

RoomReady and Red River equip a boardroom for the “new normal” at Mercy Medical Center



When the COVID-19 pandemic began in early 2020, Baltimore-based Mercy Medical Center needed a solution that would allow it to hold effective hybrid meetings – with both in-person and virtual attendees. Conversations between its board of directors and staff needed to continue, but no outside visitors could be allowed inside the building.

Mercy had already invested in a projector and upgraded its monitors in the last few years, so it didn't need to redo the room from the ground up. However, to transform the room into a functional space in the time of COVID – and to prepare it for use after the pandemic – Mercy's IT team knew various challenges within the room needed to be addressed.

Among Mercy's top challenges: the room's long, narrow shape made video conferences a hassle. Because the system relied on a fixed, single camera, not all of the in-room participants – including the person speaking at the podium – could be seen by the camera. Thus, virtual attendees struggled to follow the conversation on-screen. In addition, audio-related cables and microphones laid loose on the table, rather than neatly arranged and stored, and the room's overly complex technology interface led to user frustration when trying to launch a meeting.

To find the right solution, Mercy turned to managed service provider Red River – and Red River knew exactly which integrator to call.

“Mercy's challenge was a classic RoomReady use case,” said Kevin Malinowski, account executive at Red River. “RoomReady understands how to take existing technology, integrate it with their solutions, and deliver a simple, easy-to-use meeting room for the end user.”

Mercy Medical Center's unique challenge was a classic RoomReady use case – integrating existing AV technology with new solutions to solve a meeting room's unique challenges while simplifying the user experience.



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Simplifying hybrid meetings – no matter the challenge

RoomReady started the project by evaluating each piece of technology within the room. It removed most of the extra AV components, reducing the number of additional cords and microphones kept on the table. It simplified the user experience by installing the Cisco Touch10 control panel, allowing Mercy to integrate its existing Webex solution with the new technology – and enabling its staff to launch meetings with a single touch.

To overcome the problems caused by the single camera's inability to see all participants, RoomReady leveraged dual P60 cameras that tracked speakers no matter their location. RoomReady first sectioned the room into quadrants, getting cameras closer to participants, and then engineers fine-tuned the cameras during a live meeting to ensure they could find participants' faces. In fact, the solution was able to identify speakers even if they had a mask on, allowing in-person participants to adhere to COVID-19 guidelines without meeting disruption.

The entire process, from the initial consultation to go-live, took just 60 days. However, what pleased Mercy even more was that the actual installation took only four days – starting on a Friday and ending before the room's next meeting on Tuesday. That means staff experienced almost no impact while the room was being upgraded.

Leveraging the new meeting room in the pandemic and beyond

Mercy's executive meeting room is now running flawlessly, with 2-3 meetings per day. RoomReady guided the staff through an extensive training process, ensuring that everyone responsible for running a meeting mastered the new Touch10 panel. And even once the pandemic is over, the new technology will enable simpler connectivity for both in-person and hybrid meetings.

"The sign you've found the right AV solution is when you don't hear anything from room users at all – when IT service tickets slow to a halt. That's exactly what happened after RoomReady and Red River installed their solution," said Eric Nyman, Director of IT at Mercy Medical Center. "RoomReady took the time to understand our challenges, help us get the most out of our existing investments, and adjust their solutions for our room's specifications. We're pleased the solution will simplify the executive meeting room for years to come."

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The Results



Redesigned camera system tracks speakers in the room – even if they're wearing a mask



Completed installation in just four days



2-3 meetings per day with virtually no IT support requests