

NRG Stadium's Signage Gets a Bright Makeover

Tetra® Contour and Contour LS fixtures provide cost effective solution



THE CUSTOMER

NRG Stadium is a multi-purpose stadium in Houston, Texas that hosts a variety of yearly sporting and entertainment events. It is home to the NFL's Houston Texans, the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, and the Texas Bowl. The stadium has won several bids to host upcoming, high-profile sporting events over the next few years including a nationally-televised prime-time Texans' game in October 2015, the 2016 Final Four Tournament, and the 2017 Super Bowl.

THE EXPECTATION

In anticipation of the undeniable national and international media attention these events would garner, NRG Stadium wanted to ensure that its branding and signage would reach optimal levels by game time. The company was particularly interested in maximizing its rooftop presence since aerial television shots of the stadium are typically widespread during such events. At the time, the stadium's rooftop signage consisted only of NRG's logo and letters painted directly onto the roof. Although large in size at 30 feet, the painted signage could not be seen in the dark.

NRG Stadium wanted to amplify its rooftop signage so it could be seen at night and from a distance. NRG turned to Greg Hollenberg, president and CEO of National Signs, a custom manufacturer and installer of high-quality exterior and interior signage. NRG Stadium asked National Signs to create a new and unique solution for an illuminated sign on the rooftop.



imagination at work

THE SOLUTION

For such a project, Hollenberg required a proven and trusted lighting partner with high-performance products as well as experience in completing similar lighting projects. National Signs reached out to GE Lighting as a similar project had been completed for Houston's Toyota Center. Hollenberg reached out to Greg Taylor, Regional Sales Manager at GE Lighting, and the two companies agreed on GE Lighting's Tetra® Contour and Contour LS products for the job.

One immediate challenge the teams recognized was that the location on the roof made using a crane impossible. This, along with the sheer size of the logo, letters, and subsequent lighting needed meant that the team would have to develop the sign modularly. The sign would be designed and installed piece by piece which meant the team wouldn't know how the finished sign would look until they turned it on.

"With the roof location and vast size of the signage, we knew we would have to get it right before the final rooftop installation. To do this required flexibility and precision from the fixtures themselves. That, combined with GE's credibility and our past successful experiences working with them, made them the right choice," added Hollenberg.

RESULTS & BENEFITS

National Signs, along with GE, officially kicked off the development phase in February 2015. Since the sign wouldn't be fully assembled until it was on the roof, it was imperative to fit the lighting fixtures exactly to the painted logo and letters.

"We had some unique obstacles in the way," said Hollenberg. "I had to look at so many different angles and perspectives. We created a three-dimensional mock-up of the sign and GE Lighting was instrumental in laying that out and helping us see what the finished structure would look like," said Hollenberg.

Once the fabrication was approved in July, the race to complete the project by the Texans Oct. 8th night game was underway. The installation took a team of 10-15 people 30 days to complete. The group overcame other challenges including working 200 feet above the ground, extreme heat and rain as well as finding a solution to secure the sign to the roof itself. The final pieces were carried by hand, up the stairs to the rooftop and maneuvered through a small 4' x 4' opening to the roof where they were laid down and secured.

The team met the deadline and the sign made its debut before the Houston Texans' crowd. "It was really a 'wow' moment," said Hollenberg. "The brightness and intensity were nothing that anyone expected. The crispness was terrific and the distortion was minimal. The folks at NRG were ecstatic," he said.

All in all, 50,000 square feet of signage was laid out, including 4,000 linear feet of Tetra® Contour LS lighting. There were 125,000 LEDs used, yet despite that quantity, the sign only draws 1500 kW of energy.

"Working with the GE Lighting team was a seamless experience," said Hollenberg. "The Tetra® Contour and Contour LS fixtures provided us a cost-effective solution which resulted not only in dynamic lighting, but significant energy and maintenance savings in the years to come."



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Greg Hollenberg,
President and CEO
National Signs



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