

Novotel, Heathrow



Daikin enhances 'air' theme at stylish new Heathrow hotel

When a stylish hotel opens in a building that overlooks one of the world's top airports and was formerly its 'head office', it's no surprise that it has an 'air' theme – with a VRV IV heat recovery air conditioning system from Daikin UK efficiently providing year-round comfort for guests.

The 166-bedroom four-star Novotel London Heathrow Airport on Bath Road, just north of the airport, is part of hotel franchise operator and property investor Nine Group's expanding portfolio.

In a major three-year project, the hotel has been developed inside the shell of the former British Airways headquarters. The building became redundant after BAA was forced to sell Gatwick and Stansted airports, and the Heathrow management team moved to smaller premises.

The almost-square building features a central glass-roofed atrium. The conversion to hotel also included construction of a rooftop bar and gym – both of which will afford excellent views of the airport, especially aircraft movements on the northern runway.

Nine Group CEO Vivek Chadha specified Daikin air conditioning systems for the new hotel after personal research. He says: "Energy is one of a hotel's biggest costs – so I was looking for systems that would be cost effective to operate and maintain.

"I visited a Daikin factory on the Continent because I wanted to understand the longer-term prospects for reduced operating costs. I was particularly impressed to find they have a specialist department, constantly innovating solutions for the hotel industry.

"I chose Daikin because I wanted reliable and efficient systems to match the type of hotel we were planning. The Heathrow area is well-served with budget hotels, but there was a clear opportunity for a more upmarket offering of quality facilities and a back-to-basics approach with a full service offer."

Watford-based Nine Group currently operates 12 variously branded hotels – mostly in London and the Home Counties, as well as Birmingham, Manchester and Rotherham.

Year of installation

› 2018

Project requirements

- Air conditioning
- Air curtain
- Air purification
- Control
- Heating
- Hot water
- Refrigeration
- Ventilation

Installed systems

- › VRV Heat Recovery
- › Slim ducted fan coil units
- › Simplified controller
- › ITM



But it's not just the efficiency of the heat recovery systems that impressed Vivek Chadha. He says: "We don't want people messing about with air conditioning controls. Daikin has given us a simple but effective room controller that allows people some leeway with their choice of room temperature – without causing any operational difficulties."

"What's more, the Daikin iTouch Manager control system is linked to our reservations system. This means that we don't need to run the air conditioning unnecessarily when rooms are unoccupied. It is switched on when guests check in and it is available until they check out."

And in a further move towards maximum efficiency, Nine Group trialled Daikin's ground-breaking auto-cleaning duct accessory in a number of rooms at the Heathrow site.

The accessory, which replaces the usual filter on the rear of a ducted fan coil, cleans itself on a regular basis. It stores the dust in a receptacle that can be emptied when necessary by housekeeping staff using a vacuum cleaner. This avoids the cost of bringing in engineers to clean filters – and it prevents any dust accumulation that might reduce fan coil efficiency.

Vivek Chadha – recently recognised by accountancy giant EY as a rising star entrepreneur – says the Novotel brand gave him the most freedom to select décor. "So we've incorporated a lot of blue skies, fluffy clouds and 'flight paths' to emulate the experience of air travel."

Daikin D1+ Partner Direct Cooling Services (DCS) was drafted in to install the new hotel's air conditioning.

Nick Weymouth of DCS says: "There are five separate systems: ground floor public areas (reception, restaurant, bar etc), and guest rooms on the ground, first, second and third floors."

"The public areas are served by two 26hp (14+12hp) condensers, while the guest rooms are served by 10 condensers, each of 14hp. All the condensing units are on the roof, protected by acoustic screens. Slim ducted fan coil units are used throughout – 190 in total. There are 18 branch selector boxes."

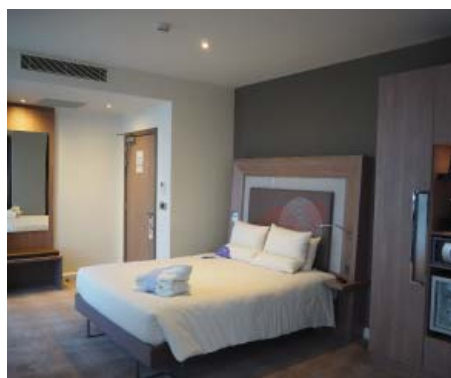
With frontages to all four points of the compass, the building is a prime example of the economic case for heat recovery, with waste energy from warm areas becoming available to heat colder areas. And aside from this, three-pipe heat recovery systems are generally more efficient than two-pipe heat pump systems.

Vivek Chadha says:

"Unfortunately for us, the auto-cleaning duct was launched too late to specify for the Heathrow hotel. But our trials there impressed us enough to select it for three later projects – and we are thinking about retrofitting it at Heathrow when they are complete."

Kit list

Code	Description	No of units
REYQ-T	VRV IV heat recovery condensing units	14
FXDQ	Slim ducted fan coil units	190
BRC2E52C	Simplified wired controllers	162
DCM601A51	iTouch Manager [plus 2 adapter boards]	1
BS_Q14AV1	Branch selector boxes	18



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