

AN ENVIRONMENT

FOR DOING BUSINESS

For Credit Agricole Indosuez, the raison d'être for its new audio/multimedia systems is to support work.

By Rebecca Hansen



Credit Agricole Indosuez considered at least 15 vendors when selecting audio/multimedia equipment for the meeting facilities in the company's new Paris headquarters.

"Bose was the only vendor that would guarantee speech intelligibility," says Joel Tejero, the bank's technical director. "Crystal clear intelligibility is critical; when there's a \$2 million deal on the table, everyone in the room needs to be able to hear and understand every single word."

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TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

In addition, Bose proposed to deliver a total solution for the headquarters' 200-seat auditorium, along with its boardroom and committee room, small meeting rooms, dining rooms, hallways and restrooms. The solution would encompass audio systems, including Bose loudspeakers, as well as multimedia presentation and video teleconferencing equipment.

"I preferred to deal with one company that would oversee all aspects of the installation," says Tejero. "Loudspeakers are just one component of high-quality sound, and sound is just one component of a high-quality meeting environment. We chose Bose in part because they were willing to take responsibility for the whole package."

"We had two goals for the meeting areas in this building," explains Tejero. "We wanted to host our customers from around the world in comfortable surroundings that support doing business, and we wanted to improve internal communications."

THE VENUE:

A prestigious facility for one of Europe's leading financial groups.

THE CHALLENGE:

To bring clear, crisp sound – particularly excellent speech intelligibility – to every seat in the house without allowing the sound to be obtrusive or aggressive.

THE SOLUTION:

Use two Bose Panaray® 502® loudspeakers and FreeSpace® Model 32 loudspeakers to achieve smooth, consistent coverage throughout the room.

THE RESULT:

"It is strong validation for Bose of not only our commitment to understanding the customer's needs and designing a solution to meet them, but our follow-through on all the details of delivering that solution. It says to other European customers, "This is a company you can have confidence about doing business with."

–Eric Gillet
Bose Account Manager

CLEAR, CRISP SOUND.

The core facility for large meetings, the 200-seat auditorium, posed subtle challenges for the Bose® engineering team. The bank wanted clear, crisp sound – and, in particular, excellent speech intelligibility – in every seat of the house.

“Sound has to support and not distract people from their purpose for being in the room, which is to work,” Tejero emphasized. “Particularly when meetings go on for long periods of time, it’s important that sound help to create an appropriate ambiance for business.”

Bose Sound Engineer Paul Massiani understood the need for this fine balance by listening carefully to his customer: “One must learn as much as possible about the customer’s business in order to understand how to design a system that will meet expectations which the customer may not be able to fully express.”

The Bose team also listened to simulations of the design. Massiani and Bose Account Manager Eric Gillet created a three-dimensional model of the space using Bose Modeler® software, virtually positioning the proposed sound system within it and taking auditory measurements of the results. They input data from the Modeler system into the Bose Auditorioner® audio demonstrator, which simulated how the system would sound when installed in the facility, which at the time had yet to be constructed.

The Auditorioner audio demonstrator enabled the team to rapidly test and refine the design, which featured two Bose Panaray® 502® loudspeakers mounted on either side of the stage and FreeSpace® Model 32 loudspeakers distributed across the length and width of the room. The two groups of speakers could be used separately or in combination to achieve smooth, consistent coverage throughout the room at an appropriate level of loudness for the activity at hand.

The Auditorioner audio demonstrator was also helpful, says Massiani, in adjusting the

number and placement of loudspeakers to avoid auditory feedback into the highly sensitive microphones that would be in use throughout the room. “The architect’s plans called for varnished wood paneled walls, which create a hard

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surface that reflects sound waves back into the room,” he explains. “As a result, we had to be very careful about controlling the direction of the sound energy so that it would be focused on the audience and kept off of the walls as much as possible. The Auditorioner audio demonstrator helped us make these determinations with precision prior to installation, minimizing the need for adjustments afterward.”

Tejero also had the opportunity to listen to the design prior to the presentation of the Bose proposal to the decision-making group at the bank. He and the architect were able to virtually sit in various seats in the unbuilt auditorium and compare speech intelligibility from all of these locations. “I was amazed at the technology, and very satisfied with the results,” he recalls. “The sound was clear and intelligible. And Bose guaranteed that the installed system would sound as good or better than the simulation.”

A TOTAL BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS SOLUTION.

Working with a subcontractor, Bose installed systems for multimedia presentation and video-conferencing in the auditorium, boardroom and committee room. An annex has two

booths for simultaneous interpreting of auditorium and boardroom events. A series of small meeting rooms and dining rooms are equipped with background music systems, as are the hallways and restrooms.

Bose even installed a public address system on the Credit Agricole Indosuez trading floor. There, given the high activity and noise level, achieving consistent coverage and excellent speech intelligibility without disturbing work was perhaps even more challenging than in the auditorium.

Tejero says he believes most users of the facility have been pleased, although he has received few comments. On the contrary, the success of the facility can be gauged by the lack of comment, he explains. “In this country, when something is ‘pas mal,’ not bad, that means it’s good.”

HIGH MARKS FOR BOSE.

One commendation was forthcoming, however, from SARI Engineering, the general contractor for the headquarters. SARI reviews the performance of its subcontractors at the close of each project and ranks them. Of the 627 contractors on the bank project, Bose was rated number four.

“We are very honored to be rated so highly given that our piece of this project was relatively small in scope,” explains Gillet. “It is strong validation for Bose of not only our commitment to understanding the customer’s needs and designing a solution to meet them, but our follow-through on all the details of delivering that solution. It says to other European customers, ‘This is a company you can have confidence about doing business with.’”

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