, which Espartaco is particularly proud of. He elaborated: “We presented the R&D team as a rock band - which was not complicated because they are all musicians - with comprehensive interviews and a presentation of each member involved in this product development. That was really different in comparison to our competitors, who usually hide their technical teams. During the interviews we emphasised the artistic size of the speaker, ☺



and the design which is inspired by Gaudi Architecture - a tribute to the founders of our company, the Masip family, who are from Barcelona. The final part of the campaign was the R&D team playing live music at Prolight+Sound in Frankfurt, something that has never been done before by any other company."

This year at the tradeshow in Germany, Beyma will be marking its 50th anniversary with a stand party on 4 April from 6pm. "I invite all readers to come along and especially the mondo\*dr staff, we moved the day of the party so it wasn't on the same day as the mondo\*dr Awards!" Espartaco and the Beyma team will also be

showcasing some new high, mid and low frequency solutions they have been working on. Both of which will continue to grow the public exposure of the company. One potential future problem Espartaco identified though, not only for Beyma but for the industry as a whole is access to rare earth minerals - neodymium magnets - could become challenging in the not too distant future, since there is an increase in demand for that type of magnets, commonly used in hybrid cars. The shortage issue is enhanced by the fact that most of the mines for this material are currently in China. Perhaps something that needs exploring in more depth by a

• **Above top**  
The marketing campaign for the 18LEX1600Nd.

• **Below left**  
An example of Gaudi Architecture.

• **Below right**  
The 18LEX1600Nd.

wider audience...

When not in Beyma world, Espartaco enjoys spending time with his family and friends. His wife, Virginia, who he met in Edinburgh and their son Alejandro, he considers very precious. "Apart of keeping a great sense of humor, my wife and I share tastes for live music, reading, cinema, theatre and art exhibitions. Over time, I think it's important to appreciate the little things that happen everyday, and be perceptive to be able to appreciate them when they happen." It's all about getting the work-life / home-life balance right - and it would appear that Espartaco has it spot on. 