

# FANTASTIC FACILITIES

Nothing gives an on-air host more pride and confidence than broadcasting from a brand-new facility that the owner has invested a lot of treasure in and a team of engineers and planners have invested a ton of time in. And even with radio going through a time of flat revenue growth, many companies continue to invest in new facilities that include the latest in technology and top-tier equipment. From

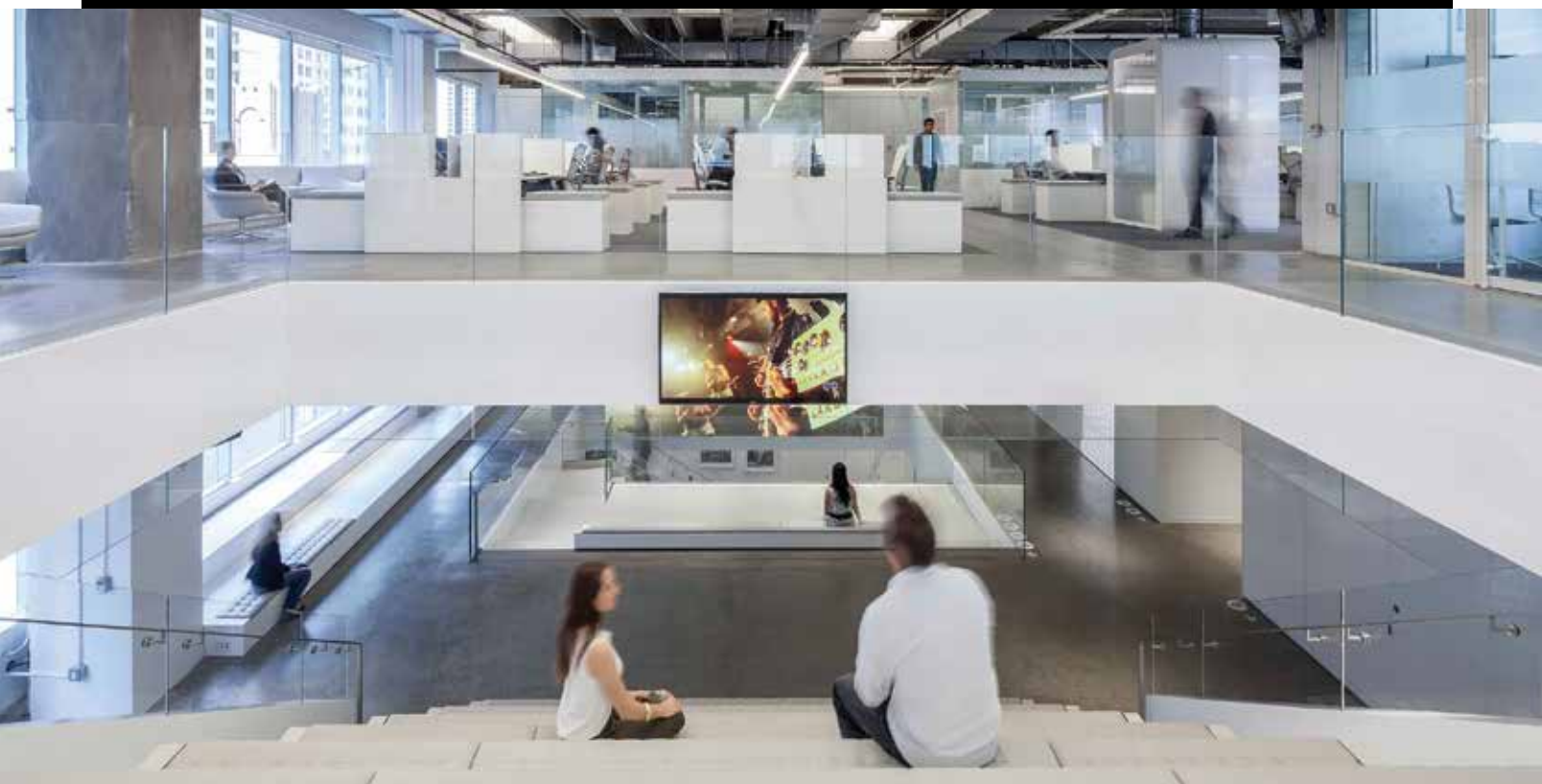
brand-new control rooms to live performance areas to street-level studios to bring the community closer to the station, we highlight them all in very specific detail — just in case you're planning a new build in the near future.

Here is Radio Ink's 2016 special report on Radio's Fantastic Facilities.

## iHeartMedia

The company used its New York HQ's offices as the "style guide" for what iHeartMedia stations and offices are now doing in terms of their facilities. And there have been several new builds for the company over the past year. At iHeart

HQ, the company wanted to create a design that could be exported to hundreds of other iHeartMedia stations across the country. It was created as a "storytelling device," with a goal of impressing visitors as soon as they get off the elevator.



## iHeartMedia's New York Facilities

Some scenes from iHeartMedia HQ in New York, the "style guide" for future iHeart builds.

**Columbus, OH**  
 (WCOL-FM,  
 WODC-FM,  
 WNCI-FM,  
 WXZX-FM,  
 WZCB-FM,  
 WTVN-AM)

This design uses simple accents and colors to reinvigorate the Columbus cluster. The main conference room doubles as an intimate performance space that can be closed off with a sliding door.



The reception area at iHeartMedia's Columbus cluster.



The conference room can be closed off to make a comfortable performance space.



The studios were updated with state-of-the-art equipment.



The "Tuning Chamber" entryway.



**Atlanta**  
 (WWPW3 HD,  
 WUBL-FM,  
 WWPW-FM,  
 WBZY-FM,  
 WRDA-FM,  
 WGST-AM)

The entrance was design-engineered to mimic the look and feel of the New York HQ "Tuning Chamber." The kitchen and lounge area doubles as a performance space for visiting talent.



The kitchen and lounge can double as a performance space.





Removal of exterior offices leaves this wide-open and welcoming reception space.



Open and accessible kitchen area.

**Pittsburgh  
(WWSW-FM,  
WKST-FM,  
WDVE-FM,  
WPGB-FM,  
WXDX-FM,  
WBGG-AM)**

iHeartMedia's Pittsburgh management decided that removing exterior offices and giving the walls a light white coat of paint would open up the space into a more positive work environment. Simple, but it has a big impact on the quality of the space.



A performance space at the iHeartMedia Pittsburgh offices.

**Philadelphia  
(WUSL-FM,  
WIOQ-FM,  
WRFF-FM,  
WDAS-FM,  
WISX-FM,  
WDAS-AM)**

The goal here was to open up the work environment and focus on key areas to create a big impact. Philadelphia curated new furniture and implemented an open floor plan.



A flat-screen monitor hangs in the hall.



The reception area shows the open plan at iHeart Philadelphia.

## New World Radio Group WUST-AM/Washington, DC

Beginning in 1992, WUST built and occupied studios, co-located with a transmitter site, in the same building that WEAM-AM radio called home in its heyday. During the time WUST occupied this property in Falls Church, VA, the station management worked hard to establish an identity as the "Multicultural Voice of the Nation's Capital" and tried to set the standard for a time-brokered radio station. WUST management always took pride in not only the format of the station, but also in providing the various individuals and organizations that purchased blocks of time with a first-class broadcast experience by maintaining great facilities that many people criticized as "overkill" for a time-brokered AM station. The management of WUST didn't agree, and worked hard to keep the studios updated with the latest technology.

In 2012, WUST was notified that land its studio and transmitter site were located on had been sold for a residential development, so the hunt for a new studio home and transmitter site began. In May of 2014, WUST began broadcasting from its new studio facilities located near the infamous Beltway in Falls Church. The management and ownership of New World Radio are extremely proud of what has been accomplished with the studios — and with an upgrade of the transmission system to a 50,000-watt directional array broadcasting from a rare high-power "tri-plex" site east of Washington, DC.

As visitors enter the lobby and approach the WUST office and studio suite, they are greeted by a flag gallery that showcases many of the languages in which WUST has broadcast over the last 24 years, in addition to the New World Radio logo, depicting Columbus's three ships traveling to the "New World." Since WUST hosts nearly 80 live shows per week, it was very important that the studio design be friendly, simple, inviting, and not intimidating to the many amateur producers who use the studios. As visitors enter the studio suite, they are greeted by a very clean and simple hallway that leads to each studio.

Contact Brian Edwards, VP, New World Radio Group, at [brian@newworldradio.com](mailto:brian@newworldradio.com).



WUST-AM/Washington, DC took advantage of a move to upgrade its facilities and equipment, and to make its studio setup simple and inviting to use.



On the air in the new studios at Cumulus Columbia, SC.



Walls were moved and electrical systems were revamped for the Cumulus cluster's move into "The Tower," the second-tallest building in Columbia.

One of six work cubicles in the newly built studios.



## Cumulus Media WTCB-FM, WOMG-FM, WNKT-FM, WLXC-FM, WISW-AM/Columbia, SC

Construction started on Cumulus Columbia, SC's new studios in September 2014, with a contractor moving walls and adding and changing electrical needs. After 30 years in the same location in a Columbia suburb, the engineering team went to work on studio furniture installation and equipment buildout on the way to a move into the second-tallest building in Columbia, "The Tower," just one block from the South Carolina State House.

The studios are on the first floor and consist of five control rooms, one seven-person talk studio, and six work cubicles, with two of those edit stations. Two four-person production rooms are located on the seventh floor, along with our general offices, and our sales department is located on a smaller portion of the eighth, with a grand staircase between the two.

Rounding out the technical facilities are two equipment racks on the 21st floor, connecting to the five STL and TSL systems, air and EAS receivers, and antennas on the elevator roof, along with two satellite dishes. The move was complete by January 2015.

The buildout consisted of furniture custom-built for our rooms by Omnix Furniture Company. Studio sound damping is by ATS Acoustics. Mic

arms and monitor stands are Mika products made by Yellowtec. On-air lights were customized with the Cumulus logo and made by Titus. The studios are using IQ, RAQ, and Element consoles by Axia, a fully digital audio-transport system including Pathfinder automation for audio and GPIO routing on the fly. The studio telephone system is the Telos VX phone system and integrates directly with the AXIA consoles for phone interaction, and the audio playback system is OpX made by BSI. Just about everything was purchased through Broadcasters General Store, with super customer service from Cindy Edwards. The complete plant is digital, and by Michael Gay's design, has no analog audio wire longer than 10 feet, which is mostly the microphones' wiring. The entire plant uses CAT5 cabling to all devices — gone are the days of patch panels and punch blocks.

Director of Engineering Ed Noyes said one of the many design challenges was the expense of running copper cabling from the first floor to the offices on the seventh and eighth floors and to the roof for the STL racks. "We would have had to drill through each concrete floor, all 21 of them, for the

added conduit, at a very high expense," he says. "The decision became clear, in an all-digital studio environment, to stay digital between the floors and continue to use IP-based systems for everything, using fiber cabling that fit into the existing building conduit bores: six fiberoptic cable runs from the first floor to the roof equipment racks and six fiberoptic runs from the first floor TOC to the offices on the seventh floor. Eight different IP subnets are used to connect everything and everybody together."

The engineering team from Cumulus consisted of Michael Gay, Cumulus' corporate project designer; Robert Combs, South East regional engineer and on-site project director; Justin Tucker, chief engineer for Cumulus Charleston, SC; Trey Bryant, CE for Cumulus, Florence, SC; Dave Wrenn, CE for Wilmington, NC and Myrtle Beach, SC; Houston CE Sam Michaels; Indianapolis CE Nick Lopez; Cumulus Midwest Regional Engineer/Cincinnati Randy Norris; Yancy McNair, South Central regional engineer for Houston, TX; and Ed Noyes, chief engineer and IT director in Columbia, SC.

Contact Ed Noyes, Chief Engineer/IT Director for Cumulus/Columbia, SC, at [ed.noyes@cumulus.com](mailto:ed.noyes@cumulus.com).

**Connoisseur Media Long Island**  
**WALK-FM/Patchogue, WBZO-FM/Bay**  
**Shore, WWSK-FM/Smithtown, WKJY-FM/**  
**Hempstead, WHLI-AM/Hempstead**

Connoisseur Media Long Island built a brand-new remote studio, called simply "The Studio," in the Paramount concert venue in Huntington, NY. Any of the five stations in the cluster can broadcast from the Studio; some jocks are heard from there weekly, but the schedule can change depending on the artist performing at the Paramount.

The build started in mid-April 2015 and took four months, with the opening on July 25. The equipment is from BGS; the facility design, specification, and buildout was by Charles Lelievre, corporate director of engineering/technology for Connoisseur, with the assistance of Dom Bordonaro, CE of Connoisseur in Milford, CT, as well as Jesse Sayre, CE for Connoisseur Long Island.

Equipment in the new remote facility includes audio-over-IP by Telos Zephyr Xstre-AM, Audioarts AIR4 board, Heil microphones, as well as a separate 8-channel mixer for artist experiences, Blue microphones for artists, JK Audio phone patch, Bose outdoor speakers, and the original beacon light from WHLI in the 1940s.

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Connoisseur Media's new remote facility, simply called the Studio.



Max PD/afternoon personality Ralph Tortora with cluster OM Patrick Shea, who hosts middays on Max.



Jon Daniels (r), PD/afternoons at AC K98.3/Long Island, chats with Mike DelGuidice of Billy Joel tribute band Mike DelGuidice and Big Shot.



Members of the band Wheatus with Orlando in the studios at 94.3 The Shark.



Graham Nash chats on the air at Classic Hits 103.1 Max FM.



In the studio at WALK-FM in Long Island.

## New England Public Radio Springfield, MA

New England Public Radio purchased a condominium in downtown Springfield for its new headquarters, in a historic building dating from 1887. The biggest challenge in designing the facility came from the layout of the space, which has many pre-existing internal divisions and structural walls that we had to work with, or work around, to create the offices and studios we needed. It's a first-floor space in a city environment, so careful attention to acoustic isolation was required. The age and condition of the building and its history of remodeling by previous tenants added to the challenge for our general contractor — but the good side of that legacy was that the architects were able to incorporate interesting design features from the building's history, such as fine 19th-century columns, internal brick walls that vary the wall textures, and a walk-in vault inherited from the banks that occupied the space for most of the 20th century.

New England Public Radio consists of these stations in Massachusetts: WFGR/Amherst (our main station), WNNZ/

Westfield, WNNZ-FM/Deerfield, WNNI/Adams, and WNNU/Great Barrington (plus five translators). The design phase took about a year, and the period from demolition to completion was approximately 16 months. We moved into the facility in October 2014.

The control board system is the Sierra Automated System's Rubicon SL (supporting four control rooms, three studios, two announce booths, and two news booths). Studio furniture is from Studio Technology. The monitor speakers are from Adam Audio, and the microphones are Neumann BSM-104 (with some legacy U-87s from our previous facility), purchased from Parsons Audio in Wellesley, MA. We use ENCO for digital storage and playback, Torpey Clocks from Ram Systems, Comrex BRIC-Links to connect with our network of stations, and Sage Endec for EAS.

Contact Richard Malawista, Executive Director of Broadcasting for New England Public Radio, at [rmalawista@admin.umass.edu](mailto:rmalawista@admin.umass.edu).



New England Public Radio's beautiful new facilities in a historic Springfield, MA building presented some interesting challenges.



NEPR's facilities have a feature unusual in radio: a bank vault, inherited from previous tenants.

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## **Mike & Mike** *ESPN Radio*

ESPN's syndicated morning show Mike & Mike debuted a new set this year that is compatible with both radio and television. It includes a 270-degree desk, which allows for more personal, face-to-face conversations between Mike Greenberg, Mike Golic, and their guests. A 9 1/2-by-8-foot feature wall displays a new magazine-inspired graphics package, while a behind-the-scenes live social integration space enables the show's research team to easily cue up live social posts. A new playback device gives Greenberg and Golic the ability to trigger their own video from the host desk, in addition to sound bites. And the hosts now have a touchscreen monitor for select segments.



A giant feature wall is a key part of the new set for the ESPN-syndicated duo.

## **Alpha Media** *Biloxi-Gulfport, MS*

Alpha Media's commitment to providing relevant, engaging broadcast and digital content to its listeners is reflected in its new facility located in the Biloxi-Gulfport, MS market. The nearly 10,000-square-foot renovation brings new life to an underutilized strip mall by transforming an abandoned suite into a state-of-the-art five-station broadcast facility. Complete with eight clustered studios for on-air and content production, flexible infrastructure, and a primarily open office layout, this facility is poised to easily adapt to the ever-changing radio and digital industry. The layout and design approach by V Three Studios LLC has proven to increase efficiency and will be the basis for future renovations across the country.

The project team consisted of architect V Three Studios, general contractor Dan Hensarling, Moses Engineers, OmniRax for studio furniture, and Axia for broadcast equipment.

Contact: Kurt Kerns, V Three Studios architect, at [kurt.kerns@v3-studios.com](mailto:kurt.kerns@v3-studios.com).



A dramatically lit new studio at Alpha Media in Biloxi-Gulfport.



Alpha Biloxi's reception area and lounge is wide open and welcoming.

**Partners for  
Christian Media**  
*WDBX/WLLJ, WBDX-FM &  
WJLJ-FM/Chattanooga, TN*

The new building for the stations was purchased in March 2015, and the buildout for everything but the studios was accomplished by July, with the studios finished up by October. This building was a showroom for a high-end audio/video company, and a lot of the original design was left intact.

Chief Engineer Sam Lewis was the mastermind behind the studio buildout. Dakota Cabinets custom-designed and built the studio furniture, which was a donation to the ministry. The station is using a Logitech Mosaic digital board in the main studio, with smaller Logitech digital boards in our production studio and our Internet radio studio. Processing is Orban, microphones are EV RE320s, and automation is touchscreen ENCO. We have Tannoy studio monitors in each studio.

Contact Clark Thompson, Director of Ministry Relations, at [clark@j103.com](mailto:clark@j103.com).



The studios for Partners for Christian Media's Chattanooga stations are housed in a former audio/video showroom.

Furniture was custom-built and donated to the stations by Dakota Cabinets.



The Chattanooga facility is warm and welcoming.