



TM Montante builds energy efficient/solar integrated properties

August 27, 2012 - Green Buildings

My name is Mike Licata, director of business development at TM Montante, and I am going to blow your mind. The U.S. wastes approximately 50% of the electricity it produces. Whether it is through waste heat, inefficient transmission, or a host of other contributing factors, we are essentially paying for twice as much power as we use. Now consider that 52% of all the electricity produced in the U.S. is generated by burning coal. That is a lot of greenhouse gas generated for electricity that never made it to the light bulb. Take two aspirin and call me in the morning. In addition to this, experts from the electric utilities tell us that our already overburdened power grid is going to face even greater challenges due to substantially increased demand for electricity. So now you are asking, so what? Who cares that we waste that much power? The answer is, practically no one, really. We burn that much electricity as a family, or business, or a government because we can afford to do so. It's true. And when you can afford to do something you will continue to do it. But what happens when you can't afford it? What happens if you lose a major source of revenue, or you experience a financial downturn, or something bad happens? You scramble to reduce costs, which is a good idea. And if it's a good idea when things are tight, it's a good idea when they are not. When we offset utility power on any site whether through energy efficiency measures, or perhaps, oh I don't know...solar power production, it takes twice as much off the grid while saving us cash, (the watt that we buy from the power company, and the watt that was wasted), and that is a great idea.

TM Montante builds special, energy-efficient, solar integrated buildings. Why? Because it is a good idea. TM Montante is the only solar focused real estate developer in New York, because as Matt Montante our VP of operations says, "...we're not just selling solar panels, we're selling a secure investment vehicle with a superior return on capital." In fact we have an entire business park specifically dedicated to this effort, Riverview Solar Technology Park. We own solar arrays that reduce the common area costs for our parks and we pass the savings along to our tenants. We reduced our tenants' energy cost, occupancy costs, and common area costs, as well as our own, by 40%. I can hear your thoughts from here and they are saying, "booooooring." Maybe, but this helped us hire a young guy who desperately needed work. Ok, not so boring. It helped us pay for improvements to an inner city "pocket park," The People's Park, that TM Montante developed and supports. Hmm, interesting. That park provides reading programs for at risk kids with limited access to tutoring and books. Downright exciting! And all of this was done without us affecting the temperature of the offices during the summer, or our lighting levels. Stinking genius!!! Well, maybe just brilliant. Forget the argument about the environment, that isn't what makes most people change their behavior even if it should. Companies want to save cash and do something else with the money, but they aren't always quick to do it until there is a problem. It's like working out. Most of us need to do it, we know we need to do it, but we don't. We have health club membership that we

don't use because we can afford not to use them, for now. No, the thing that makes many of us use that membership is the very scary, very expensive heart attack. A crisis. Just like how we treat electricity consumption. Saving money makes sense for everyone because money is the medium that allows us to do what we want to do.

TM Montante accomplished all of these things with the money we saved through our efforts, even though we could afford to continue with business as usual. The problem is, that kid, the park, and those little children, couldn't.

Mike Licata is the director of business development at TM Montante, Buffalo, N.Y.

New York Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540