

The Making of a Megachurch

SIGHT and SOUND

Looking at the acoustic, audio and video technology that went into the building of Southeast Christian Church in Louisville, Kentucky.



There is no mistaking it. With over 15,000 members attending three Sunday morning services and a recently constructed church building that cost an estimated \$95 million (including land costs, site development and architectural fees) from start to finish, Southeast Christian Church (SCC) in Louisville, Kentucky is a megachurch.

Looking more like a modern civic auditorium or sports arena complex than a traditional church building, even though a 40-foot cross stands erected in the middle of the superstructure, the

recently completed facility boasts an impressive array of buildings totaling 762,000 square feet on its 103-acre site. The main worship sanctuary (called affectionately "the big room") is an amphitheater-style worship center with a seating capacity of 9,400 complemented by two 1,400-seat multi-purpose assembly rooms, a 1,000-seat youth auditorium, a wedding chapel, two children's areas and several 100-seat meeting rooms. As one would expect, the acoustic, audio, lighting and video technology is state of the art.

ACOUSTIC SYSTEMS

Due to the massive size and cylindrical shape of the main sanctuary there were various acoustic problems to overcome. In order to compensate for architectural design that was less than conducive for sonic resonance, the room volume was reduced (by adding a ceiling gondola), a radial offset was placed in each of the seating sections and special acoustically-absorptive wall paneling was used to enhance the sound. Another compensatory design feature was to incorporate an acoustic