

Application Story

Drive-In Theater Digital Conversions, Texas



Big Sky Drive-In in Midland, Texas now enjoys the brightest and clearest images on their screens thanks to a recent conversion to Christie CP2230 digital projectors.

Drive-in digital conversions look bright thanks to Christie

Drive-in movie theaters have always faced their fair share of technical challenges. Most notably, high levels of ambient light coupled with the limited amount of light that could be thrown on the screen has had a serious impact on the quality of projected images. Now, two multi-screen drive-ins in Texas have found a solution with digital technology from Christie®. Thanks to the installation of Christie CP2230 projectors, both facilities are now enjoying brighter, sharper images and top-notch reliability on their outdoor screens.

Big Sky Drive-In in Midland, Texas

Sam Kirkland opened Big Sky Drive-In Theater in Midland, Texas in October 2005 with two big screens and two 35mm projectors. The facility expanded to three screens in 2007. As partner and co-owner of Big Sky, Kirkland jumped at the chance to convert to digital pictures when the opportunity arose. The thriving business houses huge screens, with the largest being 45ft by 90ft (10.7m x 21.3m) and the possibility of solving the ambient light issue was too tempting. Said Kirkland, "The digital pictures on the screen are awesome, and they are so bright – even in ambient light."

Lamont Furlow, general manager of Big Sky Drive-In, concurs. As a lifelong student of the drive-in theater process, born into the industry by parents who managed a local drive-in, he was used to seeing dull, fuzzy images and experiencing light-related issues. Furlow was relieved that the installation was hassle-free with Christie. "I'm not really computer literate, but when we had some initial challenges the first week, I called Christie. They talked us through the situation and the show started on time," he said. "Now, it's in perfect focus. When we first screened a movie in digital, I couldn't believe it was my screen. We couldn't be more pleased."

The installation of the 30,000 lumen, Christie CP2230 digital projectors was handled by Sonic Equipment Company, a firm known for their sales, service and remodeling capabilities. The new Christie DLP® equipment has worked beautifully since installation, and the lighting problems have disappeared. Furlow notes, "Now that we're digital, lighting is no longer an issue. Our patrons can enjoy even the darkest scenes in a movie with no focus issues at all."

Customers:

- Big Sky Drive-In
- Stars & Stripes Drive-In

Location:

Texas, USA

Industry/Market:

Cinema

Partner:

Sonic Equipment Company

Requirements:

Both drive-in theaters sought to update their existing projection equipment and convert to digital. Christie's CP2230 projectors fit the bill. They are reliable for long-time usage, stand up to outdoor cinema conditions and provide over 30,000 lumens of brightness that exceeds all expectations.

Summary:

To keep with the times and patron expectations, both drive-in theaters chose Christie for their digital conversions. Owners and customers alike are thrilled with the results – unparalleled brightness, clarity and consistency with images on the outdoor screens.

Products:

- Christie CP2230 projectors
- A range of Christie lamps, including CDXL20, CDXL30, CDXL45 and CDXL60

Results:

The owners of Big Sky Drive-In and Stars & Stripes Drive-In are extremely pleased with the results of their digital conversions. Both owners made the switch to Christie projection solutions to keep up with the times and offer the brightest, clearest pictures possible to their drive-in patrons. Both agree that installing Christie products was a great boon for their businesses.

These days, the digital conversion is paying off in spades for Big Sky. The Drive-In can host more than 800 cars per showing, and all are no doubt very happy with the crisp, clear digital images projected on the screens.

Stars & Stripes Drive-In Theater in Lubbock, Texas

Stars & Stripes Drive-In Theater in Lubbock, Texas, has also experienced a digital conversion in recent months. Ryan Smith, owner and operator of the facility, was no stranger to keeping up with the times. Just 24-years-old when he opened Stars & Stripes, Smith had just finished his first year of law school and was keen on building a drive-in that paid homage to his fond childhood memories of working in his grandparents' indoor theater. In 2003, with his parents' support, he opened his business – with two screens and two used 35mm projectors.

“Christie has an excellent history, they’re known to stand behind their products, they have great equipment, and it would be a positive experience for me.”

Ryan Smith, owner, Stars & Stripes Drive-In Theater

One of his early lessons about drive-in theaters turned out to be with lighting. As Smith explained, “You just can’t get enough light on a drive-in screen.” As his business grew, he researched digital cinema solutions and what the new technology could bring to his drive-in. Once he expanded to three movie screens, Smith financed the cost of the digital conversion himself.

After weighing all of the options, Smith decided on the Christie CP2230 digital projectors for the upgrade. “Christie has an excellent history, they’re known to stand behind their products, they have great equipment, and it would be a positive experience for me,” said Smith. He was also very pleased with Kansas-based Sonic Equipment Company, who supervised the installation and trained Smith and his staff.

From the very first week the drive-in opened, Smith noticed customer reactions. “Most people noticed something different. The images on the screen were brighter. I am thrilled to provide my customers with indoor-movie picture quality,” he explained. Now, Smith is eager to explore the possibilities of expanding his business thanks to the digital equipment. He would like to play with new kinds of content. “We were always constrained by film, but with digital, there’s no comparison. I am extremely pleased with my decision. I can’t imagine going back to film,” he said.

Contact Christie

Contact us today to find out how you can benefit from Christie’s digital projection and entertainment solutions.



All three screens at Big Sky have converted to digital, thrilling audiences who attend their double-features.



Stars & Stripes Drive-In Theater in Lubbock, Texas, is pleased to now provide customers with indoor-movie picture quality.

| Corporate offices | Worldwide offices | Independent sales consultant offices |
|---|--|---|
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