



Marcus Boerkei,
general manager, Siemens
Retail & Commercial Systems,
Austin, Texas, retail.
commercial.systems.industry@
siemens.com.

Taking Energy Management to the Next Level

Energy conservation remains a key priority for retailers as several factors, including new power plant regulations, threaten to increase volatility in the electricity market. Along with being a significant cost driver, energy management advances environmental goals. Indeed, it is typically the most cost-effective activity a retailer can undertake to become more sustainable, according to Marcus Boerkei, general manager of Siemens Retail & Commercial Systems, who spoke with *Chain Store Age* about how retailers can reduce their energy use.

What is the biggest mistake retailers make when it comes to energy management?

The biggest mistake companies make is not focusing on the information management part of the equation. At this stage in the EMS (Energy Management System) industry's evolution, the sensors and controls on a location are not nearly as important as what's 'above site' — the dashboards and analytics to help companies manage the gigabytes of data an EMS produces. The ability to automatically prioritize data to make it actionable — to the appropriate stakeholders — is what makes or breaks an energy management program.

How does cutting energy help with maintenance costs?

The answer to this is actually an extension of the previous question. The most successful retailers integrate the analytics provided by an EMS into their HVAC maintenance operations. For example, the system can be used to direct a service provider to pinpoint a particular issue prior to dispatch, and then to verify the work was done correctly.

Or certain issues can be resolved remotely or safely deferred until the next scheduled preventive maintenance visit, eliminating the cost of a site visit altogether. Siemens' customers have saved millions on their maintenance programs through effective integration of the EMS into their vendor management processes.

What is the next step for retailers that have already picked the low-hanging fruit in terms of saving energy?

This has a three-part answer:

No. 1 is innovation. We are constantly introducing new capabilities and analytics to help retailers increase energy efficiency. These include psychrometric controls, intelligent DCV and advanced override management.

No. 2 is integration. It's important to involve key stakeholders in the process, from HVAC vendors, as mentioned above, to finance to store design to energy procurement. By integrating these functions, energy management can be viewed as a strategic initiative.

No. 3 is load management. Participating in electricity

load management programs, such as demand response or capacity bidding, represents not only an opportunity to reduce usage, but also a means of generating new revenues. By enrolling in such programs, our customers generate hundreds of thousands of dollars each year that they can use to invest in further energy-efficiency initiatives.

How can Siemens help retailers reduce their energy use?

In a nutshell, through effective deployment of the most sophisticated equipment and cloud-hosted software, combined with integrated services and domain expertise. Our focus is on maintaining and expanding a retailer's energy savings over time. It's why Michaels Stores increased its savings to 30% last year (for more on Michaels Stores' energy upgrade, see August/September 2012 issue of *Chain Store Age*). This notion of continuous advancement of efficiency is the path we're on with each and every Siemens customer.

How is the Site Controls platform different from other energy management solutions?

The Site Controls platform was designed from the very beginning as an integrated, hosted solution, long before cloud computing was popular. This helps retailers avoid the upfront costs associated with traditional approaches; it allows them to take advantage of continuous innovation for increased savings.

Another key differentiator is our client services support model. For Siemens, energy management isn't a project, it's a process — and we're there as a partner every step of the way.

How do you think energy management solutions/platforms will change or evolve going forward?

It's all about the software. We're seeing continuous advancements in analytics and sophisticated control strategies that can be deployed across an enterprise. We're also seeing the confluence of energy management, facilities management and energy procurement. There are exciting possibilities to integrate these formerly separate functions that will play out for years to come.