

COSI Planetarium

Case study



▲ The upgraded COSI Planetarium is now able to play a variety of content in stunning detail beyond the typical star field.

The sky is the limit for reopened COSI Planetarium

"It's a dream come true."

That's the sentiment held by Kate Storm, the Director of Theaters at Columbus, Ohio's Center of Science and Industry (COSI), when speaking of the reopening of the COSI Planetarium. "I worked at the planetarium when it closed in 2004 and it was heartbreaking," she says, "for me, it became a mission to get it open again."

A beloved institution nestled along the west bank of the Scioto River, COSI welcomes hundreds of thousands of visitors annually to explore various science-focused exhibits, activities and events. One of the more popular attractions is the COSI Planetarium, a full-dome, 211-seat theater with a 60 ft.-diameter concave screen. First opened in 1999, it closed 5 years later and then

sat unused until this latest technology upgrade and reopening in the fall of 2014.

The original iteration of the planetarium employed an Evans & Sutherland Digistar II full-dome system. "Everything was green," remembers Storm, "green stars, green wireframe images - for the time, it was all pretty state-of-the-art, but now you realize just how limited that system was compared to what we have now."

"People are blown away by just how immersive it is with the Christie projectors, we can get into great detail where we have these 'wow' moments during the show and you get these gasps from the audience."

Kate Storm,
Director of Theaters, COSI

Customer:
COSI Columbus

Location:
Columbus, OH

Industry/Market:

- Entertainment
- Museums
- Science center

Partners:
Evans & Sutherland

Requirements:

- Full-dome theater
- High brightness
- High resolution

Summary:
Following a decade of disuse, the COSI Planetarium reopened after a significant upgrade which included the integration of an Evans & Sutherland Digistar 5 full-dome theater system with two Christie D4K2560 projectors.

Products:

- Christie D4K2560 (2)

Results:
With the upgraded projection system, COSI Planetarium staff are able to offer an enhanced educational experience that immerses the audience in stunning visuals.

And what the COSI Planetarium has now is an Evans & Sutherland Digistar 5 system that uses two Christie® D4K2560 3DLP® 4K resolution projectors powered by an intuitive user interface, easy-to-use show production capabilities and content management system. "Upgrading to the Digistar 5 system with the Christie projectors was huge for us, it's a dream come true," says Storm. "Now we can do everything we imagined or wished a planetarium could do."

"With COSI, they wanted a stunning system that would generate buzz and draw in visitors," says Michael Daut, Director of Show Production at Evans & Sutherland. "In addition to the robust real-time show production capabilities of Digistar 5, the brightness of the D4K2560 projector was essential to the COSI project. So Christie became the obvious technology partner for us, and we were so pleased with their performance that it was natural for us to continue to recommend Christie to future clients."

"Evans and Sutherland's Digistar 5 system is the best," remarks Bryan Boehme, Director, Location Based Entertainment at Christie. "Its fulldome, ultra-high resolution display capabilities with our projectors looks stunning. Digistar 5 is an incredible platform for presenting prerecorded shows and innovative real-time content that operators can easily create themselves."

Aside from the enhanced performance and visual capabilities, Storm enthuses how the new system allows the COSI team to present programming beyond the typical space show. "It's much easier

to show alternative content. It's not just the star field anymore, we can present shows about anything, really. It's very versatile and a huge game changer for us."

Having already installed the earlier version of Digistar, Storm was eager to continue working with Evans & Sutherland. "I loved working with Evans & Sutherland. They explained everything really clearly to us. We have a special relationship with them," shares Storm, while noting: "The biggest problem we had during installation was having everyone in the building poking their heads in wondering when we'd be done so they could see it."

Not only are the personnel pleased with the new COSI Planetarium, but Storm says feedback from the community has been great. "People are blown away by how immersive it is," she says. "With the Christie projectors, we can get into great detail where we have these 'wow' moments during the show and you get these gasps from the audience."

With the increased versatility of the space, Storm envisions the popularity of the planetarium to only increase. "We're always looking for and coming up with ideas to keep audiences coming back. The sky is really the limit because we can do so many things now that we couldn't do before."



▲ Since its reopening, the COSI Planetarium has welcomed countless visitors of all ages through its doors.

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