

Growing church installs all-embracing audio for the congregation.



First Baptist Church, Sevierville, TN, USA

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Rich Mace, Technical Services Director, First Baptist Church

Setting the scene

First Baptist Church (FBC) has been based in Sevierville, Tennessee since its inception. From log cabins through various incarnations, as the church has grown it's acquired larger buildings to accommodate its local congregation as well as the tourists who visit the nearby Great Smoky Mountain National Park.

Establishing objectives

Scott Andrews is Associate Pastor of Worship at FBC. “Our sound reinforcement system was seventeen years old and definitely past its best. A system from d&b audiotechnik had been highly recommended and we felt it would be ideal for our purposes.”

M&L Sound from Knoxville were the chosen installers; their long experience with worship venues made them an ideal choice.

Sound Project Manager, Joe Hamilton: “We were initially contacted by the church to look into replacing their mixing console. During the site visit we also discussed many other issues they were having, one major one being the quality of the speaker system and lack of coverage.

“After attending a few finance meetings and a church-wide business meeting, we received a contract for the speaker upgrade as well as the mixing console. The reason for such a major system upgrade was the age of the original system and growth, and what

the church wanted to achieve with the audio system.”

The solution

Hamilton went on to design the solution with input from d&b audiotechnik US and FBC's Technical Services Director, Rich Mace. “Joe understood quite clearly our objectives and the challenges we needed to overcome.”

Hamilton opted for a system based on the installation specific xA-Series, with xS for fill and delay. “We had only done a few projects with d&b prior to this design but the audio quality and extensive installation line made it an obvious choice for this project.

“We opted for the install amplifiers, the 10Ds and 30Ds, as we'd used them once before and been impressed. The connectivity is perfect for installations.”

The size and shape of the balconies required some imaginative thinking, as Hamilton explains: “The room is fan shaped with padded pews for seating. There is stadium

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seating up each side with a large over-balcony and under-balcony area.

"Due to the amount of under-balcony seating we used a number of 5S loudspeakers to get sound to every seat.

"There is diffusion and acoustic treatment throughout the room, and the ceiling is a combination of dropdown drywall soffits and acoustic ceiling tiles. These drywall soffits caused us to have to use over-balcony delays to get high frequencies to the top rows of the balcony. I have to say that acoustically the room is very well controlled, but not overly absorbent.

"To work around the needs of the church we installed the new speakers alongside the old and reconfigured existing amp racks to allow space for installation of the new amps. This allowed us to wire all the inputs of the

amps and power while not disturbing their scheduled events. It was very much a team effort: the support from d&b was great."

For Mace the upgrade means flexibility for the church and its congregation: "The capacity of the room is 2,000 and we have three worship services: traditional, blended, and we also added a contemporary service during the installation.

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"Despite the wider possibilities for the room it remains a house of worship and so the amplification of the choir and the spoken word were the primary considerations when we agreed the design."

"This has been a really positive experience," concludes Andrews. "Feedback on the system has been more than complimentary from all concerned and I consider that we have received excellent value for money. You can't really ask for more than that, can you."

► System: 10AL, 10AL-D, 27A-SUB, 5S, 8S, 10S, MAX2 and 10D, 30D