

Instructions for using a Loop

(By Lou Touchette)

Whenever I install a loop in a venue where multiple people will be using it, I provide these instructions/suggestions:

1. Approximately 84% of hearing aids manufactured today have telecoils installed in them.
2. About 35% of seniors over the age of 60 have significant hearing loss. Once word gets out that you are able to accommodate these individuals, you should see an increase in attendance.
3. I suggest that you have a few meeting/training sessions to educate folks on how to use the “Loop” and let them know of the benefits it offers them.
4. Telecoil equipped hearing aids pick up sound from a magnetic field that is created within the “Loop”. The telecoil provides this signal to the computer function within the hearing aid. The computer then makes corrections to the sound based upon the particular programming/correction the hearing aid received during fitting. This pristine corrected sound is delivered to the ear canal.
5. Not all hearing professionals (audiologists, dispensers, etc) activate the telecoils when fitting patients with new hearing aids. You should remind people that they should check with their provider if they are unable to hear through the Loop during the demonstration.
6. Telecoils can be activated in several ways, depending upon the make and type of hearing aid. Some require pressing a button to find the telecoil program, others may have a toggle switch, some may have a remote control that will wirelessly turn on the telecoil. There may even be some folks who have the microphone and telecoil active at all times. Ideally, hearing aids should have two programs, **Telecoil** (“T”) only (outside sound is shut off) and **Microphone & Telecoil** (“M/T”) both on together so you can hear the loop AND sounds around you..
7. If folks do not wear hearing aids, or they do wear them but have no telecoil, they can use a loop receiver with headphones to hear. The loop receivers (see picture below) have telecoils in them.
8. I recommend that rather than the church/venue/etc being responsible for maintaining loop receivers, the users should buy their own. Sanitation issues are high on the list of reasons followed by accountability, batteries and possible damage to the equipment.
9. To have the ideal Loop experience, the PA System (acoustical speakers) volume should be at a equal balance with what individuals are hearing through the loop. Too

loud speaker volume tends to wash out the loop sound. Setting up the ideal balance is a matter of having someone with telecoil equipped hearing aids giving thumbs up or down as the sound is adjusted. When at the right balance, a thumbs up would indicate the volume is correct.

10. Another important issue is microphone placement. A lapel microphone should be worn high on the collar. If the speaker constantly looks left, the placement should be on the left side of the collar. Hand held microphones should be held steadily to maintain a placement of about two (2) inches away and two (2) inches below the mouth. People who lip read need to see the mouth.

11. I left loop brochures with you. These are great for explaining what the telecoil is and how the Loop works. I have more if you'd like them.

12. If hard of hearing attendees have additional questions about hearing loss and what different devices are available, encourage them to go to the **Adult Loss Of Hearing Association (ALOHA)** office at 4001 E. Fort Lowell Road for a personal demonstration and/or counseling. The office is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursdays. Call for an appointment to insure someone will be able to devote necessary time to helping them. The phone number is 795-9887.

13. During training it should be mentioned that some of the VERY SMALL (almost invisible) deep in the ear hearing might be too small to accommodate telecoils.

14. I left you loop placards. These should be placed at strategic locations so folks entering this room will know that a loop is installed and to switch on their telecoils.

