

SAKO Enhances Audio-Video Communications for Law Firm

Challenge. The proliferation of media types and sources has increased the importance of proper audio-visual systems in law offices, such as at the headquarters of Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP (KMR), a leading law firm in Chicago.

When KMR first retained Sako & Associates (SAKO) to plan, develop, design and implement audio-visual systems, the firm was looking for innovative training and conference facilities for both its staff and clients. SAKO's work entailed developing audio-visual and television systems for a mock courtroom facility, including a meeting/conference facility.

Four years later, KMR was ready for a major remodeling of its facilities to improve audio-visual capabilities. KMR once again looked to SAKO for assistance.

Solution. The remodeling project included a dining room, an executive boardroom, two client presentation rooms, four conference rooms, three computer training rooms, a contract closing suite, a videoconference theater and a videoconference room. SAKO provided full planning, design development, contract document, bidding and construction monitoring services.

Different rooms have different mixes of audio-visual systems based on size, configuration, function and participant type.

The dining room, for example, is the single largest meeting area in the facility and a popular place for conducting partner meetings, presentations to large audiences and videoconferences. SAKO designed audio-visual systems that accounted for the room's movable seating and table sections, which allow various seating configurations, ranging from the traditional dining to theater and classroom styles.

The boardroom is the most formal space within the facility and provides seating for about 20. To enable proper presentation viewing from all seats at the circular board table, SAKO installed three projection screens. Eight voice-activated, ceiling-mounted cameras are positioned throughout the room to present a forward view of all participants during a videoconference. When a person speaks, tabletop microphones pick up conversation and the camera covering that section of the room automatically becomes the send source in the videoconference.

In general, SAKO's audio-visual plan for these rooms, plus the general conference rooms, accommodates prerecorded videotape and digital disc media, computer-generated graphic images and programs, live camera images, received videoconference signals and other displays. A primary motorized front projection screen provides for display of video. A playback videotape machine, DVD/CD player and computer interface device are housed within a wall millwork element.

A separate voice audio system enables full duplex telephone audioconferencing capabilities. The system incorporates audio mixer preamplifier processors, an equalizer, a power amplifier, a telephone interface, low-profile table microphones with push-button mute activation and ceiling speakers. These same microphones and speakers can be used for videoconferencing sessions.

Combination speech reinforcement program/reproduction audio systems for select rooms, such as the divisible conference rooms, amplify the voices of presenters speaking from the lectern or front presenter's table. Recessed ceiling loudspeakers provide uniform, intelligible sound throughout each room.

Result. Perhaps SAKO's stated philosophy behind the design of KMR's remote control system speaks most succinctly about how SAKO approached the entire project. The remote control system allows people to control audio-visual equipment operational functions, as well as environmental room features, such as air conditioning and window blinds. The system was intended to strike a delicate balance between simplicity and versatility. If a system is too operationally simple, it may be too restrictive. If a system is too versatile, it runs the risk of being too confusing to the presenter or casual user.

SAKO's resulting audio-visual system brought practical ease together with flexible functionality to enable KMR to meet and grow with the technological demands of conducting business.



- **Media Technology**
- **Construction Management**



sakoinc.com

