FMTC
PARTNER CASE STUDY - IOWA

CLEARONE BEAMFORMING MIC CEILING TILE AND WIRELESS MICS PROVIDE UNBEATABLE AUDIO FOR ON-SITE AN OFF-SITE MEETINGS

CHALLENGES

This is FMTC's main conference room; and with the renovation of the building, they hoped to redesign and reconfigure the conference room with new components that look better, make it easier to use and provide modern functionality.

This room is used for internal meetings and presentations, as well as hosting audio conferencing with outside partners. The 85" wireless video display allows meeting organizers to instantly connect and share content.

It was crucial that the new system be easy to use for any meeting host, without instruction or training. The room's technologies needed to "just work" and be reliable for everyday use. A drop-ceiling design was planned, to simplify any wiring needs; and the option to use a truly "invisible" microphone system, versus hanging microphones, was a major factor.
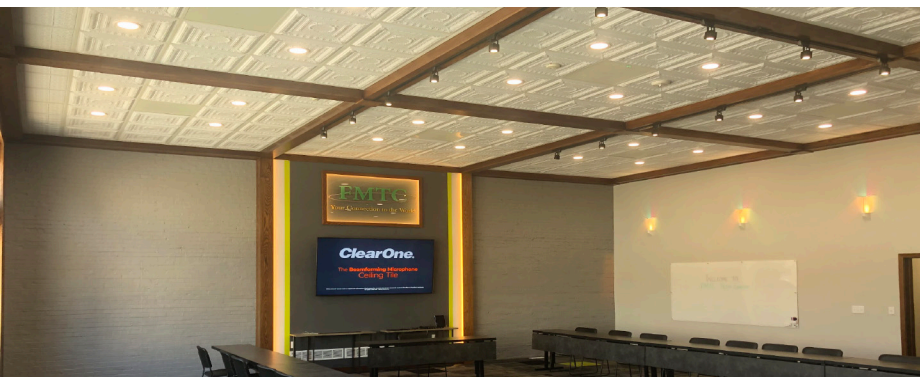
As a technology company that prides itself on using the latest tools to deliver superior services to customers, FMTC presents a forward-thinking image, especially when hosting outside partners for meetings or presentations.

ABOUT FMTC

Farmers Mutual Telphone Company provides fiber optic internet and phone services in Iowa, specializing in servicing rural communities and businesses that have historically been underserved for high-speed data technologies.

FMTC started in the early 1900's, when local Fruitland residents recognized the need for more effective communications.

They established a telephone cooperative, working together to install telephone poles, lines and a manual telephone switchboard. This cooperative effort has been the guiding theme of FMTC since the beginning — working together to keep up with the latest technology and doing it independently.

CLEARONE SOLUTION

ABOUT CLEARONE

ClearOne is a global company that designs, develops and sells conferencing, collaboration, and network streaming & signage solutions for voice and visual communications.

The performance and simplicity of its advanced, comprehensive solutions offer unprecedented levels of functionality, reliability, and scalability. More information about the company can be found at www.clearone.com

Matt Kutzli of FMTC was the project leader; in charge of researching and choosing technologies to provide conferencing and presentation capabilities for this room.

"We wanted to design a room that provides seamless operation, and one part of that is not having visible wires or components that can distract from meetings. The original ceiling was tin tiles, many damaged and not reusable. We chose to outfit the new drop ceiling with plastic tiles that mirror the tin style to maintain the historical look of the building"

Using microphones and speakers that blend in to the design were key to the room's aesthetic. The ceiling is broken up into nine square sections, with each containing a grid of ceiling tiles. All of the technology is in the front six sections, with the middle sections containing the ClearOne microphone ceiling tiles, and the outer left and right sections each containing a ceiling-tile speaker fed by the BMA-CT. Tough-panel control for motorized window shades and lighting complete the technology.

The conference room contains two ClearOne Beamforming Microphone Array ceiling tiles, four ceiling tile speakers, a CONVERGE® Pro 2 DSP, and a ClearOne DIALOG® 20 that can be used either in the room or for off-site meetings that require a microphone solution.

CHOOSING CLEARONE OVER OTHER VENDORS

Through basic research, Kutzli discovered that, at the time, ClearOne was really the only manufacturer offering a ceiling-tile-based beamforming microphone, which was the ideal solution for this space.
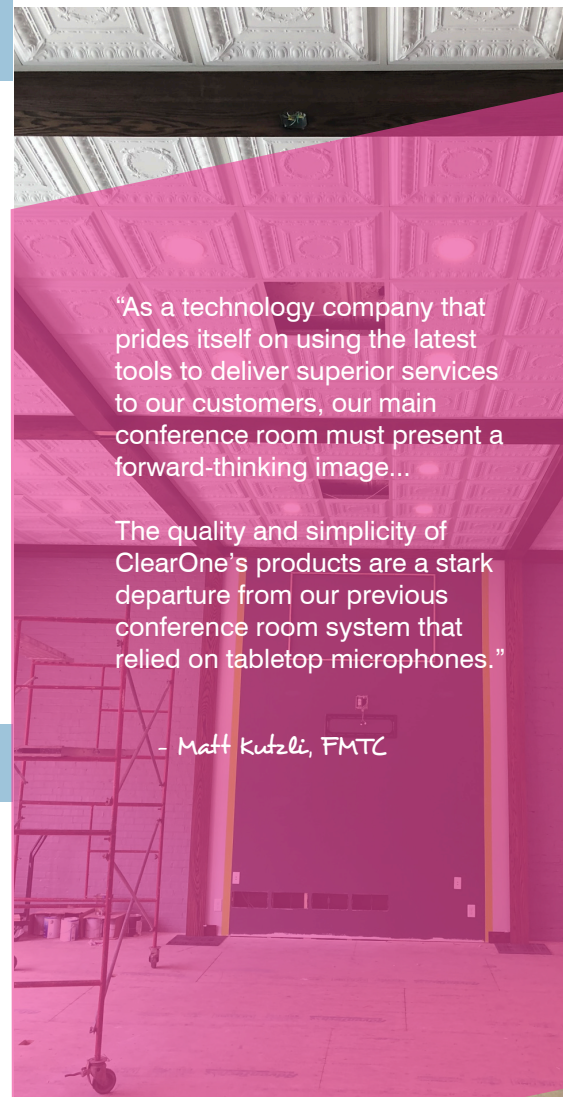
Simplification of wiring and installation was a major selling point. For a room with a drop ceiling, it makes perfect sense to use a solution that can power a pair of speakers from each microphone unit. Eliminating speaker-wire runs simplifies the installation and maintenance throughout the life of the system.

Kutzli stresses the importance of future-proof solution when choosing components to maximize installations lifespans and ensure compatibility with new protocols or capabilities. For that reason, AVI Systems went fully digital on this project, not relying on any analog systems that may become obsolete. Having IP functions and compatibility with Dante-networked audio technologies ensures this system will be ready for whatever comes next. All businesses should consider the longevity of a conferencing system when making purchasing decisions.

"As a technology company that prides itself on using the latest tools to deliver superior services to our customers, our main conference room must present a forward-thinking image...

The quality and simplicity of ClearOne's products are a stark departure from our previous conference room system that relied on tabletop microphones."

— Matt Kutzli, FMTC

ABOUT THE INTEGRATOR

As one of the company's original branch offices, AVI Systems in Omaha has a 31-year tradition of successful projects and customer satisfaction in the region and at client locations nationwide; partnering directly with clients across industries to deliver solutions precisely designed to their specific needs while providing excellent service and experience.

For more info visit: avisystems.com/locations-contact/omaha-nebraska

RESULTS AND BENEFITS

Every meeting has gone smoothly and each component has functioned as expected.

Everyone who has used the conference room, including executives, confirms their enjoyment at the ease of use, being able to simply walk in and begin a meeting. Being able to utilize the room's full potential without training is a huge benefit, and everyone agrees that a 'hidden' microphone system makes the room more appealing. The quality and simplicity of ClearOne's products are a stark departure from FMTC's previous conference room system that relied on tabletop microphones.

"It's only been two months, so we haven't had any other projects come up yet that require new systems or upgrades. Based on the positive results and reactions from those using it, I think ClearOne's solutions will be understood as top-tier options for any of FMTC's future needs," states Kutzli.

He continues: "ClearOne has been an excellent partner, and was responsive to any needs that arose during installation and setup. One of our units arrived with a faulty networking port, which happens, and ClearOne quickly initiated a warranty replacement for us. Working with Jim as our sales rep was a pleasure, and he was very helpful in coordinating between ourselves and AVI Systems."

EQUIPMENT LIST

» 2 x BMA CT with built-in amplifier
» 1 x CONVERGE® Pro 2 48V DSP Mixer
» 1 x DIALOG® 20 2-Channel Wireless Mic System

BMA CT
ClearOne's patented Beamforming Mic Array Ceiling Tile

The BMA CT blends in perfectly with today's drop ceilings, with integrated features that significantly reduce system design complexity, simplify installation, consume less rack space, and lower project cost.

CONVERGE Pro 2 48V
An advanced microphone automixer with the latest audio DSP algorithms and a VoIP interface.

Part of ClearOne's family of powerful Digital Signal Processors available in multiple versions with different combinations of audio inputs, audio outputs, network interfaces, peripherals, and software for configuration and control.

DIALOG® 20
2-Channel Wireless Mic System

A flexible, high quality 2-channel solution for adding a few microphones to small conferencing spaces, or adding sound reinforcement microphones to large conference and training areas.

SALES AND INQUIRIES

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