

ICONYX DELIVERS A TOP-DOWN APPROACH FOR TWO AQUATIC CENTRES



For an audio professional, creating a sound system for a large aquatic centre is not a simple task. The combination of high walls, corrugated metal roofs, and an abundance of concrete, glass, and water makes for an acoustical environment that is far from pretty, even before it's packed with noisy revelers.

Rising to the challenge was Chilliwack-based Go Audio, the company behind the audio installations at both Cheam Leisure Centre and cross-town neighbor Chilliwack Landing Leisure Centre. Both projects employed a very novel design approach featuring the Renkus-Heinz Iconyx steered array.

Unlike most applications where the steered array is used as a vertical column line array, the approach at the aquatic centres involved suspending the Iconyx from the roof overhead, and steering the beams to focus the sound away from the walls and other highly reflective surfaces.

The Cheam project came first. Go Audio's Mike Evans called Fred Gilpin, the local

Renkus-Heinz rep, and asked him to have a look at the project. "We've worked with Fred on other projects, including a church in Vancouver that had very challenging acoustics," says Evans. "We installed Iconyx IC16 and IC8 there and it worked great, so we were confident that Iconyx would be the best choice."

The Cheam system includes six IC7-WR powered column arrays, with a Rane processor handling system DSP. "Because of the Iconyx's very narrow vertical dispersion, we positioned four IC7's horizontally over the outer walkway, aimed slightly inward," Evans explains. "We were able to keep the sound completely off the walls and cover just the walkway and a bit of the pool. Two more IC7's suspended at 45 degrees cover the water with minimal overlap. The coverage is seamless wherever you are, with no need for delays."

Based on the success of the Cheam project, Go Audio was called back to revamp the audio system at Chilliwack Landing. "That project was a bit more challenging," says Evans. "The space is configured a bit

differently, and there was some ductwork we had to work around as well. We ended up using a total of ten Iconyx boxes to cover everything." With an existing rack of Crown CTi-series amplifiers and wiring already in place, the decision was made to go with unpowered ICX7-WR units.

Evans reports that management and patrons alike at both venues have been very pleased with the results. "The primary objective was spoken word intelligibility for safety announcements and such," he says. "But the Iconyx has been great for background music as well. Typically in this sort of environment, it's just too reverberant to run background music at the levels necessary to overcome the ambient noise. But with the Iconyx, the music is exceptionally articulate, even at lower levels."

Evans concludes, "I was amazed the first time I stepped out of an Iconyx steered beam and immediately recognized how useful this speaker system would be! It's very gratifying hearing the clarity Iconyx delivers in these challenging environments." 

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