

Lewis & Clark Library - Helena Equips With Martin Audio

Montana Pro Audio specify ADORN and CDD series



Lewis & Clark Library located in Helena, Montana, has commissioned a new public address paging system, opting for an elegant Martin Audio solution—designed and installed by locally based AV integration company, Montana Pro Audio.

They were awarded the contract after the Library, which was established in 1868 before Montana became a territory, received a higher-than-expected bid for the desired AV integration design. After receiving a request for proposal, and undertaking a number of revisions and redesigns, Montana Pro Audio specified the solution from Martin Audio’s ADORN catalogue.

“The original scope of contract was for a public address paging system throughout the library, as well as AV for their large community room that would double as a presentation space and small theatre and a small community room that would be used for meetings and presentations,” explained Aaron Fisher, who was responsible for the design and project management. “The Library is in the home stretch of a full-

scale remodel project that started nearly three years ago. This will be the first AV installation in its history.”

Assisted by Ryan Johnston (and with support from Martin Audio North America’s Jim Sage), this was Montana Pro Audio’s first experience working with Martin Audio solutions. Twenty-four of the ADORN A55’s, run in 70V line mode, have been distributed discreetly through eight zones on two floors, in a combination of black and white finishes to suit the environment.

“I have always appreciated the quality of sound, construction and aesthetics of Martin Audio products,” Fisher reveals. “The ADORN A55 hit the mark in terms of design, size, sound quality and budget. Integration is a new focus for me, coming from the production side of the audio industry, I really appreciate that the ADORN A55 has the look of a professional production loudspeaker and not a ‘playful’ 70volt loudspeaker design!”

Surprisingly, the room acoustics of the library are excellent, he confirmed. “In fact it is a great sounding facility. Despite all of the hard surfaces and openness of the main atrium, the space is so broken up with different angles and multiple surface textures that it is hardly reverberant and there are minimal reflections. We used the available ADORN DSP presets, and with minimal EQ this system is well balanced, reproduces speech very well and sounds extremely natural.”

This ‘natural’ speech reproduction had been important. “It was important that this system did not sound like a ‘grocery store’ paging system. Because this is a library, and will generally be a quiet environment, it is vital that the PA is relatively quiet and doesn’t surprise anyone when an announcement is made. The intelligibility of dispersion of the ADORN A55 made it possible to achieve these goals.

Coverage is provided throughout a number of areas, including the Lobby/Cafe, the main Atrium, the Children’s Area, two zones in the Young Adult Section, the Teen Lounge, the Mezzanine, and the Mezzanine Lounge.

However, because of COVID, the client decided to split the contract into two separate phases and the next stage for Montana Pro Audio will be to provide the system for the Library’s large community room which can be routed into different configurations. The requirements include a single sound system that can be used in 7.1 surround mode for movies as well as a system for presentations, and this time the integrators have opted for Martin Audio’s CDD series.

Explaining the reason for preferring CDD, Aaron Fisher says, “The pattern control on this series, especially in the lower frequencies, make it an ideal choice.” Low end extension will be achieved with the addition of an SX210 subwoofer.

The room is relatively small with lower ceilings. “The CDD8 and SX210 are the perfect size and will deliver plenty of impact. Also, because the system needs to act as a presentation system as well, with use of wireless mics and video playback, we

needed a speaker that was not just film-specific but could give us quality results for multiple types of use.”

The installer is confident that the fit-out has more than fulfilled the remit. “The Library requested a high-quality system that would allow for growth in the future. Our requirements were aesthetics, discreet footprint, HF dispersion, sound quality, ease of deployment/installation - and the ADORN A55 has delivered on all fronts. As such, we feel we have integrated a system that surpasses our client’s expectations and are proud of the product we have installed.”

As for discretion, he said, “We knew we accomplished this goal when our client was standing directly below one of the loudspeakers and asked where the speakers were located!”

With the success of this installation, he says, “Martin Audio will definitely now stay at the top of our list.”

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