

Shure Wireless Trusted for Super Bowl LVII Broadcast and Entertainment



Picture: Getty Images

Over the weekend, the Kansas City Chiefs again found themselves in the Super Bowl spotlight, with the team's quarterback, Patrick Mahomes, earning his second career Super Bowl Most Valuable Player (MVP) title. For Shure, the MVPs were the veteran audio engineers and sound technicians who managed the broadcasts of Super Bowl LVII and NFL Honors with the support of Axient Digital Wireless Systems and PSM 1000 Advanced In-Ear Personal Monitoring Systems, which delivered flawless audio to a record-setting 113 million viewers worldwide.

ATK Audiotek and Professional Wireless Systems (PWS) handled all wireless microphones and IEM systems for the pre-game entertainment, halftime entertainment and referees, as well as the NFL Honors broadcast. The team included broadcast mixer Tom Holmes, monitor mixer Tom Pesa, RF engineers Cameron Stuckey, Kasey Gchachu, and Gary Trenda, RF team lead for CP Communications, Loren Sherman, as well as a vast team of A2s, who expertly managed the audio of Super Bowl Sunday's most unforgettable moments.

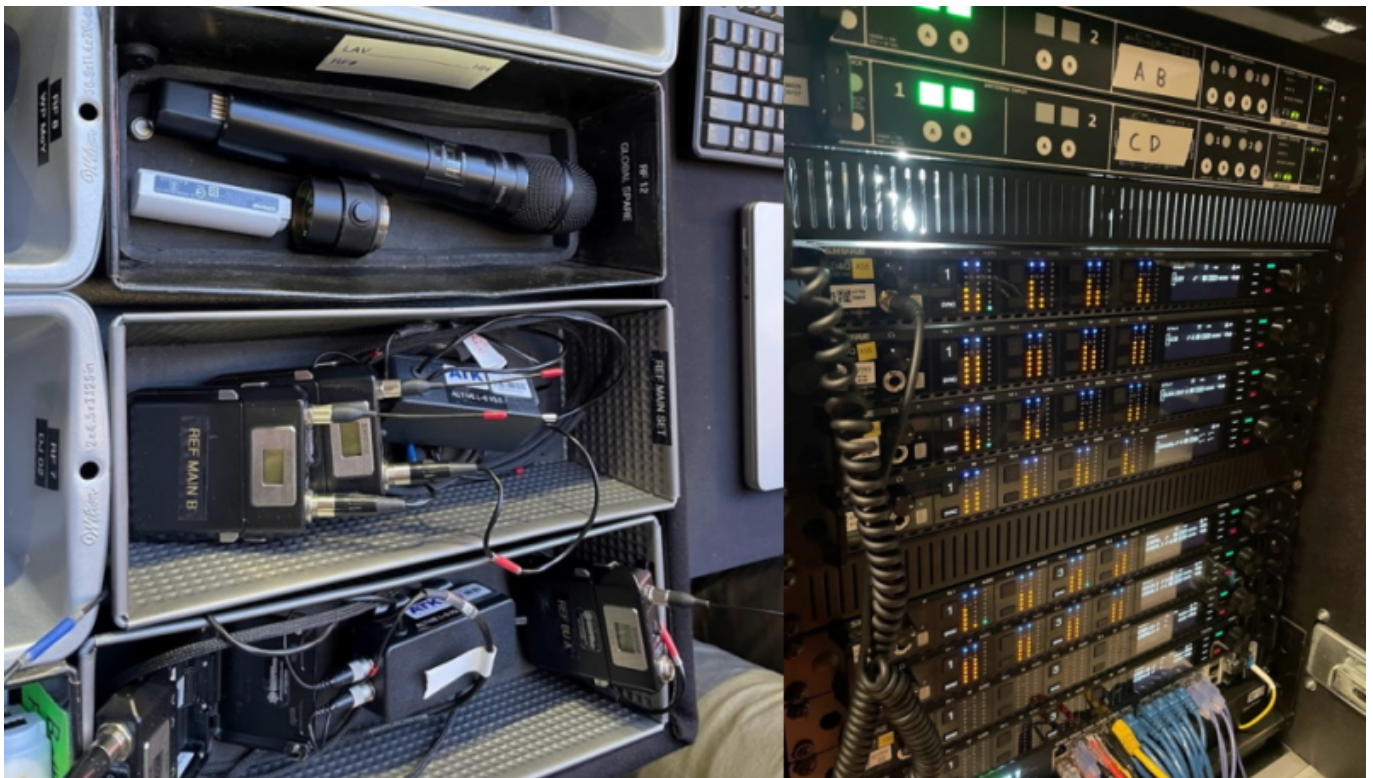
"Once again, the reigning Super Bowl champ for in-ear performance was PSM

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1000,” said Tom Pesa. “I used Shure Wireless Workbench® to monitor levels. For the pregame, all three performers wore in-ears, including Chris Stapleton, who normally does not. With the two live guitar mics and live vocal, along with Chris’ slowly building and poignant rendition of our National Anthem, PSM 1000 was the right choice for the reverberant stadium.”

The RF team depended on eight AD4Q four-channel wireless receivers and the recently introduced AD600 Axient Digital Spectrum Manager. For another year, ATK used Axient Digital with Quadversity, a patented Shure technology, leveraging four simultaneous RF inputs to feed a single RF channel. Quadversity can extend the coverage area of a microphone channel or enable multiple coverage areas with additional antenna inputs, making it ideal for challenging RF environments like State Farm Stadium.



“It’s hard to picture doing the Super Bowl without using Axient Digital,” said PWS’ Cameron Stuckey, RF engineer. “The ability to operate in Part 74 exclusive spectrum with the range of capsules, WWB monitoring, and familiarity of Axient Digital is unequaled. We are using every feature that sets it apart to the fullest extent possible. Each year we continue to push our wireless systems and have come to rely on Axient Digital’s ability to deliver.”

During the pre-game, Sheryl Lee Ralph, singer and star of ABC’s “Abbott Elementary,” delivered a historic performance of “Lift Every Voice and Sing” with a Shure KSM9 condenser microphone capsule on an Axient Digital ADX2 Frequency Diversity (FD) enabled wireless transmitter. Sheryl’s rendition of the song, regarded

as the Black National Anthem, marks the first time “Lift Every Voice and Sing” has been performed in an official capacity on the Super Bowl field. Shure’s Frequency Diversity technology guaranteed this important performance remained uninterrupted in the extreme RF environment of State Farm Stadium by simultaneously transmitting two independent frequencies. The RF engineers also depended on the command and control of Axient Digital with ShowLink, which enabled real-time, instantaneous remote control of transmitters throughout the stadium.

Additionally, a Shure Axient Digital bodypack transmitter was trusted to pristinely capture Babyface’s guitar performance of “America the Beautiful” while a separate Shure ADX2FD delivered the R&B star’s vocals to State Farm Stadium and fans around the world. The DJ performances and choreography at the stadium also relied on Shure SM58® microphones with ADX2 transmitters.

At halftime, the team relied on Shure PSM 1000 advanced in-ear personal monitoring systems to deliver audio to performers throughout Rihanna’s exhilarating montage of hits. “For halftime, eight transmit mixes were used and 35 receiver packs, which included 21 for core dancers on stage and aerial platforms. The coverage zone was the entire field, as well as the almost 80 feet that Rhianna flew at her highest peak. But, of course, when testing and walking ears for coverage, you could go almost anywhere in the bowl of the stadium. They just work that well. I truly believe that Shure PSM is one of the only brands that could function in the toughest frequency coordinated event that is Super Bowl,” said Tom Pesa.

Referees used two Axient Digital ADX1 bodypack transmitters working together in Frequency Diversity mode and paired with Shure’s premium subminiature TL47 model TwinPlex omnidirectional lavalier microphones. While omnidirectional lavaliers are typically used in controlled audio environments like theaters, TwinPlex was uniquely suited for this stadium application given the lavalier microphone’s ultra-pristine, natural response and off-axis consistency.

Portions of the audio for the FOX broadcast, including sideline reporters Erin Andrews and Charissa Thompson’s use of ADX2 mics with talk switches and Shure PSM 1000 as IFBs, as well as parabolic microphone AD1 transmitters, were executed by experts at CP Communications, with pre, half, and postgame show support from Digital Black. Mike Stock, freelance A1, mixed the audio for the pre, half, and postgame broadcast. After the clock expired and the Chiefs claimed victory, FOX Sports reporters captured their celebratory conversations with players and coaches on Shure ADX2FD transmitters across the field, with RF managed by CP Communications.

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L-R: Gary Trench, Cameron Stuckey, Loren Sherman

Marc Martignetti, RF lead and owner of Digital Black, and Ryan Stotts, freelance RF A2, trusted Shure Wireless Workbench® to monitor RF inside and outside State Farm Stadium throughout the pre, half, and postgame. Stotts and Martignetti managed the RF for all desk mics throughout the FOX broadcast, with hosts Curt Menefee, Jimmy Johnson, Howie Long, Michael Strahan, and Terry Bradshaw using Shure ADX2 transmitters. Notably, talent also wore Shure ADX1 bodypacks for backup and all stand-up segments.

"For the Super Bowl, a huge challenge is the available spectrum versus the tremendous wireless counts needed for onsite users," said Martignetti. "Shure has

wireless microphone and in-ear products that cover all our legal spectrum options. That helps meet our client's ever-expanding needs for more wireless to support their on-air talent."

Outfitted by experts from CP Communications, the NFL Network Desk (NFLN) heavily relied on Shure wireless. In total, the NFLN hosts were equipped with 14 ADX2FD transmitters with talk switches, as well as 12 channels of PSM 1000. "NFLN has requested and used Axient Digital for the last few years on all events due to their flexibility and reliability," said Brian Ready, Systems Engineer at CP Communications.

Once again, the NFL Honors Awards relied heavily on Shure gear for the show's live audio and broadcast this year. The handheld microphones used for NFL Honors were all Shure KSM8 Dualdyne Cardioid Dynamic Vocal Microphone. The host and award show participants were equipped with a mix of Shure AD1 and AD2 transmitters.

"It was a pleasure to use Shure Axient Wireless mics on this year's NFL Honors, televised live on NBC, Thursday, February 10," said Larry Reed, production sound mixer for this year's NFL Honors broadcast. "The reliability of Shure Axient is very important on a live broadcast, and I especially like the KMS8 capsule for all the vocals. I used 15 of them on the NFL Men's Choir, as well as the host handheld for Kelly Clarkson, the vocals for the three parodies, and the player tosses to commercial from the audience. I like how smooth the KSM8 sounds, and its off-axis rejection makes it easier to use out in the audience, in front of the house PA."

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