

Pleasantly Surprised

Tampa-area automobile dealership Brandon Ford enjoying better-than-expected cost savings since lighting retrofit

Donnie Miller had been thinking about a lighting retrofit project at Brandon Ford for “four or five years,” so he wasn’t about to make a hasty decision.

“I must have sat down with a dozen vendors, and each showed a fantastic rate of earn-back,” said Miller, Fixed Operations Director at the Tampa-area Brandon Ford dealership.

“But frankly, nobody supported their claims with good, solid metrics, facts and guarantees like Southpoint Solutions did.”

Miller chose Orion Energy Systems integration partner Southpoint Solutions to install 175 Orion high-performance fluorescent Exterior Fixtures. Results since the August install – financially and aesthetically – have exceeded expectations.

“We’ve been watch-



Brandon Ford Fixed Operations Director Donnie Miller said the Orion Energy Systems light fixtures on his lot more accurately showcase cars’ colors than the old fixtures did.

ing (the electricity cost savings) very closely, and we have been very pleased,” said Miller.

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– Donnie Miller



ning savings, Miller expects a return on investment in about 1½ years. After that,

cost savings of more than \$50,000 annually will accrue for the

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life of the system – or until Miller decides on another retrofit project with North Carolina based Southpoint Solutions and Orion.

Prior to the installation of Orion technology, Brandon Ford’s lot was illuminated by hot-burning, energy-draining high intensity discharge (HID) fixtures. Miller said those HIDs were “16 or 17 years old” and had certainly degraded over time.

“The problem with (HIDs), aside from their day-to-day cost of operation, which is a big problem, is that their best day is their first day,” Miller said. “They were really starting to fail, and we just felt like overall, the maintenance cost between the ballasts and bulbs was very prohibitive.”

True to his diligent nature, Miller looked into LED technology, which is getting plenty of attention. Miller concluded that Orion’s fluorescent solution still makes more sense.

“I just found that from a cost standpoint, the ROI doesn’t support an LED project,” Miller



Orion Energy Systems fixtures (on pole, foreground) compete against the legacy HID lighting at Brandon Ford during a “Site Field Verification” set up by Orion partner Southpoint Solutions. Orion’s fixtures showed significant savings and, according to Brandon Ford Fixed Operations Director Donnie Miller, made the cars look better, too.

said. “Don’t get me wrong; the technology is pretty close to being there, and I think LED looks pretty slick. But with the great ROI (for Orion’s fluorescents) I think LED is something we can responsibly take another look at four or five years down the road.”

For the next several years though, Miller expects huge monetary savings and continued superior light output. Obviously, that’s important when showcasing automobiles.

“These lights look bet-

Case Study

Project

Replaced 175 HID fixtures with Orion’s Fluorescent Fixtures

Annual Metrics

- Cost savings – \$54,422
- Kilowatt Hour Reduction – 544,221
- Load Reduction – 136 kW
- Carbon Dioxide Reduction – 352 Tons

ter,” Miller said. “The colors are more accurately rendered now than they were, no doubt about that.”

Because this project will reduce annual kWh use by a projected 544,221 and indirectly remove 352 tons of carbon dioxide each year, Brandon Ford recently received an Environmental Stewardship Award from Orion Energy Systems.

Given the cost savings and the improved quality of lighting, the award was a nice bonus, Miller said.

“I think it’s certainly a source of pride for the store,” he said. “Any time you can put up (a plaque) showing you’re a good steward of the environment, that’s important. And as time goes on, I think those kinds of actions are going to be more and more important.”

Orion Energy Systems, Inc. (NYSE MKT: OESX) is a leading power technology enterprise that designs, manufactures and deploys energy management systems – consisting primarily of high-performance, energy-efficient lighting platforms, intelligent wireless control systems and direct renewable solar technology for commercial and industrial customers – without compromising their quantity and quality of light. For more information, visit www.oesx.com.