

Future Designs Retrofits Steel Lighting Cases to Extend the Life of Commercial Lighting Systems

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Thousands of steel lighting cases across the U.K. are being retrofitted with the latest LED lighting technology, with Future Designs' carbon careful™ initiative.

Organizations are always looking for ways to make the buildings that they work from more sustainable. Often this means breaking down the component parts of their infrastructure to determine where they can make cuts in their carbon footprint. And, one of those areas is lighting. When you are managing a large property portfolio, whether that be commercial, residential, medical or educational facilities, you require a lot of lighting fixtures and a lot of energy to power them.

David Clements, chairman of U.K.-based commercial lighting solutions provider Future Designs, realized early on that he

needed to find a way to help his customers extend the life cycle of their light fittings and reduce the energy required to power them. Not only has he achieved this, he has also helped to extend the life of thousands of steel light fittings.

"It all started about fifteen years ago," he explains. "We were asked to relight the entrance hall for One Canada Square at Canary Wharf in London's Docklands. The floor-to-ceiling height there is 33 feet (10.05 m) and it was costing them a fortune to run the high-pressure sodium lighting with the intensity required to throw light that distance. So, we looked at the products that

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(worldsteel), headquartered in Brussels, Belgium, is one of the largest industry associations in the world, with members in every major steel-producing country. Its members represent around 85% of global steel production.

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were in the ceiling, which were robust and beautifully made, and we suggested reusing them and fitting the latest LED components into them. They thought that was a great idea for two reasons: first, we were cutting their energy bill in half and second, we were reusing something that was existing.”

Since then Future Designs has retrofitted over 4 million square feet of office space in the south of England, reusing existing lighting carcasses and its carbon careful™ initiative is now making up around 20% of the company’s turnover. “About 90% of those fittings that sit in the ceiling are made from mild steel, so instead of that being thrown away or recycled, we’re reusing it because it’s inert, it doesn’t decompose, it doesn’t rot and it doesn’t go out of fashion,” says Clements.

“We’ve now provided a second life for lighting for Shell’s London headquarters, where we made an almost 50% reduction in power usage and carbon, while increasing lamp life by 140%. We’ve also retrofitted the lighting at Clifford Chance, the Royal Bank of Scotland and PwC, amongst many others. Right now, we’re working on a 450,000 square foot office building where we are reusing 6,000 light fixtures.”

Future Designs is continuing to innovate new ways to help its clients with their social responsibility to reduce, refurbish and restore. It’s latest launch is its VANE system that looks at retrofitting suspended lighting, which is typically made from aluminum. “LED is here for a long time now, but we’re working on products that are easy to update to the latest LED components,” says Clements. “We want our customers to count on us for sustainability.” ♦

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