



the future's **bright**



Today Area Sq is taking us to see its latest project in Egham, namely Future Electronics' new EMEA headquarters. This is pretty convenient, seeing as Area Sq's headquarters are also in the leafy Surrey town.

We meet with Danny Miller, Managing Director of Future Electronics and Malcolm Howard, Head of Facilities. They are happy to give us some background information about the company: created 40 years ago in Canada, Future Electronics is privately held and specialises in the distribution and marketing of semiconductors and passive, interconnect and electro-mechanical components. All sounds very technical but what we do understand is that Future Electronics is one of the leaders in this industry, operating in 167 locations in 39 countries in the Americas, Europe and Asia.

We are also informed that the company's people have a common philosophy – Delight the Customer – and as such Future Electronics is the only electronic components distribution company to provide 24-hour product marketing capability and expertise to its customer base.

Previously occupying two tired buildings in Colnbrook, Berkshire, Future Electronics felt it was time to bring its 300 corporate employees under one roof in order to improve synergy and communication amongst teams, but also to create a more prestigious location for its European HQ. Danny tells us that they▶▶▶▶▶



▶▶▶▶ are proud to be investing in the key areas of their business; employees, facilities and location – especially at a time where most of their competitors are in a period of consolidating.

Danny is right; Future Electronics' new home couldn't be in a more impressive location in Surrey's prominent Aura building, highly visible from the M25. As you approach the 68,000 sq ft building, you quickly come to realise that opting for this location was definitely a clever choice. Not

only does it look imposing, but its strategic positioning means it presents a great branding opportunity.

Area Sq was appointed early 2008 for the design and fit-out of the building after a stringent two-month selection process. Originally, 12 companies were asked to pitch, three were short-listed and Area Sq was subsequently appointed. Malcolm explains that Area Sq was selected for its excellent design skills, and also the fact that the firm was confident that it could build

the project within the budget. With Area Sq's strong environmental policy and environmentally focused designs, the firm also fulfilled Future Electronics' robust policy on all suppliers having synergy with its own environmental aims. Finally, personality was also an important factor: 'Area Sq understood what we were trying to achieve and we also got on very well with them, which is vital when you embark on a project like this,' Malcolm reveals.

Future Electronics currently occupies four floors and is planning to sub-let the 18,000 sq ft third floor.

The fit-out includes a new catering facility, training and seminar suite, as well as large open plan areas and meeting rooms. In the reception area, located in the full height atrium, Future Electronics has displayed solid state lighting solutions using LUXEON technology.

New technologies, as one might expect at a Future Electronics HQ, are a key feature throughout the building and are reflected by the use of the latest network facilities, wireless touchdown areas and hot desking options for travelling staff.

Gary Chandler, MD of Area Sq Regions adds: 'As the building is visible from the M25, the refurbishment had to encapsulate a crisp design encompassing the synergy of ▶▶▶▶







Area Sq's sister company Sketch supplied Connection seating and specified a combination of new storage units as well as recycling options for the old furniture. Etched glass division screens accentuate the free flowing feel of the open plan area.

What about future-proofing the building, we enquire? 'We have allowed 10% expansion in the open plan areas on both floors, and the café, meeting and training spaces have been designed to cater for any future growth. We also have the possibility to occupy the third floor which would give us an extra 18,000 sq ft,' comments Malcolm.

With quality and environmental management being one of the key business objectives of Future Electronics, Area Sq specified that environmentally friendly materials and products be used wherever possible in the refurbishment. Reception was one area where the firm focused on a quality finish but using recycled products, for example the writing shelf (all 4m of it!) was specified from Avonite's surfaces 'recycled range'. The empty building had

been fully carpeted and was effectively new – and the client was keen to retain this. The bulk of the carpet was retained and complemented with new floor finishes where required.

So, how did everybody react to the move internally? 'The staff was thrilled with the new site and morale has been very positively impacted,' says Danny. 'As for visitors, they all have stated how impressive the building is both outside and inside.'

'We are delighted with the move to our new EMEA headquarters. We are investing heavily in EMEA and the move to the new Future House reflects our commitment to our employees and to the UK market in general.'

'Having our staff under one roof has dramatically improved communication, departmental synergies and overall morale and we believe that productivity gains will be reflected in the mid-term.'

'We have enjoyed working with Gary and his team at Area Sq as well as Sketch,' Malcolm concludes, 'and the final result definitely exceeds our expectations ●'

## essential ingredients

Client:	• Future Electronics
Design & Planning:	• Area Sq 020 7647 5200
Systems Furniture:	• Claremont 0141 419 3600
Office Construction:	• Komfort 0293 592500
Carpets:	• Desso 01235 554848
Hard Flooring:	• Amtico 024 7686 1400 Polyflor 0161 767 1111
Task Seating:	• Connection 020 7253 9877
Soft Seating:	• Connection 020 7253 9877
Meeting Tables & Cafe Seating:	• Wiesner Hager 020 7490 3627
Executive Seating:	• Komac 01384 481396