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Photos available

A Trading Floor and Classroom for Students; “Better than Wall Street”
Shen Milsom & Wilke designs technology behind simulated trading floor that helps students understand the markets and how they interact

John R. and Georgene M. Tozzi Electronic Business and Finance Center,
University of Michigan Business School, Ann Arbor, MI

Architect: University of Michigan

Multimedia/audiovisual, telecommunications, trading floor design:

Shen Milsom & Wilke, Chicago; L. William Nattress III, project manager

Size: 5,800 square feet

Completion: October 2003

The Tozzi Center in the University of Michigan Business School contains a simulated trading floor that also functions as a classroom for teaching financial analysis and trading. With its networked workstations, teleconferencing system, live financial data feeds for real-time information from global markets, and the latest financial services, the center is better than a Wall Street trading floor, says Richard G. Sloan, the Victor L. Bernard PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP Collegiate Professor of Accounting and Finance. Students have access to the latest securities research, investment banking, and asset management tools.

Aside from the financial analysis and trading floor classroom, the facility also includes a wireless electronic classroom, e-lab seminar room, server room (where the servers reside), and a ticker display outside the center to welcome visitors. The center is located in renovated space inside the existing Sam Wiley Hall.

Much of the technology in the elliptical trading-floor classroom, including the displays at the front of the room, the cable and wireless infrastructure to meet the center’s information technology needs, and instructor-controlled touch screens to manage the information and systems that appear on displays, was designed by Shen Milsom & Wilke.

The academic focus in the Tozzi Center is the trading markets and how they interact. Students work in the small groups, gathering around workstations that emulate those found on trading floors. They can also participate in class-wide analysis by observing the three large-screen

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images at the front of the room. A proctoring system allows instructors to control and display a student's workstation via the Local Area Network.

The electronic classroom is used for general instruction. Flexibility was important; instructors wanted the students to meet and talk in various configurations. Wireless network access facilitates this, as does moveable furniture. Like the trading-floor classroom, this space includes three large-screen image displays with multiple computer inputs so that instructors or students can put on presentations.

The e-lab seminar room is a small high-technology space for intimate group projects. It has a projector and display screen, wireless access, and special modular desks that are easily rearranged.

The 35-foot-long ticker, which curves around the entry to the center, presents real-time stock data. Certain designated officials may also post special messages to visitors by emailing them into the ticker system.

The University of Michigan Business School has trained 34,000 MBA leaders who now live and work in 97 countries, and has consistently been ranked within the top ten business schools in the world since rankings began in 1988.

Shen Milsom & Wilke [www.smwinc.com], an international technology consulting practice founded in 1986, offers comprehensive services in the areas of multimedia/audiovisual, information technology/telecommunications, building security, and acoustics. The firm has offices in New York, Princeton, Washington, D.C., Chicago, Houston, Denver, San Francisco, Las Vegas, London, Dubai, and Hong Kong, and a staff of more than 140 professionals. Shen Milsom & Wilke was named one of the 100 fastest growing A/E/P firms in the nation by Zweig White & Associates for the years 2001, 2002, and 2003.