



PROJECT

Soapworks

CLIENT

Soapworks

MARKET / TIME

Manchester / 2018

APPLICATION

Offices

RANGE

VRF

When looking for a suitable air conditioning system for the sustainable and low carbon regeneration of Soapworks in Manchester, the developer selected a Panasonic VRF system. The site, owned by global asset management company The Carlyle Group and joint venture partners Nikal and Abstract Securities Ltd, is of significant historical importance, so any installation had to be sensitively and sympathetically handled.

Soapworks, originally home to Colgate-Palmolive in the 1800's, is situated in Salford Quays, Manchester. This landmark development to turn the former factory into a modern office space spanning a massive 400,000 sq ft has been divided into three-phases due to its vast scale; phases one and two totalling around 230,000 sq ft, and up to 160,000 sq ft in phase three which is still to be developed. High profile organisations already confirmed to occupy the building include communication giants TalkTalk, MWH Global and The Home Office.

When the developer put the heating and cooling contract out to tender almost three years ago, they had very clear objectives of what the system would need to achieve. Due to the structure and historic features within the building, including a vaulted ceiling, the developer didn't want to install conventional building services hidden above a false ceiling; therefore they needed a system that could be seamlessly installed under the floor. The system needed to be energy efficient to meet modern office standards but also to support Soapworks' sustainability goals, which include scoring a 'B' for its Environmental Performance Certificate. The Intelligent Comfort Group (ICG) won the contract after a competitive selection process, thanks in part to Panasonic's unique and flexible offering.

The Panasonic 3-Pipe ECOi MF2 Series provided the ideal solution for the Soapworks installation, thanks to its adaptable design, energy saving attributes and simultaneous heating and cooling capabilities. "Due to the scope and prestige of this project, all of the fittings needed to be reliable, sustainable and of the highest quality. ICG presented the ideal air-conditioning solution that met all of our objectives, and we are very pleased with the results. With a huge space of over 230,000 sq ft to manage, the Panasonic system provides consistent and comfortable temperature control of the entire building." Says Jennifer Bamber, Manager of Soapworks.

Design flexibility coupled with sustainable heating and cooling

Soapworks required a system that could operate impeccably underfloor to suit the interior design of the building. With adequate underfloor space available, MF2 variable static pressure units, which would usually be fitted into the ceiling, were instead installed underfloor to meet the design criteria. Bespoke grills, which have been evenly distributed throughout the floor space, allow the warm air to be dispersed around the room.

Another key requirement was energy efficiency. The Panasonic system was selected for this project because it could guarantee consistent leaving-air control of 16 degrees, 4 or more degrees higher than other manufacturers. This is the ideal temperature for warm air to rise and effectively distribute for a comfortable environment, without the need for additional energy being used.

In addition, EVR units offer variable heating and cooling at the same time, which further saves energy as warm air can be extracted and distributed to other areas of the building. This ecological transfer of heat supports the project's sustainability objectives and modern office standards for energy efficiency.

Simon Kirk from ICG explains; "The 3-Pipe ECOi MF2 gave us the armour we needed to win this contract. Leaving air temperature was an important factor for the client to ensure they were being as energy efficient as possible. The 16 degrees offered by the Panasonic system is unique to the brand, and offers the best available option for a project such as this."



List of Products

- Panasonic VRF system
- Panasonic 3-Pipe ECOi MF2

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The applicable products and solutions may differ in markets.
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