



## CASE STUDY: STAPLES BUSINESS DEPOT

*“Direct Energy Business Services through its iSmart Centre provides us with after hours coverage as well as Energy Management System support. Their assistance with our systems has allowed us to reduce costs and repair timelines and their work in processing after hours facilities calls ensures that we use established vendors with reasonable labour rates at all times. They handle hundreds of work orders a year with minimal performance issues.”*

Leigh Pearson  
Manager Facility Services  
STAPLES Business Depot



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Direct Energy Business Services is a Direct Energy Partnership business managed by Direct Energy Marketing Limited.

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We are not a regulated distribution utility.

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## STAPLES Business Depot

Staples, Inc. founded the office supplies superstore industry when they opened their first store in Brighton, Massachusetts on May 1, 1986. Today, STAPLES is the world's leading seller of office products with \$14.4 billion in sales in 2004. Headquartered in Framingham, Massachusetts, STAPLES' 65,000 associates make it easy for businesses of all sizes to buy the supplies, business machines, technology and services they need to run their offices. STAPLES operates three business segments: North American Retail, North American Delivery and European Operations.

### CHALLENGE

There are over 238 STAPLES Business Depot stores across Canada with the typical STAPLES superstore having over 20,000 square feet (1,858 square metres) of retail selling space, copy centre and warehouse/storage space. STAPLES realized they needed a collaborator to help them meet their goals for energy use, cost control and efficiency. After tracking a 4-5% increase in their energy costs annually, as well as the rising costs of HVAC repairs and servicing and the cost of energy in deregulated markets, STAPLES realized they needed a plan of action to help control their costs and help their bottom line. In addition, STAPLES' commitment to energy conservation drove their need to find an energy service provider who could help them with these key energy-related goals.

### SOLUTION

STAPLES turned to Direct Energy Business Services, who designed and implemented an advanced application for monitoring, measuring and managing STAPLES' energy consumption and maintenance calls. The Direct Energy Business Services' iSmart Centre was established in 2003 to provide a professionally staffed 24 hour x 7 day a week customer service facility that handles over 1,000 calls per year. An Energy Management System supports 150 STAPLES stores across Canada facilitating easy troubleshooting of problems allowing the iSmart centre to book maintenance and service calls and to quickly resolve any issues when necessary. In addition, it assists STAPLES in controlling repair costs by having them flow through a central group.

Building Automation Controls were implemented for lighting and temperature to allow easy adjustment of heating, ventilation, air conditioning and lighting (to preset levels or modified according to the needs of individual stores). Through the use of free cooling, the use of mechanical cooling was decreased while maintaining comfort levels in the stores. Lighting levels are adjusted according to store hours and to accommodate overnight employees, reducing lighting loads by 50%. Heating and cooling levels are also reduced for overnight hours to reduce energy consumption.



Additionally, Direct Energy Business Services was able to help significantly reduce maintenance and service calls by teaming up with STAPLES on a web-based version of the STAPLES database. This arrangement allows Direct Energy Business Services to effectively track and manage all incoming calls and calls in progress. In 2004, Direct Energy Business Services won STAPLES' "Vendor of the Year" Award for providing exemplary response to energy and facility management calls and service requests. Direct Energy Business Services was selected for this prestigious award from over 800 STAPLES vendors.

### RESULTS

In June 2005 to date, Direct Energy Business Services has helped STAPLES reduce energy consumption by 9% compared to 2004, by implementing these solutions. Electricity cost comparison from April 2004 was \$1.37 kWh per square foot compared to \$1.30 kWh per square foot for April 2005.

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