



0



0



SHARE

Read Next: Pro:Centric Catena 2.0

[Home](#) / [Issues](#) / [Issue 12](#)

Only the Best for The Continental Cocktail Bar — AV.technology

Barlow, which creatively recreates a '20s-style speakeasy, relies on d&b for quality sound that's anything but dated.

By **AV Technology**

4 July 2022

Barlow at The Continental, Sorrento
1 Ocean Beach Rd, Sorrento VIC 3943

The term 'speakeasy' when it comes to bars has evolved to be associated with luxurious décor, discretion and privacy if you want it, and everything on offer being top class and, of course, top shelf. It's well known that, originally, speakeasies were born during the American Prohibition period (crazy Yanks, what were they *thinking?*) when illicit bars and clubs sprouted like mushrooms underground, and believe it or not, the number of drinking establishments *increased*—in New Jersey by tenfold, for example—and the fierce competition for patronage resulted in many speakeasies providing the height of indulgence and personalised service. Often it needed a password or even a secret knock to gain entry, and mixed with the thrill of thumbing your nose at the law, and the extravagance and style of the 1920s, speakeasies were popular places to meet and drink—as long as Kevin Costner didn't come busting down the door and start shooting up the bar mirrors.

The Continental in Sorrento decided as a part of its massive redevelopment to adopt a speakeasy theme for the ground-floor Barlow bar (*sans* Mr Costner ever dropping by, obviously) and has created a lavish space with plush furnishings and a stunning design that transports guest to another world of a century ago.



“ ”

One of our Directors is very passionate about good sound... he was instrumental in insisting on the best equipment for Barlow, resulting in asking for d&b sound reinforcement

MORE THAN DRINKS

Entertainment was a big part of the speakeasy scene and Barlow has acknowledged this, installing a stage, lighting and PA system that can cater for a wide range of live acts including comedy, jazz (well, it was the 1920s, right?) and rock bands, with the facility for DJ nights as well.

The refurbishment of The Continental has been a work in progress for some time, and various plans and consultancies for the different areas inside the hotel have been in place across the entire project. When it came to Barlow, the integrators Zelo Group were asked to incorporate a d&b PA system into the design.

Scott Elvery, the General Manager of The Continental, explains how that came about. "One of our Directors is very passionate about good sound, and he's got his own studio where some very well-known names in music gather to jam and do some recordings. So, he was instrumental in insisting on the best equipment for Barlow, resulting in asking for d&b sound reinforcement."

This brought together Stephen Sokolowski from Zelo, Sam Dockrill from consultants Audio Systems Logic, and NAS Solutions. The role for Audio Systems Logic was to come up with a complete system design of the PA including the supporting infrastructure and control systems. Then ASL did some electroacoustic performance modelling of the PA system within the room—the process which merges the fields of sound reinforcement system design and architectural acoustic design through complex 3D electroacoustic modelling. Sam Dockrill says, "We wanted to ensure everything sounded good, no matter what the act might be, loud or quiet. At the same time, the design of everything we were involved in needed to fit with the theme of the room and blend in."



THE D&B CHOICE

Next came Zelo Group with the installation. Stephen Sokolowski explained, "Dealing with NAS and d&b, and hearing what the brand can do, and what the system can achieve, it was a really good experience."

The final system became three of the d&b Yi7P two-way passive loudspeakers with one these employed as an overhead centre fill because of the relative width of the stage, and the remaining two paired with d&b 18S subwoofers—essentially a LCR configuration even though Barlow is more of an intimate venue. Other areas of the room are filled with d&b 8S and 5S loudspeakers, and four MAX2 monitors are available for stage foldback.

Barlow is more than just an isolated venue within the larger Continental. It's also a kind of entertainment hub, and through the local network whatever's happening on stage can streamed through to the rest of the hotel. It's made Barlow a real drawcard for patrons who might not otherwise be aware of what's going on in the venue at that particular moment. And upon discovering it, it's no surprise that guests are impressed by the attention to detail and effort put into creating Barlow and bringing that speakeasy vibe to life.

Scott Elvery couldn't be happier. "We absolutely love the d&b system. It really makes the room, providing a crisp and powerful sound. We've already used a variety of acts from DJs, comedians, and several small bands and duos, and the sound is always exceptional."

Without doubt, Barlow is already a very popular place indeed. You don't need a password or secret knock to enter, and don't worry about breaking any Prohibition Laws or Kevin Costner trashing the place. You can relax and enjoy all that Barlow has to offer—excellent service, grand 1920s luxury, and great sounds from d&b.

d&b audiotechnik: www.dbaudio.com

NAS Solutions: www.nas.solutions