

# PROJECT PROFILE



## The Newseum



### The News is Alive on Pennsylvania Avenue

A seven-level, high-tech interactive museum, the Newseum traces the history of news reporting from the 16th century to the present. Originally located in Arlington, Virginia, the Newseum is now at the Capitol end of Pennsylvania Avenue. With most of the video displays and audio systems provided by Electrosonic, it boasts 250,000 square feet of exhibit space and includes 14 major galleries and a 4D time-travel experience.

"The Newseum is a very sophisticated building with an open plan and enormously tall atrium, which meant there were many lighting and acoustical challenges to overcome," notes Andrew Kidd, Electrosonic Business Development Manager. "But our client, the Freedom Forum's Jim Updike, and Bud O'Connor and his team are technologically extremely well qualified. Since they are all former broadcast engineers, the design and implementation was really a partnership between the two organizations." Electrosonic previously partnered with the Freedom Forum on the Arlington, Virginia install of the Newseum.

With most galleries wide open to the Great Hall of News "there were issues of containing sound within the individual zones and creating good sound quality in the lobby," Kidd continues. "There are thousands and thousands of square feet of glass and concrete working against us and a few nice absorbent surfaces helping out." Electrosonic worked closely with acoustic designer Steve Haas of SH Acoustics to select the speaker types that best fit his acoustic design of the Newseum. "His speaker choices and treatments in the lobby make for quite extraordinarily clear sound," Kidd reports.



The Great Hall of News also features two Sunrise Systems news tickers, which run 100 and 150 feet respectively along the fronts of the second and third floor balconies. Associated Press RSS News feeds streamed to the Newseum have characters six inches high.

Visitors to the Newseum begin their tour on the concourse level where five Hearst Corporation Orientation Theaters as well as assorted exhibits welcome them. One 120-seat theater and four 40-seat theaters present the award winning "What's News," an HD video exploring the boundaries of journalism and the public's need to know.

In the basement, the Berlin Wall Gallery features one of only two of the original guard towers in existence along with sections of the graffiti-strewn wall. Other basement galleries spotlight a satellite news truck, a linotype exhibit, and a looped slide presentation of unforgettable photos shown on two screens.

From the concourse level visitors take huge glass elevators to the top exhibit level where they continue their tour and descent to the other floors.



On the fifth floor, the News History Gallery, a series of interactive touch screens chronicle artifacts from five centuries of news reporting. On the same floor is the Pulliam Family Great Books Gallery, which highlights documents related to freedom of speech and the press.

The fourth floor is home to an extensive 9/11 Gallery, which looks at the media response to the terrorist attack. Visitors descend to the third floor where the Internet, TV and Radio Gallery, have unique configurations. The gallery also has graphical timelines detailing methods of transmitting the news.

On the second floor, the Interactive Newsroom includes eight "Be A TV Reporter" kiosks, which are run by Electrosonic custom control software and hardware. In this blue screen experience, which is triggered by the barcode on the entry ticket, visitors choose a backdrop and read a script from a teleprompter while full-motion MPEG video and still photos capture the moment. Visitors can take the photo home and download the video from the Newseum's website with their card code.

### The Annenberg Theater at the Newseum

Electrosonic helped design and install the Walter and Leonore Annenberg Theater, a true multi-purpose venue, which includes a 4D time-travel experience. As a theater for general purpose presentations, it seats 500 guests. As a 4D theater, it seats 196 and features a 57x25-foot custom curved Stewart screen.

The 4D experience takes visitors on a journalistic trip through time where they meet celebrated reporters of the past such as Nellie Bly and Edward R. Murrow. They sit in motion base seats, built by Oceaneering under contract to Electrosonic, and feel wind, air blasts, spritzer and rumble effects as they view a 3D show created by Cortina Productions. Lighting effects were crafted by Barbizon Lighting. Electrosonic created the final show programming for the theater using their ESCAN show control software.

