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Gregg's Cycle in Seattle, **SOLVES** Sound Problem With ***Echo Eliminator Baffles!***

So, I'm sitting at my desk one day, happily making my way thru my afternoon at the office, when in comes an e-mail from a really good friend of mine on the west coast. "Hey – I need some acoustical work done! We built a new addition to our Bike Shop and it's all rattly and echoey in there. Can you charge me an exorbitant amount to fix my problem, please? What info would you need from me to get moving? Or, do I need to find someone local? Shakka, Bra." He says. In my reply I asked him for the measurements of the space along with a few photos, these would help me better understand the room he was dealing with. He sent them along and told me essentially, the room is a trapezoid – a square with one edge that goes out diagonal to elongate the store front on one end. It has 14.5 ft tall ceilings.

After a few more e-mails back and forth, I have a pretty good idea of the sound problem he is trying to fix. I've seen this before. Many retail locations built recently take advantage of the industrial look of an exposed concrete floor and an exposed metal roof deck. It's a raw, hip look but the unfortunate result is awful acoustics and a terrible echo. If any kind of background music is being played or any work is done that generates any noise at all, the sound pressure VERY quickly fills the space and creates an uncomfortable work environment.

After putting together a box of potential product samples and literature, store manager Leif took over as my point of contact for the project. Leif asked many good questions about the relative difference between products, cost, colors, location, type of installation and mounting type. The owner of the bike shop wanted to get the panels installed near the ceiling of the shop and had a few different ideas about exactly how that was going to be done. "... I actually met with our owner yesterday and, as we

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Retail orientated but industrial looking spaces like this are very popular, simple and serve a useful purpose but because of all of the hard surfaces, noise problems are quite common.



Exposed metal roof decks have replaced standard drop ceilings, which would potentially help in reducing the echo in the space.



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speak, I'm investigating some ways to hang the soundproofing. He doesn't want to glue it to the ceiling but we're looking at affixing it to a rigid board. We'd hang it between the steel beams where it would have been glued anyway but just below the ceiling itself. If the new cost of some extra materials clears we should be getting things rolling – pretty soon. We wouldn't need the spray adhesive as we'd glue all the pieces to panels on the ground prior to hanging. Have you ever seen something like this done?" He also had a few good questions I will share.

1. How much does it add to the cost to have you install grommets? I assume it's per grommet. Can we get up to 4 installed or was it just two or three.
2. Is there a significant difference in sound damping characteristics between the one and two inch material? Is the main reason for 2 the installation method?
3. Is it still realistic to be able to have these here by mid-feb? We have a women's night, as I mentioned on the phone, that we are REALLY hoping to have them up for. I'll get back to you tomorrow on a finalized color choice. Thanks again Ted for your time and consideration,"

“The echo has been eliminated and the sound quality during normal conversation is remarkably improved. The material adds a nice look and a new dimension to the room. -Leif”

One very important factor that I always bring up (when a baffle installation is considered) is the fire suppression sprinkler system in the room. If the baffles are installed in a location where they are going to inhibit the throw and coverage of the sprinklers, not only is that type of installation not safe for the potential occupants of the room, the fire marshal would likely require removal and relocation of the panels. I made this very clear and it was decided that grommets would be installed along the 4' side of each panel on site with tools that are available at the local hardware store. The final product choice was our 1" thick, **Burgundy Echo Eliminator Panels** which are made from recycled cotton fiber. A few important factors that made this a good choice are the economical cost for the product, the high acoustical absorption of the panels, the availability of nine different

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The owners and employees chose to install eighty of our 1" thick, #3 lb. density Burgundy Echo Eliminator panels as an economical yet effective and simple way to treat this space. The grommets were installed and the panels were installed by the employees. It is very important to keep the fire suppression sprinkler system in mind when considering hanging baffles.





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colors, and the fact that the panels were in stock. The bike shop was hosting a woman's night and the goal was to have the panels installed for the event. A few days after I shipped the panels I received the following e-mail:

“Hello all, I'm pleased to announce that we have installed the echo reducing material as planned in our North Pro Room. With some hard work and a lot of hours we were able to get the whole room accomplished in ONE DAY! I had great volunteer help from Lance, Gavin, and Andreas and used our orange “scaffolding”, a tall ladder, and a pre-planned attack to make it happen pretty efficiently. The echo has been eliminated and the sound quality during normal conversation is remarkably improved. The material adds a nice look and a new dimension to the room. - Leif”

*If you have any questions or need any information about any of the products or applications discussed in this article, please feel free to contact me. I would be happy to do my best to help you. Ted Weidman, Acoustical Surfaces, Inc. 123 Columbia Court North, Suite 100 Chaska, MN 55318
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