



Columbia Advisory Group Audio/Visual Services

Saving Texas A&M University System campuses over \$3.2 million during A/V redesigns

CONTEXT: As information technology (IT) partners at Texas A&M University Commerce and Texas A&M University San Antonio, Columbia Advisory Group (CAG) was asked to provide technical feedback on construction designs for classroom A/V systems. As a result, CAG was able to recommend changes that **saved over \$3.2 million** in build-out costs and resulted in a more effective A/V program for each campus.

CHALLENGES: CAG was involved during the critical path of the construction process, which allowed a very short window for feedback. CAG was able to leverage their deep bench of expertise to quickly provide advice and recommendations.

STRATEGIES: During their review, CAG noticed the equipment was more complicated and expensive than was necessary. Many "Bentley" products were specified when a "Toyota" would actually be easier to use and maintain and meet the needs of the students and faculty.

OUTCOMES:

• Texas A&M University - Commerce – Nursing Health Science Building



As the University planned construction for a renovation of the Nursing Health Science building, the leadership requested that CAG review the design of the audio visual system. The recommended changes saved the University over **\$1.4 million**.

- Recommended changes to the design consisted of the following:
 - ▶ Recommended classroom recording equipment be installed only in required rooms, rather than committing to the cost in every single classroom since instructors only record in certain rooms.
 - ▶ Changed complex, non-uniform, and expensive projectors for Epson education projectors designed to meet room and faculty requirements and provide model uniformity across campus. This means instructors only have to learn one system which applies to any classroom in which they happen to be.
 - ▶ Simplified controls in each room by suggesting less complex matrix systems.
 - ▶ Eliminated wireless video matrix in favor of more proven, cost-effective technology to achieve the same goals.
 - ▶ Recommended portable assisted listening devices for disabled students to use, rather than installing assisted listening systems in every room.
 - ▶ Eliminated cost of making every room a distance education room and instead focused on rooms that were actually needed for distance education.

- ▶ Reduced size of TVs in study halls and rooms throughout the building to increase relative effectiveness for the size of the room.
- ▶ Adjusted speaker quantity in each room to meet best practice and industry standard (ex original design called for 12 speakers in a room seating 30).
- ▶ Eliminated the need for a later change-order by noticing that A/V equipment was missing from the floor plans for the board room and a classroom.
- ▶ Advised standardizing all rooms to include the more user-friendly Epson Document cameras currently being utilized across TAMUC campus.

• **Texas A&M University - San Antonio – STEM Building**



TAMUSA requested CAG review the design of A/V products being recommended by a design firm. CAG was able to translate customer requirements to technical solutions, realizing that many items as specified were surplus to the needs of the University. CAG's recommendations saved the institution **\$1.8 million**.

- During review, CAG noticed the equipment was overly complex/expensive and more complicated than necessary. CAG recommended more user-friendly and cost-effective solutions.
- CAG's recommended changes to the design included:
 - ▶ Changed touch monitors to touch projectors.
 - Increased screen size from 80"-100"
 - Allowed for a writable surface with projector not in use
 - Removed complexity of maintenance and management for IT staff
 - ▶ Reduced total cost of ownership and complexity through design of standardized classroom and student study room technology across TAMUSA Campus.
 - ▶ Recommended portable assisted listening devices for disabled students to use, rather than installing assisted listening systems in every room.

ABOUT CAG:

CAG is a highly experienced IT consulting firm. With 100+ years of combined technology experience and business acumen, CAG's team has assessed and helped improve the performance of more than 300 technology organizations and IT departments. By focusing on simple, meaningful and practical solutions combined with straight-forward analysis and recommendations, CAG's team has experience in many regulatory and economic environments with companies and organizations of all sizes.

CAG not only offers a deep understanding of IT, but its solutions are software and hardware agnostic. Whether a client is high growth or economically challenged, CAG can adapt to the complexities and nuances of that business. Based in Dallas, Texas, CAG works extensively with clients throughout the U.S. For more information, visit columbiaadvisory.com