

CASE STUDY NO. 4

OPTIMIZING ACOUSTICS IN RESTAURANT SPACES



Cappella Restaurant | Needham, Massachusetts

With the optics that social media and apps like Yelp have brought to the sharing of overall service and experience feedback, it is critical that restaurants take action and ensure that beyond high quality food, wine and ambiance, acoustics are a high priority consideration when designing the space.

Cappella Restaurant opened in August 2018 and is located in the quiet and sophisticated town of Needham, MA. Rob Picardi, owner and head chef wanted to bring the perfect balance of food, wine and elegance to his patrons. Rob selected and designed a space in a unique and aesthetically pleasing environment that added to the overall dining experience.

As Cappella grew in popularity, it became quickly apparent that there was a noise problem. As the dining room filled up, there was a noticeable strain in guest conversation as well as in back and forth staff communication. The noise level in the restaurant would continue to increase until people were talking over one another in an effort to compete to be heard alongside the high level of echo and reverberation.

Rob took action and contacted QuietStar, a Sound Seal distributor, to help solve the acoustic issue. A detailed inspection of the space revealed that the sophisticated design, while visually appealing, was highly reflective. With a combination of concrete floors, metal clad tables and plaster walls, there was virtually nowhere for sound to escape or be absorbed.



With uncompromised aesthetics being the center piece in the approach, Rob included his interior designer along with QuietStar in the selection of sound absorption materials. The broad selection of materials that Sound Seal offers made it clear early in the project that there was an opportunity to optimize the acoustics with product selections that would further add to the aesthetics of the already visually impressive space.

Inspire Art printed panels were chosen as the focal point of the design with the intention of standing out. These custom printed panels elegantly display the Cappella logo throughout the space. Custom sized acoustic chair rails line the perimeter of the wall to wall booth space, incorporating the Sound Seal S-2000 panel wrapped with a high end textured fabric that matches the colors and patterns inherent in the space. Lastly, Chroma paintable panels were installed on both the ceiling

and back service entrance wall. These panels were specifically placed to blend in to the existing space.

The first night of service after the install was complete, there was an immediate and noticeable difference. Customers and staff alike made mention of how pleased they were with the significant reduction in noise.

“I can’t believe how effective these sound panels are in reducing the noise in the space,” said Rob Picardi. The customers in the bar and dining room noticed it right away. The improvements we made had a direct and immediate impact on the overall customer experience. Now when they come to Cappella they can truly appreciate the good food, atmosphere and conversation without the burden unwanted noise.

