

Speaking of EV...

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EV gear at Marshall University helps the Thundering Herd become the “Thundering Heard.”

“We Can Hear the Game Now!”

The old PA system at the Henderson Center just couldn't cut it. Fans of Marshall University's NCAA Division I (Mid-American Conference) men's and women's basketball and volleyball teams, the Thundering Herd, could see the games, but the announcer's voice was incoherent. They said it sounded like the teacher's voice in Charlie Brown cartoons. So when officials at the university—located in Huntington, W.V.—decided to

renovate and restore the Henderson Center, they made clarity over the noise of the game the main goal of the new sound system, and ultimately chose Electro-Voice® speakers and drivers to achieve that goal. Coffeen, Fricke, and Associates of Kansas City, Missouri, designed the system, and Rob Harold of United Sound and Electronics in Bridgeport assembled, flew, and tuned it.



Note I-beam at lower right!



The new speaker clusters at Henderson Center.

Rob Harold's United Sound and Electronics has been a feature of the pro audio scene in Bridgeport and the surrounding area since 1979, when Harold first bought the business and began serving local contractors and installers, as well as offering some equipment for rental. He's carried EV products since the beginning. Among the popular items in his product line are NRU wireless mics and Sx100 and Sx300 loudspeakers, in addition to power amps and other speakers. He's used the Sx Series™ speakers and some X-Array™ speakers in local church installations, and he says that the Eliminator® series has done very well. Harold expresses strong confidence in EV products. “They do what they're supposed to do. They're durable, and the warranties are generous to customers.”

The Henderson Center at Marshall University is a rectangular arena that seats 9,500 spectators around the four sides. After renovators gutted the arena and installed new seating, Harold began assembling the new sound system. First, though, he had to ensure that the building's structure would support the four main clusters, which would hang near the central scoreboard. Harold and his crew lifted two half-ton, 32-foot by 8-inch-square I-beams and welded them to ceiling joists to secure and distribute the load. According to Harold, "Putting up those I-beams was the biggest challenge of the job!"

Since most of the seating in the Henderson Center is on the north and south sides, Harold configured larger clusters for those sides and slightly smaller ones for the east and west sides. Nine EV HP940 and HP640 horns—each with a DH1A driver and an AT100 auto transformer—and two TL12E LF speakers comprise each of the north/south clusters, while the east/west clusters each include six horns with drivers and auto transformers and two TL12E LF speakers. Four Xi 2181 subwoofers, each with two 15567A transformers, fire straight down from a catwalk for low bass. To ensure good coverage for the upper concourse area on the north and south sides, Harold employed 14 Sx300 cabinets, again with auto transformers, as delayed satellites. The new system also includes two XE2-Q crossover/equalizers, with three RE16 mics providing input from the announcers.

The new sound system at the Henderson center is an excellent example of the cluster-based method of configuring large-format sound reinforcement systems. EV, of course, is proud that it can provide the range of products installers need to configure cluster systems, box-based array systems, or (as at the Henderson Center) a combination of both.



One of the Sx300s used as delayed satellites.

And the results? As always happens with well-selected and well-installed EV gear, spectators and university officials alike found themselves happily surprised by the improvement in quality of the new sound system over the old. Harold recounts that after he went to a game in the refurbished arena, he heard spectators commenting that they could hear the announcer clearly for the first time. "The new system is intelligible and clear," Harold said. "It has an excellent low end, and it's a pleasing sound, comfortable to listen to,

and not at all harsh." Mike Meadows, MU Director of Facilities Planning and Management, concurred. "The new system is a major asset to our institution," Meadows said, "and the designers and Rob Harold did a great job!"^{EV}

Special thanks to Rob Harold of United Sound and Electronics, John Fricke of Coffeen, Fricke, and Associates, and John Winters, Mike Meadows, and Layton Cottrill of Marshall University for their help with this article.



Athletes practice under the new sound system (behind banners).