

CHIP HOP SHOPPING

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By Lucas Graves

You go to hip hop shows for ass-shaking bass, wicked performances, and insane lighting. Now you can expect the same when buying a Nike, Sean John, or Ben Sherman outfit for the affair. Michael K., a bi-level retail store in New York's SoHo hood, sells trendy wares inside a fantastic 22,000-square-foot space filled with 42-inch plasma screens, 17,000 watts of audio, and a computer network that's more CNET than MTV. All that gear has inspired the \$4 million shop to stay open after hours for parties, like the upcoming New Year's Eve bash starring NYC's hottest MCs and DJs.

Eye candy

Nearly 200 monitors - 3-inch LCDs, banks of giant plasmas, drop-down projection systems - fill the store from floor to ceiling, displaying visuals from 64 sources. Footage comes from DVD, cable, satellite, video, and online streams.

VIP access

Michael K. gives vendors space on its servers so brands like North Face and Enyce can dial in to upload and cue up custom videos for the in-shop monitors.

In the spotlight

How do you take advantage of \$300,000 of professional lighting? You run it over Ethernet. Michael K.'s club lights, four fog machines, and 2,000 linear feet of LEDs have their own IP addresses, so they can be reconfigured on demand.

Sound machine

DJs like NY's Clark Kent have a professional booth at their disposal. It houses turntables and has direct access to an 80-gig iMerge music server in the basement. A wireless mike is on hand for visiting talent who want to star in an impromptu show.