

# Zebra Construction Company

## Suwanee, Georgia

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Zebra Construction Company is a large regional concrete and masonry subcontractor serving the commercial building market in the southeast. Zebra, based outside of Atlanta, GA, performs multi-million dollar contracts for major projects such as schools, medical centers, corrections facilities and a variety of large commercial construction jobs.

Founded in 1999 by President and CEO Chip Kessler - a 25-year construction industry veteran - Zebra immediately experienced rapid growth and success. Following Kessler's firm belief in over-delivering for his clients, the firm soon became a major player in the region's commercial building trade. As a result, management recognized the need for a larger modern facility, complete with advanced AV and presentation systems, to occupy the company headquarters.



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State-of-the-art AV presentation systems were installed and managed using Crestron control solutions. Design and integration were led by the team of Neil Philpott and Barry Shields at Crestron dealer dB Audio & Video, and CAIP (Crestron Authorized Independent Programmer), Kalonji Nicholson of Integrated Solutions and Software, Inc. (ISS).

“Zebra had been convinced by the local “geek express” that the products they had recommended would be all Zebra would ever need to achieve excellence in presentation and entertainment Kessler was expecting. Often, company owners don't know exactly what they need,” explained Philpott.

Based on in-depth consultations with Kessler and Zebra managers, Philpott and his team discovered needs from both a technology and a business perspective. They included:

- A need for high-quality presentations that promote an image of cutting-edge technology to its clients and prospects
- Presentation systems that integrate multi-format sources and outputs including HDTV satellite feeds, computer graphics including CAD, Blu-ray DVD, on-screen annotation capabilities, pro audio surround sound with microphones, CD recording, plasma, and widescreen HD projection

- Customized yet practical AV functionality with whole room control for several different room types/uses
- Formal and enhanced training facilities for employees of all levels
- Impressive entertainment space for client appreciation and relationship building purposes.
- A feature-rich system that was easy to operate by any level user and aesthetically pleasing with the new interior decor.

### Touching is Believing

To prove that dB Audio and Video - a respected local integrator with over 20 years experience - could provide Zebra with the most advanced, yet cost-effective AV solution available, Philpott decided to utilize the best way he knew.

“I knew we had to get Chip and his managers to see, hear, and touch the real thing. Our next stop was the Crestron Headquarters for the Southeastern Region in Duluth, GA. Once we entered the training facilities, Chip and his team had the proverbial “ah ha” moment. They were hooked. A Crestron team led a personal tour that gave Zebra a serious understanding of what real control and automation systems should accomplish,” recalls Philpott.

“From that point forward, it was simply a matter of defining the purpose of each space in the new building. Our design team, alongside Crestron, went to work on development and implementation of the best possible system for each room at budgets that made sense for Zebra.”

## The Boardroom - Where New Business Begins

Maintaining a healthy pipeline of new business development is a top priority at Zebra. First impressions matter and Zebra immediately sets itself apart from the competition by delivering high caliber presentations to its prospects and clients. The new boardroom was designed explicitly for this purpose.

From the in-room computer, a Panasonic 3000 Lumens WXGA widescreen projector feeds presentation content to a high definition SmartBoard interactive electronic whiteboard.

Crestron MC2E Compact Control System with on board Ethernet integrates all audio and video components into a powerful, centrally managed rackmount solution. Flush mounted in the boardroom conference table, QM-FTCC-TPS4 3.6" FlipTop Touchpanel Computer Center enables complete room control of all the technology.

Based on input from Zebra managers, customized GUI commands were programmed by ISS and provide a user-friendly interface on the active matrix touchpanel. When video is required from the Blu-ray DVD player or another input, a simple button touch lowers a 7' wide projection screen directly in front of the SmartBoard and the video is queued.

The FlipTop computer center provides convenient connectivity for a presenter to connect a laptop and instantly gain access to the room's state-of-the-art AV system – including Internet.

Crestron QM-MD5X1 AV switcher seamlessly routes audio and video signals from the touchpanel to both screens and the projector while occupying a single rackmount slot. Revolutionary

QuickMedia® technology enabled seamless inter-communication of the room and eliminated cumbersome cabling requirements, making installation fast, easy and cost-effective.

The new system has already provided measurable benefits for Zebra including:

- A decrease in time spent to prepare and deliver presentations
- Improved quality and professionalism of presentations
- Increased efficiency in business development & sales processes
- Higher closing ratio on new business opportunities

## The Training Room – Keeping Employees Connected to Industry Trends, OSHA Compliance and Management's Goals

To keep staff of all levels – including superintendents, engineers, estimators, project managers, architects, CAD designers - up to date on the latest industry trends and OSHA safety bulletins, current projects, internal administrative topics and management strategies, a dedicated training room was designed with advanced AV and presentation technology.

Considering the complexity of the training room design, which includes side-by-side electronic white boards, DVD player, two satellite feeds, CD recorder, two wireless headset mics and a high end audio system, it was a challenge to provide a robust AV system while retaining ease-of-use for both staff and outside trainers/lecturers. A Crestron MC2E Control System with Ethernet seamlessly integrates all components while providing trainers simple and total control of the room, giving Zebra the easy-to-use/high-powered flexibility combination it demanded.

Two Panasonic DLP projectors transmit computer graphics, DVD video and dual HDTV satellite feeds onto a custom made double-wide SmartBoard with a viewing area 15 feet wide. A Crestron UPX-2-1GB Universal Presentation Processor combines multiple window video processing with complete touchpanel control and flexible real-time annotation functionality. Integrated with Crestron DTT-15V3 DualTouch™ Technology Touchpanel, this solution provides trainers/lecturers unique and unmatched capabilities such as:

- Projecting multiple-window viewing to the audience
- Independent output control allows trainers to preview multi-source, multi-window content - including full-motion video - on the touchscreen prior to showing it on the room screen
- Easily annotate, draw or type directly over any computer or video source right on the touchscreen via integrated MediaMarker™ technology



- Save, edit and share annotated screen shots, in a variety of formats, for future use
- Simple, easy-to-use interface that allows trainers to focus on teaching, not on system operation

In addition to its limitless presentation features, the DTT-15V3 enables easy and complete whole room control right from the touchscreen. Plus, an outside trainer also has the choice of using the room computer or quickly connecting a laptop at the lectern, providing added flexibility.

“Programming of the touchpanel by ISS was approached with the idea of enabling novice users to quickly determine how to operate the system, as the client requested. User training was therefore very minimal, increasing productivity while saving time and money. Even the complexity of the UPX in the training room has become easy for them to maneuver by presenting a logical flow to the screens,” explains Shields.

**“Crestron Universal Presentation Processor equips trainers with the most robust, yet user-friendly presentation technology available”**

Limited by space and connectivity options, QuickMedia technology sends and receives all audio, video and computer signals to the projector over inexpensive Cat5e cabling, reducing bulky and costly cabling requirements, simplifying installation. A custom built lectern serves a dual purpose, discreetly hiding and securing the rackmountable solution.



### The Office of the President - Entertaining Clients with a Personal Touch

In addition to using his office to mastermind Zebra’s growth strategies, Kessler also wanted the large space to double as a client entertainment suite. An avid fan of alma mater Auburn Tigers football and NASCAR, Kessler wanted a home theater system that would rival any live event and offer a warm social environment for relationship building and client appreciation.

With a clear understanding of Kessler’s vision, dB Audio & Video designed a state-of-the-art multimedia theater for the 600 square foot space. To harness the power that awaited this room, a Crestron CP2E Compact Control System with Ethernet was installed to manage and control the elaborate design. A Digital Projection 1080p projector feeds a choice of two DirecTV HD satellite feeds or Blu-ray DVD signals to a custom-made 10' wide screen, providing what may be the highest resolution video available in a home theater today.

A Panasonic 50" HD Plasma provides an additional high quality display for guests to view multiple events. When it’s time to get down to business the large screen plasma also serves as a computer monitor for informal presentations and a variety of meeting needs.

Crestron ST-1700C 5.7" color touchpanel consolidates whole room control into a compact but powerful control center, either docked or wireless. QuickMedia technology interconnects the entire system into a robust, yet easily controlled client entertainment theater solution.

Philpott sums it up, “In the end, the standard for excellence had been set and more importantly, Zebra Construction Co. has a variety of facilities that meet the needs of communicating their message simply, clearly, and effectively. Through the partnership offered by dB Audio & Video and Crestron, Zebra now enjoys the challenges that come from doing business the right way.”