

Historic Yuma Theatre Mixes Digital Technology with Old Southwest Charm

Visitors to the newly renovated Historic Yuma Theatre in downtown Yuma, Arizona will see a contrast between the old and the new - not in architecture, but in technology. The Theatre, originally constructed in 1911, was Yuma's only local Theatre and vaudeville house for many years. Throughout its lifetime, the Theatre has survived hardships such as fires and earthquakes, and has endured many incarnations - even a short stint as a car dealership. In 1987, the City made the Theatre available for public use, but realized it was in much need of a makeover, as was the rest of Yuma's historic downtown area.

Now, the refurbished Theatre is the centerpiece of the 40,000 square foot Yuma Downtown Art Center, the City's \$6 million restoration project that broke ground in September 2002. Besides showing movies again, the Theatre will be host to Yuma's 90+ Arts & Culture groups, corporate training presentations, and civic functions.

During its heyday in the early 1900s, the Theatre operated what was then considered standard movie projection equipment - carbon arc projectors - 19th century technology that predates the invention of the incandescent lamp. Today, Historic Yuma Theatre is home to the only still-functioning carbon arc projectors west of the Mississippi. It also houses much newer projection technology - a state of the art digital theatre system supplied and installed by Troxell Communications, Inc.

Although the exterior of the Theatre has undergone many architectural changes over the years, the interior décor has remained virtually unchanged since 1936. In order to serve as a modern day training and presentation facility while keeping the feel of the old Southwest, the City Council realized the necessity for a highly innovative projection system. They turned to Troxell Communications, a state-approved vendor, and one of the largest audiovisual suppliers to government agencies nationwide. Having partnered with Troxell on several past projects, the City relied on the company to recommend suitable AV equipment that would honor the Theatre's historic ambience.

"It was extremely important to maintain the original look and feel of the Theatre, so the new systems had to be as unobtrusive as possible," said John Shotts, Troxell Account Executive for the City of Yuma. "I helped them put together a reasonably priced, high-end digital theatre system using components from leading manufacturers."

The City of Yuma opted to go with Troxell's recommendations:

- Sanyo PLC-XF45 True XGA Digital Multimedia Projector
- Sony DVD player
- JVC HR-S9911U SVHS Super VHS System
- JBL AM4200/64 Mid-High Frequency Loudspeakers
- dbx® DriveRack® Soundsystem Control

"I think that it's going to be very well received and we are excited about the flexibility of the system," stated Roberta Ukura, Yuma Art Center Manager. "The installation team was very responsive and worked with our special needs regarding the historic nature of the building. The price was excellent as well," said Ukura.

The project is now in its final stages, with finishing touches scheduled for completion in March 2004. The City of Yuma expects as many as 30,000 visitors to the Theatre annually.

More information about Historic Yuma Theatre can be found at www.ci.yuma.az.us.

More information about Troxell Communications products and services can be found at www.trox.com.

