



Lighting and ambiance are specialties of the Donald R. Seawall Grand Ballroom.

High-Tech Hotspots

GET WIRED INTO THESE DENVER METRO TRENDSETTERS, WHERE CUTTING-EDGE TECHNOLOGY MAKES BIG THINGS HAPPEN. BY BETH BUEHLER

THINKING ABOUT INTRODUCING MORE HIGH-TECH features into your next event but don't know how to make the leap? Have no fear as the technology and production gurus at the four venues we've spotlighted stand ready to help make it happen. Sit back and blast off into the world of ultra-modern meeting venues.

THE CABLE CENTER

When thinking of high-tech venues in Colorado, one of the first that comes to mind is The Cable Center, located on the

University of Denver (DU) campus. One of the most impressive spaces at The Cable Center, with more than 18,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor rentable space, is the

curved entry plaza of the Daniels Great Hall. A three-story glass façade, topographic terrazzo floor and massive video tower make this space unforgettable when hosting a dinner for up to 400 guests or reception for 600. The tower can be customized with photos, videos or slide shows.

The Center Theater seats 200 and is capable of receiving and displaying HD television, 35-millimeter film projection and THX-quality audio with Dolby Digital surround sound. Video conferencing capabilities in the theater and throughout the building allow events to be distributed to a worldwide audience.

DU's Institute for the Study of Israel in the Middle East (ISIME) hosted 15 Iraqi high school students in Denver and hooked up a video conference with 15 Israeli high

PHOTO COURTESY OF: STEVE CRECELIUS/WONDERWORKS PHOTOGRAPHY.



The dramatic Daniels Great Hall gives a high-tech yet warm feel to any event.

school students at ISIME's office in Tel Aviv. "Thanks to this technology, it enabled citizens of Iraq to speak to citizens of Israel," says ISIME Director Professor Shaul Gabbay. "The really high-level technology allowed us to see and hear a group of people across the world very clearly. We crossed political and geographic distances; we didn't have to be physically present with each other."

Outside, an amphitheater has an advanced cinema projector and a 50-foot screen on the building's exterior for evening functions. Back inside, seven meeting rooms are appointed with state-of-the-art presentation equipment. Web conferences and Web streaming also are available, and a distance learning studio features a complete TV studio and control room.

DONALD R. SEAWELL GRAND BALLROOM

Affair with Flair, based in Englewood, is sold on the production expertise of Seawell Grand Ballroom's staff and the facility's ambiance and high-tech features. The glass and steel structure was built atop the Helen Bonfils Theatre Complex, part of the Denver Center for the Performing Arts (DCPA) in downtown Denver.

When coordinating an event to recognize the caregiver "heroes" from Shalom Park, a senior retirement community in Denver, Affair with Flair had a revolving center stage connected to another stage by a runway and projected black-and-white photos on huge 18-foot flats.

"They help us do all this. To them, nothing is impossible," says Lisa Cook, co-owner of the event planning company. "The lighting capa-

bilities also are incredible. They can change the lights with each course served or to change the atmosphere as the evening progresses,"

Susan Hennessy, director of events and facility services, confirms that the ballroom has more than 200 theatrical lighting instruments and 60 speakers installed above the undulating wave-form ceiling, which has thousands of fiber-optic lights that change colors. "A full steel grid above the ceiling panel also gives us flexibility for what we can rig in the room," she says.

Not only can a projector screen be located anywhere on the grid, meeting planners have hung motorcycles and floated centerpieces.

The 10,000-square-foot, pentagonal-shaped room hosts approximately 250 events a year, typically for groups of 100 to 800. At a dinner honoring the ambassador of Israel, hosted by ISIME and organized by Affair with Flair, the

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-Lisa Cook, Affair with Flair, on the Donald R. Seawell Grand Ballroom

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sparkle lights were green and terrarium centerpieces were highlighted by green pinpoint lights. “If you took this same idea and put it in another facility, it wouldn’t work,” says Cook’s business partner, Leslie Williams.

THE INVERNESS HOTEL AND CONFERENCE CENTER

Looking for lodging and high-tech meeting space all in one place? The Inverness Hotel and Conference Center in Englewood, with a full-service business center and 60,000 feet of indoor and outdoor meeting and event space, offers both with exceptional service. “The Inverness is always top on my list; their goal is to make things seamless,” says Jennifer Sandoval, a project marketing manager for Microsoft.

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- Jennifer Sandoval, Microsoft

When holding a Microsoft Forecaster Forum for 150 to 200 guests at the property, the company needed six user labs that

could operate at the same time to demonstrate the budgeting and planning software. “The Inverness is an end-to-end business. If they don’t have 50 computer monitors, they will bring them in,” Sandoval says. “The staff they have on hand also are very technical and thorough.”

One of the most popular high-tech features are the portable and mounted touch-panel control boxes in each meeting room, allowing speakers and meeting planners to easily control sound, light, automatic shades and more. Also handy are production booths in mid-size and large meeting rooms and integrated microphone and screen systems. Plus, wired and wireless Internet access is available in all meeting rooms, public spaces and guestrooms.

“Our facility was built ahead of its time. It was going to be a campus for U.S. West and was wired in the mid-1980s with a fiber-optic backbone. Even new buildings that get built with fiber-optics don’t have the big bandwidth available here,” explains Vice President of Sales Curtis Bova. “We can have 250 users in the conference area and still have guests and staff using the system as well.”

COLORADO CONVENTION CENTER

One of Colorado’s largest meetings and events venues has no shortage of high-tech bells and

The spacious auditorium at The Inverness Hotel and Conference Center is a high-tech haven for meetings.



The Colorado Convention Center is known for its state-of-the-art technology infrastructure and modern architecture.

whistles, allowing it to attract the likes of the Microsoft Worldwide Partnership Conference and the Custom Electronic Design & Installation Association Expo. Colorado Convention Center is fully equipped to handle all forms of voice, video and data transmission as well as Internet access through its complete fiber, co-axial and copper infrastructures.

The Metro Denver Dental Society uses the facility's capabilities to set up 12 registration counters with computers hooked up to the Internet, so that walk-ins for their annual conference can register on the spot. "In the past, we shut down registration two weeks before, so we've really been able to reduce lines on site," says Convention Director Korinna Milam. "Our on-site registration is constantly current as it automatically feeds into the system."

An Internet café is set up to help the 8,900 attendees from the Rocky Mountain Region check e-mail and look up websites of products and services being featured in the expo hall. Speakers also have the ability to pull up the Internet in meeting rooms, says Milam.

The Colorado Convention Center's exhibit level features 584,000 square feet of space; plus, there are 63 meeting rooms, 85,000 square feet of ballroom space, a 5,000-seat theatre and a full-service business center. These spaces and

common areas are wired for all communications, and the Korbel Ballroom is known for its fiber-optic twinkle lights.

Internet and telephone services are managed by the convention center and supported by in-house technicians, and digital and high definition TV signals are made possible through Comcast. "We have just updated all of our equipment and part of our infrastructure in 2007. All networking equipment is new, including Wi-Fi," says Manager of Technology Debbie Olivas.

Several unique VLANs are available in the building, allowing staff to build multiple networks—wireless or hard-wired—for a client. "This is big for a company like Microsoft. We sit down and work directly with the client to build a network before they come into the building," Olivas says. "It all goes back to having the latest infrastructure that allows the client to showcase their latest and greatest." @

*** GET CONNECTED**

THE CABLE CENTER
303.871.4885 / www.cablecenter.org

COLORADO CONVENTION CENTER
303.228.8000 / www.denverconvention.com

DONALD R. SEAWELL GRAND BALLROOM
303.572.4466 / 800.641.1222 / www.dcpa.org

THE INVERNESS HOTEL & CONFERENCE CENTER
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