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STYLE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Colorado Electric Supply and MaxLite undertake a successful lighting makeover at the Aveda Institute of Denver.

by Susan Bloom

LOCATED IN THE BUSTLING 16TH STREET MALL IN downtown Denver, the Aveda Institute of Denver is a leading school for cosmetology and spa therapy that offers expert instruction in everything from cosmetology, hairstyling, and esthology (the study of skin care) to massage therapy and more and provides more than 50,000 hair and spa services annually through the efforts of some 300 students and staff members. The institute is also firmly committed to environmental responsibility and leadership, so when outdated lighting threatened to compromise operations at the prominent and cutting-edge facility, the owner decided that it was time for an upgrade. Thanks to a 2016 LED makeover by Colorado Electric Supply (CES) and MaxLite, the Aveda Institute can now look forward to a brighter—and more beautiful—future.

Previously lit by 45 suspended 250W metal halide high-bay fixtures that were inefficient, dim, and difficult to

maintain, the two-level institute's primary hands-on training area on the main floor had become a concern for students, staffers, and guests alike. Because of the previous fixtures' lumen depreciation and color shift over time, "the amount of shadows cast on our guests required our students to run them outside into the daylight so that they could see themselves in true lighting," admitted Dale LeMonds, owner of the Aveda Institute of Denver. "And with 25' ceilings, the labor costs associated with maintaining the fixtures were also high."

"The metal halide fixtures weren't getting enough light to the floor and the light wasn't distributing well," said Ted Lunn, energy specialist for the 15 Colorado branches within CES's 400-plus-branch United States-based network. In addition, he said, the old lighting had an industrial look that didn't match the institute's sleek décor and clean, modern lines and image. Following an audit by

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Cleareresults, an energy-efficiency consultant to local utility Xcel, CES was brought in to discuss the product options that would best suit the institute's applications.

"We spoke to the owner and the installer, Lighting Bug Electric, and brought different samples to test in the actual space based on our knowledge of the range of LED products on the market," said Lunn of the project's analysis phase.

A Sophisticated, Energy-Saving Solution

Based on their sleek appearance and smooth light output, LED products from MaxLite provided the optimal solution. Specifically, the company's 8', 80W, 3500K Polygon linear fixture was able to achieve desired light levels while reducing the overall fixture count by 20%; in addition, its 2x2', 35W, direct-lit LED panels installed into existing fluorescent troffers above the institute's seven sinks where hair is washed and colored provided even, consistent light; high lumen maintenance; and excellent color rendering, all critical factors for stylists during hair color applications. And now because the need for a ballast component has been eliminated, the new LED fixtures were suspended lower to ensure that stylists would be provided the light levels they need to work.

Since the upgrade was completed last spring by CES's Denver Central Branch with support from Integrity Sales Group, MaxLite's Colorado-based rep agency, the results have been impressive.

"Thanks to the high efficiency of the LEDs, the upgrade will reduce the Aveda Institute's annual energy consumption by more than 50,000kWh and save more than \$4,500 in energy costs each year," noted Lunn, whose assistance in securing a nearly \$6,400 custom rebate from the utility helped bring the project's payback period down to just 2.6 years. "In addition,

the Polygon fixtures' brushed aluminum finish better matched the facility's counter tops, contributing to an enhanced aesthetic overall."

A Great Outcome

For his part, LeMonds couldn't be happier with the outcome. "For stylists, it's essential to have lighting that creates even balance, true color, and minimal heat," he said. "At Aveda, environmentally conscious choices are so important to our building, and our new lighting allows us to live our mission and create an amazing environment for our guests. We've incurred fewer redo services because our guests now see the true colors in their hair and the new lights cover so much of the area that there isn't a 'bad' station in the building. Both our social media images and guest consultations have been elevated as well, and we love the lights."

According to LeMonds, he and his team were equally happy with the expertise provided by distributor partner CES. "CES provided an outstanding level of customer service, supporting us through the entire rebate process so that we could continue to focus on our core business rather than the lighting remodel," he said.

"Working with Dale [LeMonds] was a pleasure, and being able to help the Aveda Institute reduce its energy consumption and costs brings great satisfaction," Lunn said of the project, which succeeded in reducing operating costs and creating a more energizing and contemporary workspace for students, staff members, and clients alike. "We're excited to continue the upgrade throughout the lower level of the Aveda facility where classes are conducted and to have created a positive long-term relationship based on a great outcome." ■

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