Building Contractors
Make Sound Masking a Part of New Buildings,
Create Productive Work Environments and
Increase Profits

By
Cencore Acoustics Corp.

All across America, new buildings are being constructed to accommodate the greatest business expansion in years. Banks, computer companies, telecommunications companies and insurance companies, to name just a few, are expanding not just in populated cities, but in industrial parks and in suburbs as well.

One company that has been in the forefront of new construction is the North Carolina-based Shelco Inc. Shelco recently constructed more than 2 million square feet of space for First Union National Bank and 400,000 square feet of space for Nation’s Bank. The man in charge of it all is Darrel Shipman, a
highly regarded and seasoned construction manager.

Shipman noted that “many companies are constructing open area office plan concepts for their employees. These open area plan concepts have significantly reduced construction costs; but without a means of controlling workplace noise, productivity, efficiency and morale plummet.”

Shipman could not be more correct. In fact, according to industry surveys, 73 percent of all workers claim that distracting noises in the workplace are the major causes of reduced productivity.

“To make those open office areas into productive work environments, we have been working with a proven and cost-effective technology that dramatically alters the workplace. The technology is Lencore Acoustics’ sound masking system. Sound masking guarantees privacy, increases worker morale and helps to create a work environment that is conducive to increased productivity and profitability, while reducing building costs.”

Sound masking costs approximately $1 per square foot. It is maintenance free and comes with a five-year warranty.
The system is used in 75 million square feet of office space in the United States.

Open Environment

One company that has used sound masking to its full advantage is Knight-Ridder Information, Inc. It had implemented a plan to move its employees out of enclosed office spaces and placed them instead in an open work environment.

Paul De Groot of Knight-Ridder explained, “The new atmosphere increased productivity and simultaneously cut our space requirement by a third. Our success story could not have been written without the use of sound masking. Sound masking was, by far, the most important aspect of the successful implementation of our projects.

“Our open-space office plan really works. It breaks down barriers and opens the lines of communication for greater efficiency and productivity. Already achieving one of the highest sales per employee ratios in the Silicon Valley, the company achieved a 20 percent increase in productivity. We are proud that our decision to use a custom engineered sound masking system contributed to these positive increases.”

Jack Leonard, president of Lencore Acoustics Corp., stated
that “studies have confirmed and many acoustical engineers have agreed that uncontrolled and distracting noises are the primary causes of reduced productivity and low worker morale.

“Sound masking is, undoubtedly, a highly effective remedy for controlling intrusive sounds. It not only dramatically increases productivity and worker morale, but it also serves to maintain essential privacy so that proprietary information remains valuable and private.

“Sound masking introduces non-intrusive ambient background sound into the work environment while rendering speech unintelligible,” Leonard explained. “Workers find that they can concentrate easily, work efficiently and feel confident that privacy is maintained.”

Acoustical Benefits

Sound masking became a particularly important means of controlling unwanted and distracting noises after companies moved to open office environments, ones where there are walls and little privacy. Sound masking not only gives each worker privacy so that their conversations are not overheard by others, but it also permits them to work in an environment where their concentration is not repeatedly interrupted.

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As a result of effective sound masking, productivity and worker morale significantly increase, adding to corporate profitability. In addition, the added privacy ensured by sound masking means that proprietary information remains private. Sound masking is even used to help companies protect themselves from surreptitious listening devices used in industrial espionage.

Obviously, sound masking is a marketable product for construction companies and also provides major benefits for tenants. Lencore’s sound masking is a unique masking system that can accommodate paging and music; it provides a digitally generated, non-directional unobtrusive sound spectrum, creating a workplace environment for increased concentration, efficiency and productivity.

About the Author
Lencore Acoustics Corp. is located in Merrick, N.Y., and operates a manufacturing facility in Norfolk, N.Y.

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