



Abercrombie and Fitch's Historic London Location Outfitted with Meyer Sound

IMAGES



In the world of high-fashion retail, Abercrombie & Fitch has remained a frontrunner with their popular, youthful brand of casual apparel. When the successful retail and catalog operation decided to create a new class of flagship stores, they sought top-of-the-line audio systems for them that were in line with their reputation for quality and style. The A&F team found the perfect fit with Meyer Sound's UltraSeries self-powered loudspeaker systems.

Each of the three locations selected for the new stores — on New York's Fifth Avenue, at Los Angeles' The Grove shopping center, and in London's ultra-trendy Mayfair district — has been designed for maximum audio and visual impact. "The vision for these stores was to design a retail environment that is as much about fashion as it is entertainment," says David Schwartz, Abercrombie & Fitch's Director of Audio/Video Technology. "We wanted to design an audio system that could deliver the impact of a full-blown theatre experience. To me, there's only one name synonymous with theatre when it comes to sound, and that's Meyer Sound."



"We wanted to design an audio system that could deliver the impact of a full-blown theatre experience.... I have no doubt that the Meyer Sound loudspeakers sealed the deal. There is no other loudspeaker that sounds this good right out of the box."

- David Schwartz
Director of Audio/Video Technology,
Abercrombie & Fitch

For the London location, Schwartz designed a distributed system that includes 57 UPM-1P ultracompact wide coverage loudspeakers and 38 UMS-1P ultracompact subwoofers, as well as 30 MM-4 miniature wide-range loudspeakers for added spot coverage. As Schwartz explains, opening a three-story retail operation at 7 Burlington Gardens, in one of London's most historic retail districts, presented particular challenges.

"The building was built in 1725 as a residence for local royalty and is a designated historical landmark," says Schwartz. The 23,000 square foot structure's history includes several incarnations, most recently as a branch of the Bank of England, before A&F assumed the space. "Our CEO [Mike Jeffries] was really determined to get the place," says Schwartz. "I walked in, took a look at this huge space with its 27-foot ceiling and seven-second reverb time and thought, 'no way.'"

Because of the building's landmark status, the store could not use attached fixtures or make any modifications that would alter its historical attributes. "I wanted to do some acoustic treatment to the room first, and submitted a plan that was immediately rejected," says Schwartz. "So was every subsequent proposal I turned in. Ultimately, the mission was to make it work with what we were given."

FEATURE PRODUCT

[UPM-1P](#)

[UMS-1P](#)

[MM-4](#)

Fortunately, the placement of custom-designed cabinetry and store fixtures made a significant impact on the acoustics. "It broke up the standing waves enough to bring things down to a workable level. And the UPM loudspeakers are such tightly focused boxes that we were able to address the sound where we needed it and avoid a lot of excessive reflection."

Schwartz's initial sound design proposal for the New York store, the first of the new flagship locations to be built, incorporated the UPM-1P loudspeakers, and not only inspired the company to choose Meyer Sound systems, but also led to Schwartz's current position with Abercrombie & Fitch. "My own company, Essential Communications, was a small boutique audio/video operation specializing in hospitality and retail," he says. "Over a period of about four years, A&F had evolved into my biggest customer. Then we did a loudspeaker shootout with two other companies as part of the planning for these stores. The other guys brought in 10 or 15 speakers each and set them up all over the place. We hung three UPM-1P boxes on a truss and put a pair of UMS-1P subwoofers on the floor, and the other guys started making cracks about our little speakers. Needless to say, we made a strong positive impression."

After receiving the contract for the flagship stores, Schwartz approached A&F execs about creating a division of the company that would represent a single point of contact and a voice for the company concerning AV issues and practices. "I have no doubt that the Meyer Sound loudspeakers sealed the deal," he asserts. "There is no other loudspeaker that sounds this good right out of the box."

Schwartz is also pleased with Meyer Sound's response to his relatively unorthodox loudspeaker application. "Meyer loudspeakers are well known in concert settings, but this is one of the first times they've ever been used in a distributed system in a retail environment," he says. "The Meyer techs were pretty surprised when they saw the MM-4s hung on the lighting tracks. It was so rewarding for me to show them how we're using their speakers in a totally unique application. The MM-4 is an incredibly versatile little speaker."

October, 2007

[Contact Us](#) | [Terms of Use](#) | [Trademarks](#)

Copyright © 2007 Meyer Sound Laboratories Inc.