



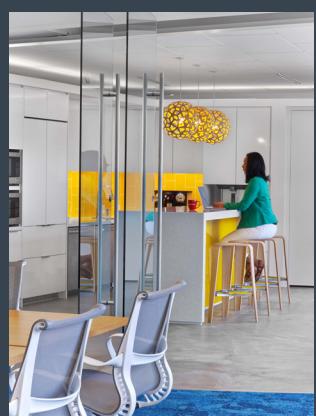
WELL-DESIGNED SPACES

In today's competitive market, it's imperative to understand your occupants' needs and how the built environment impacts their physical and mental well-being.

**SOUND.
THAT WORKS.™**

Price and location don't always top clients' list of criteria. They're looking for quality environments that will enhance their business performance. After all, the cost of real estate is far surpassed by salaries and benefits, and a poor environment can lead to lower productivity, a dissatisfied workforce and higher turnover.

Building owners and managers are now expected to assist tenants in creating healthy, sustainable workplaces that help occupants effectively perform their activities. Pursuing certification for those qualities under standards such as WELL™ and LEED® can also strengthen the relationship between the two parties, and result in savings from increased building value, higher lease rates and decreased utility costs.



Acoustics are a key consideration. In fact, poor acoustics continue to be a leading cause of workplace dissatisfaction and the most significant factor affecting employee performance. Many facilities feature open-concept floor plans, which can accommodate more people and – when properly designed – enhance flexibility and collaboration. But open plans also have a significant impact on noise control and speech privacy.

While conversations can be brought behind closed doors, walls typically aren't enough to ensure speech privacy. Often, the budget isn't available to construct rooms with high sound attenuation and, in any case, even minor gaps or penetrations in their structure can provide clear paths for conversations to travel into adjoining spaces where they can be overheard.

Effective acoustics are a marketable quality that can help attract and retain clients, and build a positive reputation for the facility.

The Task

Founded in 1975, the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) is the oldest, largest and only multi-disciplinary professional organization for interior designers and interior design students, as well as the manufacturers and suppliers who support the profession.

When the organization planned to move to new corporate headquarters in downtown Washington, DC, they were determined to create a space that reflects their strongly-held belief in the power of design to positively impact people's lives.

Their goal was to create a living laboratory for the "Workplace of the Future." They wanted the space to serve as a model for innovative workplace design, with a focus on collaboration, flexibility, sustainability, and occupant well-being.

Additionally, ASID decided to pursue WELL™ and LEED® certification as part of their 10-year lease arrangement with the building's owner, Carr Properties, and with the help of Perkins+Will, and Savills Studley. ASID covered many of the upgrade costs, knowing it would pay off in terms of energy savings, employee productivity and retention.

One of the WELL standard's key criterion involves implementation of an acoustical strategy that reduces exterior noise intrusion and controls indoor noise levels. To achieve a soothing, distraction-free environment in their 8,500 ft² (709 m²) space, ASID used barriers, absorption and LogiSon sound masking.



PROJECT TYPE CORPORATE OFFICE (WORKPLACE) **LOCATION** WASHINGTON, DC

SIZE 8,500 FT² **PROJECT TEAM** ARCHITECT/DESIGNER: PERKINS+WILL

PROJECT MANAGER: SAVILLS STUDLEY REAL ESTATE BROKER: SAVILLS STUDLEY

GENERAL CONTRACTOR: RAND* CONSTRUCTION MEP ENGINEER: GHT LIMITED

ACOUSTICAL CONSULTANTS: CERAMI SOUND MASKING CONTRACTOR:

ARCHOUSTICS LLC LIGHTING CONSULTANTS: BENYA BURNETT BIOPHILIA

CONSULTANTS: TERRAPIN BRIGHT GREEN COMMISSIONING AGENT: BIOS

The LogiSon Acoustic Network has played a role in several WELL firsts. For example, it's used:

- In the International WELL Building Institute's New York, NY headquarters
- Throughout the 23rd floor (25,826 ft²) of the 55-floor Toronto-Dominion Centre in Toronto, ON, which was the first project in the world to achieve certification under WELL Building Standard v1. It's also installed on many other floors within this facility—the first project in North America to certify its entire building to WELL Gold.
- In the American Society of Interior Designers' (ASID) Washington, DC headquarters (featured here), which was the first space in the world to achieve Platinum Level Certification for both WELL (under WELL v1) and LEED (under LEED ID+C)—the highest recognition awarded by the USGBC and IWBI.*

* WELL is designed to work harmoniously with LEED, and the Green Building Certification Institute (GBCI) is the third-party certifier for both standards. However, complying with WELL doesn't guarantee LEED credits or vice-versa.

The Results

The space became the first in the world to achieve Platinum Level Certification for both WELL (under WELL v1) and LEED (under LEED ID+C) – the highest recognition awarded by the USGBC and IWBI – and now serves as a showcase for design's impact on human experience.

Staff retention is well above historical standards and ASID has observed a direct and significant influence on employee productivity, efficiency and creativity. In order to gain a deeper understanding of the impact the new headquarters has on their employees and their work, the ASID Research team partnered with Cornell University, Delos and the Innovative Workplace Institute to conduct a pre- and post-occupancy study. The following is a brief summary of those findings:

- Collaborative work increased by 9%
- Physical health and mental health scores improved
- Absenteeism scores improved (less absenteeism) by 19%, which indicates employees are working 16% more than expected by their employer

- Productivity increased by 16%, yielding an estimated increase of \$694,000 financial impact to the Society's bottom line during the first year of occupancy (expected to yield a \$7M increase in financial impact during the total 10-year lease agreement, given a consistent improvement rate)
- Energy savings amount to \$7,636, 38.2 ton= of coal not burned, and 72.9 ton of CO₂ not= emitted, during first 15 months of occupancy
- Sound levels in the office reduced by 50% (10 dB difference)
- Sound levels in the call center reduced to a quarter of the sound levels measured in the customer service team space in the previous office (20 dB difference)
- Satisfaction with reduced noise and speech privacy increased significantly, with overall satisfaction in acoustical quality improving by 92%
- Employees' satisfaction with environmental variables such as noise reduction and speech privacy increased their sense of ownership and pride in their workplace (i.e., place attachment)



Many people believe that in order to achieve effective acoustics, they need to make their facility as silent as possible. However, if a facility's background sound level is too low, conversations can easily be heard from a distance and occupants are even disturbed by low level noises. These 'pin-drop' environments are often mistakenly described as "noisy."

To improve occupants' speech privacy and overall acoustical comfort, it's essential to ensure the space has an appropriate minimum background sound level. Sound masking is the only treatment that can effectively perform this function. The technology uses electronic components to generate a subtle, but effective background sound that's distributed via a network of loudspeakers. In other words, sound masking doesn't absorb, block or cancel noises, but rather interferes with our ability to hear them – much like it's difficult to understand someone talking to you from a distance when you're running a tap or fan.

After the LogiSon system was installed in ASID's new headquarters, the sound was professionally tuned using a unique TARGET application, ensuring the specified masking spectrum and levels were achieved within all treated areas. Because the behavior of sound within the built environment is exceedingly complex, this post-installation step is crucial to the performance of any sound masking system; if it isn't done, the masking sound—and, hence, speech privacy, noise control and acoustic comfort—will vary. Tuning makes sure all occupants consistently enjoy the system's benefits throughout the facility.