



Uppsala was formed in 1986 when the parent firm bought two companies which specialized in rigging and set design — Skandinavisk Lyftservice and S & M Teknik. Sales and rentals are handled in Stockholm and by AVAB subsidiary AVAB Norge A/S in Oslo.

Another subsidiary, Emil Niethammer GmbH, was formerly a West German lantern manufacturer. Acquired by AVAB in 1983, it is today the center for optical development and production of stage projectors, followspots, automated luminaires, and high-performance theatrical luminaires. AVAB America Inc. was started in San Francisco, California, in 1978, developing digital dimmers for the North American market and handling marketing activities throughout the continent.

More than 30 independent agents represent AVAB, with at least one located in every western European nation. "Agents operate differently in the different countries," says Lau. "In our larger markets, like France, Spain, and the United Kingdom, agents import our products and sell them to independent dealers. Most dealers have regular relationships with theatres and studios, and they handle all user needs. Dealers do everything from helping professionals to determine what products they might need, to taking their orders, handling shipping and overseeing installation." If desired, an AVAB engineer can supervise an installation and

provide on-site training.

Niethammer serves as AVAB's agent in West Germany and works with local sales reps who call on the theatres. "In smaller markets, like Switzerland, Italy, and Holland, an agent often operates on a direct basis with the customer," says Lau.

This hands-on approach to the customer is, according to Lau, one of the reasons for AVAB's success. But customer relations go beyond technical advice and product service. The firm typically contacts professionals during the initial phases of research and development. AVAB's marketing department initiates product development by studying the industry and determining what's needed. Product engineers then go to end-users to learn what professionals want. A new product is test-marketed with a pilot series that's distributed to dealers and selected end-users. Most pilot products are tested in Scandinavia, France, and Germany, AVAB's strongest markets.

Looking to the future, Lau hints at AVAB's expanding interest in the architectural systems market. "In Europe, there's a growing understanding of lighting controls in office buildings, hotels, and exhibit halls," he says. "Some of these systems use the same parts that theatre-oriented systems use. We already have 70% of market share in Scandinavia, and we're looking at different ways of expanding our operations."

■ In anticipation of 1992 and a single European economic community, AVAB is planning on globalising its products — offering a user interface on its lightboards that can easily be adjusted to meet local needs. Among the company's strongest markets currently are the Scandinavian countries of Sweden, Norway, Finland, and Denmark (left, the AVAB 202 board at the Nationalteatern in Gothenburg, Sweden)

● *En anticipation de 1992 et d'un marché Européen communautaire, AVAB prévoit une stratégie marketing globale, en proposant un logiciel de jeux d'orgue qui soit adaptable à tous les besoins locaux. Parmi les marches les plus forts de la compagnie AVAB, se trouvent actuellement les pays scandinaves de la Suède, de la Norvege, de la Finlande et du Danemark. (à gauche, le jeu d'orgue AVAB 202 du théâtre national de Goeteborg en Suède)*

▼ In Vorausschau auf Jahr 1992 und den vereinigten europäischen Markt, plant AVAB seine Erzeugnisse zu globalisieren. Es bietet für seine lightboards ein user interface an, dass leicht örtlichen Bedingungen angepasst werden kann. Die skandinavischen Länder, Norwegen, Finnland, Schweden und Dänemark, sind derzeit die wichtigsten Märkte der Firma. (links; der AVAB 202 im Nationaltheatre Gothenburg in Schweden)