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Posted on June 17, 2022



Three years in construction, the new Romanian Pentecostal Betania Church in Dublin is remarkable not just because it is now ranked the largest church in Ireland, but because the building was funded and primarily built by volunteers in the Church's community. Accommodating 1500 worshippers in its main sanctuary, as well as a thriving online following, the ambitious design required an equally impressive sound

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system, resulting in the installation of the latest technology from DiGiCo's recently launched compact, Quantum 225 digital mixing console.

The 8m Euros development comprises a 2800m² building with large sanctuary, stage, choir and orchestra space, media pod, fellowship halls, a conference room, eight community rooms, pastoral areas, and a youth worship area. The building design and framework were established by a professional team of architects and construction specialists, but the majority of the building work was completed by skilled volunteers from the Church's Romanian community during evenings and weekends.

Requiring specialist expertise, Betania's project leaders researched the best companies to help manage the audio installation, which led them to industry leading, Wigwam Acoustics.

Wigwam has many years of experience in houses of worship installations, and the company was even involved in sound systems for the ministry of evangelist, Billy Graham, who toured Romania in the 1980s, events which hold great significance for the Romanian Christian community behind the project.

"Betania Church needed to invest in an audio system and infrastructure with capacity to manage not only the size of the sanctuary and congregation but also a versatile roster of events from worship services and musical performances to conferences and broadcasts. Furthermore, during COVID-19 lockdown, the Betania team responded to the challenge of an online worship environment, hosting live streaming events for the congregation. Their efforts were so successful, budget was also allocated to invest in media facilities to enhance their broadcast productions," explains Tim Mortimer, System Integration Project Manager at Wigwam. "With so many features on the spec list, DiGiCo was clearly the brand of choice."

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Sam Brio, FOH Engineer for Betania Church

Wigwam was appointed to supply all cabling and hardware for the audio system, comprising the latest offering from DiGiCo's premium Quantum portfolio, the Quantum 225 compact digital console. Tasked with running FOH and monitor duties in the main sanctuary, the Quantum 225 is installed at the FOH position, and fitted with a Waves network card to interface to a Waves server for access to plugins. Linked to the Quantum 225 console, an MQ-Rack compact MADI unit is also installed to support broadcast and live streaming events. The MQ-Rack splits off to a second DiGiCo console, an SD9, installed in a dedicated broadcast room, and fitted with a UB MADI interface for recording and playback.

"Wigwam was excited to be able to offer the latest console from DiGiCo's exceptional Quantum range. The small Quantum 225 is a pocket rocket, with functionality that exceeds its compact size. It can absorb large channel counts, easily multitask operations using Nodal Processing technology, and has three powerful FPGAs, as well as a wealth of network opportunities," explains

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Mortimer. "The Quantum platform is also surprisingly user friendly for the amateur. Most of the mixing operators at the Church are volunteers, and with minimal training, they were all comfortably operating the system."

With various halts in construction due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Church finally opened its doors in December 2021. The Betania Church is now fully operational, conducting several services a week, also streamed live, as well as concerts, youth seminars, and radio and TV broadcasts. There are future plans to extend the technical design of the venue by installing a dedicated sound system in the youth area.

"It was a big challenge, a long procedure with some hard decisions to make sure we chose the right sound system for our worship place," concludes Betania Tech Coordinator, Daniel Catana. "But now, the d&b sound experience together with the DiGiCo consoles has proved it was the right way to go. We have great sound and awesome coverage, and I'm glad we could make this happen through Wigwam, which is a very professional company with a great team."