TECH-SAVVINESS OPTIONAL

RTI Provides Effortless Control and Source Switching Over High-End Video Conferencing System

For a startup app developer in New York, creation stems from communication and collaboration. Designed around that concept, the company's new Manhattan office consists of a large open area featuring two zones. One is a dual-facing working space with employee desks, and the other is a meeting area with auditorium-style bench seating. To inspire a creative mood, background music floats throughout from a Sonos® Connect wireless receiver.

Optimized for video conferencing, the office's meeting area is equipped with an Epson G7400UNL projector, 120-inch Dragonfly motorized projection screen, Nearus PTZ web conferencing camera, and Shure mxa910W ceiling microphone array. A Mac Mini provides web-based conferencing apps, and sources for sharing including an Apple TV, cable set-top box, and laptops or mobile devices via a Barco Clickshare wireless presentation system or an RTI VWS-21T wall-plate HDBaseT video transmitter. For company-wide video conferences, the office's two zones can be combined, with audio extended into the working space and content shown on its two Samsung 4K LED displays.

From the planning stages, one thing the company was clear it didn't want with its high-tech set-up was a dedicated employee in charge of running it. Therefore, operating the system had to be so intuitive that anybody could quickly start a scheduled or on-the-fly video conference, select a source, and share it to the projection screen and the rest of the displays if required. For New York-based integrator

Mattera Design Inc., the key to achieving this level of simplicity was to incorporate a control and automation system; that is, if they could get the company on board with the idea.

"Originally, our client felt a control and automation system would be too cumbersome and difficult for employees to understand and use; instead, they wanted to rely on handheld remotes and the manual switching of sources," says Joseph Mattera, owner of Mattera Design. "We explained that RTI control would require absolutely zero tech-savviness on the part of users. The company offers a variety of commercial products that bring everything together into one seamless system that is incredibly intuitive and simple. Furthermore, control can be completely customized using RTI's Integration Designer APEX programming software. After hearing this, our client was all in and quickly came up with a list of desired features."

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On the company's wish list was employee control over the office's technology using nothing more than an iPad mini. In addition to source and display selection, volume control, and other basic functions, employees needed the ability to start meetings with a single button tap, which would turn on the projector, lower the screen, and enable the ceiling mic array. For the PTZ camera, the company wanted pre-configured scenes that could easily be selected for different speaking and seating scenarios. Finally, employees needed to easily extend video conferencing audio to the working zone.

To deliver all of this functionality, Mattera Design built the control and automation system around RTI's XP-8v control processor, with source switching powered by the company's VHD-8 HDBaseT video matrix switch, VTX-T HDBaseT transmitters, and VTX-R receivers. The single processor is controlling the Epson projector, Nearus camera, Sonos Connect, a Clearone Converge SR1212 digital audio matrix mixer, and the VHD-8 switch via RTI drivers; the projection screen using relays; and the two Samsung displays with RS-232.

Employees have control over every aspect of the office's technology using the RTiPanel app running on an iPad mini, which is wall-mounted in a LuxePort wall station. In addition, Mattera is monitoring the status of the XP-8v processor and connected devices using RTI's RTiQ intelligent remote monitoring solution. The company receives email and text notifications that alert them if a failure occurs, and they can restore the failed system or component using a virtual dashboard.

"In the end, our client was amazed that everything they thought they knew about automating a video conferencing system was wrong," adds Mattera. "RTI has completely blown away all of their expectations. They love the intuitive control and the fact that we can provide one-touch functionality for virtually any action they require. In fact, they like it so much that they will soon be adding a Lutron RadioRA 2 lighting system, and the office's three small huddle rooms are already pre-wired for future connection to the RTI system."

List of RTI products used:
- XP-8v Control Processor
- VHD-8 HDBaseT Video Matrix Switch
- VTX-T HDBaseT Transmitters
- VTX-R HDBaseT Receivers
- VWS-21T Wall-plate HDBaseT Video Transmitter
- RTiPanel App for iPad Mini