



THE CLIENT

ESG provides a sophisticated energy software platform which serves over 400 leading energy retailers, generators and asset management specialists in the UK, North America and Canada

Its technology is the most widely adopted software platform deployed in energy retail markets and powers optimal CRM, billing, pricing, settlement, smart metering, asset tracking and other related services.

Its UK business is headquartered in Chorley, Lancashire.



Business Needs

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"We had a couple of roll-on TVs, the webcam we used for photo-IDs and, because a few members of the team played in a band together, we pinched half of their equipment for the audio!" recalls Mark.



"Avoira spelt out how the solution would be delivered, how their engineers would come out, fit everything so that it worked specifically for our space and then provide us with full support."

Mark Smith,
Global Head of Corporate IT, ESG.

"So, we had one person using a handheld mic to speak internally and a Bluetooth mic, shared between presenters, that went out to the Teams audience.

Whilst Mark notes that his team had got setting up "down to a 'T' and running smoothly," with each meeting hosting around 100 staff on-site and a further 300 via Teams, this was clearly far from ideal.

The space itself also presented its own challenges. "It's not really conducive to putting in traditional television screens because it has an open space at the front which people can walk through," explains Mark.

"We had a bespoke requirement, needing something which could be deployed as and when, but with a fixed camera system. I also wanted it to be a space that, when not being used for town hall meetings, could be used for other meetings and presentations where we've got, say, 20 people. "It also needed to be something that was easy to use."

With ESG also planning a major refresh of its offices, it made sense to upgrade to a state-of-the-art AV solution.



Yealink UVC86 dual-eye intelligent camera



The Solution

Mark first came across Avoira at Manchester's DTX - Digital Transformation Expo - at which he was impressed with our audio-visual communications expertise.

"We went from there, looking at the solutions Avoira could offer. There seemed to be one which perfectly fitted the space."

His experience at DTX gave him confidence in the package we could offer. "We're not AV specialists, it's a specialised area. Avoira spelt out how the solution would be delivered, how their engineers would come out, fit everything so that it worked specifically for our space and provide us with full support."

That perfect solution comprised Yealink's S90 Microsoft Teams Rooms System incorporating an Mcore Pro PC and coupled with two Yealink UVC86 dual-eye intelligent cameras, an AV hub and room sensor.



Audio-Technica System 10 wireless microphones

Our team further specified a Screen International electric screen that could be fitted to the ceiling and lowered when required.

To complement this they recommended a Epson EB-L630U ceiling mounted laser projector. This is designed to deliver bolder and brighter displays - it offers 6,200 lumen brightness - making it ideal for overcoming the challenge presented by a space flooded with natural light.



An Extron IPL Pro 250 controller provides configurable management, monitoring and control of the projector, screen and Mcore PC, as well as managing microphone and volume levels through a Biamp Tesira Forte AVB DT digital audio server.

The cutting-edge audio kit is completed by a two-channel Biamp 2120T power amplifier harnessed to three Extron FF 120T ceiling speakers. The latter incorporate patented Flat Field technology which reduces beaming of mid and high range frequencies directly under the speaker, enabling delivery of consistent sound levels across a wide listening area.

The full specification was determined after Mark had benefited from a full demonstration of the proposed solution. "Avoira were cheaper on price, but price is never, within reason, my primary concern. It's what work's best. The fact that I and a colleague were able to have a hands-on demonstration of a clone solution to the one proposed for our office was useful.

"I'm a very hands-on person, I like to test things myself and make sure they do exactly what I want them to do. Avoira's demonstration was key in pushing it over the line, in confirming it was the solution we needed and the one I was comfortable pushing to my CFO."



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Once the green light was lit, Mark was equally impressed with the dedication and expertise of the Avoira installation team. A three-day install went seamlessly, despite a last-minute request for some custom tweaks to the audio software.

"The installations guys were really good. They were happy to explain things as I barraged them with random questions of what does this do, what does that do?"



Epson EB-L630U ceiling mounted laser projector



The Benefits

Our solution has been transformational, significantly enhancing meetings for presenters, internal audiences and Teams participants.

"It's a lot easier for our presenters to work with, allowing them simply to focus on what they're presenting," says Mark, noting that the configuration allows them to see on screen exactly where they are in their presentation, without having to turn around. It also delivers greater visibility to audience members sitting at more acute angles to the screen.

"They're also not having to be trained on how to hold microphones, which was a problem previously. With lapel microphones they can just stand and talk without worrying about anything else because IT is controlling everything."

Indeed everything, including the in-room and Teams audio, are controlled from the single control panel, custom configured by Avoira.

Those audio tweaks make all the difference to the sound quality. "It's just a slight level of reinforcement from the speakers internally which you don't realise is there until it's gone. But it means the level is pitched absolutely perfectly, so that it's so much clearer to hear. It really doesn't feel like you're hearing through speakers."

Teams participants are equally impressed, noting in particular the significant improvements in visual presentation.



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Global Head of Corporate IT, ESG.

Indeed the overall reaction has been so positive that ESG will now be able to squeeze further value from both the Avoira solution and the refurbished meeting space. That's because it's set to be used more frequently by various members of staff. "Because they've seen its capabilities, a large number of people have asked me about how they can use the space for delivery of X,Y and Z.

So impressed is Mark that he reports that Avoira has leapfrogged a longstanding incumbent supplier to top his AV service provider list, a feat he regards as "quite an achievement."

As such he's already looking ahead to how we might help with the potential upgrade of other meeting rooms in the building. "Avoira say that they're brand leaders in the provision of audio-visual solutions and they've definitely delivered on that," he concludes.