

TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES IN MOVEABLE PARTITIONING

Julian Sargent, group managing director for Style, sole UK supply for Dorma Hüppe and Skyfold partitioning wall systems, highlights how recent technological advances have impacted on the moveable wall marketplace



Until quite recently, the market for partitioning walls was relatively simple with manually moved panels sliding along tracks in the ceiling and floor, to form a temporary wall. But that has all changed and modern and sophisticated systems of today offer diverse opportunities to deliver efficient space flexibility to almost any room.

Perhaps the most significant development in the market is the explosive demand for automatic partitioning walls. To give you an idea of the level of growth facing this sector, 10% of all of Dorma Hüppe's UK sales are now for their fully automatic ComfortDrive system, launched only seven years ago.

Sales of the phenomenal Skyfold partition, which descends from the ceiling at the press of a button, have also rocketed. It took Style 10yrs to sell the first 100 units but in the last

nine years we have more than doubled that figure with over 200 additional installations completed. One of our more notable projects for 2022 was at the world's first super boutique hotel, The Londoner, where Style installed a six metre high Skyfold to divide the expansive main ballroom and for which we received our 12th Gold FIS Contractors' Award.

Automatic systems offer a lot more than just the ability to quickly reconfigure a room. Electronic seals on both fully automatic and semi-automatic partitioning walls will always expand to exactly the optimum pressure to maximise the acoustic integrity of

the system. There is no risk of the seals being manually wound too tight and causing damage or of not being extended sufficiently and allowing sound leakage. Similarly, with a fully automatic system, the panels themselves are not going to be bumped or scratched by someone rushing to get the wall in place.

Finally, with space being an expensive

commodity, there is a direct cost benefit too and having an automatic partitioning wall really does allow multiple events and meetings to run concurrently throughout the day.

And it is not just automation that has changed the market for partitioning walls. A myriad of creative tracking options can now be considered, encouraging panels to spin and glide in multiple directions, before tucking cleverly away into concealed storage areas when not in use. Intelligent use of modern materials, not to mention advanced understanding of sound paths, has led to the development of ever more lightweight panels that still deliver an exceptional acoustic barrier.

Clearly there's a lot to consider if specifying a modern operable wall and this impacts the very earliest stages of a project. Involving a partitioning expert right at the beginning will allow an innovative solution to be created that can surpass expectations.

style-partitions.co.uk