

# CASE STUDY:

Ensuring a Private and Comfortable Acoustical Environment for Bank Employees and Their Customers



## Gate City Bank

### Challenge

#### Ensuring Good Acoustics at Both Headquarters and the Branches

North Dakota and West Central Minnesota-based Gate City Bank prides itself on delivering a warm and welcoming environment for customers of its 36 offices and a comfortable, private, and productive environment for its nearly 600 employees. Gate City Bank's team knew they wanted a bright, open, and airy environment for their headquarters renovation, but that this space would need to be acoustically comfortable since there would be a mix of employees collaborating and working on individual tasks as well as an on-site call center with employees fielding customer calls.

Gate City Bank looked to sound masking, along with other sound abatement measures such as absorptive ceiling baffles and carpeting, to help mitigate office noise issues. Sound masking is the process of adding a low-level, unobtrusive background sound to an environment through speakers installed in the ceiling. The introduced masking noise, specifically tuned to the frequency and amplitude of human speech, covers up or "masks" excess speech noise, making the affected environment more comfortable, private and free of excess noise distractions.

Gate City Bank enlisted the services of Toshiba Business Solutions for sound masking solution selection, procurement, and installation. Pierre Lamoureux from Toshiba recommended QtPro sound masking from Cambridge Sound Management, the world's largest provider of sound masking solutions. QtPro was chosen because of its superior sound masking uniformity, small yet powerful emitters, zoning capabilities, and energy efficiency.

“ Sound masking from Cambridge Sound Management has helped us ensure that every customer and employee has a sense of privacy and comfort. We're very pleased with the results. ”

Jay Krabbenhoft  
Senior Vice President  
and Office Services Manager  
Gate City Bank

# Solution

## QtPro® Sound Masking System

Lamoureux worked in concert with Gate City Bank's architect Wild | CRG to develop a system design that would be effective and would mesh perfectly with the Bank's architectural vision for the space. Different zones were designated for the open office, private office, call center, lobby, and corridor areas. Small, barely visible emitters (loudspeakers) were installed in the ceiling tiles throughout the private and open-office space. The emitters were connected by cables above the ceiling tiles to a Qt® 600 control module residing in the office's server room. An added benefit of the system is that it doesn't have to run on Gate City Bank's network, alleviating any security concerns.

# Result

## A Private, Comfortable Environment for Both Employees and Customers

Gate City Bank's new headquarters is everything they hoped it would be, excelling in both form and function. Employees can focus on individual tasks as conversations over 15 feet away fade into the background ambience of the space. Employees having phone conversations or meetings can speak more freely with less concern that their conversations are being overheard by the entire office.

The team determined that offices could benefit from sound masking as well. Each of Gate City Bank's 36 office locations provides a warm, welcoming atmosphere with lots of natural light and clear sightlines. However, this means there are fewer partitions and walls to block sound transmission. To ensure that customers feel comfortable speaking to bank personnel without fear of being overheard, Gate City Bank has added sound masking to almost all of its offices and renovations, and Lamoureux, Wild | CRG, and Gate City Bank continue to work together to ensure that acoustics are an important component of each location's architectural design. "Building acoustics are important," says Jay Krabbenhoft, Senior Vice President and Office Services Manager for Gate City Bank. "Sound masking from Cambridge Sound Management has helped us ensure that every customer and employee has a sense of privacy and comfort. We're very pleased with the results."



## Case Study Overview

### SPACE

Tens of thousands of square feet of open office, private office, and retail bank space.

### CHALLENGE

Creating an acoustically comfortable space for bank employees and clients

### SOLUTION

QtPro® Sound Masking System



### RESULT

A private, comfortable environment for both employees and customers

## About Gate City Bank

A \$2.1 billion mutual community bank, Gate City Bank has been providing banking services to its customers since 1923. Gate City Bank has 36 convenient banking offices across North Dakota and west central Minnesota and employs 590 people. In addition to being the number one mortgage lender in North Dakota with locally approved, financed, and serviced home loans, Gate City Bank was named one of the "50 Best Places to Work" in 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 by Prairie Business. Additional information is available at [gatecitybank.com](http://gatecitybank.com).

## About Wild | CRG

A few years ago, two like-minded companies decided there had to be a smarter way to design and build—one that was more client focused, with less room for error. After operating successful individual companies, Wild & Associates Architects and Construction Resources Group joined together to form wild | crg, a design-build contractor in North Dakota.

## About Toshiba Business Solutions

Toshiba Business Solutions is part of Toshiba America Business Solutions, Inc., both are subsidiaries of Toshiba TEC Corporation, a global leader in office printing and retail solutions. Toshiba Business Solutions sells multifunction printers, barcode printers, managed document services and digital signage to businesses of all sizes in both the United States and Latin America.

## About Cambridge Sound Management

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.

