



Lifetime Television wins 2009 IFMA Award for Excellence

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By Bill Rehberg, IFMA Lifetime Television was the winner of the 2009 IFMA Award for Excellence in Design & Construction in the under 100,000 s/f category.

When Lifetime outgrew their space at World Wide Plaza, the logical decision was to relocate to the 72,000 s/f of space on the 11th Floor, at 111 Eighth Ave., since they already occupied 50,000 s/f on the 2nd floor in the same building.

The lease was signed in March of 2009 and Lifetime had to occupy the space by August 2009. The challenge to the team was how to accomplish this highly detailed project in less than six months. To assist, Lehr Construction was hired as the construction managers.

Since Lifetime was starting with a clean slate it was important to incorporate their branding throughout the space. They also took this opportunity to better organize the floor plate locating technical staff and administrative staff, with the appropriate working adjacencies.

Lifetime's design goal was to create a light and airy space, keeping in mind that they are a communications company, they wanted to promote open dialogue between the staff members. In order to encourage collaboration and communication, many "huddle" spaces, conference rooms, and breakout areas were distributed throughout the floor for easy access for the staff's use.

Lifetime's team of Cushman Wakefield, HOK, Lehr and Meyer, Strong & Jones (now Pennoni Associates, Inc.) succeeded in bringing everyone together in a loft like, collaborative space utilizing natural light with a large open plan layout, offering their employees state of the art technology, a huge "town hall," and three outdoor balconies.

The fast track schedule of the project made it necessary to avoid long lead time items, and select materials which were readily available. This did not hamper the team in designing a space that is not only beautifully appointed but has also improved Lifetime's productivity.

Peter Zimbaldi, director of media services & facilities for Lifetime, noted that another challenge to the success of the project, other than the tight schedule, was how the Team would address the many technical design requirements without affecting the desired image.

Lifetime has a Telepresence Room, which is a high-tech audio/visual room linked to a similar space in their Los Angeles office. This room accommodates 8 staff members and had to be designed, built, and completed, including testing of all required equipment before Lifetime could occupy their new facility.

Another technical challenge was how to securely get their communication and data cabling from their main LAN Room on the 2nd Floor up to the 11th Floor. The only way to connect the two floors was to run the cabling through various shaft ways. The Team had to devise enclosures in order to secure and house the cabling.

In order to take advantage of the high slab to slab dimension and give a loft like look, the design of the space required leaving the ceilings open to the slab above. This necessitated the exposed duct

work and sprinkler work, as well as the electrical, telephone, data and fire safety cabling to be carefully planned and coordinated to give a crisp neat appearance.

Zimbaldi felt that the collaboration of Lifetime's IT group along with Meyer, Strong & Jones talent for problem solving contributed in no small way to the success of the project.

When asked if there were any lessons learned, Zimbaldi said that with a fast track project schedule it is difficult to pay attention to the minute details of a project. The Team had to keep their eyes on the big picture, which of course was the move in date.

When accepting the IFMA Award for Excellence Zimbaldi said, "Lifetime Television was extremely excited and proud to be the recipient of the award for this category. Our vision of creating an environment that encourages creativity and collaboration across departments was realized and positively embraced by our employees."

Bill Rehberg is principal for Applied Design Initiative, LLC, New York, N.Y.

New York Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540