

Sound and Video Systems Guide

A comprehensive process to find the best solution to your sound and video system needs.

Choosing the right systems for your specific application and finding the best value vs. cost.



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Introduction to Sound & Video Systems

“If you fail to plan, you’ve planned to fail”

Are your words being heard loud and clear?

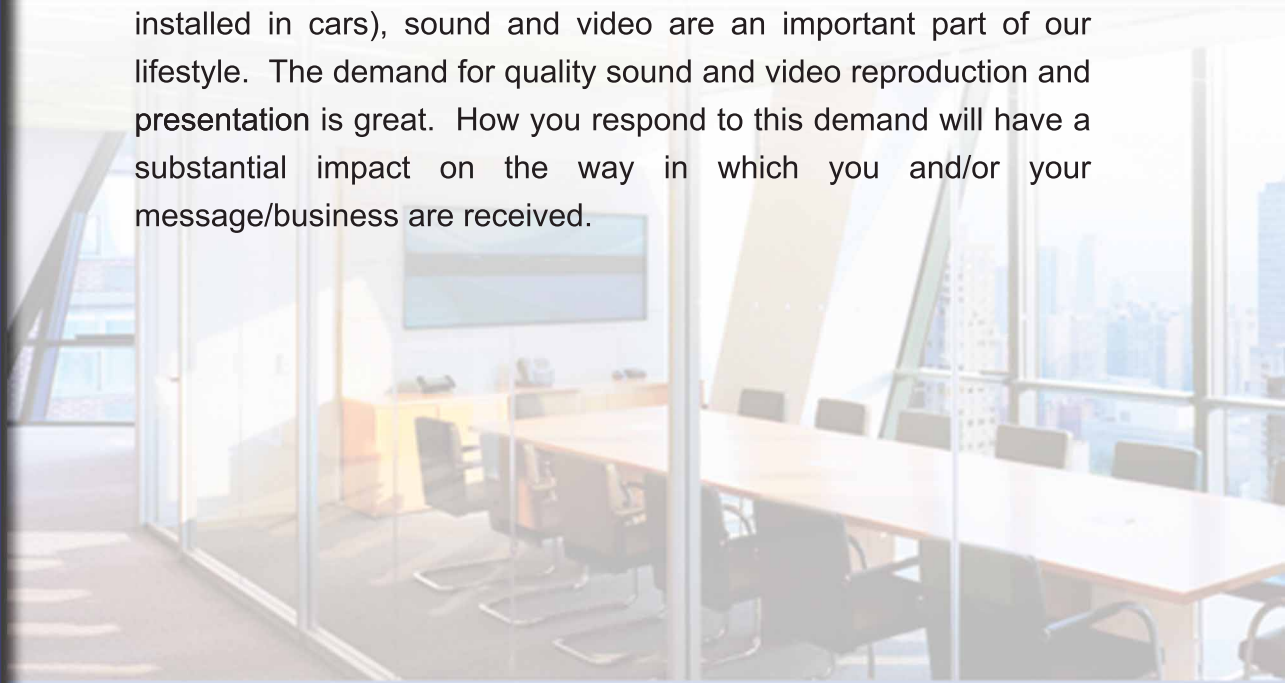
Can your audience see the images you present?

Have you had complaints over hearing (or seeing) throughout your facility?

If you have answered YES to any of these questions the following Sound and Video Systems Guide will be of great benefit to you and the clients, guests or members you serve.

Quality technology is an expected amenity in every professional application.

Your clients, guests, members, congregants, etc. are more demanding than ever and their expectations for hearing and seeing your presentations are high. People are more Audio/Video savvy these days. With the continued proliferation of Surround Sound, HDTV, Digital Audio, iPods and DVDs (many of which are even installed in cars), sound and video are an important part of our lifestyle. The demand for quality sound and video reproduction and presentation is great. How you respond to this demand will have a substantial impact on the way in which you and/or your message/business are received.



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What do you really need?



**“If you don’t know where you are going,
you will probably end up there”**

There are hundreds of speaker, amplifier, projector, display panel manufacturers and thousands of product types. Which are right for your application? Finding the proper technology starts with a solid assessment. Having a list of goals or specific requirements that you can convey to each potential vendor will have a positive impact on the acquisition of any system. Ask your team (or yourself) the following eight questions and provide these answers to the vendors you consider:

- 1) What specific areas do we need to cover with Sound and/or Video technologies? Note the dimensions and scope of the facilities.
- 2) What are the primary goals of implementing a system in our facility?
- 3) What complaints have we received in the past when utilizing sound or video?
- 4) What aesthetic concerns are there?
- 5) What source media (Voice, Music, Live Performance, Computer, Video, Cameras, etc.) do we need to present?
- 6) What budget constraints do we have?
- 7) What existing systems/components do you have? Detail your experience with them.
- 8) What is the anticipated deadline for completion of the new systems?

Note: Providing a written list of criteria will often strengthen your ability to negotiate with vendors. It projects the image that you know what you want and have thought through the process. This also gives all potential vendors some equal footing so they may better provide a proposal to which you can do a true “Apples to Apples” comparison.

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Professional Sound and/or Video equipment only

**“They don’t care how much you know
until they know how much you care”**

An impressive presentation shows your audience (clients, members, etc.) that you care. Pleased participants lead to a profitable result. Today people are more in tune with the quality of the technology you utilize than ever before. Most homes have quality sound and video components, but this equipment cannot accommodate a commercial environment. **DO NOT ACCEPT “HOME” VENDORS, CONCEPTS OR COMPONENTS FOR YOUR COMMERCIAL APPLICATION.**

Be sure the A/V contractors you interview are commercial systems integrators. There is a substantial difference between “home” grade and “professional” equipment and those who use inferior products (or installers) in a commercial application pay more in down-time and component replacement than they should. Allowing a “Home Theater” contractor to work in your Corporate, Retail, Church, Hospital, Temple or other (professional) facility invites the opportunity for failure. Start with the end in mind and choose the right contractor carefully.

Nine Questions a Candidate should be asked before considering a Proposal from them:



- 1) Do you have a fully qualified staff for Design, Engineering, Installation and Service of Professional Sound and Video systems?
- 2) Do you have an extensive list of satisfied commercial clients?
- 3) Has your company been involved in commercial sound & video systems integration for at least five years?

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4) How many projects of this type have you successfully completed this past year?

5) How long is your Warranty, what does it cover and do you have a written policy?

6) What is your average response time to a Service Call and do you provide free loaner equipment?

7) Do you include training and instructions in your Proposal for the completed systems?

8) Can you provide a current Certificate of Commercial insurance with a minimum of \$2 Mill in coverage?

9) Is your price all inclusive for a complete and operational system?



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The High Cost of Low Price: It's NOT about the money!

“Penny wise and pound foolish” does not lead to success.

The cost of any project is an important consideration in choosing the right product to suit your needs. But this should never be the deciding factor or it could lead to disastrous results. Quality and reliability should be the primary search criteria. What would happen if, on the first day of use, your facility is ready, your staff is trained and prepared and your audience is seated with expectation and the sound or video systems fail? What is that worth to you? “You never get a second chance at a first impression” and when budget is your primary concern you have added “great-risk” to your formula.

Trust is essential to any relationship and you must realize that you are going to be doing business with your A/V Contractor for some time. All systems need to be maintained and serviced from time to time. Updates are also important as technology continues to advance at an astounding rate. Knowing that you can work with your chosen vendor for the long-haul should be important. If you engage a vendor who is in and out, always in a rush, looking for quick money and the next job, you will most likely receive an inferior system and suffer disappointment.

When considering A/V Contractors:

- 1) Find three qualified companies.
- 2) Provide each with specific criteria.
- 3) Ask if they are flexible in their pricing.
- 4) Compare “Apples to Apples.”
- 5) Do they really care about the quality of their work and about you their client?
- 6) Ask the vendor you are most comfortable with to help you with questions you have.
- 7) Often the vendor with the middle price can be your best choice, as long as they impress you and meet your other criteria.
- 8) Be honest! If a vendor has impressed you and price is the final issue, let them know. The best contractors who truly want your business will find a way to work with you.

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Important Quotes to Remember:

1) □“The bitterness of poor quality will linger long after the sweetness of low price is long gone.”

2) □“There is hardly anything in the world that someone cannot make a little worse and sell a little cheaper and the people who consider Price Only are this man’s lawful prey.”

For a FREE “Systems Analysis Form” with a step-by-step survey to properly assess and convey your sound and/or video systems needs (as well as other valuable information) go to:

www.SoundandVideoGuide.com

About the Author:

Glen Dalakian has been involved in the commercial sound and video systems integration industry for more than 30 years. He has participated in the Design, Engineering and Installation of thousands of professional sound and/or video systems in almost every industry. His projects include conference rooms, auditoriums, houses of worship, hotels, gymnasiums, zoos, restaurants, supermarkets, hospitals, malls and more. Few in the industry have such a diversified background and practical hands-on experience. Glen’s services and consult are still in high demand as he regularly participates in most aspects of the professional sound and video systems integration field.

**This Guide is provided as a courtesy by
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