



Retrofit of exhibition hall yields great sound

Located in Topeka, the Kansas Expocentre first opened in 1987. The facility comprises a 9,000 seat arena, a 45,000 square foot exhibition hall, a livestock facility that can stall up to 241 horses, and two smaller halls used for multiple types of events. When an enclosed box office and foyer area was recently added to the complex, facilities Operations Director Roy Mitchell leveraged the work on the new addition to help fix an audio problem throughout the facility.

The Expocentre's exhibition hall had originally been outfitted with about 120 loudspeakers from another manufacturer. "They never sounded all that good," Mitchell says, "about a 3 on a scale of 10. If anyone spoke with any quickness in their voice, for example, an auctioneer, the words would become rumbled and unintelligible. If we had any dignitaries in the building we would have to go out and rent special sound equipment to cut through the fog." Mitchell had been researching different loudspeakers for some time when a stroke of luck settled the matter for him.

"It just happens that I got a free ticket to go to Wendover, Nevada," Mitchell says. "As I was walking through a raucous, noisy casino, I noticed the sound was really cutting through and the music was crystal clear. I started checking it out carefully and saw that the casino floors would have one kind of speaker, the buffets would have another type, and still another in the lobby. I ran down some management people there and asked about the speakers in the facility, and was told that SoundTube had provided all of the loudspeakers. When I went back home, I selected SoundTube for the Kansas Expocentre."

SoundTube system designers worked with Mitchell in determining the placement and number of loudspeakers. The design required only 18 HP12i loudspeakers were needed to provide full coverage of the main hall, replacing the 120 speakers that had been in use. An additional eight HP12i speakers were hung in the building's new foyer area. The concession area in the exhibit hall, which has a 12-foot ceiling, was covered with SoundTube CM590i ceiling-mount loudspeakers. In addition, two SoundTube CM890i models were placed in the exhibition hall to cover a location with a drop ceiling as well as the space above the garage doors leading to exhibition hall.



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SoundTube's HPI Series high-power speakers are available in hanging mounts (shown here) and surface-mount models.

Lenexa, Kansas based system integrator Sound Products Inc. handled the installation of the new sound system through their Topeka office. Monty Ehrlich, Account Manager at Sound Products Inc., says the chief concern in the installation was the loudspeaker height relative to the ceilings. "The main hall in the Expocentre has a 40 foot roof deck with a 30 foot height specified for the speakers. We had other things to handle in the installation, such as setting up the Biamp digital audio platform, but were most concerned about accurately placing the speakers with the dead hangs from the ceiling. The people at SoundTube were very communicative with us; they shared some great information about mounting hardware and hanging techniques which helped us do the job very smoothly. Their rep in the area (Eakins/Bernstein & Associates) is also extremely knowledgeable on the product." All of the loudspeakers were hung in about 2-1/2 days.

How did the facility staff and users react to the new loudspeaker system? "They were dazzled," Mitchell says. The sound is so crisp and clean - you cannot find a spot in the building where you cannot hear."



CMi Series in-ceiling loudspeakers offer fixed-wing installation for any type of hanging tile or sheetrock application. The Kansas Expocentre uses two models, the CM890i (above) and the CM590i (below).

Ehrlich says the difference in quality was apparent even before doing any adjustments, and after making minor adjustments for mics and voice, it was even better. "Coverage is great from edge to edge; you can clearly hear the sound system everywhere," Ehrlich says. "This exemplifies how SoundTube can go into a venue of this size and take you from 120 speakers to 18, and it is head and shoulders above what it was before in terms of clarity and intelligibility."

SoundTube Entertainment is consistently developing new technologies that enhance audio product performance. For more information, contact SoundTube at:



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