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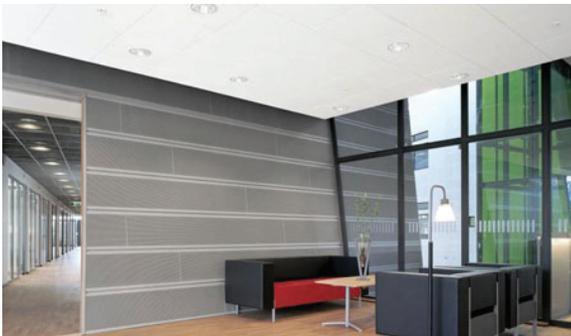
7 breakthrough acoustical products for green buildings

For all the praise green buildings receive these days, many of these projects fall woefully short of expectations when it comes to acoustical performance. Why?

In many cases, acoustical performance is an afterthought on green projects because some green building rating systems, such as LEED, do not require acoustical credits, says green acoustics guru Jeffrey Fullerton, director of architectural acoustics with Cambridge, Mass.-based consultant Acentech.

Another reason is the minimalist design approach applied on many of these projects: Green buildings tend to have fewer interior walls, higher ceilings, minimal finishes, and hard surfaces.

Luckily, building product manufacturers have recently flooded the market with acoustical products geared toward the green buildings market. We've asked Fullerton to select his top seven breakthrough green acoustical products. Here they are, in no particular order:



Ecophon Focus C direct-applied ceiling tiles. "A high-density fiberglass tile that can be used in a glue-up application in existing spaces where lowering the ceiling height is not possible," says Fullerton. CertainTeed, www.certainteed.com/products/ceilings



Fiber-free, micro-slotted acrylic sound absorbers. "These products are ideal for sound absorption in spaces that might be using radiant heating/cooling systems. Because they don't use fiberglass or porous materials for sound absorption, they eliminate many of the concerns that those materials present. For use in ceiling or wall applications." DeAmp, www.deamp.com



K-13 Spray-on acoustical finish. "For use primarily on ceiling surfaces to provide direct-applied sound absorption to an exposed structural deck in an occupied space." International Cellulose, www.internationalcellulose.com



Tierra rapidly renewable ceiling tiles. "The industry's first biobased, rapidly renewable ceiling tile. For use in open-plan offices where very good sound absorption is sought." Armstrong, www.armstrong.com/commceilingsna



Ultra Touch Cotton acoustical batt insulation. "For use in stud walls to achieve improved sound isolation of demising constructions, for example, between adjacent offices." Bonded Logic, www.bondedlogic.com



Echo Eliminator sound absorbing panels. "For use on walls or ceilings. You can use the panel as is or cover it with a stretch fabric for a more finished look. Ideal for conference rooms or video conference rooms where teleconferencing, audio recording, or microphones are used." Acoustical Surfaces, www.acousticalsurfaces.com



Oasis speech privacy system. "A scalable speech privacy (masking or 'white noise' system), paging, and background music system that can provide improved speech privacy in open office plans and for closed offices constructed with demountable partitions." Cambridge Sound Management, www.csmqt.com