

MANULIFE

Hong Kong

Client: Manulife

Country: Hong Kong

Execution time: From Aug. 6th to Oct. 31st 2021

Project size: 1,750 linear meters of combined solid/glazed partitions and door systems.

International insurance provider Manulife maximizes its workspace availability in Hong Kong thanks to modular partitioning

Manulife has a long history of servicing customers in Hong Kong and has continued its development in the past few years by building multiple workspaces across different locations in the city. One of Manulife project teams' top priority has always been to ensure the highest availability rate of their multiple workspaces around the world. To achieve this, Manulife project teams have long understood the need to optimize design and execution stages to deliver new office projects in a short time frame. In the construction industry, building trust and transparency with suppliers is key to achieve significant productivity leaps and ensure the best built quality.

In this respect, Manulife Hong Kong and Clestra have been collaborating since 2009 on the firm's largest office construction projects in the city. From the very beginning of the collaboration, Manulife's challenges were very clear: they expected their workspaces to be delivered quickly and consistently, especially for complex agency floors housing the highest concentration of employees. Clestra was chosen, along with other key suppliers, to provide the engineering and build response for partition fit-out of several projects. Clestra proposed its proprietary Synopsis partition system to address Manulife's need for quick planning and execution, taking full advantage of the speed and reliability offered by prefabricated modular construction systems.

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Adopting modular construction meant for Clestra to be involved very early during design and planning stages of most of Manulife Hong Kong's projects over the years. Clestra has brought its insights to Interior Designers and Project Management firms on the most efficient ways to integrate modular construction in each project and leverage maximum efficiency. The result of this advanced involvement with other stakeholders comes in the form of a set of standardized rooms, each with their own dimensions, specifications and pre-determined equipment which are quickly positioned on the different project layouts, allowing for significantly shorter delays during design stages. For instance, all these rooms have a pre-set ceiling height of 2400mmH for both walls and doors. If a building's ceiling height shall be higher than 2400mmH, Clestra would simply add adaptable transoms to connect to the ceiling. This also allows Manulife to reuse these partitions into any other workspace in the future.

Thanks to such standardized room designs, Clestra can quickly elaborate its technical response, manufacture exact quantities and thus ship its fit-out solutions to start the onsite installation in the shortest delays. In addition to providing Manulife with speed and precision, Clestra's solutions also address another recurring challenge of large international firms: performing regular workspace layout changes without disrupting teams' work and leaving spaces unoccupied for too long. Clestra minimizes the impact of office transformations by pairing its modular partition systems with tailored services to perform modifications during weekends, causing minimal disruptions. Ever since 2009, Clestra has been performing regular space transformations for Manulife Hong Kong for all their office locations.

The latest collaboration of Manulife and Clestra happened during their 2021 project in Hong Kong, a significant undertaking considering additional difficulties brought by the covid situation in Asia and resulting supply chain disruptions. Despite these hurdles, Clestra could work side by side with the architect firm and project management firm to propose a comprehensive modular fit-out solution, adapting pre-determined room designs to suit Manulife's current needs. The project at International Trade Tower, covering 4 full floors, was delivered under tight schedule thanks to increased collaboration between all stakeholders. This ongoing partnership also demonstrated how modular construction can be the backbone of numerous construction projects when its principles are applied during planification stages, and how a close collaboration between stakeholders can create significant value.

Clestra specifically addresses the following challenges of Manulife Hong Kong:

- **Bringing our expertise in modular construction for interior fit-out at the early stage of projects, assisting in the planning and coordination stages for best execution.**
- **Ensuring the project's tight deadlines were met through offsite manufacturing efficiency, control of the value chain and faster installation time of modular systems.**
- **Helping Manulife Hong Kong to maximize their space availability by performing fast transformation services during the weekends.**

