



Online Sensation Nasty Gal Turns to Solais to Bring New Retail Stores to Light

project feature



Solais' Xi24 LED technology helps Nasty Gal light their way to an unparalleled shopping experience

Over the past decade, the Nasty Gal brand of women's apparel has experienced a meteoric rise in popularity – originally a small web boutique on eBay, founded by owner Sophia Amoruso in 2006, the Internet sensation now claims its own line of women's clothing and accessories, over 1.5 million Instagram followers, and more than \$100 million in sales in 2014. As a further reflection of its successful growth and evolution, the brand recently launched its first two brick-and-mortar stores, both in the Los Angeles area – an inaugural location on Melrose Avenue in November 2014 and a second, larger site on Santa Monica's Third Street Promenade in March 2015. Known for its edgy vibe and chic, on-trend fashions that appeal to today's hippest millennials, Nasty Gal viewed its in-store lighting as a critical extension of and means of communicating the brand. And thanks to cutting-edge LED technology by Solais Lighting, a brand of PowerSecure Lighting and part of PowerSecure International, Nasty Gal is successfully lighting the way to a fun, sustainable and unparalleled in-store shopping experience for its many devoted customers.

"After Nasty Gal's success online, the next obvious choice was brick-and-mortar stores, another avenue of growth and sales for the brand," confirmed Director of Retail Development Kevin Nolen, who joined Nasty Gal in 2014 to help the company "identify optimal physical store locations, negotiate leases, as well as design, build and bring them to life." In an effort to "create an art gallery for clothing and accessories," Nolen shared, "our store lighting for both locations was extremely important for several reasons. We wanted lighting with a minimalist profile that would highlight the merchandise without the use of bulky trackheads. We want the consumers' eyes on the merchandise, not noticing what is in the ceiling." Regarding the store exteriors, he said, "We recognized that our storefronts are key to showcasing

our mannequins, attracting customers and driving our brand, so we wanted to light up our windows to pop and stand out from the rest of the storefronts on the street, especially at the Melrose Avenue store, which is a destination location."

Contemporary, Low-Profile Lighting Solutions

Working with Solais, a leading manufacturer of specification-grade LED fixtures and lamps based in Stamford, Connecticut, and National Energy & Light, a company specializing in lighting and energy controls for the retail and restaurant sectors based in Nashua, New Hampshire, Nolen and his team selected a range of LED products. All products in the selection delivered high-performance and maximum aesthetics, while fully complying with California's stringent energy-efficiency codes and meeting the store's own sustainability goals.

"Nasty Gal used our 22-watt Xi24 LED trackheads with a 25-degree beam angle, 3500K color temperature and 1600 lumens," shared PowerSecure Lighting's Vice President of Marketing George Stroumboulis. The company's low-profile, fully dimmable LED track head solutions are ideal for high-performance lighting applications that demand the outstanding lumen output, center-beam candlepower, and color rendering characteristics required in high-end retail outlets like Nasty Gal.

In Nasty Gal's 2,500-square-foot Melrose store, "we used Solais track fixtures along our wall cabinets to highlight product displays and opted for the fixtures in gray to match the stainless steel panels in the storefront window," Nolen said. In the company's 9,100-square-foot Santa Monica store, "we went with white Solais trackheads to match the ceiling and line the sides of the sales floor, for a seamless white-on-white effect that really enables our colorful products to stand out." According to Nolen, "We love the color options that are available in the Solais line, as well as the flexibility of these fixtures—an important feature to us, because we continually move merchandise around to highlight different colors and products. The LED product offerings give us great versatility."

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- Kevin Nolen, Director of Retail Development, Nasty Gal



From a technological standpoint, added Jim Schmidt, President of National Energy & Light, "I love Solais' exclusive active-cooling technology and compact design, and the Solais products were a slam dunk for us – we didn't even consider another manufacturer for Nasty Gal's store lighting design. We incorporated a total of nearly 160 Solais Xi24 LEDs into the stores' layouts for merchandise and task lighting in housings that matched the interior. We installed custom linear and starburst-patterned lighting that had been designed exclusively for each store," he said. "We've enjoyed a great collaboration with Solais Lighting for many years and appreciate the clean aesthetic, high performance and innovative design of the Solais products."

"The Solais team was also very responsive, proactive and solution-oriented — all traits that you look for in a vendor," Nolen added. "We consider Solais one of our trusted partners."

A Great Response

For Nasty Gal's hip, young, contemporary demographic, "the Solais LED trackheads in both of our stores help highlight our products perfectly without being too bright and create a mood that's ideally suited to the unique look and feel of each location," Nolen confirmed, adding, "The response from customers has been great. When people don't talk about the lighting, that's a good thing, and Solais technology succeeds in focusing attention on the merchandise." According to Nolen, "LED technology has really come around in the last few years, but I've seen no competing LEDs that have performed as well as Solais products. While our specific lighting needs may change from store to store as we roll out new locations in the future, Solais LEDs will be standard for Nasty Gal."

"Solais Lighting is one of the things I really like about the lighting industry," shared Schmidt. "Nasty Gal is a unique, highly specialized brand. A lot of thought went into its store lighting design to create a memorable shopping experience at each location. We love the appearance and color of the

lighting at the Nasty Gal stores and are delighted to have been part of the creative, collaborative process."

"As a progressive LED manufacturer, Solais is very excited to have teamed up with Nasty Gal as it expanded into the brick-and-mortar medium, and we're extremely proud to have been part of making that happen," PowerSecure Lighting's Stroumboulis concluded. "Nasty Gal is a fun, powerful and high-growth brand, and we're thrilled to work with the company to help ensure that its new retail space is just as exceptional as its online experience."

Project Summary

End User: Nasty Gal, a Los Angeles-based online retailer of women's clothing and accessories with more than \$100 million in sales in 2014

Project Description: Installation of nearly 160 22-watt Xi24 LED trackheads from Solais Lighting, based in Stamford, Conn., in Nasty Gal's brand-new retail stores in Los Angeles (Melrose Avenue) and Santa Monica (Third Street Promenade)

Project Timetable: Installations completed in November 2014 and March 2015, respectively

Project Support: Lighting design and specification provided by National Energy & Light (Nashua, N.H.) and Architectural Visions (Mahopac, N.Y.)

Other Benefits Experienced:

- Luxiance® active-cooling technology supports superior life, light output and performance.
- With an average life rating of 50,000 hours, Solais lamps and fixtures will offer years of maintenance-free operation.
- Outstanding lumen output, high color rendering index and strong center-beam candlepower ensure maximum performance – ideal for high-end retail and commercial applications.
- Solais products are fully dimmable and free of hazardous materials, such as lead and mercury.

Photography: Courtesy of Nasty Gal



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