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# Powerflor Cable Management for Today's Classrooms

by Jim Norton / President / Custom Products & Services, Inc.

In today's technology driven classrooms, the requirement for power, data, and AV connections to be located exactly where needed is now more important than ever. As classroom configurations and room usage requirements change, the ease with which these connections can be changed or relocated is a major cable management consideration.

## Computer Classroom Conversion

**The University of Iowa (Iowa City)** recently installed a Powerflor Cable Management raised floor system to upgrade one of their computer classrooms. Three rows of computer desks (30 total) and a podium were originally configured in the room with the power and data cables routed through, and hardwired into, the furniture. Reconfiguring the furniture layout would require completely rewiring the entire room for both electrical and data, at considerable expense, just to achieve a new furniture layout. For most universities, this becomes a major issue from both a time and expense perspective and usually results in the decision to simply use the room as it is currently configured and make the best of it.

## Room Usage Requirements

Jeff Reuter, Instructional Technology Director for the Tippie College of Business at the University of Iowa, had very specific requirements for his computer room usage. "We wanted to use this room for more than just traditional classroom computer training. We needed to have 30 individual workstations that could be moved throughout the room in order to perform group activities in various numbers."

***"These workstations needed to have electrical and wired data connections without cables running across the floor or hanging from the ceiling."***

"This required additional electrical and data connection points, with the ability to move these on-the-fly also being desired". Jeff further noted: "There is a possibility that the room would also be repurposed in the future and we were looking for something that we could move to a new site and still leave the room in useable condition. We also had a

## CASE STUDY MANAGING CABLES TO MEET EVER CHANGING CLASSROOM POWER & DATA REQUIREMENTS



very tight timeframe when we could actually tear down and remodel the room. Adjacent spaces and spaces below this room would also have ongoing classes, so we did not want long, loud disruptions that would have come from coring the existing cement floor".

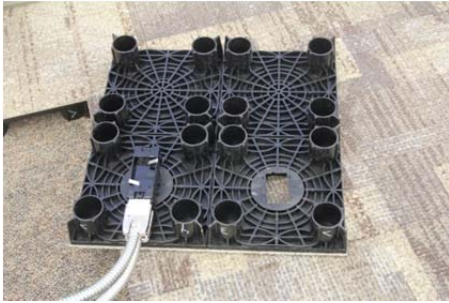


## Features & Functionality

When seeking a viable solution for managing the power and data cables for the computer lab, Jeff offered the following observations: "We needed the product to function as a solid, quiet floor with the ability to run data and electrical underneath the floor."

***"We also needed the product layout to be reconfigurable on short notice without having trained specialists or special equipment on hand."***

"We needed the product to be installed with minimal change to the existing structure and installation time to be as short as possible. We also hoped to work with one vendor from start to finish to reduce the organizational demands on the staff, minimizing scheduling problems and reduce lead time delays. Safety concerns regarding materials used and financial costs were also a consideration".



### Reconfiguring Power & Data Locations

The Powerflor system is designed for quick and simple reconfiguration. Jeff noted: "Since we were not sure exactly how we were going to need the room configured, I had to reconfigure it 4 times in the first few months. This process was easy enough that I have tweaked the configuration several more times since then, which is something I would not have needed to do, but it was easy enough that I went ahead and made the minor changes."



### Turn-Key System

Powerflor is presented to the end user as a truly turn-key process, from room layout and design right through on-site installation by our trained installers.

***This system is shipped complete with pre-carpeted floor pedestals, ramps, railings, pre-terminated power and data cables and outlets (plug-and-play).***

As a result, a typical 1500 sq. / ft. classroom usually takes about 2 days to fully install. The end user can accomplish this entire process by working with a single vendor. When Jeff was asked if this concept carried any weight in their decision making process, he replied: "Because of our timetable and limited staffing resources, this was a large factor in our choice, since all of our other needs were also met."



### General Observations

Customer comments and observations are always welcomed. After having the Powerflor installed and in use for over a year, we asked Jeff to critique the system and his overall experience. "We have been very pleased and have hosted other groups wanting to tour the space. Perhaps the best thing to say is that most people don't realize that they are on a raised floor until they are shown. I was especially impressed when the President of Powerflor took a personal interest in our project. It is great when an important project of ours is also treated as an important project by the vendor". Jeff continued, "From my research, I had already concluded the Powerflor was a product that I was interested in using. After contacting Jim Norton with Custom Products & Services, Inc., meeting with him and checking out one of their installations, I was impressed with their level of service and commitment to their customers. I never had a problem getting in touch with Jim if I had questions and he made a point to follow-up before, during, and after the installation. It has been 17 months since the installation and that impression has not changed."

### Summary

All Powerflor customers are important to us, regardless of the size or scope of the project. We take pride in our longstanding customer relationships and we always welcome candid critiques relating to our products and services. We fully understand that our customers have made a financial commitment to receive the best possible products and after-the-sale service available.

It's our job to make certain that the end result meets or exceeds the customer's expectations.



### References

Jeff Reuter is the Instructional Technology Director for the Tippie College of Business at the University of Iowa.

### Resources

Link to additional information regarding Powerflor Cable Management System:

<http://www.custom-products.com/Industrial.nsf/get/Product-POWERFLOR+CABLE+MANAGEMENT+SYSTEM>

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