

**80,000-seat AT&T Stadium Upgrades its Facilities to Include
a Solid State Logic System T S500m Console**

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*— handling sports, entertainment and corporate events*

**Arlington, Texas, January 11, 2024 — AT&T Stadium, home of the NFL’s Dallas Cowboys, has significantly upgraded the capabilities of its main audio control room with the installation of a Solid State Logic System T S500m console. The new system, which was supplied and integrated by Clair Global Integration’s Pro Media Audio Video division, is primarily used to mix and route audio throughout the 80,000-seat stadium during the venue’s very busy calendar of sports, entertainment and corporate events.**

AT&T Stadium is in use 365 days a year, not just during football season, and the control room is the hub through which all audio signals pass for almost every event. “This room routes audio for the whole venue, to the bowl P.A. system, the X clubs, back-of-house, concessions and bathrooms, as well as broadcast feeds — you name it, we route it through here,” says Gary French, head of audio for the Dallas Cowboys.

**System T delivers far greater flexibility**

The new SSL S500m console is custom-configured with 48 faders in a 2.5-bay frame. French has set up three metering displays, one for inputs, one for outputs and a third, utility screen for mix-minus feeds and various other signals. French says that the upgrade became necessary because he needed something more up-to-date, with far greater flexibility and with the capacity to handle many more inputs and especially outputs than the previous console, which was installed in 2009 when the stadium opened.

“Gary had an SSL background from his previous TV post days,” says Mike Mason, Regional Vice President, Clair Global Integration. “So he knew their platform and the quality and the history of SSL. He made the decision regarding what brand and model of console he wanted and then turned it over to us. We figured out what parts and pieces were needed, supplied everything, then integrated it into the stadium’s systems.”

**High capacity AoIP interface**

Mason continues, “We converted the whole control room to Dante from CobraNet.” Then, during the integration of the System T, “We added some AES3 connectivity in the room to integrate with existing equipment and Gary went from nine to 48 feeds to and from video. We added a Dante link to the truck dock; SSL provided an HC Bridge SRC for Dante conversion. Now, Gary's got a full 256 channels of Dante that he can send to and receive from the broadcast dock.” The external truck network is siloed from the facility's Dante network, he adds: “Gary has control of all of his Dante channels but nobody else can see those signals. More importantly, they can't mess each other up.” In a separate project, Mason adds, Pro Media also updated the DSP managing the stadium P.A. “So they are now native Dante from the SSL console straight into the DSP.”

During a football game, French says, “We've got a lot of elements feeding into this room that are part of our show. We've got eight playback machines that we use during football games. Plus, I've got a couple of DJs in different parts of the stadium that feed me, and we've got mics down on the field for the national anthem and various presentations on the field.” Pre-game, French receives submixes of the hosts on the Cowboy’s game day set as well as from two shows on the stadium plazas and from pianos and singers on platforms in the endzones.

His primary mix is typically for the seating bowl and the in-house TVs in the stadium’s clubs, with a copy feeding the recorders. He will also provide separate mixes for sponsors: “Every sponsor wants their own ISO split of the show of their product being shown, to record.” He also trades signals back and forth with the broadcast trucks: “I send them my PA mix, other announcer mics and whatever else they need, and they send me their field effects and send me a program mix.”

**AT&T Stadium delivers for football and more**

Outside of football games, French continues, “We average about four corporate events a day here. If we’ve got a bowl event, which could be a party, a conference or a trade show on the field, I will handle that. Sometimes we have a third party come in and I will send them feeds from the video playback and route it into our sound system or just feed into theirs. For concerts, they always bring in their own system. But this is the biggest room in the world and that fourth level seating is way up there, so they usually tie into our upper delay speakers, and we manage the delay and EQ during their show. That is routed directly into our speaker system and also feeds our suites.”

Monster truck events and Supercross motorcycle races may feature live streaming or delayed broadcasts, French says. “I will provide the mix for those, which will be my bowl mix plus a stereo mix with the net sounds and crowd that I don't put into my P.A. mix. I'll add truck sound effects; we've got mics around the stadium to pick that up. I switch my monitoring back and forth and make sure everybody's got the same basic mix, plus or minus effects.”

With such a busy events schedule, Pro Media did everything they could to make the transition fast and painless, Mason says. “We set the console up next door to the control room for about three weeks, and had it all completely connected, sitting on tables, so Gary could do all of the pre-programming. SSL came in and did the training and we got everything configured. The actual transition from the old console to the System T only took two days. There was no learning curve once we installed the SSL because it had already been set up for weeks before.”

**Powerful SSL DSP**
French has come to appreciate the processing power of SSL’s System T, especially channel delay, which enables him to set compensation times between the mics on the stadium’s 16 in-house cameras. His previous console had only six delays, French says, “So having a delay on every channel has been a great thing. They're easy to take in and out, but they're always there.”

He continues, “I use the duckers a lot just because there are so many elements. The referee always takes priority over the announcer and the announcer takes priority over music or commercials, so I have multiple duckers, chained one to the other. I also use a lot of noise gates. And the EQs with the analysis are nice to have.”

But there is one effect that French almost never uses, he says. “This is the biggest domed room in the world, and it’s made from concrete, glass and steel. It has a 12 and a half second decay time at 60 Hertz — so I don't use a lot of reverb!”

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*Solid State Logic is the world’s leading manufacturer of analogue and digital audio consoles and provider of creative tools for music, broadcast, live and post production professionals. For more information about our award-winning products, please visit: www.solidstatelogic.com.*

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