

Opposite attraction

Media Technology Systems, Inc.

CHINA: Bucking the current trend of supersized hotel towers piercing Beijing's sky, Swire Hotels' Opposite House was constructed in the run up to last year's Olympics. Located in a once down-market but now thriving part of the Sanlitun neighbourhood in Chaoyang, the 99-room boutique property is six storeys high and clad in screen-printed glass in various shades of green. The Village at Sanlitun is a new retail and entertainment complex hosting brands such as Apple, Uniqlo and Adidas, with crystalline buildings designed by Japanese and US architects including Mr Kuma, SHoP and Lot-ek.

The hotel takes its name from the guesthouse that sits on the opposite side of a traditional courtyard, blending old with new design. The Mediterranean styled Sureno and North Asian Bei restaurants have already scooped a number of prestigious awards for their cuisine in *Time Out* and *Conde Nast Traveller*. Similarly, the cool contemporary cocktail lounge Mesh and the Punk nightclub have been given great attention when it comes to style. Finally, the cosmopolitan Village Café with its international menu completes the F&B outlets within the hotel.

Hong Kong-based Audio System Consultants (Asia) Ltd (ASCL) won the contract to design, supply and install the A/V system for the complex, with project manager James Wu, senior project manager Billy Wong and five technicians taking on the nine-month task.

ASCL looked to various new technologies, including a new generation of networkable audio signal wall plates controlling IP addressable amplifiers, an infrastructure based on a Cisco 10G fibre switch and a Renkus-Heinz Iconyx IC16 steerable array system in Punk. In terms of video, HD DVI-D/HDMI wall plate systems are connected via fibre converters to an Extron scaling matrix switcher supporting composite video onto 1080p HD video and HD projectors. The ASCL team opted for simplicity and, by minimising cable runs, both installation times and costs were reduced.

Central to the BGM and voice announcement is a DSP router and patch panel system – a MediaMatrix NX32 DSP CobraNet module with eight-channel Nion mic/line interface that provides signal processing and routing throughout the facility. The system uses Media Technology Systems (MTS) COM-3004D four-channel 300W amplifiers connected via their CobraNet ports, which allows full networking, control and monitoring, as well as fault and load monitoring from a laptop. The BGM and local sources are zone controlled via Ion 2.0 wall-mounted interfaces, which take their feed from source inputs patched into the DSP router, which has all been made possible by changing the network address of each Ion wall interface. Nasuko audio and speaker cables connect the amplifiers to the various Altec Lansing CD-308/408, Bag End S10-I, IC Audio DL-SF 06 and QSC AD-S52T speakers in the public areas. In addition to Ion 2.0 wall mounted local audio input, several food and beverage outlets are equipped with Crestron CNX-BF12 volume controls, while the 99 guest rooms are served by a 148 Bose M16 stereo ceiling speakers.

Punk is one of the main attractions of the Opposite House, and it is where resident DJ Saul and guest DJs entertain patrons six nights each week until 3am. The harsh acoustic mirrored walls and tiled flooring required a sound reinforcement system that would not disturb hotel guests outside the confines of the club. The solution was provided in the shape of a pair of Renkus-Heinz IC16-R column speakers, together with a BPS12-1 subwoofer. The digital speakers direct multiple sound beams into the audience area using the software-controlled DSP – up to four separate beams can be produced from each IC16-R, and the acoustic centre of each column array can be raised or lowered electronically using RHAON (Renkus-Heinz Audio Operations Network) software control. Operating on a single Cat5 cable, multichannel digital audio distribution, user-controlled DSP, selectable presets and remote system management are all enabled using standard Ethernet hardware.

The DJ booth is equipped with two Technics SL-1200 MK5 turntables, two Pioneer CDJ-800 CD players and a Rane TTM 57SL mixer featuring Serato Scratch Live software. Additional signal processing in Punk is performed via a Lectrosonics DM812 eight-input/12-output digital matrix.

The exhibition facility is used for corporate functions, entertainment and conferences. Here, the press conference room is equipped with a Sanyo PLV-WF10 4000 ANSI lumens projector and 2m x 1.5m Da Lite screen allow playback from Sony and Philips DVD players, all controlled via a Crestron wireless unit. The audio system uses a Lectrosonics DM1612 16-input/12-output digital matrix processor, which routes the Shure SM58 microphones, Tascam CD and MD playback devices to a QSC CX204V amplifier and 10 QSC AD-S52T speakers. A Lectrosonics DM1624 16-input/24-output digital matrix is at the heart of the system in the main auditorium, taking its feed from a 32-channel Yamaha LS9 digital console. Sound reinforcement is provided by 10 Renkus-Heinz TRX121 12-inch speakers powered by five BGW dual channel VX660 amplifiers, while at the opposite end of the signal chain a custom built lectern with two Shure EG18 conference microphones, together with Tascam CD and MD players.

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