The Nokonah

CUSTOMER BENEFITS

- Flexibility to expand
- Systems interoperability
- Increased energy efficiency
- Web access to real-time system data
- Individualized alerts for condo owners

PROJECT AT A GLANCE

Location:
Austin, Texas, USA

Property:
11-story mixed-use building
(95 condominiums, 4 commercial spaces)
160,000 ft^2, excluding parking garage

Project type:
New construction

Equipment installed:
TAC I/NET building automation
2 – cooling towers
2 – boilers
6 – pumps
5 – outdoor air units (15 to 120 tons each)
AHUs, dampers, pressurization fans
30 – exhaust fans
Fire alarm system

Original installation:
2002

Erecting a luxury high-rise in a busy urban area is challenging enough. Getting systems to work together as designed is another. And that's when an experienced building automation company can make a huge difference.

The Challenge

Designers of The Nokonah wanted to offer potential condominium owners the best of two worlds – city living in a park setting. Ultimately, that would translate into easy access to a host of desirable amenities for discriminating residents.

24-hour concierge … upscale fitness center overlooking a heated lap pool and whirlpool … balconies with a view of the Hill Country or the downtown skyline and greenbelt … just steps away from the business, arts and entertainment district, as well as Austin's most famous supermarket – Whole Foods …

Designed so that each condominium and retail space in the building would control its own interior environment, The Nokonah still needed a building automation system to control common areas and building services.

> "TAC's diagnostic capability is unsurpassed in getting The Nokonah back into working order. The reports we are now producing from our system are having a significant impact."
> Erik Eilerts
> President
> The Nokonah HOA

After reviewing building automation proposals from several manufacturers and interviewing some of their clients, the designers selected TAC®. In addition to the building automation system, TAC recommended a mechanical service agreement and a remote monitoring/reports agreement to ensure that systems performed as designed – and as promised.

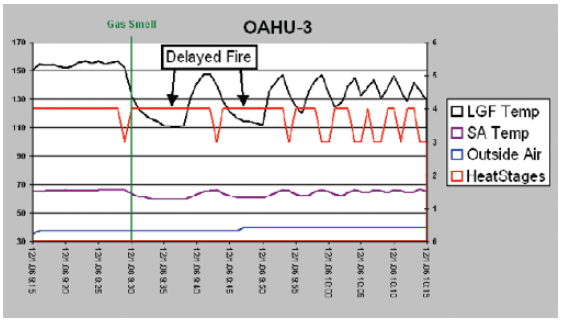
Among the challenges TAC faced when construction began were a lack of parking and staging areas in an already busy downtown district; a bustling supermarket adjacent to the construction site; and the need to work closely with manufacturers of other systems.

The Nokonah Home Owners Association (HOA) soon discovered that TAC was not only knowledgeable and experienced, but also has a track record for consistently delivering high-quality customer service. These capabilities would prove invaluable as the project progressed.

The Solution

TAC proposed a TAC I/NET™ building automation system for The Nokonah. This system interfaces with the A/C system, as well as the controls for the AHUs, cooling towers, boilers, pumps, outdoor air units, exhaust and pressurization fans, dampers, and fire alarms.

After TAC provided its initial building automation proposal, the designers selected an alternate manufacturer for the A/C system, citing value engineering reasons. However, the new A/C system presented a new challenge – and an opportunity to demonstrate the value of working with experienced industry professionals like TAC.



When residents reported an unusual odor inside the building, the search began to determine its source. Theories ranged from sewer gas vapor to trash room odors. Ultimately, the TAC I/NET system was able to help pinpoint the exact source down to the component level; this enabled the HOA to correlate an odor report received from a resident with the operational state of a related furnace. As illustrated by the chart, the problem arose from unfired raw natural gas, which the original HVAC installer corrected by replacing the defective furnaces. The trending capability available in the TAC I/NET system, paired with the customer's understanding of the systems and the respective data, helped make this solution possible.

Unique diagnostic capabilities across the entire TAC I/NET system offer valuable information. In addition to collecting data samples from all building system controls, TAC I/NET gives condo owners the ability to view real-time information on the Internet. Web access also allows the system to notify residents by email about alarms, the need to change a filter, and other pertinent information. Plus, it allows TAC technicians to manage the system remotely, such that operational settings like set points can be altered without the time or cost of a site visit.

Equipment on the roof provides data to the TAC I/NET system that correlates with events occurring in the building. If something unexpected occurs, the system will provide the information needed to quickly track down the source. Ultimately, this saves time and money while eliminating the frustration of having to guess.

RESIDENTIAL PROFILE

Increasingly, property owners are responding to the demandfor intelligent buildings that provide attractive residential facilities combined with commercial use, especially businesses that deliver value via convenience and amenities for residents.

TAC offers property owners and developers technology that reduces operating costs while improving rental income or property market values, all in the interest of ensuring occupant comfort, and hence, tenant retention.

This is all part of TAC's Building IT solutions for mixed-use properties – designed for economy, operational efficiency and occupant satisfaction.

The Bottom Line

Remote access capabilities allow TAC to monitor the mechanical systems around the clock. Full-color graphics help interested parties see what's happening at any time, day or night.

Customized reports extract the system's data, making the information meaningful for residents and putting it at their fingertips via the Internet. The Nokonah HOA appreciates that TAC goes the "extra mile" to track down and remedy any problem.

Confidence in TAC's technical expertise and customer service has led to discussions about other building automation projects.

Schneider Electric One High Street, North Andover, MA 01845 USA Telephone: +1 978 975 9600 Fax: +1 978 975 9674 www.schenider-electric.com/buildings

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