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LED solutions - Reality and perception

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With continuing technical advances, the reality of LED solutions is an expanding platform of innovation. Today's LED lighting products not only deliver increased cost and energy savings, but now meet higher levels of specification requirements. As for perception, that's a different story. While the general perception of LED recognizes cost and energy savings advantages, it does not include more recent advances in technology. LED lighting is generally perceived as a white light in the 3,000 to 4,000K range - suitable for office installations or 5,000 to 6,500K - a blue/white light suitable for commercial or exterior solutions. Contrary to perception, however, current LED technology has advanced to a level where there are warm light options available (below 3,000K), similar to incandescent. Recent LED retro-fits, utilizing LED products below 3,000K, include hotels, department stores and art galleries, all with exacting lighting requirements. The reality is that if today's LED products can meet the requirements of a department store, where product lighting is critical or an art gallery, then it is viable for virtually every lighting retro-fit.

Before going further, however, it is important to address LED quality issues. There are a large number of quality LED products available. There are also a large number of lesser quality LED products promoted as lower cost alternatives. Don't even think of going there. Focus only on high quality manufacturers such as Philips, Hubbell or Acuity, whose products come with warranties as well as Energy Star or DLC designations. These designations are a qualifying requirement for Con Ed funding.

While there are many quality LED options available for most retro-fits, identifying the specific LED product that will work best for an application requires an expert. In depth knowledge of product specifications from all of the quality manufacturers is essential as well as how individual products perform under different field conditions. LED products from the various manufactures have characteristics that need to be evaluated as part of the selection process. It is not realistic to embark on a successful LED retro-fit without this level of product knowledge. Work only with an independent industry expert who is not associated with any one manufacturer. Even better, select an independent expert who is a Con Ed marketing partner, who can not only guide you through the process, but source Con Ed funding as well.

Expert navigation and funding are the key ingredients to a successful LED retro-fit.

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