

Key to communication

With its growth, the Amana Buildings Contracting Company found itself with an acute need for a sophisticated corporate communications system, as **Richard Lawn** discovers



The Amana Building auditorium and lectern



The entrance to the new Amana Building



Amana reception area



Inter M security system



The auditorium stage

FOUNDED IN ABU DHABI IN

1993, the Amana Buildings Contracting Company has grown rapidly as a construction, design and engineering service for the agriculture, automotive, food processing, logistics, manufacturing, medical, oil and gas and retail industries. As a result, Amana Buildings operates 12 subsidiaries covering each Emirate of the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Egypt and Sri Lanka, and has a workforce of around 7,500 employees. In 2006, the company had completed over 1,500 buildings in the region and had established itself as the preferred subcontractor for international EPC contractors in the construction of facilities for their oil and gas business. As a result of its success and subsequent expansion, Amana's Dubai-based human resources and IT departments recently relocated to a new, purpose built facility in the Dubai Investment Park near Jebel Ali, calling in local integrator Aesthetix to keep them connected to the Gulf Tower Dubai main office, as well as all the other company offices, via an advanced conferencing and A/V installation.

Following its successful bid for the contract, Aesthetix nominated project manager CK Jaison to manage the day-to-day operations of the site, with assistance from the company's senior technicians and assigned the Creston programming duties to Balaguru. The installation called for a six-zone BGM system covering all four floors of the building using an Australian Monitor Amis solution. 'We decide which systems are to be installed in accordance with the client's budget, but we recommend Australian Monitor as it is simple to install, cost-effective and – most importantly perhaps – it is reliable,' says Mr Jaison.

At the heart of the system is an Amis Digipage multi-zone paging and source selection system providing paging and source routing. It has six programme inputs and one dedicated local mic/line input that can be routed to each of the six zone outputs. Three of these zones are on the building's ground floor (covering the front desk, cafeteria and lift) with one zone for each of the remaining three floors. This presently leaves two spare zones on the unit for future use. LED indicators for programme/local input selection, zone output level, paging enable/disable and network busy indicate the status of the unit at any time. Remote control panels have been installed in each zone, allowing source selection

and volume control at the touch of a button. A DPM8 microphone is provided in the control room for the facility supervisor to make announcements when necessary.

A total of 74 white Quick Fit 6 10W RMS ceiling-mounted speakers deliver the BGM and announcements throughout the Amana Building. Three Amis 480P amplifiers supply power to the 100V line speaker network, delivering 80W on each of four channels. Their eight balanced mic/line inputs have bass, mid and treble controls on the front panel and integrated bell, pre-announcement, evacuation and alert tones that can be accessed via the rear panel. The BGM sources can be switched between a six-disc Onkyo DXC 390 CD player, an Onkyo T4211 AM/FM tuner or a Denon DRW695 dual cassette deck.

The auditorium that is located on the ground floor required Aesthetix's greatest attention. This is where the conferencing between the meeting room and auditorium within the same building complex takes place. The split level chamber provides delegates with visuals projected onto a 150-inch diagonal motorised Draper Baronet screen from a Christie LX34 LCD projector, which is lowered into position on a Draper micro projector lift. The Christie LX34 features 3,500 ANSI lumens and true XGA resolution, with progressive scan to improve the playback of moving images. The system allows any of the offices to see colleagues in the Amana Building via a Tandberg Video Conference unit. A Samsung SA-UF80ST 'rostrum-style' camera system is available for viewing from the auditorium. The image can be displayed on TV-monitors or projected onto a large screen using a video projector at the other end of a video link. In addition, two ceiling mounted Kodicom KDS2211 intelligent dome cameras can record the conference for later playback.

Installed in the auditorium's ceiling are a total of eight Crown PZM-10 pressure zone microphones. With a Clearone PSR1212 microphone matrix mixer and Cresnet RS232 control module, these provide an inconspicuous audio link. The PZM-10 uses a miniature capsule mounted close to a sound-reflecting boundary plate, that also benefits from using the ceiling as an extended pick-up membrane. Operating on phantom power, integrated humbucking transformer and steel case prevent hum pickup near the ceiling lights.

The lectern is fitted with a Shure MX412 gooseneck microphone, and a Shure PGX wireless system can be used for seminars and Q&A sessions, using a tie clip mic or a hand-held SM58. Audio playback in the auditorium from the remote locations is via four black, wall-mounted Evid 4.2T 30W speakers powered by a single Amis 120P amplifier.

All the control functions of the A/V system are managed from



Auditorium screen, projector and lectern



EV Evid 4.2 wall-mounted speaker in the auditorium

a Creston AV2 processor with a user-friendly portable ST-1700C touchpanel. An Extron MPS 112 media presentation switcher, MVX 44 VGA computer-video and stereo audio signal router and RGB 164xi computer-video interface are racked in an adjacent control room. Here too, a 16-channel/four-bus Yamaha MG16 analogue console covers mixing duties and a Denon DRW695 dual cassette player serves as the BGM source. An LG DVD/VCR player serves the video projector, and a Promethean Activboard smart board is mounted behind the lectern providing the main speaker with further presentation options. The 18-seat ground floor training facility also uses a smart board linked to an NEC LT380 projector and Draper 84-inch diagonal screen, as well as having a PC for each seat.

A third floor human resources meeting room is equipped with a third smart board, an NEC LT380 projector, Draper Baronet 120-inch diagonal screen, dual 42-inch Samsung plasma screens and an LG DVD/VCR player controlled by a Creston touchpanel. This room can be linked to the auditorium via a Tandberg videoconference system.

www.amanabuildings.com

Aesthetix, UAE: +97 1 4337 4755

www.aesthetix.ae