



TUMI Stores Pack a Punch With High-Performing LEDs From Solais

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project feature



Solais LED fixtures make premium retailer's products "pop" with exclusive ViOLight™ color-enhancing technology

Offering premium products and cutting-edge designs since 1975, TUMI® has been a leader in the market for high-quality luggage and accessories for business, travel and lifestyle for more than 40 years. Its 110 corporate-owned retail stores throughout the U.S. have been a further reflection of the brand's creativity, innovation and integrity. Supporting a long-standing corporate commitment to social awareness and environmental responsibility, in 2014 the company met its aesthetic and sustainability goals by upgrading the lighting to LED in several of its flagship New York City locations to enhance the shopping experience for its legions of loyal and discerning customers.

At its prominent location in Rockefeller Center, a store about 10 years old, the roughly 200 39-watt metal halide fixtures that illuminated the 2,500-square-foot space "were nice, but our biggest complaints were that the store was too dark and the lighting was too high-maintenance," stated Glenn Trunley, TUMI's Senior Director of Global Store Design. "Our biggest challenge was that we have a lot of black luggage; which absorbs light, making it hard to get our stores bright enough. At the same time, he noted, "With current power restrictions and stricter energy codes, we're limited in the amount of energy we're allowed to consume in our stores and need to get as much light out of every watt as possible."

For Trunley, who joined the TUMI team in 2012 and is responsible for the lighting and design concepts within TUMI's 250 retail stores and 1,000 outlets worldwide, "Aesthetics are critical – we wanted lighting that looked nice, had a long life and was compact with no visible transformers," he explained. "Our previous metal halide fixtures would fail every year or two; they also lost light over time, were inconsistent and always needed to be re-aimed to support our changing displays. We needed powerful lighting that would bring our

dark products to life, highlighting their unique shape, design and premium features, including zippers, pockets, handles, hardware and cutting-edge carbon-fiber construction."

In the search for the optimal light source throughout 2013 and 2014, "We determined that LED technology was the only solution that would give us the amount of candlepower we needed," Trunley shared. "LEDs would also deliver the aesthetics, the optimal color temperature, intensity of light and versatility, so that we could easily rearrange lights to accommodate our changing displays and featured colors."

A Specialized Solution

Regarding TUMI's lighting dilemma, "The average life span of TUMI's metal halide fixtures was only about 12,000 hours, failing at different times, which led to inconsistent illumination," said Tori Cole, Lighting Designer for national lighting services

leader Regency Lighting. "As metal halide lamps age, the color of the lighting shifts from white to pink – even green at times, and isn't desirable for high-end merchandise."

The solution was a combination of Solais' 22-watt Xi24 LED fixtures with a 15-degree beam angle and its 15-watt Xi20 LED fixtures – both of which feature the company's unique and exclusive ViOLight™ color-enhancing technology. After working with TUMI to identify the optimal lighting product to specify in its stores, Cole said that "We investigated a variety of LED products, but ultimately selected Solais fixtures with ViOLight technology because standard LED sources don't render black and white as well as other colors. By contrast," she noted, "ViOLight's unique design enables black hues to look richer and more vibrant and whites to appear crisper, while still allowing other colors to pop. The fixtures' small aperture beam with a hex-cell louver further cuts down on glare, while the high center-beam candlepower [CBCP] optimally supports TUMI in highlighting specific bags and design features to really make them stand out."

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A Forward-Thinking Future

Following its Rockefeller Center store's complete remodel and reconfiguration with Solais LED technology in November 2014, the TUMI team is thrilled with the new look and feel of its high-traffic retail space. "Our new lighting has a lot more impact when you walk in," Trunley confirmed. "It focuses on the product, not the lighting, allowing the merchandise to be the hero when you enter the store. Our foot-candle level has increased dramatically, and the light is much whiter and crisper than before – with no maintenance." In addition, with the versatility of track lighting, the fixtures offer the appearance of recessed trough systems and really deliver the aesthetics we were looking for."

"Solais' ViOLight technology is very innovative, especially for retail," Cole said. "Retailers are attracted to technology that makes their products pop in the store, and there is a noticeable difference in perceived light quality between LED fixtures with ViOLight technology and standard LED technology," she confirmed. "The price point of Solais' fixtures is also competitive. Solais' technology truly represents a breakthrough product for retail."

Trunley agreed: "We're very pleased with the Solais product and can't believe how different it looks against our previous lighting, especially the color rendition. It really performs ahead of our expectations." He confirmed TUMI's plans to open 40 to 50 new stores per year in the U.S. and upgrade another five to 10 stores per year, all of which will incorporate Solais' LED fixtures with ViOLight technology. "With energy standards that continue to get tougher, we're always looking for ways to get more bang for the buck and save energy," he shared. "Solais technology allows us to achieve our goals by using the same amount of energy to get more light. As a result, these fixtures represent a great way for retailers to save power."

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"Overall," Trunley concluded, "LED lighting has changed dramatically, even from a couple of years ago, and will defy most people's expectations. While there are some good options out there, we looked very hard and found Solais to be the best fixture for our use. When it comes to illumination, we haven't found a better solution than Solais."

Project Summary

End User: TUMI® is a premium provider of high-quality, cutting-edge luggage and accessories for business, travel and lifestyle since 1975.

Project Description: The project replaced 39-watt metal halide fixtures in several of the retailer's New York City locations with Solais' 22-watt Xi24 LED fixtures and 15-watt Xi20 LED fixtures – which feature the company's unique and exclusive ViOLight™ color-enhancing technology

Project Timetable: Upgrades were completed in November 2014 and will be ongoing nationwide.

Project Design: Lighting design was performed by Tori Cole of Regency Lighting, a national lighting services and distribution company with strong lighting design expertise.

Lighting Quality Improvements: ViOLight, with its unprecedented degree of color saturation and ability to broaden the visual color spectrum, registers not only all primary colors but pastels as well. It appears most true to natural sunlight, delivering unparalleled color vibrancy – from richer black hues to whiter whites and every color in between – that makes merchandise pop.

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 Armando Espinoza

