



CUSTOMER PROFILE

The Canadian Tire Centre is a multi-purpose indoor arena located in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. This reputable hockey location opened in 1996 and has since been home to the Ottawa Senators of the National Hockey League (NHL).

CHALLENGE

In the summer of 2022, the Ottawa Senators hockey team felt that something was missing to the atmosphere of their pre-game warmups and practice sessions with the existing sound system.

SOLUTION

Branch AV put together a plan to expand the existing sound system by adding new EAW loudspeakers and powering them with Q-SYS amplifiers.

BENEFIT

The effect of the new sound system was immediately felt and heard by the Senators hockey team at the very first practice and home game warm up. The sound and vibe that the players were seeking was now a reality, and it was also well received by the rest of the Senator's organization.

EAW PUMPS UP THE VOLUME WITH THE OTTAWA SENATORS

The Canadian Tire Centre is a multi-purpose indoor arena located in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. This reputable hockey venue opened in 1996 and has since been home to the Ottawa Senators of the National Hockey League (NHL). The Senators' home ice was originally known as the Palladium, and later under other proprietary names, before eventually becoming the Canadian Tire Centre. The arena has also served as a high-profile venue over the years for music concerts and various other sporting events, like the University Basketball Championships, the Junior Ice Hockey Championships, the UFC, and even more popular events being added to the calendar each year.

In the summer of 2022, the Ottawa Senators hockey team felt that something was missing in the atmosphere of their pre-game warmups and practice sessions with the existing sound system. And so, the players thought it would be a great idea to increase the volume and vibe at the ice level and help liven things up for the players before each game and during practice.

The hockey club's management team reached out to Branch AV for the project, a trusted AV solutions company based in Ottawa and Toronto. Branch AV was founded by industry veterans and is made up of skilled professionals who combine technology expertise with a strong process-driven and people-first approach to provide extraordinary value to their customers.

Branch AV took on the project and was presented with a challenge right from the start. The team had to determine the best time to install the new sound system all within the arena's very busy year-round schedule--and finish the work quickly. The best (and only) time for Branch AV to start the project, as agreed to by the Senators' management, was during the Senators' pre-season schedule, with the installation to be completed before the beginning of the official hockey season in October 2022.

After consulting with SFM and EAW to determine the best audio solution for the project, Branch AV put together a plan and proposal for the Ottawa Senators' organization to install two (2) pairs of EAW MKD1264 loudspeakers, two (2) EAW MKD1200-UB mounting brackets, and two (2) Q-SYS CX-Q-8K4 amplifiers.

To get things up and running quickly, due to the busy schedule of the arena, the Branch AV team set out to complete the installation at the Canadian Tire Centre in only three (3) days. And they did. The first day was dedicated to setting up the wiring and installing the amplifiers. On day two, the team worked on the rigging system around the scoreboard. This phase proved to be slightly challenging at first, because it required them to carefully pierce through the strong aluminum structure of the existing rigging system to build a new frame structure above it for the new speakers. Luckily, this type of obstacle wasn't anything that Branch AV hadn't seen before in similar installations, and they were able to quickly overcome the issue. Finally, the third day was reserved for commissioning the new system and tuning the PA.

The original system (installed in 1996) was already comprised of EAW loudspeakers and Q-SYS amps. Those audio components were still working well, but an upgrade to the existing Q-SYS system powering the original PA was needed to get the desired result at ice level that the Senators wanted, and as such Branch AV worked to integrate the new equipment with the existing tech.

Ryan Carman, of Branch AV, recalls how relatively simple and smooth it was to install the new EAW speakers, despite the tight deadline. "One of the main challenges in this facility, as you can imagine", says Ryan, "is that the arena doesn't have that many 'dark days', so to speak. It's a busy building. And so, we managed to essentially get everything in and installed within the given time frame". In other words, the combination of Branch AV's expertise and its familiarity with the existing EAW set up, as well as the flexible mounting capabilities of the MKD1264's, all contributed to help complete the work on schedule. In addition, EAW provides speaker configuration software (Revolution™) that allows integrators to create and present a full heat map to their clients in advance, which helps manage clients' expectations and provide a clear visual representation of the resulting sound coverage before even thinking about signing on the dotted line. The software provided by EAW really came in handy when it came time for Branch AV to present the project to the Senators' organization for approval and get the ball rolling.

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The effect of the new sound system was immediately heard and felt by the Senators hockey team at the very first practice and home game warm up. The sound and vibe that the players were seeking was now a reality-- an experience that was also well received by the rest of the Senator's organization.

As Ryan of Branch AV confirms, the "players looked up and saw speakers, and they were just pumped! So, it was pretty immediate. I mean, it was noticeable, and they definitely saw and heard the difference, literally. They were happy and it was a success".

Another benefit of the new set of EAW loudspeakers was that their added power helped avoid pushing the original system as hard as before to provide the volume needed at ice level and the whole arena. That would often make the sound level too loud, harsh, and too much for the existing system to handle over time--not to mention risking possible blown subwoofers or speaker failure. In other words, the new sound system provided a more even and more comfortable sonic experience for the players and the spectators—creating a more enjoyable atmosphere overall. As an added bonus, the new system improved the sound and clarity of important referee announcements for the crowd and especially the players during loud games.

Thanks to the skilled and prompt expertise of Branch AV, as well as the quality, flexibility, and added power of the new EAW sound system, the Ottawa Senators and their fans can now enjoy home games on a whole new level.

GEAR LIST:

EAW

4 X MKD1264 (2-way full-range loudspeaker with 2 × 12" LF cone - black)

4 X MKD1200-UB (mounting bracket)

Q-SYS

CX-Q-8K4 (4-channel amplifier with DSP-2400W -routable inputs)
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