



## FHITTING ROOM GETS FIT WITH ASHLY

NEW YORK, NEW YORK: The Fhitting Room is a boutique fitness center in New York City that, instead of leading its clients through sustained low-intensity workouts, drives them to the edge of endurance via scientifically-grounded High Intensity Trainings (HITs). The relatively small space, which can accommodate fifteen clients at a time plus two instructors, is equipped with dumbbells, medicine balls, and a pair of rowing machines. Tenants live above the Fhitting Room, which places constraints on how loud the instructors can play the energetic music that motivates the HITs, and there is potential for tension between the immediate desire to drive the music ever louder and the restraint required of neighborliness. The Fhitting Room hired **Essential Communications** of nearby East Hanover, New Jersey to design and install a cost-effective audio system that would be transparent for the instructors to operate and that would prevent their exuberance from raising a conflict with the neighbors above. To satisfy all of those requirements, Essential Communications specified Ashly processing, amplification, and user control.

While regularly called on to perform A/V integration in hotels, restaurants, houses of worship, and so on, Essential Communications has cultivated a unique niche for audio systems in fitness facilities nationwide. “Price was definitely a huge consideration at the Fhitting Room,” said David Schwartz owner and chief systems designer at Essential Communications. “The founder had been a marketing executive at Pepsi-Cola, and she was funding this venture with her own money. Ashly processors and amplifiers are very cost-effective, and by specifying them I was able to give them all of the performance they requested, including volume limits so that the neighbors would not be disturbed, and ease of use for the staff.”

There are only three simple inputs to the system: an iPod® input and two wireless headset microphones. Those feed an Ashly ne4400 4x4 DSP. In addition to standard equalization and dynamics to improve the sound quality in the space, the ne4400 also provides the brick wall limiting that prevents the instructors from driving the system too loudly. Output from the processor feeds an Ashly KLR-2000 dual-channel amplifier. “Whenever possible, I like to specify systems with components made by the same manufacturer,” said Schwartz. “I feel that they are designed to work together. From an engineering standpoint, the brain trust that goes into building the different components has a common basis.” In dual mono mode, the KLR-2000 powers two-way loudspeakers.

Control of the system is as easy as it could possibly be. “I don’t like to give the instructors access to equalizers or anything like that,” said Schwartz. “It’s too complicated for them. Too many things can go wrong. I needed something simple, and the Ashly RW-8C remote level control was just the thing.” The RW-8C is a bank of eight faders plus a master fader that interfaces with the ne4400 to provide customized control. The RW-8C also gives the instructors the ability to mix the level of the microphones over the music. This is a very convenient feature that is difficult to achieve with other user interfaces. The Fhitting Room simply uses the first three faders for the iPod, headset 1, and headset 2 volumes. The master fader controls the overall volume. If the instructors try to drive the system too hard, the brick wall limiter kicks in, protecting the Fhitting Room’s good-neighbor status!

