

The Lighting Connection

Bright ideas to improve your bottom line

Central Maine Power Company, 83 Edison Drive, Augusta, Maine 04336 - www.cmpco.com

Boost productivity with lighting! From cyberspace to workplace, Envisionet knows how to succeed.

Envisionet does business in the virtual world — while employing 1500 people that work all day in the real world! That means they face the same office productivity challenges as other companies, with a few Web-related wrinkles thrown in.

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Wayne Crowell

Envisionet is an outsource provider of high-quality, value-added technical support and customer care for Internet business. It currently operates five service centers here in Maine. When Envisionet decided to expand its operation

into Augusta, the company chose an existing building and quickly went to work to bring it up to

Envisionet standards.

Facilities Manager Wayne Crowell says, "The computer age makes information available at the touch of a button, but remodeling a building takes a lot of effort and planning." The most important goal was to create an efficient, pleasant, and productive atmosphere for the hundreds of people who would be working in the new building — which operates two shifts, 7 days a week.

Lighting is critical to SUCCESS

To meet the needs of its clients, and handle a heavy workload, Envisionet had to get the Augusta building into move-in condition in just a month and a half.

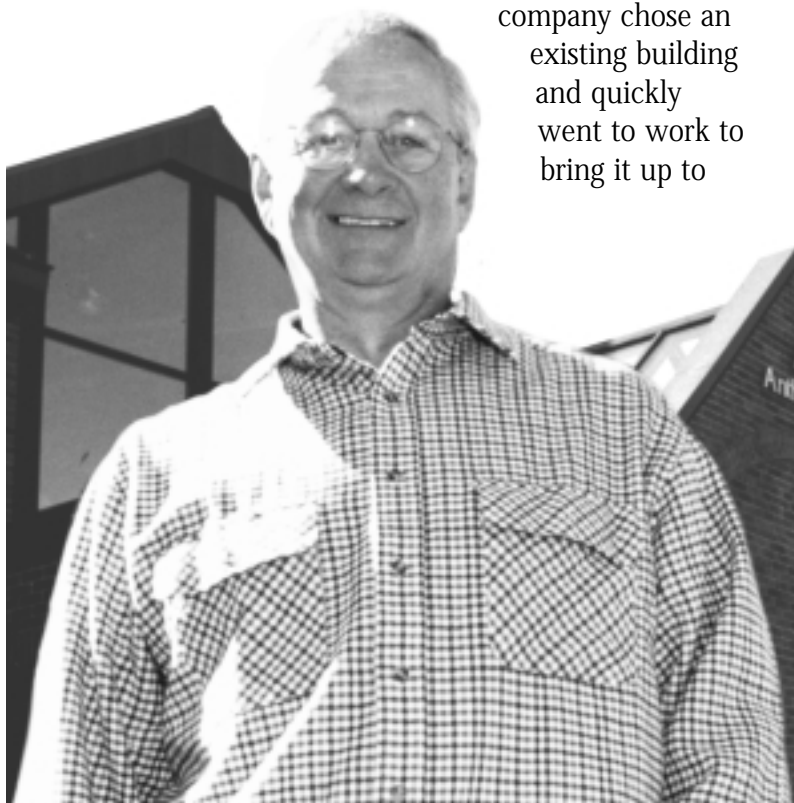
When drawing up the work plan, Crowell considered the lighting, HVAC, and office décor. He is well aware that these play a role in producing a work environment where high energy, quality, and production spell success. "We know that color and high-quality lighting, which in our business also means low glare, has an effect on the performance of our employees. This is a fast-paced business. Well-balanced, natural lighting helps make our employees more relaxed — when they feel better, they work better."

So Wayne Crowell called in some expert help. A to Z Electric from Buckfield was asked to head up the lighting task force — evaluating and

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*Wayne Crowell
Facilities Manager
Envisionet*



Envisionet...

then revamping the existing lighting system.

Light contributes to a comfortable, productive environment

The existing lighting failed the test. The fixtures were 1 x 4 drop-in parabolic troffers, standard ballast, with specular reflectors (mirror finish), and warm white lamps. These fixtures are very good for controlling light distribution, but they're not very efficient, and don't have color-corrected lamps. The solution was to replace these with matched T-8 lamps and electronic ballasts that produce more efficient and color-corrected light. The lamps are 3500K which means they produce a "white" light with fairly equal distribution of all colors, with no single color dominating.

Installing the best is the best business choice

Wayne Crowell sums up the remodeling effort in these



Excellent lighting supports Envisionet's goal of offering a safe and comfortable work environment

words, "The equipment we install, from the smallest lamp to the largest air handler, is some of the very best equipment available. We have found that by installing quality items up front, and not cutting corners, most maintenance costs and energy use become less of an issue. Making this facility efficient, comfortable, and well-lit supports Envisionet's goal of offering a safe and comfortable work environment in which people offer high-quality service to customers."

Whether you're an e-business or a bricks-and-mortar operation, you can enhance productivity by making changes in your office environment. Lighting impacts the people who work for you. Make a small change or a big change. And see what happens!



Electric solutions to
smart power
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Don't work in the dark — talk to an office lighting expert!

Turn on the lights in your office and then walk through your space. Does the light quality make a positive statement about your company? Are the light levels optimized for the meetings and work that take place in your space? Does your lighting encourage productivity? Does it provide safety and security?

Interior office lighting has a huge impact on your customers, employees, and bottom line. So it's a really good idea to work with an expert when you're ready to design or revamp your lighting.

- First, make a list of the things you want your lighting to accomplish.
- Meet with your lighting designer to set priorities and start planning.
- Design to strike a balance between aesthetics and function.
- Plan lighting that fits with your office architecture and furnishings.
- Consider all of the job functions in your office — these will call for specific lighting direction, quality, and levels.
- Look at the sizes and proportions of fixtures to make sure they're appropriate for your space.
- Ask about the technical criteria for attaching — and maintaining — fixtures.
- Discuss any special needs or concerns such as

variable light levels, color temperatures, applicable government building codes, etc.

- Be clear about your budget and your expectations.

Don't think of the services of a lighting expert as an added cost. Consider it part of your investment in optimum lighting. You'll enjoy the business benefits for years to come!

Ask the Lighting Expert:

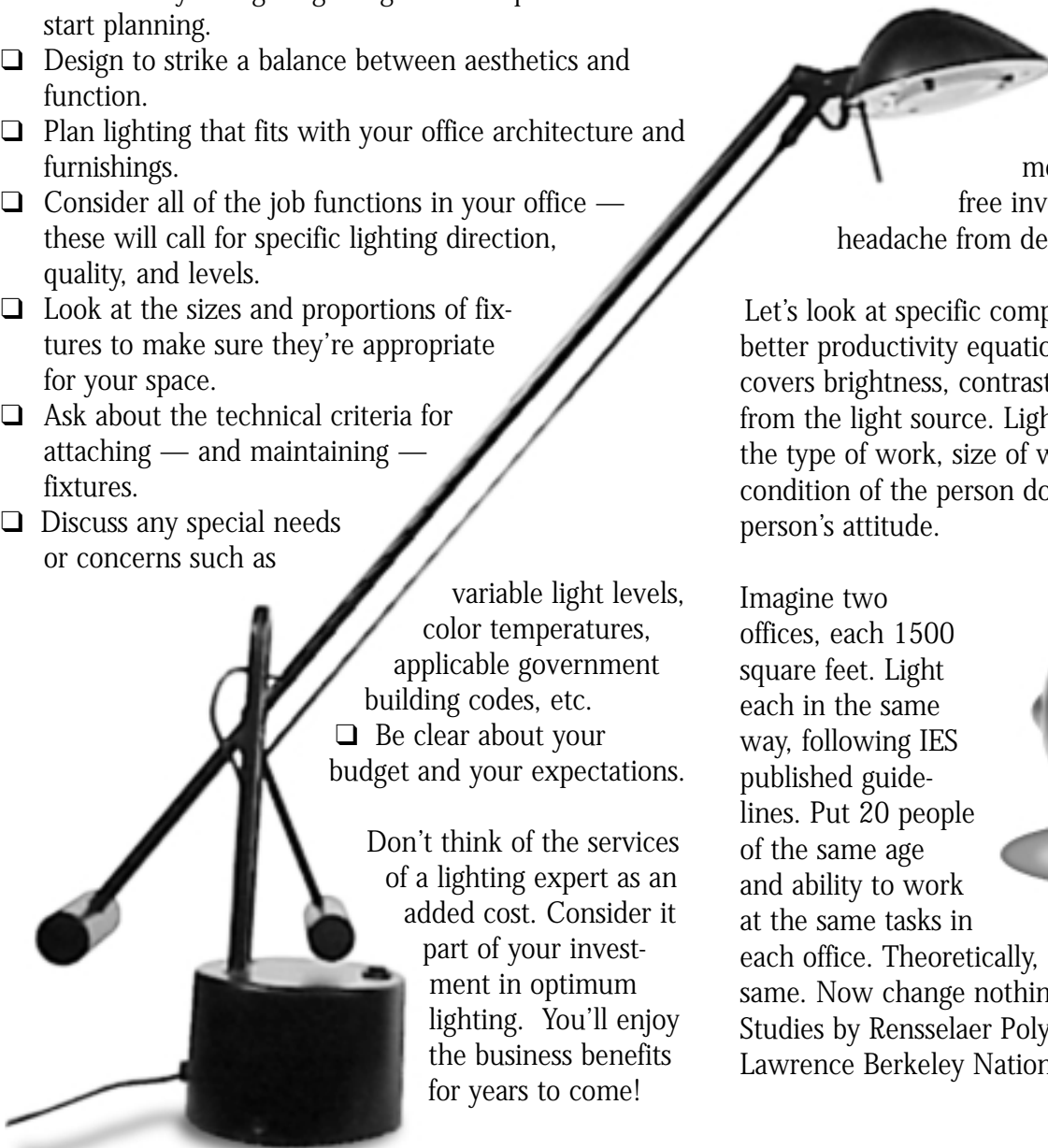


I've heard the pitch about "productivity" lighting, but I don't buy it. You tell me I can increase my bottom line just by changing my lighting. I think you just want to improve yours. Please prove it.

Quality lighting and your company's bottom line are linked like this: give a good employee the best environment in which to perform a given task and that employee will produce his or her best. For example, a clerk who can see his computer monitor without squinting is more likely to produce an error-free invoice than a clerk who has a headache from dealing with VDT glare!

Let's look at specific components in the good lighting = better productivity equation. There's light quality, which covers brightness, contrast, color, and amount of glare from the light source. Light quality has to be suitable for the type of work, size of work object, age, and physical condition of the person doing the work and that person's attitude.

Imagine two offices, each 1500 square feet. Light each in the same way, following IES published guidelines. Put 20 people of the same age and ability to work at the same tasks in each office. Theoretically, everyone's output will be the same. Now change nothing but the lighting in one office. Studies by Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (www.lrc.edu), Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (www.lbl.gov),



show that, with everything else being equal, changing cool white lamps to color corrected-lamps increases productivity levels!

Quality lighting contributes to a safe, comfortable workplace. Employees put more focus on their jobs, and have a lower absenteeism rate in a well-lit environment. There are gains in work volume and accuracy. There's less waste and fewer customer complaints. Increased productivity...lower costs...all going to the company's bottom line.



Remember that every person/task combination is different. Your lighting needs to fit your business. Think about your own work area. Can everyone see what needs to be done without moving to a better-lit area? Does anyone squint because of reflections or glare? Are colors true-to-life under your indoor lamps? If your office has lighting challenges — or if you'd like to explore increased productivity through better lighting — get some specific advice from a lighting designer.

Dick Bacon, CMP's Lighting Expert, has over 25 years of experience in the lighting business working for major electrical wholesalers and Central Maine Power Company. Dick is a member of the Illuminating Engineering Society (IES).

If you have a business lighting question, please contact our Lighting Expert: E-mail: lighting.expert@cmpco.com or call the Business Lighting Hotline: Toll-free: 1-800-649-1169

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