



Hollywood Bowl

The Sweet Sound of Security at Hollywood Bowl

On the night of July 11, 1922, in a large natural amphitheater in Bolton Canyon, California, 18,000 people sat under the stars on simple wooden benches placed on the natural hillside. They listened to a performance of the Los Angeles Philharmonic under the direction of conductor Alfred Hertz. It was an historic evening: the opening of the Hollywood Bowl.

Since that time, the Hollywood Bowl has come to be known as one of the finest musical venues in the world. The amphitheater holds over 85 musical performances each year from June through October. In addition to the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Hollywood Bowl presents artists from all musical genres, ranging from Faith Hill to Aretha Franklin.

With an audience so large and so much talent on display, the Hollywood Bowl represents a daunting security challenge. Each evening represents a new test, and each show requires a well-

CASE SUMMARY

Location:

Bolton Canyon, California

System:

American Dynamics:
SpeedDome Ultra
Programmable Dome Cameras
Intellex
Network Client

orchestrated performance by security personnel to keep things moving safely and on time.

At the center of that security performance is a video surveillance infrastructure that includes more than 70 SpeedDome Ultra 8 Programmable Dome Cameras from American Dynamics®, architected and installed by TAB Technical Services, a firm that specializes in the consulting, design, installation, and maintenance of state-of-the-art sound and visual systems. Every corner of the stage, parking lots, and neighboring freeways is carefully monitored to ensure that people and traffic are moving freely. The security video is recorded on a number of Intellex® Ultra digital video management systems to ensure that, if necessary, evidentiary video is a mouse-click away. This vigilance has come in handy in the past, as told by Todd Bermann, President from TAB Technical Services.

“We had an incident not too long ago, when a guitar was stolen from one of the musicians who was setting up to perform that night,” tells Bermann. “We were able to use Intellex to quickly review the recorded video from the camera monitoring that area, and caught the thief red-handed.”

The Hollywood Bowl’s robust surveillance system, comprised of cameras, digital video management systems, and MegaPower 3200 matrix switcher systems, serves many purposes. The stage manager relies heavily on the live video to ensure the show starts on time. He has access to his own console to monitor the steady stream of audience members as they make their way to their seats. This allows him to call for more ushers to move people along, and delay the opening act if necessary.

For more traditional security and surveillance, the Director of Operations oversees the parking lots and walkways leading to the venue, and relies on the PTZ functions of the domes to give him superior close-ups of potential problems.

“From the visitors’ and performers’ perspectives, security is invisible,” said Ed Tom, Director of Operations. “It’s pretty amazing when 18,000 people descend upon the Bowl, and our security team is operating seamlessly and effectively in the background to ensure that the patrons are flowing in and out safely and efficiently.”

This was not always the case. Prior to switching to American Dynamics solutions, there were no remote viewing capabilities. When TAB Technical Services was initially brought on to help beef up the system in 1995, that was the first thing to change.

Tom continued, “To see the infrastructure in the backrooms is pretty impressive. More than 70 cameras are being monitored by our surveillance team through the matrix switcher and being recorded on four Intellex systems. And I love the fact that I can log in remotely using the Network Client remote management software.”

“Viewing video remotely is taken for granted now,” said Bermann. “But the previous digital video management system Hollywood Bowl had didn’t support that capability.”

With the new season ahead of them, the security team at Hollywood Bowl is ready for the next set of great performances.

Lights, Cameras, Action.