

DESIGN PROFILE



Nature Research Center North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences

AV Design Highlights the Wonders of Science

The Nature Research Center (NRC) wing of the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences is the largest of its kind in the southeast United States. Featuring state-of-the-art labs, research opportunities and live presentations in an 80,000-square-foot facility, the center is designed to make science a tangible and fun experience that helps visitors understand science's practical applications in their everyday lives.

Electrosonic's Design Consulting team was involved with the project for nearly six years, from the concept to the grand opening, working closely with exhibit designer Andrew Merriell & Associates and lead designer Rebecca Shreckengast, to design audio-visual systems for a wide array of unique interactive exhibits. Electrosonic was then subsequently assigned to engineer, fabricate, install and program the systems.



Exploring the Deep Sea Exhibit

The AV systems were designed and engineered to provide low maintenance and be energy efficient.

The highlight of the NRC is the SECU Daily Planet, a globe-shaped, immersive multimedia theater structure cantilevered onto the building and spanning the three-story wing. The massive visual canvas presents spectacular scenes from nature through a variety of pre-recorded video content and random imagery, and also serves as a backdrop to scientists making daily live presentations on topics.

Electrosonic designed the SECU Daily Planet to feature a 40 by 40-foot high-definition screen with six 3-chip DLP digital projectors for maximum brightness and resolution; four provide the blend for the bottom and middle of the screen and two for the upper portion.



All Photos: batwin + robin

SECU Daily Planet

Four moving digital light projectors were specified to paint additional images on the bands of the screens located between the three floors. The media servers are designed to handle all warping, blending and color balancing.

Electrosonic also designed the ability to stream computers to the equipment room and the operator's control kiosk in the Daily Planet, which along with a laptop input from the speaker's podium, can be routed through live inputs of the media servers to the Daily Planet's main screen in a pre-determined Presentation mode window.

In addition to meeting the AV design requirements of the Daily Planet theater, Electrosonic designed AV solutions for 55 innovative experiential media exhibits in the NRC wing, including "magic tables" for specimen identification via RF tags; visitor-veterinary lab observations; a salt-water tank with touch-activated information; and a weather prediction station with live international links. Electrosonic also designed the NRC's audio system, allowing it to process and distribute uncompressed audio from a multi-channel audio server over the network to the Daily Planet and throughout the facility.

Exhibit Video Describing New Discoveries in Ancient Fossils



Research Lab Interactive



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