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THE W FACTOR

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A look inside The W Singapore-Sentosa Cove hotel

Substance and style

While all hotels employ BGM, The W Singapore Hotel takes the concept to a higher level. **Richard Lawn** tours its stylish facilities

THINK OF CHARACTERISTIC

Singaporean five star hotels and the established institutions of One Fullerton and Raffles will most likely come to mind. Then there are the modern chains dotted in and around Orchard and Marine Drive that offer comfort, convenience and luxury. The newly opened W Singapore-Sentosa Cove hotel is different. Located on the eastern Cove of Sentosa, it doesn't pretend to be in the bustle of the city as wealthy Indonesians park their private yachts up next to it. Secluded and quiet with plentiful amenities, both business and leisure guests don't need to take transportation across the Causeway to be entertained. Just as the two major resorts aim to keep their guests in house, the W succeeds in keeping its cosmopolitan guests occupied within its cool, upmarket grounds.

There's an energy associated with the W Singapore that sets it apart from the moment a guest checks in, and the BGM more than plays its part. The electronic music is more reinforced than background and creates more than just a first impression. However, it's not confined to the lobby – music is all around. From that initial introduction in the lobby, it spreads into the lounge, bar, F&B outlets, ballroom, outdoor grounds, pool area and down below the water surface of the

large, ornate outdoor pool that never closes. Classical, stylish, functional, reliable and consistent are by-words in five-star hotel design. Despite having been designed over a decade ago, the large inventory of Electro-Voice speaker systems installed in the W Singapore remain the best tools for the job.

Guests are made to feel at home in the W Lounge, which is a twist on a traditional lobby, uniting relaxation



The luxurious lobby is served by Evid C6.2C and C8.2 ceiling speakers

and celebration with its electrified design courtesy of the discrete Evid C8.2 ceiling speakers tapped at 30W. The laidback space, which includes Woobar, is transformed as the sun



W Hotel's A/V assistant manager Devendren flanked by Concept Systems Technology's Jack Tay and Karthik by the pool bar area

sets by a live DJ who can ramp up the soundtrack via a Pioneer DJM-900 mixer and CDJ-900 players. During these hours, the music is enhanced by ceiling mounted Evid 6.2T surface-mount speakers augmented by Evid 12.1 surface mount subwoofers that have been integrated and blended into the surrounding furniture. One guest remarked online that 'the very noisy music played in the lobby probably turned off a number of guests'. A hotel representative responded: 'One of the hotel's main passion points is music along with design and fashion. Music played all over the lobby is structured to embody that passion point. We are looking to have a more diverse sound

of music to cater to all our guests.' The scene is set from here on, although it has not been repeated. The sound systems that weave their way through the corridors and public areas from the lobby have been carefully and deliberately selected according to their locations. For example, the F&B outlets of the restaurant Skirt, and the breakfast diner named The Kitchen Table, are located on the same floor level with 7m ceilings, but adopt different speaker solutions. Whilst Skirt is served by 12 Evid 4.2T speakers discretely positioned on shelves at roughly 3.5m, The Kitchen Table adopts Evid C8.2 ceiling speakers. By escaping to the serene settings

of the rainforest-like Away Spa, an accompaniment of soothing music and sound effects are as much a part of the fabric as the wooden sculptures and soothing natural surfaces. From the Detox changing area, to the decompression area, sauna, steam room, vitality pool, treatment room or resonance room, zoned Evid C6.2 ceiling and 4.2T surface mount speakers play their role in the relaxation experience. In order to stir the blood, the same speakers receive a different audio source in the Gym fitness centre.

Any guest heading for the jetty, gardens or pool area will be assured that there is music all around. A further 16 Evid 4.2T wall and pole mounted speakers serve the foyer, whilst TIC mushroom speakers have been concealed amongst the plants. Whilst some guests prefer to relax in outdoor lounge chairs that include vibration capabilities and a built-in sound system, others can ignore the W Singapore's selected music source. Mist-fan cooled private cabanas have been erected offering a view across the South China Sea, in which escapees can immerse themselves into a parallel world courtesy of complimentary iPads and iPods. Back in the real world, Evid 6.2T dual six-inch surface mounted speakers cater for guests at the pool side bar, which is located below the

aply named Lighthouse. Thirsts are quenched to rhythmic beats courtesy of the distinguished Evid 6.2T and 6.2T 100V line speakers that include coherent coverage waveguides and vented LF enclosures within the elliptical weather-resistant ABS cabinets. Guests diving into the deep end of the 1,338 sq-m swimming pool – aptly called Wet – are aurally



TIC mushroom speakers provide BGM in the garden areas



The W lounge is a twist on the traditional lobby



The pool has been equipped with underwater EV UW30 speakers

surprised when confronted by the sum of 21 Electro-Voice UW30 underwater speakers. The 30W speakers represent a departure from conventional underwater sound source design as they utilise the water proof barrier as a sound source radiator.

The sound systems designed for

relaxing, eating and drinking on the first two levels differ somewhat from those installed on level two for business purposes. Christened The Great Room, the main ballroom is a 732 sq-m function area that can be divided in two by a 7m ceiling-to-floor screen. Capable of accommodating 500 seated guests for a banquet or 700 for a theatre style evening, The Great Room is characterised by Swarovski floral chandeliers and welcomes a multitude of events such as wedding parties, corporate functions and product launches. As such, the A/V system needed to be multifunctional to cater for these varied needs.

An FOH sound reinforcement system comprising four ceiling suspended clusters each consists of two EV TX1122 12-inch speakers and a single EV TX 1181S 500W 18-inch subwoofer, powered by EV Precision Series CPS 2.12 and 2.4 amplifiers. The two central clusters serve as a main L-R system for the middle section, whilst the outer left and right clusters can be operated with one of the central clusters when The Great Room is divided. For background ambience, the facility manager can switch to a ceiling speaker solution, comprising Evid C8.2 coaxial speakers augmented by C10.1 10-inch subwoofers, all disguised in a white finish. Powered by EV CPS

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FEATURES: INSTALLATION

2250 and 2400T amplifiers, the ceiling speaker system has been extended into the 290 sq-m foyer that serves as a pre-reception area.

Like the Evid speakers, the EV NetMax N-8000 system controller was a state-of-the-art digital matrix system when it was launched over a decade ago. Seemingly style never goes out of fashion as those timeless attributes of ease of use, flexibility and reliability appeal to the system integrator and hotel engineers alike. The Iris-Net (Intelligent Remote & Integrate Supervision) protocol provides routing, DSP system control and supervision for both the Evid distributed ceiling and TX FOH speaker systems in The Great Hall via the EV Precision Series amplifiers and the CAN Bus of the



EV PA and CPS amplifiers power the EV FOH and ceiling speaker systems

N-8000. Various EQs, crossovers, dynamics, and FIR-Drive loudspeaker optimisation configurations have been stored as presets according to the event being staged and whether the room is going to be partitioned. Rather than managing the two loudspeaker systems via a conventional PC, Crestron control has been enabled with a Pro2 processor linked to a TPS 6 touch panel via the RS-232-interface of the N8000.

Each partitioned room is graced by a motorised Panasonic PT-D10000U projector and 6.5m wide x 8m high LAV screen. Like the DSP, operation of the visuals can be conducted via Crestron control connected to



The W Hotel ballroom can be divided into three sections, each served by ceiling suspended TX1122 speakers and DX1181 subs

a Sierra Video Pro XL router in the main control room. A Datavideo SE600 digital video switcher receives video feeds from LG DVD and Blu-Ray players in addition to a PC and six Panasonic cameras. Kramer VS-1616V 16x16 composite video matrix switchers, VP-719xl presentation digital scalars, VP-8 distribution amplifiers and VS-33V 3x1 composite video switchers have been added to the signal chain. With access to the overhead control room being somewhat tricky, the facility manager prefers to configure the A/V systems via Crestron control. As such, a Yamaha MG166c mixer is preferred for normal functions, for which the controls are set beforehand.

Live stage performances, however, require an engineer mixing on a Yamaha M7CL-32 console, while musicians can benefit from various dbx EQ, compressors, limiters and gates together with a Yamaha SPX2000 multi effects processor. A Pioneer DJM500 mixer has been added to the hotel's inventory for guest DJs, whilst eight channels of Shure SLX wireless are at the hotel's disposal.

Referred to as studios, four meeting rooms in close proximity to The Grand Hall can accommodate between 40 and 85 guests according to the room plan. Each studio is set up for multifunctional events, but the main usage is business meetings and conferences. The four individual systems consist of Sanyo PLC-XU106 4,000-lumens projectors, Kramer VP 8x8 switchers, Yamaha MG1202 mixers and Evid C8.2



A Yamaha M7CL console is used for live performances in the ballroom



A DJ delivers a chilled ambience each evening courtesy of Evid 6.2 speakers and subs on Pioneer decks

speakers powered by PA2250 amplifiers. All four studios can be connected as a single matrix when required and are equipped with either wired or wireless Crestron control 6-inch touch-panels together with individual VGA, A/V and microphone inputs.

Concept Systems Technologies was awarded the contract to install the resultant A/V systems throughout the W Singapore Hotel, including the elevators and the VIP suites. The company's credentials prior to the W Hotel included the vast Carlton Hotel and Pan Pacific upgrades, which bear similar A/V signatures.



A Crestron TPS 6X tablet offers full remote A/V control



Well heeled vacationers park their yachts and check in at Sentosa Cove's W

A 12-month placement on site posed the eight man team many challenges, as recalled by project manager Jimmy Lim: 'As is normally the case, the interior design and the aesthetics were the over-riding factors in the integration of the A/V systems in the W,' he explains. 'Although we were very sensitive to Rockwell Group and Axis Architects, we were encouraged by the hotel's desire to incorporate a high SPL audio system, in which the music would play a large role in lifting the ambience. However, the high SPLs also led to internal vibrations and there were further challenges

caused by many the high ceilings in the ballroom and the restaurants.'

Having submitted a price-sensitive quotation, Acviron Acoustics was encouraged to employ Concept Systems Technologies. 'Price performance is a huge consideration in any job today, but EV systems also provide huge reliability and ease of use,' furthers technical manager Willy Tan. A vast assortment of Evid C10.1 subwoofers and C8.2-C4.2 ceiling speakers together with Evid 6.2T and 4.2T surface mount speakers are powered by some 45 PA 2400T-2250T-1250T-4150L-2450L and CPS 2.12-2.9-2.6-2.4 amplifiers throughout the 20 designated zones. 'No two hotels are the same and it took us three to four months to create the necessary documentation,' adds Mr Tan. 'Many



The outdoor areas and patios are served by Evid 4.2 speakers

changes had to be made throughout the job as a result of the interior design, but we communicated regularly and effectively. We also decided to integrate Sabine wall panels into the design to allow the staff in various zones to change the volume only should they wish.'

As the sun sets across the Cove, the musical ambience shifts up a gear for the evening shift. As Mr Lim and Mr Tan sip teas in these plush surroundings, it appears a far cry from the times they had to negotiate their way around the many other contractors on site pulling cables in the dusty, non-air conditioned gypsum and cement atmosphere.

'We really enjoyed working on this project,' adds Mr Lim. 'It was refreshing to install audio systems that are DJ quality rather than straightforward background music. We use EV a lot for our projects owing to the cost effectiveness, functionality, ease of installation and flexibility. In the case of the W, however, the Evid styles have blended perfectly with the W Singapore's interior design and their versatility has promoted the various models to be used in a wide variety of applications.' W Singapore ensures that meetings, weddings and events are glamorous, dynamic, fabulous, sparkling and electrifying. The multitude of EV speaker systems woven into the W's design fabric from the entrance foyer to the deep end of the Wet pool play a critical role in delivering these amplified expectations.

www.concept-systems.com.sg
www.wsingaporeentosacove.com

