

Audiovisual Glossary

Aspect Ratio: The aspect ratio of an image describes the proportional relationship between its width and its height. It is commonly expressed as two numbers separated by a colon, as in 16:9 or 4:3.

Back Stage: The area that is behind the stage, scenery, or draping.

Cat 5: A cable that is used when connecting Ethernet networks. It is used to transmit information to and from different types of equipment.

Digital Sign: A TV or flat screen display that is used to display information. Text, images, and video can all be combined to display information.

Digital Snake: A box that transmits digital audio signals from the front of house to the stage through a Cat5 cable.

Dimmer: A device that controls the brightness of lights through voltage control.

Feedback: The regeneration of sound from speakers back through the audio source. In most cases this occurs when an open microphone is placed too close to an active speaker.

FOH: Front of House. Lighting and sound operators, excluding the monitor engineers, are normally positioned in a small sectioned-off-area front of house, surrounded by the audience or at the edge of the audience area. From this position they have unobstructed hearing and a clear view of the performance, enabling the operation of the main speaker system, show control consoles, and other equipment. Therefore in this case Front of House can refer to both the general audience/public area or to the specific small section from where the show is mixed.

Gels: Colored cellophane capable of withstanding extremely high heat levels. Gels are placed in front of the lens of a lighting instrument to give color to the light.

Gobo: A logo or image etched out of metal or into glass allowing it to be projected onto a surface through a lighting instrument.

Gooseneck: A flexible device that attaches a microphone to a podium. It allows adjustments to be made between the speaker and the microphone.

High Definition: Also known as HD or High Def. An image that has higher resolution of standard TV and is crisper. It is often referred to in terms of 1080i, 1080p, or 720p. This also has an aspect ratio of 16:9 or widescreen.

IMAG: Short of Image magnification. When a video camera is used to capture the image and display it on the screen. Often used so everyone in the room can see what is happening on stage.

Keystone: Distortion caused by the lens not being directly aligned with the center of the screen when projecting an image.

Lavalier: Type of small microphone that attaches to clothing allowing the speaker to roam the stage hands free.

LCD: Liquid crystal display. This type of display technology is used in laptops, flat panel TV's, and flat panel displays.

LED: Light emitting diode. LED's give off light with little to no heat. They consume less power and are considered environmentally friendly.

Lighting Console: Allows the control of the brightness of light instruments from a remote position through voltage control.

Light Tree: A structure consisting of an upright pole or truss and a crossbar from which to hang lighting instruments. These are floor supported.

Lumens: The amount of light generated from a light source. When referring to lumens, the higher the number the brighter the source. This is most important when comparing projectors.

Mixer: A piece of equipment that allows multiple audio sources to be combined into a single source to the speaker system.

Obstructions: Any structure, fixture or anything otherwise that protrudes, resides, or is built into a space that can impede sight lines or placement of equipment.

Patch: A connection which is plugged in between two lines.

Projection Distance: A critical calculation as to the distance the projector is required to be placed from the screen to fill the screen with the image.

Rear Screen Projection: When an image is projected from behind and through the screen. This hides the equipment from the view of the audience.

Rigging: A term used to describe any foundation or system that is used for support, move, or fly scenery, lighting fixtures, drapery, screens or cables. Only qualified and certified riggers should attempt to hang or install equipment above an audience, stage, or any other situation. Safety is paramount and liability is extremely important.

Stage Directions: Stage left, stage right, up-stage, and down-stage refer to the perception of the stage in relation to where you are standing. The rear of the stage is considered up-stage. This derives from the raked stage, where the stage sloped up away from the audience. The front of the stage is down-stage. Stage left and right refers to the performer's left and right facing the audience. Audience left and right or house left and right refer to how the audience perceives the stage. The audience's left is referred as house left or audience left as is the right as well.

Switcher: A piece of equipment usually used with video that allows multiple input sources to be distributed to an output. It also allows dissolves, wipes, faded, cuts, and a host of other transitional visual effects. Switchers can also match different resolutions and scan rates.

Widescreen: Term referring to an aspect ratio of 16:9 or greater.

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