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With all of the recent promotion on the energy efficiency, brightness, and long-life benefits of light-emitting diode (LED) technology, many food service operators may be familiar with LEDs or have heard about the way they're revolutionizing the world of lighting. The question is, how can you translate LED technology to your food service business and secure the look and feel that both you and your customers desire while improving your bottom line? Happily, LEDs offer the best of both worlds, delivering high-quality, long-lasting, and maintenance-free lighting while significantly reducing your energy consumption and costs -- a value proposition that represents a win-win for both businesses and consumers in today's highly-competitive food service industry.

According to the U.S. EPA's Energy Information Administration (EIA), refrigeration and lighting are the two largest draws on energy in the restaurant sector, with lighting accounting for nearly 25% of an average restaurant's electricity use. At the same time, lighting plays a pivotal role in reflecting a restaurant's image and in creating a safe and appealing atmosphere that will bring customers back. With lighting typically on for 16-20 hours a day in the average restaurant, an LED upgrade offers a treasure trove of opportunities for cost savings while supporting and enhancing your operation's ambiance and brand.

Reaping the Benefits

Today's generation of high-performing LEDs provide many advantages over conventional lighting technologies such as incandescent/halogen, fluorescent, and metal halide, including:

- Energy savings of up to 80-90% (additional energy savings are available if dimming is employed)
- A lifespan up to 25 times longer than incandescent technology
- Fewer lamp replacements, which saves on both maintenance and disposal costs; this time and money can then be invested into other revenue-generating initiatives
- Excellent color quality in a range of popular color temperatures
- No emission of IR or UV rays, which promote color fading of materials, artwork, or other décor in the dining room

Best Bets

Wondering where to get the biggest bang for your buck with an LED upgrade in your restaurant? Consider the following opportunities:

- An upgrade from traditional 90 Watt halogen PAR38 technology to a 17 Watt LED PAR38 alternative will reduce your energy consumption and costs by over 81%
- Ideally suited to cold environments, LEDs can be an optimal solution for your refrigeration lighting, which will serve to address both of the highest energy-consuming elements in your restaurant
- Dimming capabilities can provide further energy and cost savings, and with LEDs' ability to dim from white to amber, they can create the warm, cozy environments traditionally associated with incandescent/halogen technology

Start Today

LED upgrades are being undertaken by thousands of other food service operations nationwide and there's no reason to wait to begin enjoying the comprehensive benefits of an LED retrofit in your establishment. To get started, reach out to your local distributor partner, lighting manufacturer, or utility to request assistance in performing an audit of your restaurant's lighting, receive product recommendations, and secure installation support if needed.

Thanks to the breakthrough properties of modern LED solutions, an LED upgrade won't require you to sacrifice any aspect of your lighting, but rather will enable you to achieve all of your lighting objectives more energy and cost-effectively. By capitalizing on an LED upgrade today, you can reach "the promised land" of lower operating costs and improved lighting quality.