



CASE STUDY

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Since its inauguration in 1996 under the name Molson Centre, the Bell Centre remains the hub for entertainment and business events in Montreal. It is best known as the home of the Montreal Canadiens, who play in the National Hockey League (NHL). It has a seating capacity of 21,288, making it the largest hockey arena in the world. It is currently owned by a partnership group headed by Geoff Molson and his brothers, Andrew and Justin.

CHALLENGE

The Bell Centre had reached a point where components of the previous system were starting to fail. It needed a new PA system to cover the 21,000-plus seats throughout the lower, middle, and upper bowls, as well as smaller configurations for the various events the venue hosts outside of hockey games.

The new system had to occupy the same 16 cavities in the overhead arena-wide walking grid as the previous one. It also needed to be state-of-the-art in terms of its sonic performance, feature set, operation, and maintenance to deliver the desired 20-plus-year lifespan like the previous system.

BENEFIT

With the upgrade, the Bell Centre now has more control of the system creating higher definition and clarity in the sound. As a host to a variety of different-sized events, the remote-control directivity makes it easy to digitally reconfigure the coverage for full or half-bowl experiences.

SOLUTION

The project was broken into two phases so the space could remain operational throughout the upgrade. The first phase involved the installation of 22 MKD1096 loudspeakers to cover the upper bowl with four additional MKDs to cover the ice, along with seven UX4410 amps.

The second phase was centered around covering the rest of the bowl, which involved a total of 96 Anna loudspeakers and 36 Otto subs. Trizart Alliance, which continually maintains the ceiling grid, had to reinforce the framing for the hoists to accommodate the weight of the Anna and Otto enclosures since the cabinets have all amplification and processing onboard.

SYSTEM UPGRADE AT MONTREAL'S BELL CENTRE UTILIZING EAW COMPONENTS

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Jesse Leveillé, Bell Centre's lead audio technician explains "We were amidst a big transition in our technologies, and the PA was the first big part of that as it was most in need of an upgrade. It replaced the original system from when the venue first opened in 1996, so well over 20 years old."

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Once the Leveillé-led project committee, which included design and consulting firm Trizart Alliance, selected EAW (Eastern Acoustic Works) the system was procured through SFM in Canada, and the job of installing the system was the responsibility of the integration company, Solotech.

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Solotech Technical Project Manager, Ghislain Veronneau, explains, "The main reason it worked was that we prepped all the clusters in advance the week before the first installation phase, so everything was nearly pre-assembled. That involved assembling all of the arrays, organizing all of the cabling, and testing each cabinet. They also set up the Q-Sys networking backbone to ensure it ran smoothly."



Jesse Leveillé
Bell Centre Lead Audio Technician



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"The fact that we've got so many boxes and that they're self-powered makes the system very flexible in terms of different configurations for different types of events," offers Leveillé. "We can build in presets and recall them as needed without actually moving anything, so it's not just easier; it also helps reduce costs and set-up time for events."

SYSTEM UPGRADE AT MONTREAL'S BELL CENTRE UTILIZING EAW COMPONENTS

The strong communicative collaboration between all parties enabled the Bell Centre audio team to fully understand the cutting-edge technology allowing the creation of unforgettable live experiences.

“People are loving the experience here,” Leveillé adds in closing. “Ownership is very happy, and we couldn’t have asked for a better collaboration from the start.”

GEAR LIST

ADAPTive series
MKD1096 loudspeakers
UXA4410 amplifiers