

**Tallowood Baptist Church Acquires Solid State Logic Live L350 Console
as Part of Wider Upgrades to A/V Systems and Networking Infrastructure**

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**Houston, Texas, February xx, 2022 — Tallowood Baptist Church, in the Memorial City neighborhood of West Houston, replaced an aging mixing console at front-of-house with a Solid State Logic Live L350 in recent months. The installation was part of ongoing upgrades at the church that also includes construction of a new video and audio control room, new audio and video equipment and wider implementation of a network infrastructure.**

When the choir and the musicians returned to the church after the initial lockdown due to the coronavirus pandemic, they all wore masks to prevent the spread of Covid-19 and, not surprisingly, it sounded like it. “It was really hard to get intelligibility and clarity,” Tallowood’s director of technology, Miguel Ortiz, says. Then the church replaced the old desk with a new SSL Live L350. “The choir was still wearing masks when we switched the console — and it sounded as if they had taken their masks off. We were so shocked.”

The previous console was 12 years old, Ortiz reports, so obviously there was going to be some improvement in sound quality. “But I didn’t think it was going to be that dramatic,” he says. “It was so surprising.”

The 1,750-seat church hosts two different Sunday services with two different styles of music, Ortiz says. The first service is a traditional presentation with choir and orchestra and requires just a handful of microphones. “We mic the choir. And we have high-level musicians with high expectations who want it to sound just like it sounds coming out of their instruments. They still need to hear everything, so we have our podiums and extra mics and the piano mics being fed onto the stage.”

Tallowood is using Dante to transport the lines from the stagebox to the L350 console. Dante is also used to distribute the live stream, which is additionally sent to other public areas of the building, he says.

The second service is contemporary, with drums and guitars. “Currently we’re feeding a personal monitoring system onstage for the band from the L350 via MADI,” Ortiz says. “And we’re feeding three in-ear systems.”

Ortiz’s assistant, Allan Tiguila, handles most of the mixing duties at front-of-house. One challenge with the sound system using the old console was that he could never get the choir loud enough in the mix because of feedback and other issues, Tiguila says. “Once I was able to put the SSL bus compressor on them, man, that was a game-changer. I was really impressed with that. It was one of the first times that I thought the choir was a bit too loud! I’d never had that.”

Tiguila continues “For the second service, I’m using all the onboard stuff, mainly the de-esser, extra EQs and all the reverbs. Mainly what I use on Sunday is the plate ‘verbs and the standard vocal thickener that’s on there; that’s pretty nice.”

“That was one of the selling points” of the Live console, Ortiz says, “getting the SSL bus compressor and EQ sound that everybody knows and is familiar with. I think it really does help. It’s easier to get a good sound.”

Tallowood acquired the L350 from local AVL equipment provider, integrator and rental house LD Systems, which had installed the current sound system years earlier when the church first moved to its purpose-built campus. According to Matt Rhodes, sales engineer, LD Systems, Ortiz and his sound team confirmed their purchase decision at LD’s shop, where they took the production sound department’s SSL Live L500 for a test drive. “They were most impressed with the sonic quality,” Rhodes says, adding, “The SSL mic pre’s are still the best on the market. Period.”

The road to purchasing the new SSL Live console had started years earlier, Ortiz says. At a conference some years ago, he recalls, he spoke to Andrew Stone, renowned production director and senior audio engineer at Church on the Move in Tulsa, Oklahoma, which has SSL Live consoles in two worship spaces. Stone, who passed away suddenly in 2019, was also an educator and had been a touring FOH engineer before joining the church. “He had been touring forever, so when he said the SSL Live changed the way he worked it really piqued my interest,” Ortiz says. “That was the start of choosing that direction.”

Ortiz continues, “I had spoken to several guys who had also used the Live console and I kept hearing that the sonics, just the sound right out of the console, was such a massive improvement. It made everything so easy to do; it was less work to get to the sound that you wanted. I heard that several times from different people.”

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