



Case Study: Recreation

Galveston Island Historic Pleasure Pier

Remodeled Galveston Island Historic Pleasure Pier Opens with a Centrally-Controlled and Widely Distributed Audio System

When Tilman Fertitta was a boy, he worked at the first Pleasure Pier of Galveston, Texas, which was originally built in the late 1940s. Destroyed by Hurricane Carla in 1960, the Pier was replaced by The Flagship Hotel. Decades later in 2008, Hurricane Ike swept through the region and damaged the Hotel beyond repair.

Fertitta has come a long way since those childhood days on the pier, and is now the president of Landry's Restaurants—a national hospitality and entertainment company. Hoping to recapture the site's original purpose as a family entertainment destination, Fertitta bought the land, demolished the hotel, and on May 25, 2012 the remodeled Galveston Island Historic Pleasure Pier opened its gates to thousands of guests.

At 1,130 feet long and 125 feet wide, the Pleasure Pier is a premier waterfront entertainment destination. Extending over the Gulf of Mexico, the pier is home to the first Bubba Gump Shrimp Company restaurant in Texas. Along with classic amusement park rides such as a double-decker carousel, visitors also enjoy a 100-foot tall Ferris wheel, a roller coaster with a 100-foot tall vertical climb, and a 200-foot tall swing—recognized as the highest ride in Texas.



Photo Courtesy of Chills & Thrills Inc.

“We knew that whatever Pleasure Pier threw at us, AudiaFLEX would give us the DSP horsepower TO ACHIEVE ANYTHING THEY WANTED.”

—Steve McCary,
CTI Project Manager and DSP Programmer

THE CHALLENGE

The most difficult challenge to overcome in this audio installation was the length and narrowness of the pier. Instead of a typically wide and open space, integrator Chills & Thrills, Inc. (CTI) of Houston, TX was tasked with installing a robust audio system on a long and narrow pier. The system had to include paging, indoor and outdoor background music, TV and stage audio, pre-recorded message playback, and centralized control for the entire system. More than just being able to monitor the system from a single location, the Pleasure Pier team required complete control over the volume of each ride on the pier as well.



Photo Courtesy of Chills & Thrills Inc.

“We wanted the Pleasure Pier team to have the flexibility to do anything they wanted and have it work reliably.
THAT’S WHY WE CHOSE AUDIA.”

—Rick Roberts,
Owner of CTI

THE SOLUTION

Distributing audio up and down the pier, with localized monitoring and control of each individual component of the system required long lines of cable and DSP monitoring stations throughout the pier. Steve McCary, CTI project manager and DSP programmer, chose Biamp's Audia® as the DSP platform with the right amount of flexibility and intuitive user interface that would allow the Pier's staff to easily control and manage their audio system.

To accommodate the length of the pier, CTI built dedicated IT infrastructure to support the AV system. Five AV rooms were built at appropriate intervals along the pier, all connected via fiber optic cabling, and each room containing the equipment needed to feed the audio for rides, the live entertainment stage, general paging, and TVs located in two event rooms. While the control of the system resides in the dedicated control room, these AV rooms have amplifiers, AudiaFLEX DSPs, switches, and monitoring screens inside for increased system monitoring capability.

The installation was divided into phases, starting outside the Pier gates with an Audia in the Bubba Gump Shrimp Company for localized control over its background music, while still being tied into the larger audio system for full-Pier paging and emergency announcements. Inside the gates, the ticketing office is located on the first story and the administrative and IT offices are on the second. Complete control of the Pier's audio system is maintained from this building. To run at maximum efficiency, it was important for the staff to have the master AV control room in the same location as their offices. The daVinci control panel in this room contains five pages of controls, each corresponding to a different segment of the pier. One of the pages is all input and output meters, making it easy for the staff to monitor every bit of audio that's coming or going anywhere along the pier.

Pleasure Pier also wanted the ability to play pre-recorded messages about ride procedures, closures, and emergency messages in case of inclement weather. In addition to having local microphones on ten of the major rides, CTI installed remote controls on specific rides most impacted by weather with these message presets for ease of delivery and consistency.

Each of the four AudiaFLEX has an installed CobraNet® card that allows for distributed audio among multiple units (including speakers, microphones, and other Audia DSP devices) throughout the facility. Initially providing 24 channels of I/O, the AudiaEXPI and AudiaEXPO expanders offer an additional eight inputs and outputs, respectively, without the need to purchase and install additional AudiaFLEX units.

The RP-S4 remote panels were installed with corresponding pre-recorded message presets through a multi-messenger for easy playback. The panels are tied into a Logic Box, which utilizes Audia outputs to respond to contact closures. Because CTI ran the messages through the Audia first, it gives the ride operations team the flexibility to push messages to certain speakers along the pier, before the message actually plays. Certain messages, such as those announcing dangerous weather, are also connected to hailer horns that will sound at regular intervals, as needed, along with the messages. System-wide and zone-specific messages can also be sent out through a microphone located in the security office.

SYSTEM SPECIFICS

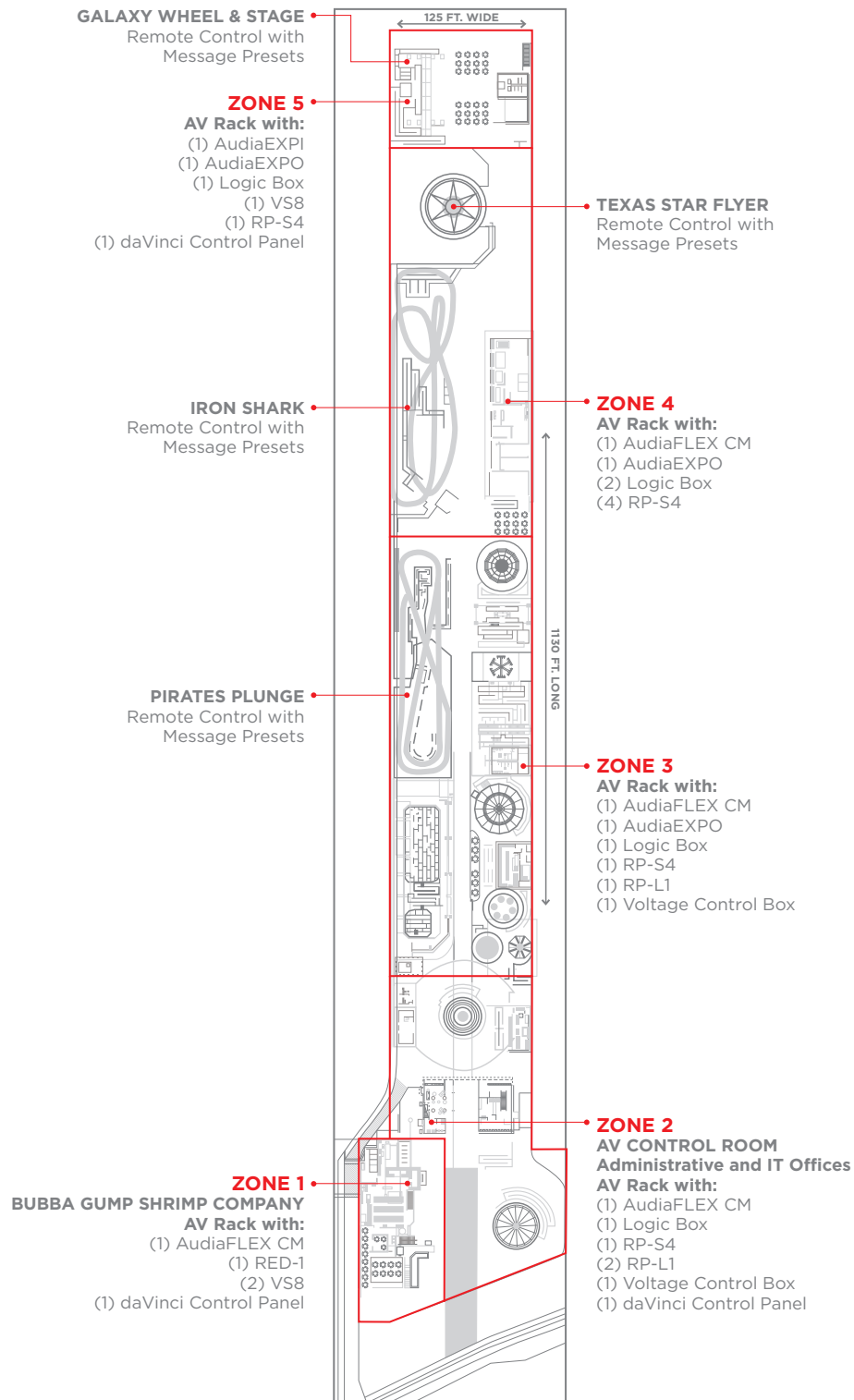
COMPONENTS:

- (4) AudiaFLEX CM**
- (2) AudiaEXPI**
- (2) AudiaEXPO**
- (5) Logic Box**
- (2) Voltage Control Box**
- (3) VS8**
- (3) RP-L1**
- (7) RP-S4**
- (1) RED-1**
- (3) daVinci Panels**



THE PLEASURE PIER PLAN

Extending out over the Gulf of Mexico, Pleasure Pier brought a unique set of challenges to CTI. With AudiaFLEX at the heart of the solution, CTI provided Pier staff with the flexibility needed to manage the five paging zones along the pier.



A FLEXIBLE SOLUTION FOR A UNIQUE ENVIRONMENT

The topography of the pier was a unique challenge for both CTI and Pleasure Pier to overcome. By using Audia, CTI built flexibility into the audio solution, and made it possible for them to create a system that could send any audio, to any speaker along the pier. The centralized control made possible with this solution, significantly increased the convenience and ease with which the IT team and staff can manage the audio throughout the amusement park.



Photo Courtesy of Chills & Thrills Inc.

ABOUT BIAMP SYSTEMS

Biamp Systems is a leading provider of innovative, networked media systems that power the world's most sophisticated audio/video installations. The company is recognized worldwide for delivering high-quality products and backing each product with a commitment to exceptional customer service.

The award-winning Biamp product suite includes the Tesira® media system for digital audio networking, Audia® Digital Audio Platform, Nexia® digital signal processors, Sona™ AEC technology and Vocia® Networked Public Address and Voice Evacuation System. Each has its own specific feature set that can be customized and integrated in a wide range of applications, including corporate boardrooms, conference centers, performing arts venues, courtrooms, hospitals, transportation hubs, campuses and multi-building facilities.

Founded in 1976, Biamp is headquartered in Beaverton, Oregon, USA, with additional engineering operations in Rochester, New York, USA and Brisbane, Australia. For more information on Biamp, please visit www.biamp.com.