



# SOUND MASKING IN CORPORATE ENVIRONMENTS

## CASE STUDY — Marvin Keller Trucking, Inc.



Marvin Keller Trucking, Inc.'s headquarters

**Space:** A single-story headquarters spanning over 7,000 square-feet with twelve-foot ceilings, eight-foot tall wooden walls, and large glass windows

**Challenge:** A work space covered in sound reflective materials that amplified work place distractions

**Solution:** A Qt 200™ sound masking system covering both the open office workstations and private offices

**Result:** An aesthetically pleasing, productive environment for employees, with fewer distractions

## Challenge

### Creating a space that is reflective of the company, not noise

In 2006, Marvin Keller opened its single-story 7,100 square foot headquarters in Sullivan, Illinois. The headquarters contains a number of departmental areas, including its operations center. The operations center is comprised of 1,800 square feet of open office workstations and five private offices. The area features twelve-foot ceilings with eight-foot tall wooden walls dividing the private offices from the open office workstations. These internal walls also include large glass windows to allow for external light to reach the open offices. The external walls of the space are made of highly sound reflective steel and some of the space's flooring is travertine tile. The operations center

houses twenty Marvin Keller employees, who are on the phones most of the day assisting their truckers.

With much of the space covered in sound reflective materials, conversations and noise were easily spread throughout the space, causing severe distractions for the workers in the open office workstations. Since the walls in the private offices are only eight-feet tall, there is a four-foot gap between the office wall and the ceiling, allowing for sound to easily carry from the private offices to adjoining spaces. The operations center set up not only created an environment full of distractions, it also created several speech privacy issues. "We lacked privacy in the private offices," said Joe Keller, CEO of Marvin Keller, and "employees were experiencing many distractions



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due to the open nature of the operations environment as well as the fact our building is a commercial steel building.”

### Solution

Working with CSM distributor Thompson Electronics Company, Marvin Keller decided that a Qt Quiet Technology sound masking system should be installed to address the space’s acoustic challenges. A Qt 200 sound masking system was chosen to provide separate audio levels for the open office workstations and private offices. “The installation went extremely well,” said Keller. “Installation was completed quickly with no impact to the space. We were very pleased with the professionalism of the Thompson Electronics installers.”

### Result

#### Employees are now more focused and productive

“We couldn’t be happier with the results of the sound masking system,” said Tim Marshall, Director of Finance and Administration at Marvin Keller. “In fact, the installation went unnoticed in the space until we turned it off briefly to see if people would detect a change.” Immediately the employees noticed that their speech was echoing throughout the space, creating distractions and speech privacy issues. “It was an effective investment. In addition, the Qt system is easy to use with very straightforward operation. It also helped



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Director of Finance and Administration



The private offices feature 8-foot tall walls



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all our employees become more focused, which improved productivity immediately,” added Keller, “helping us to meet the main company objective of ensuring employee satisfaction and productivity.”

### **About Marvin Keller Trucking, Inc.**

Marvin Keller Trucking is a family owned transportation company located in Central Illinois with over 100 drivers. The company focuses on time-sensitive regional (truckload) freight, including food grade commodities, consumer products, and non-bulk hazardous materials. Describing the company’s mission, Joe Keller, CEO says, “The company’s most important strategy is to invest in its people, who create a competitive advantage, and that everyone benefits from the creativity, varied perspective, innovation, and energy that comes from a diverse work force.”

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**Joe Keller**  
CEO