



May 2006

For more information, please contact Jeff Wilde, Partner, Shen Milsom & Wilke (212) 725-6800, jwilde@smwinc.com

Photos available.

The Evolution of Technology (and Shen Milsom & Wilke)

Convergence is the basis for new technologies that are already making the operating table safer for patients, keeping rare paintings within the walls of the museum where they belong, and guiding drivers to the best spot in the parking garage. Convergence describes the intersections between data applications and telecommunication systems. It is not a new term; the trend started in the '90s and continues to have repercussions throughout the information technology industry. What is new are the many innovative applications for this ongoing movement, particularly among wireless applications.

Understanding convergence, predicting its importance, and interpreting its implications for business and architecture, is the basis for Shen Milsom & Wilke's past and future growth, explained Fred Shen, chairman and CEO of Shen Milsom & Wilke, during a talk delivered at the Harman Pro Group 2006 Global Business and Technology Conference on January 16 in Huntington Beach, Ca.

"As technology evolves, our company evolves, expanding to include expertise in the systems that share basic applications," Shen said. "Right now, we offer multimedia, acoustics, telecommunications, and building security. Each of these technologies is inextricably linked."

Shen Milsom & Wilke, which started in business in 1986 as acoustic consultants Shen Milsom & Associates, kept pace with changing times by adding new services and specialties, and opening branch offices that follow demand.

In August of 1988, foreseeing the upcoming convergence of acoustics and audiovisual design, Shen had what he calls, "the bare-feet-on-the-coffee-table conversation." The place: a ski condo in Vermont. The two pairs of bare feet belonged to Hubert Wilke and Shen. Wilke had his own audiovisual consulting firm at the time and brought more than 20 years of experience in system design. "Audiovisual and acoustics have to come together in lock-step," Shen told Wilke. "We at Shen Milsom & Associates

INTEGRATED
COMMUNICATIONS
TECHNOLOGY AND
ACOUSTIC CONSULTING

NEW YORK

HONG KONG

WASHINGTON D.C.

CHICAGO

SAN FRANCISCO

PRINCETON

HOUSTON

DENVER

LONDON

LAS VEGAS

DUBAI

will get there eventually by ourselves, but with you, we'll get there a hell of a lot better and quicker.”

Fortunately Wilke shared Shen’s vision and the result was Shen Milsom & Wilke. Today, the company has grown to include 140 employees with 11 offices worldwide.

The 700 attendees from all over the world, including Harman’s distributors, sales representatives, and consultants, listened as Shen described how technology’s convergence has implications throughout all sectors, from casinos to hospitals, and even developers’ speculative buildings.

“We are seeing just the tip of the iceberg. This is something that will touch everyone,” Shen said. Unifying network infrastructure--combining what were once distinct networks, such as telecommunications, building management systems, security, lighting, vertical transportation, audio and visual displays, into a single service--is a significant part of this trend and it is something in which Shen Milsom & Wilke is actively involved.

One common “converged” network brings ease of maintenance. The costs and complexities associated with moves, additions, expansions, or changes are minimized; new functions can be added in days, not weeks. A greater choice of applications and equipment is available off the shelf. Information from all sources (voice, data, video, audio) can be unified so all aspects of a building’s operations can be linked. As a result, personnel are better informed and able to make better decisions.

At Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City, for example, Shen Milsom & Wilke set up a network that links 21 new minimally invasive operating theaters with hospital departments, such as pathology, the nurses’ station, patient archival systems, conference and seminar facilities, and off-site locations. As a surgeon is operating, he or she can confer with pathologists or other experts in remote locations all under real time to help make the surgery more successful.

Unified networks are in place in a range of other projects too, including The Borgata Resort & Casino in Atlantic City. The converged network here and in the new 315,000-square-foot Phase I Expansion project delivers entertainment (music and streaming video media), marketing information, telephony needs, and information directed at patrons. The system permits the 160 plasma displays throughout the resort to receive digital multimedia streams customized for each location. The network also supports mission-

critical operations, including gaming, player tracking, hotel registration, and other back-of-house functions.

Hong Kong Science & Technology Park is an approximately 55-acre campus where high-technology enterprises and talented people come together. The campus includes a highly flexible converged cable infrastructure that accommodates different tenancies--from research laboratories to technology incubators.

Similarly, at H. Roe Bartle Hall Convention Center in Kansas City, Missouri, a network that supported a range of clients and uses was needed for the building system and for the constantly changing exhibition space. A data network was designed to support two physical networks. The technology network supports the functionality and control of the building systems, such as lighting, audio, building automation systems, and the administrative network. The exhibitor network supports a billable service for the conference center and its exhibitors, including hardwire data networking in all of the public spaces as well as wireless access.

Future projects include The National Library of Latvia, designed by Gunnar Birkerts; and the Al Shaqab Academy in Doha, Qatar, designed by Leigh & Orange Architects.

Libraries, museums, residential high-residential buildings, healthcare facilities—all these as well as buildings of all types benefit from advanced network design.

“Most owners and developers have the misconception that investing in high technology is a budget buster,” said Shen. “The fact is that a unified network and its supporting infrastructure saves in capital investment while delivering savings due to operational efficiencies and energy conservation.”

Shen Milsom & Wilke [www.smwinc.com], an international technology consulting practice founded in 1986, offers comprehensive services in the areas of multimedia, information technology/telecommunications, building security, and acoustics. The firm has a staff of more than 140 professionals and offices in New York, Princeton, Washington, D.C., Chicago, Houston, Denver, San Francisco, Las Vegas, Dubai, Hong Kong, and London—where we have formed a partnership with Sandy Brown Associates.