



SOUND MASKING IN CORPORATE ENVIRONMENTS

CASE STUDY — MassChallenge, Inc.



Team working in one of the MassChallenge conference rooms

Space: 24,000 square feet of open office space, housing an average of 275 employees, with 12 ft. exposed ceilings

Challenge: A new headquarters and business accelerator with open unfinished areas that had inherent acoustical challenges

Solution: Qt 600™ sound masking system covering open cubicle spaces, corridors, lounges and conference rooms

Result: An aesthetically unique and collaborative environment for employees; free from distractions

Challenge

A unique space for a unique organization

MassChallenge, Inc. is an independent non-profit whose mission is to support and strengthen early stage entrepreneurs by connecting them with the resources they need to immediately launch and succeed. MassChallenge is the largest startup accelerator in the world with 125 early stage companies sharing space in Fan Pier Boston with open office environments, semi-private conference rooms, lounges and event space.

MassChallenge and their finalists occupy an entire floor at Fan Pier Boston. Their space features numerous acoustic challenges including a poured concrete floor, open twelve-foot ceilings with exposed beams and duct work and large floor to ceiling windows. These highly reflective surfaces create a challenge to the companies that need an open, collaborative environment for their employees, but also require a private environment with minimal distraction to be most productive. Initially, the team

from MassChallenge installed partitions between each workstation in the open office areas. This unfortunately did not solve the noise and distraction issues.

Solution

Cambridge Sound Management's Quiet Technology: a better acoustic environment

Sound masking from Cambridge Sound Management (CSM) was recommended to the team at MassChallenge to solve their acoustic distraction challenges. A Qt 600 control module was installed into the space along with 270 Qt Emitters. The space was separated into six zones based on the four open office areas, lounges, conference rooms and event space. Additionally, MassChallenge staff have been trained on the use of the system monitoring and control software included with their new system. The installation process took place during business hours with minimal disruption to the companies and the space.



MassChallenge, Inc.

Result

Unobtrusive is an understatement

“By adding the Qt Quiet Technology sound masking system we were able to create what is arguably the most collaborative and efficient work space ever” says Dave Miller, MassChallenge Startup Concierge. Since the addition of the Qt Quiet Technology system, the MassChallenge team has been able to remove nearly 50% of the cubicle partitions within the open office areas. The resulting environment fosters collaboration efforts within each startup as well as cross collaboration between startups.

The reaction to the addition of the Qt Quiet Technology system has been overwhelmingly positive. The workers in the space have reported that they are much happier now that they are not distracted by the conversations and miscellaneous noises throughout the open space. Additionally, the startups have reported feeling more private when they use the conference rooms or are in the lounges with clients. Early stage entrepreneurs are more effective with the increase in privacy.



The Accelerator workstations (above) feature bench style seating and are open with the rest of the space. The lounge (below) gives the entrepreneurs a space to meet with clients and share ideas.



A team of entrepreneurs meet to discuss ideas just outside of the open office area.

“ Last year was a mess! We were in cubes and it was difficult to collaborate together. It’s much better now, there are forty people sitting near each other and we can’t really hear one another; it’s much more pleasant. ”

Ben Jabbawy
 Founder, Privy