NFL Films, widely recognized as the most honored filmmaker in sports, has revolutionized the way America watches football for nearly 40 years with exclusive all-access sound, stunning cinematography, stirring orchestral music and poignant storytelling. In recent years, NFL Films has expanded beyond sports to become a major factor in the film and video production arena as the company sought to design and construct a new 250,000-square-foot state-of-the-art television and motion-picture production and post-production studio recently. Maintaining these unique abilities in the new space was a top priority. The goal for the architects from the Russ Berger Design Group set a new standard in acoustical, aesthetic and ergonomic design and construction.

The Addison, Texas-based architect created a unique design for the facility: formed aluminum and pre-cast concrete exteriors. The facility is made up of two buildings connected by a bridge of offices. One wing houses the offices to NFL Films administrative staff and more than 70 producers and directors as well as the studio’s cinematography department, 150-theater, film-processing lab and the world’s largest sports film library—more than 1 million feet of football action dating back to 1894.

The second wing houses the studio’s complex post-production division complete with extensive high-definition video editing suites; digital audio editing and mixing suites; mask composition and MIDI rooms; a recording studio large enough to hold a GO-piece orchestra; a comprehensive video library and a 60-by-80-foot sound-stage for live and live-to-tape productions.

The general contractor overseeing the project, W.S. Cumby & Son, Swarthmore, Pa., hired Hagen Construction, Inc., Bensalem, Pa., to manage the fitout of the 7,000+-square-foot sound stage. Hagen was responsible for the installation of all acoustical materials, treatments, finishes, drywalling and taping.

Who Are They?

Here’s a quick play-by-play of the key figures in this game:

NFL Films officially opened its facility in September 2002. This season, NFL Films will produce and distribute more than 400 hours of original NFL programming across broadcast and cable networks, NFL.com, home videos, DVDs and CD-ROMs.

In addition to its weekly flagship series NFL Films Presents, NFL Films produces Edge NFL Matchup (ESPN), Inside the NFL (HBO) and NFL Blast, an international program produced in 26 languages and seen in nearly 200 countries.

W.S. Cumby & Son is a general contracting/construction management firm founded in 1981. The company specializes largely in educational facilities. The
Hagen Construction, founded in 1983, is an interior finish contracting company. The company specializes in interior and exterior carpentry and the installation of millwork, doors, frames and hardware throughout the Philadelphia tri-state area.

George F. Kempf Supply is a commercial building supply company founded in 1950. Based in Philadelphia, with building supply yards and offices in Trenton, N.J., and Wilmington, Del., Kempf specializes in the delivery of a variety of construction materials with an emphasis on gypsum board and acoustical products.

CertainTeed Corporation is a manufacturer of building materials (insulation, roofing, vinyl siding and windows, fiber cement siding and ventilation products and piping products) and fiberglass products for reinforcing plastics and other materials. The company is headquartered in Valley Forge, Pa., and has approximately 7,100 employees and more than 40 manufacturing facilities throughout the United States.
Critical to the construction of the third studio’s sound stage, studio area, audio and video mixing suites, MIDI composition rooms and the 95,000 square feet of technical space was the need to control acoustics. Hagen sought expertise in this area from George F. Kempf Supply, Philadelphia.

“We believed the acoustical insulation on this job would make it or break it,” said Ron Lindemuth of Hagen Construction.

Adds Steve Coughlan of Kempf Supply, “Proper specifications and a world-class acoustical material were critical.”

After reviewing the material specifications, Hagen and Kempf representatives selected CertainTeed Acoustablanicet Black Fiber Glass Insulation.

The five-member crew installed more than 15,000 square feet of the product in the new headquarters over the course of a month. Two layers of the 2-inch thick black insulation blanket was installed in a honeycomb shape built of two 2-by-45s. A screen door netting was applied to the first layer and another layer attached with a nailer at the top.

About the Author

CertainTeed is a subsidiary of Saint-Gobain, one of the top 100 industrial companies in the world. The company is a producer of abrasives, building materials, containers, flat glass, industrial ceramics, insulation, reinforcements and piping. Headquartered in Paris, Saint-Gobain had worldwide sales of $26.6 billion in 2000, and has approximately 165,000 employees in more than 45 countries. In the United States and Canada, Saint-Gobain employs approximately 31,000 people and has more than 200 manufacturing locations. Its total United States and Canada, sales in 2000 were approximately $6.5 billion.