



cambridge[™]
SOUND MANAGEMENT

What Makes a Sound Masking System Sound Good?

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What Makes a Sound Masking System Sound Good?

Sound masking systems were invented to improve privacy in office environments. They do this by raising the ambient noise level to cover up conversations in adjacent workspaces.

There is no magic to this. Any continuous loud noise will mask conversations. The trick is to use a masking sound that is both effective and unobtrusive. A masking sound should be pleasant and easily ignored – it should not be in your face.

Over the last three decades, our engineers have determined the characteristics of sound required to effectively mask and to sound good – and we have developed sound masking systems that create those sounds.

To sound good, a sound masking system must:

1. Have no perceptible local variations in level. The background sound should not change when you move your head a foot or two.
2. Have minimal variations in loudness when listener walks through the space.
3. Sound like moving air. The more sound masking sounds like air conditioning, the easier it is to ignore because everyone knows what air conditioning sounds like.
4. Have an appropriate spectrum (balance of frequencies).

When we achieve these goals, we get a sound masking system that is effective in reducing the annoyances of adjacent conversations at the lowest possible perceived loudness and that is not in itself annoying.

