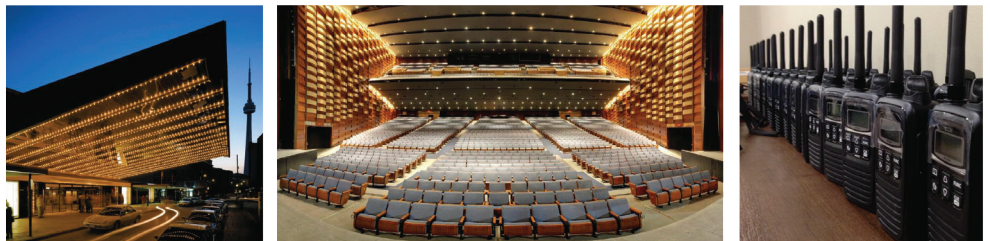


Sony Centre: **Case Study**



Sony Centre for the Performing Arts

Icom Provides IP Radio Communications
for Canada's Largest Soft-Seat Theater



A case study prepared by Icom America Inc.
Manufacturers of high-performance, award-winning radios for over 55 years.

Sony Centre for the Performing Arts

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*Lakeshore Communications
is an Authorized Icom Dealer
serving Canada's Southern
Ontario region.*



Featured Products:

- IP100H Handheld Radio
 - IP1000C Controller
- BC-202 Battery Charger
 - HM-166LS Earphone
Lapel Microphone
- HM-186LS Hand Microphone

Toronto's iconic Sony Centre for the Performing Arts has a rich cultural history that spans more than 60 years. Credited as the city's first performing arts center, Sony Centre has become an international venue for concerts, musical theater, dance, comedy and family entertainment. With a 3000-seat capacity, the Sony Centre is Canada's largest soft-seat theater. Offering in-house catering and customizable spaces, the Centre has also become a viable location to host large business events, town hall meetings and similar attractions.

New Theater, New Radios

Designated a heritage building by the City of Toronto, the Sony Centre for the Performing Arts underwent a renovation from 2008-2010. Maintenance included the restoration of materials and features from the original building as well as reconfigured layouts and facility upgrades. Under a sponsorship arrangement with Introtel e-Networks, the Sony Centre also implemented facility-wide wifi infrastructure.

Four years after the Centre reopened its doors with a new layout, it became apparent that the theater's existing radios would need to be replaced. The Sony Centre required a radio system that provided reliable coverage throughout its 250,000 square-foot facility and durable subscriber units that could withstand typical wear-and-tear use.

Various alternatives were tried, but failed. VHF and UHF radios (simplex and with repeaters) were unsuccessful. 900 MHz radios did not provide adequate coverage or reliability. A badge-like mobile device was implemented, but proved too difficult to configure and offered little flexibility or functionality. A software application for smartphones was considered, but ultimately passed up due to the tedious configuration of each unit and theft concerns.





An Advanced IP Radio System

After learning about Icom's IP100H wireless LAN radio from an online boating trade show blog, the Sony Centre approached Authorized Icom Canada Dealer Lake-shore Communications for a demonstration.

The IP100H's functionality complemented the theater's existing wifi infrastructure — approximately 74 wireless access points in a mesh system. The radio also met the Centre's physical requirements with rugged IPX7 waterproof ratings.

The Sony Centre's knowledgeable IT department, coupled with Icom's easy to understand user documentation, provided a seamless installation of 45 Icom IP100H radios and one Icom IP1000C 100-user controller. Access points to extend coverage were easily added and/or relocated as needed. "Installation of this IP solution at the Sony Centre was done quickly, successfully, and primarily by the knowledgeable IT department of the end user," reports Icom Canada Systems Technician Ron LeBlanc. "Little help was needed for installation from either the dealer or Icom Canada."

"By the time Icom Canada technical personnel arrived on site, the end user had the system fundamentally working."

- Ron LeBlanc, Icom Canada Systems Technician

Twenty-two additional IP100H units were reordered and pre-programmed for "on the shelf" visitor use. "The Sony Centre bought additional units for their system after initial implementation," says Icom Canada Territory Sales Manager Murray Lycan. "This is always a positive sign that an end user is satisfied with a solution."

In total, the Sony Centre defined 7 talkgroups: Food & Beverage, Maintenance, Operations, Front of House, Production, Security, and Box Office. IP100H features such as over-the-air programming and individual/group calling promoted simple configuration and general ease of use. The Sony Centre IT staff recommended a feature update that would improve talk group functionality for their use. Icom was able to update the firmware to provide this enhancement.

"Icom reacted and provided a software revision that addressed the Sony Centre's key issue."

- Murray Lycan, Icom Canada Territory Sales Manager





Improving Business with an Icom Solution

Icom's IP Advanced Radio System resolved communications issues experienced by the theater's previous VHF/UHF and 900 MHz radios. Users have praised the IP100H's rugged, compact and ergonomic body as well as its manageable learning curve for operation.

Stable in-building coverage, flexible configuration and programming, and ease of use all contributed to the Sony Centre's decision to choose Icom. Similar organizations can also streamline their operations with Icom's IP Advanced Radio System

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