



At the new W Hotel in Scottsdale, Ariz., the pool area's Grand Lamps were redesigned to include built-in loudspeakers, much to the artist's initial dismay. But aesthetics were important.

Hotel Arizona

Scottsdale integrators achieve high style through the creative deployment of zoned sound. ■ BY KIMBERLY R. GRIFFIN

WHEN STARWOOD BEGAN BUILDING one of its W Hotels, a boutique line of high-end getaways, in downtown Scottsdale, Ariz., the company didn't have to look far for an AV integrator. In fact, it didn't have to look at all.

"I actually did the old-fashioned cold calling—found the lead and pursued it," says Jill Sietz, account manager for CCS Presentation Systems of Scottsdale, which, after starts and stops, integrated the sleek AV systems that adorn the new property.

Her designing for the W wouldn't be easy. Several months in, says Sietz, the company's original point of contact was no longer on the project, so it found itself coordinating directly with other trades and contrac-

CHALLENGE: Create a unique audio atmosphere at a hip hotel without violating city sound ordinances.

SOLUTION: Use long-range audio and reinforcing design to establish a fun vibe without disturbing the peace. Oh, and check out the men's bathroom.

tors. (Shortly afterwards, the owners added a general contractor.) After months of AV design drafts and construction delays, a team from CCS began installation in early 2008.

"The W is very exclusive, very high-profile, cutting-edge, very detail oriented—and very demanding,"

explains Sietz. "So it's a different type of design/build hotel versus, if you will, a 'cookie-cutter' standard."

Fortunately, CCS had exceptional experience with such projects under its own roof. "I've had to design other hotels around the state before," says design and field engineer Steve Rosendahl. "So I used that kind of background to get us started."

But balancing aesthetics and the rule of law can prove tricky.

IN CONTROL

According to Rosendahl, sound and background music are two of the key ingredients the W chain feels distinguishes its properties. Therefore it was important that each environment have its own ambience and its own zone. CCS installed audio equipment in all of the public areas of the hotel, including the port cochere, lobby, hallways and elevators, two bars, four meeting rooms, pool deck, and a men's restroom.

The entire system runs on just two Cat-5 cables: one for the CobraNet audio and one for the AMX NetLinx NI-2100 integrated controller that

manages the system. One AMX NXD-1200VG Modero in-wall touch panel provides back-up control in the main rack room, but primary access to the system is via an AMX MVP-8400 Modero ViewPoint portable panel.

"The bar managers want to be able to adjust the music volumes in the different areas... so they can walk around the pool area and the bars and adjust the levels or pick what they want to play," says Rosendahl. Still, granularity was important. For instance, the owners were concerned about audio from the Living Room bar spilling into the nearby lobby, so Rosendahl kept the audio within bounds by configuring the speakers in what he calls "a distributed system."

Four Tannoy CMS8 TDC in-ceiling loudspeakers are divided into stereo left and right with four Community Professional CLOUD12SUB in-ceiling subwoofers. Because the bar is open to the lobby, Rosendahl divided the sound system into three zones that could be controlled separately, so the music volume within the Living Room bar could be set louder than the zone closest to the lobby.

A different method of dispersion control was applied to the upstairs pool area, bar, and port cochere. According to Rosendahl, the city of Scottsdale has a strict decibel ordinance that prohibits audio from the open-air pool, bar, and deck from spilling into neighboring areas. To address this issue, he faced all of the outdoor loudspeakers inward and toward the hotel, with a philosophy of "more speakers, less volume."

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HEARD, NOT SEEN

The W prides itself on a distinct sense of style, so aesthetics were key. "There was a high demand for having equipment perform, but they didn't want to see any equipment," says Sietz.

The port cochere, the main entrance to the hotel that offers a skylight view of the pool above, employs 20 Community CLOUD6 loudspeakers to establish a strong first impression. "They wanted that music to be what I refer to as 'background music': fairly loud, good quality," says Sietz. The audio source is a customized music network from Austin, Texas-based service provider DMX, which is supplied by Starwood.

On the second level, the owners wanted most of the pool-area audio hidden completely from view, a dilemma addressed creatively by incorporating the equipment into furniture and other design elements. Twelve TOA H-1 Series loudspeakers rest in the trusses of cabanas that surround the pool. The cabanas were designed and built by local artist/designer Jeff Zischke of Zischke Studio, who covered each loudspeaker with a valance of sound-absorbing acoustic fabric, further preventing the audio from escaping the premises.

Near the center of the pool level are four large Grand Lamps, also created by Zischke, that



Near the end of the project, a special change order came through. The client wanted the LCDs above these urinals to sense approaching "users" and trigger video of gesturing women.

provide color-kinetic light to set the mood. Inside the base of each lamp hides a Community WET Series II W2-212-SUB indoor/outdoor subwoofer and a Community WET Series II W2-218 full-range, two-way loudspeaker aimed toward the hotel, organized into three different control zones. There are also four Electro-Voice EV-UW 30 underwater loudspeakers built into the pool structure, so guests don't have to swim in silence.

The audio inside the nearby Shade Bar also required some creative solutions, due mostly to last-minute structural changes. Rosendahl originally spec'd in-ceiling loudspeakers for the pool-side bar, but the design change reduced the available ceiling space.

"We only had 4 inches above the ceiling, so we couldn't put ceiling speakers in," says Rosendahl. "But we used some nice full-range surface-mount speakers and a couple big subwoofers, which they actually built into the furniture." A coffee table in front of the bar's couches hides one of two Yamaha IS1218 subwoofers.

The most significant change, however, came within the last four months of the project. It had to do with, of all things, the men's restroom off the Living Room bar. Above each urinal is a wall-mounted, motion-activated DM10M 10-inch AdView LCD panel from AdMart, which when approached, plays soundless, prerecorded video clips of women giggling, winking, gesturing, and otherwise flirting with the, er, user.

"When you walk into the restroom, the panel just looks like a picture; when you walk in front of the urinal, it's activated to be sort of fun, playful video

images that the W created to be conversation pieces and just something different," describes Sietz (the gimmick got the hotel written up in newspapers). "Actually, the clips are really pretty funny, and they get people in a lighthearted mood. Their whole theme is just to be cutting edge."

Optex OA-70C active infrared sensors in the ceiling above each urinal trigger the AMX controller to activate the screens and the Focus Enhancements ASK-0741-01 four-channel video playback system, which can store about 45 different clips on each channel.

PLANNING FOR VIDEO

By Labor Day weekend 2008, the W Scottsdale was ready for its soft opening, an invitation-only event for investors. Since then, not only has it been open to the public, but it's hosted a variety of high-profile events, such as *American Idol* auditions and Cirque du Soleil. CCS built in the flexibility to host crowds large and small—such as six input places scattered around the pool deck for the hotel's portable DJ system—and to prepare for possible future plans.

While there was very little video involved in CCS' portion of the project, aside from the LCDs in the restroom and NEC VT695 and NP1000 projectors in the meeting rooms, the firm laid the groundwork for future upgrades by wiring for another video system in the pool-side restrooms, videoconferencing in the meeting rooms, and a possible large-scale outdoor projection system on the pool deck.

Despite setbacks, delays, and last-minute adjustments, the CCS team is pleased with what it accomplished. Says Sietz, "A lot of hard work, and a lot of creative thoughts, and a lot of just coordination to make things happen really all came together for a huge successful project." ■ AV

EQUIPMENT LIST	
Below is a partial list of the equipment installed by CCS Presentation Systems of Scottsdale, Ariz. For a complete list, please visit www.proavmagazine.com/entry .	
■ AMX NetLinx NI-2100 integrated controller	
■ Biamp Audio Flex with CobraNet DSPs	
■ Community Professional CLOUD6 in-ceiling loudspeakers	
■ Community Professional CLOUD12SUB in-ceiling subwoofers	
■ Community Professional WET Series II W2-218 indoor/outdoor loudspeakers	
■ Electro-Voice EV-UW30 underwater loudspeakers	
■ FSR ADM4 1x4 audio distribution amplifiers	
■ Iadsonics DM1624 digital automatic matrix mixer	
■ Tannoy CMS8 TDC in-ceiling loudspeakers	
■ TOA H-1 Series loudspeakers	
■ Yamaha Commercial Audio R-2208 meeting loudspeakers	
SOURCE: CCS PRESENTATION SYSTEMS	