



SOUND MASKING IN CORPORATE ENVIRONMENTS

CASE STUDY — Simpson Gumpertz & Heger



Simpson Gumpertz & Heger Headquarters, Waltham, MA

Space: A 24,000 sq ft expansion with open office space in a converted manufacturing warehouse.

Challenge: A new expansion with 17' to 24' ceiling heights, exposed beams and supports, exposed concrete and a requirement to integrate with the existing paging system.

Solution: A Qt Quiet Technology™ sound masking system covering the open cubicle spaces and communal areas with integration with the firm's paging system.

Result: An environment with seamless sound masking between each expansion and aesthetically pleasing design elements.

Challenge

A Growing business with a growing need for sound masking

Simpson, Gumpertz & Heger (SGH) is a national engineering firm that designs, investigates, and rehabilitates structures and building enclosures with clients in the academic, scientific, municipal, utility and corporate environments. In 2005 and again in 2007, SGH installed Qt Quiet Technology sound masking solutions developed by Cambridge Sound Management (CSM) to increase privacy and worker performance in their converted manufacturing warehouse.

In 2011, the engineering firm needed to expand its headquarters a third time. As with its previously inhabited sections, the new addition features 17' to 24' open ceilings with exposed steel beams and duct work. Harking back to its original function, the repurposed manufacturing warehouse features exposed structural supports, concrete

floors, and large windows. While noise in the space is slightly dampened by the large 10' by 12' cubicles and the tall (80") partitions, the facility managers needed to include sound masking due to the hard reflective surfaces in the space.

Additionally, the firm needed to ensure a collaborative environment for their design teams, while preserving privacy and keeping acoustic distractions to a minimum. In this large facility, the firm relies on a separate paging system to alert team members of guest arrivals and to provide instructions to evacuate in case of emergency.

Solution

Seamless system expansion

For the latest expansion, CSM recommended that Simpson Gumpertz and Heger have a Qt 600 installed into the space. To match the interior of the space and blend with the



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exposed beams the emitters and mounts were custom painted. Nearly 150 emitters were installed to cover the expansion. The space was separated into four zones due to varying ceiling heights. Additionally, the Qt 600 was connected to the firm's preexisting paging system, using the contact closure. In the event of an emergency page, the Qt 600 will mute the sound masking in the space.

Results

An aesthetically pleasing, comfortable work environment

The sound masking between the original office and the two expansion areas feature seamless masking sound due to the sound masking frequency and the patented Qt Emitters. These four channel "Smart" emitters provide unobtrusive uniform sound masking coverage. SGH employees cannot detect a difference between the sound masking expansions throughout the office. The employees have reported that when the system is switched off, the noise level is jarring and uncomfortable to work in. Michael Roche, Facilities Manager, describes the system as invaluable for their office, stating, "We can't work without it."



The SGH open office area features areas with 24' ceilings and exposed steel beams (above). The Qt Quiet Technology sound masking system inconspicuously is installed on the exposed beams (below).

