

SOUND SOLUTIONS CASE STUDY

ZURICH

PROBLEM:

Zurich Insurance Group (Zurich), a leading multi-line insurer, made a decision to build a new North America Headquarters. The group set out, and achieved, LEED Platinum® Certification – the highest rating available and awarded from the U.S. Green Building Council® (USGBC). But it was the forward thinking approach which made this project unique and positioned for success. The 783,800 square foot building, home to nearly 3,000 employees and contractors, was designed following the crowdsourcing of ideas from employees regarding workspace features.

One of those features was the incorporation of Lencore's sound masking solution throughout the facility. Says Dean Pipes, Chief Information Architect for Zurich "We knew from the beginning that to achieve a successful employee environment, based on our design concept, we needed to incorporate sound masking to make the space comfortable. Our advantage was the ability to mock-up every feature and test it prior to selection – this doesn't happen often with any build out." Zurich was able to leverage 25,000 square feet of mock up space to evaluate products and systems. Dean Pipes noted early on in the process that sound masking needed to be part of the IT package because of the size of the project and the technology forward approach they were taking to the whole building.

Furthermore, it was well stated by Andrew Chow, Netrix LLC, that the project was set-up to succeed by the management team, "This was a great project, as it started with a team that was willing to put the traditional or typical way of doing things to the side. The management team was on board from the beginning to evaluate new, innovative approaches to building out the space."



SOLUTION:

Zurich's unique situation allowed them to test many different systems and evaluate them against their criteria: comfort of the sound and the technology it delivered. "When you are designing with cutting edge technology, why would you settle for anything less than cutting edge technology? The initial deliverable, which is the sound, was critical to our selection process. But just as important was the technology and forward integration the system provided for the total build out of the space," stated Pipes.

Pipes further explained that although the selection was based on the sound masking, he also had the foresight of additional functionality throughout the system's capabilities. "Now that we are moved in, and everyone is thrilled with the space, I am beginning to see additional opportunities to add audio in different areas of the building. I also envision enabling the safety aspect of the system and although we haven't activated it as of yet, I have the technology plans in place and a robust enough system behind me for when we want to move it forward," stated Pipes.

OUTCOME:

Zurich installed Lencore's n.FORM™ system and leveraged the new Operating Platform (OP) Rack Mount units. n.FORM is designed as a mass notification system which also provides sound masking – which is why Zurich is able to leverage additional technology moving forward, such as incorporating audio, general and zoned paging, as well as mass notifications in audible and visual formats, and system redundancy. The Rack Mount OP's eliminate the need to hang operating platforms in the plenum and, rather, reside in the IT closet. These robust units cover approximately 22,000 square feet each and make set-up and maintenance easier from a single location.



"Zurich is thrilled with the implementation and output of the Lencore system. The simple user interface and robust platform that allows us to be technology forward stands in line with the expectations of this cutting edge facility," finished Pipes.