



NEW PRODUCT : A workman fits an i-ceiling loudspeaker system

City firm aiming to raise the roof

CIE-GROUP is launching a revolutionary range of loudspeakers in the UK.

The system — i-ceilings — comprises ceiling tiles that act as the speakers.

They will be used in conference halls, supermarkets, shops and leisure centres.

They are made by US electronics firm Armstrong and distributed in the UK by the Bulwell company.

The first stage of the six-month project, which started in November 2002, involved setting up an approved sales and installation network.

Now the product is being launched to the consumer.

By SEAN KENNY

Chris Edwards is marketing manager for CIE-Group, which employs 52 people.

He said: "It's a major project for CIE.

"We have been in the audio market for 40 years and we've never spent this much money or put this much effort into a brand."

Mr Edwards said i-ceilings was a high-value product.

He said: "We are trying to raise the value of the market so we can put margin back into products for our customers."

The project has already created three new high-end sales positions and

the company is recruiting another two new staff.

CIE-Group has a product development arm called Amina, which has been involved in manufacturing new technology that lies behind the i-ceiling speakers.

It is this link which led to Armstrong working with CIE-Group.

CIE is the UK distributor for more than 40 brands.

Mr Edwards said: "Armstrong is the biggest brand we've ever had. They have a very high-end product and to have that within our portfolio is very important to us."

Each i-ceiling loudspeaker will cost between £80 and £130.