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**It was only three years ago when Interact Fire Solutions first opened its doors for business – and even less time since it introduced its flagship product, Interactive Columns, to the construction industry.**

But now, this innovation is being increasingly specified by architects and structural engineers as the optimum solution for insulating feature columns in all manner of prestige developments and locations. But what are the particular qualities of this system – and why does it hold so many advantages over more traditional forms of passive fire protection?

All the answers lie in the various properties of the material from which this product is produced – epoxy intumescent. Initially developed for protecting offshore oil rigs against onslaught from the elements and the threat of fire or explosion, Interact saw an opportunity to pioneer a process whereby epoxy intumescent might be moulded and cast to a particular shape. The company concentrated on a specific application for circular hollow sections – and Interactive Columns was the end result.

This is how the product works. When exposed to a high increase in temperature, the epoxy intumescent expands slowly and evenly to prevent the columns from collapsing under the stress of extreme heat. It does this by introducing sufficient thermal insulation to extend the time it takes for the steelwork to reach its critical failure temperature. In this way, Interactive Columns can provide up to 3 hours fire protection, while enjoying significant appearance and maintenance

## Interact's *Interactive Columns* Can Now Be Found In All The Best Places

advantages over thin-film intumescents and other alternatives such as concrete-filled columns and secondary cladding.

Interact's founder and MD, Tony Tiernan, elaborated on these advantages, " Unlike any thin-film intumescents, our product has a smooth, elegant finish that is also difficult to damage. In an environment like a modern shopping centre, good looks are demanded and floor space at a premium. That's why Interactive Columns are seen as the only real way of preserving the original design concept without compromising fire protection integrity."

Explaining the maintenance benefits, he continued, " This material is extraordinarily robust and durable. It can withstand all types of knocks and abuse, including vandalism. If there is the need for repair, this can be done easily and cheaply without ever having to replace a whole section."

With such a superb appearance and superior fire protection qualities, it's little wonder that there are so many projects completed, underway or in the pipeline, where Interact's product is the preferred choice of specifiers.

Interactive Columns can already be found in airport terminals, atriums, and major office and retail developments. The application is equally suitable for hotels, hospitals, leisure centres - and for protecting government institutions against potential terrorist attack.



