

What made this project in Gouda so successful?

There was a clear and unambiguously formulated assignment for which the three principals felt equally responsible. Preparations started early enough with a clear project plan. The de Goudse Schouwburg had a group of motivated and capable technicians who really felt challenged by such a project. The management was aware of the fact that it is important to organise such a project well so that every function is covered, and there is cover for every function. However, the most important factors were actually the participation of the theatre management team and the technicians. This team and the technicians both acknowledged that things would change and they choose to go for custom solutions which would last so as to secure the theatre as a cultural facility for a period of at least 10 years. That did not necessarily mean that the costs were higher.

How did the technicians and the management handle the automation?

First of all, they were a part of the project organisation. Before the construction period started, I organised special meetings in which the technicians discussed what would change and how they would handle these changes. They wrote protocols, describing how to deal with the new situations. For example, a second video camera was installed to provide a second view of the stage so that they would not have to operate the computer control system for the power flying installation without a suitable view of the stage.

The supplier of the systems trained the technical director, as well as all the technicians, on the operating system. This was a part of the deal with the supplier. The training started during the construction period, from the start of which two operating systems were supplied for training and so that all the technicians could, in their spare time, try out the operating system on these



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How were the...

During the planning that the cost of maintenance would be higher than before, as was expected with an automated system. The budget for the coming years was adjusted and the supplier was asked to make a calculation for a maintenance period of 10 years as part of his offer. Based on that offer, a maintenance contract has now been entered into with the supplier.

A year and a half before the construction period, the date for the opening performance was set and the maximum anticipated construction period was planned carefully. One year before the construction period, the budget was approved. In the operational budget for the coming years, the cost for education, training and maintenance were adjusted. The management provided workspace and facilities like a telephone, server space, internet connections, for the extra project personnel. Between the end of the construction period and the opening, one month was included for training and adjustments. In that period also, four trial shows were scheduled and executed, guided by the supplier as part of the deal. The adjustments in the budgets for maintenance and operations, which came out as a consequence during this process, and which had to be separately subsidised by the city of Gouda, were relatively easily realised because all parties concerned took part in the steering group and they all felt directly responsible for the overall results. I trust this gives you some background to our approach in the Netherlands. Thank you. Ω

Management consultant Jeroen de Leeuw here explains the change process in the Netherlands, TD Nikk Turnham describes her experience with steel band hoists, TD Ingemar Melander recounts the process in the City Theatre in Gothenburg, and TD Mark Taylor reviews his experiences of powered systems in three venues.



The power flying hoists by Trekwerk on the grid and Reind Brackman in an animated training session with the crew
Photos: Jeroen de Leeuw