



maximumenergy Case Study



- MC DONALD'S RESTAURANTS
- ALBURY-WODONGA REGION

- LIGHTING UPGRADES
- PV SOLAR INSTALLATION
- SAVINGS OF 20%

Seven of McDonald's restaurants within the Albury-Wodonga region (on the border of NSW and Victoria) are operated under a single license. They are overseen by a General Manager, who, together with the licensee, makes decisions for the benefit of the whole. Recently, the most important decisions have centred on reducing energy costs; totally understandable, considering the restaurants are open 18-24 hours a day. Maximum Energy is the preferred LED lighting installer for McDonald's Australia we were able to provide the 'AW7' with a retrofit solution. Basically, we upgraded each of the restaurants, replacing outdated lighting with energy efficient LED. General Manager, Matt Lawrence, said it was simply a matter of good business sense, not just financially, but from customer experience point of view.

Obviously, a reduction in energy costs was the overriding catalyst for change, but it certainly wasn't considered in isolation – our business model is centred on reinvesting any savings into providing a better restaurant experience for our customers.

The new LED lights have made a surprising difference to aesthetics and the efficiency of the restaurants. The old fluoros were harsh and ugly, the tubes often needed replacing, and it seemed we were constantly cleaning out the dead bugs. The new LED panels and downlights look brilliant; flush, streamline and totally bug free. The ambience of each restaurant has lifted significantly, which is something our customers have noticed and commented on. And because our staff members no longer have the distraction of lighting maintenance, they are able to focus more on interacting with people and create an even better restaurant experience.

McSolar's

McDonald's Corowa was the last of the seven restaurants to benefit from lighting upgrade (at the end of 2018). However, it was the first to include a solar energy upgrade. Obviously, solar is a big part of our energy solution process, and we understand there is always a need for a relatively short-term cost-benefit. We were very confident this would be achieved at Corowa – if ever there was a roof designed to make the most of solar energy, Corowa was it.

We installed a 33kW system using premium (25 year warranty) panels – it would have been a bigger system, but the roof couldn't fit any more panels. Shortly afterwards, a 36 kW premium solar system was incorporated into another restaurant at Benalla (It has a slightly bigger roof).

Both solar energy systems were purchased up front, and while the investment was significant, the licensee can expect to recoup their outlay (in reduced energy costs) in 4 years... or less.

We are delighted with the solar installations at Corowa and Benalla – they are massive progression towards having a carbon neutral footprint across our seven restaurants. Sustainability is extremely important to McDonald's and to us as a group – our aim is to set the industry standard. We have a dedicated Facebook page in which we reach out and interact with our community. The comments regarding the LED lighting and solar upgrade have been overwhelmingly positive.

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The Partnership

In consultation with Matt and the licensee, we provided the AW7 with a cost-effective LED lighting retrofit, significantly reducing their energy use. In 2019, we expanded upon their cleaner energy investment by installing solar at Corowa and Benalla. The next stage will be to retrofit the air-conditioning systems. Again, this is about reducing costs and emissions – modern systems are 30% more efficient than ones built 10 years ago.

We really value the partnership we've established with Maximum Energy; they are highly professional and their scope of work is impressive. But, just as importantly, they are very approachable, which is crucial part of building trust and confidence. This was an unknown (and significant) investment for us, but the promise has well and truly been delivered by everyone at Maximum Energy.