An office relocation presents exciting opportunities to converge AV and IT to achieve greater operational efficiencies. Bayer UK benefits from versatile meeting spaces at its modern new HQ, demonstrating how orchestrating a culture change can bring about enhanced working practices and greater productivity.

After 30 years located in Newbury, life science giant Bayer relocated its UK HQ to Reading’s Green Park. “This entire project was built around the desire to bring about a cultural change and encourage a more agile way of working,” says Glynn Seymour, Innovation and Infrastructure co-ordinator for Bayer UK & IE. The key challenge was to provide a change in how employees not only worked but how they felt about working.

Focus 21 Visual Communications was commissioned by AV specialist consultant, MiX Consultancy Ltd, to deliver Bayer UK’s extensive AV upgrade.

The Challenge

Bayer’s steering committee had an extensive list of requirements for the project, not least of which was creating a standardised approach to meeting room technology that was simple and intuitive for both colleagues and guests. As well as providing a flexible and reliable infrastructure for conferencing and presentation, Focus 21’s Project Director Justin Paveley had to consider the impact on the existing architecture of the building as
well as IT, management and environmental systems across 60 collaborative spaces. In addition, Bayer brand enforcement and communications has to be clearly visible in high quality facilities that were fully compliant with the relevant industry standards.

The NEC Solution

The project had to accommodate the needs of Bayer’s employees in an office that comprises four floors, twenty meeting rooms, a dedicated space showcasing Bayer’s latest scientific innovations and BayLab; a large restaurant and café area that opens to a large town hall space for quarterly employee gatherings. Quality and reliability were crucial aspects of this installation and on this basis, NEC Display Solutions was chosen to supply a range of large format screens across all areas of the business.

“The NEC was chosen to supply the visual interfaces that are so crucial in Bayer UK’s daily operations and interaction with their other offices, the quality of the screen was of utmost importance. NEC displays were selected with the client based on their features and performance at the product demonstrations and became the adopted standard for Bayer,” says Sebastian Day, director of Audio Visual services at MiX Consultancy Ltd.

The dedicated video conferencing room benefits from dual 65” UHD displays mounted on a Peerless SmartMount, providing a ‘pixel-free’ visual interface to facilitate remote conferencing.

The divisible meeting space offers the flexibility to cater for different usage scenarios and benefits from two 75” High Bright displays. Delivering 2,500 cd/m² brightness, these displays present content which is easily readable even in the brightest environment where the sun streams in through the window. Two huge 84” displays present highly detailed content in ultra-high definition for presentation to a larger audiences whilst also suitable for close proximity viewing.

All other meeting spaces benefit from a range of 32”, 46”, 55”, 65” and 70” large format displays as appropriate to the size of each meeting room.

Focus 21 had only two weeks per floor to install and commission all AV systems. To assist in this challenge, during these key stages Justin and his team ensured their coordination followed AVIXA standards conforming to ANSI/INFOCOMM 2M-2010, the Standard Guide for Audio-visual Systems Design and Coordination Processes.

The Result

Following completion of the main installation, technology now spans four floors of the building transforming Bayer into a bustling hub of varied business and collaborative activity. The integrated, end-to-end AV solution was designed to promote collaboration; providing Bayer’s employees with easy to use presentation facilities, video conferencing and control systems. The result of this unique but easy-to-use technological solution has significantly enhanced employee relationships and overall communications.

“By working closely with both MiX and the client, we’ve installed and commissioned this project above the client’s expectation and delivered a solution that has made an impact on the culture for the employees who work in this impressive building. The system deployed is both resilient and well supported and will provide the client with a return on their investment for years to come,” says Jim Harward, Managing Director of Focus 21 Visual Communications.

This prestigious project has been highly acclaimed winning several industry awards in recognition of its pioneering success. “These accolades top what has already proven to be an amazing project for Bayer in the UK - one that has supported a cultural change and equipped employees with the tools to collaborate effectively and drive customer value,” concludes Glynn Seymour.