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Mark Buckley, Vice President of Environmental Affairs, Staples, Inc.

» Staples, Inc.

World’s Leading Seller of Office Products Reduces Both Carbon Emissions and Costs

About Staples Staples invented the office superstore concept in 1986 and today ranks second worldwide in e-commerce sales. With 2009 sales of \$24 billion and 91,000 associates worldwide, Staples operates in 25 countries throughout North and South America, Europe, Asia and Australia serving businesses of all sizes and consumers. The company is headquartered in Framingham, MA.

Staples is an industry leader in the use of renewable energy. Staples voluntarily committed to a 7% reduction in U.S. carbon emissions by the end of 2010 using 2001 as a base year. As of the end of 2009, Staples has reduced absolute greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by more than 10% since 2001.

Staples is committed to environmental sustainability focusing on three core areas – offering more sustainable products, providing recycling and other sustainable services for customers, and operating our businesses in a sustainable manner.

Mark Buckley, Staples’ Vice President of Environmental Affairs, oversees the environmental impact of running the business. Buckley says, “We’re really taking an integrated approach to carbon mitigation, including energy conservation, green building design, buying more renewables off-grid and renewable energy certificates, and then lastly implementing on-site distributed solar power and fuel cells. We regularly look at new and innovative technologies to incorporate into our building designs to reduce energy consumption.”

Challenge While Staples is firmly committed to reducing the effects of the organization’s energy use on climate and the environment, they also have to ensure that the steps taken are financially viable. “Solar ownership historically was not something we considered because the IRR was not attractive enough,” states Buckley. “When we first discovered the SunEdison solution in 2004, they were really the only pioneer with this type of a solar services model,” continues Buckley. “Their Solar Power Services Agreement (SPSA) allowed us an opportunity to derive all the benefits from solar including reducing our cost per kWh for the solar-generated power without the capital expenditure or the maintenance costs. Early on, we decided to look at the solar service model as a potential route not only for the pilot phase of the first two implementations in California, but also looking at the potential impact of really scaling this up across the country.”



CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



COMMERCIAL



Project Profile: Staples, Inc.

Industry: Office Products Reseller/Commercial

Location: North American Retail Stores, Distribution Centers and Offices

Company: Staples, Inc. is the world's leading seller

of office products with 2009 sales of \$24 billion and 91,000 associates worldwide.

System Type: Roof-mounted and ground mounted

System Size: 6.9 MW across 32 sites to date

Solution Staples partnered with SunEdison in 2005 with two 280 kW solar arrays installed on distribution centers in California (Rialto and Ontario) and one 120 kW system installed on the Staples Office in Englewood, NJ. Since that time, Staples has added dozens of distribution centers, fulfillment centers, and retail sites in California, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Maryland. By the end of 2010, SunEdison will have deployed 10 MW of Staples systems.

Staples' requirements for the solar projects were straightforward. Buckley states, "There has to be a cost savings from the grid-derived power, there's got to be a corresponding carbon benefit, and there can't be any up-front capital or operating and maintenance expenses for the term of the power purchase agreement. All of those elements are what makes the SunEdison model so attractive to us. Early on, there were no other providers offering a similar service. We have had discussions with a few other entities that have come into play, but thus far haven't found them to be as competitive and innovative as SunEdison."

Benefits "First and foremost for Staples, solar energy delivers a positive environmental benefit and enables us to reduce our dependency on energy produced by burning fossil fuels," states Buckley. "There is also a long-term value associated with having distributed generation capability on our roof that provides some energy independence from the grid and helps mitigate the impact of rising energy costs.

"The bottom line is that we're able to purchase solar energy off our rooftops for less than electricity off the grid, so it's a traditional win-win-win," concludes Buckley. "The SunEdison solution requires no capital investment and no operating or maintenance expense, provides power at or below the price for grid power, and helps us meet our carbon reduction goal. We're also taking a portfolio-based approach that considers sites that might be marginal on their own but could make sense for us as part of a larger portfolio of implementations. SunEdison is delivering an innovative solution, partnering with several different entities and taking a pioneering approach to ownership, providing a unique solution to companies like Staples who have a desire to control cost and yet have a positive environmental impact."



About SunEdison: SunEdison is North America's largest solar energy services provider, and operates across a global marketplace. We deliver predictably priced solar energy services to complement your existing utility services. Unlike other solar companies, SunEdison provides a fully managed service; we finance, install, own, operate, monitor and maintain photovoltaic power plants for our commercial, government and utility customers without the high capital outlays traditionally associated with solar energy.