

Consistent coverage

Active Audio has become the EPuDF West's go-to brand for all church upgrades in the region



CREATED IN 2012, THE ÉGLISE

Protestante Unie de France (EPuDF) is the union of the Église Réformée de France and the Église Évangélique Luthérienne de France. These two churches originated in the 16th century during the Reformation movement and founded the Fédération Protestante de France in 1905. There are over 450 protestant parishes, 1,000 places of worship and 500 vicars that make up the EPuDF, which is broken into nine regions across the country. Jean-François Baudet is the digital project manager for the EPuDF West, which covers major cities such as Nantes, Le Mans and La Rochelle.

"While there was no sound system in the 16th century, today, auditory comfort for parishioners is both a technical necessity and an evangelistic goal," explains Baudet. "Better hearing, better seeing and better communicating' are the three pillars of audiovisual renovation for all EPuDF churches in the western region."

The EPuDF West receives a continuous flow of renovation requests for the churches in its catchment across the year, with nearly 25 applications processed over the last 12 months. However, the capacity to

complete the work is limited by the capacity of Baudet and his team, with the number of completed installations reaching around 10 every year.

Each church can choose between using the EPuDF's regional digital project manager or an external service provider. However, the majority opt for this regional service. "The process is simple," adds Baudet. "During a meeting with the church's presbyteral council, the project manager guides them through a 360° questionnaire on 'better seeing, better hearing and better communicating' and then translates the parish's needs into equipment."

Factors taken into consideration on the questionnaire include whether the sound system needs to be fixed or mobile, how many microphones are required, whether the service is streamed live and whether it's possible to install a fixed screen in the sanctuary. Once the questions have been answered, a technical dossier is created and validated by the presbyteral council. This is then submitted to the national funding office. After obtaining the funds, the digital project manager and a team of volunteers purchase and install the



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equipment, followed by training and support.

Baudet explains that there are three major advantages to the system. "First, this centralised management results in a 30–50% reduction in audiovisual costs compared to external companies. Purchases are made through framework contracts with negotiated prices from certain suppliers. Second, all local churches speak with each other and the feedback from all the churches leads

to highly adapted equipment choices. Finally, working with parishioners ensures strong project support. These volunteers often become the most dedicated and motivated at the end of the process and training sessions become moments of community building."

Baudet describes the relationship between the EPuDF West and Active Audio as "well-established". After receiving photos and plans of each installation, Active Audio conducts

an acoustic study to define the type, quantity and placement of speakers. This step is crucial for the digital project manager of the EPUDF, as sizing must be based on calculated acoustic data.

"There are many speaker brands in the market," says Baudet. "After a full-scale demonstration, Active Audio was naturally chosen for the quality of their products. Furthermore, the proximity and French manufacturing were significant factors. Having the same brand of speakers and amplifiers simplifies maintenance, support and fosters expert development with this type of equipment. Additionally, Active Audio's site visits to validate and fine-tune settings are highly appreciated by parishioners."

"The first Active Audio systems were installed in small churches in the countryside," explains Eric Grandmougin, marketing and sales director France for Arbane Groupe, parent company of Active Audio. "The advantage of this system is that the churches in Cognac, Jarnac and Saint-Sauvant share the same vicar so he's pleased to have the same sound system in all the churches where he works. Having the same speaker manufacturer in every church is a very original way of working but it's also very efficient. The idea is to create one



Active Audio is the preferred speaker manufacturer for all Protestant church upgrades in the west of France

speaker system and duplicate it in all the different locations, regardless of the architecture."

Choosing both a French – and a local – speaker manufacturer was also an important deciding factor for the EPUDF West. "They like that we are French, but they also like the strength of the relationship they have with us," continues Grandmougin. The EPUDF West's AV division is based in Nantes, very close to Active Audio's factory. "Our proximity makes it easy to develop new ideas or for us to provide the digital project manager with any necessary training. They really appreciate the direct contact with the factory."


"The range of Active Audio columns is broad, which allows us to choose the appropriate equipment based on the varied dimensions of our churches," concludes Baudet. "Their 3D simulation software is also a valuable asset. Consideration, customer service, responsiveness and reliability are significant strengths of Active Audio. For our churches, Active Audio products provide all the security they need to ensure their services run without any complications, every day of the week."

www.arbane-groupe.com
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