

## MANCHESTER EVENING NEWS ARENA STUDY PACK



The Manchester Evening News Arena, managed and operated by SMG Europe, is one of the busiest venues in the World and the largest indoor arena in Europe.

Opened in 1995, the M.E.N Arena has staged the biggest names in live entertainment from U2, The Rolling Stones, Madonna and Pavarotti to the record-breaking 2010 / 2011 residency by local comedian Peter Kay.

Attracting over one million visitors each year, the 21,000 capacity Arena was named 'International Venue of the Year' in 2002 by industry publication Pollstar and has been nominated an unrivalled nine times.

### **SMG**

SMG was formed in 1988 in response to a market need for professionally managed public assembly facilities including arenas, stadiums, theatres and convention, exhibition and trade centres. The company now provides management expertise to large-scale venues, including the 76,000-seat Louisiana Superdome, the Tampa Ice Palace, the Hawaii Convention Centre, the San Francisco Civic Auditorium and the Manchester Evening News Arena.

The successful growth of SMG has been built on the many partnerships they have developed with their clients - both municipal and private. SMG's ownership and team of dedicated corporate support personnel make them unrivalled in the field of private facility management. SMG is an affiliate of American Capital Strategies Ltd.

## M.E.N Arena Time Line

1995 – The venue is officially opened by Torvill & Dean who break the UK Box Office record for a single ice performance to over 15,000 fans

1998 – Ricky ‘Hitman’ Hatton beats Karl Taylor in his debut M.E.N Arena bout – the first of 14 fights at his hometown venue

1999 – The M.E.N Arena hosts the homecoming of Manchester United after they win ‘The Treble’

2000 – Mike Tyson’s UK debut fight at the Arena is watched by over 100 million people worldwide

2001 – Local band James perform their farewell show at the Arena – before returning with a sell-out concert in 2007!

2002 – The venue holds the 2002 Commonwealth Games’ Boxing and Netball tournaments

2002 – U2 play to 19,384 fans, the biggest single audience of their European Elevation Tour. Bono declares the M.E.N Arena “the best concert venue in the country”

2004 – Madonna returns to Manchester for the first time since her 1980’s British debut at the infamous Hacienda to perform two sell-out shows

2005 – Comedian Lee Evans breaks the Guinness world record for a solo act performing to the biggest comedy audience

2005 - Comedian Peter Kay, who used to work as a M.E.N Arena Steward, returns with his record-breaking “Mum Wants A Bungalow” Tour

2006 – Now an annual event, the first Versus Cancer charity concert is staged by Ex-Smith’s member Andy Rourke

2007 – Kylie Minogue is crowned the biggest-selling solo artist in the history of the Arena after her January Showgirl Homecoming dates bring her total Arena performances to 17

2007 – Following their 11 shows in December, local band Take That become the biggest-selling act of all time with a total 27 M.E.N Arena performances

2008 – The Arena becomes the UK’s first music and entertainment venue to host competitive swimming after staging the 9<sup>th</sup> FINA World Short Course Swimming Championships in April

2008 – The M.E.N Arena becomes Kylie Minogue’s number one venue after official figures reveal the international pop star has performed more shows at the Arena – and to more people – than any other venue in the World

2009 – Peter Kay breaks box office records after all 20 nights for his 2010 spring residency sell out in an hour. The local comedian later announces he will return for an additional eight shows in 2011



*Europe*

Manchester  
**Evening News**  
arena

2009 – Westlife announce they will return to the M.E.N Arena with two 2010 shows making them the biggest selling group (29 performances) in the history of the venue – surpassing the joint record held with Take That

2009 - The M.E.N Arena's summer family blockbuster Walking With Dinosaurs wins 'Best Family Show' at the Manchester Evening News Theatre Awards

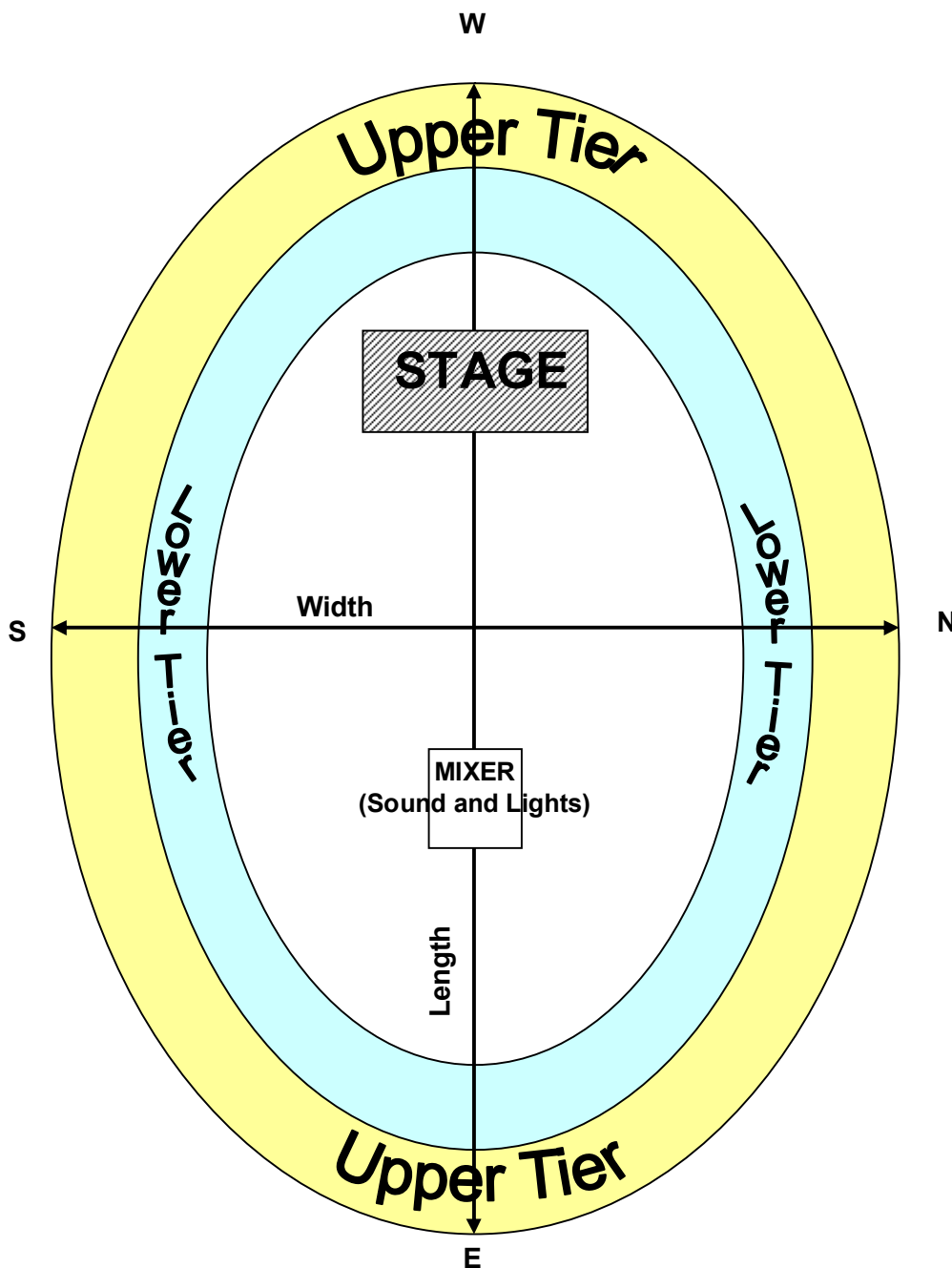
2009 – The venue smashes attendance figures after welcoming over one and a half million ticketholders in 2009

\*Based on concert ticket sales between January 2002 and June 2007, as calculated by Pollstar

SOUND AND LIGHTING INFORMATION

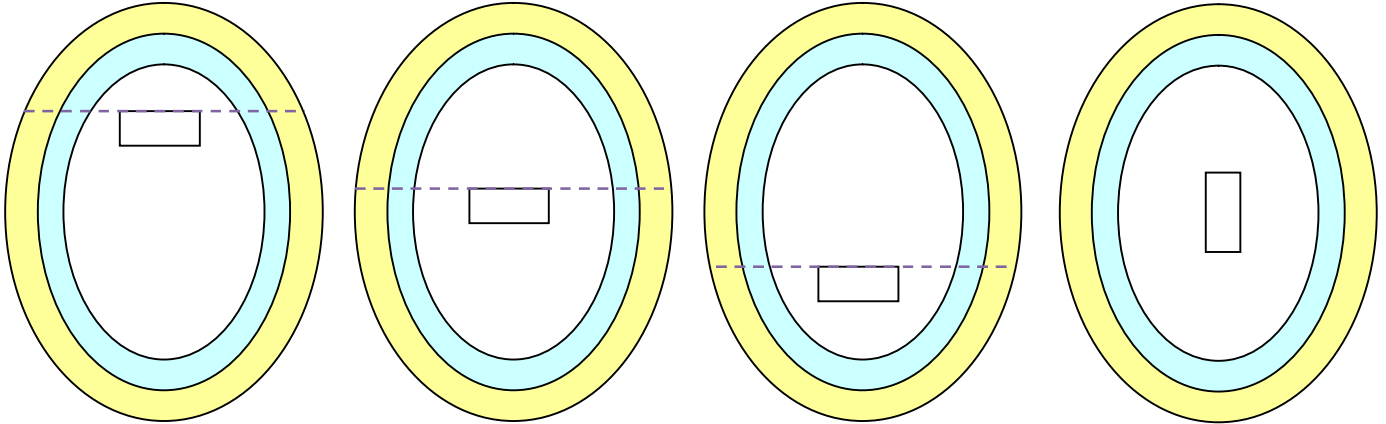
The sound and lighting at the Manchester Evening News Arena varies on each show. The touring production hire separate companies to produce the sound and lights at the venue and control it all whilst the show is taking place. This is usually controlled from a front of house sound and light mixer position situated in the floor area approximately 110ft (30m) from the downstage edge of the stage.

- Width** (From the back rows of the upper tier) = 326.12ft / 99.40m
- Length** (From the back rows of the upper tier) = 420.70ft / 128.23m
- Height** (From the floor to the lowest roof beam) = 84.74ft / 25.83m
- Length** (From the downstage edge to the back of upper tier) = 255.91ft / 78m



STAGE LAYOUTS

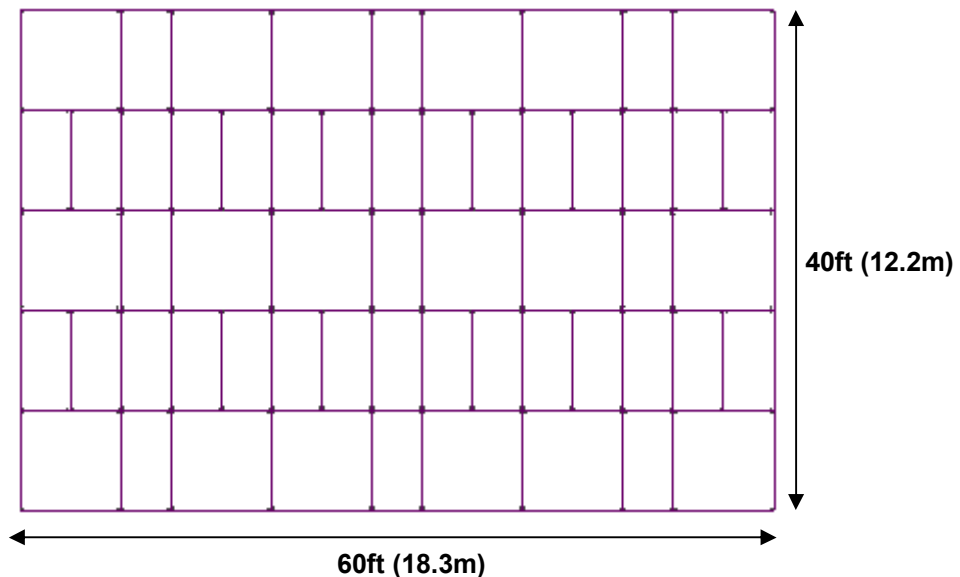
Using our draping system, the Arena is capable of adapting to a number of formats depending on requirements of the show from full end stage shows with a standing or seated floor to more intimate events using only part of the Arena.



End Stage	Reduced Hall	Short Hall	The Round
Capacity: 15,000 (Upper and lower tier)	Capacity: 5,500 (Lower tier only)	Capacity: 4,500 (Lower tier only)	Capacity: 19,500 (Upper and lower tier)

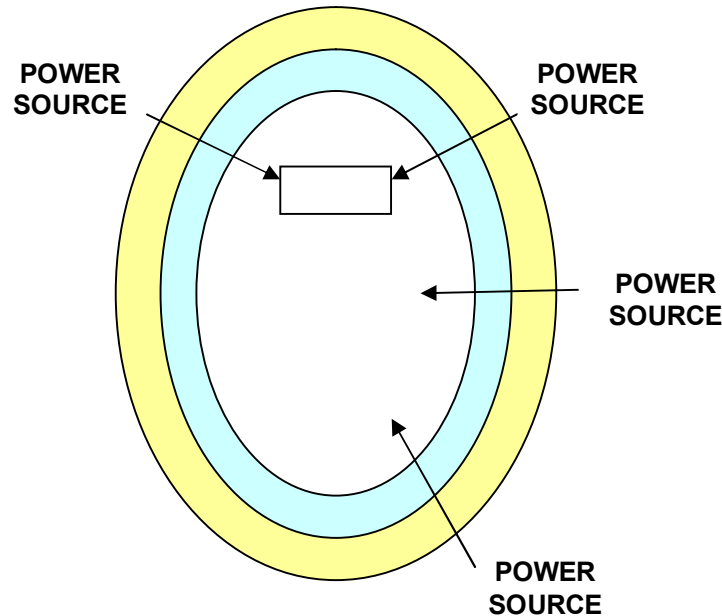
STAGING SYSTEM

The M.E.N. Arena uses a SICO 'roll and set' staging system and can be set out in a variety of sizes e.g. 60ft wide x 40ft deep (18.3m x 12.2m), 56ft wide x 40ft deep (17.1m x 12.2m), 60ft wide x 48ft deep (18.3m x 14.6m) with varying heights between 4ft and 6ft (1.2m – 1.8m). All of the stage comes in 8ft by 8ft sections (2.4m x 2.4m), with 8ft x 4ft (2.4m x 1.2m) bridges. In addition to the stage, the Arena can also provide wings for both stage left and right. These are usually used for monitors, pyrotechnician platform or for technicians working near the stage. An example is below. Alternatively, larger productions may bring their own 'rolling' stage, in which case no Arena stage is used and the floor is completely clear for the load in.



## POWER

The M.E.N. Arena has a number of different power outlets throughout the Arena. The production uses this for sound, lights, rigging, video walls, followspot positions or to simply provide power to the buses parked in the yard. The main power supplies are stage left and right although we have further power in the central bowl as well as the back of the Arena. Further power can be used in the marshalling yard, the catwalk and on the concourse.



## THE RUNNING OF THE BUILDING

The Manchester Evening News Arena works alongside a number of different contractors to ensure effectiveness when running a show. This includes outsourcing our security, rigging, cleaning and medical arrangements on show nights using the market leaders in their fields. The contractors we use have been supplying us for a number of years, which has allowed us to build up professional and long-lasting relationships. Although we use contractors for a number of operations within the Arena, unlike other venues our merchandise and food and beverage services operate in-house creating a good balance between in-house and contracted facilities.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- The M.E.N. Arena can provide a SICO free standing crowd control barrier. The total length of this is 25m. Alternatively the tour may supply their own barrier if it needs to accommodate any tour extensions or thrusts
- The Arena has 3 loading bays for trucks. Trucks are also able to drive directly onto the Arena floor to unload
- The Manchester Evening News Arena holds followspot positions for every show. We have available 4 x SuperTrooper spots and 4 x Gladiators.

Further information can be found on the [frequently asked questions](#) section on the M.E.N. Arena's website.