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VBA Construction Management revamps and expands TV studio

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Lowell, MA When a North Shore MA-based medical device manufacturer needed to renovate and expand its TV/video production studio, they turned to VBA Construction Management, a full-service commercial construction management firm to complete the work.

“The TV studio, a vital component of the company’s training and employee communications tools, became even more important with the advent of COVID-19,” said Tom O’Connor of JLL, the owner’s project manager. “The existing studio needed to be expanded and updated to meet the growing demand. Being able to communicate and share information clearly and effectively with the company’s global audience of physicians, patients and employees makes the studio a critical component of the company’s work. We needed a construction management team which understood that and could get the job done quickly and efficiently, VBA was the obvious choice,” O’Connor said.

“It was all about sound,” said Tyler Amore, project manager with VBA. “No sound could escape, and no outside sound was allowed in. We installed double drywall, double studs, and acoustic foam panels on the ceiling.” Amore also noted the two soundproof doors, each weighing 500 pounds, required specialized installation.

The 2,500 s/f project wasn’t without its challenges. There were several supply chain problems and delays with securing material and equipment. “One example of how we kept the project moving was to provide pathways within the walls and hard ceilings utilizing a network of conduit. This allowed us to close walls and stay on schedule. When material arrived, the vendors had easy access to complete their work thereby minimizing delays,” said Amore. “We will do whatever it takes to keep a project on time and running smoothly.”

Expanding the existing studio also required avoiding any disruption to the adjacent clean room. VBA met that goal resulting in the company maintaining full operations in that location during the 90-day construction process.

O’Connor said that the upgraded lighting and equipment loads mandated additional cooling capacity requiring the removal and replacement of existing HVAC equipment with larger units. Amore explained that VBA welded additional steel between the joists of the existing roof to support the equipment, “Because the welding work was partially over one of the company’s very tall and expensive machines that ran 24/7, the logistical and accessibility challenges as well as the fire safety plan demanded careful planning and execution,” said Amore. O’Connor said, “VBA’s strategy saved the client time and money with their expertise and creative solutions. We greatly appreciated that.”

Dan Stone, vice president of project management at VBA said, “VBA understood the importance of this project to the client and the need for all technological and construction aspects to be coordinated and flow seamlessly. Our team’s commitment to open dialog with the client, the owner’s project manager, and subs met those goals and helped keep this project on track and on time.”

O’Connor echoed Stone and particularly praised the work of Chris Layman, VBA’s superintendent. “Chris is a great communicator,” said O’Connor. “He seamlessly coordinated material deliveries, work schedules all while making sure the client’s employees were able to go on with their work. Chris built trust and had a great relationship with the client’s team, which resulted in a successful project.”