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Hidden challenges for assistive listening technology in large venues

Assistive listening systems provide a means of wirelessly transmitting an audio signal from a venue's sound system directly to a listener in the audience, dramatically increasing speech intelligibility by removing background noise and bypassing room acoustics. Recent advances in assistive listening technology, such as the development of Bluetooth Auracast, hold promise in making assistive listening technology more available, more accessible, and more affordable for venue operators and listeners alike.

However, several hidden challenges that both existing and new technology face in large venues, such as places of worship, movie theatres, performing arts theatres, lecture halls, as well as airports and train stations, remain unaddressed. This presentation explores how to overcome these hurdles that even many industry professionals are unaware of. The issues discussed affect all assistive listening systems (FM, IR, induction loop, WiFi, Bluetooth) of all manufacturers.