

CASE STUDY:

Sound Masking at a Busy Insurance Agency



Warren G. Bender Co.

Challenge

Reducing Distractions and Protecting Speech Privacy at a Busy Insurance Agency

The Warren G. Bender Co. is one of the largest independently owned insurance brokerages in the Sacramento, California area, providing a variety of insurance solutions to both commercial and individual clients. They pride themselves on providing excellent customer service, so ensuring their employees can assist customers and concentrate on projects with minimal interruptions is imperative.

Each month, the company holds education and training sessions for their clients as part of their ongoing "Bender U" seminars. These events are typically held in one of the company's conference rooms. During scheduled breaks, attendees would leave the conference rooms and speak to each other in hallways and corridors. These discussions would sometimes distract employees, resulting in increased noise complaints to management. This was not the only office noise issue Warren G. Bender Co. was experiencing. Private office and conference room walls were thin, resulting in conversational spillover into adjacent offices and the open office area.

Vice President of Finance Michele Sweet and Vice President of Operations Maggie Bender-Johnson began looking for a solution to the problem. Construction options were researched but were cost-prohibitive. The Warren G. Bender Co.'s IT firm suggested there might be a technical solution to the problem. They had sound masking from Cambridge Sound Management installed in their office and suggested Sweet and Bender-Johnson visit the office and experience it. Sound masking is the process of adding a low level, unobtrusive background sound to an environment to cover up excess speech noise, making the affected environment more comfortable, private, and free of excess noise distractions. Impressed with the system, they decided to purchase it. Their furniture supplier, United Corporate Furnishings, was also familiar with the technology and connected them with area integrator Precision West Technologies who installed QtPro from Cambridge Sound Management throughout the space.

“ Sound masking helps make our office feel more quiet and comfortable. Speech noise from across the office is much less distracting, making it much easier for everyone to concentrate. It's become an essential part of our office ”

Michele Sweet
Vice President of Finance
Warren G. Bender Co.

Solution

QtPro® Sound Masking System

Precision West installed small, barely visible Qt® Emitters (loudspeakers) in the drop ceiling throughout the open office, private office, and conference room space. The emitters were connected by cables to a Qt® 300 control module residing in the server room. The system allowed for different masking volume levels across different zones, allowing the Warren G. Bender Co. to address noise distractions more aggressively in the open office areas. Automatic ramping was also programmed into the system, allowing the masking noise to be slightly louder at times when the office is at its busiest.

Result

A More Pleasant Work Environment

When employees returned to the office after the sound masking was installed they were pleasantly surprised to hear the masking noise and a noticeable decrease in distractions. After a few days, the masking sound itself wasn't noticed by the employees, but the benefits of reduced distractions continued to pay dividends for employee concentration, productivity, and well-being. "Sound masking helps make our office feel more quiet and comfortable," says Sweet. "Speech noise from across the office is much less distracting, making it much easier for everyone to concentrate. It's become an essential part of our office." The Warren G. Bender Co. has since added QtPro to two additional office expansions.

About Warren G. Bender Co.

Warren G. Bender Co. is one of the largest independently owned insurance brokerages in the Sacramento area and are proud to provide innovative solutions to clients in the Western States. Their market position enhances their influence and strategies on behalf of their clients and customers, allowing them to concentrate their time and energy on running successful businesses and leading more fulfilling lives. The company was founded in 1938 by Warren G. Bender. Its long life has always been keyed to remaining current, resourceful and willing to consider new ideas and strategies while carrying on the simple foundation of honesty and integrity.

About Precision West

Precision West is a leading full service technology company servicing Northern California and Northern Nevada. Founded in 1989, Precision West is proud of its unblemished history in the technology industry. They are locally owned and operated in Loomis, CA and play an active role in the local Chamber of Commerce as well as several other non-profit organizations designed to better the community in which they live and work.

About Cambridge Sound Management, Inc.

The world leader in commercial sound masking, Cambridge Sound Management, Inc. manufactures QtPro and DynasoundPro sound masking systems to help organizations protect speech privacy, reduce noise distractions, and fuel workplace productivity in their work places. Its next-generation sound masking systems work by emitting a uniform, barely perceptible background sound at the frequencies of human speech. The systems also include office paging and background music capabilities to help facilities meet all of their masking and audio needs with one affordable system. Cost effective and easy to install, Cambridge Sound Management's systems are deployed in over 20,000 organizations' spaces throughout the world including commercial businesses, healthcare facilities, financial services, government agencies, and educational institutions. For more information about Cambridge Sound Management, visit www.cambridgesound.com.



Case Study Overview

SPACE

Approximately 15,000 square feet of open office, conference room, and private office space.

CHALLENGE

Reducing distractions and protecting speech privacy in a busy office environment.

SOLUTION

Qt® 300 Sound Masking System



RESULT

A more comfortable and private workplace.