

THORBURN ASSOCIATES INC.
Acoustic and Technology Consultants
15 Years of Designing Quality Environments
eNewsletter

April 2007

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Thorburn Associates Celebrates 15 Years!

15 years ago, the price of gas was \$1.12, Boyz to Men's "End of the Road" was #1 on the radio charts, Clint Eastwood's *Unforgiven* had just come out and Thorburn Associates was born in a garage.

"TA's longevity and the work we've produced is a testament to the dedication and hard work of the people involved," said Lisa Thorburn, President and co-founder of TA. "We are still moving forward, forging a path that sets us apart. We are, at our roots, traditionalists with a good dose of our mid-west upbringings that demand high standards. Our engineers and staff are energetic and inject vitality and creativity. It's a wonderful mix that works beautifully."

Considering trends in demographics of the acoustical and technical industries: "I see the future bringing TA more medical, retirement and recreation facilities for baby-boomers; there is an increase in corporate awareness that to compete is to compete globally with technology, such as real-time video presence between locations; and houses of worship seem to cycle around every five to seven years," says Steve Thorburn, co-founder and Director of Engineering and Design at TA.

TA continues to add key people and expand their client list. "We've come a long way since those early days in the garage," Lisa Thorburn says. "I appreciate our fantastic employees and thank all our clients."

Thorburn Associates milestones:

1992 – Thorburn Associates founded—April 1—no foolin'!

1993 – Lisa Thorburn awarded "Rookie of the Year" by the Construction Specification Institute (CSI)

1993 – Completes first international project in Taiwan

1994 – Moves to first office on Grove Way in Castro Valley, CA

1995 – Opens Los Angeles office

1995 – Awarded "Best New Service" from International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAPPA) for Binauralization(tm) – a computer program that models how a space will sound before it is built



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1996 – Steve Thorburn awarded “Educator of the Year” by International Communications Industries Association (ICIA)

1998 – Opens North Carolina office

1999 – First Design firm to become an “ICIA Gold Certified Member Company”

2000 – Received Themed Entertainment Association (TEA) THEA Outstanding Achievement Awards for: Universal Studios “Amazing Adventures of Spiderman”; Universal Studios “Islands of Adventure”; and Columbus Center of Science and Technology (COSI) audio, video and control system engineering services and acoustical design

2001 – Moves to current location on Baker Road in Castro Valley, CA

2002 – Awarded Themed Entertainment Association THEA Outstanding Achievement Award for Paramount’s King’s Island “Tomb Raider: The Ride”

2002 – Moves North Carolina office to current location in Morrisville (near Raleigh-Durham)

2007 – Staff expands to 18 and still hiring (www.TA-Inc.com if you’re interested)

In 1992, the vision was to establish an audiovisual and acoustical consultancy firm with equal strengths in each field. With both services balanced, TA was structured for growth, investing in staff and responding to the needs of the client.

Adding services that made sense for the client prompted the addition of:

- Audiovisual control system programming as the industry moved from relay controls to digital control systems;
- Presentation lighting/lighting control as videoconferencing became more prevalent;
- Network and structured cabling design as the number of network devices increased.

TA was built on the belief that education is the foundation and the future. We are proud of the past fifteen years and the nearly 6,000 hours spent teaching at industry events.

Looking back, Steve and Lisa credit TA’s success to their passion and commitment to the industry as well as their vision, from the beginning, of a company structured for growth and adaptation. We still seek, we continue to wonder and we anticipate future adventures.

Upcoming Industry Events

Attending National Association of Broadcasters’ Conference on April 17-19 in Las Vegas, NV. Exhibiting at AIA National in San Antonio, TX, May 3-5, booth #11106. Instructing 20 hours at InfoComm International in Anaheim, CA June 19-2.

As always, it is our goal to make sure that Thorburn Associates is your single point of contact for all your Acoustical and Technology Design services. If you have an idea, question or suggestion, please drop us a note at TA@TA-Inc.com.

TA Project Highlight: Bartlett High School

Bartlett High School has a multi-function auditorium that doubles as a public venue for Performing Arts in Anchorage, Alaska. Designed and built on a high school budget, this



theatre, “rivals that of the Anchorage Performance Arts Center,” said Jack Thomasen, an early visitor to the space. Thorburn Associates’ involvement in the project included:

- Provided high quality audio system that is simple enough to be used by a single person without the support of technical staff
- Automatic mixing system created that allows for a single person to plug in one microphone for lecture purposes or simple performances
- System designed to be controlled from the mix position in the audience or the control booth
- Permanently wired power amplifiers power left, center and right main loudspeakers
- Designed a Performance Audio System that included surround loudspeakers
- Microphone and intercom connections in three floor pockets on the stage apron as well as wall panels and orchestra pit
- Coordinated the positioning of the acoustical cloud (large reflective panels hung from ceiling) with loudspeaker layout system
- Simple recording system located on stage allowing band/choir director to easily record a performance without setting up additional equipment
- Individual sound systems in band/choir rehearsal rooms that allow recording/playback of music
- Production intercom throughout the facility

“One of the challenges to the audiovisual design was coordinating the surround loudspeakers with the intricate acoustical panels that line the back and sides of the room,” stated Thorburn Associates’ Senior Consultant Eric Cronwall.

Product Perusal: Fire-Rated Back Boxes

Back boxes have long been available for small applications such as loudspeakers, recessed lights or electrical boxes. They provide a fire-rated casing to separate these items from the insulation within a wall. Now you can get a back box big enough for a Plasma, LCD or TV screen. The result is that the front of the display is almost flush with the wall. The screen can then be framed or covered to give the illusion that the display is actually art. The recessed box contains the display mount and the power and signal boxes. The back boxes serve several benefits:

- Simplifies installation
- Supports the flat panel display
- Provides fire proof/moisture proof enclosure for installation in fire-rated walls
- Easier cable management

The back boxes are mounted into the wall and attached to studs and are rough framed much like a window. They can be ordered in advance from various companies as a separate item to allow for the framing and rough-in work. The recessed installation helps protect the unit from accidental bumps with its lower display profile. Cover the screen with a framed piece of your kid’s artwork or a picture of Grandpa Jack and no one knows you are hiding a TV.

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