

CASE STUDY:

Reducing Distractions and Protecting Speech Privacy at a Global Marketing Staffing Agency



Challenge

Reducing Distractions and Protecting Speech Privacy while Maintaining an Architectural Vision

When Aquent, a Boston-based global marketing and creative staffing firm, began building out a new office for their headquarters space, they wanted something completely different from their existing setup. Their previous space was spread across four floors; each with their own conference rooms and restrooms; resulting in employees in different departments to not have functional space to collaborate with ease. The new office would cover 12,000 square feet of office space across one floor of an existing downtown building. It would not have assigned seats, rather, everyone would have a place to store their personal belongings and choose where they wanted to sit throughout the day. All workspaces would be open with no cubicle partitions or private offices, allowing in more natural light. Desks could become standing desks with the touch of a button. Different rooms would have unique aesthetic themes – for example “The Library” would be a designated quiet room and designed to look and feel like an actual library.

With such a bold vision came privacy and noise concerns. A completely open office space with no cubicle partitions or walls to block sound would mean compromised speech privacy and increased noise distractions. How could Aquent retain their unique collaborative vision but also create an acoustically comfortable environment?

The architectural firm on the project, Huntsman Architectural Group, recommended that sound masking be added to the space to ensure it was acoustically comfortable. Sound masking is the process of adding an unobtrusive background noise to an environment to cover up excess speech noise through speakers installed in the ceiling. Cambridge Sound Management’s QtPro™ sound masking system was chosen due to its superior uniformity of coverage and the fact that its small, sleek Qt® Emitters would complement Aquent’s open ceiling design concept.

“We’re extremely proud of our new headquarters, and sound masking is a big part of making sure the space feels private and comfortable. We’re very satisfied with our experience with Cambridge Sound Management.”

Allen Fletcher
Global Headquarters Operations
Team Manager
Aquent

Solution

Qt® 600 Sound Masking System

Certified masking experts from Cambridge Sound Management's integration partner Connectivity Point installed the barely visible Qt® Emitters (loudspeakers) throughout the space's open ceiling. The emitters were connected by cables to an intuitive Qt® 600 control module rack mounted in the server room.



Result

A Functional, Comfortable, and Beautiful Work Environment

Aquent's new office is everything they hoped it would be, excelling in both form and function. "You can still hear the people right next you, which is great because that facilitates the collaborative effect we were going for in the first place," says Allen Fletcher, Global Headquarters Operations Team Manager. "But conversations over 15 feet away tend to fade into the background, making them less distracting and easier for employees to focus on individual tasks." The masking even helps cover up the sound of music playing at a retail store operating beneath the office. Aquent is currently installing sound masking in their Los Angeles office, and sound masking will be part of future satellite office renovations. "We're extremely proud of our new headquarters, and sound masking is a big part of making sure the space feels private and comfortable," says Fletcher. "We're very satisfied with our experience with Cambridge Sound Management."



About Aquent

Aquent offers a broad range of staffing services to help global companies add technical expertise to their marketing and creative departments, increase the bandwidth of their in-house teams, and achieve higher quality creative work. To learn more about Aquent's full range of services please visit aquent.com.

About Connectivity Point

Connectivity Point specializes in integrated technology solutions for voice, data, video and security applications. They have specific expertise in structured cabling and wireless connectivity, security systems, audio visual equipment, VOIP telephone systems and soundmasking solutions. Connectivity Point services the New England area with their own technicians, and nationally and globally through a network of pre-qualified partners, enabling Connectivity Point to be their clients' One Point of contact.

About Cambridge Sound Management, Inc.

Cambridge Sound Management, the world's largest provider of sound masking solutions, manufactures QtPro and DynasoundPro sound masking systems to help organizations across multiple industries protect speech privacy, reduce noise distractions, and increase workplace productivity. Cambridge Sound Management's proprietary sound masking technology works by emitting a uniform, barely perceptible background sound at the frequencies of human speech. Cost effective and easy to install, their sound masking, office paging, and background music systems are deployed in hundreds of millions of square feet of space throughout the world including commercial organizations, healthcare facilities, financial services, government agencies, and educational institutions.

Case Study Overview

SPACE

12,000 square feet of open office space.

CHALLENGE

Sound transmission issues in the new space would lead to increased noise distractions and decreased speech privacy.

SOLUTION

Qt® 600 Sound Masking System



RESULT

An efficient and collaborative work space that stayed true to Aquent's modern open office vision.