

Canadian courthouses get clarity of sound

The ideal time to specify assistive listening systems is at the design stage of a project.

Whether it's a new development or a refurbishment, adding hearing loops into the plans makes for the most effective, and cost-effective, outcome as they can be installed before the final fixes.

While hearing loops had been specified in the architect's plans for renovations at three courthouses in Ontario, Canada, it was a detail that had been missed in the early stages of the planning and procurement process.

Renovations were already underway when the project managers became aware of the hearing loop specification. The project contractor contacted our North American arm, Contacta Inc., and we recommended Better Hearing Solutions to complete the job.

As our installation partner in the province, Bill and his team began discussions with the contractors to install 21 loops at secure windows. Their proposal was signed off in March 2022 and work began later that year.

Under-the-counter hearing loops would have been the ideal system to use but were precluded by the stage of construction. As a result, the Better Hearing Solutions team selected above-the-counter systems to avoid the need to alter the counters that had already been installed.

The courthouses were in constant use during the 18 month installation project so the installation team had to do the bulk of the work after hours.

Contacta Supa M300 cardioid microphones cut out background noise and allow detainees and family members, or staff and visitors, to talk at a discreet volume.

Clear signage at every window lets people know the hearing loops are available.

The installation is part of an accessibility plan by Ontario Public Service to become a more inclusive and accessible employer and service provider.