



Shining Light on the Events Scene: NEC projectors and displays create versatile event space

The Eastwood Mall Complex in Niles, Ohio represents one of the best established retail destinations in the country. Operated by Cafaro, it offers a unique blend of amenities, going beyond retail to also offer corporate offices, three hotels, and close proximity to Eastwood baseball field. With help from SVT Technology Services and Solutions, CDW and Sharp Imaging and Information Company of America, Cafaro set out to add an event space to the complex.

The Challenge

The Eastwood Mall has become a thriving destination, known for its retail, hotels, restaurants, and nearby minor league baseball field. In recent years, the Eastwood Mall's parent company, Cafaro, noticed that retailers were developing a preference for smaller footprints for their mall locations. As a result, Cafaro found an opportunity with surplus retail space.

Cafaro made the innovative decision to convert the space into a flexible event center, complete with ballrooms, breakout rooms, and its own dedicated kitchen, integrated into the mall and a hotel for an enhanced experience.

"We asked, how else can we generate traffic in our business center" said

The Challenge:

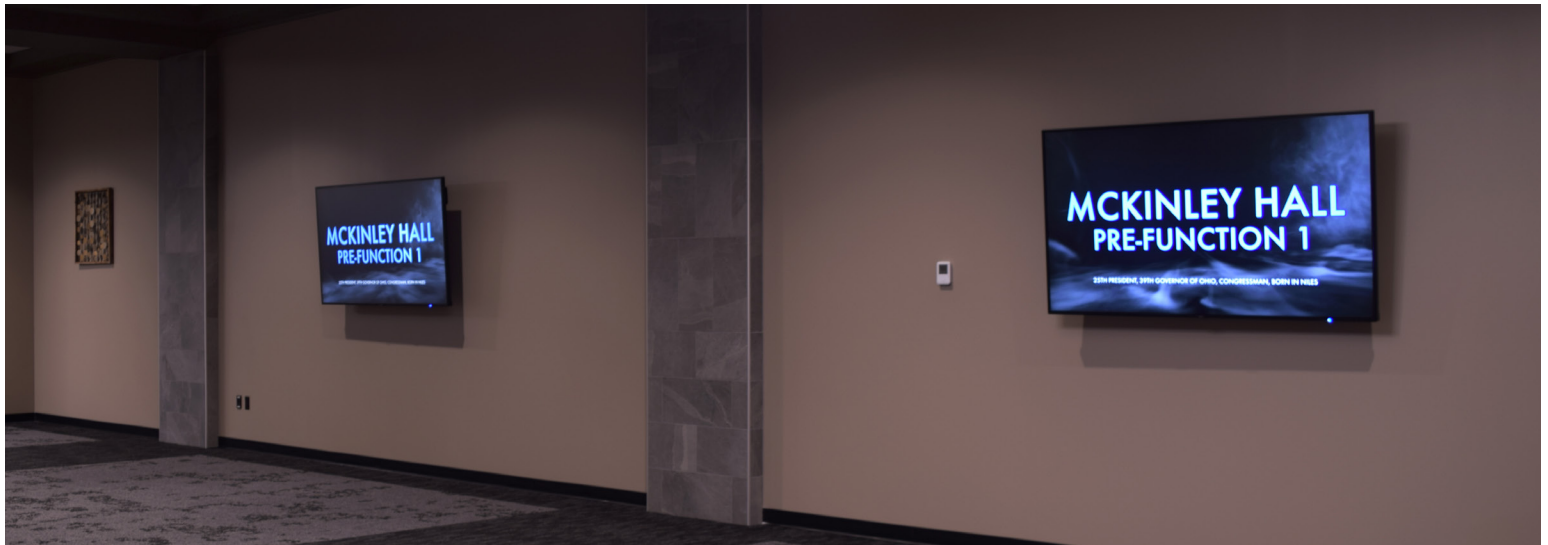
Convert retail space into highly functional events center complete with digital signage and presentation capabilities.

Solution:

- (6) NEC NP-PX2000UL Professional Laser Installation Projectors with 20,000 lumens of brightness and quiet, maintenance free operation, with a variety of zoom lenses, including (1) NP45ZL ultra wide zoom lens, (1) NP46ZL short throw zoom lens, (2) NP47ZL standard zoom lens, and (2) NP48ZL long throw zoom lens in the ballrooms and breakout rooms.
- (1) CB751Q 75" collaborative display with 10pt IR touch and a built in Linux SOC for the break out rooms.
- (2) C751Q 75" UHD large format displays providing digital signage in pre-function halls.
- (1) NP-ME382U - 3,800 lumen WUXGA projector paired with a portable cart for mobility within the event center.
- (8) AS241F 24" narrow bezel LED desktop displays with integrated speakers outside of each room to provide scheduling information.

Result:

An event center with amenities unlike any other, including full presentation capabilities for events of every kind.



Jeff Kovacich, IT director at Cafaro. “We wanted to get people to stay in the hotel, enjoy the retail and restaurants, and ultimately we decided that we needed an event center with the latest and greatest technology to make it as flexible as possible.”

Kovacich turned to Cafaro’s longtime equipment supplier, Joey Aiello, executive account manager at CDW. Aiello in turn introduced them to a Michigan-based installer, Eric Pounds, solutions architect at SVT. Together, SVT and CDW evaluated Cafaro’s needs and determined several equipment manufacturers that would be perfect for the project.

Among those manufacturers was Sharp Imaging and Information Company of America, who would provide the projectors and displays at the heart of the installation. “I wanted to show Cafaro a partner and solution that would wow them and give them everything that they could consume,” said Pounds. “The customer also wanted a solution where, if there was a problem, they knew they could depend on support from the manufacturer.”

Kovacich, Price, and Pounds agreed that the best way to preview Sharp’s products was to travel to their briefing center in Downer’s



Grove, IL, where they offer live demonstrations of their solutions in real-world settings. While there, they met with Sharp’s Rich

McPherson, who previewed the brand-new NP-PX2000UL projector, which had yet to hit the market.

“I knew NEC was the one manufacturer who could do it all,” said Aiello. “Their products are the highest quality and built to last.”

The Installation

The Eastwood Events Centre consists of a large ballroom, floating walls able to create four breakout rooms, and a pre-function hallway that can serve as an overflow space. Each of these areas needed to be outfitted with an array of AV solutions to ensure maximum usability.



The AV solution in each of the event rooms revolves around the 20,000 lumen NP-PX2000UL NEC projectors. Each projector casts an image on a Da-Lite screen with enough brightness to be seen in any lighting condition, including when all of the lights in the room are turned on. The main screens in the ballrooms measure a large 181 inches.



In addition to brilliant image quality, the NP-PX2000UL provides quiet and unobtrusive integration. To capitalize on this, SVT worked with Draper to create an enclosure that can raise and lower the projector from a panel in the ceiling, providing a solution that melts into the environment when not in use.

The ballrooms feature an ornate ceiling, with some portions featuring beautiful wood construction. SVT wanted to avoid cutting into those portions of the ceiling, and opted instead to mount the projector further away from the screen. Fortunately, NEC offers a variety of zoom lenses, and the correct lenses were used to ensure a good image fit on each screen, regardless of projector location.

Outside the event rooms, the pre-function hallway was fitted with two C751Q 75" UHD large format displays. These displays provide information on upcoming events and fulfill other digital signage needs. In addition, in the event of an overflow situation, viewers outside the event rooms can watch presentations in uncompromising detail.

The exterior of the event rooms also feature 24" AS241F displays that function as welcome screens and display event schedules for each space. All of the content is driven through multiple inputs over an IP network, with each room's AV components controlled by Crestron control panels. In addition, Shure provided approximately 20 wireless and hardwired microphone systems, including wall panel inputs and outputs to facilitate newsroom functions.

Finally, there are two mobile solutions that can easily be transported to any of the event rooms as needed. The NP-ME382U is a compact, 3,800 lumen projector that can provide an additional image source. For collaborative meetings, the CB751Q collaboration board provides multi-user touch screen capabilities, as well as wireless and remote connectivity for external devices

and teleconferencing capabilities for parties who want to participate in events but are unable to be physically present.

The Results

Less than a year from the conception, the Eastwood Event Centre will be finalized by the end of September, 2020. With the ballrooms, breakout rooms, and pre-function areas combined, the center provides nearly 29,000 square feet of event space.

The design for the AV component was set in March, and the last components were being installed and tested at the end of August. Sharp Imaging and Information Company of America involvement in the AV industry meant their products went hand-in-hand with the components from partners like Crestron and Draper, providing for seamless integration. With the NEC projectors in place, SVT and Cafaro flipped the switch to test their new solution.

"The experience was jaw dropping," said Kovacich. "Everything about it has been great so far. NEC isn't just a manufacturer. There are people we can lean on there."

The experience has forged new bonds between SVT, CDW, and Sharp "There are certain partners that I begin to trust," said Aiello. "I wanted to make sure I was representing a technology that I could get behind and support, and that's why I wanted to stick with NEC."

Once open, the Eastwood Event Centre will be used for business conferences, auxiliary group meetings, catering events, and other gatherings. Cafaro says there has already been interest in booking the space, including some weddings seeking to relocate to a new venue.