

InfoMarketing

by **CONVENIENCE DIRECTIONS**

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Going Green to Save Some Green

By Michael Lawshe

These days everyone is caught up in the wave of the “green movement”. Not only is it still coming, but it is here and here to stay whether we like it or not. Recent studies show that consumers are willing to spend more money and travel further for products and services that are deemed environmentally friendly or ethically produced, and that’s a statistic convenience and petroleum retailers cannot ignore. Customers have educated themselves and are increasingly concerned about what they put into their bodies and how their purchases affect the environment.

In the convenience store industry, I think there is a common misconception that “going green” is a fad that is expensive, cumbersome, and too difficult to implement. In actuality, with a little research and some strategic planning, hopping on the environmental bandwagon can save you a lot of money in the long run and attracts a new customer base in the process. If you are contemplating a green makeover, ask yourself “How green do I want to be?” and implement a plan that is consistent with your level of commitment. Consider having a green review conducted on your current location(s) by an independent consultant to find your starting place. Keep in mind that it’s okay to go green to save money. If it helps out mother earth while also padding your pocketbook, it’s a win-win decision.

My consulting firm, Paragon Solutions, designed a green prototype convenience store for Green Valley Grocery in Las Vegas. The project was recently featured at the NACS Show in Chicago. We looked at Green Valley’s existing operational elements such as the car wash, interior and exterior lighting, building materials and site orientation, windows, HVAC, equipment, and finishes, to name a few, searching for ways to increase energy efficiency and create a more environmentally friendly store. The results of our analysis were overwhelming, with short returns on investment (1-3 years) and substantial annual savings thereafter. The following are just a few of the solutions we implemented:

Even simpler solutions can be evaluated and implemented to



generate incremental savings. Waterless urinals, dual flush commodes, Energy Star rated equipment, store recycling programs, use of landscaping, and basic lighting modifications are good places to start. Going green does not have to be painstaking, expensive or cumbersome, in fact it’s a downright good business investment and your customers will appreciate your efforts and thank you for it in the long run.

For more information about green convenience store analysis and the vendors mentioned above, visit Paragon Solutions’ website at www.paragon4design.com and click on “Green Links”. Video excerpts from Michael Lawshe’s green feature on NACS Ideas2Go and NACS TV can be viewed by clicking on “Presentations”. Michael can be contacted at **817.927.7171**, or via e-mail at mlawshe@paragon4design.com.

| Product | Incremental Cost | Annual Savings | Environmental Benefit |
|---|--|---|---|
| Purclean Car Wash Water Reclamation System | \$22,000 | \$12,424 (based on 80% reclaim); Immediate \$15-25K in impact fee savings | 1,800,000 gallons of water saved annually |
| Anthony International ESP System Cooler Doors | \$3,300 | \$2,538 (1.3 year payback) | 16,475 KWH/yr saved |
| LSI LED Lighting (Exterior) | \$9,000 | \$7,506 (1.2 year payback) | 68.5% energy usage reduction |
| LSI LED Lighting (Interior) | None; immediate cost savings of \$12,000 | \$2,365 | 39.13% energy usage reduction |
| SSDI Energy Management System | \$3,500 | \$4,800 (9 month payback) | Substantial inside store energy usage savings |