



American Tower Gives the Javits Center a SYSTEM UPGRADE

BY JOE DYTON



Before any masked marvels or caped crusaders could grace the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center® for the 2013 New York Comic-Con event, American Tower® had to pull off a few heroic feats of its own.

American Tower, a Boston-based owner, developer and operator of wireless and broadcast communications infrastructure, was tasked with putting a new Distributed Antenna System (DAS) throughout the 2.1 million-square-foot convention center.

Under normal circumstances, this request wouldn't be an issue for American Tower—installing DAS is one of its core solutions—however, this proposal was unique. The Javits Center's initial request for proposal was issued in August 2012. The project began in

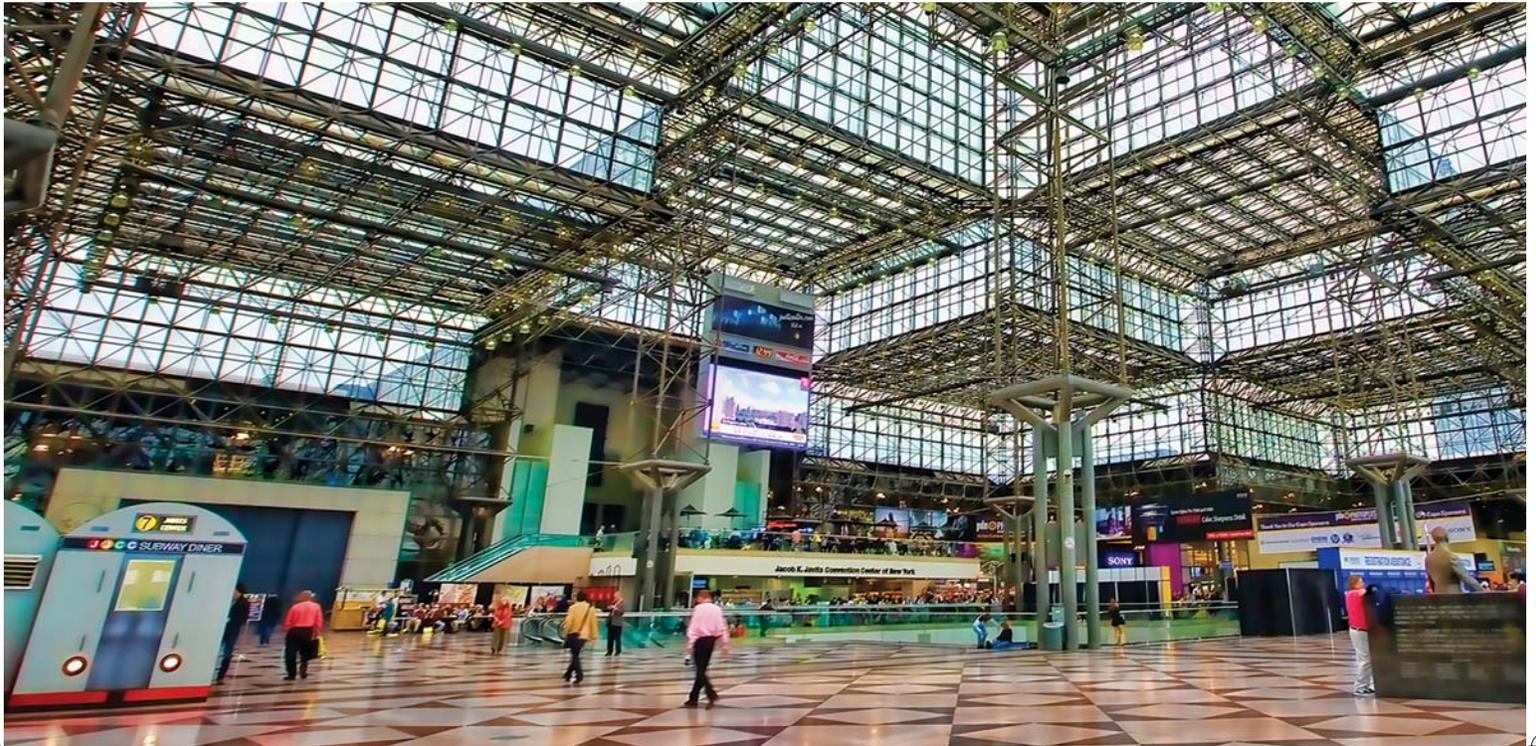
June 2013 with an October 2013 due date to coincide with Comic-Con, leaving American Tower with just four and a half months to complete a project that normally takes six months.

Although the production time was less than American Tower was accustomed to, once the company had a clear idea of what the Javits Center team wanted, the process fell into place. After the timeline was confirmed, the project became more about execution and less about how it would be completed in four and a half months.

“Once we had a vision of all of the information and communication technology applications that could be enabled by our shared infrastructure solution in mind, the real estate and the associated end users became the

focus of our partnership. We were able to realize this through our best in class deployment and on-going operations,” American Tower vice president of business development Alex Gamota said. “We were working very closely with the Javits Center and because it is such a large, ever-changing, multi-purpose venue, our goal was to ensure that our deployment was invisible or had as minimal an impact as possible on their core business. While it needed to be operational, it also needed to be seamless. People shouldn't realize how their wireless is being delivered.”

The American Tower DAS that was to be installed had to work with all major wireless service providers. The system design included 15 sectors that covered all the provider's frequencies,



409 antennas and 86 remote equipment dual-node locations. This equipment also required a head-end equipment room, comprising 1,400 square feet with 3x10 ton HVAC units and 400 amp, three-phase power.

Although the inventory sheet was expansive and the project “to-do list” was long, American Tower had things under control early. Since its core business is working with property owners and wireless carriers, American Tower’s dedicated sales team was able to stay in constant contact with carriers about their needs. Once it was clear American Tower had the winning bid, it got in touch with the carriers right away to gauge their interest in the Javits Center. Their interest was high, given the type of property, along with the traffic an event like Comic-Con brings.

The American Tower sales team took the carriers’ interest and charted it to

application and design on a national level and within the market, and the company already had agreement templates it could use to keep the process moving forward.

“We pulled out all of the stops,” American Tower vice president of engineering and deployment Lisa Gascoigne said. “Having fiduciary relationships and being able to move quickly through engineering, design and the contract phase were part of the reason we were able to deliver ahead of the Comic-Con event.”

The quick turnaround time was something American Tower could work around; the Javits Center’s features and dimensions were another story. The size for example—as previously mentioned, the Javits Center is 2.1 million square feet with 840,000 square feet of exhibition space.

Meanwhile, the Javits Center runs



nonstop—literally. It operates on a 24/7 schedule as events usually require full venue set up before the actual event date. Thus, there's almost always something going on. If it's not an event, it's a set up or breakdown of an event.

As American Tower had to work around the convention center's schedule, it couldn't work during certain events or work in particular areas. To stay on schedule, the company worked 24-hour split shifts. The Javits Center also had remodeling projects going on simultaneously, which meant, at times, American Tower had to relocate some of its remote DAS equipment.

Working around a client's schedule is nothing new for American Tower; however, according to Gascoigne, the company has longstanding relationships with big properties, such as malls and casinos, so it was comfortable working alongside an entity that could

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not shut down during the installation.

“They have their core business and it never stops,” Gamota said. “We have plenty of experience with that. For the Javits Center, it was working closely with our counterparts there to understand their requirements, when we could work and who needed to be in the facility. There was also a protocol for access and security. Being a high-profile venue, security and conforming to their requirements were as effectual as the qualifications of who we selected.”

American Tower also worked around the Javits Center's design. For example, the wall configurations are all flexible to accommodate any type of event, it has glass exterior walls and a mainly steel infrastructure, all of which can make for a difficult installation. In addition, aesthetic restrictions made antenna placements and cabling routes difficult.

Due to space restraints, some remote DAS equipment had to be custom installed on the top of the champing tower columns in the main event hall. The DAS system also had to meet RF coverage standards per the Javits Center's RFP and had to work for all major wireless service providers.

Despite the obstacles and time constraints, American Tower was able to complete the DAS installation in time for the Comic-Con event. In fact, it did such an outstanding job, the company will be working with the Javits Center once again as it goes through a major expansion. The Javits Center will add an additional 500,000 square feet of contiguous space on one level, providing room to host more events and meetings than ever before. The expansion will include a 55,000-square-foot ballroom, a 45,000-square-foot, state of the art meeting space and a four-level truck garage that will house 200 tractor trailer trucks simultaneously and include 27 new loading docks.

American Tower will be the sole DAS provider for the Javits Center's current and expanding venues. “American Tower is grateful and excited to be part of this major expansion at the Javits Convention Center,” Gascoigne said.

“One of the differentiators for us is the ongoing real estate management of our relationship,” Gamota said. “We take the approach from an account management perspective with regular recurring meetings as necessary. The network is a living, breathing part of that venue.”

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