



Limited Brands

Comverge energy efficiency programs help leading retailer achieve a substantial reduction in energy costs

Background

Limited Brands is currently one of the largest U.S. specialty retailers in total revenue, with over 2,900 specialty mall based and outlet stores nationwide, operating under such well-known brand names as Victoria's Secret, Pink, Bath & Body Works, C.O. Bigelow, La Senza, White Barn Candle Co., and Henri Bendel. Anticipating rising electric costs on the heels of then recent federal energy deregulation, Limited Brands engaged Comverge to monitor electricity usage throughout their portfolio of stores. Sandra Ware, Energy Manager for Limited Brands, offered: "When we started out with Comverge, all we asked them to do was monitor our electricity usage. They have evolved into our trusted energy advisor on many of our efficiency efforts."

Expanding on that further, she stated: "Comverge has totally exceeded what we expected of them. In energy efficiency programs, they are our right hand."

"The fact that Limited Brands has saved millions of dollars on energy costs is fantastic, and that they utilize us as their monitoring and verification resource for all energy efficiency initiatives speaks for their diligence to innovation and validation."

— George Hunt, Senior VP of Major Accounts, Comverge

“Limited Brands has one of the most progressive and innovative energy services departments. They are always thinking of new ways to conserve energy and they are committed to the acquisition and evaluation of energy data as a powerful tool to assist in these efforts.”

– Shawn Borden, Comverge Energy Analyst assigned to Limited Brands

Solution

What began for Limited Brands as a cost-cutting initiative became part of a broader environmental strategy to reduce congestion on the local electricity grid. To assist that effort, Comverge worked with Limited Brands on a demand response program in the PJM territory and as a proxy in other markets. In addition, Comverge:

- Installed advanced metering equipment, provided a web energy portal, and offered energy analysis and a daily refresh of detailed data for Limited Brands stores
- Sub-monitored lighting and HVAC units, displaying 15-minute interval data on the website for individual stores
- Created a Virtual Energy Manager (VEM) with the capability of viewing and receiving comprehensive energy reports detailing electricity usage in stores, as well as office space and distribution centers
- Developed an “After Hours” program focused on energy usage when stores are closed

Benefits

Since 1998, Limited Brands has saved millions of dollars in energy costs through energy projects such as lighting retrofits, proactive replacement of older HVAC systems, and renegotiation of landlord energy leases.

Limited Brands Strategies

- More than 2M kWh reduced in 2007 with the After-Hours program—enough to power over 180 homes for a year
- 50M kWh reduced under lighting projects focused on both maximum efficiency fixtures and light bulbs for new stores and retrofits for legacy stores
- 1.5M kWh saved by replacing more than 125 aging HVAC units—cutting CO2 emissions by more than 1,000 metric tons
- 15% reduction in heating/cooling costs by installing improved design roofs in three of seven Ohio distribution centers, with more to follow
- 1.5M kWh expected savings as CFLs replace standard fluorescents in all home offices, distribution centers, and call centers

Results

As a values-led organization, Limited Brands has been increasingly integrating protection and preservation of global resources into everyday business practices. It has proven to be not only sound business strategy, but important corporate environmental stewardship as well. The company has received formal recognition for its efforts each of the last few years. In 2007 alone, they received three governmental awards, including “Partner of the Year – Very Large Business” from the U.S. E.P.A.’s WasteWise Program. For more than a decade, the partnership has also grown between Comverge and Limited Brands, as has the bottom line success. Summing up the relationship between the two companies, George Hunt, senior VP of Major Accounts for Comverge put it succinctly: “We started out monitoring Limited Brands’ energy usage, and now we are a member of their energy team.”

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