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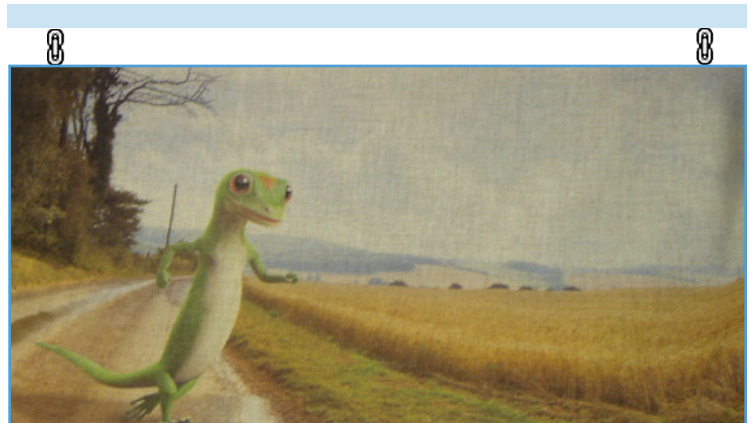
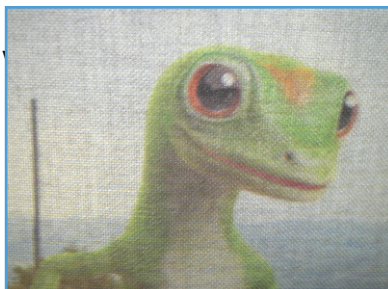
Company Cafeteria Echo/Reverberation **PROBLEM IS SOLVED** with Fabric Wrapped Fiberglass Panels and Baffles

GEICO Real Estate & Facilities

By Ted Weidman

Picture a cafeteria or lunch room that can hold 150 people. The picture in your mind is going to depend on the age group of people using the room. Grade school, high school or college cafeterias usually have vinyl tile floors, painted concrete walls and either a drop ceiling or a painted sheetrock ceiling. Large corporate cafeterias may have a thin pile carpet on the floor because some adults are cleaner than some kids. Either way, large rooms with hard surfaces are perfect environments for echo and reverberation. Large rooms hold a lot of people. Lots of people usually means a lot of noise. A lot of means occupants get headaches. People with headaches call me.

In April of 2008 I got a call from Maria Williams from GEICO doing some research to find the right product or products to reduce the echo and reverberation in their cafeteria. We talked about a couple of different products and I sent some products and literature to review. Taking into consideration the professional aesthetic of the cafeteria Maria decided that the company wanted to go with our pre-fabricated Fabric Wrapped Fiberglass Wall Panels and Baffles.



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During the product selection process, Maria asked about the possibility of using these baffles as a decorative accent to the room by possibly getting some company specific images printed onto the fabric before we wrapped the fiberglass. The timing of this question was perfect as we had just gotten some prototype printing done for a job with the Jacksonville Jaguars from a local printing company. This company has the technology to take a digital image and transfer the image onto fabric. Maria sent me a few low resolution images and I forwarded them onto the printing company for a quote.

Based on the size of the room; as well as the fact that this room does not have a fire suppression sprinkler system, a layout of wall panels and hanging baffles was a very effective way to reduce the echo and reverberation in the room. For this room, twenty-eight (4' wide x 2') tall baffles were chosen along with eighteen 4' wide x 2' tall wall panels, two 4' x 4' and two 4' x 8' wall panels were purchased. All of the acoustical products for this installation are an overall thickness of two inches.

Because this was my first job working with the printing process I wanted to make sure absolutely everything went perfectly. Maria had her graphics department make high resolution files of the art work that the company wanted to use and send it directly to the printer. I sent the fabric to the printing company so that it was on hand when it came time to start production. In the interest of making sure GEICO was completely happy with the finished product, I had the printer make one full size sample and we wrapped it around a piece of fiberglass just like the Fiberglass Panel we would use for the finished product. I noticed that the little GEICO lizard's foot was so close to the bottom of the image



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that it would wrap around the edges of the panel and looked odd.

I sent the full size sample to Maria for her review and it was decided that the lizard should be moved more toward the center of the panel so we did not “lose” his foot over the edge.

After the issues with the art work were sorted out, I gave the green light and had the fabric printed. We printed images for both sides of all eight baffles, wrapped them around the fiberglass and glued the pieces on either side of two mounting brackets. The panels were crated and shipped to GEICO and installed a few weeks later.

MARIA’S SUMMARY OF THE INSTALLATION:

Hi Ted!

I finally took some pictures of the cafeteria with the panels and baffles installed. It really does look great and significantly cuts down on the echo! Take a look and let me know what you think! I may have a few emails coming your way with pictures.

Thanks again,

Maria Williams



More photo's continued on next page...



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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.

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