



A Roaring Success



## Bose® Sound Helps Transport Zoo Visitors Closer to Each Animal's Natural Environment.

### the venue:

One of the most well-known and well-respected zoos in the world.

### the challenge:

The existing PA system needed to be replaced with an easy-to-use sound system capable of providing coverage in several separate areas as well as adding to the feeling of being in the animals' natural environments.

### the solution:

A team from Muzak and Bose engineered a system using Panaray® 302™ A and FreeSpace® 360P II loudspeakers. They also used a ControlSpace® system to deliver advanced functionality while making it easy to use for zoo staff.

### the result:

"We're delighted with the results. People say it has really changed the experience for the better."  
– Manny Gonzalez, Chief Operating Officer, Columbus Zoo

As one of the most renowned zoos in the world, the Columbus Zoo in Ohio is home to more than 6,000 animals representing more than 700 species. The facility educates and entertains more than 1.5 million visitors annually.

A key goal for the zoo is to bring visitors closer to the experience of seeing the animals in their natural environments. This includes not only what visitors see, but what they hear as well. "We want our guests to have a more active experience," says Manny Gonzalez, the zoo's chief operating officer. "What they see, what they touch and certainly what they hear are all critical to the experience we want to create."

The exhibits at the Columbus Zoo are designed to represent various regions of the world. The zoo wanted to use sound to help create the feeling of being in the environment of the African savannah or an Asian rainforest. Unfortunately, Gonzalez and his management team realized that the existing zoo PA system could not deliver the performance they wanted.

Gonzalez contacted Mark Hulme, account executive for Muzak, an authorized Bose dealer. "They had a very clear vision of what they wanted to achieve," Hulme recalls. "We told them we'd find a way to make it happen."

*"Bose and Muzak were right on the mark, from the sound to the service to the installation."*

Manny Gonzalez, Chief Operating Officer  
Columbus Zoo

Hulme knew this would not be a typical installation, so he contacted his Bose senior sales manager, Steve Miller. "There were definitely some challenges with this project, but that's what made it fun," Miller says. Among them was the large coverage area. The zoo grounds encompass more than 95 acres. Sound was needed in each exhibit area as well as along the walkways. "There was a lot of ground to cover," Hulme explains. "But there were not many places to hang loudspeakers." There was also the concern about disturbing the animals by placing the loudspeakers too close to them.

## The Bose® solution for sound coverage and simple operation

The Bose and Muzak design team used two Bose loudspeakers specially engineered for the demands of outdoor sound reproduction: the Panaray® 302™ A and FreeSpace® 360P II in-ground loudspeakers. The full-range Panaray 302 A loudspeaker uses proprietary Articulated Array® speaker design to reproduce sound over a wide listening area, so fewer loudspeakers are needed to provide the desired coverage. In addition, a proprietary Acoustimass® multi-chamber bass enclosure inside each cabinet delivers full, deep bass without audible distortion.

With their compact size and elegant design, the 302 A loudspeakers could be hung unobtrusively from the existing poles and buildings. They also could be easily positioned to direct sound toward the visitors and away from the animals. The green-colored FreeSpace 360P loudspeakers were integrated into existing landscaping. This enabled the system to provide sound coverage within the exhibits and along the walkways while remaining out of sight to preserve the visual environment.

The weather-resistant construction of both loudspeakers helps them stand up to sun, water, temperature extremes and the other demands of outdoor use. "Dependability is very important," Hulme says. "Losing sound not only diminishes the experience, but going in to repair or replace equipment creates disruption for the staff and the visitors."

Along with the significant sound coverage challenge, the system also had to provide different music, sound programming and volume levels for each exhibit area, the walkways, and the entrance and common areas.



"We needed a solution that could handle the complexity of the system while also making it very simple for nearly anyone on the zoo staff to operate and control," Hulme points out. The team found what they needed in the ControlSpace® system. ControlSpace systems deliver a powerful, flexible, sophisticated DSP solution for nearly any installation – large or small, simple or complex. Just as importantly, a ControlSpace system offers simple, elegant controls that users can access and operate with confidence. "With the ControlSpace system, we could automate and preset many of the system parameters, such as volume level, so that the system performance would be consistent," Miller says. "Plus, we could make it easy for the zoo staff to easily select and control the functions they needed access to."

*"The ability to bring the reputation of Bose and Muzak to this project really made a difference with our customer."*

Mark Hulme, Account Executive  
Muzak

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With the new Bose sound system, visitors and staff both agree that once inside the zoo they feel miles away from Columbus and closer to the real environments of the zoo's residents. "We're delighted with the results, and we've received a lot of positive feedback from our visitors," the zoo's Gonzalez says. "People say it has really changed the experience for the better." Gonzalez also cites the benefits for the staff: "The technicians love the Bose system, too. It's extremely simple to use and very dependable. Bose and Muzak were right on the mark, from the sound to the service to the installation."

Both Miller and Hulme believe the success of the Columbus Zoo project came from the strong working relationship between both organizations. "The ability to bring the reputation of Bose and Muzak to this project really made a difference with our customer," Hulme says. "Having access to a Bose field engineer, for example, was a key factor in earning the confidence of the zoo management." Miller adds, "We and our dealers are very passionate about what we do and about delighting our customers. When you share a common foundation like that, it leads to success for everyone."

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