

Controlling the Uncontrollable: Managing Restaurant Energy Usage Delivers the Green – Greener Business, Greater Profits



Martin Flusberg, CEO, Powerhouse Dynamics

Reducing energy use is like going to the gym. You know it's good for you, but it's hard to do.

In fact, it is particularly hard, because energy is the only commodity for which you are billed way after the fact, on the basis of factors with no clear connection to the way you consumed it. After all, do you remember ordering 25,000 kilowatt hours?

Can you imagine customers coming to your restaurant and ordering food without seeing any prices – and then getting a bill the next month telling them how many carbohydrates they bought for \$4,500?

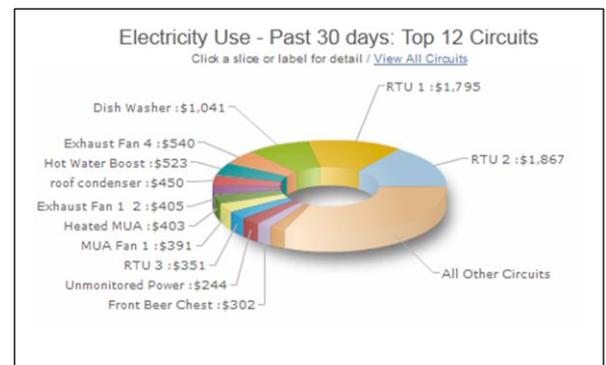
But, at least they would be making decisions about what they are buying. Energy usage is totally blind; you don't buy energy directly, but use it every time you cook, clean, cool or heat the air, turn on a light, or use any other equipment. And, you have lots of equipment. All of which is aimed at providing your guests with a quality product and a differentiated, comfortable experience. Energy is not a product you buy because you want it – it's something you pay for because you used it.

And, you pay a lot. It is often the 3rd biggest expense for a restaurant, after people and food.

Restaurants are the single most energy intensive businesses in the US, averaging almost 3 times the energy cost per square foot of a typical business.

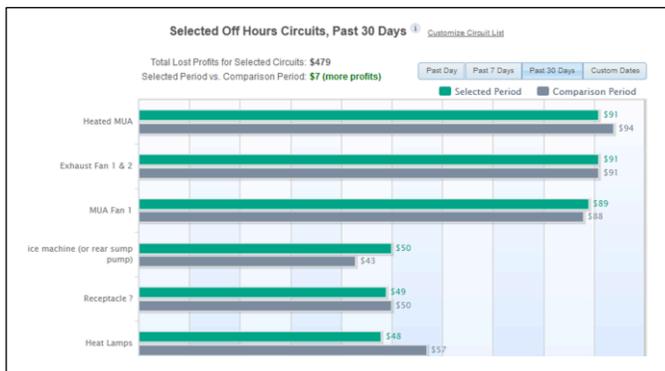
So, what can you do about it? You can procure energy from a lower cost supplier, replace your lighting with energy efficient LEDs using a utility rebate – still at some cost - and use EnergyStar appliances. But, there is little else that you can do; energy costs are uncontrollable – right?

Well, no. Thanks to recently available technology, you can look at an “energy menu” with all your equipment costs clearly broken out – as a first step in getting control of your



utility bills.

For example, the *eMonitor™* from Powerhouse Dynamics monitors every electric load in your restaurant, letting you know what you are spending on different equipment – and when. This lets you squeeze out inefficiencies; e.g., by identifying and doing something about equipment unnecessarily on during off hours –





and pinpoint the exact impact on profitability.

And, the system analyzes electrical use and temperature information to alert you when equipment is not operating as it should be: is a reach-in compressor working overtime, an RTU unit short cycling, or an economizer not working? Is food being maintained at an

improper temperature? All of these have immediate bottom line implications – but alerts may also help avoid costly equipment failures.



By knowing exactly what your equipment costs to operate, you can also determine when it is worth replacing a unit with a more efficient model, or what the best models are for a new location. In fact, by benchmarking across facilities, you can identify and adapt best practices.

The eMonitor also lets you control your HVAC units remotely, making sure that the proper

balance is struck between guest comfort, corporate policies and profits.

Everyone knows that energy waste is not only bad for the environment and inconsistent with best sustainability practices, but bad for your bottom line. Now you can finally do something about it.

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