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Showroom: CCS Presentation Systems, Scottsdale, Arizona

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Showroom: **CCS Presentation Systems**, Scottsdale, Arizona
Photograph by Scott Sandier

If you think you know everything about audio-visual, you might want to make an appointment to take a tour of CCS Presentation Systems headquarters in Scottsdale. The 27,000-square-foot building is home to some nine vignettes that highlight the latest in audio-visual products and solutions for market sectors that range from education and healthcare to corporate and hospitality.

Need a pentagonal plasma video display system for an executive conference room? Check. How about a hotel audio system that pumps music into the lobby, bar area and even under water, in the pool? Check. How about a high-definition video conferencing system that connects meeting rooms at various locations? Check again.



CCS Presentation Systems does it all, collaborating with architects and interior designers to design integrated systems, selling products, installing the systems, training the end users and servicing the installations. "Audio-visual has shifted from just products into the infrastructure of a building," notes Greg Littlefield, vice president of sales and marketing. "That's why we offer all aspects of service."

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The firm got its start when founder John Godbout had an "aha" moment in 1991, explains Julie Solomon, marketing and business development manager. "John Godbout started out selling software, which he was showing on an LCD panel," she explains. "This was in the days of overhead and Carousel projectors, not to mention huge projectors. He realized that his clients were more interested in his hardware than the software, and the firm as we know it was born." Godbout ran the firm with his wife, Beth, who did the books, and when a client asked if he carried a certain item, he always said yes, Solomon notes.

That "yes" attitude morphed into a firm with some 450 employees, with 26 offices in 13 states, including New Mexico, Colorado and Nevada. The Scottsdale headquarters has some 105 employees, with 15 more in the Tucson office. Last year, CCS ranked number three in the audio-visual trade publication Systems Contractor News' Top 50 Systems Integrators in the United States and Canada,

The firm features products from 300 manufacturers, including familiar audio-visual names such as SMART Technologies, Toshiba, NEC, Ergotron, Mitsubishi, Panasonic and Epson. Wander through CCS Presentation Systems vignettes and you can check out a SMART Board, write notes on an interactive projector screen, compare different digital signage options or learn how a teacher's amplification device can also double as a discreet emergency panic button that alerts administration of a situation and activates a classroom's security camera.

Recent projects handled through the Scottsdale headquarters include the NASCAR world headquarters in Daytona Beach, Florida; Casino Arizona's Talking Stick Resort, Services Group of America's offices (home of that pentagonal video display system), done with architect Brian Cox of Cox James Architects of Tempe, Arizona; and Scottsdale's W Hotel, where the client requested, among other elements, motion-tripped in-wall screens in the men's bathroom. The customized video displays sequences of women gazing upon the users.

Training is a large element of CCS Presentation Systems' offerings. The Scottsdale headquarters features a large training center where more than 4,500 end-users have learned about their particular equipment and technologies. Additionally, there's the CCS Mobile Training Center, a 44-foot converted trailer that houses a flexible, 12-seat computer lab. "The training center goes to remote locations," says Solomon, "and also to places such as school board meetings and military bases." The training, adds Solomon, allows CCS to "close the loop" of its services.

Despite all of its sophisticated offerings, many visitors to the Scottsdale location linger in the education vignette, where among other things, there's a small SMART table for kindergartners, where a touch screen allows young students to collaboratively color, identify objects and more. You're never too young to learn about audio-video integration.

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