

to contend with, or the associated noise of the fans needed to circulate air at higher velocities," Nagles said.

Bass Pro provided the ideal environment for the system because it is a large, open space with high ceilings.

"Running a metal duct-work system along the ceiling wouldn't look finished," said Ray Jackson, project engineer. "Bass Pro Shops are designed to help create the outdoor feel. The fabric duct and color were specifically chosen to blend in with the surrounding color themes."



Combining the system with the building's air-handling system required no special fittings or configurations, (the store is a remodel and expansion of an existing retail space). Five rooftop air-handling units feed the system. Other than normal testing and balancing procedures to meet the correct building pressure, no special adjustments were made.

"We installed this system in about half the time it takes to install a metal system," said Brett Rathbone, mechanical contractor, Acosta Mechanical, Little River, S.C. ■

Under Lock and Key

Key management system saves Sprint Nextel time and money

Keeping track of keys and locks is no easy task for retailers, even under the best of circumstances. But it was especially challenging for those with stores in New Orleans in the days following Hurricane Katrina. Unable to make contact with local store managers and other associates, many chains sought out locksmiths to re-key stores on an emergency basis.

Sprint Nextel, however, was able to gain access to and secure its seven stores in the area without outside help. The company utilizes a key-management program that allows doors to be re-keyed easily and quickly—and without the assistance of a locksmith.

"Our key program helped save the day for us," said Hank Roberts, who manages the facilities help desk for Sprint Nextel, Overland Park, Kan., which operates 1,700 stores under the Sprint and Nextel banners.

Sprint utilizes InstaKey Security System, from InstaKey, Denver, which combines specially designed hardware (including non-duplicable keys) with



Sprint Nextel, using a key-management program, was able to quickly secure stores devastated by Hurricane Katrina last year.

on-line records management. It allows the end-user to re-key a lock without having to remove a core from the door. Instead, the end-user simply inserts a special key in the lock and turns it

according to directions. There is nothing to disassemble.

The system proved invaluable to Sprint in the days following the hurricane. Security was a concern and lock-

smiths, whose services were at a premium, were not that easy to come by.

"After the hurricane and floods hit, we needed to gain access to our stores so they could be surveyed to determine damage," Roberts explained. "But the majority of people that worked in the stores had left the city, many had left the state and we didn't have keys."

InstaKey's software program provides real-time tracking of every key, key holder and location. After Hurricane Katrina, Sprint immediately contacted the company and requested copies of the keys for the stores in the affected area. The company shipped the keys to Sprint's local retail sales manager who was coordinating all store activities in the area. The manager immediately re-keyed the locks.

"Without this system, we would have needed a locksmith to go to all the locations, change the locks and so on," Roberts said. "It would have been time-consuming and expensive. Also, locksmiths were not very available at that time."

Sprint switched to the system several years ago.

"In previous years, we had to call in a locksmith each time a store needed to be re-keyed," Roberts said. "In addition to the costs, there was the wait factor."

With InstaKey, a lock can be re-keyed by turning a special, notched "step-change" key 180 degrees. The key removes a wafer from inside the core, resetting the pins inside so that the old keys cannot open the lock. The lock can be re-keyed with a step-change key nine times, according to Roberts.

"The manager turns the step-change key, and the lock is automatically re-keyed to the next set of keys," he added.

Once a lock is re-keyed, the store manager distributes new keys to the employees and the job is completed. InstaKey is kept updated as to all key changes, with the information stored in its database. After a store re-keys, InstaKey sends out a new step-change key and the corresponding set of

employee keys. Both are stored away in the store's safe until the lock needs to be re-keyed again.

"The system works so that the manager is always prepared for the next re-keying," Roberts said. "He can re-key the lock—and distribute the keys that will fit that lock—in no time at all. The next set

of keys is always waiting in the safe."

The system offers a number of advantages, Roberts said, including convenience and tight key control.

But the biggest advantage is the cost savings.

"Locksmiths don't come cheap," he noted. ■

Carpet Use Increasing

Retailers find shoppers linger when they have happy feet

The use of carpet, particularly modular carpet, is on the upswing in stores, lifestyle centers and enclosed malls across the country. That was one of the key findings of a survey conducted by Quantum Associates for Milliken Carpet.

The survey, which included a variety of retail segments, found that carpet is a workhorse surface for many retailers. The participating retailers cited warmth, low cost, underfoot comfort, sound reduction, upscale look and design as the top reasons for selecting carpet. In general, retailers said they use carpeting in places where they want the buyer to linger around displays.

Survey participants cited maintenance as a top concern when specifying carpet. However, modular carpet emerged as an effective solution.

"Modular carpet wears better due to its dimensional stability and attached cushion," explained Michael Callaghan, director of sales, Milliken Carpet Consumer Environments. "The cushion not only increases underfoot comfort, but has the effect of cushioning the carpet fiber against wear."

Modular carpet also allows stained carpet tiles to be replaced quickly and cost-effectively, resulting in a better overall appearance.

"It's a simple task that can be done without special equipment and without

disrupting the store," Callaghan said.

With the use of carpet growing throughout retail stores, here are some trends cited by Callaghan:

● **The emergence of "green" specifications:** Increasingly, green issues are being factored into the flooring specification process, and more facility managers and designers are requesting information on how flooring materials can contribute to LEED certification. At the same time, floorcoverings manufacturers are developing new green chemistries to ensure carpet offers credit toward LEED-CI in recycled content, resource reuse, indoor air quality and construction waste management.

"For instance, there is a new technology on the market that allows modular carpet to be installed without adhesives, which improves air quality," Callaghan said.

● **More comprehensive flooring plans:** Increasingly, retailers are looking at more comprehensive flooring strategies that include entryway systems and walk-off mats to protect interior flooring.

"Lifestyle centers, with their multiple exterior entrances, create special maintenance challenges for retailers as more dirt and soil gets tracked in from the outside," Callaghan said. "Manufacturers are responding with new technologies that both resist stains and release soiling when it occurs."