

Special Series: Acoustic Solutions for the Workplace

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Acoustic Correction Inspired by Nature

CPM One Source has partnered with Snowsound, a Santa Fe Springs acoustics distribution company. CPM has installed Snowsound's 100% sound absorbing surface products in our CPM Studio at The CalEdison Building located at One Bunker Hill in Downtown Los Angeles. All Snowsound products leverage the exclusive patented Snowsound technology, based on sound absorbing material with variable densities, which enables selective absorption at various frequencies for optimal room acoustics. The Lab's newest project, currently in the final stages of development, is Snowsound-Fiber: a patented textile fiber with acoustic sound absorbing properties. If you want to learn more go to snowsoundusa.com.

Part I: Workplace Acoustics – is there a Doctor in the house?

The furniture industry began with the expectation that companies were to supply great products for their customers. Eventually, expectations grew and the word “products” was replaced by “solutions” and a slew of other buzzwords meant to convey dealers’ identity shift away from “traditional furniture suppliers.”

In fact, today’s most successful dealers have expanded beyond solutions providers. They’ve almost become doctors, tasked with prescribing the correct mix of elements to create an environment conducive to productivity, focus, collaboration, and comfort. And while dealers today are faced with addressing many client pain points, workplace acoustics seems to be the concern keeping everyone up at night.



SnowSound at the CPM Studio

The ability to control sound is the elephant in the room, and it’s attributable in large part to the current commercial interior design trends: open floor plans, lower workstation panels, industrial chic, more glass, concrete, and exposed everything. These trends result in more reflective surfaces with less soft material to absorb the sound. Higher personnel density per square foot also creates more noise in the same footprint compared to years past.

“ These trends may explain why recent studies have found that we waste 86 minutes per day because of sound distractions. And that 31% of workplace personnel declare having to leave the office to complete their work in a quieter place.

Without dividers between employees, interruptions happen about every 11 minutes, and it takes 25 minutes to regain maximum focus on the interrupted task.



Last year, a national survey conducted jointly by ESI Ergonomic Solutions and OnePoll, a leading online market research firm, exposed millennial's top concerns about the workspace. Approximately 2000 millennial workers weighed in on the top three elements of their workspace that are most important to their productivity and well-being.

“ While 26% cited “Ability to Control Noise Level” as *the number one element* that most affects work productivity, 25% cited “Ability to Control Noise Level” as *the number one element* that most affects personal wellness.

The increased effort required to focus has side effects, namely longer hours to finish the job and end-of-day fatigue – both on the rise in today's workplaces.



This acoustic epidemic is not exclusively a corporate workplace challenge, but the malady is spreading across all vertical markets including hospitality, education and healthcare.

- Restaurant noise is at an all-time high especially with the new design of high ceilings and open floor plans. In these restaurants, servers communicating with other staff and patrons must speak above the noise levels to be heard, a taxing physical and mental burden – especially during multi-hour shifts and peak times.
- Uncontrolled noise in modern hospital environments is affecting patients from an internal health and wellness perspective; symptoms being high blood pressure and increased anxiety. The lack of absorptive materials in healthcare settings disturbs patients.



It is worth noting that sound *is* important; it's a natural part of our senses and we want sound to exist. But when sound is not controlled it turns into noise, and it's the noise we'd like to prevent. The good news is there are quality acoustic solutions on the market that both perform well and are on-trend with today's modern commercial interiors.

“***If your workspace needs an “Acoustic Correction”, call or email CPM to arrange a consultation with Snowsound at our Studio to discuss what would be the “right prescription” for your workspace and learn more about creating a “sound friendly” solution through properly addressing the acoustics in your space.***



