



CASE STUDY: AREA LIGHTING

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Innovation in Light™



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SBI ILLUMINATIONS



LED DIGITAL SIGN DRIVES AUTO SALES *While LED Luminaires Drive Costs Down*

Car dealerships use a lot of illumination. While these lights serve a dual purpose of attracting potential customers and acting as a 24/7 security system, they devour energy, which is the third-highest overhead expenditure for dealerships. So reducing electricity consumption is a major consideration.

Including this extensive use of lighting, auto dealerships consume on average more energy per square foot than a typical office building: using about 110 kBTU/sq-ft compared to prime office space at 93 kBTU (*source*: National Automobile Dealers Association). This can mean thousands of dollars in energy costs for the typical dealership each year.

Meanwhile digital signage is a great medium for being timely and relevant and translates well for auto dealerships. It's all about increasing sales. Dealerships have to turn that inventory. Digital signage engages prospective customers and helps lessen the sales cycle because a person has gotten an idea or learned about a sale or special from the sign before even walking into the showroom.

When it comes to "call-to-action" messaging, digital signage may be the most effective and most efficient way to get people into a showroom. According to the National Auto Dealers Association, auto dealers across the country are searching for ways to incorporate more tools into their digital advertising strategy. Because

an LED sign can fully integrate with dealers' online marketing presence, it can provide a vital link between live customers and the information they will use to drive a purchase.

After almost three years of preparation and construction, Jerry Hunt Supercenter opened their new location in Lexington, North Carolina in October 2016. (*Note*: After the Department of Transportation needed their former property for a new bridge, they were forced to relocate after thirty years.)

As a customer-focused and forward-thinking business, the dealership is always looking for ways to reduce costs and increase operational efficiencies while promoting sound sustainability practices.



vice, Todd Hunt, owner, installed a LED display board manufactured by California-based Optec Displays, Inc. Optec's 16mm full-color, 5-by-10-foot double-sided Intelligent sign with video capabilities was installed into an existing pole to avoid any zoning issues. It's the first time the dealership has had any electronic display signage. (Note: The UL 48 Listed and UL Energy Efficiency Certified sign can be seen from one mile away.)

Since the sign is so new, there isn't data to support increased sales. However, anecdotally, the dealership's sales team has said that customers actually refer to the sign and specific promotions when coming in to purchase a vehicle.

In addition to the new LED display, Hunt also upgraded to LED luminaires from the metal halide technology that was at the previous site.

Under the recommendation of twenty-year sign veteran Ryan Quimby, owner of Lexington-based QI Signs, Hunt selected

Optec LED Lighting luminaires.

Quimby and his team installed 22 300W Optec LED on the front row of the 550-car exterior lot and 78 240W Optec LED luminaires everywhere else on the property's exterior.

"These lights make the inventory [show up] better and stand out more from the street," said Quimby. "Additionally we anticipate these new lights will last three times longer than the fixtures at the dealership's other location and, the best part, virtually eliminate maintenance and the need to move cars to accommodate the rented bucket trucks to change out the burned-out lamps."

The automobile dealership industry, like many businesses, typically only has one chance to make a positive impression with the customer, so it's important to show products in the best possible "light." The luminaires' uniform lighting eliminates dim areas between lamp poles, improving the automobiles' vibrancy.

Additionally the LED luminaires provide consistent light levels, reduce hazardous waste disposal, and provide dramatically more efficient light distribution than the MH fixtures that were at the previous location.

Employees and customers have also reacted positively to the parking lot's crisp, bright illumination.

"When [Hunt] looked at the lights' energy savings and that installing LED technology is really the right thing to do for the environment, it was an easy decision to make," explained Quimby. "And the new LED display drives customer traffic and increases the Jerry Hunt Supercenter's brand—providing another smart business decision." ■

—Jeff Gatzow

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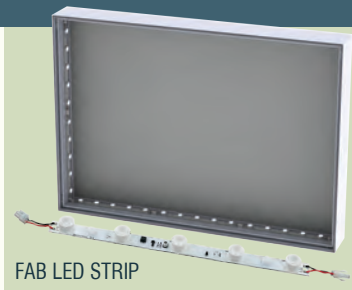


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