

case study

Project **PNC Financial Services Group**
Location.... **Pittsburgh, PA**
Product..... **DC FlexZone™ Grid**

the challenge:

In 2002, PNC Financial Services Group became the first major U.S. bank to apply green building practices to all its newly constructed branches. The result: PNC now has more LEED®-certified buildings than any other company in the world. "Any time we construct a building, we want to include state-of-the-art technology," explains Mike Gilmore, PNC Director of Design and Construction Services. "And, not just technology for now, but for years down the road."

the solution:

Gilmore sees the increased use of direct current (DC) in commercial buildings as one of those technologies. "As DC becomes more prevalent, it only makes sense to go in that direction," he states. As evidence of that belief, PNC was the first company in the country to install DC FlexZone grid, a ceiling suspension system from Armstrong that can distribute safe, low voltage DC power to electrical devices in a space. Installed at PNC Realty Services Group's offices, the grid powered lay-in light fixtures, pendants, and wall washers in both open plan and closed spaces.

"As a leader in sustainability, we're interested in anything that saves energy," Gilmore says. "The grid goes an extra step because it deals with direct current, which saves the energy needed to convert AC to DC."

In addition to its energy-saving potential, the grid also improves the flexibility of interior spaces by providing 'plug and play' capabilities for moving light fixtures without the need to re-wire. Gilmore reports one reconfiguration has already occurred in the PNC space, and "we were able to simply snap pendant fixtures into the grid wherever needed."

The grid also enables more efficient use of DC power sources such as solar. To that end, PNC is constructing a net zero energy branch in Florida in which electricity required for lighting will come from on-site solar panels into the DC FlexZone grid. Yet another possible application of the grid is The Tower at PNC Plaza, which will be the greenest skyscraper in the world upon completion in 2015. "We're definitely considering direct current in certain areas of the new building," Gilmore states.



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